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Comparative Study of Galdantseren Khan's Oirat Letter Sent to a Khalkha Nobleman Tseren in 1737

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Abstract: The present article deals with an Oirat letter, which was sent from Galdantseren (1694–1745) to the Eastern Mongol nobleman Tseren (1672–1750) in 1737 during the border-line negotiation between the Dzungar Empire (1671–1755) and the Qing Dynasty (1644–1912). The letter is examined from two aspects. The first compares the original Oirat letter and its Manchu translation of that time, attempting to find distinctions in the content or sentences. The second is to analyse the Oirat letter's colloquial elements and speech act. Academics generally agree that the precise sound marking capability of the Oirat script makes it easier for components of that time's spoken language to infiltrate into the written form.

Key words: The Dzungar Empire, the Qing Dynasty, an Oirat letter, Manchu translation of that time, colloquial elements in the Oirat letter, perlocutionary speech act

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Introduction

The prominent Oirat Buddhist monk, — a prince of the Khoshuut tribe, — Rab'byam Zaya Pandita (1599–1662) invented the Oir. *Todo üjüq* “Clear script” in 1648. This writing system is one of the more than ten scripts developed by Mongols based on the Uighur-Mongolian script and is intended to eliminate its deficiencies and is suitable for all Mongols (yet, due to primarily political reasons, it was never accepted by the Eastern Mongols); for instance, it has separate letters for marking short and long vowel phonemes, voiced and voiceless consonants, and reduces the number of positional al-

lographs.¹ Subsequently, the Oirat script has been used as the official written language of the Dzungar Empire established by the Tsoros clan² that held a leading role in the left wing of the Oirat Confederation³ in the seventeenth century. Despite being limited in use following the collapse of the Dzungar Empire, the writing system has survived among the Oirats in contemporary Western Mongolia, Kalmykia, and Xinjiang.

A remarkable publication that includes huge Manchu, Chinese, Uighur-Mongolian, and Oirat script archive documents, 清代新疆满文档案汇编 *Qingdai Xinjiang Manwen dang an huibian* ‘Collections of the Manchu Language Archival Materials on the Qing Xinjiang’,⁴ contains significant pieces of information to study the history of the Oirat Mongols from 1730 to 1911. Co-edited by China Border History and Geography Research Center and the First Historical Archives of China, the 283 volumes consist of several types of documents namely 奏折 *zouzhe* ‘palace memorials’, 上谕 *shangyu* ‘edicts’, 寄信 *jixin* ‘court letters’ and 附件 *fujian* ‘attachments’. The publishers selected the documents based on the Chinese catalogue of 清代边疆满文档案目录 *Qingdai bianjiang Manwen dang’an mulu* ‘Catalog of Frontier Manchu Archives in the Qing Dynasty’,⁵ published in 1999. The present Oirat letter that provides a chance to investigate the colloquial influence on the written language of the eighteenth-century Oirats was included in volume 4 of this collection,⁶ together with the Manchu translation of that time.⁷ The brother-in-law of the emperor, — Man. *Jecen be toktobura hashū ergi aisilara jiyanggiyūn*, Chin. 定邊左副將軍 *Ding bian zuo fu jiangjun* ‘vice-general of the left side of the Pacification of the Frontier’, — Khalkha nobleman Tseren reported it to the Qianlong Emperor (r. 1735–1796) on April 9,

I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Ágnes Birtalan and Attila Rákos for their valuable feedback on my article.

¹ The above definition is based on Rákos (2015 A): 103.

² For a detailed study of the ethnogenetic myth of the Tsoros clan cf. BIRTALAN 2002. In the paper, the author elucidates several salient issues, including an examination of the mythological underpinnings and mythological personages within the Tsoros myths, an exploration of the disparities existing between the oral and literary traditions, an evaluation of the extent to which Buddhist influence permeates the mythical tradition, and an investigation into the purported function of Oirat myths in substantiating their legitimacy.

³ Further reference regarding the Oirat confederation and its ethnic component cf. OKADA 1987.

⁴ WU YUANFENG 2012.

⁵ WU YUANFENG 1999.

⁶ WU YUANFENG 2012, IV: 339–340.

⁷ WU YUANFENG 2012, IV: 336–338.

1737, and the emperor commented on it in red handwriting on April 16. The present study sheds light on issues such as speech act, colloquial elements in the Oirat letter which is based on the methodology of Hungarian morphologist Attila Rákos,⁸ dialect words and their contemporary usage, and the differences between the Manchu translation and the original Oirat letter.

Historical background

Galdantseren Khan (r. 1727–1745), the third ruler of the Dzungar Empire, was the first son of Tseveenravdan Khan (r. 1697–1727) and his Khoshuut wife Gungeravdan (d. 1723). During his 18-year reign, he achieved an important border-line treaty between the Qing Dynasty and the Dzungar Empire in 1739 which sacrificed Tuva and the Great Lakes Basin,⁹ ending inconclusive military engagements with the Qing Dynasty since the 1680s. The tribal appellation Dzungar, also known as Man. *Jun gar*, Oirt. *Jöün yar* ‘Left wing’, Mong. *Jegün yar*, Chin. 準噶爾 *Zhun gaer*, Rus. *Джунгар*, Khal. *Зүүнгар* appeared in the first document in the seventeenth century as an integral component of the Oirat confederation with the Tsoros clan. The geographical location of the Tsoros lineage, on the left wing of the Oirat confederation ultimately became the empire designation when Galdan (1644–1697), the leader of the left wing effectively consolidated their power and united the right wing, establishing an empire renowned as the last independent Mongol state with a non-Chinggisid bloodline. In the winter of 1678, the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngagwang Lobzang Gyatsho (Tib. ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho; 1617–1682) bestowed on him the preeminent honorific title, Tib. *dga'ldan bstan 'dzin bo shog thu khang*;¹⁰ Oirt. *Galdan Bošoqtu xan*; Man. *šajin be jafara g'aldan bošoktu han*;¹¹ Khal. *Шашныг баригч Галдан Бошогт хан* ‘Galdan Boshogtu Khan, patron of religion’. After five successors, namely Tseveenrabdan, Galdantseren, Tseveendorzhnamzhil (r. 1745–1749), Lamdarzhaa (r. 1749–1752), and Davaach (r. 1752–1755), the empire was conquered by the Qing Dynasty in 1755 which resulted in uprisings against the Qing authority from 1755 to 1758.¹²

⁸ RÁKOS 2015a.

⁹ ATWOOD 2004: 194.

¹⁰ ISHIHAMA 2015: 175.

¹¹ JIANG FUCONG 1982: 534.

¹² Several researchers, namely Bawden (1968) and Ishzhamts (1962), focused on this rebellion. The latest studies present the following problems: its influence on the emergence of a rebellion among Khalkha Mongols under Qing control, the significance of Manchu and

Galdantseren Khan held the throne in an unstable political situation when his father, Tseveenravdan Khan died of a poisoned meal from his second wife Seterzhab (?–1727) in her fellows' attempt to turn the Dzungar Empire's political rule. Meanwhile, the Yongzheng emperor (1678–1735) carefully investigated Galdantseren's situation and devised a brilliant plan to conquer the Dzungar Empire. The plan consisted of three main strategies:¹³ to make an alliance with the surrounding pivotal political strengths like the Russian Empire, Khazaks, and Kalmyks; to persuade Luvsanshunu (1695/6–1732), son of the Tseveenravdan and Seterzhav, to become an opponent of Galdantseren; and to mobilise armies to the significant border locations of Khovd and Barkhol. As for the first two plans, Qing Dynasty minister Tushi (托时, ?–1760) was in charge of it, under the guise of dispatching a delegation to the Russian Empire to congratulate Peter II Alexeevich (r. 1727–1730). In addition to delivering the imperial letter to the Russian authorities at the beginning of 1731, he also brought four oral messages:¹⁴ First, to inform the Russian authorities of the Qing Dynasty's war against the Dzungar Empire, and to inform Russia that if the Qing army fought near the Russian border, Russia should not have any suspicions; Second, if the empress had any interest in the adjacent lands with the Dzungarian territory, please inform the Qing envoys about it when the Qing Dynasty conquered the Dzungar Empire, and these lands could be ceded to Russia; Third, if the Dzungars fled into Russia during the war, Russia could accept and restrain them, but hand over their noblemen to the Qing dynasty. The last was a request to dispatch Mantai's (满泰, ?) team to the Kalmyks smoothly. It was intended to receive support from the Kalmyks in the war with the Dzungarians together with cooperating with Luvsanshunu who refuted in Kalmyk to destroy Galdantseren's political power. Russians accepted the request but informed them that if they needed to contact the Kalmyks in the future, they must do so through Russia because “these Kalmyk people were becoming the subject of her Imperial Majesty and could not do anything without her will and permission”. Despite their offers, the Russian Empire held a neutrality and Luvsanshunu politely refused to join.

In addition to the above two envoys, the assistant minister of the Board of Ritual, Hangilu (杭奕祿, ?–1748) was dispatched to the Dzungar Empire in

Russian archive materials, and the role of Amarsanaa (1723–1757) and Chingunzhav (1710–1757), both of whom were famous leaders of the Oirat and Khalkha Mongols (cf. ed. by SUKHBAATAR 2018).

¹³ OYUNBILIG 2017: 8–10.

¹⁴ BANTYSH-KAMENSKY 1882: 178–181.

August 1730 to persuade them to accept the Qing Dynasty's authority.¹⁵ At the same time, the Qing government mobilised 60,000 men to build the fortress of Khovd City. Due to these circumstances, the Dzungarians suddenly attacked the Qing border guards in the Barkhol region at the end of 1730, which resulted in two well-known battles, Khoton Khurga Lake¹⁶ in 1731 and Erdene Zhuu¹⁷ in 1732. The main purpose behind the attack was Galdantseren Khan's intention to manipulate the second Zhevtsundamba Khutughtu (1724–1757) to make an alliance with the Dzungar Empire and to unite Mongols under his reign, however, the Yongzheng Emperor noticed it and issued an order to move the Zhevtsundamba Khutughtu from the Erdene Zhuu monastery to Dolonnuur monastery in September 1731.¹⁸ General Tseren's letters in 1737¹⁹ indicate that the Dzungarians recognized the strength of the Qing in the Erdene Zhuu battle and that the Qing acknowledged the strength of the Dzungarians in the Khoton Khurga battle. Due to the significant military losses on both sides during these battles, the Yongzheng emperor decided to ensure all beings lived in harmony and sent the assistant minister of the Board of Justice, Funai (傅鼐, 1677–1738) to the Dzungar Empire in 1734 to negotiate a peace treaty with them by determining the border lines between the two sides. During the negotiation, a difficult point for both sides was due to its strategically beneficial location, who the Altai Mountains belonged to. In the Dzungar's view, the Altai Mountains belonged to them, while the Khangai Mountains belonged to Khalkha. In contrast, the Qing Dynasty stated that the past should be left in the past and it should be discussed in the current situation. The successor of Yongzheng, the young Qianlong emperor (r. 1736–1796) was quite stringent in the negotiation period. Choi Namki, Galdantseren Khan's envoy left the capital city in February 1736, and was given two choices: accept the suggestion of the Qing Dynasty or stop dispatching envoys and be guarded.²⁰ Under

¹⁵ Man. *Jun gar-i ba be necihiyeme toktobuha bodogon-i bithe* 'Strategy Book for the Pacification of the Dzungarian Territory', 20th book in the Central Collection. The Yongzheng emperor issued an order on Fire Cow Day (May 10), the 8th year (1730) of Yongzheng.

¹⁶ Khoton and Khurga Lakes are located in Bayan-Olgii province, Mongolia.

¹⁷ Erdene Zhuu monestary in Ovorkhangai province, Mongolia.

¹⁸ *Strategy Book for the Pacification of the Dzungarian Territory*, 26th book in the Central Collection. The Yongzheng emperor issued an order on Female Metal Goat Day (September 11), the 9th year (1731) of Yongzheng.

¹⁹ ZHAO LINGZHI 2009: 396–397. General Tseren's letter was addressed to Galdantseren Khan.

²⁰ ZHAO LINGZHI 2009: 353–360. The Qianlong Emperor's letter to Galdantseren Khan on February 15, 1736.

the situation, Galdantseren Khan attempted to seek assistance from General Tseren by capturing the border guardsman named Zhamba (Man. *Jamba*) from Khalkha in June of the same year and releasing him with a letter addressed to Tseren in January — of the next year.

Form and Content of the Oirat Letter

Zhamba, a subject of the *gung* (in Manchu) Minzhuur (?–1740) of the Chin Achitu wang banner in the Zasagt Khan province was in charge of border guarding duty at Khamar Shaazhgai station²¹ and his station was attacked by the Dzungars in June 1736. As far as his time at the Dzungar and the true intention of Galdantseren Khan were concerned, General Tseren interrogated Zhamba in detail and clarified his one-year background from when he was captured until his release by the Dzungarians. The following table is based on General Tseren's letter sent to the Qianlong Emperor on April 9, 1737,²² to illustrate Zhamba's track.

Date	Definition
June 28, 1736	The Dzungars attacked Khamar Shaazhgai station where Zhamba was serving
July 8, 1736	Zhamba captured by the Dzungars
July 10, 1736	Zhamba attempted to escape when they reached Khada Chingil ²³
July 11, 1736	They arrived at Arugtai
August 8, 1736	Zhamba entered the Ili Valley where Galdantseren Khan lived
January 9, 1737	Zhamba first time met Galdantseren Khan and was set free with Oros who belonged to the same banner as Zhamba
January 20, 1737	Oros died at Sari

²¹ Shaazhgai Lake is located in Khovd sum, Uvs province, Mongolia. This border guard station seems to have existed near the lake.

²² WU YUANFENG 2012, IV: 340–345. General Tseren's memorial was sent to the Qianlong emperor on April 9, 1737, about interrogating Zhamba.

²³ *Qing ge li he* 青格里河 (or *Qing he* 清河) river is located in the northeast of Qinghe County, Altay Prefecture, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, China. This border guard station seems to have existed near the river.

Date	Definition
March 7, 1737	Zhamba went forward alone since coming at Khad Chingil, and the Dzungarian soldiers returned to their land
March 10, 1737	Guardsman <i>Kamci</i> (in Manchu) at <i>Bodohoni hošoi</i> (in Manchu) station reported to <i>hebei amban</i> (in Manchu) Tsengunzhav (?–1771) who led one thousand Khalkha soldiers at Uliastai that Zhamba crossed the border
March 13, 1737	Zhamba arrived at <i>Bodohoni hošoi</i> station
March 14, 1737	Zhamba arrived at <i>Bodohoni holo</i> (in Manchu) ²⁴ station and was delivered to General Tseren
April 9, 1737	General Tseren sent his letter to the Qianlong Emperor about interrogating Zhamba
April 16, 1737	General Tseren’s letter was introduced to the Qianlong Emperor

Zhamba was released after half a year of living in the Dzungar Empire with the letter and Galdantseren Khan’s oral statement, which exactly repeated the letter’s content. The Oirat letter’s content can be divided into the following parts:

Inscriptio

to the wise prince [Tseren], [it is] given.

*Arenga*²⁵

You know the previously discussed matters, so [we] don’t need to talk [about] them [again]. In the first imperial [Qianlong] letter that my envoy Choi Namki recently brought [is indicated that], to establish the borderline as [the Qianlong] mentioned earlier: do not touch my territory in the Altai; the [Eastern] Mongols should stay in their previous land; and if you [Galdantseren] will not do it this way, don’t dispatch your envoy [again].

Narratio

Although you not only said not to send an envoy, but also that you would go to war, it is difficult to give you the territory where [we have been] living

²⁴ A gorge named Botgon khavtsal is located in Mankhan sum, Khovd province, Mongolia. This border guard station seems to have settled down at the gorge.

²⁵ Arenga expresses in general terms the motive for the issue of the document. Cf. *Diplomatics* 2015.

ever since [our] ancestors. The person who brought up such words is you Mongols. If we are in Altai, you suspect that it will cause harm to you. Seems you talk to admonish ministers of the board. If such words are going on, it will eventually be as inharmonious as before, and it will cause suffering to all living beings, I think. If a conflict occurs, it does not matter how far or near [we live], there is no place where we can't reach out to each other. Let's stop talking about this word, and if we become peaceful, regardless of how far and near, I will not harm you and won't deceive you. This year your patrol came to Altai and watched over my land, so my border folks [were worried about] why you located your border guard station in our land and caught your two men. If we keep watching each other like this closer now, my border folks will be doubted since we become closer now, and [it might] lead to unpleasantly. [Hence,] retreat your station [slightly inwards] is better. Previously, all living beings suffered because the [Qing] government and ministers had taken conflict actions which resulted in conflict. Don't you [Tseren] know everything [about it]? Even now, [I] think prohibiting us from settling down at the Altai is that the border edge leads to a conflict like before. Therefore, you [Tseren] and Outer Mongol's noblemen [first] tell the government ministers and inner ministers [and then] report to the emperor [about it] for expanding yellow [hat] Buddhism and making all beings happy. Respond [Tseren] to my word before the first mount of autumn of the snake year, and the circumstance is talked by Zhamba and Oros's mouths.

Datatio

Fire Snake [1737] year, the first mount, the eighth day.

In the above letter as a first step, Galdantseren Khan presented his suspicions as to why the Qianlong Emperor had taken such a stringent stance during negotiations (he believed that Tseren was responsible for all those incidents), later recalled the previous hardships and explained the current worries, and finally shared his true intention of solve the matter peacefully by saying that making all beings happy.

Comparison of the original Oirat letter and its Manchu translation

The main question concerning who translated the Oirat letter into Manchu: Was he a Mongolian fluent in Manchu or a Manchu fluent in Mongolian? Is there any clue in the letter to answer this question? Throughout the comparison, we can see morphological and lexical cases which imply that the

translator could be a Manchu person because he couldn't understand or read some expressions in the Oirat letter properly.

a. Morphological cases

Oirt. *odō mini elči čoi namki eseyigēr /1–3/ ireqsen qāni bičiq tū* ‘in the first imperial [Qianlong] letter that my envoy Choi Namki recently brought’

Man. *ne mini elcin coi nam'ka isigei deri* [sic!] *jihe /1–5/ han i bithede* [id.]

An expression in the Oirat letter, *ešeyigēr*²⁶ was translated separately into Manchu text: *isigei deri* period. Its writing looks identical to the Oirat writing and this expression couldn't be found in any Manchu dictionary. Nevertheless, the translator seems to understand the instrumental case suffix in the Oirat letter *-gēr*²⁷ and translated *ešeyigēr* in two sections using the prolicative case suffix *-deri*²⁸ in Manchu.

Oirt. *mani jaxayin kümün, mani nutuq tu xaroulān /1–15/ you* [sic!] *kekē soulyaxu belei gēd xoyor kümüyiten bariji ireji* ‘my border folks [were worried about] why you located your border guard station in our land and caught your two men’

Man. *meni jecen i niyalma, meni nuktei /2–18/ tanggū* [sic!] *karun be tebumbi sehei juwe niyalma be jafafi ganjihabi* [id.]

It appears that the translator was confused between Oirt. *you* ‘why, what, how’ and Mong. *jou* ‘hundred’ because of their identical appearance, and translated Oirt. *you* into Manchu as *tanggū* ‘hundred’ which doesn't make sense in the sentence. The next case illustrated that the translator was confused between the several meanings of an expression.

Oirt. */1–3/ xāni bičiq tū yačariyin jāgi urdaki* [sic!] *yosōr šiyidēd* ‘In the imperial letter [indicated that] to establish the borderline as mentioned earlier’

Man. */1–5/ han i bithede, ba na i julergi* [sic!] *hešen be toktobuŋi* ‘In the imperial letter [indicated that] to establish the south borderline’

The expression *urdaki* has general meanings that are previous (or before, earlier) and south (or southern) two. It seems that the translator misinterpreted *urdaki* and translated it as south. Furthermore, the translator misinterpreted the means of “previous” again and translated *urdaki* as ‘*te an-i*’ (Mon. *edüge keb iyer*) ‘ordinary like now’.

²⁶ This expression is not included in Krueger's Oirat dictionary, but there are indicated synonyms such as *ešendü* ‘in the beginning’ and *ešeni* ‘originally, at first’ cf. KRUEGER 1978, part I: 66–67.

²⁷ RÁKOS 2015b: 59.

²⁸ GORELOVA 2002: 331.

Oirt. /1–4/ *mongyoliyin arosun* [sic!] *urdaki oron dōn bayituyai* ‘the [Eastern] Mongols should stay in their previous land’

Man. *monggoi* /2–1/ *fejergi urse te an i bikini* ‘the people under the [Eastern] Mongolians should stay in their current [land]’

There is another questionable translation related to the word *arosun* [sic!], which was written unclearly in the original Oirat text. The reason why the translator did it is still unclear even so it leaves so many questions behind: why did he translate with two words *fejergi urse* (Man. *dour_a du arad*) ‘people under’ and what is the original Mongolian word that could have those meanings or was it also misinterpreted? In addition to the most common suffix for expressing conditionality in the written language, adverbium conditionale’s *-wl*,²⁹ the original Oirat letter has introduced an interesting variant of the adverbium conditional suffix-*bo\ba\be gem* which was translated with the *-ci* suffix in Manchu.

Oirt. /1–5/ *öü=gēr ese bol=bo gem* ‘if can’t do it this way’
this way=inst neg to become=adv.fin part

Man. /2–1/ *uttu akū o=ci* [id.]
this way NEG to become=con

Oirt. *odō eyimi* /1–16/ *šadar xara=ji bayi=ba gem* ‘If we keep watching each other like this closer now’

now like close to see=adv.imper to be=adv.fin part

Man. *te ere gese hanci kara=me* /3–2/ *bi=ci* [id.]
now this like close to see=adv.fer to be=con

b. Lexical cases

An interesting difference between the Manchu and Mongolian languages can be seen in the next case, in which the Mongolian lexeme *ečige öbököšö* ‘father and grandfather’ was translated into Manchu in the reverse order³⁰ as *mafa ama* ‘grandfather and father’. Moreover, the translator made more classical translations and added a Manchu expression *gebu=de* ‘name (or fame)=dat’.

²⁹ RÁKOS 2015b: 92.

³⁰ Although the author couldn’t find a detailed study on the present case yet, Mongolian philologist Bayrsaikhan has mentioned two cases that illustrated differences between the Mongolian and Manchu languages in his study: the first one is that if Mongols said *egün-eče qoyisi* ‘hereafter’ it is going to express oppositely in Manchu *ereci julergi* ‘here before’. The next one is, that Mongols said *bi arbun nasutai* or *bi arbun nasun-du kürbe* ‘I am 10 years old or I reached 10 years old’ while in Manchu *bi juwan se oho* ‘I become 10 years old’ cf. BAYARSAIKHAN 2003: 50.

Oirt. *ečige öbökösö nārān /1–7/ nutuqlaqsan nutuḡān tabiji ögüqči mini kečöü* ‘it is difficult to give the territory where we have been living ever since our father and grandfather’

Man. *mafa /2–4/ ama i gebu de daci nuktembihe nuktei babe /2–5/ anabume burengge manga* ‘it is difficult to give the territory where we have been living hitherto by the fame of our grandfather and father’

The translator seems familiar with the Oirat dialectal terms of *uralān* ‘previously’³¹ and *nāru čāru* ‘to-and-fro’.³² The first is less commonly used (almost forgotten) among the Oirats in contemporary Western Mongolia, where the author comes from, while the second is still regularly used.

Oirt. *uralān nāru čāru kelelčejī bayiqsan ügeyigi či /1–2/ medē tölō* ‘you know the previously discussed matters to-and-fro’

Man. *neneme ebsi casi gisureme /1–3/ bihe gisun be si donjiha saha ofi* [id.]

Colloquial elements and perlocutionary speech act in the Oirat letter

The appearance of colloquial elements in written Oirat texts can be found easily in documents concerning everyday activities or informal topics, particularly personal and business letters, more than in monuments with formal or religious content.³³ The present Oirat letter is a diplomatic text but contains colloquial elements in some aspects: a dialectal term (a), the colloquial form of the reflexive possessive suffix (b), the colloquial form of the ablative case suffix (c), dropout of vowels (d), fronted vowels spelling directly reflects the new vowel quality (e), the colloquial form of the instrumental case marker (f), the colloquial form of the long vowel (g) and non-harmonising form (h).

- a. Oirt. /1–6/ *nāru čāru* ‘to-and-fro’, WM. *inaysi činaysi*
- b. Oirt. /1–4/ *oron dōn* ‘country/land=loc.ref.poss’
WM. *oron du ban* or *oron dayan*
Oirt. /1–8/ *beyi=den* ‘body=loc.ref.poss’, WM. *bey_e dü ben*
- c. Oirt. /1–6/ *öbök=ōsö* ‘ancestor=abl’, WM. *ebüge eče*
Oirt. /2–9/ *sar=āsa* ‘month=abl’, WM. *sar eče*

³¹ Multiple variants of this expression are documented: *urālān* ‘previously, prior’ and *urālan* ‘ahead, forward, in front’ cf. KRUEGER 1978, part II: 179.

³² Krueger translated this expression separately: *nāru* ‘hither, this way, within, since, before’ and *čāru* ‘thither’ cf. KRUEGER 1978, part II: 212 and part III: 621.

³³ RÁKOS 2015a: 104.

- d. Oirt. /2–1/ *urda* ‘before/previously’, WM. *urida*
 e. Oirt. /2–3/ *bese*³⁴ ‘other/different/anything’, WM. *basu* or *busu*
 f. Oirt. /1–3/ *yos=ōr* ‘custom/manner=instr’, WM. *yosu bar*
 Oirt. /2–2/ *ebdereldüqs=ēr* ‘to conflict=instr’, WM. *ebdereldügsen-iyer*
 g. Oirt. /2–3/ *ǰāq* ‘to demonstrate’, WM. *ǰiyaqu*
 h. Oirt. /1–10/ *ǰobouritai* ‘painful’, WM. *ǰobayritai*

A perlocutionary speech act aims to change the listener’s feelings, thoughts, or actions by persuading (or convincing), inspiring (or insulting), or scaring (or deterring).³⁵ Galdantseren Khan made clear in his letter that he intended to change the Qing Dynasty’s decisive action by persuading General Tseren by giving reasons. As mentioned in the letter, from Galdantseren Khan’s perspective the main fear of the Khalkhas during the negotiation was that if the Dzungars were in the Altai, it would cause harm to them. That’s why Galdantseren Khan gave his first promise “It does not matter how far or near [we live], and if a conflict occurs, there is no place where we can’t reach out to each other. Let’s stop talking about it. Regardless of distance, if we become peaceful, I will not harm you and won’t deceive you”. Despite this, Galdantseren Khan’s primary concern was that conflict like before could occur again, and that is repeated three times in the letter.

Oirt. /1–10/ *urdaki du adali ebderel bolǰi olon amitan du ǰobouritai bolxu beyiǰe /1–11/ geǰi sananai* ‘I think that it will eventually be as inharmonious as before, and it will cause suffering to all living beings’

Oirt. *ebdereltei šinggi bolxu tölö, xaroulān čāru /2–1/ tataǰi xaraqsan tan sayin* ‘[it might] lead to unpleasantly. [Hence,] retreat your station [slightly inwards] is better’

Oirt. *töün šinggi ebderel bolxo beyiǰe geǰi /2–5/ sananai* ‘[I] think it leads to a conflict like before’

At the end of the argument, Galdantseren Khan attempted to remind General Tseren about all those harsh times by asking, Oirt. *yamar bese učiri či medē bišöü* ‘Don’t you [Tseren] know everything about it?’. Based on the Manchu archive materials, Galdantseren Khan’s perlocutionary speech act fulfilled its purpose and the two sides established borderlines in 1739. As a response to Galdantseren Khan’s letter, General Tseren dispatched nobleman

³⁴ KRUEGER 1978, part II: 338.

³⁵ BIRTALAN 2012: 90–105. She has conducted the first study of the perlocutionary speech act on Mongolian materials.

Emgen, his close relative, and he reached Galdantseren Khan's place on September 7, 1737, and headed back from there on the additional month of September 5, the same year³⁶.

Conclusion

Galdantseren Khan wrote an Oirat letter to Khalkha nobleman Tseren in 1737 for assistance during the borderline negotiation between the Qing Dynasty and the Dzungar Empire when the Qianlong Emperor stood firm on his statements. The original Oirat letter contains colloquial elements with the perlocutionary speech act, and the translator who translated the letter into Manchu could have been a Manchu person.

Abbreviations

Man.: Manchu
Oirt.: Oirat
WM: Written Mongolian (i.e., Classical Mongolian)
ABL: ablative
ADV: adverbium
ACC: accusative
DAT: dative
FIN: finitum
IMPER: imperfecti
INST: instrumental
NEG: negative
LOC: locative
PART: particle
PER: perfecti
POSS: possessive
REF: reflexive

³⁶ WU YUANFENG 2012, IV: 384–388. General Tseren's memorial to the Qianlong emperor on November 9, 1737, about nobleman Emgen's return from the Dzungar Empire.

Appendix

Transcription of the Oirat letter³⁷: /1–1/ čečen vang du öqbö, uralān nāru čāru kelelčeji bayiqsan ügeyigi či /1–2/ medē tölö töüni keleji kereq ügei, odō mini elči čoi namki eseyigēr /1–3/ ireqsen xāni biçiq tü, ɣajariyin jāgi urdaki yosōr šiyidēd, mini nutugi /1–4/ altai-du bitegei kür, mongyoliyin arosun [sic!] urdaki oron dōn bayituyai, /1–5/ öügēr ese bolbo gem elči čigi ilgem kereq ügei geji irebe, elči /1–6/ ülü ilgekü bayituyai dayin bolonai bi gem čigi ečige öbököšö nārān /1–7/ nutuqlaşan nutuyān tabişi ögüqči mini kečöü, öüni eyigöülji bayiqčiyigi /1–8/ ta mongyol mani altai du bayiyād, beyeden xor kikü geji sejiqlēd jüryān /1–9/ bitü sayidoudi kökögöd eyigöölne bololtai, eyimi üge utudaba gem adaqni /1–10/ urdaki du adali ebderel bolşi olon amitan du jobouritai bolxu beyiše /1–11/ geji sananai, kerbe ebdereltei üyile bolumaqča xolo oyiro geji kürči /1–12/ yadaxu ɣajar ügei, eyimi ügeyigi ourād sayin sayixan bayiba gem, xolo /1–13/ oyiro bolbočigi mekeleji xor kekü mini ügei, ene jil tanai xaroul altai /1–14/ du ireji xaraşi bayiqsayigi mani jaxayin kümün, mani nutuq tu xaroulān /1–15/ you kekē soulyaxu belei gēd xoyor kümüyiten barişi ireji, odō eyimi /1–16/ šidar xaraşi bayiba gem, mani jaxayin kümün šidardaqsan tölö xoriqlōd /1–17/ xorixuyitai bolbo gem, ebdereltei šinggi bolxu tölö, xaroulān čāru /2–1/ tataşi xaraqsan tan sayin, urda jüryān bolōd sayidoud ülü bolxu üge /2–2/ üyile keji ebdereldüqsēr: olon amitan du amur jobouritai boluqsan, /2–3/ yamar bese uçiri či medē bišöü, odō čigi bese ɣajariyin jāq gēd /2–4/ altai du bitegei nutuqla gebe gem töün šinggi ebderel bolxu beyiše geji /2–5/ sananai, teyimi tölö či bolōd ɣajādu mongyoliyin noyodoud, jüryān /2–6/ bolōd dotoriyin sayidoud tu čigi keleji, yeke xān du čigi ayiladxaji /2–7/ ebderel ügei šarayin šajin delgereşi olon amitan jiryaxu üyile keqsen /2–8/ sayin, ene ügeyinni mini xariugiyini moyoi jiliyin namuriyin türüün sarāsa /2–9/ nāru kele, basa uçiriyini jimba oros xoyoula amār kelekü, /2–10/ ɣal moyoi jiliyin 1 sarayin 8 ödür.

Transcription of the Manchu letter³⁸: /1–1/ cecen /1–2/ wang de ung-gehe, neneme ebsi casi gisureme /1–3/ bihe gisun be si donjiha saha ofi gisure /1–4/ baitakū, ne mini elcin coi nam'ka isigei deri jihe /1–5/ han i bithede, ba na-i julergi hešen be toktobufi /1–6/ mini nukte be altai de ume

³⁷ WU YUANFENG 2012, IV: 339–340.

³⁸ WU YUANFENG 2012, IV: 336–338.

isinara, monggoso /2-1/ fejerji urse te an i bikini, uttu akū oci /2-2/ elcin unggire inu baitakū seme jihebi, elcin /2-3/ unggirakū sere anggala dailambi secibe mafan /2-4/ ama i gebu de daci nuktembihe nuktei babe /2-5/ anabume burengge mangga, erebe uuntu oburengge /2-6/ suweni monggoso, membe altai de bifi biyede /2-7/ koro isibumbi seme kenehunjeme jurgan i jergi /2-8/ ambasa be huwekiyebufi uttu obumbi dere, /2-9/ uttu bihei goidaha manggi aici nenehe /2-10/ gese efujen banjinafi geren ergengge de /2-11/ suilacun ombi dere seme gūnimbi, aika /2-12/ eherci acara baita tucici, goro hanci /2-13/ seme isiname muterakū ba akū, ere gese /2-14/ gisun-be nakafi, sain saikan-i bici goro /2-15/ hanci seme arga deribume koro isibure ba /2-16/ akū, ere aniya suweni karun altai-de jifi /2-17/ karame bihe be meni jecen-i niyalma meni nuktei /2-18/ tanggū karun be tebumbi sehei juwe niyalma be /3-1/ jafafi ganjihabi, te ere gese hanci karame /3-2/ bici meni jecen i niyalma hanci oho turgunde /3-3/ kenehun-jeme bašara de isinaci efujen banjinara /3-4/ gese, suweni karun be casi tatame gaici /3-5/ sain, neneme jurgan i ambasa banjinarakū baita be /3-6/ deribuhei geren ergengge de jobocun obuha, yaya /3-7/ baita be sini sahangge, te sehe seme ba i /3-8/ jecen altai de ume nuktere seci tere gese /3-9/ efujen banjinambi dere seme gūnimbi, uttu /3-10/ ofi sini beye monggoi taiji sa jurgan, /3-11/ jai dorgi ambasa de alafi /3-12/ amba han de seme wesimbufi, efujen akū suwayan-i /3-13/ šajin be badarabume geren ergengge be jargabure /3-14/ baita be deribuci sain, mini ere gisun-i /3-15/ karu be meihe aniya i bolori ujui biyade /3-16/ ebsi ungu, turgun be jimba, oros juwe /3-17/ nofi anggai alambi, meihe aniya aniya biyai /4-1/ ice jakūn.

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