

A TALE OF CHINESE ORIGIN IN THE “MONGOLIAN STORIES FROM PAÑCATANTRA”*

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In the Mongolian Geser, about the middle of the chapter of three Khans of Sharaigol there is an episode that in 1950 attracted attention of Hungarian Mongolist Louis Ligeti. He expressed an opinion that the episode is of Chinese origin.¹

I am not giving the full transliteration nor translation of the text from the Mongolian Geser in the following article, both being involved in the work of L. Ligeti in AOH.² The episode occurs on Geser's way home with *Tümen jiryalang* after Geser killed the mangas with twelve heads and rescued her.³ On their way

* I wish to express my gratitude to the Oriental Department of the Royal Library of Copenhagen for allowing me to examine their Mongol books.

¹ Louis Ligeti, Un épisode d'origine chinoise du « Geser-qan ». AOH I (1950) 339–357.

² L. Ligeti, *op. cit.*, 344–345. L. Ligeti used the Peking blockprint edition of the Mongolian Geser of 1716 and supplemented it with a comparison to the manuscript Mong. 100 of the Oriental Collection of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

³ Cf. Geser, Ulaanbaatar 1986, 127, or *Arban jüg-ün ejen Geser qayan-u tuyuji orosiba*. Köke Qota 1955, where the episode is found on 236–237. It is also found in other Mongolian versions of the Geser, as they were published in *Nomči qatun's Version of Kesar Saga*. Corpus Scriptorum Mongolorum (CSM) IX/4a. Ulaanbaatar 1960, where it is in an almost identical form with the above-mentioned versions, on 256–258; and in *Cay-a Version of Kesar Saga*. CSM IX/2(a). Ulaanbaatar 1960, 326–327. The episode is also part of the Russian translation in *Geseriada. Skazanie o milostivom Geser mergen-hane, iskorenitele desjati zol v desjati stranah sveta* (transl. from Mongolian by S. A. Kozin). Moskva–Leningrad 1935, 175; of the Hungarian edition *Geszterkán, a tíz világtáj ura* (transl. from Mongolian by László Lőrincz). Budapest 1982, 223–225; and of the Slovak translation in *Chán Geser, vládca desiatich svetových strán* (transl. from Mongolian by M. Kiripolská). Praha 1994, 179–180.

The episode seems to be a part of the Mongolian Geser exclusively. As it was already mentioned by L. Ligeti in *op. cit.*, 346, it is not included in its West Tibetan version (cf. A. H. Francke, *A Lower Ladakhi Version of the Kesar Saga*. Asiatic Society of Bengal, New Series, No. 1134, Calcutta 1905). I have not found it in the edition of the East Tibetan Geser (as told by A. David-Neel and Lama Yongden, *The Superhuman Life of Gesar of Ling*. Boston–London 1987); nor in G. N. Roerich's record of the epic as it was sung in the Greater Tibet (The Epic of King Kesar of Ling. *JRASB*, Letters, vol. VIII, No. 2, 1942, 277–311); nor I have found any mention of it in the work of R. A. Stein, which L. Ligeti could not have at his disposal, *L'épopée tibétaine de Gesar dans sa version lamaïque de Ling*. Paris 1956; nor in other languages as in a text in Burushaski language (published by D. L. R. Lorimer with a translation into English in *The Burushaski Language*. Oslo 1935, vol. II, No. IV: *The Story of Kiser, alias Pangchu*, 100–179), or in Russian translations of Buriat variants of the Geser.

home they suddenly saw a big yurt and a beautiful woman invited Khan Geser to go in and take a rest. Geser ordered *Tümen jiryalang* to continue the journey and entered the yurt. As he was sitting, the woman hitched up a stag beetle to a plough, ploughed the ground in the yurt and sowed some wheat. After she harvested it, she baked two cakes from the acquired flour. She made a sign on one of them and placed it in front of Geser. When she popped up for a while, there appeared three heavenly sisters of Geser in a shape of a cuckoo and warned him not to eat the cake with a sign. Geser changed the cakes. After the woman returned, she urged Geser to eat his cake. Geser did so and asked her to eat the other one. The woman did not notice the sign and after she ate the cake, she took a stick, cried "gürü soy" and hit Geser three times on his head. Geser grabbed the stick from her⁴, exclaimed "gürü suyaq-a" and three times hit the head of the woman that turned into a donkey. Geser made a fire and burnt her up.

In his article Louis Ligeti pointed out that the theme of a metamorphose of a man into a donkey is well-known in the Chinese folklore.⁵ For the above mentioned episode he refers to a free translation of a Chinese folk tale made by L. Wieger — who mentions as his source the encyclopedia *T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi* of 10th century⁶ — and gives L. Wieger's translation into French.⁷ According to this translation, the Chinese tale is a quite elaborated version of the episode known also from the Mongolian Geser.

However, Louis Ligeti did not mention other sources where this episode can be found, moreover in a closer form to the Geser. But this episode, almost in the same form as in the Geser, was known to Tibetans as well as to Mongols from commentaries on the "Drop of Nourishment for People",⁸ which is attrib-

⁴ In *Cay-a Version of Kesar Saga*, 327, he hit the woman by his "whip of wisdom" (*bilig-ün tasiyur-iyar*), which is "a ritual whip used in previous times" according to Ja. Ceval, *Mongol chelnij товч тайлбар тол*. Ulaanbaatar 1966, 83.

⁵ L. Ligeti, *op. cit.*, 347.

⁶ Cf. L. Ligeti, *op. cit.*, 356, the note No. 39: "L. Wieger, *Histoire des croyances religieuses et des opinions philosophiques en Chine*. Hien-hien 1922, 656."

⁷ In L. Ligeti, *op. cit.*, 347–349. The translation of the tale in L. Wieger, *op. cit.*, 651–652. (In English translation L. Wieger, *A History of the Religious Beliefs and Philosophical Opinions in China from the Beginning to the Present Time*. New York 1969, 651–653.)

The work of L. Wieger seems to be a quite faithful translation of the Chinese original of the episode found in the encyclopedia *T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi*. Cf. its edition from the third year of *Chia-ching* (1524) newly published by Pei-p'ing wen-yu-t'ang shu-k'un, where the episode with a title *Pan-ch'iao San-niang-tzu* is included in the third box, book 35, volume 286, on seven pages. (For checking the Chinese text I thank V. Ando from the Oriental Institute of Prague.) It seems to be the tale mentioned by Nai-Tung Ting in *A type Index of Chinese Folktales*, FF Communications No. 223, Helsinki 1978, as an item No. 449A: *Travelers Turned into Donkeys*, found in *T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi*, 286: 878–879 (I, II, III), (ed. Li Fang, 925–996, et al.), as published in Taipei in 1962 (cf. Nai-Tung Ting, *op. cit.*, 264). The encyclopedia has been published also in Peking (Chung-hua shu-chü) in 1961 (cf. Donald E. Gjerston, *The Early Chinese Buddhist Miracle Tale. A Preliminary Survey*. JAOS CI: 3 (1981) 289, the note No. 10).

⁸ D. Jëndon writing about the commentaries in his *Skazočnye sjužety v pamjatnikah tibetskoj i mongol'skoj literatur*. Moskva 1989, does not mention the occurrence of this episode in the Mongolian Geser. Nevertheless, he has found it (cf. *idem*, 70) in Lubsangcerin's Tibetan commentary to *Lam-rim čhen-mo* (19th–20th centuries; cf. C. Damdinsüren, *Mongolyn uran zochiolyn tojm*

uted to Nāgārjuna and found in the Tanjur.⁹ To this Nāgārjuna's work, which was quite popular and used also as a textbook for children¹⁰, there are found in

II. Ulaanbaatar 1977, 595), some variants of it in a work of Dpal-ldan Ye-šes (1738–1780), the *Be'u bum dang/dpe chos gnyis-la mkho'i gnam rgyud rin chen 'phreng mdzes zhes-bya-ba* (D. Jëndon, *op. cit.*, 174), and a reference to it in *Po-to skor-ba'i khyad chos don gsal-bar byed-pa'i sgron-me dpe chos rin chen spungs-pa'i bum 'grel* (cf. *ibid.*), which is a commentary on a dogmatical work of Po-to-pa (1031–1105) written by Šes-rab Rdo-rje in the 16th century. These works were not at my disposal, with the exception of two Mongolian translations of Šes-rab Rdo-rje's commentary found in the Oriental Collection of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest (cf. L. Bese, On the Mongolian and Manchu Collections in the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In: *Jubilee Volume of the Oriental Collection 1951–1976*. Budapest 1978, 46). The first one (Mong. 125: *Bodoba-yin ubadis üliġer-ün nom erdeni čoyčalaysan kemeki orosiba*), a blockprint edition of 1720, contains on its folio 86v:3–6 a short reference to the episode, which reads as follows: *nigen ayisiki em-e ber kümün-i elġige bolyan duralaysan-iyar öber-iyen elġige boluysan-u qaŷuli-yi nayirayul*. The other one (Mong. 231: *Bodu-a tan-u ayimay-un ülemji nom udq-a-yi geyigül-ün üiledügči ĵula üliġer-ün nom erdeni čoyčalaysan: lags-a tayilburi orosiba*), an 18th-century blockprint, mentions the episode on its fol. 80v:16–20: *ayisiki eme kemegsen inu: nigen ayisiki eme kümün-i elġige bolyaqui sanal-iyar qarin öber-iyen elġige boluysan qauli-yi nayirayul: tegünčilen bida ču...* (For Mong. 125 see also L. Bese, The Mongolian Collection in Berkeley, California. *AOH* 31:1 (1977) 26, Mong. 31; D. M. Farquhar, A Description of the Mongolian Manuscripts and Xylographs in Washington, D.C. *CAJ* I (1955) 202, No. 59; W. Heissig, *Die Pekinger lamaistischen Blockdrucke in mongolischer Sprache. Materialien zur mongolischen Literaturgeschichte*. Göttinger Asiatische Forschungen. Bd. 2. Wiesbaden 1954, No. 56; W. Heissig–K. Sagaster, *Mongolische Handschriften, Blockdrucke, Landkarten*. Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland, Bd. I, Wiesbaden 1961, No. 297; A. G. Sazykin, *Katalog mongol'skich rukopisej i ksilografov*. Institut vostokovedeniġa Akad. Nauk SSSR. t. I, Moskva 1988, 92, No. 356. For Mong. 231 cf. D. M. Farquhar, *op. cit.*, 202–203, No. 60; W. Heissig–C. Bawden, *Catalogue of Mongol Books, Manuscripts and Xylographs*. Catalogue of Oriental Manuscripts, Xylographs etc. in Danish Collections. Vol. 3, Copenhagen 1971, 224, Mong. 388; British Museum Mon. 18 (according to a typescript catalogue of the Mongolian holdings of the British Museum, kept in the Oriental and India Office Collections of the Museum, made by W. Heissig); W. Heissig, *Die Pekinger...*, Nos. 121, 122; M. Kiripolská, *A Description of the Mongolian Manuscripts and Blockprints in Prague Collections*. Preprint, Prague 1993, 46–47, No. 47; J. R. Krueger, Catalogue of the Laufer Mongolian Collection in Chicago. *JAOS* New York–New Haven 1966, vol. 86, 173, L–464; L. Ligeti, La Collection mongole Schilling von Canstadt à la Bibliothèque de l'Institut. *T'oung-Pao* XXVII (1930) 173, No. 3600; N. Poppe–L. Hurvitz–H. Okada, *Catalogue of the Manchu-Mongol Section of the Toyo Bunko*. Tokyo 1964, No. 82a; A. G. Sazykin, *op. cit.*, 92, No. 355. According to C. Damdinsüren, *Mongolyn uran zochiolyn tojm*, II, 509, there is a third translation of Šes-rab Rdo-rje's commentary into Mongolian made and published by Nomtu-yin Rinčin in 1860. It could be the No. 357 of A. G. Sazykin, *op. cit.*, 93.

⁹ *Arad-i tejyeküi dusul neretü törö-yin šastir*. (San. Nitišāstrajantupošanabindu nāma, Tib. *Lugs-kyi bstan-bčos skye-bo gso-ba'i thigs-pa*, in Mongol Tanjur, Vol. 211. The Sanskrit original is lost today, cf. L. Sternbach, *Influence of Sanskrit Gnostic Literature on the Gnostic Literature of Mongolia*. The Third International Congress of Mongolists. Vol. III. Ulaanbaatar 1979, 359.) The work in Lubsangdanjin's translation was edited by C. Damdinsüren in *Rasiyan-u dusul-un mongŷol töbed tayilburi*. *Mongolian and Tibetan Stories from Panchatantra*. CSM VII, Ulaanbaatar 1964, 69–77; and in its later translation by Čaŷar gebsi Lubsangčültim in *idem*, 53–68, as well as in *Mongŷol-un uran jokiyaal-un degeġi jaŷun bilig orosiba*, CSM XIV, Ulaanbaatar 1959, 355–361, and in the Cyrillic script in *Ardyg težečhüj dusal nert šašdar, tüünij tajlbar čandmanijn čimeg*, CSM, XV/2, Ulaanbaatar 1961, 23–39. In Nomtu-yin Rinčin's translation in CSM VII, 79–139, in translation of Agvangdampil in *idem*, 149–170. Its English translation together with the commentary (translated into Mongolian by Nomtu-yin Rinčin) see in *A Drop of*

Mongolia four commentaries in Mongolian, called also "Mongolian stories from Pañcatantra" by some scholars¹¹: a group of works called for simplicity by their short title *Erdeni-yin čimeg*,¹² *Törö yosun-u šastir-un tayilburi*,¹³ *Čindamani-yin čimeg*,¹⁴ *Erdeni-yin sayin qumq-a*,¹⁵ and two groups of their Tibetan versions.¹⁶

Nourishment for People by Nāgārjuna and The Jewel Ornament: A Commentary. (Transl. from the Mongolian by Dr. Stanley Frye.) Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharmasāla 1981. Reprint 1985.

¹⁰ Cf. L. Chürelbaatar, *Enetcheg, tövd, mongolyn surgaalyn zochiolyn chelchee cholboo.* (*Tövd, mongol ech chereglegdechüün, survalž bičigt tüšiglesen sudalgaa.*) Chel zochiol sudlal, XVIII/2, Ulaanbaatar 1987, 166. Also some tales from commentaries to it were used in textbooks for children, as writes C. Damdinsüren in CSM XIV, 383. On popularity of the commentaries see also D. Jëndon, *op. cit.*, 19.

¹¹ As B. Ja. Vladimircov in *Mongol'skij sbornik rasskazov iz Pañcatantra*. Petrograd 1921; or C. Damdinsüren and A. D. Cendina in *Tibetskij sbornik rasskazov iz «Pañcatantra»*. CSM XX/3, Ulan-Bator 1983; even if it is not a translation of Indian Pañcatantra, it contains some stories from it. The translation of the Persian version of Pañcatantra, the Kalfla and Dimnah into Mongolian, supposed to be made in 13th century in Persia, is today lost (cf. C. Damdinsüren, A. D. Cendina, *op. cit.*, 4, and B. Ja. Vladimircov, *op. cit.*, 1).

¹² Published by C. Damdinsüren in CSM XIV, 363–380. A version of 17 tales also in B. Ja. Vladimircov, *op. cit.*, 67–97, their translation into Russian 111–149. As the translator of one of the versions of this group (*Törölkiten-i asaraqui dusul-i teyin nomlaqui erdeni čimeg*) into Mongolian is mentioned Sečen Šabrun, who lived probably at the end of 16th and at the beginning of 17th centuries (cf. C. Damdinsüren, A. D. Cendina, *Tibetskij sbornik rasskazov iz «Pañcatantra»*, 9; also B. Ja. Vladimircov, *op. cit.*, 12; and CSM XIV, 381).

¹³ Compiled in 1758 by *Dai Güüsi* Agvangdampil (1700–1780) from two Tibetan sources. Cf. CSM VII, 11, and C. Damdinsüren, *Mongolyn uran zochiolyn tojm II*. Ulaanbaatar 1977, 280; also D. Jëndon, *op. cit.*, 22. Published by C. Damdinsüren in CSM VII, 149–170.

¹⁴ Translated from Tibetan by *Čaqar gebsi* Lubsangčülüm (1740–1810) and published as a blockprint in 1779 in *Čayan ayula-yin süm-e*. Cf. CSM XIV, 383, and D. Jëndon, *op. cit.*, 22. Also in CSM XIV, 380, C. Damdinsüren confirms that the commentaries are translations from Tibetan into Mongolian. All the same, in *Mongolyn uran zochiolyn tojm II*, 281, he mentions that the work was written by *Čaqar gebsi* Lubsangčülüm. C. Damdinsüren edited it in the Cyrillic script in *Ardyg težeechüij dusal nert šašdar, tüünij tajlbar čandmanij čimeg*, CSM XV/2. Ulaanbaatar 1961, 40–97. Seven tales are found also in Erdenebat, *Surguulij chüüchdijn sonirchon unšich surgaal bičig*. Ulaanbaatar 1924. (Cf. C. Damdinsüren, *Mongolyn uran zochiolyn tojm II*, 281.) The work is found also in St. Petersburg, see A. G. Sazykin, *op. cit.*, Nos. 201, 203; and in Copenhagen, cf. W. Heissig–C. Bawden, *Catalogue...*, 43–46, Nos. Mong. 18, 25, 26, 44, 72, 104. Even if Mong. 44 is by the authors of the *Catalogue* said to be only a translation of the "Drop of Nourishment for People" by Nāgārjuna, it actually is its commentary.

¹⁵ Translated from Tibetan by Lubsangrinčen (1821–1907), a well-known Buriat writer, i.e. Nomtu-yin Rinčin in 1895 (cf. CSM XIV, 384). Published in CSM VII, 79–139. In CSM VII, 11, Damdinsüren mentions Nomtu-yin Rinčin as the author of the commentary. In his work *Mongolyn uran zochiolyn tojm II*, 284, C. Damdinsüren writes that Nomtu-yin Rinčin translated and rewrote the commentary — "*orčuulan zochiož*" — and published it in the *dacan* of Cugol in 1895. According to D. Jëndon, *op. cit.*, 22–23, there is an older, lithographical edition dated from 1883. The work is found also in St. Petersburg's collection, according to A. G. Sazykin, *op. cit.*, Nos. 199, 200, 202.

¹⁶ Cf. C. Damdinsüren, A Brief Review of Tibetan and Mongolian Stories from the Pañcatantra. AOH XXXVI: 1–3 (1982) 95; C. Damdinsüren, A. D. Cendina, *op. cit.*, 3, 5; and C. Damdinsüren, *Tibetskije i mongol'skie sborniki rasskazov iz «Pañcatantra»*. In: *Mongolyn uran zochiolyn charilcaa cholboony asuudal*. Ulaanbaatar 1987 (which is the same as the Introduction of the previous work), 158. In *Mongolyn uran zochiolyn tojm II*, 286, C. Damdinsüren writes about

C. Damdinsüren, who thoroughly investigated them, expressed an opinion that the commentaries on the "Drop of Nourishment for People" were not translations from Sanskrit into Tibetan, but were originally written in the Tibetan language,¹⁷ and may well belong to Sa-skyapa or Bka'-gdams-pa traditions, i.e. could date as far as to the 12th–14th centuries.¹⁸ In any case, the first translation into Mongolian whose author is known appeared probably not later than the early 17th century.¹⁹ All of the Tibetan as well as Mongolian versions contain as a commentary on the 53rd²⁰ stanza of the "Drop of Nourishment for People" the tale known also from the Geser.²¹

In the Royal Library of Copenhagen there are six more or less preserved copies of the *Čaqar gebsi* Lubsangčülüm's commentary *Čindamani-yin čimeg*.²² Even if they have no colophons mentioning the author or translator, the work is attributed to *Čaqar gebsi* according to data given in his biography.²³ This is the only one of the Mongolian commentaries that has not been published in the Mongolian script yet, therefore I am giving full transliteration of the episode followed by a translation into English according to this commentary. The episode is found both in Mong. 72 (44r–44v) and Mong. 18 (79r–81r). For the

three Tibetan versions. L. Chürelbaatar, *op. cit.*, 167, mentions two Tibetan versions. Cf. also D. Jëndon, *op. cit.*, 21.

¹⁷ Of the same opinion are also L. Sternbach, *op. cit.*, 355, or S. K. Pathak in *The Indian Nitiśāstras in Tibet*. Delhi 1974, 37.

¹⁸ See C. Damdinsüren, *A Brief Review...*, 96–97; and *Tibetskie i mongol'skie sborniki...*, 161; also C. Damdinsüren, A. D. Cendina, *Tibetskij sbornik rasskazov iz «Pančatantry»*, 5. However, I have not found any reference to it in any available newer catalogue of Tibetan works. It still remains to further investigate the origin of the Tibetan commentaries.

¹⁹ Cf. C. Damdinsüren, *A Brief Review...*, 97; and C. Damdinsüren, A. D. Cendina, *op. cit.*, 9. See also the note No. 12 of the present article.

²⁰ *Nigen qurumqan-u tedüyiken yabuqu ene oqorqan nasun-ıyan :*
Negente möngkerekü metü sanaju sinuqu ması buruıy :
Nigül-tü em-e rags-a-yin yilvi-ber qubilyaqu metü :
Nigen gšan-a üküged odqui ču yerü bolııy-a ügei :: (CSM XIV, 358.)

"To think of this life which lasts but a moment
 As unending and cling to it is a terrible error.
 Like the magic creations of the female demon;
 Death comes in a second and your destination is uncertain."

(Translation from the Mongolian of Stanley Frye, *A Drop...*, Reprint 1985, 17.)

²¹ For *Erdeni-yin čimeg* see CSM XIV, 378, the tale No. 23. For *Törö yosun-u šastır-un tayılburı* cf. CSM VII, 164; for *Čindamani-yin čimeg* see CSM XV/2, 84; and *Erdeni-yin sayın qumq-a* in CSM VII, 125–126. As for their Tibetan versions, for the first (called for simplicity *Nor-bu'i rgyan*) see CSM VII, 194–195, and for the second (*Čhos-kyi sñan-ngag*) cf. C. Damdinsüren, A. D. Cendina, *op. cit.*, 95. Its translation into English in Dr. Stanley Frye, *op. cit.*, 74, the tale No. 24; a translation into Russian, made according to the second version of the Tibetan commentaries, in C. Damdinsüren, A. D. Cendina, *op. cit.*, 66, the tale No. 23.

²² See the note No. 14 of the present article.

²³ Cf. C. Damdinsüren, *Mongolyn uran zochiolyn tojm* II, 281. In *A Brief Review...*, C. Damdinsüren assumes that at least three Mongolian versions of the commentaries (with perhaps exception of *Erdeni-yin čimeg*) are "either translations or changed reproductions of the Tibetan versions" (98). See also C. Damdinsüren, A. D. Cendina, *op. cit.*, 15.

purposes of the present article I have chosen the manuscript Mong. 18²⁴, which seems to be more correct. The episode as recorded in the text, runs almost the same as in the Geser and is not so sophisticated as the Chinese tale included in the encyclopedia *T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi*:

Transliteration, Mong. 18:

(79v:1) *urida nigen kümün-ü gergeri inu kümün busud-ača qubilaǰu* (2) *törögsen em-e rays-a aǰu. tegün-ü gerte nigen kümün* (3) *iregsen-dür tere em-e-ber ger dotor-a-ban ǰaǰar-a qayaluyad* (4) *tariy-a tariǰu bolbasur[a]q[=γ]ulaqu. qadaǰu abaqu. qayuraqu [=qurayaqu] terigüten-(5)-i qurmuqan [=qurumqan] ǰayur-a üildün ter-e yuilir [=yulir]-iyar bobo kiǰü ter-e* (6) *kümün-e ögügsen-i idemegče. em-e-ber nigen šidum [=sidam] abuyad bcag²⁵* (7) *kemeged ter-e kümün-i del[e]dügsen-iyer ter-e kümün elǰige boluysan-(80r:1)-iyar tegün-i mal bolyad ǰaruǰu edlebei. tegünče qoin-a. basa nigen* (2) *kümün-i elǰige bolyoqui-i dur[a]laǰu uridu metü bobo kiǰü talbiyad* (3) *em-e öber-iyen nigen yuilir-iyar bobo kigsen-dür tere kümün* (4) *ese itegeǰü. em-e alyu[=a]su[=a]qui-yin ǰabsar-a ekner-ün bobo-i* (5) *öber-e-ün [sic] saban-a talbin. öber-e-ün bobo-i em-e-yin saban-a talbibai.* (6) *em-e-ber tegün-i meddel [=medel] ügei ideged bosaǰu nigen šidum-i abun* (7) *bcag kemeged del[e]dügsen-dür ter-e kümün šidum-i buliyaǰu abu... [the text is torn²⁶]* (80v:1) *či öber-e-iyen [sic] bcag kemeged del[e]degse-iyer ter-e em-e-ber* (2) *elǰige bolbai. tegünče ter-e kümün-ber ter-e elǰige-i [sic] kögeged* (3) *qariǰu yabutal-a ter-e em-e er-e inu aǰulǰi[=a]ysan-a tuǰurai-(4)-ban d[=t]arčiginu[=a]yuluysan-dur²⁷ er-e inu medeged. ter-e kümün-eče* (5) *elǰige-i abču oduyad ridi-ber qubilyasan-i aldar[a]yulbai kemebei.*

Translation:

Long ago a man had a wife who was born not as a human being but as a female demon-rākṣasī. When one man came to their yurt, the wife in a moment ploughed the ground in the yurt and sowed some wheat. When it was ripe and she harvested it and gathered and so forth, she baked a cake from the flour and gave it to that man. As soon as he had eaten it, the wife took a short stick, pronounced "bcag" and hit the man. As she did so, the man became a donkey. When he became a domestic animal, she used him to serve her. After that she again craved for making a donkey of another man. She made a cake as before.

²⁴ W. Heissig-C. Bawden, *Catalogue...*, 46.

²⁵ Written as *bcag*, *bcig* and *bcang* in Mong. 72.

²⁶ *buliyaǰu abuyad* in Mong. 72, fol. 44v:2.

²⁷ *Tačignuulsand* "when she made a great noise" in CSM XV/2, 84. *D* written instead of *t* in *darčiginuyluysan* points to a Tsakhar origin of the text. (Equally as *i* instead of *a* in *aǰulǰiysan-a*.)

But as she made her own cake from different flour, the man became suspicious. When she did not pay attention, he took the woman's cake and put it on his own plate and his own cake he put on the woman's plate. The woman did not know about it, and after eating her cake, she stood up and took a stick. When she told "bcag" and prepared to hit him, the man grabbed the stick from her by force, said "bcag yourself" and hit her. The woman became a donkey. As the man drove the donkey on his way back home, they met the woman's husband and when the donkey clattered its hoofs her husband recognized her, took the donkey from the man and went away. It is told that he freed his wife from her transformation by supernatural power.

The episode in the other versions of the commentary differs in some details from *Čindamani-yin čimeg*. The most simple and shortest is the version of *Törö yosun-u šastir-un tayilburi* of *Dai Güüsi* Agvangdampil from 1758, which has some peculiarities also as far as its vocabulary is concerned.²⁸ Its plot is very simple: here, the woman becomes a donkey without any intervention of another person by eating the enchanted cake by mistake. The episode in *Erdeni-yin čimeg*²⁹, one version of which is supposed to be the oldest by C. Damdinsüren³⁰, is the most sophisticated of all from the literary point of view, while in the *Erdeni-yin sayin qumq-a*, translated and revised by Nomtu-yin Rinčin in 1895, it is longest and most intricate with a quite elaborated story. The text transliterated in the present article can be placed in this list somewhere after *Törö yosun-u šastir-un tayilburi*, it is slightly more elaborated than the previous one, but not so much sophisticated as the last two of them. The basic outline of the episode is similar in all the texts (including the Mongolian Geser): a woman-witch can change men into donkeys. She grows wheat in her yurt and bakes enchanted cakes from it. After she tries to do it again with another man, he suspects her and changes the cakes. The woman eats the enchanted cake and when she wants to hit the man with a stick and tell a magic formula, the man takes the stick from her by force and changes her into a donkey. On the way home, they meet her husband, who recognizes his wife and frees her from her transformation. (Only *Törö yosun-u šastir-un tayilburi* — and the Geser — does not have this ending.)

Except of *Čindamani-yin čimeg* (and the Geser) no other commentary uses the expression *bobo* for the cake, which, as L. Ligeti implies, could be an evidence of another possible Chinese influence.³¹ Nevertheless, the Chinese origi-

²⁸ For example, it translates Tibetan terms into Mongolian, as for *mkha'-'gro-ma* (cf. CSM VII, the text *Skye-bo gso-ba'i thig[s]-pa'i rnam-bšad nor-bu'i rgyan žes bya-ba bžugs so*, 194; or C. Damdinsüren, A. D. Cendina, *op. cit.*, the text *Čhos-kyi sñan-ngag*, 95), it uses *oytaryui-bar yabuqui em-e*, while all the other translations have *däkinī* (or avoid this term).

²⁹ As published in CSM XIV, 378.

³⁰ See the notes Nos. 12, 19 of this article.

³¹ Cf. Louis Ligeti, *op. cit.*, 357, the note No. 43. As the author writes, Mongolian *bobo* is adopted from Chinese *po-po*. (For the term cf. also F. D. Lessing, et al., *Mongolian-English Dictionary*. Bloomington 1973, 123.)

nal of *T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi* in its 1524 edition writes *shao-ping* instead³². *Erdeni-yin čimeg* has *idegen* ("food"), and *Törö yosun-u šastir-un tayilburi* and *Erdeni-yin sayin qumq-a* writes *yulir* ("flour"). As it has been already noted by L. Ligeti,³³ the Chinese version is very elaborated and gives details such as are names of the woman and the man who succeeds to change her into a donkey, the age of the woman and other information about her, as well as the name of the place and a detailed description of the whole scene, all of which is missing in the Geser and in the commentaries and could well speak for the Chinese origin of the story. Still, there is another significant difference, by which the Chinese version varies from all of the commentaries as well as from the Geser: here, instead of changing the cakes prepared by the woman, the man, who knew about her tricks, brought his own cakes and changed them for the enchanted ones. Moreover, the woman uses no animals to plough the land in any of the commentaries. In the Chinese version she uses little figures of an ox, a plough and a servant, which the man afterwards takes with him. The episode of the Geser with its controversial "stag beetle" may therefore be closer to the Chinese version in this point.³⁴ However, by contrast with all the Mongolian sources, the woman-witch in the Chinese version does not use any stick nor magic formula, which in all the commentaries as well as in different versions of the Mongolian Geser are the instruments, together with the cake, of transforming a man into a donkey. They thus form a significant connection between the version of the Geser and the commentaries. Moreover, the formula that sounds as *soy* in the Geser, strongly resembles the sounds used in the commentaries.³⁵ In *Erdeni-yin sayin qumq-a* it is mentioned also in Tibetan letters as *chag*, as if it had been copied from a Tibetan original for accuracy. This fact speaks for an assumption that the word might derived from Tibetan *chag chag*, explained by Ju. N. Rerich as an "onomatopoeia for the sound of knocking" or "knock",³⁶ which would fit

³² For the transcription of the Chinese term I thank V. Ando, Oriental Institute, Prague.

³³ *Op. cit.*, 349.

³⁴ L. Ligeti explains *eber-tü čogo qara qoroqai* ("a black stag beetle") as a Mongolian misinterpretation of Chinese *nieou-eul*, which means "a little ox" in a very colloquial language, but otherwise it is a name of a beetle. Cf. *op. cit.*, 351.

³⁵ *Bcag*, *bcig* and *bcang* in different versions of *Čindamani-yin čimeg*, *cai* in *Erdeni-yin čimeg*, *cay* in *Erdeni-yin sayin qumq-a*. For the Geser cf. *Arban jüg-ün ejen Geser qayan-u tuγuǰi orosiba*, 237; *Geser*, Ulaanbaatar 1986, 127; or *Nomči qatun's Version of Kesar Saga*, 257. In *Cay-a Version of Kesar Saga* there is only mentioned *suvaq-a* (from Sanskrit *svāhā*), 327. For Tibetan texts of the commentary see C. Damdinsüren, A. D. Cendina, *op. cit.*, 95 (*chags*); and CSM VII, 194 (*cai*).

³⁶ Cf. his *Tibetsko-russko-anglijskij slovar' s sanskritskimi paraleljami*. Moskva 1987, 236. The dictionary *Bod-rgya chig-mdzod čhen-mo*. Peking 1986. Vol. II, 2249, explains *chag sgra* as *chag chag čes-pa'i sgra*, "a sound *chag chag*"; and *Dag-yig gsar-bsgrigs*. Hsining 1970, understands *chag* as: *šing gas-pa'i sgra lta-bu mchon-byed-de*, "a sound resembling sounds of a cracking tree/wood". *Bod-hor-gyi brda-yig ming-chig don gsum gsal-bar byed-pa'i mun-sel sgron-me* of Sumatiratna, CSM, Tomus VI. Ulaanbaatar 1959. Vol. II, 566, writes for *chag sgra*: *tord kikü dayun*: *čičignekü dayun*, "a sound made by a hard object when hitting some other object" (cf. F. D. Lessing, *op. cit.*, 825); and 567, for *chag chag*: *šard kijü aliba siyafang saba kemkeren*

in the context. After a detailed comparison of the story in all the versions, we can conclude that the episode of the Mongolian Geser might be created after the story as it was known from one of the Tibetan (Mongolian) commentaries on the "Drop of Nourishment for People" and adapted for the Mongolian Geser, or both had a common, most probably Tibetan source.

Anyway, there remains a question of what origin is the story from the commentaries (or its other Tibetan source), when nearly all the stories in the commentaries have their origins in India?³⁷ Nāgārjuna, who is supposed to be the author of the "Drop of Nourishment for People", usually closed his stanzas with a reference to a — certainly Indian — story as an example of his maxims. He undoubtedly had some definite story in his mind, when he compared the uncertainty of life to "the magic creations of the female demon". But as in case of stories commenting some other stanzas, this one is also connected with its stanza only very loosely and it is not certain, if the Tibetan author of the commentary found an appropriate story in Indian sources known to him or had to reach for another, maybe originally Chinese, material to comment the Nāgārjuna's verse.

Although a transformation of a man to a donkey can be found not only in Chinese, but also in Indian folklore and literature, from where it sometimes penetrated into Mongolia,³⁸ considering that no analogous episode has yet been

qayaraysan dayun, "a cracking sound when breaking some porcelain vessel" (for *šard* see F. D. Lessing, *op. cit.*, 753).

³⁷ Cf. B. Ja. Vladimircov, *op. cit.* Also G. N. Očirova in *Skazki i pritiči o životnyh v kommentarii Rinčena Nomtoeva k sočineniju «Kaplja rašijany, pitajuščaja ljudej» Nagardžuny. Buddizm i srednevekovaja kul'tura narodov Central'noj Azii*. Novosibirsk 1980, 133–150, showed parallels with Indian folklore and Pañcatantra. See also C. Damdinsüren, *A Brief Review...*, 96; and C. Damdinsüren, A. D. Cendina, *op. cit.*, 6–7, who found that 23 out of 31 stories of the Tibetan commentaries are of Indian origin (11 of them analogous with stories in Pañcatantra), three of them they traced in Tibetan sources and the rest, among them the present story, they regarded to be of an unknown origin. D. Jëndon in his *op. cit.*, 34, mentions 42 different stories in the commentaries altogether, only 16 of which seem to have no Indian parallels (cf. *idem*, 38).

³⁸ Cf. S. Thompson and J. Balys, *The Oral Tales of India*. Indiana University Publications, Folklore Series No. 10. Bloomington 1958: D132.1. Transformation: man to ass. HIMALAYA, PUNJAB, MADRAS; Q.551.3.2.6. Punishment: transformation to ass. KASHMIR.

See also in the story of king Vikramāditya, as published by F. Edgerton, *Vikrama's Adventures*. Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. 26. Cambridge 1926. On 263–266 Edgerton gives a "Translation of the Story of Vikrama's Birth", where the father of Vikramāditya is changed by Indra to a donkey (264). For its Mongolian version see C. R. Bawden, *Tales of King Vikramāditya and The Thirty-two Wooden Men*. (Śata-Piṭaka, Vol. 13) New Delhi 1960: Chapter Five: "How the son of Khormusda was reborn as the son of a donkey". (The translation of the Chapter Five, 102–106; the Mongol text in transliteration, 29–33.) The motif is found also in Tibeto-Mongolian tales of Vetāla, cf. *Tibetan and Mongolian Tales of Vetāla. Töbed mongyol šiditü kegür-ün üliger*. CSM II/1. Ulaanbaatar 1962, tale No. 2: *Ügegü kümün yabuysan nöögöge jüil*, 31–32. (The same in *Šidet chüürjün ülgel*, I. Ulaanbaatar 1992, 14–15.) Also in *Šiditü kegür-ün üliger. The Mongolian Tales of the Bewitched Corpse. Mongolian Text of the 1928 Ulan Bator Print*. (Romanized by G. Kara.) Debter, Materials for Central Asiatic and Altaic Studies, 4. Budapest 1984, 19.

found in any available Indian nor other older Tibetan³⁹ material, it is more than probable that the original source of the above-mentioned episode found in the commentaries on the “Drop of Nourishment for People” (as well as in the Mongolian Geser) can well be looked for in China and that it is identical with the tale from *T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi* of 10th century. It can be assumed that the tale went through changes on Tibetan soil — it became more simple, but at the same time it included a new motif, the magic stick and formula. Providing that a Tibetan commentary on the “Drop of Nourishment for People” was not written later than the early 17th century, when its first Mongolian translation is supposed to be done, the Chinese tale could be taken over by the Mongolian Geser from this commentary or even from its Mongolian translation. It also may be that narrators or compilers of different versions of the Mongolian Geser knew both the newer Tibetan adaptation as recorded also in some of the commentaries on the “Drop of Nourishment for People”, as well as the Chinese version of the episode. However, in view of similarity, almost identity of the episode in the Mongolian Geser and the commentaries it is very unlikely that they could develop from their Chinese model fully independently.

In any case, the above-mentioned observations suggest that the tale about “the magic creations of the female demon” included in the “Mongolian (and Tibetan) stories from Pañcatantra” has been borrowed from China.

³⁹ Except the short reference to it in Śeṣ-rab Rdo-rje's commentary from 16th century. See the note No. 8 of the present article.