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CHINESE-MONGOL HYBRID SONGS

By ARTHUR WALEY

AS Mongol dynasty plays were written partly for Mongol patrons one would expect a certain amount of Mongol vocabulary to creep into them. But in the 'Hundred Plays', which despite recent discoveries still remains the most extensive collection that we possess, not more than two or three Mongol words occur. This may be partly due to the fact that they were edited in late Ming times, when such words were no longer intelligible and may well have been replaced by the editor with Chinese words. Two words which remain are *hala-* (*ala-*) 'to smite', 'kill', and *darasun* 'wine'. It appears that both of these were so well embedded in Chinese vocabulary that they were not recognized as foreign words. *Hala-*, for example, occurs in the opening scene of 'Wu Yüan Plays the Flute', the 38th of the 'Hundred Plays', the events of which happen in the sixth century B.C. Even allowing for the tendency of popular literature towards anachronism, the use of the word in such a context shows, I think, that the writer of the play did not regard *hala-* as a foreign, recent word. Similarly in 'Little Wei-ch'ih', the 30th play (Act II), a seventh century A.D. character is made to say 'Go and buy a jug of *darasun*'. An example of *hala-* in the southern-style play *Yu Kuei Chi* 幽閨紀 ('Sixty Plays' edition, episode 3) is of another kind. Here the words '*teü'ün-dür hala!*' 'Smite upon the head' are put into the mouth of a Mongol leader, and *hala* is clearly recognized to be a foreign word. This version of the play may well date from the fifteenth century. But there do exist much more extensive examples of hybrid Chinese-Mongol. The most interesting of these is an anonymous (fourteenth century?) song-sequence called 'The Hunt'.¹ It consists of thirteen songs and a coda (尾聲), using the rhyme *-a* throughout. It begins with a eulogy of falcons and hunting-dogs. The third song calls for strict attention to the rules of the Falcon and Hawk Treatise; for example, to the use of the embroidered cap ('hood') if the bird grows restless. Many treatises of the kind existed, and we need not tie the poet down to one in particular. In song 5 'half a thousand huntsmen' throng out of the city gates. Song 6 describes the actual hunt. In song 7 the huntsmen are deep in the woods, the talk of the men and the neighing of horses resounding through the forest. In song 8 bears, tigers, boars, wolves fall victim to the lances and arrows. The falcons seize mountain-pheasant and water-fowl. In song 9 the game is being loaded on the horses' backs to the accompaniment of 'a babble of foreign speech' 打番語一溜兀刺. It is from this point onwards that the text begins to be largely in Mongol, very difficult to disentangle from the scattered Chinese words. One recognizes *darasun*, *morin* 'horse', *miqan* 'meat', *a'ula* 'mountain'. But my knowledge of Mongol vocabulary is far too limited to

¹ *Tz'ü-lin Chai-yen* 詞林摘艷, p. 381 of the 1955 edition (ch. III, fol. 43).

allow of my attempting to make sense of the Mongol passages. Songs 11 and 12 appear to describe the feasting and music-making. The coda (four lines) is in Chinese.

More manageable is a fragment consisting of the six songs which formed the lyric part of Act III of the lost fourteenth-century play *Ku-ku Tan* 苦 苦 旦.¹ As the prose dialogue is omitted, one can only guess at the situation. But it is evident from the first two songs that the speaker is a Mongol woman whose husband (a *ch'ien-hu* 'Captain of a Thousand', as he is called in song 5) is away on public service. It is autumn and the snow, falling like 'flying willow-fluff or cut goose-down', has created the illusion of 'a silver world'. Then in song 3 she hears the sound of people approaching and thinks at first that it is her husband returning. But it is snowing so hard that she 'cannot open her eyes'. However, it is evident from song 4 that the traveller has turned out to be a venerable *tümen* 'Captain of Ten Thousand', an envoy of the Khan, and she asks him to go back with her into her tent and take shelter, saying: 都麻呢咬兒只不毛兀刺。你與我請過來, i.e. *tümen-i yorji* ² *bu ma'ula*! ('Captain of Ten Thousand, go! Do not take offence! Let me ask you to go in!').

In the 5th song she addresses the envoy as 俺答的官人 ('friendly official'; Mongol *anda*, 'pledged friend') and explains that if her husband had been at home he would have given the guest mutton, wine, horse-flesh, and beef. As it is, she has nothing in her tent: 沒甚麼東西; 東西的這五隔 'Nothing at all; of things there are *ügei*'; 五隔 being a quite regular transcription of the Mongol word *ügei* 'none'.

In song 6 the envoy has evidently refused to come into the tent, and he and his followers are continuing on their way. Apparently the Mongol lady goes after him and warns him against the inhospitable nature of the *jam* (posting-stations) which lie before him. 'The Hu-lu 葫蘆 Station', she says, 'is haunted by baleful monsters, the Li Ling 李陵 Station is very hard to hold out in. The Han-hu-lu 寒³ 葫蘆 Station has flat ground above it.⁴ The A-mi 阿彌⁵ Station does not stop shoes.⁶ On the Po-li-ho 白梨河 Station there are few habitations. That those relay horses should be ridden to the point of exhaustion is very distressing. Have not we here got our range of mountains and (?) the Black River Water 黑河水, and the Terrace of Li Ling wrapped in light mists?

'What I tell you plainly, do me the kindness to remember. Venerable official, do not scorn me because I am a simple banner-woman and have nothing

¹ *Tz'ü-lin Chai-yen*, p. 324 (ch. III, fol. 16). Collated text in Chao Ching-shên's *Yüan-jên Tsa-chü Kou Shên* 元人雜劇鉤沈, 1955. The play is listed in the *Lu Kuei Pu*, and must therefore be earlier than c. 1350.

² For *yorji*; cf. the constant interchange between *çi* and *ji* in Mongol personal names.

³ Variant 罕.

⁴ Sense doubtful; an underground dwelling?

⁵ Variant A-mi-je 者 (Emi)je).

⁶ Sense doubtful.

wherewith to entertain you. The fact that you have come in security¹ on this morning of an autumn day to our desert² (沙陀) means that God (騰乞里 *tenggeri*) takes (the side of) a heroic (曲律 *külik*), good official (撒銀那顏 *sain noyan*). Relying on the power of Heaven and Earth and the blessing and protection of the Emperor (帝王) he has personal happiness and no illness among his horses. Friendly official, into this bag-basket of a dwelling-place, *noyan yorji bu ma'ula*, official, go! Do not take offence! Let me ask you to go in!

Of the stations mentioned in this song the only one known to me is the Li Ling Terrace Station, which was at the point where the more westerly of the two routes from Peking to Shang-tu divided into two, going north-east to Dolon and Shang-tu and almost due west to Karakorum. The other stations mentioned here would then have been on the route from the Li Ling Terrace to Karakorum. There seems to be no list of these stations either in the *Yung-lo Ta-tien* or the *Yüan Tien-chang*, nor can I find that they are marked on any map.³

The full title of the play is 風雪當站兀刺赤; 像生番語括罽旦 'The *ula'açi* at the postal-station in wind and snow; the realistically-dressed foreign speech Mongol head-dress leading-female-rôle'. If *ula'açi* refers to the envoy, then it here means 'dispatch-rider' in general and not (as often) a rider who escorts a higher official. *Hsiang-shêng* 'true to life', means when it occurs in the title of a play that the character is realistically dressed in the costume belonging to the person she represents, as opposed to wearing one of the stock rôle-costumes of the theatrical wardrobe. It has to-day and has had in the past other meanings that need not be here discussed.

Ku-ku (transcribed in various ways) was the name given by the Chinese to the Mongol noble, married women's head-dress, adorned with coloured stuffs or kingfisher-feathers. The Mongols themselves called this head-dress *boytay*, which in the interlinear paraphrase of the 'Secret History', § 74, is glossed 固姑 *ku-ku*.⁴

The word *ku-ku*, written in many different ways and applied only to the head-dress of non-Chinese ladies, must originally have been a loanword from some foreign language other than Mongol.

Probably the latest play that uses any considerable number of Mongol words is the *T'ao-yüan-ching* 桃源景 of Chu Yu-tun (died 1439; grandson of the founder of the Ming dynasty), which dates from about 1420. In it a

¹ 安插兒. The usual meaning of *an-ch'a* is 'to establish in security'. The *érh* ought to make it into a noun. The text is perhaps corrupt.

² *Sha-t'o* is not here, I think, a proper name, but simply means 'desert', as it does in Ch'ang-ch'un's *Hsi Yu Chi*.

³ Professor Olbricht, the greatest authority on the posting arrangements of the period, has kindly searched his material, and can find no list of the stations between the Li Ling Terrace and Karakorum.

⁴ I am indebted again to Professor Olbricht for calling my attention to this gloss. It will be found in Shiratori's edition, ch. II, fol. v b.

Chinese official who has been banished to the Mongolian frontier sets up a wine-shop. Two Mongol herdsmen (*ada'uči*) come clamouring for drink, get very drunk, sing and dance and become quarrelsome. They use many Mongol words and phrases, strung together with Chinese particles, e.g. *edö'e üdür maši köyiten*. *Kita aqa, sain darasun mino ü* 'To-day it is very cold. Chinese elder-brother, good wine of us drink (should mean, Drink my good wine)'. Or again, *Kita kü'ün ma'u-bui; darasun ese ü, ma'u kele sogo* 'Chinese man is bad; wine not yet drink, bad words curses'.¹ Other words that occur are *yasa-* 'ask', *sa'u* 'sit', *soyta-ba* 'has got drunk', *da'ula-* 'sing', *börji* 'dance', *basa* 'again', *qari* 'return'. These are all common words, such as might have been culled from a phrase-book. Completely baffling, to me at any rate, is the curse with which the Mongols quit the scene: 得妻吉鄰母刺失骨, which represents something like *deleugirin mulašiqu* (or *mürešikü*). Perhaps Owen Lattimore, a great authority on Mongol curses, could make something of this.

¹ I have not in most cases given the Chinese transcriptions, as they are of no particular interest, coinciding in almost every case with those in the *Hua-i I-yü* of 1389, except that the diacritical signs distinguishing *r* from *l*, etc., are not given. I wish to thank my friend Denis Sinor for reading through this paper and making several suggestions.