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Ondřej Srba

A COLLECTION OF CLEAR SCRIPT MANUSCRIPTS OF S. NAADGAI AND THE CONTINUITY OF CLEAR SCRIPT USAGE IN OIRAT RELIGIOUS LIFE

ABSTRACT

The article presents a survey and a list of a manuscript collection created in the last decades of the 20th century by S. Naadgai in Mo'nhairhan, Hovd aimag (Mongolia), who belonged to the last generation of Oirats in Mongolia actively using the Clear script (*todo bičig*) in their religious practice. The collection and the oral history connected with Naadgai's lifetime give an evidence about the role of the Clear script usage among the ethnic group of Altain Uriankhains, a tradition now definitely interrupted on the Mongolian side of the Altai range. The aim of this paper is to clarify the palaeographic and orthographical differences of Naadgai's autographs from the classical Written Oirat (17–18th centuries). The analysis shows an influence of the spoken dialect and a general decline of the Clear script literacy in the contemporary Western Mongolia.

KEYWORDS

Written Oirat; Mongolian writing systems; manuscripts; collections; palaeography.

1. Usage of the national language in the Mongolian Buddhism

The translating of Buddhist texts into Mongolian started in the late 13th or the very beginning of the 14th centuries. The vigorous work of translators of the Yuan dynasty became almost forgotten and lost during the centuries of a political and trade isolation of the Mongolian regions from China until Altan Khan's agreement with China (1571) and his attempts to legitimize his authority by contacts with Tibetan

Buddhist leaders, followed by other local khans. Although the whole Buddhist Canon was translated into Mongolian as early as in the first part of the 17th century, Tibetan remained the language of Buddhist rituals and scholarship. Besides the voluminous Mongolian manuscripts ordered and donated by political leaders mainly through the 17th and the first part of 18th centuries, the majority of religious books written in Mongolian in the 18th and 19th centuries were intended for the popular use, although it was still a good habit for the well-educated lamas to be versed also in the Mongolian religious literature. The monastic usage of Mongolian, partly promoted by a group of religious leaders in the 17th century (mainly around Neiji toyin), has been gradually pushed away by the Tibetan language. According to *Erdeni-yin erike* (written in 1835) (ISIBALDAN 1961) only five monasteries in Inner Mongolia used Mongolian as their main language of rituals, or by a less proper term "liturgy": Mergen juu, Bay-a juu in Köke qota, one or two monasteries among the Qorčin and Maqakala-yin süm-e in Peking (ISIBALDAN 1961, 28r/57).

Mergen süm-e in Urad is the only one which has preserved the tradition and re-established it after the years of the Cultural revolution. Following the indigenous tradition and the general opinion of Inner Mongolian researchers, Mongolian liturgy originally came to Mergen süm-e with its first Mergen gegen Dinv-a, a disciple of Neyiji toyin (1557–1653). All the texts used in Mergen süm-e were composed and adapted by the Third Mergen Gegen Lubsangdambijalsan (1717–1766)¹ and included in his collected works whose xylograph was cut in Beijing in 1783.² All the liturgical texts have been versified and fitted to particular melodies. The Mongolian liturgical tradition of Mergen süm-e achieved a great popularity and was introduced to all the monasteries in the Right Urad Banner (*Urad-un Barayun güng-ün qosiyu*) and sporadically to the surrounding areas. In Northern Mongolia, Khalkha, we have only scarce evidence about the Mongolian liturgy at the monasteries and it seems true that it has never been widely used.³

¹ The basic literature concerning the Third Mergen Gegen and his literary work are the following titles: MÖNGKE 1995, 2004, LHAMO – MÖNGKE 2007. The most recent work has been written by Caroline Humphrey and Hürelbaatar Ujeed (HUMPHREY – UJEED 2013).

² A complete facsimile of the preserved parts of the collected works by the Third Mergen Gegen Lubsangdambijalsan (*Wčir dhara mergen diyancı blam-a-yin gegen-ü gbum jarliy kemegdekii orusiba*) has been published three times in Inner Mongolia (LUBSANGDAMBIJALSAN 1998; MÖNGKEBATU 2012, vol. 1 and 2).

³ MHT, 370–371 mentions that the monastery Honic'iin hu'ree (founded 1788) in the area of Tüsiyetü *qan ayimay-un* Gobi *mergen wang-un qosiyu* (now Mandah sum in Dornogovi aimag) together with Bulag bilu'unii hiid (now in O'lziit sum, Dundgoví aimag) were using Mongolian liturgy. The tradition of the Mongolian liturgy has been probably limited to the large Gobi *mergen wang-un qosiyu* and the *Da wang-un qosiyu* (Gobi Tüsiyetü čin wang-un qosiyu; the mention about this *qosiyu* probably relates to the Bulag bilu'unii hiid, which was located within its boundaries).



2. Religious use of Mongolian in the Eastern Mongolia

Within one century following Altan Khan's propagation of the Buddhism, Mongolian scholars created several new writing systems (Ayusi Güüsi's *Ali kali*, Zanabazar's horizontal quadratic script and *Soyombo* script). All of these attempts have responded to a need to note the recently translated Buddhist texts in a way enabling their accurate reading by everyone. Their authors have been aware of phonetic imperfections of the Classical Mongolian (CM) script. Mastering CM script needed a longer experience as far as many words might have been read in several ways. It is well known that reading of the religious texts by unskilled readers led even to the establishment of new words in Mongolian (e.g. *bodisung* as a misreading of the archaic Uigur-like form *bodistwa*, *čakrawar-un qayan* instead of *čakrawar-t[i] qayan*, *uwaa* instead of *ōm* etc.).

The only writing system of the 17th century which spread and became common, was the Clear Script *todo* or *todorxoi bičiq* (abbreviated CS), invented by the Oirat monk Zaya pandita (1599–1662), according to his biography in 1648. CS received wide circulation only at the end of the 17th and in the 18th centuries, when it became the single official script of the Dzungar khanate and Volga Kalmyks. The earliest preserved monuments written in *todo bičiq* date to the end of the 17th century,⁴ but the oldest religious manuscripts come at best case from the first part of the 18th century. The Dzungar governor Galdantseren (1727–1745) supported first xylographic editions of CS sūtras in Zaya pandita's CS translation.⁵

We have no evidence whether in the time of the Dzungar khanate the Oirat sūtras were used for the monastic liturgy, although it is believed that they were among Zaya pandita's disciples. In the 19th and 20th centuries all the monasteries in Western Mongolia were already using Tibetan, but the Clear script books were widely used by lay persons. Specialists for reading CS sūtras are called *xara bayši* "lay masters". Originally, *xara bayši* were performing much more than the simple ritual reading of Oirat sūtras, resembling shamans in some respect (the essential difference was that the ancestral spirits *ongyud* did not enter *xara bayši*). *Xara bayši*

⁴ KARA 2005, 141 considered the letters of Galdan bošoytu to the Russian Tsar (among them the letter of 1691) the earliest known monuments of the Oirat script. Earlier correspondence of Oirat nobles in Russian archives, e.g. the letter from Prince Dayičing tayishi to Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich of 1661 (facsimile in USTJUGOV 1967, 131), has been still written in CM script and only starting with Ayuka Khan (correspondence from 1713–1724) documents are written in CS (SUSEEVA 2009). For the Dzungar Khanate, letters written in CS have been attested in Manchu archives in Beijing since 1678 (letters of Galdan tayiji to Kangxi Emperor). (*Dayičing gürün-ü dotuyatu yamun-u mongol bičig-ün ger-ün dangse* 2005, II 143).

⁵ Two xylographs have been found so far: *Xutuqtu biligiyin činadu kürügsen tasuluqči učir kemekeiye keke kölgöni sudur orošboi* (skt. Ārya-vajracchedikā-nāma-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, "Diamond sutra" a Nayiman mingya-tu orošboi (skt. Ārya-aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā, "Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines". Both of the prints have been preserved as sacral objects worshiped by Mongolian families in Mongolküriy-e, Ili Kazakh Autonomous Region, Xinjiang).

were acquainted with divination and astrology, otherwise were able to perform rituals detecting thieves and stolen thinks. The existence of *xara baysi* is attested by Ööld, Alt.U. and Dörvöd Oirat ethnic groups. The religious role of CS has been less important at Torguud and Khoshuuud areas. Up to the present times, the tradition of *xara baysi* has been widely preserved only in one Ööld county, Mongγolküriy-e (Ili Kazakh Autonomous Region) in Xinjiang. A few *xara baysi* can be found also in the nearby counties Tekes and Nilq-a.⁶ The contemporary *xara baysi* in Mongγolküriy-e are usually only reading sūtras and copying them – both of these activities have strict rules. For the reading of more voluminous titles several *xara baysi* gather and read various parts of the book simultaneously in order to complete the reciting of the whole sūtra in a reasonable time.⁷

3. The usage of the Written Oirat by Altai Uriankhains

Altai Uriankhains (Alt.U.) living at the Xinjiang side of the Mongolian Altai practised the ritual reciting of CS sūtras until recently. Old people still remember *xara baysi* who as late as in the 1990s were reading CS sūtras on demand of others and practising a method of detecting stolen things (usually some livestock) by a ritual arrow or a vajra. Even though a few of CS manuscripts survived the Cultural Revolution and the old and middle age generations learned CS in schools, in present days there is nobody regularly reciting and copying CS sūtras as it is practices in Mongγolküriy-e and the nearby counties.

A similar situation is at the north-eastern Mongolian side of Altai mountains, where Alt.U. survived as a minority among Kazakhs in Buyant, Altai, Altanco'gc and Bulgan sums in Bayan-Olgii aimag (except the Tuva-speaking Alt.U. in Cengel sum, regarded today as the Tuva nationality) and as a majority in two sums (Mo'nhairhan, Duut) in Hovd aimag. During my repeated oral history research in these areas (since 2010), I have collected some few mentions about local people previously famous in their native place for their knowledge of CS and reciting CS sūtras. The best evidence came from the former *Barayun amban-u qosiyu* of the Left wing of Alt.U. (today's Mo'nhairhan and Bulgan sums and a part of Duut sum).

6 Only a little has been written about this tradition so far. MENDE – BAYANKESIG 2006, 264–288; MINGRAD ERDEMTÜ 2006.

7 During the ritual of reciting the texts, *xara baysi* are seated in a line. The first one takes one leaf of the sūtra after another, reads a passage of the text and passes it down to his neighbour and takes a new leaf for himself. Every *xara baysi* uses his own melody and a slightly different speed of reciting taken over from his personal teacher. *Xara baysi* distinguish propitious and unfavourable days for reciting sūtras. Similarly to the monastic Buddhism, reciting of every sūtra has its particular effects and its choice reflects the situation of the household who ordered the reciting and the time conditions. In present days, women are actually excluded from the usage of Clear script sūtras, although some *xara baysi*'s mention that women used to be admitted to the reciting wearing a cap (*tojurčay*).



Unlike in Xinjiang, where CS was in use as the official writing system for Mongolian until early 1990s, in Western Mongolia (formerly the Khovd Frontier Qobdu-yin kijayar) CM script was used for the administrative needs starting with the Manchu times (at least 19th century)⁸ and, of course, replaced by the Cyrillic during the late 1940s. CS has been limited to the private use, mainly for religious needs, and has never been taught in official schools.⁹ Still the books in CS have been kept in a high esteem and despite big losses caused by several forced migrations in the first half of the 20th century and the harsh anti-religious campaigns from 1940s to 1990, a large amount of the books is still kept by local families and re-established local temples.

Unlike in Mongyolküriy-e, in Barayun amban-u qosiyu it has been no exception that women mastered CS and regularly recited the scriptures. Tu’ruunii Togtoh (deceased in 1963, 76 years old) belonging to the Myangat sum of the Baruun amban’s banner, was known as *usanz* (skr. *upāśikā*), a lay devotee, who had undertaken certain vows, transmitted her knowledge of CS and inherited her books to her daughter, Damdinii Muuz'a (1909–1992).¹⁰ Muuz'a in her older age also started to observe precepts and rules of an *usanz*. She has been reciting the Diamond sūtra on 15th and 30th day of every month of the Mongolian calendar. She started to recite the Diamond sūtra as soon as the morning tasks like milking of cattle has been finished, lit a lamp and made an incense offering. Muuz'a learned CS spontaneously just following her mother's reciting. She has probably never used CS for writing.¹¹

Reciting the Diamond sūtra, Muuz'a is said to use a literary pronunciation, strange for her children listening to it. Her son, C’uluunoc’ir remembered only two words from the reciting as an example *tegünčinen bolugsan*, which excellently shows the abidance of the written form of the written language (the colloquial form would be *tünčilēn bolsōn*, Mongolian translation of the skr. *Tathāgata*). C’uluunoc’ir did not remember the exact melody, but recalled that the melody had been agreeable to listening and similar to the melody of the “*mani* chants” *maani ho'g'z'ooh*. Once the

⁸ The oldest archive materials provenant from the Alt.U. banners kept in the National Archives of Mongolia date to the first half of the 19th century.

⁹ The only short time when the Clear script appeared in the archives of the Alt.U. banners were the late 1910s, when Alt.U. pertained to Chinese authorities in Sir-a süm-e (today's Altay in Xinjiang) - *Fu dutong xian Aertaishan daoyin gongshu* 副都統銜阿爾泰山道尹公署.

¹⁰ Muuz'a's father Damdin belonged to the Oriyas elkin of Ah sumun in the Baruun ambanii hos'uu. His father was Sam'ya and grandfather Baglaan (Bo'HHUYAG 2010, 51).

¹¹ According to the interview with C’uluunoc’ir, Muuz'a's adoptive son (son of Maidar, Nu’cgé elkin) (14.5.2012, Ulaanhus bag, Bulgan sum, Bayan-Olgii aimag). The collection of manuscripts inherited by C’uluunoc’ir from his mother Muuz'a contains four items in the Clear Script: 1.) *Xutuqtu biligiin činadu kürügsen tasuluqči učir kemēkü yeke kölgöni sudur orošibo* (26 fol., a manuscript written by calamus on the Russian handmade paper, presumably of the first half of the 19th century), 2.) *Zouraduin sonosöd toniluqči orošibo* (14 fol., written by calamus on the Russian handmade paper), 3.) *Altan gereliyin xurāngyui orošiboi* (4 fol., modern Russian paper), 4.) *Xutuqtu Mayidariyin tangyariqlaqsan kemēkü toqtol* (2 fol., modern Russian paper).

reciting has been finished, Muuz'a started to sing one of the “*mani* chants”, usually repeating the following stanza:

mānīn zurgān üsgīg (ni) / maytān šilüglen unšidžū / öm manī pad me xom ... 3x / maši xalūn tamāsă (ni) / tatān soyorxōn odičō / öm manī pad me xom ... 3x (“Six syllables of the *mani* / Read them with praises and reciting / Let us deliver / From the very hot hells”)

Although the chant remembered by C’uluunoc’ir is too short as to provide a material for an analysis, it is curious to note, that forms of words like *unšidžū* (instead of the colloquial *unšidž* or *unšidži*) and *šilüglen* (instead of *šileglen*) are both pronounced forms of the written Mongolian *ungsiju* and *silüglen*. The syllabic principle of the verse also needs the word *maš* (which is received as a single syllable in modern Khalha and Oirat in Mongolia) to be pronounced in a dissyllabic way *maši* (CM and TB *masi*) in order to keep the number of syllables in the verse.¹² Understanding the contents of the *sūtra* was not so important as the simple act of its reciting. After the reciting has been completed, Muuz'a was telling stories about benefits from reading the Diamond *sūtra*. Such stories were extremely popular in Mongolia in the second part of the 19th and the first part of the 20th centuries, as it is attested by a large amount of preserved manuscripts.¹³ C’uluunoc’ir mentioned one story about a hunter whom the simple physical contact with a manuscript of the Diamond *sūtra* procured salvation from hells and reincarnation in the human body. The story is not included in the written collection.

The motif of a wise old woman reciting the Diamond *sūtra* can also be found in Alt.U. oral narratives. In a tale called *Altuuž' mergen*, the wandering hero comes several times to the house of a woman reciting the *sūtra*. In some cases, the woman gives him an advise, in other cases not, but thanks to the encounter with the miraculous power of the wise woman and her *sūtra*, the young man is every time inspired with a sense of the right direction:

“The young man got down from his shedding colt and entered the *ger*. Inside, an old woman was reciting the Diamond *sūtra*. The child approached, bowed thrice, received blessings and set before her. When the old woman completed the reciting, put the *sūtra* on the *hoimor*, [versified:] turned towards him and fired the juniper, / turned back and placed the offerings, / walked out and made a libation of tea, / [returned to the *ger* and] from a vase-shaped tea pot / poured the red tea and passed it to the boy.” (PUNCAG-DORZ' 1990, 33).

¹² In the *mani* chants we can usually find the last relics of the “oral-literary” pronunciation in the contemporary Mongolian. After 1990 the *mani* chants became again a part of the popular Buddhist culture in Mongolia and the Cultural revolution in China, but its traditional authentic forms can still be heard for example in Govi-Altai aimag Cogt sum, in Ordos and among Kölünbüyir Buriats

¹³ Usually with the title: *Qutuytu bilig-ün činadu kijayar kürügsen wčir-iyar oyтуluγči-yin ači tusa erdem-ün tayiliburi-yin sudur*. The manuscript copies are present in almost every catalogue of old Mongolian manuscripts.



4. Sanz'iin Naadgai and her manuscript heritage

Another legendary old wise woman reciting the Diamond sūtra was Sanz'iin Naadgai from Mo'nhairhan sum (Hovd aimag). Although she is not mentioned in the existing local monograph (Bo'HOO 2004), she can be considered one of the most remarkable personalities in the recent past of the place. She was born in 1902/1903 as a daughter of Sanz'i zahiragc',¹⁴ presumably an assistant of the banner's governor.¹⁵

Being an old lady with a perfect memory, Naadgai was interviewed by several researchers. In 1978, she was called to talk with prof. Jaroslav Vacek from the Charles University in Prague and Jugderiin Lubsangdorji, who went to Mo'nhairhan during their dialectological research in Hovd aimag.¹⁶ In 1988, she provided a lot of ethnological information to the field researcher I. Lhagvasu'ren from the Mongolian Academy of Sciences.¹⁷ Z'. Coloo in his article about the Alt.U. written culture mentions traditional names of the graphical components and letters of CS recorded from S. Naadgai with their comparison to the names included in written sources.¹⁸

According to my interviews with Naadgai's son Magsar and her daughter-in-law Pooluugiin Noosgoi,¹⁹ Naadgai learned CS from her father, forgot it through his life and brushed up her knowledge again when she was seventy, it means in 1970s. At that time she was searching for old manuscripts preserved by others and probably collected some of them. Then she was copying them by hand. She has also presented many copies to the people.

Naadgai used to give tea offerings to her sūtras placed in the home altar *hoimor* every morning and fire the juniper frequently. P. Noosgoi describes the process of reading as follows:

nom bolxār dzāvāl č güi xōmört bānā. tegēd öglö bükēn ter cānān dēdž tävīna. ürgeldž saj tävildž arc üyülna. im odō nom sudür erxbiš arcā üyülād, nögö tegdēr burū dzövīg sūchēd, tegēd üdzdēg, ... nomin barintāy gedēg čanya orādž ög, nom gemtēdgii, ter barintāy maši čangyāldž orādāy. nomdū barintāy ögsen kümün, öglige ögölgin dēd xamyīn tom ögligē nomin barintāy, nom xadāyalaxād xerēgtā. manā ēdži bičixdēn bol ter xar bex gedēg yum nārūlād bičidži bādīm. nigē usūn butāy bāsān šiy sanāydād, ter ulān bek gedēg bāsān, xāyā xāyā nigē uyīn todotoyol orüldāy bāsānšiybānāldā. astā mod üzürlečigsēn, ter nārūlsān yumānd xigēd

¹⁴ Her father belonged to the Tünken *elken* (clan) in Ah arvan of Oorcog sumun of Baruun ambanii hos'uu. Naadgai was a resident of Bort bag in Mo'nhairhan sum.

¹⁵ Otherwise, the name Sanz' zahiragc' has never been mentioned in the oral history I have collected in the region of the former banner.

¹⁶ Prof. Jaroslav Vacek has written a short account about his expedition in Nový Orient (VACEK 1980). About the meeting with S. Naadgai, J. Lubsangdorji has written an impressive story in his textbook of the Mongolian conversation (LUVSANDORDŽ – VACEK 1990, 137).

¹⁷ His recordings were published in MUZHSEH 2011, 32–33, 40, 64.

¹⁸ COLOO – MO'NHCECEG 2008, 424–427. Z'. Coloo interviewed S. Naadgai in 1971.

¹⁹ Centre of Mo'nhairhan sum, 13.7.2011, 27.6.2012, 8.7.2012, 20.6.2013, 6.7.2013.

bičdēg bāsim, bal mal bāsāngui, tegēd bičdimbilē. manā ēdžin nom unšixū bičixū bolxār bosād yarān uyāčixād, tegēd saj täviād, saj dērē eŋgēd xoyor yarān engēd ariülčixād, tegēd nomōn avād, delgēd, bidendē unšdāy bāsim (Interview 6.7.2013 in Mo'nhhairhan sum).

"A sūtra has to be placed on the hoimor necessarily. Everyday morning, [Naadgai] gave an offering of tea and also fired the juniper frequently – offered the incense. Having removed the book in the proper way, she started to recite it. [She used to remind me] to wrap the book clothing on tight, [in this way] the book won't damage. She wrapped the book clothing very firmly. The cloth wrapping of the book is the supreme pious gift, for it is needed to protect the book. Our mother used the black ink for writing, she was used to prepare it herself. Then there was something like a watercolour, called the red ink, which she used to write sometimes an epithet [of a deity or Buddha]. Then she had a pointed wooden stick. She dipped the stick into the mixed ink and wrote. There has not been any pen. When going to recite or copy a book, our mother stood up, washed her hands, fired the juniper and purified her hands in the smoke of the juniper. Only after this she took the book, unwrapped it and started to recite it to us."

5. A list of CS manuscripts from the inheritance of S. Naadgai

During two of my visits to the family of Magsar and P. Noosgoi, I was kindly permitted to see and take photographs of all the manuscripts in the possession of this family. The collection can be divided into two parts – manuscripts written by S. Naadgai herself and older manuscripts. It is quite simple to distinguish them, for the first group is written either on the hand-made Russian paper (which was used in the Northern Mongolia approximately between 1780s – 1850s) and the Russian machine-made paper (used in the Northern Mongolia between 1850s – 1920s). S. Naadgai's manuscripts are usually written on modern thick white paper.

5.1 Manuscripts attributed to S. Naadgai

1. *itegel orošbai* (CM *itegel orusibai*, Tib. *skyabs 'gro bzhugs so*), 5 fol.
2. *arban burxani z[a]rliq orošbai* (CM *arban burqan-u jarliy orusibai*). Folded book, 19 pages.
3. *sukew[a]diyin iröl orošbui* (CM *sukawadi-yin irügel orusibai*), 6 fol.
4. *zoürdüyin sonosod toniloqci sudur orošibu* (CM *jayuratuy-yin sonusuyad tonilyayči sudur orusibai*, Tib. *bar do thos grol*), 14 fol.
5. *tamu ebdekuxouri kemekü altan usun xutuyan oršiboi* (CM *tamü ebdekü qouri kemekü altan usun qutuy-a orusibai*), translation by Rab byampa corji.

Title on fol. 1v: *xamuq kile[n]ce nam[an]čilxu sudur*

Incipit: *arban züg yurban cagiyin xamuq burxan bodhi satwa nar-tu mörgümüi::*



- Explicit: *kilince namančilxu altan usun xutuyan tamun ebtekü xouri kemekü dousubai::*
6. *Mila burxan Xormustu yeke tenggeriyin z[a]rlıq orošibo'i* (CM *Mila burqan Qormusta yeke tngri-yin jarlıy orusibai*), 13 fol.²⁰
 7. [A prophetic text Čilayun-u bičig], 6 fol. A concise version of the preceding prophetic text.
Incipit: *N[a]mo guru abaraltan dedü yurban erdeni-dü mürgemü'i: na zha ja taya ku-du nige gerte'i čulun buujai ireqse-ece yar[a]qsan nomin z[a]rlıq egüni debter z[a]r tarxabal buyun yeke bolmu'i:: ...*
 8. *xutuqtu doqšin šiyike neretü sudur orošiba'i*, 4 fol.
 9. [No title]. Incipit: *ese bögsü beyed yadyal mon:: tegebel kümün bükü-dü ta-bin jili ayuul-du ülü učir[a]mui* (CM *ese bögesü bey-e-dü qadayalamüi: tenggobel kümün bükü-dü tabin jil-ün ayul ülü učiramui*). A folded book of *dhāraṇī* with a protective function, 6 pages with writing.

5.2 Older manuscripts written by various scribes:

1. *xutuqtu biliqiyin činadu kürügsen tasuluqči učir kemekü yeke kölgöni sudur orošibo'i* (skt. Ārya-vajracchedikā-nāma-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra), 35 fol. on the Russian hand-made paper, 1 fol. of the modern paper with S. Naadgai's handwriting.
2. *xutuqtu sa'in yabudali'in irööli'in xān orošiboi*: (CM *Qutuytu sayin yabudal-un irügel-ün qayan*, Tib. *bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi rgyal po*), Russian machine-made paper, 17 fol.
3. *buuriyin sang: arban zügiyin xarangyui arilyaqči: möriyin sang orošibo::* (CM *bayuriyin sang: arban jüg-ün qarangyui arilyaqči: mör-ün sang orusibai*), 7 fol. of the Russian hand-made paper, 1 fol. of the modern paper with S. Naadgai's handwriting.
1v-3r: [buuriyin sang: A prayer of the landscape worship]
3r-5v: *xutuqtu arban zügi-yin xarangyui büküni teyin arilyaqči kemekü yeke kölgünü sudur* [Tib. *Phyogs bcu'i mun ba rnam par sel ba*]
5v-7v: [möriyin sang orošibo] Incipit: *namo buddhā-ya: namo dharmā-ya namā sangghā-ya: yurban kürdüyigi sedkiqsen-yēr tögünçilen medeqči tedeni dörbön tantariqsani dotorön orouluqsan amitan bügüde-dü endöörel ügei ünen möriyigi üzüülüqči xamugi medeqči nomiyin boqdo-du zalbarimui:: ...*
[8r:] A short syllabary of the Clean script (an appendix written by S. Naadgai)
4. *xara ama kele xariuluqči sudur orošiboi*: (CM *Qara ama kele qariyuluyči sudur orusibai*, Tib. *'Phags pa kha mchu nag po zhi bar byed pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*)
Translation by paṇḍida Rab 'byam 'corji. Russian hand-made paper, 8 fol.
5. A manuscript by Tariac'iin Nanzad (born 1919/20). A concise textbook of CS.

²⁰ For the references see SÁRKÖZI 1992, 43–44, LUBSANGDORJI – VACEK 1997, SRBA 2013.

6. Two manuscripts written by S. Naadgai and their analysis

Text A: Taking the Refugee (No. 1)

1r/1	itegel orošibai: ²¹	2v/5	bay[a]s[a]lc[a]mui: burxani bodi se=
1v/1	bi kiged eke bol[o]=	2v/6	tegel-iyer b[a]ramui: burxan nom
1v/2	qsan xam[u]q amitin arban	2v/7	kiged cuulyan-ni dedü bodi
1v/3	züq yurban c[a]qin xamuq tö=	2v/8	noyod kürtel bi itegemü=
1v/4	güyin čilen boloqs[a]diin bi=	2v/9	'i über busdiin tusa s[a]-i-
1v/5	ye kelen setegel erd[e]m ü=	2v/10	tar büdügeküin tula bodi sa-
1v/6	i=le bügüdiin mön činar bo=	2v/11	tegel üüsgen üldemüi:
1v/7	loqs[a]n nayan dörben mi[n]gyan	2v/12	dedü bodi sategel üüsget
1v/8	nom-'i coqca yarxui oron	2v/13	xamuq amitini bi zočil=
1v/9	xamuq xutuqtu xuw[a]r[a]qin	2v/14	xui tus[a]l[a]ji dedü bodi se=
1v/10	ezen ačitu ündüsün kige=	3r/1	tegel-y[e]r s[e]tegel-din o=
1v/11	dü[n]düşlen seletecoqtu	3r/2	rouula üild[e]müi am'i[ta]ni tu-[say]in
1v/12	dëdü blama noyodu i=	3r/3	tula burxan but<te>kü bolo=tu=
1v/13	tegemüi: blama-du itegemü=	3r/4	yai: xamuq amitin jirl[a]=
1v/14	'i burxan-du itegemü'i:	3r/5	γ[a]ng kiged jiryal[a]ng-in
2r/1	nom-du itegemü'i: burs[an]g	3r/6	ü[n]düş[ü]n-luyan tögüsüküyi
2r/2	xuw[a]r[a]q-du ite<gemeti>i: id[a]	3r/7	boltuyai: xamuq amitiin zo=
	m mand[a]=	3r/8	bul[a]ng kiged zobul[a]ng-in ü[n]dü=
2r/3	loin burxan ni zolyan nöküd se=	3r/9	sün-ece xayac[a]xui boldu=
2r/4	leten bügüdedü itegemüi:	3r/10	<tu>yai: xamuq amitiin zobo=
2r/5	nom tetegeqčii s[a]güüsan	3r/11	l[an]g ügei jiryal[an]g-ēce
2r/6	belbi. bilegii. nidetü.	3r/12	ülü xayac[a]xui boltuyai xamuq
2r/7	dëdü coqtu itegel no=	3r/13	amitaiin ameg ²² öši tāči=
2r/8	γodu-tu itegemüi: bu[r]xan	3r/14	xui öšíkү xoyor-ece
2r/9	nom kiged cuulyan-ni dedü	3v/1	xayačiqs[a]n teqšii sud[a]du
2r/10	noyoudu bodi kürtel bi i=	3v/2	axui bo[l]tuyai: ken šitün ba=
2r/11	tegemüi: mini ögelege te=	3v/3	rildun boloqsan tördöküi
2r/12	rgegeten üiledeqsen e=	3v/4	ügei töröküi ügei: tasu=
2r/13	ne buyen-yer amitini tu=	3v/5	rxai ügei: möngköğ ügei:
2r/14	si tul[a]da bu[r]xan bütükü bo=	3v/6	odoxu ügei: <ir[e]kü ügei:> öber
2v/1	ltuyai: dedü yurban erde=	3v/7	čina=
2v/2	ni-dü bi itegemüi: xamuq	3v/8	r-tu busu negen činar-tu bu=
2v/3	kili[n]gce öbör öbör nam[a]	3v/9	su toyoirbal ma*n*ši ami=
	nčil[a]=	3v/10	rleqsen kiged amirleqseni
2v/4	mui amitini buy[a]n-du day[a]n	3v/11	üzüleqči duuqs[a]n burxan
		3v/12	ögüleqčiin dedü tegü[n]-dü
			mörgümüi: amirlesan ni

²¹ Omitted letters, which should be present according to the standard forms in the Written Oirat, are written in square brackets. Asterisk marks superfluous letters, syllables or parts of words. < > marks complementary syllables or words written by the scribe outside the main line.

²² A mistaken writing of *amuraq*.



3v/13	kergel[e]qči šr[a]w[a]q noγoud <m[a]>šii	5r/14	dörben tib nara s[a]ra-ber
3v/14	amirlegsen-dü kötölön	5r/15	čimeqsen uuni burxani
4r/1	üiledeqči bükünü mör	5v/1	oron-du zoro[n] örgügs[e]n-
4r/2	medeküi-ber al*a*i amitini	5v/2	yer xamuq am[i]tin ar[i]un
4r/3	tusal[a]n üiledeqči y[e]rtünci-'in	5v/3	oron edlekü'i boltuγai::
4r/4	tusa bütén üiledeqči al*a*i		
4r/5	kiged ali s[a]yitir togüse=		
4r/6	qsen čiqči noγoud xamuq		
4r/7	züil tögüs[e]n eld[e]b ü=		
4r/8	ini noml[a]san šr[a]w[a]q bodi s[a]dwa		
4r/9	nariin cuulyan selten bura=	1r/1	Suk[a]w[a]diyin iröl oroš'ibu':=
4r/10	xadiin ezen toin-du	1r/1	xamugi med[e]qči bal=
4r/11	mörgümüü: sejigiin tö=	1r/2	ma'iyan ölmödü süzülün
4r/12	rü tiin arıyan gün axui ye=	1r/3	mürgümüi kiz[a]:r üge::
4v/1	ke biye tögüseqsen s[a]m[an]d[a]	1r/4	irol oγoto togüsü=
4v/2	bidrai gerel bükün-ece	1r/5	qsen küčin=yer arban züq-
4v/3	yarγaqči-dü mörgümüi	1r/6	tü suuqsan xamuq burxa=
4v/4	bügünd xamuq amitini ite=	1r/7	d maqtaqsan:: :: erdem-i-yin
4v/5	gel bolon tesgešii ügei	1r/8	erke ögüülekü o=
4v/6	şim[n]usa-'in aim[a]q emnal sel- ti=	1r/9	ron sukew[a]di-du xu=
4v/7	igi d[a]ruqči burxan bodi	1r/10	bilun törökü boltuγai
4v/8	noyod xocorol ügei s[a]i=	1r/11	xoyör kölötoni erkin
4v/9	ytar aild[u]qči ilγun togüse=	1r/12	itegel: amid[a]ba ni=
4v/10	qsan =*üse*qs[n]n nöküd selten ene oron=	1r/13	dü-bér: üzeqči ki=
4v/11	du öküd bolon iren soyo=	1r/14	ged yeke küçüoloqsan
4v/12	rxan yambar xubileqsen ni tü=		
5r/1	düyi-dü tenggeri nar u=		
5r/2	kikiy[a]qs[a]n metü tenggerii=	fol. 2r	
5r/3	rid usun-iy[a]r tögü[n]čilen	2v/1	terigüütén c[a]ql[a]ši-
5r/4	bi gegēni ukiy[a]n takimui:	2v/2	ügei burxan budhi s[a]dwa::
5r/5	ülü ködölkü wčir-'in bi=	2v/3	orošıqsan oron: su=
5r/6	ye oloqs[a]ddu tengger'i-yin	2v/4	kewadi-du xubilun tö=
5r/7	zolon ²³ nimegen xubc[a]d ü=	2v/5	rökü boltuγai <yaz[a]r> alixan
5r/8	lü tasurxu'i süzüq-yer.	2v/6	metü teqši erdeni xa=
5r/9	örögüqsö[n]-ece bi ču w=	2v/7	muq γaz[a]:r delekeyin _
5r/10	čir biye olxui boltu=	2v/8	dere altan tor-yēr tü=
5r/11	ya'i: γaz[a]r delke-gi kü=	2v/9	gel bolun γayixamš'ıqtai::
5r/12	j'i-bar surčin ceceq	2v/10	olon padmyin dürü=q
5r/13	delger[e]d sum[a]bar ouliin	2v/11	sen oron sukew[a]di-du
		2v/12	xubilun törökü: bol=
		2v/13	tuyai nizege pad[a]myin
		2v/1	üzür noγoudtu:
		2v/2	cu c[a]ql[a]š'i ügei gerel
		2v/3	sacuurin eldeb gerel:-
		2v/4	yēr sayibér oduqsa=
		2v/5	ni: caql[a]š'i ügei xu=
		2v/6	biluγan tügem[e]l oron
		2v/7	sukew[a]di-du xubilun

23 A mistaken writing of zöölön.

2v/8	törön kü boltuγai do=	4r/11	seltedü sedkiqsen
2v/9	lön erdeni-ber bütü=	4r/12	tödükün-yer ali küsü=
2v/10	qsan eld[e]b zemisa=	4r/13	litegel amid[a]biyin
2v/11	tē modun sayin önggū	4r/14	irölyin küçün-boltu-yer
2v/12	dürin üzekülē γō ü=	4v/1	büt[ü]gükü: oron su<ke>w[a]
2v/13	zesküle[n]gtei iröü	4v/2	di-du:: xubilun tö[rö]kü bo=
3r/1	douni ekešiq doru=	4v/3	ltuγai tenggeriyin niden::
3r/2	saxui oron suk[e]w[a]di-du tö=	4v/4	kiged tenggeriyin čikin
3r/3	rökü boltuγai sayiber odö=	4v/5	uridu oron keged se=
3r/4	qsani xubilyan olo[n-]züyil	4v/6	dkili medekü'i mergeni _
3r/5	sobud'i zuuyilyan:: elde=	4v/7	dedü xubilyani küçün
3r/6	b züyil sayixan douno=	4v/8	noγodi ötör oli=
3r/7	γoud dourisaxui bükü=	4v/9	xui:: oron sukaw[a]di-
3r/8	ni itegel daxa:: oron	4v/10	du xubilun törökü bol=
3r/9	suk[e]w[a]di-du:: xubi[l]un tö=	4v/11	tuyai ükükü caqtu ye=
3r/10	rökü boltuγan oyouni	4v/12	ren yesün:: byewā bur=
3r/11	bayisaxui dēdü ünür tö=	4v/13	xan noγoud ilerkei e=
3r/12	güsüqsen mergen il[a]γaqsan=	4v/14	š'i üzüülün mi[n]gy[an]:
3r/13	ni c[a]lq[a]ši ügei erdeilyin	5r/1	burxad bay[a]sun γarsu=
3v/1	douni cuulyan noγoud[a]: nasuda	5r/2	xui sukaw[a]di-du xubilun
3v/2	ürgülj: tas[a/u]ral-ügei	5r/3	törökü boltuγai bi kiged
3v/3	dours[a]xui oron suk[e]w[a]*d*=	5r/4	amitan ükükü'i cagiyin: u=
3v/4	dai-du xubilun törökü ²⁴	5r/5	čirtu dēdü uduriduqči
3v/5	boltuγai kümün tenggeri _	5r/6	nomiyin xān amid[a]ba olon
3v/6	bügüd altan önggū ²⁵ : tögü=	5r/7	dgeslong-giyin:: cuulyan-
3v/7	süqsen eldeb xubec[a]sun	5r/8	yēr sayitur küre'üülün ene=
3v/8	keged erdeni čimeq:-yēr či=	5r/9	riküyigi mini ömönö
3v/9	m[e]qša[n]i ügei: dedü nomiyin	5r/10	irekü boltuγai itegel _
3v/10	bayasaxulang amuγuuli[n]g tö=	5r/11	nökü:d selte'i bi üzəd
3v/11	rökü oron sukaw[a]di-du xu=	5r/12	cu sedkildü čilq[a]š'i ü=
3v/12	bilun: törökü boltuγai	5r/13	gei bayasxul[an]g durşil ü=
3v/13	idē xubcasun oron de=	5r/14	yiledün sanal ülü buur[a]i
4r/1	bisker em orou=	5r/15	nige:: aqšini tödüdü
4r/2	d kiged:: nomtu debe=	5v/1	sukewadi-du xubi=
4r/3	l badir ayaγa erdeni bal=	5v/2	lun törökü boltuγai
4r/4	γasun terigüuten sedki=	5v/3	ye[r]tū[n]cüyin il[a]γuqsaqni
4r/5	ldü sedkiqseni tödü=	5v/4	adistid nota γarxu'i
4r/6	kü-yer bolxui oron	5v/5	oron aγui küçün:: kiged
4r/7	sukawad'i-du xubilun _	5v/6	amidaba-yin yeke
4r/8	törökü boltuγai kükür	5v/7	adist'id-yēr sukew[a]=
4r/9	il[a]γuqsan belge tergüü=	5v/8	d'i-du xubilun törökü bol=
4r/10	ten takiliyin cuulyan	5v/9	ltuγai ali xur[a]γsan ye=
		5v/10	ke buyan adistid gegen
		5v/11	gerel ma'ha mudiri-yin

²⁴ Written torokü.²⁵ Written onggi.



5v/12	adistid ki<ge>d γurban er=	6r/5	dii::
5v/13	deniyin ölzöi:: adi=	6r/6	oričiulbai öün-yēr
5v/14	stid-yer ötör bütü=	6r/7	ölzöi coq: bada=
5v/15	kü boltuyai:: kemekü	6r/8	riči čimbuti čimeq
5v/16	öuni bükü::: medeq=	6r/9	boltuγai:: s[a]rwa man
5v/17	či dolapa ses rab	6r/10	gi lam om ma ɳi
6r/1	rgyal sayin:: coq-tu	6r/11	pad mē hum om
6r/2	zokō::=bo'i öuni nom-	6r/12	ma ɳi pad mē om
6r/3	tu coriji-du rab		...
6r/4	'byam za ya paṇdi=		

6.1 Palaeographical notes

Unlike CM script, CS has been created as a phonetic system recording all the phonemes of the language. It has 7 graphemes for the short vowels and a special sign indicating the length (according to the general rules this sign is used with all the vowels but *u* and *ü*, whose long variants are recorded by a doubled letter). Although CS can excellently record the Oirat Mongolian and eliminate multiple readings quite common in CM – especially when applied to a dialect, in comparison with the classical Mongolian script it is rather difficult to write fast. This is the reason why CS was so popular within the religious texts, but gained only a limited use for administrative purposes. Such a high level of a graphical redundancy in CS (CM script does not make any comprehension problems even with less distinctive graphemes) led the scribes to its individual simplifications and so was the case of S. Naadgai.

Naadgai frequently does not distinguish *u* and *ü*, *o* and *ö* (e.g.: *töröküi* (3v/4) written *töroküi*, or *kötölön* (3v/14) written *kötölon*). In the transcription, I had to follow the vowel harmony according to the real standard pronunciation of the Written Oirat (or followed the vowel in the first syllable, which is usually written correctly). Sometimes, there is no distinction between *a* and *e*, and *e* is recorded by *a* (e.g.: *dörben* (1v/7) written *dörban*, or *seleten* (2r/4) written *selaten*), which is a clear influence of CM. Another simplification is the confusion of *c* and *č*, *z* and *j* – also an influence of CM or just a lack of strict rules in CS. In the next paragraphs I will observe, how far the peculiarities in Naadgai's handwriting can be considered an influence of the spoken Oirat, or only as mistakes of an unprofessional (but still highly assiduous) scribe.

a) Elision of vowels – in the following examples, the elision of vowels in the unstressed syllables of the word can be considered an influence of the colloquial Oirat, or Alt.U. respectively. These vowels are weakened, but still reflected as present in all the colloquial Oirat dialects and reflected as absent in modern Kalmyk.

E.g.: *boloqs[a]diin* (A1v/4), TB: *boluqsadiyin*, CM: *boluyasad-un; erd[e]m* (A1v/5), TB: *erdem*, CM: *erdem; boloqs[a]n* (A1v/6), TB: *boluqsan*, CM: *boluyasan; xuw[a]r[a]qin* (A1v/9), TB: *xuwaraqiyin*, CM: *quwaray-un; xuw[a]r[a]q-du* (A2r/2), TB: *xuwaraq-du*,

CM: *quwaray-du; id[a]m mand[a]loin* (A2r/2), TB: *idam mandaliyin*, CM: *idam mandal-un; tus[a]l[a]ji* (A2v/14), TB: *tusalaji*, CM: *tusalaju; nam[a]nčil[a]mui* (A2v/3), TB: *namančilamui*, CM: *namančilamui; buy[a]n-du day[a]n* (A2v/4), TB: *buyan-du dayan*, CM: *buyan-du dayan; bay[a]s[a]lc[a]mui* (A2v/5), TB: *bayasalcamui*, CM: *bayasulčamui; zobul[a]ng* (A3r/7), TB: *zobulang / zobolong*, CM: *jobulang; tögüs[e]n* (A4r/7), TB: **tögüsün*, CM: *tegüsün; eld[e]b* (A4r/7), TB: *eldeb*, CM: *eldeb; noml[a/o]san* (A4r/8), TB: *nomloqson*, CM: *nomlaysan; aim[a]q* (A4v/6), TB: *ayimaq*, CM: *ayimay; burs[an]g* (A2r/1), TB: *bursang*, CM: *bursang; tul[a]da* (A2r/14), TB: *tulada*, CM: *tulada; xayac[a]xui* (A3r/1), TB: *xayacaxu(i)*, CM: *qayačaqui; xayac[a]xui* (A3r/9), TB: *xayacaxu(i)*, CM: *qayačaqui; med[e]qči* (B1v/1), TB: *medeqči*, CM: *medegči; tas[a/u]ral-ügei* (B3v/2), TB: *tasural-ügei*, CM: *tasural-ügei*.

The diphthong *ei* at the end of a word is pronounced as ā in Alt.U., which influenced the loss of the letter *i*: *yaz[a]r del[e]ke* (A5r/11), TB: *yazar delekei*, CM: *yajar delekei*. Compare with the next example, where the diphthong *ei* is replaced by the colloquial long vowel ē: *zemisa=tē modun* (B2v/10), TB: *zemis-tei modun*, CM: *jimis-tei modun*.

The presence or absence of unstressed vowels are not consistent in Naadgai's manuscripts. In some cases she followed the original version with Zaya Pandita's orthography, in other cases she preferred her own pronunciation and ignored the unstressed or unclear vowels.

E.g.: *bol[o]qsan* (A1v/1) x *boloqs[a]n* (A1v/6); *xam[u]q* (A1v/2) x *xamuq* (A1v/9).

b) Elision of consonants – to various phonetic simplifications pertain the elisions of consonants. These are usually *debisker* consonants, i.e. consonants followed by another consonant or closing the word (otherwise every consonant must be followed by a vowel in CM and CS).

The archaic *debisker q* in the suffix of *nomen perfecti* -*qsan/qsen* (Todo) or -*ysan/gsen* (CM) is not reflected in the spoken language in Western Mongolia anymore, although it is still written in the modern CS in Xinjiang. Naadgai used the simplified form -*san* in several cases: *amirlesan* (A3v/12), TB: *amurlıqsan*, CM: *amurliyan; s[a]gülüsan* (A2r/5)²⁶, TB: *sayıuqsan*, CM: *sayıysan*. Another example of the elision of a consonant is the next word: *süzülin* (B1v/2), TB: *süzunglen*, CM: *süjüglen*.

A special case without any evidence in the spoken Western dialects is the release of *debisker d* in the final position, which could be in fact also considered a simple omission: *nizege* (B2r/13), TB: *nized / nizégéd* (TODAJEVA 2001, 246), CM: *nijeged*. The majority of cases with omitted consonants are certainly mistaken writings:

²⁶ The nonstandard usage of a velar *g* (instead of the uvular *γ*) in the word containing mainly the back vowels demands to consider the next long vowel *uu* as *ii*. This writing is apparently a mistake.



E.g.: *ü[n]düslen* (A1v/11), TB: *ündüsülen*, CM: *ündüsülen*; *kili[n]gce* (A2v/3), TB: *kilince*, CM: *kilingče*; *bu[r]xan* (A2r/8), TB: *burxan*, CM: *burqan*; *ye[r]tü[n]cüyin* (B5v/3), TB: *yerümji* (TODAJEVA 2001, 184) / *yirtenčü*²⁷, CM: *yirtinčü-yin*.

c) Addition of vowels – in certain *debisker* combinations we can observe a tendency to insert a vowel. Although this phenomenon is not reflected in dialectical dictionaries, it is clear that the speakers can individually perceive the space between the *debisker* sound and the next consonant as a mute vowel similar to the weakened vowels in the unstressed syllables:

E.g.: *setegel* (A1v/5), TB: *setekil*²⁸ / *sedkel* (TODAJEVA 2001, 292), CM: *sedkil*; *kölötöni* (B1v/11), TB: *költöni*, CM: *költen-ü*.

d) Elision of vowels not reflecting the pronunciation – apart from the vowels omitted in the writing because of their weakened pronunciation, Naadgai frequently omits vowels in the stressed and clearly pronounced syllables. The very high occurrence of these elisions could be explained only as a variant of the speed-writing. In the shorthand cursive style of the Mongolian script, all the “teeth” (*sidü*) are replaced by a single base-line. In such a recording the general image of the written word is what plays the greater role, more than its actual components. Although CS does not support the cursive writing, some samples can be found in the archives of *Yosutu qosiyu* of Alt.U. from the years 1917–1920.²⁹ The cursive ductus of these archive documents still permits only the omission of the letter *a*, the letter *e* is always noted.

E.g.: *c[a]qin* (A1v/3), TB: *caq-giyin*, CM: *čay-un*; *b[a]ramui* (A2v/6), TB: *barimui*, CM: *barimui*; *s[e]tegel* (A3r/1), TB: *setekil* / *sedkel*, CM: *sedkel*; *šr[a]w[a]q* (A3v/13), TB: *šrawaq*, CM: *šraway*; *šr[a]w[a]q bodi s[a]dwa* (A4r/8), TB: *šrawaq bodi sadwa*, CM: *šraway bodisatwa*; *c[a]ql[a]ši-ügei* (B2r/1), TB: *caqlaši-ügei*, CM: *čaylaši-ügei*; *budhi s[a]dwa*: (B2r/2), TB: *bodhi satwa*, CM: *bodisatwa*; *c[a]ql[a]ši ügei* (B2v/2), TB: *caqlaši-ügei*, CM: *čaylaši-ügei*; *kergel[e]qči* (A3v/13), TB: *kergelegči*, CM: *kereglegči*.

e) Assimilation of sounds – a special case of the vowel assimilation is the word: *amitin* (A1v/2), TB: *amitan*, CM: *amitan*. In modern Oirat dialects the second vowel *a* is weakened to *ě* and *i* sometimes disappears (Kalmýk ämtň RAMSTEDT 1935, 23, amtn MUNIEV 1977, 42). The stress on the first syllable in *ämtěn* caused a shift of still implicitly present *i* to the second syllable, where it replaced the weak vowel *ě*. A similar example of assimilation is the word: *s[a]yitir* (A4r/5), TB: *sayitur*, CM: *sayitur*; *negen* (A3v/7), TB: *nigen*, CM: *nigen*. In two following cases, the weakened vowel of the final

²⁷ COLOO 1988, 511 quotes plenty of variants in the Clear script: *yirtenčü*, *yirtemci*, *yirtincü*, *yirtimci*, *yirtimji*, *yirtüncü*, the spoken form in Alt.U. being *yirtimči*.

²⁸ COLOO 1988, 743. Alt.U. *setkil*.

²⁹ National Central Archive of Mongolia, A-130, Д-1, ХН-63, 69.

syllable preceding a suffix is assimilated by the vowel of the suffix: üiledeqsen (A2r/12), TB: üiledüqsen, CM: üiledügsen; buyen-yer (A2r/13), TB: buyan-yēr, CM: buyan-iyar.

f) Length of the vowels – in CS, the length of the vowels *a*, *e*, *o*, *ö* is expressed by a special sign called *udān* attached to the single letter (the corresponding long vowels are then transliterated like ā, ē, ö). The length of *u*, *ü*, *i* by a reduplication of the letter (then transliterated like *uu* or *ou*, *üü* or *öö*, *ii* or *iyi* or *i'i*). Naadgai frequently neglects the standard usage of *udān*, as well as the appropriate usage of the distinctive forms of *o*, *ö*, *u*, *ü*. The length of vowels in Naadgai's manuscripts cannot be attributed to the impact of the Alt.U. spoken dialect. A special attention should be given to the word *kiz[a]:r* with *udān*, but without any visible vowel. This case seems to correspond with the theory pronounced by G. Z'am'yan, that *udān* is not a sign without a phonetic value on its own, but the long vowel ā or ē according to the vowel harmony (Z'AM'YAN 2012, 33–43).

E.g.: *iröl* (B1r/1), TB: *irōl*, CM: *irügel*; *kiz[a]:r* (B1v/3), TB: *kizār*, CM: *kijayar*.

Breach of rules of the vowel harmony, in CM script as well as in CS, has always been a sign of the unprofessional writing. It also frequently occurs in Naadgai's handwriting:

E.g.: *bügüdadü* (A2r/4), TB: *bügüdedü*, CM: *bügüde-dü*; *xubileqsen* (A4v/12), TB: *xubi-laqsan*, CM: *qubilqu*; *xoyör* (B1v/11), TB: *xoyer*, CM: *qoyer*; *bütüqsan* (B2v/9), TB: *bütüqsen*, CM: *bütügsen*; *xubec[a]sun* (B3v/7), TB: *xubacasun* / *xubčasun* / *xubcisun*, CM: *qubčasun*; *s[a]güüsan* (A2r/5), TB: *sayuuqsan*, CM: *sayuysan*.

g) Examples of mistaken writings – parts of words omitted, corrected and uncorrected by Naadgai:

boldu=<tu>yai: (A3r/10), TB: *boltuyai*, CM: *boltuyaï*; *togüse=qsan* = *üse*q[s]e[n] (A4v/10), TB: *tögüsüqsen*, CM: *tegüsügsen*; *ami[taj]ni tu[say]in* (A3r/2), TB: *amitani tusayin*, CM: *amitan-u tusa-yin*; *šim[n]usa-'in* (A4v/6), TB: *šumnušiyin*, CM: *simnusa-yin*; *tō[rö]kü* (B4v/2), TB: *törökü*, CM: *törükü*.

Erroneously divided words (within a single line):

su=kewadi-du (B2r/4), TB: *Sukewadi-du*, CM: *Sukawadi-du*; *zokō::=bo'i* (B6r/2), TB: *zokōbai*, CM: *jokiyabai*; *üi=le* (A1v/5), TB: *üile*, CM: *üile*; *kige=d* (A11v/10), TB: *kigēd* / *kigēd*, CM: *kigēd*; *itegemü=i* (A1v/13), TB: *itegemüi*, CM: *itegemüi*; *čina=r-tu* (A3v/7), TB: *činar-tu*, CM: *činar-tu*.

An erroneous transliteration of the Sanskrit name (pañdita): *rab 'byam za ya pañdiqii* (B6r/3), TB: *rab 'byam za ya pañdita*, CM: *rab 'byam za ya pañdita*.



7. Conclusion

W. Kotwicz claimed, that Zaya pandita had recorded the colloquial pronunciation of his time, but the orthography of CS had conserved the language of the 17th century, which turned again to be archaic from the point of view of the colloquial Kalmyk of the beginning of the 20th century (KOTVIČ 1929, V–VI). More recent scholars disagree in that point, that Zaya pandita's script recorded the colloquial pronunciation. The translations attributed to Zaya pandita and his disciples show an orthography which is similar to the oral literary pronunciation of CM Script, whereas already the Oirat language recorded in Galdan bošuẏtu's letters from the 1670s shows more colloquial features. The administrative documents were closer to the spoken language, but similarly to the part of Mongolia, where CM script was in use, there existed a generally known oral-literary language mastered by both literate and illiterate people.³⁰ The language of CS texts was not perceived by Oirats as archaic – at least in its phonetic aspects – until the introduction of Cyrillic in Mongolia or the replacement of CS by CM script and other languages (Kazakh, Chinese) in Xinjiang.

The primary purpose of the manuscripts written by S. Naadgai was not their reading, but the worship. They might have been intended for those who would not be able to read them. Even when a manuscript was used for reading – or reciting – the mistakes would not make the comprehension difficult. Naadgai has certainly memorized the text since her childhood and the written text served her only as an *aide mémoire* and as a material object of the worship, a materialized object of veneration. And in case of larger texts, Naadgai used older calligraphic manuscripts, much more convenient for reading. Her collection contains also few texts, whose merits issue from their copying – not reciting. These are especially the prophetic texts (№ 6, 7).

The manuscripts of S. Naadgai together with a large amount of recent manuscripts from Western Mongolia show, how CS, once the official script of the Dzungar Khanate, lost its representative character and became a folk script (or the script of the folk Buddhism) opened to the influences of the spoken language. It also shows that the role of CS in the Alt.U. society has been strictly limited to the religious use. None of the known folk *littérateurs* of the former Baruun amban's banner used CS for his personal notes, records or correspondence. In all the other spheres of life it has been the oral transmission or – more recently – the Cyrillic script, that served these purposes. The knowledge of CS has been transmitted orally, through the individual relations between the teacher and his disciple, frequently inside the families. The fact that the natural transmission of CS survived more than two hundred years since the destruction of the Dzungar Khanate despite the campaigns against the old culture under the Communist rule is not incidental. The tradition of CS use

³⁰ For the question of the oral-literary language see VLADIMIRCOV 1929.

has finally broken in the last decades, following the shift of the cultural centres from the countryside to the cities and the decline of the traditional way of life, regardless of the increasing value of old books and manuscripts and growing facilities to learn CS and to get acquainted with the old literature.

Transcription: For transcribing the Mongolian words in Cyrillic alphabet I use the simple transcription introduced by A. Oberfalzerová and J. Lubsangdorji (e.g. see in *Mongolica Pragensia* '02, p. 13). For Classical Mongolian I use the standard transcription introduced by N. Poppe and L. Ligeti. For the Clear script I use the transcription presented by LUVSANVANDAN 1975. In quotations from oral materials in spoken Oirat I have used a slightly modified and generally comprehensible transcription used by Mongolian dialectologists for Oirat dialects (COLOO 1988, CENDEE 2012).

Abbreviations: CS – Clear script (in general), Alt.U. – Altai Uriankhai (ethnic group and dialect), TB – Classical Clear script/Written Oirat, CM – Classical Mongolian, Tib. – Tibetan.

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