A MONGOLIAN RITUAL FOR CALLING THE SOUL

by C.R. BAWDEN

In an article published some years ago I reproduced in romanization and translated a manuscript which contained a ritual for the calling back of the soul of a dying person. At the time, that text was unique, at least for me, but in the meanwhile one other such text has come my way, and it may be of interest to present this in the same form. The original manuscript is in the State Library of Mongolia, Ulan Bator, and I have only my handwritten notes to go by. For this reason the romanization presented here may be erroneous in detail, especially as the orthography of the original is sometimes erratic. However, it seemed to me better to make this text known in a possibly imperfect form rather than ignore it, as the subject it treats is a rare one in Mongol folk religion, and, moreover, it is not just a duplicate of the text already published. The mental outlook discernible here is, however, so similar to that of the latter, that it is not necessary to modify the remarks I offered at the time about the nature of the soul in Mongol folk belief. I should, however, like to refer again here to my earlier suggestion, which was perhaps lost in the footnote where it appeared, that what we now know of the form a ritual for the recall of the soul takes amongst the Mongols makes it likely that the well-known lament for the dead Genghis Khan, as it appears for example in the chronicle Erdeni-yin Tobči, may be rather more than a mere lament, in fact a version, or at least an echo, of a litany for the recall of the soul of the departed monarch. This lament has been commented upon a number of times in European and Japanese literature since Hans Conon von der Gabelentz's pioneer work on Mongol poetry, but I do not think that this hypothesis has been presented before.

In my previous article I mentioned that death was often attributed, in texts of folk religion, to the removal of the life or the soul (amin, sînetün, the words being apparently interchangeable) by demons. I did not mean to suggest by this remark that the two words were, in themselves, essentially interchangeable, but only that where the texts under consideration said

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2 294.2 X 17245. 6 fols. 30 by 7 cm. 26 lines, calamus.

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two words are not always synonymous, and only the term sinesü appears to be used when the recall of the soul is the subject.

The manuscript used is written in black with a calamus on six sheets of thick, somewhat greasy paper. There is some overlining, in an ochre-coloured ink or paint, according to the usual custom of marking section headings or other passages to be emphasized. The orthography is at times erratic, words being spelled and split up in unconventional ways. In nearly all cases the accepted spellings can be recovered, but one or two problems remain. As examples of the vagaries of this text we may cite such forms as adisla qada for adislayad or what appears to be nomuqa dayan for nomuyadqan.

These divisions of words are all the more striking in that they occur within a line and not at the overrun to a new line. Medial ı and J are not distinguished. Medial ı is generally distinguished from medial d, being formed as a horizontal oval, with more of the loop to the right of the vertical line of the word than the left, while medial d preserves the customary form.

Text
1r. Kümün-yi sinesü-i dalalgui sudur bui
2v. Nige:

2r. Qoyar:
Dörben:

арийяйчи ном-ун + / майу чебчүн гүжүүн qabu /
дар qалдарури огүүсүн sigüün / -ее + (ерasure) мөнкү бусу-ы /
укуйлюүчү ном-ун + / юнгүү юлду жолдуу-ача /
бейя-ы сарылчын-ача gалаб / джыр сорун чы-ын тоыва /
yабудуун-ун юлду жолдуу / чы-ын орон гер терген ed /
thавар кигд кымым юлду жолдуу / дуун-ача qаралчын-ача + /
qарыл үүгү ном-ун + юкегер-ун / yасуң барики түүкүү-ее + /
ибэгэчү ном-ун + оглы-ын ежен эйимүн неретү абай /
мину чи чынысы бүйүү ода : / инайсы ирекү бүйүү чи : /
ире + ачы күчү / ик жын буну ындуу / амара /
ача дегүүбүр үрук садун чуну / бүйүү буну амабуун сыйын идеген /
дарасун чын буну ындуу : / арийчын сыйын көртүү чыкөкү /
-үүн кигд ангылаху сыйыкан

4v. siyasabad-un únur кигд ende / бүйүү ауыа күчүтүү-ын сүлдө /
ауы эке амиду айыл-ун / ulus ergин ba : / адысуну /
yамыра морин темеген кигд ал / бүгүдөөр терген ба аманд-ы /
күсүл-ын qангыячы бүрүн-ы / бүйүү буну : abai mina инайсы /
ири + ерлүн-үн яжар / күрөү үлү болдуу : ерлү /
-үүн шам-ын ябабүү үлү / бөлүу ерлүң-үн ирөүү洋 /
-дүр саызы үлү бөлүү : ерлүң-үн идеген-ы идегүй /
үлү бөлүү : ерлүң-үн / усын-үүн үлү бөлүү /
игу : ерлүң-үн о-и / эмүүү үлү бөлүү : тегүнү /
-дүр ыкын одумүү чи : / инайсы ирөдүүкү бүйүү чи /
енде ирилүң-үн ечүү / ину абүүрүү метүү : ерлү /
-үүн еке икүн маныясу метүү : ерлүң-үн идеген икүн ину /
бирди метүү : ерлүң-үн / икинө нус жыны хетүү метүү /

5r. Tabun:

тегүндүр бүйүү ода а-а абай / minu инайсы ири + тарны /
барычын жылдүүрүн жылың / -дүр сүтүү ирөдүүкү бүйүү /
чи икүн эке : таның / күмүүн-үңгү нүкүүчү чэшүү /
Ju ирекү бүйүү чи икүн + / төнкү чырбейя-дүр нокүү /
ji ирөдүүкү бүйүү чи икүн + / yeke нигүлүсүгү чыны / бөлүү /
-дүр сүтүү ирөдүүкү бүйүү / чи икүн + / сарны /
-дүр эдүү жыың жасар / -ача асальдүү үүгү одөр /
ирөдүүкү бүйүү чи икүн + / нүүрүн огүү эрдүү жүү /
ji ирөдүүкү бүйүү чи икүн + / yeke нигүлүсүгү бүйүү /
-дүр сүтүү ирөдүүкү бүйүү /
чи икүн + ибөлү жылы күлүн-үү /
-лүү чынанычы ирөдүүкү бүйүү / чи икүн + идеген умдаян /
көрөсөн эди барың адаху анын / бүгүдөөр элдөө жылы көрөсөн /
түстүн-ын күсүлүү ирөдүүкү / бүйүү чи икүн эке + чылылай

5v. үүги эрдүүн-ын иригөр-үүр / ирөдүүкү бүйүү чи /
енде + чындун көл-үү сүтүн / -иын дайылы чы-тоо /
The flesh of the left shoulder of a sheep, and grain in a tub. Under these spread the skin of a sheep and appropriate materials. To a

2 Mo. qan for qa. Lessing, in his article "Calling the Soul: A Lamaist Ritual", *Semitic and Oriental Studies: A Volume Presented to William Popper*, University of California Press, 1951, pp. 265-84, says, p. 267, that the Tibetans and other peoples assume a mysterious relation between the soul and the sheep or lamb. However, as far as the Mongols are concerned, we may say that in their folk rituals a piece of mutton is listed as a requisite in ceremonies beyond those immediately connected with the soul, for example in fire-worship (for which see my article "The Louvain Fire Ritual", *Central Asiatic Journal*, VIII, 4, pp. 285 and 294) and in hunting rituals. For the latter I refer to an unpublished MS. in private possession in Ulan Bator of which I have a photocopy. The MS. is untitled and incomplete. The surviving first folio, numbered 12, has a text for the worship of the saddle thongs, entitled *yamjyaa tabku-yin yatas* which begins with an enumeration of the ritual items needed. The saddle is to be placed on a piece of clean white felt and the prayers offered with four lamps, four joss sticks, a "four-sided incense offering", the ribs of a sheep, a thigh, and the tip of the tail: *Ariyyn tayaa rargas degere emegel-yi talbju darden jula: darden kii: darden talatu ubang: qom-u tula-ta gabyrja: tayu-tu dhamge: uraya segul: edem-yen uruuru baolu.* An illustration in M. Dingsh: Mongol Orny Bicheltsern Mal Mallagoany Aarg Turgalago, Ulan Bator, 1966, p. 394, shows and names 66 parts of the external anatomy of the horse. For the present it is clear that *tayaa taree dhamge* (shaant chomu) is the thigh, not the skin, as I translated it in *Central Asiatic Journal*, VIII, 4, 294. I am not sure of the proper meaning of *tala-ta gabyrja* and paraphrase as "ribs." The list of requisites in our main text is naturally similar to that in the Louvain ritual. Further, a white felt and a flaxless arrow are some of the requisites prescribed for use in burial rituals. Cf. my article "Einiges zu den Ethnographika der Chalcha und Buriats im Museum für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig", *Jahrbuch des Museums für Volkerkunde zu Leipzig*, XXV, 1968, 79-91, especially p. 84, referring to MS. 36, Louvain. Cf. also the section Yeri yafar ujeke khamun-dir, "For the geomanas" in a MS. Tahun shibdet yafar hemeget, "On the five cemeteries" in a bundle of MSS. in private possession in Ulan Bator, of which I have a photocopy. Here the white felt is said to be for the officiant to sit on; yeru yafar ujeke khamun-dir sine tarsa erege debus u neyata-bai. An arrow with a flaxless bow is also among the requisites.


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flawless-feathered arrow tie a square of silk and ... 8, and tie on turquoise gems, and stick it into (the) rice. 9 Recite ōm a-a gili huum huum pat sōva ha-a 10 one hundred and eight times, consecrate the arrow and what was got ready, and set up the object of worship permanently and firmly. Further, whatever he was devoted to, stretch a five-coloured thread from this, to secure the life and soul.

2r. Reciting ōm tsa tsa huum ham huru samaya sōva, ha-a, consecrate this. Set up the object of worship, stretching it in the manner of a thong. Further, prepare food and drink, pretty-coloured clothes and materials, and beasts, and — whatever he may be devoted to — structures 12 of what he desired, in the shape of man, woman, or anything else. Consecrate these with the consecration ōm a-a hri huum. Prepare the “desire-structures”, putting them into the various gaps. 13 Further,

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worshipping the fire derived from this. When one worships the fire nowadays one must tie a square of white silk to an arrow with an eagle’s feather representing the shrine of grace, and put in a fine, unburned tub representing the firm presence of the vital principle of the golden earth, a thigh representing the grace of heaven, the four pairs of long riba representing the grace of the ten directions, the flesh of the rectum representing the grace of the Buddhas, the outer layer of the chest representing the outer and inner grace, butter representing blessing, and milk representing the grace of the golden earth, prepare four lamps, four joss-sticks, four streamers and, in front, the platform for the incense offering. Put the grain, jewels, medicines, fruit, joss-sticks, milk-products, butter, flour, spirits and feather grass inside the chest. Leave these ready, covered with suet and silk-sloth. 9

8 The phrase khe ba: kiš looks tautological. Later, 2r, and 40, we find the spellings silk scarf to an arrow”. For hari, here translated “square”, cf. Ramstedt, Kalmückisches Worterbuch, p. 49, “Bogen, Quadrat (von Papier)”.

9 Mo. tutarya, apparently the “grain”, budgay, mentioned just previously.

10 Evidently equivalent to Sanskrit sahā, as pointed out to me in correspondence by Professor W. Simon. The problem of the structure and orthography of the mantras in Mongol texts, and of deformations apparent in non-canonical texts in particular, might be explored with profit.

11 Mo. ājvandar. I take this to be a contracted form sājvandar from sājvandarab. Such contractions of the present infinitive plus instrumental suffix are not unknown: for example sang novan ... ničkharvan ochtun bana: “The noble went to pay a visit.” (Wang Novan Har Tergyes Buon, Hulhut 1936, p. 1). There may of course be a better explanation of this form, but the symbolism seems to make the theory that the thing will attach the soul to favourable articles and restrain it if departing.

12 Mo. adisla qadā for adislada.

13 Mo. khered. For khered as a ritual object see my article “The Supernatural Element”, Part II, pp. 177-8.

14 Mo. jabsar jacksar-tur jokchyan belededeh. I take this to mean that these items are to be installed in the spaces left between other ritual objects. The same words occur in the manual for constructing an obo, Oboya bosoq yusun ur jende omba, for which see my article: “Two Mongol Texts Concerning Obo-Worship”, Orient.

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offering an incense-offering, recite prayers, appeasing 14 all and begging for blessing, and cause a man born in a protective 15 year to grasp in his hand the arrow with the silk and the items of food and clothes and summon (the patient), calling him by name.

Recite ōm agaru nōgag dharma gang adaya śhen-e dunda ōm a-a huum pat sōva ha-a seven and three times. Pray, thinking that all that has not been fulfilled will be fulfilled according to your desire: “If you have fled, fearing the oath of the protectors of the faith of the supreme lama, will you come hither 18 in a mood of tranquil devotion? Come here, come here. If you have fled fearing heaven, planets and stars, will you come, relying on the instruction of the matchless lama? Come here, come here. If you have fled fearing the power of the examples of the bodhisattvas of the ten directions, will you come, relying on the precious blessings of the beneficient lama? Come here, come here. If you have fled fearing the asuras and the gandharvas and other odour-eaters, 17 will you come, relying on true prayer? Come here, come here. If you have fled fearing demons and ghosts, will you come, relying on the commands of the pure Buddha? Come here, come here. If you have fled fearing the messengers of Erlig, devils and sprites, will you come, relying on the prayers of the precious faith? Come here, come here. If you have fled fearing the sway and power of some countries of the world, will you come, relying on the prayers of the greatly merciful one? Come here, come here. If you have fled fearing the bladed and pointed knives of men, will you come, relying on the prayers of the protective faith? Come here, come here. If you have fled fearing the ugly 18 perversity 19 of women, will you...
come, relying on the path of the true, supreme faith? Come here, come here.
If you have fled fearing the . . . 20 of those of black and white manner, will you come, relying on the prayers of the marvellous faith. Come here, come here.

3v. If you have fled fearing the intensity of the sky, the sun and the moon, will you come, relying on the prayers of the mighty faith? Come here, come here.
If you have fled fearing the kings of the dragons, hail and lightning, will you come, relying on the prayers of the faith which surely saves? Come here, come here.
If you have fled fearing mountains, rocks, precipices and ditches, will you come, relying on the prayers of the indestructible faith? Come here, come here.
If you have fled fearing earth and water, fire and wind, and all the five elements, 22 will you come, relying on the five Buddhas of fate? 23 Come here, come here.
If you have fled in fear of Garudi, king of the winged ones, and the other sky-travellers, will you come, relying on the prayers of the guiding faith? Come here, come here.
If you have fled, fearing the many sorts of footed and footless ones, will you come, relying on the prayers of the immoveable faith? Come here, come here. 24

20 The words transcribed as qarqar gusur form a crux. Kowalewski lists a phrase yarvar kkh, meaning "to scold" which may be relevant. For the second element a word which may be normalized as ququur and is listed by Monrour, p. 365b, as equivalent to ququardin and meaning "stupid and touchy" may also be relevant.
22 The phrase qaraq gan yabadal-tan requires explanation.
23 Apart from the series of five elements, tabun maqabat, listed in Mongol usually as modum, yal, sirri, temir, tasun (as for instance in Mong 13. Copenhagen, fo. 150r, 157v), we find a series of four elements attached to the various planets and stars. The combinations of planet- and asterism-elements are of astrological significance. Thus 28 asterisms are divided into four groups of seven, and each group is allotted to one of the four elements yal, tasun, sirri, kei. The seven planets, plus raqi, are similarly allotted in pairs. Similar information is given in an untitled MS. in 39 folios in the Institute of Language and Literature, Ulam Baton, inc. Namosi's gula targa. On fo. 130v we read: gury odion nigen gomut udersayusun u maqabat imu: "Coincidence of elements for planets and stars." The various types of combination bear separate names. Thus planet-sirri and star-sirri are known as sid-i-yin uclaral, "magic-conjunction." If two tasun coincide, it is known as rasyun-i ucloral, "elixir-conjunction," and so on, and each different conjunction presages certain happenings for the day under consideration. It seems probable that this series of four and the series of five are both intended in our text.
24 Tabun fayayusun-u bajaran, perhaps identical with the divinities known variously as fayayun-u tabun inger, Qoyan fayayusun inger, Tobi inger, Tobi-i thaisa tabun inger. For inger batl in Tibetan tradition see R. de Neubsky-Wojwokits, Oracles and Demons of my possession.)

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If you have fled, fearing unpleasant small thorns and knives, will you come, relying on the commands of the true faith? Come here, come here. If you have fled, disgusted by and fearing bad colours, which are not to be seen, bad smells and tastes, and dirt, will you come, relying on the prayers of the faith which eradicates the roots. 21

4r. If you have fled, fearing evil sicknesses, ulcers, 25 tumours, infections and pus, 26 will you come, relying on the prayers of the faith which explains impermanence? Come here, come here.
If you have fled, fearing the incompatibility of colours, that which is noxious to the body, incompatibilities of the calculations and courses of era, year, month, day and hour, incompatibilities of dwelling, cart, goods and all else, 27 and that which is noxious, will you come relying on the prayers of the unswerving faith? Come here, come here.
If you have fled, fearing the disposal and burial of the corpses of the dead, will you come, relying on the prayers of the protective faith? Come here, come here.
You, my dear one, the lord of gifts named so and so, do not go away, come hither. Come here, come here.
Your benevolent father and mother are here.
Your dear brothers and relatives are here.
Your tasty, good food and wine are here.
Your clean good silks and ornaments and your nice-smelling religious 28 odours are here.

4v. Your great powerful tutelary genius, 29 the people of your great, living
Will you come, associating with the man born in a protective year? Come here, come here.
Will you come, desiring the requisites of food, drink, and materials, beasts and all sorts of requisite and useful thing? Come here, come here.

5v. Will you come, relying on the prayers of the limitless jewel? Come here, come here.

When I beckon with the arrow with the white silk, will you see it and come? Come here, come here."

Reciting öm a-a huum, bag tsa tsa huum, huum pat pat pat sōoaha-a, let the jewels, food and clothes, and the beckoning-requisites be worn or eaten by their owner. While having him eat, say: "Letting the element which strengthens his life flourish, and letting grace accrue delign to enhance his good fortune and restore his soul", and imagine that whether or not the soul has come has happened according to the way so many people have been begging. When reciting the spell öm sōoaha-a ńg čihege sōo ha-a, imagine that it has settled down unwaveringly.

6r. See whether or not the soul has come by weighing with scales. If it comes below one tenth of an ounce but above one hundredth of an ounce this is good. If it comes much more, then evil spirits will have followed it. Have rites of repulsion against these recited, give alms to the poor and needy, and give a feast to infants. If it does not come, have (the patient) spend the night** pillow on the clothes used in the beckoning, and do the weighing early next morning, and it will surely come. But if it does not come at that, select favourable planet, star, day and hour, and make up** completely any requisites which were lacking when the previous summoning took place, and it will come.

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24 Mo. kei morin-i deqeqüä lägeden (for deqeqüäłiged). For a similar phrasing cf. Ki morin mor-im sang orusiba (Chester Beatty Library), fo. 1r., ki mor-im deqequl, and further, a MS. entitled Ki morin-i sang takši-yä adhimit-in gar-i bayüläyäci kemäti (Ulan Bator, State Library, 294.2 × 439. 17389), fo. 2r., ki morin-i delgerqibëh-i-im nula. We may note the use of three different verbs, of differing meaning, but each commencing with de.

25 In Lessing's ritual, too, the officiant is required to imagine that the desired result has been obtained. For a further instance of what may be auto-suggestion cf. my article "The Supernatural Element", Part II, p. 160.

26 The readings should probably be corrected to deng, dengleša. The usual words for "steelyard" and "to weigh with a steelyard" are denges and dengleša. It is possible that we have here either a variant form of this Chinese loan word, lacking the diminutive suffix tau, or some confusion with the Mongol words teng, "in equilibrium, equally" and tengelşä, "to balance an animal's load evenly".

27 Offering a feast to children is prescribed also in Mong 297. Copenhagen, fo. 4, a part of a ritual whose purpose is obscure: 9 qeqeqüä-tür gurim ög: "give a feast to 9 children".

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28 Mo. gom yoda for gomuyad.
29 Reading gütelšä for gütelšä.
30 Reading Dutayam for totyayam.
Have it summoned by a man with a fine skilled voice. Avoid persons of incompatible behaviour, dogs and bad things. If you pray trustingly, it will come.  

6v. Ah, may the blessing ² of the unwavering body be established.
May the blessing of the sixtieth jointed commands be established.
May the blessing of immensely unsullied thoughts ³ be established.
May the blessing of body, tongue and thoughts be established.

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² Or, "If you invite it, praying trustingly." The reading nish is not certain.
³ M alți for ḍißei.
⁴ Mo. sāgelân for sēkāl-un.