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XIV

MONGOLIAN STUDIES

EDITED BY
LOUIS LIGETI



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NOTES ON THE WORSHIP OF LOCAL DEITIES IN MONGOLIA

BY

C. R. BAWDEN (London)

That the Mongols were for long preoccupied with the worship and pacification of all sorts of local deities who were thought to inhabit natural features of the landscape, is by now a matter of general knowledge, and needs no more than a few words of general introduction. At least since the time of Dorji Banzarov (1822—1855) scholars have been paying attention to this aspect of Mongol popular religion, and to the relation between cults of this sort and the institutionalised Buddhist church which tried to adopt and adapt them for its own purposes. It was especially when any action, such as the disposal of the bodies of the dead, was being contemplated, that the Mongols seem to have felt the need of propitiating those local deities whose rights might be thought to be infringed thereby. That such rituals were a reality and more than a literary tradition may be shown, for example, by the presence in the Museum für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig of a collection of objects used in propitiatory burial rituals, which can be associated with actual texts.¹ In the present paper, however, I wish to deal briefly with another aspect of Mongol popular religion, that is, the attitude of the Mongol administration towards the worship of local deities as performed with a view to obtaining positive advantages or averting natural calamities.

An interesting instance of how the state promoted religious activities for the purpose of influencing nature is mentioned by Korostovets who quotes, in German translation and unfortunately without the original Mongol, the text of a decree issued in June 1924 by the Ministry of Popular Education in Mongolia calling on local authorities to have services performed to summon rain. The decree made especial mention of the late Eighth Jebtsundamba Khutuktu as having been a real expert in this sort of ritual, and

¹ C. R. Bawden, *Einiges zu den Ethnographika der Chalcha und Burjaten im Museum für Völkerkunde Leipzig: Jahrbuch des Museums für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig* xxv, pp. 79—91. Since preparing this article I found, in a ms. forming part of a bundle of mss. shown to me by my colleague Mr. D. Tserensodnom, (*inc. Tabun üküdel γajar kemebesü*), fol. 16v., further mention of the ritual objects used in ceremonies accompanying the disposal of the dead. The text is similar to that quoted (note 14) from the Louvain manuscript.

having been active on behalf of the people.² A second instance of a procedure of this type forms the subject of the present article.

During a recent visit to the Mongolian People's Republic I was fortunate enough to be able to see and copy a number of texts of what seems, from the number of manuscripts still extant, to have been a fairly common order of service for an incense offering (*sang*) to the local deities of the Khalkha territory. This ritual is referred to in the notes to the reprint of Banzarov's collected works under the title *Tngri delekei yaŋar oron-u sang takilya orusiba*, and it is ascribed to the authorship of the Čorji lama Agvandorji.³ Reference to it is made also by Poppe, and by Heissig, who mentions a copy in the von Portheim Stiftung, Heidelberg.⁴ In Ulan Bator I was able to examine no less than ten copies of this ritual, including the Khalkha block-print mentioned by Poppe and Heissig.⁵ Most of these texts were in the

² *Von Chinggis Khan zur Sowjetrepublik*, Berlin and Leipzig 1926, p. 336.

³ *Sobranie Sochinenii*, Moscow 1955, p. 270.

⁴ Walther Heissig, *Mongolische Volksreligiöse und Folkloristische Texte*, Wiesbaden 1966, p. 9, note 3 to p. 8. (I have not had direct access to N. Poppe, *Opisanie Mongol'skikh «Shamanskikh» Rukopisei*, which mentions this work on pp. 185–6).

⁵ These texts are as follows:

- i. *Čorji blama ngayvang dorji ber jokiyaysan tngri delekei yaŋar oron-u sang takilya orusibai*. Blockprint. 29 by 10 cm. (24 by 7.5 cm) 11 folios. 9 and 16 lines.
- ii. *Čorji ngayvangdorji ber jokiyaysan tengger delekei-yin yaŋar oron-u sang takilya orusiylba*. Ms. 19 by 7–5 cm. 15 folios. 14 lines. Calamus.
- iii. *Čorji blama ngayvandorji ber jokiyaysan tngri delekei yaŋar oron-u sang takilyan-u sudur orusibai*. Ms. 23 by 9 cm. 15 folios. 7 and 15–17 lines. Russian paper, brush.
- iv. *Faŋar usun-u eŋed-ün sang orusibai*. Ms. 21.5 by 9 cm. 13 folios. 15 lines. Russian paper, Calamus.
- v. *Čorji blama Nayvandorji ber jokiyaysan tngri delekei yaŋar oron-u sang takilya orusiba*. Ms. Folded book, vertical. 9.5 by 25 cm. 18 sides. 8–10 lines. Chinese paper, brush.
- vi. *Delekei-yin eŋed-yin takilla-yu sang-un sudura orusibai*. Ms. 11 by 9 cm. 20 folios. 9–10 lines. White paper, pen.
- vii. *Čorji blama ayula sang ngay vandorji ber jokiyaysan tngri delekei yaŋar oron-u sang takilya orusibai*. Ms. 22 by 9 cm. 15 folios (incomplete). 14 lines. Russian paper, brush.

All the above are in private possession.

viii. *Faŋar usun-i mongyol-iyar takiqu sang*. Ms. Folded book. 24 by 12 cm. 24 sides. 13 lines. Brush. (State Library, Ulan Bator, 234.2 Γ 135 17501).

ix. *Mongyol-un oron-u delekei-yin eŋed-tür takil ergükü sang-un sudur ölŋei-yin egüden-ni negekü tülkigür kemegdekü orusibai*. Ms. 18 by 7.5 cm. 20 folios. 13 lines. Russian paper, brush.

x. *Boyda-yin jokiyaysan sang-un sudur orusibai*. Ms. 18 by 7 cm. 16 folios. 15 lines. Russian paper, brush.

private possession of colleagues who most generously put them at my disposal.⁶ Associated with the copy of the blockprint in one box of books shown to me was a manuscript copy of an order sent out from the administrator of an unnamed Banner Office to two local officials, referred to as *medegči*,⁷ conveying to them instructions received by way of the appropriate League Office from the *Gambu*, or Abbot of Urga⁸ and the *Shangjodba*, to have the text recited officially, at the behest of the Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, with the intention of promoting an improvement in the weather.

The text of the order of service is rather long, and I shall not edit it here. I wish merely to comment on the hints we are given of the interaction between «church» and «state» in Mongolia in Manchu times. We have two sorts of evidence. First there is the order itself, which was forwarded through the usual bureaucratic channels. Secondly we have a chance piece of internal evidence. At a certain point in the text of the service the worshippers are given the opportunity to insert the names of any local topographical features whose indwelling deities they might wish particularly to worship.⁹

Nos. ix. and x. are at present in my possession.

The author, Čorji lama Ngayvangdorji, appears to be the lama of the same name mentioned by B. Rintchen, *Mongol Bichgiin Helnii Züi, Udirtgal*, Ulan Bator 1964, pp. 175 foll. Rintchen refers to the Bicheech Agvaan Tsorj, while the order we are to examine mentions the author of the ritual as the Bičigči (= Bicheech) Čerin Čorji kemen aldarsiyā Nagvangdorji. The only discrepancy is, apart from the slight variation in the form of the name, the fact that Rintchen's lama is situated in the time of the first Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, 1635–1723, while the order situates the author in the time of the 5th Khutuktu, (b. 1815). Without further information I cannot resolve this.

⁶ At this point I should like to thank all those colleagues in Mongolia who helped to make my stay with them a success. In particular I am grateful to Academician B. Shirendyov, President of the Academy of Sciences, to Professor P. Horloo and Mr. S. Luvsanvandan, Director and Secretary respectively of the Institute of Language and Literature, and Academician Ts. Damdinsüren, Mr. J. Tömörtseren and many others.

⁷ *medegči* is listed by D. Tsedev, *Ih Shav'*, Ulan Bator 1964, p. 30, as the title of a subordinate official in an *otoy* or sub-division of the *shabi* or subjects of the Jebtsundamba Khutuktu.

⁸ According to S. Pürevjav, *Huv'sgalyn ömnöh Ih Hüree*, Ulan Bator 1961, p. 27, the *Gambu* was the head of the «executive authorities» of Urga itself, and was appointed by the Manchu amban of Urga on the recommendation of the Jebtsundamba Khutuktu and the Shangjodba or Shanzav. The latter presided over the office administering the *shabi*-estate.

⁹ For example, text x, 3v, 7: *minu alin sanaysad čöm tere yosuyar torqu dürbekü ügei bolqu boltuyai: ay-a delekei-yin arban buyan-u belge büridügßen ölŋei kisig toytoysan čoy*

Of the ten available texts, one has a short list of a few names,¹⁰ but another happens to contain a list of considerable length. Reference to the gazetteer of Mongolian place names published recently by Mr. M. M. Haltod¹¹ suggests that these localities were all situated in Sečen qan *aimay*. A considerable number, but by no means enough for us to be able to draw the conclusion that only one banner is involved, can be identified as belonging to the banner of Dorjyüljildoy. The inference is that the names of natural features were not entered at hazard, but were confined to those occurring within the territory of the competent administration, probably the League, but perhaps the Banner.

I propose now to reproduce the list of names inserted in text vii. Where possible I add the identification number from Haltod's gazetteer, and each such identified name is allotted a separate line. Where items cannot be identified I enter them on one and the same line without attempting any arbitrary division of what might be compound names.

The text runs as follows: *man-u törögsen nutuy ba: ayuluysan delekei-yin dumdadu yañar-i ejelen sayuysan*

edelet-iyer delgeregsen yeke mongyol qalqa-yin nutuy (4r) taki tuqaitu ayula yañar usun-u nere-yi oroyulsuyai: kemebesü ene jabsar oroyulbasu bolumui: man-u törögsen nutuy ba: ayulaysan delekei-yin eki aday-un ayula tala modu ilayuu qada asqa yool usu jülge namuy qufir derisü jam kötöl terigüten-e ayči . . . tngri luus . . . čöm-i urin jalamui. «May all my desires be fulfilled according to this. Ah! If anyone says: 'I would like to insert the names of special mountains, areas and waters in the great Mongol Khalkha pasture lands, where the signs of the ten virtues of the world are complete, where blessings are confirmed and rich possessions are distributed, they may be inserted at this juncture. We invite the gods and water spirits . . . residing in the first and last of the mountains, plains, trees, stones, cliffs, boulders, rivers, waters, meadows, marshes, salt marshes, reeds, ways, passes, etc., which are contained in our native pastures and in —.» It is evident that the insertion should be made at the words *nutuy ba*, corresponding in the translation to «pastures and —», and this is in fact the case in text ii. However, text vii, which contains the long insertion we are concerned with, has a somewhat muddled appearance here, and has inserted its list of names, introduced by the words *man-u törögsen nutuy ba: ayuluysan delekei-yin* after the words *minu alin sanaysad čöm*.

¹⁰ Text ii, reading: *Qanui ene yool bečigtü gangyai čayan obuya čayan ilayun bügürgü*. Evidently a reference to part of *Sayin noyon qan aimay*.

¹¹ Magadbürin Haltod, *Mongolische Ortsnamen*, Wiesbaden 1966.

matad (7317 *Mitad ayula*, maps 100, 152, 155)¹²

bayan tümen (kiged) (1558 *Bayangtümen öljeyitü oboya*, 13, 100, 147)

čoy öndör (3486 *Čoyöndör* 85, 100, 139)

gotola tümen

bayasqulangtu (1586 *Bayasqulangtu nuur* 85, 100, 139)

selemtü qoyar ulayanergi yurban jiryalangtu

öljeyitü (8353 *Öljeyitü*, 100, 143, 150, 8360 *Öljeyitü ayula*, 100, 152, 155)

urtu (12961 *Urtu bulay*, 100, 152, 155. Also other listings, 12957 to 12960,

all including reference to 100)

naran bulay (7642 *Naran bulay* 100. Also 7696 *Narin bulay*, 152, 155)

badarqu arada

bayan бүридү (1247 *Bayan бүрдү* 85, 100, 139)

ayuyitu (199 *Ayuyitu ayula*, 93, 100, 153. Also 203 *Ayuyitu qayilsu*, 100, 152,

155. Several other identifications listed).

yurban qorumsuya

öggömer (8324 *Öggömör ayula*, 93, 100, 153. Several other identifications listed).

bayangčayan (1452 *Bayangčayan*, 100, 152, 155. Several other identifications listed).

bayang dösi

köb (6499, *Köb*, 100. Other identifications listed).

bayang öljei (1508 *Baya göljei* 79, 100, 156)

čayan arsalang

modun oboya (7335 *Modon oboya* 13, 100, 147. Other identifications listed)

erdenibadarqu

köke ger (?6510 *Köbegör*, 100, 143, 150)

kötöl moyaitu

činutu (3462 *Činutu-yin bulay* 100, 152, 155)

küisü (6885 *Küisü*, 94, 100, 157. Other identifications listed)

čayannuur (2845 *Čayan nuur* 11, 100, 141. Several other identifications listed for 100 and for other maps)

lüngdö

šabar (11008 *Šabar* 100, 152, 155. Also 11007 *Šabar* 13, 100, 147)

¹² The maps can be identified by reference to the gazetteer, the numbers being the numbers of the catalogue references to the class Hs. or. of the Staatsbibliothek, Marburg. The most common references in this list are 100, Sečen qan *aimay*, and 152 and 155, Banner of Dorjyüljildoy. Where no identifying number has been added, either the name could not be traced at all in the gazetteer, or, in one or two cases only, only a place well outside Sečen qan *aimay* could be identified, e.g. for Erdenibadaraq only a reference to Silingol could be found.

The text now continues: *terigüten-dür orusiysan delekei-yin ejed ba: barayun eteged-i ejelen sayuysan*

qungdarqarmangnai ongyoda saraöndör

köke deresü (6583 *Köke dersün-ü qoyolai*, 152, 155. Also *Köke deresün-ü qoyolai*, 85, 100, 139)

örböl (8489 *Örböl ayula*, 100, 152, 155. Also 8490 *Örböl ayula-yin oboy-a*, 152, 155)

büridü (2543 *Bürdü* 100. Other identifications listed)

boro dabusu (2001 *Boro dabusu*, 152, 155)

ulayan öndör (12803 *Ulayangöndör*, 100, 152, 155. Other identifications listed).

qarʻanatu (? 9405 *Qarʻanatai ayula*, 100, 122. Other identifications listed) *arada*

ʻjibqulangtu (5956 *Jibqulangtu*, 100, 152, 155. Other identifications listed)

čorʻutu bayangtamsuy

qangʻai (9038 *Qangʻai*, 100, 152, 155. Other identifications listed)

siübeltei (11557 *Šiübeltei*, 100, 152, 155)

qajiu (8837 *Qajiyu bulay*, 100, 152, 155)

čorʻjin (3538 *Čorʻjin bulay*, 100, 152, 155)

The text now continues: *terigüten-dür orusiysan delekei-yin ejed: ʻjegün eteged-i ejelen sayuysan*

matad qan (kiged) (as above 7317)

öndör ölʻjeitü (? *ölʻjeitü* as above 8353, 8360)

küriye (6943 *Küriye ayula* 100, 149, 158)

toson (12245 *Toson bulay* 91, 16, 100, 12246 *Toson bulay*, 100, 122. Other identifications listed)

šingda

qadan (8688 *Qadan ayula*, 100, 140)

köb (as above 6499)

asqatu (611 *Asqatu*, 100, 152, 155. Other identifications listed)

bayan ʻjulge buyangöndör ulayandabusu beleg dalai

tabun toloyai (11663 *Tabun toloyai*, 26, 100, 142. Several other identifications listed for 100 and other maps)

γurban kögebüri (4981, 4982, *γurban kööbör*, 87, 88, 100)

büridü (as above 2543)

loboqu (7053 *Lobqo šabar* 152, 155)

tümendelger

The inserted text ends: *terigüten-dür orusiysan delekei-yin ejed ba: edeger-ün eki aday-un etc. etc.*

The copy of the order concerning the performance of this service was written on a piece of Chinese paper folded vertically to make four panels. The measurements were 37 cm (horizontal) by 25 cm, with six brush-written lines per panel. The text¹³ is as follows:

1. *Tamaya-yin ʻjakiruyči tüsimed-ün bičig: medegči galsang dasidondub nar-tur tusiyan ilegebe yabuyulqu učir: edüge qamiyaruyšan čiyulyan-u daruyatan-u ʻaʻjar-ača ulamʻjilan küriyen-ü gambu nom-un qan erdeni šangʻjodba nar-un ʻaʻjarača kürgegülün ʻjakiʻju irigsen-ü bičig-tür boyda-yin lüngdüng-i dayaʻju kürgegülün yabuyulqu-yin učir ene on ʻjirγuyan sarayin sine-yin tabun-u edür boyda lüngdüng-iyer gambu šangʻjodba man-dur tusiyayšan anu qalqa-yin dörben ayimay šabi-yin olan kümün bügüde qutuytu minu üye uliran qarayalčaysan üri šabinar mön čöm dörben*

2. *ʻjül-ün mal-dur itegeʻju*

eʻjen-ü alban nom-un körüngge-yi ʻjalγamʻjilan aʻju töröʻjüki: uridaki kedün ʻjül-dü ʻjül darayalan yang ʻjud mal-un emgeg eriye tokiyalduʻju nidün üʻjetele körüngge sürddüʻju γaruča-yin niγur onča elbeg boluyšan tula qutuytu bi ürgülʻji sanaya ʻjobaniʻju

blama γurban erdeni-dür čidaqu-yin cinege-ber-iyen ʻjalbarin sayuday bile sanamsar ügei-yin ʻaʻjar-ača urida minu tabuduyar düri-yin gegegen-i üye-yin bičigči čerin čorʻji kemen aldarsiysan

¹³ For the fixed formulas in which this document is cast see Čebele, *Mongyol Alban Bičig-ün Ulamʻjilal: Studia Mongolica* I, 22, Ulan Bator 1959 and II, 35, 1962. The formulas used here are a mixture of those given in Čebele's types 3 and 4, that is, those appropriate to an office addressing another of equal standing, and an office addressing one of lower standing but containing officials of more or less equal rank with the originator, respectively. Thus *tusiyan ilegebe* (type 4): *yabuyulqu učir* (type 3): *egün-ü tula tusiyan ilegebe* (type 4). An interesting feature of this letter is that it quotes a *lüngdüng* («order, instruction», Tib. *luñ-ton, luñ-t'añ*, Sumadiradna, II, 995) issued by the Jebtsundamba Khutuktu. This quotation is resumed by the verb *ayiladduyšan*, a respect-verb meaning «to speak, say». For this cf. the biography of the Jebtsundamba Khutuktu in C. R. Bawden, *The Jebtsundamba Khutuktus of Urga*, Wiesbaden 1961, p. 18, text 21v: . . . *kemen lablaʻju ayiladqabas . . . kemen lüngdüng ayiladduyšan aʻjiyuu*, «When they respectfully enquired about . . . he issued an instruction saying . . .»

3. *nagvangdorji-yin mongγol üsüg-iyer eblen žokiyaysan tngri delekei yařar usun-u eřed-ün sang takilyan-u sudur-i nadur ergüre iregsen-i küliyen abču üřebesü minu sanaysan-luya neyilelčekü tedüi ügei ene čaγ-un bayiri-luya neng tokiyalduqu metü-yin degere ene sudur-i uy-ača man-u küriyen-ü süm-büm-yin-dü bara seyileged qadayalaysan bolbači neyite-dür yaliyatai tarqařu kereglegdegsen ügei aři sanabasu edüge-yin üye-dü tarqařu qalqa řabinar-tu minu üčüken ölři řiči bolqu-yin bilig yerüngdeg neyilelčegsen bolbau kelen sanaqu tula ene sudur-i gambu řangřodba-yin yařarača*

4. *qalqa-yin ayimay qariyatu: řabinar-tayan neyiteber kürgegülün tügegeřü öber öberün sayuysan nutuy-taki ayulan oboya-yi tayiqui-dur tusa bolyan ungsilčayulbasu yambar kemen ayiladduysan egüni tusalayčin tüsimed: sumun bay-un řanggi medegčin döčitü-yin da lama nar-tur uy lüngdüng-i sang-un qamtubar kürgegülün yabuyuluyad kürümegče küliyen abču uytusi-yaysan yosuyar kinan güicedkeřü dayařu güicedkegülsügei egün-ü tula tusiyan ilegebe.*

Arban yisüdüger on arban sarayin qorin yisün-e

Translation

Letter of the Administrator of the Banner Office.
Sent to the *medegči's* Galsang and Dashidondub.
Matter for attention:

In a letter which has been delivered here from the Offices of the Gambu Nom-un Qan of Urga and the Shangjodba by way of the Office of the League Head now in office, (it states:)

Obediently forwarding the Instructions of the Khutuktu, Matter for attention:

We, the Gambu and the Shangjodba, were commissioned as follows on the fifth day of the sixth month of this year in Instructions from the Khutuktu:

'All the people of the four Aimaks and the Shabi of Khalkha are my disciples¹⁴ whom for generations I the Khutuktu have been looking after.

¹⁴ *üri řabinar*. For the form *üri* see N. Poppe: *The Twelve Deeds of Buddha: Asiatische Forschungen* 23, Wiesbaden 1967, p. 89, note 8 to fol. 22v.

They all rely on the four types of domestic animal and have gained their livelihood by inheriting the Emperor's duties and the stock of the Faith.¹⁵ For several years past there have occurred, year after year, drought, famine, and cattle-sickness,¹⁶ and before our eyes property has been ruined, and loss has been exceedingly apparent, wherefore I, the Khutuktu, have continually been anxious and have been praying to the limit of my ability to the Lama and the Three Jewels. But then, from an unexpected source, there came to be presented to me the sutra for offering incense and worship to the gods and lords of earth and water compiled in Mongol letters by Nagvangdorji, known as the Scribe Čerin Čorji, of the epoch of my earlier, fifth, incarnation. When I received it and looked at it, it not only accorded with my own ideas, but also seemed to suit the conditions of the present time very well, besides which, considering that this sutra had long ago been cut on blocks and stored in the printing house¹⁷ of our Urga but had never been circulated and made use of to any extent, I wondered if by circulating it at the present time it might not prove a valuable remedy, of benefit¹⁸ to my Khalkha and Shabi. I wonder how it would be if this sutra were distributed by the Offices of the Gambu and the Shangjodba generally amongst the Khalkha aimaks and the Shabi my subjects, and were caused to be recited as a help at the worship of the mountains and *obos* (ritual cairns) which are in the areas where they severally dwell.» This was stated, and this Instruction having been delivered together with the order of service to the Principal Officers (of Banners), and to the *řanggi's* and *medegči's* of the *sumun's* and *bag's*¹⁹ and to the Head Lamas of the Forties,²⁰ as soon as it arrives they are to

¹⁵ Provisional translation of *eřen-ü alban nom-un körlüngge*. In the original text *eřen* is raised above the general line of the text in respect.

¹⁶ *emgeg eriye*. *Eriye* of this compound is probably the *erē* of Mostaert, *Dictionnaire Ordos*, p. 243a, «inconvenient; quelque chose de mal, de prohibé; gêne».

¹⁷ *sümbüm*. See Pürevjav, *op. cit.*, p. 39. The blockprint does not mention Urga in connection with this work, but the colophon to one text, no. ix, does do so: 19v. *boyda narun žokiyaysan sudur-ud-ača* (20r) *bayiri sanaya abču yeke küriyen-e eyin eblegölbei*. «Taking passages and ideas from sutras composed by the saints, this was compiled at Urga.»

¹⁸ *ölři řiči* is difficult to understand. Perhaps *ölři aři*?

¹⁹ that is, units of the banner and *řabi* organisation respectively.

²⁰ The term *döčitü* is explained as follows in *Arдын Zargyn Bichig: Monumenta Historica* IV, 1, Ulan Bator 1968, p. 201. From the end of the 17th century onwards a complement of 40 regular lamas began to be established in each banner. These lamas had their names registered on an official list, and were known as *döčitü*. In time their relatives came, in some banners, to constitute a separate unit of the population, also known as *döčitü* or *döčün lama*.

receive it, and in accordance with the original orders they are to examine it and obediently have it executed. Despatched for this reason. 29th of the 10th month of the 19th year.²¹

This instance of a League Office receiving instructions from the heads of the «church» in Outer Mongolia, and passing them on for action to its subordinate Banner Offices, and thence to the local administrative authorities both secular and clerical, may add a little to our understanding of bureaucratic processes in Mongolia during the Manchu period.

²¹ This must be 1893. The Khutuktu concerned is subsequent to the Fifth. The Sixth was installed in 1842, after which time the only imperial reign which ran for as much as 19 years was Kuang Hsü, from 1875. That Mongol documents were dated according to the Chinese reign period is apparent from those reproduced, for instance, in *Manjiin Daranguillyn Üeiin Mongolyn Surguul*, Ulan Bator 1965.

ON THE ETYMOLOGY OF A COLOUR NAME IN MONGOLIAN

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Turkologists are inclined to regard many colour names as being of Turkish origin while they consider Mongolian to be the borrowing language. One of these colour names is *köke* «sky-blue». «Semasiological analysis makes it likely to suppose that there is a Turkish origin of the written Mongolian *köke*: 'sky-blue'» — A. M. Ščerbak writes.¹ And he goes on: «In Turkish languages the meaning «sky-blue» is derived from the meaning «sky» but one cannot reveal such a succession of meanings in Mongolian languages.»² In our opinion these assertions of A. M. Ščerbak do not square with the facts of the given language. It is true that the object appellations are of primary importance. Although the word *köke* «sky-blue, dark blue, blue» itself does not mean «sky» there are some appellations derived from «sky» in Mongolian languages. In the shamanistic pantheon of the Kuda Buriats of the Irkutsk territory the God of thunder is called *chóchdêj mêngên* meaning «archer of the sky». *chóch-dêj* «belonging to the sky» can be split to give the rootmorphem *chóch-* and the morphem *-dêj* ~ *daj* meaning «having a relation with someone, substituting someone». (Cf. in the proper names: *Bacha-daj* «passionate» from *bachan* «passion, longing for something», *Baríja-daj* «bawling» from *baríja* «to bawl», *Chonchol-doj* «absorbed in, immersed in» from *chonchol* «hole, cavity» etc.) In «The Secret Narratives of Yüan-ch'ao pi-shih *Kököčü* «magian, the servant of heaven» is mentioned:³ *Qonggotadai Mönglik-ečige-yin kö'üt dolo'an büle'ei. Dolo'an-u dumdadu Kököčü Teb-tenggeri büle'ei.* «Qonnggotadai Mönglik father had seven sons. Among the seven (he had) Kököčü-magian named Teb-tenggeri».⁴ At Rašid-ad-Din we read: «He (Mönglik) had a son named Kököčü

¹ A. M. Ščerbak, *O metodike issledovanija jazykovych paralelej (v svjazi s altajskoj gipotezoi)*, Moskva 1960, p. 7.

² A. M. Ščerbak, *op. cit.*

³ cf. B. Ja. Vladimircov, *Upominanie imeni Teb-Tengri v mongol'skoj pismennosti. Doklady Rossijskoj Akademii Nauk* 1924, pp. 116—117, as well as the paper of P. Pelliot in *T'oung Pao*, vol. XV, p. 627.

⁴ S. A. Kozin, *Sokrovennoe skazanie*, vol. I. Moskva—Leningrad, p. 294. It is said in the *Sbornik letopisej*, (vol. I. book I. Moskva—Leningrad 1952, p. 150.) by Rasid-