

# Doktori disszertáció

Synchronic and Diachronic Comparative Analysis of the Oirad Dialects

Az ojrát nyelvjárások szinkrón és diakrón összehasonlító elemzése

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Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem  
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Rákos Attila

Synchronic and Diachronic Comparative Analysis of the Oirad Dialects

(Az ojrát nyelvjárások szinkrón és diakrón összehasonlító elemzése)

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a doktori értekezés szerzőjének aláírása

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. TRANSCRIPTION

The transcription system used in the present work for transcribing Oirad and other Mongolian languages is a phonemic transcription that consists of characters used traditionally in Mongolian studies with some additions and innovations based in IPA symbols. In general, phonemic Oirad data are written in italics through the text without any additional marking. Data from other languages are cited in italics using the relevant writing system of the given language (e.g. Cyrillic for Khalkha Mongolian) or in its usual transcription system (e.g. Pinyin for Chinese, traditional romanization for Written Mongolian and Written Oirad, etc.). Phonetic details are provided in square brackets using IPA symbols where necessary. Vowel length and geminated consonants are marked by the relevant IPA symbol (:).

<b>Transcription symbols used for Oirad</b>	<b>Most frequent IPA equivalent</b>
b	b
w	β, w
c	ts
č	tʃ / tʃʰ
d	d
dʲ	dʲ
g	g
γ	ɣ / ʁ
x	x
j	j
ž	ʤ / ʤʰ
k	k
l	l, ɭ
lʲ	lʲ
m	m
n	n, ɳ
nʲ	nʲ
ŋ	ŋ
p	p
r	r, ʀ

rʲ	rʲ
s	s
š	ʃ
t	t
tʲ	tʲ
ʒ	z, d͡z / ɮ
a	a
ä	æ
e	e
i	i
o	o / ɔ
ö	ø / ɵ
u	u
ü	y
ə	ə

## 1.2. ABBREVIATIONS

### 1.2.1. Abbreviation of languages and dialects

WMO	Western Mongolian Oirad
WMO-D	Western Mongolian Oirad, Dörwöd
WMO-B	Western Mongolian Oirad, Bayid
WMO-Khot	Western Mongolian Oirad, Khoton
WMO-Ö	Western Mongolian Oirad, Ööld
WMO-U	Western Mongolian Oirad, Uriankhai
WMO-T	Western Mongolian Oirad, Torgud
WMO-J	Western Mongolian Oirad, Jakhchin
WMO-M	Western Mongolian Oirad, Mingad
XO	Xinjiang Oirad
XO-T	Xinjiang Oirad, Torgud

XO-Kh	Xinjiang Oirad, Khoshud
XO-Ö	Xinjiang Oirad, Ööld
SK	Sart-Kalmyk
Kalm.	Kalmyk
Kalm.-D	Kalmyk, Dörwöd
Kalm.-T	Kalmyk, Torgud
Kalm.-B	Kalmyk, Buzawa
DM	Deed Mongol
DM-He	Deed Mongol, Henan
WM	Written Mongolian
Khal.	Khalkha
WO	Written Oirad
Dar.	Darkhad
Bur.	Buriad
AO	Alsha Oirad
Rus.	Russian
Tib.	Tibetan
Skr.	Sanskrit
OT	Old Turkic
Kaz.	Kazakh

Nog. Nogai

Tat. Tatar

### 1.2.2. List of glossing abbreviations

1P	1st person
2P	2nd person
3P	3rd person
ACC	accusative
ADD	additive
ARCH	archaic
CAUS	causative
COLL	collective
COM	comitative
CONC	concessive
CONF	confirmative
CONT	continuative
CONV	converb
CONV.ABT	abtemporal converb
CONV.COND	conditional converb
CONV.IMP	imperfect converb
CONV.MOD	modal converb
CONV.PERF	perfect converb
CONV.TERM	terminative converb
COOP	co-operative
DAT	dative
DEF	definite
DES	desiderative
DIR	directive
DUB	dubitative
EQU	equative
GEN	genitive
IMP	imperfect
IMPER	imperative
IND	indefinite
INSTR	instrumental

INTENS	intensifier
INTERR	interrogative
LIM	limitative
NOM	nominative
ONOM	onomatopoeia
OPT	optative
PART	participle
PART.ACT	participle of actor
PART.FUT	futuritive participle
PART.HAB	habitive participle
PART.IMP	imperfective participle
PART.PERF	perfective participle
PASS	passive
PERF	perfect
PERM	permissive
PL	plural
PLUR	pluralitive
PLUR	pluralitive
POL	polite
PRAES.IMP	praesens imperfecti
PRAES.PERF	praesens perfecti
PRAET.IMP	praeteritum imperfecti
PRAET.PERF	praeteritum perfecti
PROH	prohibitive
REF	reflexive
RHYME	rhyme
SG	singular
SOC	sociative
TPC	topic marker
VOC	vocative
VOL	voluntative

### **1.3. THE AIM AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

The main goal of the present work is creating a phonological and morphological description of Oirad language and its dialects with an outlook on their history and diachronic evolution. The

present description of Oirad is based on field-work materials, as well as language descriptions and texts published in the relevant academic literature. Although several descriptions of various dialects are available in Mongolian, Russian and English (see History of the researches), a description of Oirad in general, covering materials from all or most of its dialects has not been published yet.

A general description of Oirad may be useful for studies on various research topics. The history of Mongolic languages is an extensively, but still not completely studied field. There are several studies dealing with the overall history of Mongolian or Mongolic languages, but only few studies deal with the history of particular languages or dialects. Conducting researches on the present state of Oirad is an essential requirement for studying its history. The present work cannot go into the details of the history of Oirad, it would be far beyond the limits of such a work, but tries to outline the diachronic background of some phenomena in order to show their importance in further studies.

Unfortunately, there are no etymological dictionaries of Mongolian, although it would be essential for the thorough and reliable researches on the history of Mongolian. Detailed description of various Mongolian or Mongolic languages and dialects is fundamental requirement that should be done before compiling and etymological dictionary.

Oirad was in permanent contact with other languages through its history. Due to the influence of these languages Oirad incorporated several elements from Chinese, Tibetan, Russian and various Turkic languages. Since these relations were obviously mutual, a layer (or layers) of Oirad influence should exist in at least some of these languages. A description of Oirad definitely may help to forward studies dealing with these interlingual relations.

Most of the Oirad dialects are spoken by minority groups living under the strong influence of the language and culture of the majority. Practically all dialects are endangered, some of them are almost extinct, while others are on the way to becoming extinct within the next decades. Collecting data from the still living speakers of the most endangered dialects is an important task, but documenting the less endangered variants is also an urgent problem. There are at least two areas, where Oirad has a good chance to survive (Kalmykia and East Turkestan), but it still requires the active and effective participation of the Oirads themselves and also the involvement of local and state authorities into the revitalization projects. Descriptions of the various Oirad dialects may contribute in the success of these revitalization projects, too.

The present work is not the final outcome of a closed project, but a milestone of an ongoing research. The summary of what is known about Oirad on the basis of the currently available source materials unfolds and shows the incomplete and imperfect parts of the general view.

The further research plans of the author include two main directions on the basis of the present work. On the one hand the author plans to collect more source material on the Oirad dialects (texts, audio and video recordings) with the aim of clarifying the unclear or defective parts of the general view of Oirad. On the other hand further research is aiming the study of the history of Oirad on the basis of written monuments from various sources.

#### **1.4. RESEARCH METHODS**

The basis of a description of a language is an analysis of an oral and/or written corpus of texts. An ideal comparative analysis of dialects would be based on a set of corpora containing texts from each involved dialect with a very similar structure and content. Such a corpus of dialects would provide the best material for comparing various features of different dialects. Unfortunately there is no such a corpus of Oirad dialects available at present, so the analysis should be based on the available sources. These sources are pretty heterogeneous, the available texts were collected and recorded by different researchers in different periods using different transcriptions.

#### **1.5. DEFINITION OF OIRAD**

Oirad is an ethnic, linguistic, cultural, historical and political term that is used in wider and narrower sense in various diachronic and synchronic contexts (Oirad people, Oirad language, Oirad script, Oirad Khanate, etc.). The word itself first appears in the 13<sup>th</sup> century as an ethnonym and has remained in use up to now. There are several other synonymous names that are either interchangeable with Oirad in some contexts or overlap its semantic field, and several other ones denoting its subcategories.

In the present work Oirad is basically used as a linguistic term that denotes a branch of Mongolic languages, a group of dialects also frequently called Western Mongolian and spoken by people living scattered through distant territories of Inner Asia and easternmost border of Europe. These groups and their dialects are known under different internal and external names, and not classified uniformly in the academic literature. So the definition of Oirad is far not unambiguous, heavily depends on the context. In this work Oirad as a linguistic term includes the native or ethnic language of the following ethnic groups:

- Oirads living in Mongolia (Dörwöd, Bayad, Ööld, Jakhchin, Torgud, Minggad, Khoton, Uriankhai)
- Oirads living in Kalmykia and its neighbouring territories (Kalmyk, Torgud, Dörwöd, Buzawa)
- Oirads living at the Yssyk-köl in Kyrgyzstan (Sart-Kalmyk)

- Oirads living in Xinjiang, China (Torgud, Dörwöd, Ööld, Khoshud)
- Oirads living in the Alsha League of Inner Mongolia (Torgud, Khoshud)
- Oirads living in Gansu and Qinghai, China (Deed Mongol, Khoshud, Torgud)

Although some authors include other groups into Oirads, such as Darkhads and Khotgoids of Northern Mongolia<sup>1</sup>, the present work does not deal with the language of these groups.

## 1.6. HISTORICAL CONTEXT<sup>2</sup>

Word Oirad (WM *oyirad*, WO *oyirod*, Oir. *ö:rd*) first occurs in the 13<sup>th</sup>-century chronicle, the Secret History of Mongols in the form *oyirad* as the name of a Mongolian ethnic group or tribe.<sup>3</sup> The homeland of Oirads was probably in the southern part of the forest area, west or southwest of the lake Baikal. As Rašīd ad-Dīn writes in his *Compendium of Chronicles* Oirads were living in a territory called “Eight rivers”, probably in the area of the source of the Yenisei.<sup>4</sup>

According to the sources Oirads of that time were considered as one of the so-called „forest people” (MM *hoi-yin irgen*, WM *oi-yin irgen*), which is a term used by both the Secret History of Mongols and Rašīd ad-Dīn in opposition with WM *keger-ün irgen* ‘steppe people’. According to this economic-social division „forest people” were probably semi-nomad or hunting groups living in the forest area, while „steppe people” were steppe nomads, who formed tribal alliances and some of their tribes even established states (e.g. Naimans, Kereits). During the 13th century Oirads moved on from their previous homeland to the steppe and changed their way of life and became real steppe nomads, too. In the 14th century they formed a well-organised alliance close to the level of statehood, and they started to play a significant role in the history of Inner Asia for a long time. From the 14th century Oirads were a strong power in opposite of the Eastern Mongols led by the descendants of Chingis khan, and they were fighting for the leadership of the territories inhabited by Mongols. Oirads were an important and significant group not only in the internal rivalry of the Mongols, but they formed a strong military and political power that the ruling dynasties of China (Ming and later Qing) also had

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<sup>1</sup> Ю. ЦЭНДЭЭ, *Ойрад аялгууны хэл зүй*, Улаанбаатар, Монгол Улсын Боловсролын Их Сургууль, Монгол Судлалын Сургууль, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> The present summary of the Oirad history is based on the following works: Á. BIRTALAN – A. RÁKOS, *A kalmükök. Egy európai mongol nép*, Budapest, Terebess Kiadó, 2002; S. A. J. HALKOVIC, *The Mongols of the West*, Bloomington, Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, Indiana University, 1985; L. LŐRINCZ, *Mongólia története*, Budapest, Gondolat, 1977.

<sup>3</sup> L. LIGETI (Ed.), *Historie Secrète de Mongols*, Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1971.

<sup>4</sup> А. А. СЕМЕНОВ (Ed.), *Рашид Ад-Дин: Сборник летописей*, vol. I/1, tradotto da Л. А. Хетагуров, Москва, Ленинград, Издательство Академии Наук СССР, 1952, 119–121.

to take into account. The zenith of the Oirad power was during the time of the Jungar Empire (or Khanate) from the middle of the 17th century to the middle of the 18 century. During this period different groups of Oirads left their pastures in Jungaria and headed to new territories. One group moved towards Tibet and Amdo (they are the ancestors of today's Deed Mongols), while another group moved west to the Caspian sea and the Volga forming a new ethnic unit called Kalmyk today. After the fall of the Jungar Empire and the Oirad political power Oirads could preserve their identity, language and culture for a while, but their language and culture became endangered in modern times.

Oirads are usually mentioned in different historical sources as *Dörben Oyirad* 'Four Oirads'. Dörbens (WM *dörben* 'four') and Oirads are mentioned several times in the Secret History of the Mongols, too. According to the chronicle Dörbens have common ancestors with Borjigids, the clan of Chingis khan: Dobun-mergen, the mythical ancestor of Chingis khan had a brother, Duwa-soqor, whose four sons founded the clan of the Dörbeds.

At the beginning Dörbens and Oirads were enemies and opponents of Chingis khan (called Temüjin at this time), they were a member of an alliance led by Jamuka, rival of Chingis khan. Dörbens and Oirads were there, when Jamuqa was elected to the title of *gür-qa* in 1201 and they fought together with him under the leadership of the Dörben Qaji'un beki and the Oirad Quduqa beki in the battle at Köiten, but they have been defeated by Temüjin.<sup>5</sup> When Temüjin defeated the Naimans, Dörbens and some other allies of Jamuka left their previous leader and joined the victorious Temüjin.<sup>6</sup> Later in 1207, when Chingis khan's son, Jochi led a campaign with the aim of subjugating the so-called „forest people” living in the vicinity of lake Baikal and in the northern territories of Mongolia, Oirads living there joined him without resistance.<sup>7</sup> After joining the new Mongol power Oirad leaders established dynastic relations with the ruling clan of Chingis khan and took part in the conquering campaigns of the Mongol Empire.

After the fall of the Great Mongol Empire and the end of the rule of the Yuan dynasty in China (1368) the power of eastern Mongols led by Chingisid rulers declined and the influence of Oirad leaders became stronger and stronger. Although the leadership of the Mongols was the indisputable right of the descendants of Chingis khan, the real political power slowly passed into the hands of some powerful Oirad chiefs, who were in important positions at the court of the khans. During the fight of eastern and western Mongols for power the Chinese Ming dynasty

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<sup>5</sup> L. LIGETI (Ed.), *Historie Secrète de Mongols*, §141–143.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, §196.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, §141.

provided military and financial support mostly to the Oirads, but sometimes also to the other side depending on its own political interests. Thanks to the raising power of the western Mongols, the Oirad Batula chingsang (Mahmud in other sources) was so powerful that he could kill the ruling khan Elbeg nigülesügchi and elect a new ruler. His son, Toghon followed the way of his father and in 1434 after defeating the army of Arughtai, the legitimate hier to the throne, he elected his puppet Toghto Buqa to the khan's throne. Although Toghon was the descendant of Chingis khan, too (his mother was a Chingisid princess), he could not sit on the throne himself, because Mongolian laws accepted only patrilinear descendants of Chingis khan. The fact that the members of the Oirad ruling elite were not Chingisids prevented the Oirad leaders to use the title of khan and announce legitimate demand for the throne. The closest relatives of the Chingisids were the leaders of the Oirad Khoshud tribe, which joined the Oirads only during the 15<sup>th</sup> century and was of eastern Mongolian origin. The ancestor of their ruling clan was Qasar, the brother of Chingis khan, but even this was not enough for legitimating the power of Oirads in opposite of the Chingisid rulers.

Toghon used his power to extend the influence of Oirads and their territories to the Ili valley on the west and to Korea on the east. His main aim was controlling the trade routes and maintaining commercial relations with the Ming dynasty of China. His son followed the work of his father and extended his influence even further in the west. The Ming dynasty fearing the increasing power of Oirads started to support the eastern Mongols and took measures against the Oirads: they refused to give a Ming princess to Esen and boycotted the trading relations. Finally, in 1449 Esen decided to lead a military campaign against China. Although the campaign was successful from the military point of view and Esen's forces could reach even the Chinese capital and capture the emperor, Esen could not exploit the political benefits of his military success.

Nevertheless, Esen felt himself powerful enough to end the system of puppet khans and sit on the throne himself. After killing the Chingisid ruler in 1454 he proclaimed himself the khan of the Mongols, but even his own men feared his increasing power and killed him shortly after the enthronement. After his death the influence of Oirads declined in the eastern Mongol territories and the power of the Chingisids started to emerge again. The fighting of western and eastern Mongols continued, but the Oirads could reach less success during these times. Although the eastern Mongols could once again create a powerful empire under Batu Möngke Dayan khan (1478–1543), they could not fully subjugate and control the Oirads. After the death of Dayan khan the united Mongol territories fell apart again, and his descendants could rule only smaller territories practically independent from each other. Although the power of Chingisid princes remained quite limited, the Oirads could not take back their previous dominance. During the

16<sup>th</sup> century various rulers of Eastern Mongol tribes led campaigns against the Oirads with considerable success. In 1552 the Altan khan of the Tümeds defeated the Khoyid tribe of the Oirads in the Khangai mountains on the territory of present-day Mongolia, and this victory made possible for the Khalkha Mongols to occupy these territories. Under the attacks of the Eastern and Southern Mongols the Oirads were mostly in defensive positions. They suffered defeats from the Ordos Mongols (1562, 1570) and payed tribute to Layiqur khan (1606) and the Altan khans of the Khalkhas.

The turnpoint for the Oirads after their series of defeats against Mongols was the victorious battle against Sholoi Ubashi, the Altan khan of the Khalkhas in 1623 at the Irtysh river under the leadership of Kharakhula. During the first decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Kharakhula started to unite the Oirad tribes under his control and the victorious battle significantly increased his power and dominance among the Oirads. His son, Erdeni Baatar (d.1653) continued the work of his father and established a centralized power under the leadership of the Choros clan. He strenghtened the economy of his newly established domain, provided support for agriculture and trading, maintained good relations with the Russian Empire. The conversion of the Oirads to Buddhism also took place during this time at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. During this period appears a new ethnonym Jungar (probably from WM *jegün yar* 'left hand > left wing') that quickly becomes the common name of the Jungarian Oirads in several contexts.

After the death of Erdeni Baatar the process of centralization has stopped for a while, his son, Senge could not maintain the united power of his father and internal conflicts were weakening the Oirads. These conflicts and fights for the power finally led to the assassination of Senge by his opponents in 1671.

The first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century was the period of the emergence of the Oirad power not only in their central territories in Jugaria. The permanent internal conflicts promised little success for some Oirad leaders and they decided to stop fighting with each other in Jungaria and move towards new territories to establish their domain. The first such leader was Khoo Örlöq, who in 1616 led his subjects (mainly Torguds and some Dörwöds) westward through the Kyrgyz and Kazakh steppes to the Caspian sea and the pastures at the lower Volga along the southern borders of Russia. Oirads of Khoo Örlöq quickly overcame the local nomadic population of various Turkic tribes and established firm positions in their new territories. The migration of smaller Oirad groups to the lower Volga had been continuing for many years. The Oirads who moved westward are called Kalmyks today, although the same name was once used in some contexts for denoting other Oirad groups or the Oirads in general, too. Thanks to their significant military power the Kalmyks could establish a relatively independent state at the border area of Russia until the death of their greatest ruler Ayuki khan (r. 1669–1724). Usually

the Kalmyks were the allies of Russia, but Kalmyk raids on Russian territories were not exceptional. Kalmyks protected the southern borders of Russia and were engaged in many military campaigns against various Turkic tribes in Central Asia, the Caucasus and Crimea. Russian rulers tried to extend their influence to the Kalmyks, and after the death of Ayuki this process became more and more successful. Finally, the Kalmyk khan Ubashi tried to get out under the pressure of Russia and decided to return to their homeland in Inner Asia. In the winter of 1771 the majority of Kalmyks (mainly Torguds) headed east and moved on to Jungaria. A smaller part of Kalmyks (mostly Dörwöds) living on the west bank of the Volga could not cross the river because the weather was too warm for the water to freeze. The Kalmyks of Ubashi went through many difficulties during the journey, they suffered from permanent attacks of Russians, Kazakhs and Kyrgyzs, malnutrition and diseases. When they reached Jungaria only 70 thousand people survived out of the 170 thousand, which started the journey. People of Ubashi were settled down in Jungaria by the Manchus and they are the ancestors of the majority of today's Oirad population there. Those Kalmyks, who could not join Ubashi and remained at the Volga, still live there. Of course, the Russian authorities were not happy about the escape of the majority of Kalmyks, and quickly took a total control over the remaining Oirad population. The Kalmyk khanate was abolished and the Kalmyk territories were integrated into the Russian administrative system with a very limited autonomy.

The other migration of Oirads was led by Törbaikhu, the chief of the Khoshud tribe. In 1637 Törbaikhu in alliance with other Oirad leaders led his army to Amdo and Tibet in order to provide military support for the “yellow hat” Gelug sect of the Dalai lamas against the “red hat” Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism. The area of the Kükunor (WM *Köke nayur* ‘blue lake’) was occupied by the Khalkha Tsoghtu prince, who supported the Kagyu in the rivalry of the Buddhist schools in Tibet. The Oirad army of Törbaikhu defeated not only Tsoghtu’s forces, but also occupied the whole territory of Tibet. He had put an end to the power of the Tibetan king and established the reign of the Dalai lamas. In 1642 Törbaikhu was enthroned by the Dalai lama as the protector king of Tibet under the name Gүүishi khan. Although earlier the khan’s title was an exclusive right of the direct descendants of Chingis, the support and legitimating power of the Buddhist church let some Oirad leaders to become khans, such as Gүүishi.

The Oirads of Gүүishi khan remained in Amdo and the Kükunor area up to the recent times and they are called Deed Mongols ‘Upper Mongols’. After the death of Gүүishi khan in 1654, the real power in Tibet came into the Dalai lama’s hand and Gүүishi’s descendants were nominal rulers only. Nevertheless, the Khosud Khanate existed until the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century,

when first the Jungars invaded Tibet in 1717, and then the Manchus occupied the whole territory in 1720.

The power and expansion of Manchus posed a threat to the Mongols even at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Mongols of the southern territories could not resist to the Manchu power and after the death of Ligdan khan (1588–1634), who was fighting against the Manchus, the southern Mongols joined the Manchu rule in 1636. This time was a period when the permanently fighting eastern and western Mongols tried to establish an alliance, probably against the Manchus. In 1640 the leaders of Khalkhas and Oirads (even the Kalmyks from the Volga) signed a treaty in a form of a common law code called “Great Code” (WM *Yeke čayaji*, WO *Yeke cāji*). The code was based on the traditional customary law of the Mongol nomads, but also contained articles for strenghtening the positions of Buddhism among the Mongols and guaranteed a mutual military assistance of the signing parties in a case of external attack. The new law code did not establish a new state or a central authority, and finally it could not put an end to the rivalry of Khalkhas and Oirads.

After the death of Senge in 1671, his brother Galdan became the ruler of the Jungarian Oirads. Galdan was an educated buddhist monk and returned from Tibet in order to take the throne. Galdan tried to re-establish the centralized power among the Oirads and quickly came into conflict with some Khalkha chiefs because they supported Galdan’s Oirad opponents even with military forces. Galdan expanded his influence and dominance in west among the oasis cities of Turkestan, and also maintained close relations with the Buddhist church. The Dalai lama awarded him the title of Boshogtu khan ‘khan ordered by the heaven’ (WM *bosiytu qan*, WO *bošoqtu xan*), so after Gūūshi khan Galdan was the second Oirad ruler bearing the title of khan.

As a consequence of conflicts with the Khalkhas Galdan launched an attack on Khalkha territories in 1688 and by 1690 his victorious Oirad forces could take control over the whole Khalkha land. The Khalkha elite could not resist and fled to the southern Mongol territories being under the rule of the Manchus at that time. The Manchu emperor provided some support for them against Galdan, but the joint forces of the Khalkhas and Manchus could not reach a decisive victory in the battle of Ulaan Budang in 1690. Although Galdan could not defeat his opponents, the Oirad army could withdraw without significant losses and inflicted more casualties than they had suffered. The Manchu emperor provided further support for the Khalkhas only in exchange of their full submission, so in 1691 the Khalkha elite accepted the authority of the Manchus. In 1695 a great army of the Manchu and Khalkha forces moved on towards the eastern Mongol territories under the leadership of Kangxi, the Manchu emperor. Galdan’s forces were unprepared and also the conflicts with his nephew Tsewanrabdan

weakened his positions. Finally, in 1696 in the decisive battle of Juunmod (near today's Ulaanbaatar) Galdan suffered a total defeat from the Manchu army. Although Galdan could escape alive his army was lost, his supporters abandoned him and he died in 1697 in unclear circumstances. However, his death did not mean the end of the Oirad power. Khalkha territories were lost for the Oirads, but under the rule of Galdan's successors, Tsewangrabdan (r. 1697–1727) and Galdantseren (r. 1727–1745) the Jungar Empire was in its zenith. The Jungars had strong positions in Central Asia and Turkestan and could successfully resist to the Manchus for a half century.

The decline of the Oirad power came with the death of Galdantseren in 1745. His descendants ruling for short periods could not maintain their authority and the fighting for power and the throne weakened the whole state. Amursanaa, an Oirad chief from the Khoyid tribe also wanted to take the Oirad throne and tried to get support from the Manchus. In 1754 Amursanaa joined the Manchus and together with the Qing army attacked the Oirad khan Dawaachi (r. 1753–1755). Due to its internal conflicts the Jungar state could not resist to the Manchu attack and Dawaachi was captured by the Manchus. Since the victorious Manchus did not place Amursanaa on the Oirad throne as he was expecting that, he turned against the Manchus and together with the Khalkha Chinggünjab started an anti-Manchu uprising in 1755. The uprising was quickly crushed by the Manchu forces and during the campaigns of 1755–1757 the Manchus occupied the central Oirad territories in the Ili valley. According to the sources the warfare and diseases caused extreme losses among the Oirad population and huge areas became almost unpopulated. Those Oirads, who remained alive and did not flee were incorporated into the Manchu empire. Most of them were settled down in the territory of today's Western Mongolia. The majority of Oirads living today in Jungaria is not the descendant of the population of the Jungar Khanate, but they are descendants of the Kalmyks, who returned to Inner Asia in 1771.

### **1.7. ORIGIN OF THE NAME OIRAD**

Several explanations exist in the literature concerning the origin of word Oirad. According to different authors Oirad may come from WM *oi* 'forest' and *arad* 'people' (see the parallel of MM *hoi-yin irgen* mentioned above) or a plural form of WM *oyira* 'near', it may have common root with ethnonym *oguz* and *ogur*, etc. Further details and a summary of studies on the etymology of Oirad are available in the recent article of Béla Kempf.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> B. KEMPF, *Ethnonyms and etymology - The case of Oyrat and beyond*, in «Ural. Jahrbücher» 24, 189–203.

Oirads usually were mentioned as *Dörben Oyirad*, which literally means 'Four Oirads' and suggests that it was a unit consisting of four subgroups or an alliance of four tribes. Such an ethnonym has many parallels among the Inner Asian nomads, a lot of similar names occur in historical sources (Naiman 'Eight', Toquz Oghuz 'Nine Oghuz', etc.). It is not clear however, if this interpretation is correct and originally *dörben* was really an attribute of Oirad. Since *Dörben* is also a well-known ethnonym on its own, *Dörben Oyirad* might be also a compound name of two allied tribes, Dörbens and Oyirads. Nevertheless, contemporary Mongolian sources always interpret *Dörben Oyirad* as a unit consisting of four subgroups and it might be true for the original alliance. But the names of the original four units are not clear, different sources of different times contain various names as the members of „Four Oirads” and much more ethnonyms occur than four. Apparently the original fourfold division of Oirads became „theoretical” and this “theoretical frame” was always filled with ethnonyms selected from the set of ethnonyms being in use in the given time.

## **1.8. CURRENT STATE OF OIRADS, THEIR CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC ENVIRONMENT**

As a consequence of their eventful history, various Oirad groups reached distant territories of Inner Asia and even Eastern Europe. Today Oirads live in major groups on the territory of four countries (Mongolia, China, Russia and Kyrgyzstan), and also there is a significant Kalmyk diaspora in the United States.

Each Oirad group is an ethnic minority in the countries they live in, but in Mongolia and Russia they are the majority in some administrative units. The next chapters contain some demographic data on the Oirad population, which were taken from the English, Mongolian and Russian versions of Wikipedia<sup>9</sup> (unless otherwise noted).

### **1.8.1. Western Mongolia**

According to the 2010 census almost 9% of Mongolia's population is Oirad. They mostly live in Uvs, Khovd and Bayan-Ölgii provinces, some Öölds live in Arkhangai province, too. Due to the recent migrations inside the country a number of Oirads live in Ulaanbaatar and other urban places. Oirads in Mongolia are mostly known under the names of their subethnic division and they also identify themselves by the name of such a group. The Oirad groups in Mongolia are the following ones: Dörwöd (Khal. *дөрвөд*), Bayad (Khal. *баяд*), Khoton (Khal. *хотон*), Torgud (Khal. *торгуд*), Khoshud (Khal. *хөшүүд*), Jakhchin (Khal. *захчин*), Uriankhai (Khal.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://wikipedia.org>, <http://mn.wikipedia.org>, <http://ru.wikipedia.org>

урианхай), Ööld (Khal. *өөлд*), and Mingad (Khal. *мянгад*). The provinces and sums where Oirads live in major groups are the following ones:<sup>10</sup>

Dörwöds:

- Uws province (Ömnögow', Ölgii, Khowd, Türgen, Sagil', Bökholmörön, Dawst, Ulaangom, Naranbulag and Dzawkhan sums)
- Bayan-Ölgii province (Bayan-Ölgii city, Cagaannuur, Nогооннуур, Bugat sums)
- Khowd province (Myangad sum)

Khotons:

- Uws province (Tarialan, Naranbulag, Tes, Sagil' sums)

Bayads:

- Uws province (Tes, Dzüüingow', Malchin, Khyargas, Naranbulag, Baruunturuun sums)

Torguds:

- Khowd province (Khowd city, Bulgan sum)

Khoshuds:

- Khowd province (Bulgan sum)

Jakhchins:

- Khowd province (Khowd city, Altai, Üyench, Möst, Dzereg, Mankhan sums)

Uriankhais:

- Bayan-Ölgii province (Bayan-Ölgii city, Bulgan, Altai, Altancögc, Bugat, Buyant, Delüün, Sagsai sums)
- Khowd province (Khowd city, Duut, Mönkhkhairkhan sums)

Öölds:

- Khowd province (Erdenebüren sum)
- Arkhangai province (Khashaat, Khotont, Öldziit sums)
- Gow'-Altai province (Sharga sum)

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<sup>10</sup> Ю. ЦЭНДЭЭ, *Ойрад аялгууны хэл зүй*, 31–54.

Mingads:

- Khowd province (Myangad sum)
- Uws province (Ölgii, Ömnögow' sums)

According to the 2010 census there are 236 067 people, who considered themselves belonging to one of the Oirad subethnic groups:

<b>Ethnic group</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>% of total population</b>
Total population of Mongolia	2 647 545	100.00%
Oirads	236 067	8.97%
Dörwöd	72 403	2.75%
Bayad	56 573	2.15%
Jakhchin	32 845	1.25%
Uriankhai	26 654	1.01%
Ööld	15 520	0.59%
Torgud	14 176	0.54%
Khoton	11 304	0.43%
Minggad	6 592	0.25%

Oirad population of Mongolia according to the 2010 census<sup>11</sup>

Oirad has no official status in Mongolia, it is not taught in schools at all. Oirads have been living beside and among Khalkhas for several centuries, and this contact had a significant influence on their language. Even at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were traces of this Khalkha influence in various Oirad dialects, as it was recorded by B. Ya. Vladimircov.<sup>12</sup> Since today the language of the education and mass media is Khalkha, this influence became even stronger and according to the present situation mostly elderly people can talk fluently in Oirad only and the main domain of Oirad is the family life. The younger generation uses Khalkha as their primary language with some elements of an Oirad substrate, but they are hardly able to speak in Oirad. However, the ethnic identity of Oirads is strong and they try to maintain and preserve their culture and traditions. There are a number of organizations publishing books on

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<sup>11</sup> Хүн ам, орон сууцны 2010 оны улсын тооллогын үр дүн.

<sup>12</sup> Б. Я. ВЛАДИМИРЦОВ, *О двух смешанных языках Западной Монголии*, in «Яфетический сборник» II (1923), 32–52; Б. Я. ВЛАДИМИРЦОВ, *Образцы монгольской народной словестности*, Ленинград, 1926.

Oirad topics and caring about their cultural heritage. The Oirad identity is often reflected in the language of the Oirads to some extent: although most of the them do not speak Oirad fluently, they know some characteristic features of their ethnic dialect or a handful of typical Oirad phrases, and they use this knowledge in order to express their identity if necessary.<sup>13</sup>

Oirad dialects spoken in Mongolia are heavily endangered because of the dominance of Khalkha in the education, mass media and public communication. Documenting these dialects before they become extinct is an urgent task for the researchers.

### 1.8.2. Kalmykia<sup>14</sup>

The highest level administrative region inhabited by Oirads and created on ethnic basis is the Kalmyk Republic (Kalm. *Хальмг Таңһч*, Rus. *Республика Калмыкия*), which is one of the 22 republics of the Russian Federation with its own constitution, parliament and government. According to the 2010 census the total Kalmyk population of Russia is 183 372 people. 162 740 out of them live in the Kalmyk Republic, 6 624 in the Astrakhan Territory and the others in different parts of Russia. Although 164 769 Kalmyks indicated Kalmyk as their mother tongue, there are only 80 546 people (70 549 in Kalmykia), who states that really speak the language. Kalmyks form the 56% of the total population of 289 481 people in the Kalmyk Republic. The other ethnic groups are Russians (30%), Dargins (2,7%), Chechens (1,2%), Kazakhs (1.7%), Turks (1.3%), Avars (0.8%), Ukrainians (0.5%) and Germans (0.4%).<sup>15</sup>

According to the constitution<sup>16</sup> and current laws<sup>17</sup> the official languages of the Kalmyk Republic are Russian and Kalmyk since 1991. Although the laws guarantee equal rights for these two languages, their role and significance are very different in the everyday life. Russian is undoubtedly the primary language of everyday communication in formal and informal situations, too, while Kalmyk has a slightly limited use. The first language of most of the Kalmyks is Russian, and indicating Kalmyk as a mother tongue is rather the expression of national identity than a reality. Practically, all speakers of Kalmyk are bilingual in Russian and

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<sup>13</sup> For further description see Á. BIRTALAN, *Oirad - The Prestige Language. Ethnolinguistic Approach to the Altai Oirad Language and its Dialects*, in Á. BIRTALAN (Ed.), *Oirad and Kalmyk Linguistic Essays*, Budapest, ELTE Eötvös Kiadó, 2012, 59–74.

<sup>14</sup> The present chapter extensively uses data based on В. В. БАРАНОВА, *Языковая ситуация в Калмыкии: социолингвистический очерк*, in С. С. САЙ – В. В. БАРАНОВА – Н. В. СЕРДОБОЛЬСКАЯ (Edd.), *Исследование по грамматике калмыцкого языка*, Санкт-Петербург, Наука, 2009, 22–41.

<sup>15</sup> *Всероссийская перепись населения 2010 года*, in <http://www.perepis-2010.ru>.

<sup>16</sup> *Степное Уложение (Конституция) Республики Калмыкия*.

<sup>17</sup> *Закон Республики Калмыкия от 15 декабря 2014 г. №93-V-3 «О государственных языках Республики Калмыкия и иных языках в Республике Калмыкия»*.

their dominant language is mainly Russian. Kalmyk language is taught in elementary schools and high schools as a subject (few lessons per week), and also at the university in Elista. The majority of Kalmyks do not speak Kalmyk at all, or can speak it poorly. Fluent speakers of Kalmyk are mainly elderly people, middle-aged residents of some rural areas and teachers of Kalmyk language. According to some data no more than 6% of Kalmyks are fluent speakers of their native language and 98% of children entering school do not speak Kalmyk at all.<sup>18</sup>

After the political changes of the 1990s and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, emphasizing the national identity became more and more important and popular in Kalmykia. Earlier, speaking in Kalmyk (that was characteristic to the rural population only) was labelled as provincial and old-fashioned, but recently Kalmyk language became an important element of the national identity and fluent speakers are appreciated by the community. A number of initiatives and organisations exist for promoting the Kalmyk language, but the real results of the efforts is doubtful at the present moment.

Despite of the fact that Kalmyk is taught in schools, the language proficiency of the students is quite low. Since Kalmyk is only a subject and not the language of the education, it is no more than a foreign language for most of the students.

Present-day situation of Kalmyk language is a result of a process started with the deportation of the Kalmyks in 1943. Before the deportations Kalmyk was the primary and dominant language of the population with a significant number of monolingual speakers, and Russian was spoken only by the urban population and educated persons. This situation has been changed after the deportation because of several reasons.

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War Kalmykia was occupied by German forces and after their withdrawal Kalmyks – similarly to several other ethnic groups of the Soviet Union, such as Crimean Tatars, Chechens, Volga Germans, Balkars, Karachays, etc. – were found guilty by the Soviet authorities in collaboration with Germans. As a consequence the Kalmyk Republic was abolished as an administrative entity and almost the entire Kalmyk population was deported to Siberia and partly to other territories of the Soviet Union. Only 13 years later in 1957 they were allowed to return to their homeland. The deportation fundamentally changed the fate of the Kalmyk language. There are several factors that exercised influence on the position of Kalmyk during and after the period of deportation.

Approximately 120 thousand Kalmyks were deported from Kalmykia and due to the harsh conditions, cold and starvation thousands of them died even during the way. Kalmyks deported to Siberia were settled down not in major groups, but they were mostly scattered in minor

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<sup>18</sup> E. INDJIEVA, *Oirat Tones and Break Indices - Intonational System of the Oirat Language*, 2–3.

groups or even as separate families. There was no education in Kalmyk for the children and even the public use of the Kalmyk language could lead to various inconveniences for the speakers. As a members of a “guilty” ethnic group, Kalmyks often tried not to emphasise their ethnic identity, adults learned and spoke Russian at their work, as well as Kalmyk children did it at the school. Those, who knew Russian often spoke in it even among themselves in order to avoid the discrimination of the outer community. When Kalmyks were rehabilitated in 1956 and allowed to return to their homeland, only 78 thousand people remained and could return during 1957 and 1958 from the original 120 thousand. The position and role of the Russian language has been changed a lot up to this time, almost all Kalmyks except elderly people acquired Russian to some extent. A significant part of the Kalmyks, especially the generation born or grown up during the period of deportation became bilingual in Kalmyk and Russian. ...

Unfortunately, after the re-organisation of the Kalmyk Republic the education system did not lay much emphasis on the teaching of the Kalmyk language. There were no schools with Kalmyk as the teaching language except some elementary schools in rural regions and the basic language of education was Russian in all levels. The primary language in the family of bilingual speakers of the Siberian generation (born in the 1940-50s) was often Russian when talking to their children, and Kalmyk in the communication with the older generation, especially in urban areas. Children, who learned only Kalmyk from their parents had difficulties in Russian schools, so most of the parents taught Russian as a first language to their children in order to avoid such difficulties. The normal way of giving over the native language to the next generation was broken at this stage: Kalmyks born during the 1960s and 1970s rarely speak Kalmyk fluently. The domain of the Kalmyk language is limited to the sphere of the family and communication with elderly relatives. Today there are almost no Kalmyk children who learn Kalmyk as their mother tongue, Russian is the dominant language in the families, too. Before entering school most of the children do not know Kalmyk at all, only a few of them learn some Kalmyk from their grandparents and elderly relatives.

### **1.8.3. The Ysyk-Köl region**

Sart Kalmyks living in the vicinity of Yssyk-Köl lake (Kyrgyz *Ысык-Көл*) in Kyrgyzstan and migrated there in the 19<sup>th</sup> century are an isolated Oirad group, mostly converted to Islam. Their number is around 4–5 000 and they live in Chelpek, Tash-Kiya, Burma-Suu and Börü-Bashi of Yssyk-Köl province.<sup>19</sup>

The relation of Sart Kalmyks to other Oirads, especially to the Kalmyks is interpreted somewhat controversary. Some authors classify their language as a dialect of Kalmyk and even

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<sup>19</sup>

emphasize their common self-identification with the Kalmyks<sup>20</sup>, while others have an opposite view, stating that Sart Kalmyks distinguish themselves definitely from Kalmyks of Kalmykia.<sup>21</sup> Anyway, it seems that beside their ethnonyms there is nothing common in Sart Kalmyks and Kalmyks what could suggest closer relationship in comparison with any other Oirad group.

The dialect of Sart Kalmyks is endangered, it is very close to extinction. According to Somfai, fluent speakers of Sart Kalmyk are elderly people over 80, while the younger generation around 60 still understands Sart Kalmyk, but does not use it. The primary language of the family life and public communication is Kyrgyz and/or Russian, and Sart Kalmyk has a very limited domain.

#### 1.8.4. East Turkestan (Xinjiang)

East Turkestan or Xinjiang is one of the three major regions in China where Oirads live in significant number. Significant part of the Oirads living here is descendant of those Kalmyks, who returned from the Volga to Jungaria in 1771 under the leadership of Ubashi. Xinjiang Oirads have four subethnic groups: Torgud, Khoshud, Ööld and Dörwöd. Oirads live mainly in three administrative units created (or at least labelled) on ethnic basis, but minor groups are present in other areas, too:

- Bayangol Mongol Autonomous Prefecture in Xinjiang province of China (Mong. *Bayanyool mongyol öbertegen jasaqu jeu*, Chin. 巴音郭楞蒙古自治州 *Bāyīnguōlèng Měnggǔ Zìzhìzhōu*)
- Khowogsair Mongol Autonomous County in Tacheng Prefecture of Xinjiang province of China (Mong. *Qobuysayir mongyol öbertegen jasaqu siyan*, Chin. 和布克赛尔蒙古自治县 *Hébùkèsàier Měnggǔ Zìzhìxiàn*)
- Bortala Mongol Autonomous Prefecture in Xinjiang province of China (Mong. *Boratala mongyol öbertegen jasaqu jiu*, Chin. 博尔塔拉蒙古自治州 *Bóěrtālā Měnggǔ Zìzhìzhōu*)

The ethnic administrative units in China are labelled as Mongol, since Chinese authorities classify a wide variety of Mongolian groups (including Oirads) into the same single category as Mongols (Chin. 蒙古 *měnggǔ*), one out of the 56 officially recognized nationalities, and do not take into consideration their dialectal and cultural differences. This may be useful on the one hand, since various Mongol groups can vindicate their interests more effectively if they are numerous, but also disadvantageous on the other hand, because the official language for all of

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<sup>20</sup> Э. Р. ТЕНИШЕВ, *О языке калмыков Иссык-Куля*, in «Вопросы языкознания» 1 (1976): 87.

<sup>21</sup> D. SOMFAI KARA, *Sart-Kalmyks - Kalmyks of Ysyk-köl (Karakol, Kirghizstan)*, in Á. BIRTALAN (Ed.), *Oirad and Kalmyk Linguistic Essays*, Budapest, ELTE Eötvös Kiadó, 2012, 197–210.

these Mongols in China is a literary standard based on the Chakhar dialect of Mongolian (also called Barimjaa, Mong. *barimjïy-a*). It means that the language used in the education and public affairs is the same official Mongolian dialect that is very different from the native dialect of the Oirads. Since the official writing system of the official Mongol language is the Mongolian script, this script is taught in Mongolian schools even for Oirad students instead of their national Oirad script and literary language closer to their dialect. Oirad script was in official use by Oirads and taught in some schools in Xinjiang until the 1980s, but they still use it their private life and also publish some newspapers, magazines and books written in Oirad script.

According to the 2000 census the number of Mongols (including Oirads and other Mongol groups) in Xinjiang was 149 857 and this is less than 1% percent of the province's total population (19 630 000)<sup>22</sup>. The Mongol population is around 47–49 000 in Bayangol Mongol Autonomous Prefecture (Khoshuds, Torgud and Öölds), 26–27 000 in Bortala Mongol Autonomous Prefecture, appr. 32 000 in Tacheng Prefecture (16–17 000 in Khowogsair Mongol Autonomous County, mostly Torguds), and 41–45 000 in the Ili Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture (Öölds), but minor Oirad groups live in other areas of Xinjiang, too. The total number of Torguds and Khoshuds is appr. 100 000, while that of Öölds is about 50 000.<sup>23</sup>

Unlike their relatives in Kalmykia, Oirads living in Xinjiang could preserve their language quite well. According to recent data of A. Bitkeeva<sup>24</sup> Oirad is in everyday use by ethnic Oirads of this region. They use Oirad not only in the family, but there are also TV and radio channels broadcasting in Oirad, newspapers, magazines and books are published in Oirad written in the reformed variant of the Oirad script, and there is a Department of Oirad language and literature at the university in Ürümchi.

Xinjiang is a multi-ethnic region, and although there are some elderly monolingual speakers of Oirad, most of them speak other languages, too, including Chinese, Uighur and Kazakh. This multi-ethnic and multi-lingual area helps the Oirads to preserve their language.

### **1.8.5. Alsha region**

Alsha League (Mong. *Alaša ayimay*, Chin. 阿拉善盟 *Ālāshàn Méng*) is the largest administrative unit in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region of China. Despite of its large area, the population is rather small, since almost the whole territory is covered by deserts. The Mongol population is 44 630, 22.74% of the total population of 140 900 people (71.79% is

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<sup>22</sup> E. INDJIEVA, *Oirat Tones and Break Indices - Intonational System of the Oirat Language*, 31.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 152–154.

<sup>24</sup> A. BITKEEVA, *Language of the Oirat-Kalmyks: Past and Present*, in «Mong. Stud.» XXIX (2007), 47–53: 52–54.

Chinese). Khoshud and Ööld Oirads mostly live in the Left Banner (Mong. *Alaša jегүн qosiуu*, Chin. 阿拉善左旗 *Ālāshàn Zuǒ Qí*) and the Right Banner (Mong. *Alaša barayun qosiуu*, Chin. 阿拉善右旗 *Ālāshàn Yòu Qí*), while Torguds in the Edznee Banner (Mong. *Eјen-e qosiуu*, Chin. 额济纳旗 *Éјinà Qí*).

Khoshuds and Öölds of the Left and Right Banners moved to their present territories from Jungaria and partly from Amdo in the 17th century, due to internal conflicts of the Oirads. Torguds of the Edznee Banner came there in 1703, when Rabjira, grandson of the Kalmyk Ayuki khan went on a pilgrimage to Tibet with his 500 Torgud people. On the return journey they were captured by the Manchus, who prevented them to go further through Jungar territories. The Manchus wanted to use Kalmyks of Rabjira for making an alliance with Ayuka against the Jungars, but after sending several envoys from both sides, their plans failed. Nevertheless, Rabjira and his men were settled down by the Manchus in the area of today's Edznee Banner and their descendants still live there. Oirads are not the only Mongols living in Alsha Banner, a number of Khalkhas also migrated there from Mongolia during the 1930s.<sup>25</sup>

Present situation of the Alsha dialects of Oirad is far not clear, because of the insufficient data. According to the available sources the local dialects are close to central Mongolian (Khalkha and Inner Mongolian dialects), but preserved some characteristic features of Oirad.

#### 1.8.6. Qinghai and Gansu

The Oirad population of Qinghai and Gansu is usually known as Deed Mongols 'Upper Mongols'. They are the descendants of those Oirad groups, which came here with Güüshi khan in the 17th century.

In Qinghai and Gansu three administrative units were created on ethnic basis for the Oirads and other Mongols living there (two in Qinghai and one in Gansu):

- Haixi Mongol and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai province of China (Mong. *Qayisi-yin mongyol töbed üндүсүтен-ү өbertegen јasaqu јeu*, Chin. 海西蒙古族藏族自治州 *Hǎixī Měnggǔzú Zàngzú Zìzhìzhōu*)
- Henan Mongol Autonomous County in the Huangnan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Qinghai province in China (Mong. *Henan mongyol өbertegen јasaqu siyan*, Chin. 河南蒙古族自治县 *Hénán Ménggǔzú Zìzhìxiàn*)
- Subei Mongol Autonomous County in Jiuquan prefecture level city of Gansu province in China (Mong. *Subei-yin mongyol өbertegen јasaqu siyan*, Chin. 肃北蒙古族自治县 *Sù běi Ménggǔzú Zìzhìxiàn*)

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<sup>25</sup> Н. СУХБААТАР, *Өмнөд хилийн цаадах монголчуудын тухай*, in <http://www.oirad.mn/өмнөд-хилийн-цаадах-монголчуудын-тух> (Consultato: 30 ottobre 2015).

Similarly to Oirads living in other territories of China, Oirads of Qinghai and Gansu are also classified as Mongols in general. According to the 2010 census 24 020 Mongols live in Haixi Mongol and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (7.23% of the prefecture's total population), according to the 2000 census 28 879 Mongols in Henan Mongol Autonomous County (89.55%) and 4 112 in Subei Mongol Autonomous County (31.52%). The Oirads and other Mongols form a very small part of the total population of Qinghai (5 626 722) and Gansu (25 575 254).

Qinghai and Gansu are also a multi-ethnic region, and the local Oirad population mostly has relations with Amdo Tibetans and Chinese. Tibetan language and culture exercised so strong influence that almost all Oirads of the Henan Mongol Autonomous County became heavily Tibetanized. Although they speak Tibetan as their primary language and follow Tibetan customs, still preserved their ethnic identity. The very peculiar Henan Oirad dialect is spoken to some extent only by a handful people, mostly elderly ones.

### **1.9. OIRAD AND ITS DIALECTS IN THE FAMILY OF MONGOLIC LANGUAGES**

Mongolic language family consists of several languages and their dialects, but there is no consensus on their classification. Several systems of classification exist, but the exact number of languages is different. Oirad forms a separate branch of Mongolic languages in each division, but it is categorised on different levels (language or dialect) in various systems. There are also differences concerning Oirad's internal classification, too, especially Kalmyk is what treated differently in many systems: it is a subcategory of Oirad in some systems, and classified on the same level with it and recognised as a separate language in others.

Regardless of whether Oirad is considered as a dialect of Mongolian, a single separate language or a group of independent languages, it is undoubtedly not uniform and can be divided into several subgroups on the basis of various factors. According to the term applied to Oirad, its subgroups may be labelled as languages, dialects or sub-dialects. Factors that should be taken into consideration when classifying Oirad dialects are geographic location, historical background, linguistic features, ethnic and cultural environment.

One of the earliest significant academic categorisations of Mongolian languages has been made by B. Ya. Vladimircov. He classifies Oirad dialects into the western branch of Mongolian languages together with Mogol. Classification of Oirad into the same group as Mogol is a quite unique idea in the academic literature, it is a result of Vladimircov's territorial approach in this case. According to his further division of Oirad the westernmost group is European Oirad (Kalmyk), that has two dialects by his opinion: Dörwöd and Torgud. He separates two

subdialects of Dörwöd (one spoken in the Yeke Dörböd ulus and the other of Don Buzawas), and two of Torgud (Uralian and Orenburgian).

According to Vladimircov the Oirads of Western Mongolia form another larger group (Khowd Oirad), which includes Dörwöd, Bayid, Torgud, Uriankhai, Jakhchin, Dambi-Ööld and Minggad. Vladimircov divides these dialects into northern (Dörwöd, Bayid) and southern groups (the others). He also establishes three subdialects of the Khalkhaised Bayids, Dörwöds and akhchins.

The smaller Oirad groups scattered throughout Inner Asia do not form an independent group in Vladimircov's system – due to the lack of enough information he did not classify them. He just mentions, that the Oirads living in the Alasha and Khobuq sayir region speak a dialect similar to Torgud of Western Mongolia.<sup>26</sup>

Although Vladimircov divided the language of Oirads into numerous groups, he did not state that any of them could be considered as an independent language. He admits the existence of one Mongolian language only, and asserts, that each Mongolian dialect (including Oirad dialects) is the dialect of the one and same language.

Poppe takes a different position and states that Kalmyk is an independent language, which is very close to other Oirad dialects, but due to the strong Russian and Turkic influence exercised on its vocabulary should be separated from them. By Poppe's opinion Kalmyk has three dialects: Dörwöd, Torgud and Buzawa, but he counts to Kalmyk the so-called Sart Kalmyk in Kyrgyzstan, too. According to Poppe, the Oirad dialects (without Kalmyk) form a separate language, which has Dörwöd, Bayid, Torgud, Uriankhai, Jakhchin, Dambi-Ööld and Minggad dialects in Western Mongolia, and Torgud in Alashan, Qinghai and Jungaria.<sup>27</sup>

The last comprehensive summary on Mongolic languages edited by Juha Janhunen treats Kalmyk and Oirad as two separate languages, but admits that this separation is controversial.<sup>28</sup> Ágnes Birtalan, the author of the Oirad chapter accepts a traditional division based on tribal (ethnic) basis and lists Bayad, Dörwöd, Jakhchin, Khoton, Khosud, Minggad, Ööld, Torgud and Uriankhai as Oirad dialects spoken in Mongolia, Torgud and Khoshud as spoken in Xinjiang (mentioning Shin Torguds 'New Torguds', descendants of the Kalmyks returned from the Volga), Deed Mongol in Qinghai, Sart Kalmyk in Kyrgyzstan and also the Oirad dialect of

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<sup>26</sup> Б. Я. ВЛАДИМИРЦОВ, *Сравнительная грамматика монгольского письменного языка и халхаского наречия*, Ленинград, 1929, 6–7, 17.

<sup>27</sup> Poppe 1955: 18-19

<sup>28</sup> J. JANHUNEN, *The Mongolic Languages*, a cura di J. Janhunen, London, New York, Routledge, 2003, xvii.

the Alasha League in Inner Mongolia.<sup>29</sup> An interesting fact, that Written Oirad, the traditional literary language of the Oirads is discussed in the Oirad chapter in parallel with the modern language. In the same book Uwe Bläsing explains the status of Kalmyk recognised as a separate language by its special history and the strong Russian influence. He divides Kalmyk into Dörwöd and Torgud dialects, and categorises Kalmyk dialects spoken in the Ural and Orenburg as subdialects of Torgud, while Buzawa or Don Kalmyk as a mixture of Dörwöd and Torgud.<sup>30</sup>

In another place Birtalan uses a division of Mongolian languages, which has a western group containing Kalmyk and Oirad. Kalmyk has three dialects (Dörwöd, Torgud, Buzawa), while Oirad has seven (Dörwöd, Torgud, Bayad, Uriankhai, Khoton, Jakhchin, Ööld). As she states, Minggad is a transitional dialect between Oirad and Khalkha.<sup>31</sup>

A recent system presented by Yu. Cendee in her grammar of Oirad dialects spoken in Mongolia is mostly based on the sub-ethnic division. She classifies Dörwöd (spoken also by Khotons), Bayid, Torgud (spoken also by Khoshuds), Jakhchin, Uriankhai, Ööld and Minggad as dialects of Oirad, and also sets up two transitional categories for dialects of Oirad influenced by Khalkha, and other dialects influenced by Oirad. Khalkhaised Oirad consist of dialects spoken by Öölds and Khoids of Arkhangai, Gowi-Altai and Bayankhongor provinces, as well as Khoids or Khotgoids in Khöwsgöl and Dzawkhan. Oiradised dialects include Darkhad and Arig Uriankhai in Khöwsgöl.<sup>32</sup>

It seems to be obvious, that dialects and languages should be separated by their differences, but it is very difficult to decide what kind and amount of differences are enough to classify the speech of a group of people as a separate dialect or language. Beside the linguistic arguments and other factors mentioned above (geographic location, historical background, ethnic and cultural environment) the identity of various Oirad groups should be taken into consideration.

According to a recent division presented by Nugteren, Rybatzki and Janhunen<sup>33</sup>, Mongolic languages are divided into two larger groups with two satellite languages. The largest group covers languages and dialects of the core Mongolian territory, where Mongols live in an almost continuous area and speak languages and dialects that have been developed by mutual contacts

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<sup>29</sup> Á. BIRTALAN, *Oirat*, in J. JANHUNEN (Ed.), *The Mongolic Languages*, London, New York, Routledge, 2003, 210–228: 211.

<sup>30</sup> U. BLÄSING, *Kalmuck*, in J. JANHUNEN (Ed.), *The Mongolic Languages*, London, New York, Routledge, 2003, 229–247: 229–230.

<sup>31</sup> Á. BIRTALAN (Ed.), *Őseink nyomán Belső-Ázsiában I. Tanulmányok a mongol népi hiedelemvilágról*, Budapest, Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó, 1996, Appendix.

<sup>32</sup> Ю. ЦЭНДЭЭ, *Ойрад аялгууны хэл зүй*, 31–60.

for several hundred years and are relatively close to each other. This group – called Common Mongolic by Janhunen and Central languages by Nugteren – includes Oirad, too.

The other group consists of Mongolic languages spoken in the Qinghai and Gansu area. Janhunen revives an old term, Shirongolic for this group, while Nugteren calls it Southern periphery. The two satellite languages are Moghol in the west (Nugteren’s Western periphery) and Dagur in the east (Nugteren’s Northeastern periphery).

According to certain historical and linguistic arguments the Oirad dialects can be divided into three major groups:

- dialects spoken in Western Mongolia
- Kalmyk, Sart-Kalmyk and dialects spoken in East Turkestan (Xinjiang)
- dialects spoken in Alasha (Alxa) League of Inner Mongolia and Deed Mongol of Qinghai and Gansu provinces

## **1.10. LITERARY LANGUAGES AND WRITING SYSTEMS**

Two literary languages exist today based on Oirad and common in everyday use: Kalmyk in Kalmykia, Russia, written in Cyrillic script, and Written Oirad in Xinjiang, China, written in the so-called Clear or Oirad script. These literary languages are both supradialectal variants of Oirad and do not correspond exactly to a certain vernacular.

There are two more Mongolian literary languages that are also used by Oirads: Written Mongolian in China and Khalkha in Mongolia.

### **1.10.1. Written Mongolian**

Similarly to other Mongolians, Oirads used Written Mongolian as their written language for long time. After the introduction of Zaya Pandita’s „clear script” and the Written Oirad literary language in the 17th century, the use of Written Mongolian declined. Recently, Written Mongolian is used again by Oirads living in China, since this is the official writing system and literary language of the Mongols in China (including Oirads).

### **1.10.2. Written Oirad**

When Zaya Pandita has invented his new script, he also created a new literary language – now usually we call it (and its descendants) Written Oirad, but in Zaya Pandita’s time the language was called simply Mongolian, while the script was referred to as *todorxoi üzüq* or *todo üzüq* ‘clear script’. This literary language and its orthography were closer to the contemporary spoken language than Written Mongolian in some aspects (e.g. indicating long vowels with separate letters), but had a plenty of features very far from the spoken idioms (e.g. neglecting vowel harmony in the case of certain suffixes, excessive use of verb *üyiledkü* ‘to

perform, to do' not typical of Mongolian). It is clearly not true, that Zaya Pandita's literary language is the direct equivalent of the "contemporary Western Mongolian" and "he has handed down to us the exact pronunciation of Western Mongolian in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century" as stated by Udo Posch [Posch 1957: 209] and some other scholars. György Kara describes it as a mix of colloquial and bookish elements [Kara 2005: 148], which is true for its later forms, but less characteristic for the original variant appearing in Buddhist translations. The very original idea of Zaya Pandita is probably closer to B. Ja. Vladimircov's opinion, who writes that the language of Zaya Pandita's Buddhist translations is a purely artificial creation, and it is not even similar to any Oirad dialect [Vladimircov 1989: 25–26].

Zaya Pandita's aim with reforming the Uighur-Mongolian script and creating a new literary language was not to provide a more precise and effective writing system for the Oirads only, but he targeted the whole Mongolian community. As X. Luwsanbaldan cites from *Üzügiyin nayiralʻya* ('Composition of letters') ascribed to Zaya Pandita, he created his script in order to make it easy for the Mongols – and no Oirads are mentioned here [Luwsanbaldan 1975: 23–24]. The political situation in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century pointed towards a possible unity or at least closer alliance of Eastern and Western Mongols (against the Manchus), the emerging Buddhism and its strengthening positions also made a positive atmosphere for cultural innovations, and as it is obvious from life and his travels to various Eastern and Western Mongolian territories, Zaya Pandita himself had a wider perspective, so it is quite plausible that he created his script for all the Mongols. Why did it not succeed as he expected? That has probably several reasons, but surely not because his script was not suitable for writing Eastern Mongolian dialects or because his literary language contained too much features taken from the spoken Oirad dialects and differing slightly from the Eastern dialects. The main point here is that if Zaya Pandita's literary language was created for all Mongols, it could not rely significantly on an Oirad dialect, but had to bear a common Mongolian character.

As such I suppose that Written Oirad, the literary language created by Zaya Pandita for mostly religious purposes in its original form was not either the direct equivalent of the contemporary spoken Oirad (or other Mongolian) language or the language of Oirad folklore texts and heroic epics as stated by D. A. Pavlov [Pavlov 1962: 113]. Most probably it recorded the way how the Mongols and Oirads (or at least Zaya Pandita) read out loudly and pronounced formal and religious texts written in Uighur-Mongolian script. This clerky pronunciation of Written Mongolian texts has been following the phonetic changes of the spoken language (e.g. spirantization of *q*) and also phonological ones to some extent (e.g. long vowels), but still greatly insisted to the written letters and morphemes, even to those that did not exist in the spoken language anymore. Insistence to the written forms lead also to such

“misunderstandings” that some Written Mongolian suffixes having the same graphical representation in their front and back harmonic variants (due to the same grapheme for medial *a* and *e*) were treated as front vocalic and transferred to Written Oirad as non-harmonic suffixes or postpositions with front vowels: *-ēce* < *-ača/eče*, *-yēr* < *-iyar/iyer*, *-bēr* < *-bar/ber*, *-yēn* < *-iyan/iyen*. This is clearly an artificial invention not characteristic to any Mongolian dialect.

By representing this clerkly pronunciation, Zaya Pandita’s literary language could be far enough from the different dialects of spoken Mongolian (including Oirad) to serve as a supra-dialectal literary language. So, the new script and the new orthography did not change too much the archaic style of written texts being distant from the colloquial speech, but made their reading clearer and easier. Even Written Mongolian texts could be easily transcribed to Oirad script (and some evidences prove that it was done sometimes).

Now if it is clear enough what Oirad means and what is the relation of Oirad to Zaya Pandita’s original literary language, then we can answer our first question: was the Oirad script used for writing a Mongolian dialect other than Oirad? The answer is yes, it was. Specifically, in its original and first form it was not used for writing either an Oirad dialect or any variant of spoken Mongolian, but a supra-dialectal literary language.

However this situation rapidly changed. Due to various, probably mostly political reasons (Oirad-Khalkha conflicts) Zaya Pandita’s invention did not reach wider (if any) popularity among Eastern Mongols and only Oirads (including Kalmyks) have started to use it. Since Clear script had a very good and precise system for indicating the sounds of the contemporary spoken Mongolian, this feature facilitated the infiltration of colloquial elements into the written language. Inasmuch as Oirads were who used the new script, colloquial elements of their speech started to infiltrate Zaya Pandita’s literary language and it became Oirad or Written Oirad – clearly distinct from Written Mongolian and typical of Oirads only. As time progressed this colloquialization became stronger and stronger, but it was not even and uniform everywhere. Religious texts and Buddhist translations kept the original bookish and clerkly character for long time, historical texts (e.g. *Sarayin gerel* ‘Moonlight’, the biography of Zaya Pandita) have borrowed more from colloquial speech, while official and personal letters contained a lot of colloquial forms. Written Oirad became a mix of archaic, artificial and colloquial elements whose ratio depended on the era, location, context, author and some other factors. As Written Oirad is not equal with spoken Oirad, but reflects its influence, they have separate, but partly overlapping history. One can study Written Oirad’s history in whole as the history of a written language, but only its colloquial elements matter when history of spoken Oirad concerned.

Since Oirads living on huge territories of Asia did not have a central authority controlling the unification and standardization of their literacy (except of modern Xinjiang), just the

unifying influence of some local cultural centres (monasteries, chancelleries) could exercise some effect on the variants of Written Oirad. As a result of this, Written Oirad had vivid and diverse varieties, a lot of orthographical variations – the same colloquial element could appear in many forms, but mostly with minor differences only.

#### ***1.10.2.1. Modernized Written Oirad in Xinjiang***

During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Written Oirad have fell out of the everyday use in the Oirad territories except Xinjiang. In Xinjiang however it remained the primary literary language till the 1980s when it was officially replaced by the Chinese authorities with Written Mongolian. Despite of the official change Written Oirad is still in use even today and a number of books, journals and newspapers are published in this script.

#### **1.10.3. The Kalmyk literary language**

Traditionally Kalmyks used Clear Script and Written Oirad as their literary language. Although a heavy influence of the Kalmyk spoken dialects could be observed on the variant of Written Oirad that was in use by the Kalmkys, it was still a supradialectal literary language not differing much from the variants used by Oirads elsewhere.

##### ***1.10.3.1. Cyrillic script***

After the political changes of 1917 in Russia and the establishment of the new Communist regime new directions emerged in the cultural policy of the multi-ethnic country. On the one hand the new regime actively supported efforts to establish new writing systems and create new literary languages for languages that did not have such in the past. New writing systems were introduced even for languages that already had their own script and literary tradition. It had a clear political reason: limiting or making the access impossible to the previous literary tradition, which has been considered as conflicting with the Communist ideology.

Kalmyks, who had their own literacy for several hundred years, were among those ethnic groups that got a new writing system instead of their old one. In 1924 a new Cyrillic script was introduced, which was based on the Russian system with some additional letters for the Kalmyk sounds missing from Russian. It had also a diacritical mark (macron) for indicating long vowels, but in practice this mark was omitted.

The new script has not been used for a long time in its original form, since in 1927 it was changed and some letters were replaced by new ones. In 1928 some changes were introduced once again and in 1930 the whole script was abolished and replaced by a Latin based system (see 1.10.3.2). Latin script was also in use for a relatively short time (with a minor change in 1931). In 1938 a Cyrillic based system was introduced again in accordance with the new

government policy aiming the full Cyrillicization of the languages spoken in the Soviet Union (with a few exceptions only). The new Cyrillic system was not the same as the earlier one, but a slightly different and improved variant, which was in use until the 1950s. Although officially some changes were introduced in 1941, these changes came into real use in the 1950s only, after the return of the Kalmyks from the Siberian deportation to their homeland. This final variant is still in use up to now.

The Kalmyk literary language written with the Kalmyk Cyrillic alphabet is mostly based on the Dörwöd dialect, but it has elements from the Torgud dialect, too. Today it is the official language of the Kalmyk Republic together with Russian, but in real its use in official communication is quite limited in comparison with Russian. Kalmyk literary language is taught in schools from the first class as a separate subject.

Kalmyks often use the Russian alphabet to render Kalmyk texts in non-formal communication (especially on the Internet), omitting special Kalmyk letters and replacing them with simple Russian ones (e.g. *ə* with *я* or *a*, *ø* with *ë* or *o*, etc.).

### ***1.10.3.2. Latin script***

During the 1920s and 1930s variants of the Latin script were introduced officially in Kalmykia, but this experiment lasted for a very short period only and had no significant traces in the Kalmyk literary tradition.

## **1.11. HISTORY OF THE RESEARCHES**

First information on the Oirad dialects became available for the European academic audience from the records of voluntary or non-voluntary travellers visiting Kalmyk lands on the Southern borders of Russia. At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Peter Simon Pallas compiled a valuable material concerning the life and culture of the Kalmyks including some short samples of their language in latin transcription.<sup>34</sup> Somewhat earlier Philip Johan von Strahlenberg of Swedish origin has visited Mongolian people of Russia as a prisoner of war between 1711 and 1721. After returning home he has published a book entitled *Das Nord-und Ostliche Theil von Europa und Asia* with the results of his geographical, anthropological and linguistic studies.<sup>35</sup> The

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<sup>34</sup> P. S. PALLAS, *Sammlungen historischer Nachrichten über die mongolischen Völkerschaften*, vol. I, St. Petersburg, Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1776; P. S. PALLAS, *Sammlungen historischer Nachrichten über die mongolischen Völkerschaften*, vol. II, St. Petersburg, 1801.

<sup>35</sup> P. J. von STRAHLENBERG, *Das Nord- und Ostliche Theil von Europa und Asia*, Stockholm, 1730.

collected records of Strahlenberg and other European travellers containing Kalmyk glosses or even short vocabularies were published by Gerhard Doerfer in 1965.<sup>36</sup>

Academic researches on the Mongolian (including Oirad) language have been started in Russia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The very first grammar of Mongolian was published by Isaac Jakob Schmidt in St. Petersburg in 1831. In 1835 he also published a Mongolian–German–Russian dictionary. Although Schmidt’s grammar and dictionary dealt with Written Mongolian only, Schmidt was one among the founders of not only Mongolian, but Oirad studies, too. The mission of the Moravian Church located in Sarepta, South Russia, where Schmidt has been working from 1798 till 1807 maintained intensive relationship with the neighbouring Kalmyks and became a base for collecting material on the Kalmyk and Written Oirad languages. Later on another missionary, Heinrich August Zwick, who worked in Sarepta between 1818 and 1837 has been published a grammar and a dictionary of Written Oirad in 1851 and 1853.

An emerging centre for Mongolian studies in Russia was Kazan, where the Mongolian–Russian–French dictionary of Joseph Kowalewski has been published in 1844, shortly followed by the very first grammars of Oirad (Kalmyk) language in 1847 and 1849. The grammar of Aleksandr Popov<sup>37</sup> was exclusively focusing on Written Oirad, the written language of the Kalmyks in that time, while Aleksei Bobrovnikov’s work<sup>38</sup> dealt with both Written Mongolian and Written Oirad. Parmen Smirnov has compiled a Russian–Kalmyk dictionary and published it also in Kazan in 1857.

Although Written Mongolian, the written language of the Mongols was quite far from the contemporary spoken language, and even Written Oirad was slightly different from the living speech, all these grammars and dictionaries mentioned above were limited to written languages since there was no writing system in use for rendering the contemporary pronunciation of the Mongols. Bobrovnikov have made some notes on the real Kalmyk pronunciation of written forms, but the first grammar dealing specifically with the spoken language was written by Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna, who collected a significant amount of material on the living Kalmyk language during his travel to Astrakhan in 1871–1872, as well as on East Mongolian dialects when he visited Mongolia in 1873. Although his grammar contains an introduction to Mongolian and Oirad scripts, its entire content is devoted to the spoken languages rendering the texts in latin characters. The exact date when Bálint has finished his *Romanized Grammar of the East- and West-Mongolian Languages* is not known (after 1882) and unfortunately it

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<sup>36</sup> Publications already referred in the text with author’s name and date of publication will not be referred once more in the footnotes – please see the bibliography.

<sup>37</sup> А. ПОПОВ, *Грамматика калмыцкого языка*, Казань, 1847.

<sup>38</sup> А. БОБРОВНИКОВ, *Грамматика монгольско-калмыцкого языка*, Казань, 1849.

was not published at that time. The manuscript has been published only recently by Ágnes Birtalan<sup>39</sup>, who also had published Bálint's Kalmyk texts.<sup>40</sup>

The Kalmyks remained in the focus of the researches in Russia and several scholars were working on studies related to their language and culture. E.g. Aleksei Pozdnejev, the famous mongolist published a Kalmyk–Russian dictionary<sup>41</sup> as well as several Kalmyk written monuments. Russia was one of the most important centre for Mongolian studies in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (and still remains that up to the present), but also scholars of other European countries has been involved into the researches on Mongolian and Oirad languages. E.g. in 1844 Bernhard Jülg has published the Kalmyk (Written Oirad) text of some tales from the *Vetalapañcavimsati* together with a brief Kalmyk–German vocabulary.

Due to the growing interest in the study of spoken Oirad dialects a grammar of spoken Kalmyk was published by Vladislav Kotvič in 1915. The first large-scale dictionary of spoken Kalmyk language has been compiled by Gustaf John Ramstedt and published in 1935. This dictionary not only a valuable source for the Kalmyk dialects, but contains several data on the Oirad dialects of Eastern Turkestan and Mongolia.

As can be seen the Kalmyks and their language were represented in the researches much higher than other Oirad groups and dialects. Although some information were available on the Oirads of Western Mongolia, Eastern Turkestan and other territories, no significant linguistic material was published until Boris Jakovlevič Vladimircov's works. Vladimircov carried out fieldwork in Western and Central Mongolia in 1908 and between 1911–1915 and collected huge amount of linguistic material concerning the Oirad dialects of the visited area. His observations on the Oirad dialects were published in several articles and included into his comparative study of the Written Mongolian and Khalkha languages.<sup>42</sup> A valuable material of his collection of Western Mongolian Oirad folklore texts was published in 1926 in Cyrillic transcription.

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<sup>39</sup> Á. BIRTALAN, *Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna, A Romanized Grammar of the East- and West-Mongolian Languages. With popular Chrestomathies of both Dialects*, a cura di Á. Birtalan, Budapest, Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Csoma de Kőrös Society, 2009. Birtalan 2009

<sup>40</sup> Á. BIRTALAN, *Kalmyk Folklore and Folk Culture in the mid-19th Century. Philological Studies on the Basis of Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna's Kalmyk Texts*, Budapest; Elista, Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences; Kalmyk Institute of Humanitarian Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 2011.

<sup>41</sup> А. ПОЗДНѢВЪ, *Калмыцко-русскій словарь*, С.-Петербургъ, Типографія Императорской Академіи Наукъ, 1911.

<sup>42</sup> Б. Я. ВЛАДИМИРЦОВ, *Сравнительная грамматика монгольского письменного языка и халхаского наречия*; Б. Я. ВЛАДИМИРЦОВ, *Сравнительная грамматика монгольского письменного языка и халхаского наречия*, Москва, Наука, , Издание 2- 1989.

Beginning from the 1950s a new generation of mongolists started to work in Mongolia and the expanding academic activity initiated and vitalized the study of Mongolian dialects spoken in the territory of the country. The Mongolian Academy of Sciences organised expeditions for studying Mongolian dialects on regular basis, often jointly with academic institutions and researchers from abroad.<sup>43</sup> This work is still going on and younger linguists are also involved into the researches continuously. The most outstanding Mongolian linguists studying Oirad (and other) dialects in the past and present are Ү. Цолѳ, Е. Вандуй, Х. Луванбалдан, Д. Бадамдорж, Ш. Луванвандан, С. Мѳмѳ, О. Самбѳдорж, С. Пѳрѳжѳв, Х. Ойѳн and many others.

Oirad dialects of China also remained less studied until the 1950s. At this time Soviet expeditions have visited various Mongolian groups living in China for studying their language and collecting linguistic material. This work was led by Булжаš Тодајева and her several publications containing Oirad material have been published since then.<sup>44</sup> In the past few decades local Mongolian linguists in China also have been involved in the researches on Oirad dialects. The works of Лѳнтѳ, Ѳлжеибѳрен, Сангѳжѳи, Сайинбулаг, Булаг-а, Сѳнгрѳб, Чѳйѳжѳнѳб, Чѳимѳи and others to be mentioned here.

The activity of Тодајева and other Kalmyk linguists is focused also on the study of Kalmyk dialects. In the past decades Kalmyk researchers such as Дордѳи Павлов (Павла Дорж), Пѳтр Биткејев (Биткѳн Петр), В. Мунѳјев (Мунин Бембе), А. Кичикѳв (Кичикѳ Телѳ), С. Корсункѳјев (Корсункѳн Церн), Николай Убушѳјев (Убшѳн Николай), Светлана Трофѳмова, Григорѳј Пѳрбејев and others are playing the main role in the study of their language, publishing a series of articles, grammars and dictionaries. Not only Kalmyk, but several other linguists working in Russia (Валентин Рассадѳн, Эдѳжѳм Тенишѳв and so on) are also actively involved in the study of Kalmyk dialects.

Noted scholars in Europe researching and writing on Oirad dialects during the past decades are Pentti Aalto, Gyѳrgy Kara, Uwe Blѳasing, Johannes Benzing and Ѳgnes Birtalan. From the

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<sup>43</sup> Ж. Цѳлоѳ, *БНМАУ дахь монгол хэлний нутгийн аялгууны толь бичиг II. Ойрд аялгуу*, Улаанбаатар, БНМАУ-ын ШУА Хэл зохиолын хѳрѳэлѳн, 1988, IV.

<sup>44</sup> Б. Х. ТОДАЕВА, *Монгольские языки и диалекты Китая*, Москва, Издательство восточной литературы, 1960; Б. Х.-С. языка ойратов С.-по версиям песен ТОДАЕВА, *Язык монголов Внутренней Монголии: Материалы и словарь*, Москва, Наука, 1981; Б. Х.-С. языка ойратов С.-по версиям песен ТОДАЕВА, *Язык монголов Внутренней Монголии: очерк диалектов*, Москва, Наука, 1985; Б. Х.-С. языка ойратов С.-по версиям песен ТОДАЕВА, *Словарь языка ойратов Синьцзяна*, Элиста, Калмыцкое 2001.

recent publications *The Mongolic Languages* edited by Juha Janhunen<sup>45</sup> also contains a good summary of Altai Oirad by Ágnes Birtalan<sup>46</sup>, as well as Kalmyk by Uwe Bläsing.<sup>47</sup>

As it was mentioned above the researches on the Oirad language have been started by studies on the written language and written monuments. Although the study of spoken language has become increasingly important, researches on the written language were not stopped and still going on. Written Oirad is beyond the scope of the present article, but we should mention the Oirad–English citation dictionary of John R. Krueger<sup>48</sup> as a useful aid for reading Oirad texts, and grammars of Written Oirad published by Natalja Jahontova in 1996 and Attila Rákos in 2002.

The above summary on the history of studies on Oirad language and dialects could not be complete, of course. Listing the names and publications of all researchers involved in these studies exceeds the boundaries of the present article and I apologize for all those who have been left out from the description.

The first descriptions on the Sart Kalmyks have been published by A. Gagarin and T. Melmer in 1928<sup>49</sup>, and by A. B. Burdukov in 1935<sup>50</sup>. These publications mostly contain ethnographical and historical material, while the linguistic aspect is represented by Š. Dondukov and E. R. Tenišev. Short summaries on their language were published by E. R. Tenišev in 1976 and 1997 in Russian. The most detailed and thorough description of the Sart Kalmyk dialect has been published by the Kalmyk linguist Pawla Dorj in 1990.<sup>51</sup> This description written in Kalmyk is based on a fieldwork carried out in 1982 by four researchers of the Kalmyk State University. A brief account on the situation and language of the Sart Kalmyks living in Chelpek has been published by Dávid Somfai Kara<sup>52</sup>, who visited them in 1999.

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<sup>45</sup> J. JANHUNEN, *The Mongolic Languages*.

<sup>46</sup> Á. BIRTALAN, *Oirat*.

<sup>47</sup> U. BLÄSING, *Kalmuck*.

<sup>48</sup> J. R. KRUEGER, *Materials for an Oirat-Mongolian to English Citation Dictionary*, vol. I, Bloomington, The Mongolia Society, 1978; J. R. KRUEGER, *Materials for an Oirat-Mongolian to English Citation Dictionary*, vol. II, Bloomington, The Mongolia Society, 1978; J. R. KRUEGER, *Materials for an Oirat-Mongolian to English Citation Dictionary*, vol. III, Bloomington, The Mongolia Society, 1984.

<sup>49</sup> А. Д. ГАГАРИН – Т. М. МИЛЛЕР, *Сарт-Калмыки*, in «Северная Азия» 65-68 (1926).

<sup>50</sup> А. В. БУРДУКОВ, *Каракольские Калмыки*, in «Советская этнография» 6 (1935).---

<sup>51</sup> Д. ПАВЛА, *Хар холин хальмгуд болн теднэ келн*, Элст, Хальмг государственн университет, 1990.

<sup>52</sup> D. SOMFAI KARA, *Sart-Kalmyks - Kalmyks of Ysyk-köl (Karakol, Kirghizstan)*.

## 1.12. SOURCES

There are several books and collections both in Mongolia and Inner Mongolia publishing a large amount of Oirad folklore texts in Cyrillic script (Mongolia) and Mongolian script (Inner Mongolia). These publications are valuable and important sources for folklore studies, but due to the lack of precise transcription system they are useful for linguistic studies only to a limited extent. The ...

### 1.12.1. Western Mongolia

1. The largest corpus is the collection of the Hungaro-Mongolian Joint Expedition. The collection consists of audio and video recordings recorded from 1990 up to the present.
2. A collection of audio and video recordings of the Dörwöd dialect collected by Yu. Cendee. The collection is available on-line in the Endangered Languages Archive at <http://elar.soas.ac.uk/deposit/0310>.

### 1.12.2. Kalmyk

1. Audio and video recordings made in the frame of the Hungaro-Mongolian Joint Expedition in 2014 in Elista and Ketčenery (Kötčnər). The collection consists of interviews and folklore texts.
2. Video recordings in Kalmyk available on the internet, especially on the Youtube.

### 1.12.3. Sart-Kalmyk

1. Data available in the relevant academic literature.

### 1.12.4. Xinjiang Oirad

1. Series entitled *Mongyol törül-ün kele ayalun-u sudulul-un čuburil* ('Series of Researches on Mongolian Languages and Dialects') publishes materials on different Mongolic languages spoken in China. The 21<sup>st</sup> volume of the series is devoted to the Oirad dialect<sup>53</sup> and contains texts in phonetic transcription. The texts were collected by the researchers of the Inner Mongolian University in 1980 on the territory of the Khowogsair Mongol Autonomous County of Xinjiang province.
2. Audio and video recordings collected by B. Damrinjaw (Institute of Ethnic Literature, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) between 2013 and 2015. The collection consists of simple dialogues, narratives, folk songs, folk tales and excerpts from heroic epics.
3. A short excerpt from the collection of Elena Indjieva recorded in Xinjiang during 2005.
4. Audio recordings of Thomas Hoppe, made in 1995 in Xinjiang, Bayanbulag.

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<sup>53</sup> ČOYIUNGĴAB, *Oyirad ayalun-u üge kelelge-yin materiyal*, Mongyol-un arad-un keblel-ün qoriy-a, 1986.

#### **1.12.5. Alsha region**

Unfortunately sources on the dialects spoken in the Alsha League are very rare. There are some articles dealing with this dialect and some other publications containing data on it (see the history of researches and the bibliography), but there are no texts or audio recordings of significant amount available to me at the present.

#### **1.12.6. Deed Mongol**

1. Audio and video recordings made by Mátyás Balogh in Qinghai during 2008 and 2014.

## 2. PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY

The phonological system of Oirad dialects can be examined comprehensively, focusing on the common features of all Oirad dialects, and also separately for each particular dialect. Common features characterizing all (or most of) dialects are one of the main distinctive features distinguishing Oirad from other Mongolian languages and dialects.

Reviewing the literature dealing with the phonology of various Oirad dialects, the sound system of Oirad seems to be subject of debates and various interpretations. There are several different and controversial opinions concerning especially the vowel system.

### 2.1. VOWEL PHONEMES

There is a consensus on dividing Oirad vowels into front and back groups by the place of articulation (and vowel harmony, see later), as well as into three categories on the basis of quantity: short, long and overshoot (or reduced). Beside of these points however several controversial questions exist.

The vowel system of Oirad usually examined by taking account on Written Mongolian and Written Oirad, and most interpretations classify vowels according to their origin, rather than according to their role and position in the current vowel system. This diachronic approach is noticeable in the interpretation of vowel length (quantity) in non-first syllables. Although Oirad dialects clearly distinct short and long vowels in the first syllables, the original short and long vowels of non-first syllables were fairly reduced: short vowels became overshoot (and mostly lose the distinctive character of their quality), while length of the original long vowels became almost identical with the length of short vowels of first syllables. Several classifications of the Oirad vowel system bear the effect of a diachronic approach, which ignores some results of these changes took place in vowel quantity.

The typical Oirad vowel system consists of 8 short (*a, o, u, i, e, ä, ö, ü*) and 8 long (*a:, o:, u:, i:, e:, ä:, ö:, ü:*) phonemes with an additional reduced vowel or shwa (*ə*). The phonetic features of these vowel phonemes may vary according to particular dialects. Mostly the pronunciation of labials is different in certain dialects, probably due to the influence of other Mongolian languages (Khalkha in Mongolia and the Chakhar-based official Mongolian dialect in China). The most common variants are the following ones:

<i>u</i>	[u], [ʊ]
<i>o</i>	[o], [ɔ]
<i>ü</i>	[y], [ɥ]
<i>ö</i>	[ø], [œ]

The first syllable of words may contain any vowel except shwa, and vowel length is distinctive only in these syllables. In non-first syllables only short vowels and shwa may occur. This interpretation of the Oirad vowel system is not the only one in the literature.

E.g. according to Sambūdorj the reduced vowels of Uriankhai dialect should be regarded as illabial vowels, because in stressed position they always sound as long illabials.<sup>54</sup> Considering the lack of labial attraction in Oirad, these illabial vowels could be the very short variants of *a*, *ä* and *i* > [ǎ], [ǣ] and [ĩ]. Colō practically says the same when states, that Jakhchin dialect has three reduced vowel phonemes: *ě*, *ǎ* and *ĩ*.<sup>55</sup> These observations could be extended also to other Oirad dialects, but if we take into consideration that [ǣ] and [ǎ] show complementary distribution (due to vowel harmony) they can be considered as variants of the same neutral phoneme *ə*. If we assume that palatalized consonants are also phonemes in contrast with non-palatalized ones, then [ĩ] could be treated as an allophone of /ə/, too.

Front		Central	Back	
Unrounded	Rounded		Unrounded	Rounded
<i>i i:</i>	<i>ü ü:</i>	<i>ə</i>		<i>u u:</i>
<i>e e:</i>	<i>ö ö:</i>			<i>o o:</i>
<i>ä ä:</i>			<i>a a:</i>	

The vowel system of Oirad

Some short vowel phonemes (*a, u, i, ä, ü*) may occur in any syllable, while others (*o, e, ö*) only in the first syllable, with the only common exception of *o* occurring in the negative particle *-go* (the latter has a variant *-g<sup>h</sup>a* in Western Mongolian Oirad). It should be mentioned however that *u* and *ü* may have variants [o] and [ö] in non-first syllables, so the difference between [u] and [o] as well as [ü] and [ö] is non-phonemic in non-first syllables. Long vowels are found only in the first syllable, and overshoot vowels exist in non-first syllables only. Overshoot vowels

<sup>54</sup> O. SAMBUUDORJ, *Az urianxai nyelvjárás hangtanának alapvető sajátosságai*, in Á. BIRTALAN (Ed.), *Őseink nyomán Belső-Ázsiában II. Hitvilág és nyelvészet.*, Budapest, Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó, 1998, 145–156: 147.

<sup>55</sup> Ж. ЦОЛОО, *Захчины аман аялгуу*, Улаанбаатар, 1965, 40–41.

(shwa) can alternate with zero.<sup>56</sup> The actual situation can be formulated so that vowel quantity is a distinctive feature only in the first syllable.<sup>57</sup>

Although diphthongs are usually considered as not typical of Oirad, various Oirad texts published in phonetic transcription contain obvious traces of diphthongs. Diphthongs are found in Vladimircov's folklore text collection (Western Mongolian dialects)<sup>58</sup>, Coloo's Jakhchin<sup>59</sup> and Wandui's Dörwöd<sup>60</sup> material, as well as in Ramstedt's Kalmyk folklore texts<sup>61</sup> (but not in his dictionary) and in many other publications. Audio recordings of the Hungaro-Mongolian Joint Expedition are also contain evidence on diphthongs occurring in Western Mongolian dialects. Existence of diphthongs in Altai Oirad dialects could be explained by the influence of Khalkha, but this explanation cannot be applied to Kalmyk.

Distribution of diphthongs in Oirad dialects shows occasional and irregular alternation with long vowels developed from the common Mongolian *Vyi* sound complexes. This alternation rules out that these diphthongs have phonemic sense. Obviously the development of original diphthongs into long vowels did not take place completely in Oirad dialects and diphthongs remained as free variations of the new long vowels (but not that of the original ones).

In spite of facts discussed above scholars mostly deny the existence of diphthong phonemes in Oirad dialects, and some Mongolian researchers are the only exceptions. While Coloo accepts the existence of a single and marginal diphthong phoneme only (*ua* in the short form of the negative particle *-gua*)<sup>62</sup>, Wandui gives 11 variants (see the table below). On the basis of audio sources of the Hungaro-Mongolian Joint Expedition recorded in Western Mongolia and my personal experiences I admit that several diphthongs exist in Western Mongolian Oirad dialects as variations and allophones of long vowel phonemes, but they are certainly not independent phonemes. Existence of these diphthongs could not be explained exclusively by the influence of Khalkha, but the frequency of their occurrence shows clear correlation with that.

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<sup>56</sup> Since this alternation is non-phonemic and various sources show great diversity concerning the presence and quality of reduced vowels, these vowels are indicated in the sample texts only if the presence is relevant or the source clearly indicated the shwa.

<sup>57</sup> See the similar conclusion of Bläsing concerning Kalmyk: Bläsing 2003: 231.

<sup>58</sup> Б. Я. ВЛАДИМИРЦОВ, *Образцы монгольской народной словестности*. Vladimircov 1926

<sup>59</sup> Ж. ЦОЛОО, *Захчины аман аялгуу*.

<sup>60</sup> Э. ВАНДУЙ, *Дөрвөд аман аялгуу*, Улаанбаатар, 1965.

<sup>61</sup> G. J. RAMSTEDT – S. BALINOV – P. AALTO, *Kalmückische Lieder*, in «J. la Société Finno-Ougrienne» 62 (1963), Helsinki; G. J. RAMSTEDT – P. AALTO, *Torgutische Lieder*, in «J. la Société Finno-Ougrienne» 67 (1966), Helsinki. Ramstedt 1962, 1966

<sup>62</sup> Ж. ЦОЛОО, *Захчины аман аялгуу*, 40–41.

Existence of back vowel [ĩ] and [ĩ̄] as phonemic vowels in Oirad is also a debated question. Some scholars (mostly Mongols) state, that Oirad has primary or secondary [i] and [ĩ] vowels and these are phonemes.<sup>63</sup> However, there is no real reason to suppose such idea, since there are no word pairs containing [i]/[ĩ] and [i]/[ĩ̄], which could be considered as minimal pairs. It is obvious, that some difference can exist in the pronunciation of /i/ and /ĩ/ in words containing back or front vowels, but these variations are non-phonemic.

As a demonstration of various classifications established by scholars concerning the vowel system of Oirad dialects, the table below shows the vowel phonemes of Dörwöd, Jakhchin and Torgud dialects spoken in Western Mongolia based on the work of E. Wandui, Ў. Coloo and O. Sambuudorj:

		Front	Back
Wandui <sup>64</sup> (Dörwöd)	Short vowels	ä, e, i, ö, ü	a, o, u
	Long vowels	ā, ē, ī, ō, ū	ā, ō, ū, ī
	Diphtongs	äi, üi, ēe, üē	ōi/ōi, ūi/ūi, ōe, ōa, iū
	Reduced vowels <sup>65</sup>		
Coloo <sup>66</sup> (Jakhchin)	Short vowels	e, i, ö, ü	a (à), o, u
	Long vowels	ē (ē), ī, ō, ū	ā (ā), ō, ū
	Diphtongs <sup>67</sup>		<sup>u</sup> ā
	Reduced vowels	ě, ĭ	ǎ
Sambuudorj <sup>68</sup> (Torgud)	Short vowels	ä, e, i, ö, ü	a, ĭ, o, u
	Long vowels	ā, ē, ī, ō, ū	ā, ĭ, ō, ū
	Diphtongs <sup>69</sup>	öü, öe, e'ē, ö'ō	ou, ua, oa, a'ā, o'ō
	Reduced vowels	ě, ĭ, ő, ů, ǎ	ǎ, ĭ, ő, ů

Vowel system of three Oirad dialects accordin to the literature

<sup>63</sup> Э. ВАНДУЙ, *Дөрвөд аман аялгуу*, 20–27. Wandui 1965: 20–27; О. САМБУУДОРЖ, *Торгууд аман аялгууны тэмдэглэл*, Улаанбаатар, 1996, 23.

<sup>64</sup> Э. ВАНДУЙ, *Дөрвөд аман аялгуу*, 20–62. Wandui 1965: 20–62

<sup>65</sup> Wandui does not determine exactly the set of reduced vowels.

<sup>66</sup> Ж. ЦОЛОО, *Захчины аман аялгуу*, 40–41. Colō 1965: 40–41

<sup>67</sup> By Colō's opinion *ua* is the only diphtong in Jakhchin, which occurs in the shortened form of the negative particle (-*gua*).

<sup>68</sup> О. САМБУУДОРЖ, *Торгууд аман аялгууны тэмдэглэл*, 23–24.

<sup>69</sup> Sambuudorj does not use the term diphtong (Khal. *хос эгшиг*), instead he writes *хосорхог эгшиг* 'diphtong-like vowel' and says that these vowels are not phonemes, just variants or allophones.

Due to the Khalkha influence Oirad dialects spoken in Western Mongolia adopted some Khalkha sounds as variations or allophones of labial vowel phonemes. Thus the common Oirad pronunciation of phonemes /*ö*/ and /*ü*/ as [ö] and [ü], as well as phonemes /*o*/ and /*u*/ as [o] and [u] alternates with the centralized labial vowels of Khalkha.

### 2.1.1. Palatal and rounding harmony

Palatal harmony is a typical feature characterizing Mongolian languages. Palatal harmony of Oirad divides vowel phonemes into three groups: 1) back vowels – *a, o, u*; 2) front vowels – *ä, e, ö, ü*; 3) neutral vowel – *i*. A word (except compound and foreign words) can contain vowels from the same group only, but neutral *i* occurs together with any other vowel. In some dialects vowel *ä* is also treated as neutral (mostly in Dörwöd in Western Mongolia and also Dörwöd dialect of Kalmyk, but it also occurs in Xinjiang Oirad).

The basis of vowel harmony and division of vowels into two classes is the place of their articulation. Original Mongolian vowels were divided into back and front vowel groups, which has been retained in Oirad dialects in contrast to Khalkha, Buriad and Inner Mongolian dialects, where vowels were centralized and vowel harmony is rather based on the position of tongue root (retracted or advanced).<sup>70</sup>

Lack of rounding harmony (labial attraction) is a typical feature of Oirad in contrast with other Mongolian dialects. In Oirad labial vowels of the first syllable can be followed by illabial vowels *a, ä* and *i*, as well as labial vowels *u* and *ü* only, according to vowel harmony. Thus suffixes can contain these vowels only, too.

This however seems to break to some extent in Western Mongolian Oirad, because of Khalkha influence (Khalkha has labial attraction). Some examples can be found where word stems show rounding harmony of Khalkha type. E.g. *noxa* ~ *noxo* ‘dog’ < Khal. *нохой*; *ноγan* ~ *ноγon* ‘green’ < Khal. *ногоон*; *boran* ~ *boro* ‘rain’ < Khal. *бороо*, etc. It is interesting however, that such labial attraction found in word stems (radical harmony) does not affect the suffixes (suffixal harmony), e.g.: *šoroγar* ‘clay’ + INSTR. A similar phenomenon could be observed concerning rounding harmony in the Alsha dialect and Deed Mongol, too.

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<sup>70</sup> J.-O. SVANTESSON et al., *The Phonology of Mongolian*, Oxford, New York, Oxford University Press, 2005, 7–8. Svantesson 2008: 7–8

## 2.2. CONSONANT PHONEMES

The consonant system of Oirad consists of 23 basic phonemes and 5 additional marginal phonemes mostly occurring in loanwords. Certain phonemes are phonetically different in various dialects and idiolects and also may have allophones depending their position.

		Labial	Dental	Dental, palatalised	Alveopalatal	Palatal	Velar	Uvular
<b>Stops</b>	<b>Voiceless</b>	(p)	t	tʲ			k	
	<b>Voiced</b>	b	d	dʲ			g	ɣ
<b>Fricatives</b>	<b>Voiceless</b>	(f)	s		š			x
	<b>Voiced</b>	(w)	ʒ		(ž)			
<b>Affricates</b>	<b>Voiceless</b>		c		č			
	<b>Voiced</b>				čʲ			
<b>Nasals</b>		m	n	nʲ			ŋ	
<b>Laterals</b>			l	lʲ				
<b>Trills</b>			r	(rʲ)				
<b>Glides</b>						j		

Consonant system of Oirad

It should be mentioned that phonemic correlation between palatalized and non-palatalized consonants exists in back-vowel words only.

### 2.2.1. b

Voiced bilabial *b* has two allophones: [b] and [w]. Allophone [b] can occur in any position, while [w] mostly in non-initial positions. Even initial [b] can alternate with [w] in fast speech. Unvoiced variant [p] occurs in some dialects at the end of words or end of syllables, where the next syllable begins with a stop or affricate. E.g.: *büdüin* ‘stout’; *xolba* ~ *xolwo* ‘connection’; *xöb* ~ *xüb* ~ *xüw* ‘part, destiny’; *nogaptr* ‘greenish’.

### 2.2.2. p

Voiceless bilabial plosive *p* is a marginal phoneme occurring in loanwords and onomatopoeic words only. E.g.: *pargram* ‘programme’.

### 2.2.3. c

Voiceless alveolar affricate *c* corresponds to WM *čV*, where *V* is any vowel except *i*. Sometimes WM *či* also results in *c* in Oirad. Consonant *c* occurs in any position. E.g.: *cagan* ‘white’; *acan* ‘cargo, caravan’; *garc* ‘exit’.

### 2.2.4. č

Voiceless palato-alveolar affricate *č* has been developed from Written Mongolian *čV*, where *V* mostly *i*, but sometimes any other vowel. At present it occurs in any position, however in final position it is often followed by a reduced, non-phonemic [ɨ]. E.g.: *čödr* ~ *čüdr* ~ *čidr* ‘hobble’; *gi:č* ‘guest’; *önčn* ‘orphan’.

### 2.2.5. d

Voiced alveolar plosive *d* occurs in initial, middle or final position. As a word final sound it may become unvoiced [t]. E.g.: *dotr* ‘in, inside’; *bodx* ‘to think’; *u:d* ‘bit, snaffle’.

### 2.2.6. dʲ

Palatalized voiced alveolar plosive *dʲ* stays instead of original *d* in vicinity of an original *i*. E.g. *bodisad* ‘boddhisattva’.

### 2.2.7. ž

Voiced palato-alveolar affricate *ž* corresponds to WM *jV* complex, where *V* is *i*, or rarely any other vowel. Phoneme *ž* occurs in any position in Oirad, but at word ends it is often followed by a reduced, non-phonemic [ɨ]. E.g.: *žora* ‘amber’; *u:žam* ‘wide’; *kögž* ‘mold, mildew’.

### 2.2.8. g

Voiced velar plosive *g* corresponds to WM *g* and *γ* where the latter was not followed by a vowel. In final position it becomes unvoiced and has a variant [k]. E.g.: *nutg* ‘homeland, territory’, *gerl* ‘light’.

### 2.2.9. γ

Voiced uvular fricative *γ* corresponds to WM *γ* followed by a back vowel. E.g.: *γurwn* ~ *γuru* ‘three’; *γolγa* ‘intestines’.

#### 2.2.10. x

Voiceless velar fricative *x* is found in back-vowel words and front vowel-words derived from back-vowel ones (due to the effect of original [i]), as well as in the *x* suffix of the futuritive participle, which can be attached to either back or front-vowel verb stems. E.g.: *xä:r* ‘love’; *asxn* ‘evening’; *xaša* ‘fence’; *su:x* ‘to sit’.

#### 2.2.11. j

Palatal approximant *j* occurs in any position and corresponds to WM *y* or sometimes WM *j*. E.g.: *jasx* ‘to arrange’; *bij* ‘body, oneself’; *bajn* ‘rich’.

#### 2.2.12. k

Voiceless velar plosive *k* corresponds to WM *k*, so mostly occurs in front-vowel words, but also in back vowel ones in positions preceding an original *i*. Due to the Khalkha influence *k* alternates with *x* in Western Mongolian Oirad. E.g.: *kirü* ‘hoarfrost’; *kök* ~ *kok* ‘blue’; *taka* ‘hen, chicken’.

#### 2.2.13. l

Lateral approximant or fricative *l* rarely occurs in initial position (mostly in loanwords). E.g. *law* ‘sure’; *xalun* ‘hot’; *xo:l* ‘meal’.

#### 2.2.14. lʲ

Palatalized /lʲ/ appears in the surrounding of original /i/. E.g. *älʲä* ~ *alʲa* ‘elfish’; *ülʲi* ‘cuckoo’.

#### 2.2.15. m

Bilabial nasal *m* occurs in any position. E.g.: *äm* ‘life’; *medx* ‘to know’; *selm* ‘sword’.

#### 2.2.16. n

Alveolar nasal *n* occurs in any position. In final position [n] alternates with [ŋ] in some dialects (mostly influenced by Khalkha, e.g. Jakhchin). E.g.: *nogan* ~ *nogon* ‘green’; *xancu* ‘sleeve’.

#### 2.2.17. nʲ

Palatal nasal /nʲ/ appears in the surrounding of original *i*. E.g.: *xänʲädʲn* ‘cough’.

#### 2.2.18. ŋ

Velar nasal *ŋ* occurs as syllable coda only. E.g.: *bä:šŋ* ‘building’; *möŋgn* ‘silver’.

#### 2.2.19. r

Alveolar trill *r* occurs as initial sound in loanwords only. E.g.: *ükr* ‘cow’; *rašān* ‘mineral spring, holy water’.

### 2.2.20. rʲ

Palatalized alveolar trill *rʲ* appears in the surrounding of original *i*. E.g.: *särʲsn* ‘leather’.

### 2.2.21. s

Voiceless alveolar sibilant *s* occurs in any position. E.g.: *sa:xn* ‘beautiful’; *bögs* ‘rear, backside’; *zems* ~ *jems* ‘fruit’.

### 2.2.22. š

Voiceless palato-alveolar sibilant *š* occurs in all positions. E.g.: *šar* ‘yellow’; *xarš* ‘harmful’; *bušu* ‘quick’.

### 2.2.23. t

Voiceless alveolar plosive *t* occurs in any position, however final /t/ is often followed by a non-phonemic reduced vowel. E.g.: *bat* ‘strong’; *bortx* ‘flask’; *tümn* ‘ten thousand’.

### 2.2.24. tʲ

Palatalized voiceless alveolar plosive *tʲ* occurs in positions preceding an original *i*. E.g.: *botʲ* ‘volume (of a book)’.

### 2.2.25. ʒ

Phoneme *ʒ* corresponds to WM *jV* (*V* ≠ *i*) or sometimes *ji*. This phoneme is mostly pronounced as a voiced alveolar sibilant [z], but alternates with voiceless or semi-voiced alveolar affricate [dz] in Western Mongolian Oirad and Deed Mongol. The regular surface form in Alsha Oirad is [dz]. E.g.: *galʒu* ‘rabid’; *ʒäŋg* ‘news’; *boʒ* ‘liquid made from milk’.

## 2.3. CONSONANT ASSIMILATIONS

### 2.3.1. Nasalization

There is an assimilation tendency in Oirad that turns labial consonant /w/ into nasal /m/ under the influence of a following nasal consonant /n/. This tendency is far from being a strict rule, but several examples of its result occur in Oirad dialects.

Ex:1 *manʒ* ‘novice’ < WO *bandi* ‘id.’, WM *bandi* ‘id.’

Ex:2 *jom-na* ‘go’ + PRAES.IMP; WO *yabu-na* ‘id.’; WM *yabu-na* ‘id.’

Ex:3 *tämn* ‘fifty’ < WO *tabin* ‘id.’; WM *tabin* ‘id.’

## 2.4. CONNECTIVE SOUNDS

### 2.4.1. Connective consonants

If two (full) vowels meet at a morpheme boundary, a connective consonant *g* or *ɣ* (depending on dialect or idiolect) appears between the vowels. Practically it means that if a suffix beginning with a full vowel is connected to a stem ending in a full vowel, then a connective *g* or *ɣ* (depends on dialect) appears between them. This epenthesis never takes place on word boundary.

A similar *g* is added after velar nasal noun stems if the suffix following the stem begins with a full vowel, too. The epenthesis of *g* after velar nasal *ŋ* is required because of a phonotactic restriction preventing the occurrence of *ŋ* as a syllable onset. Due to this phonotactic restriction there are no word stems in Oirad containing *ŋ* in syllable onset. The appearance of this epenthetic *g* could be observed also historically in loanwords containing *ŋ* in syllable onset in their original form.

This epenthetic *g/ɣ* is a lexically empty segment and not an independent morpheme. Whether this segment belongs to the word stem or to the connected suffix is an open question and valid arguments could be cited for both options. According to the phonotactic rules of Oirad two vowels cannot occur side by side in the same word, so the appearance of a consonant filling the hiatus is inevitable, but the quality of this consonant is not predictable on phonetic basis. Appearance of a homorganic consonant (*g*) after *ŋ* if this *ŋ* would occur in syllable onset is a more predictable process partially motivated by phonetic reasons. However in order to maintain the simplicity of segmentation I will treat here both epenthetic *g* consonants as a part of the suffixes.

### 3. NOMINAL MORPHOLOGY

Similarly to other Mongolic languages Oirad is an agglutinative language and its morphology is based on suffixes. The most important nominal morpheme and suffix categories are derivation, number, case, personal and reflexive possession. Depending on phonotactic rules, stem types and other factors certain suffixes may have several allomorphes. Classification of certain morphemes as suffixes or clitics is not without ambiguities, and also the separation of the elements of declension and derivation has open questions, too.

The order of extension of common nouns is the following:

2. stem
3. derivational suffix(es)
4. plural suffix(es)
5. case marker(s)
6. possessive marker (personal, reflexive)

Most of the nominal stems do not change during suffixation, except *n*-stem nouns, personal pronouns and some demonstrative pronouns.

There is no formal distinction between nouns depending on their meaning, no formal difference between substantive and qualitative nouns. The same noun form can be used also adverbially without any further suffixes, but there are suffixes that could emphasise the adverbial function of the word (e.g. instrumental case marker).

Suffixes containing a (full) vowel usually have two variants according to palatal harmony. Variants with vowel *a* or *u* are attached to back vowel words, while variants with *ä* or *ü* to front vowel words. Capital letters in the suffixes always indicate these vowels. In some dialects (Dörwöd in Kalmykia, Dörwöd in Western Mongolia, Torgud in Xinjiang) *ä* is a neutral vowel and in these dialects suffixes have a single variant with *ä*.

#### 3.1. STEM TYPES

Nominal stems may be classified on the basis of their final sound. The three basic types are the following ones:

- consonant stems
- vowel stems
- *n*-stems

Category of vowel stems includes only stems ending in a full vowel, stems ending in a reduced vowel (schwa) behave similarly to consonant stems. Most of the common noun stems have a single stem variant and the only exception is the category of *n*-stem nouns. These nouns have a

stem final *n* sound that appears before certain suffixes and disappears before others. As a rule *n* is dropped before derivative suffixes and the markers of accusative, instrumental, sociative and terminative cases.

The presence of stem final nasal is well documented in written sources of Mongolic languages, and this *n* probably goes back to a suffix, that was already non-productive in the period the first Mongolian written monuments. The original role of this potential *-n* suffix is obscure (nominaliser, substantiviser, etc.), and it should not be confused with other suffixes having the same surface form (e.g. an archaic plural marker of certain verbal nouns, etc.). The supposed *-n* suffix ceased to be productive long time ago and *n*-stem nouns probably became lexically encoded already in Middle Mongolian.

In Oirad the *n*-stem class is not restricted to nouns only, it also includes nominals belonging to other categories, such as the perfect participle (*-sən*). The final *n* of these nominals is also unstable, appears or disappears if certain case markers or plural markers are added. This phenomenon could be observed in earlier stages of Mongolian and partially in other modern languages.

Significant variance in the surface form of nominal stems occurs only in such closed noun classes as pronouns. Although most of the pronouns behave similarly to common nouns, some personal and demonstrative pronouns have several allomorphes. These allomorphes occur with nominal case markers, and although synchronically they cannot be analysed, some of their variants are explainable on the basis of diachronic processes.

### **3.2. NOMINAL CASES**

System of Oirad nominal declension consists of several cases, mostly corresponding to similar cases of other Mongolic languages and marked by certain suffixes. There is no consensus in the academic literature on the exact number of cases – not only in Oirad, but also in Mongolic languages in general. Description of the Oirad case system depends on the interpretation of inflectional and derivative suffixes, clitics and postpositions, consequently authors classify some morphemes differently on the basis of their behaviors and distribution. In the present work the Oirad case system consists of 10 cases, but obviously there are arguments not only for including some other morphemes into the case system, but also for excluding some of them, too. The names of the cases as used here mainly follow the traditional naming convention of the relevant literature, although introduction of a new terminology would be justifiable, too.

Nominal cases may be classified depending on various aspects, e.g. their role, grammatic function, phonetic and phonological character of their suffixes. Presence of the final nasal of *n*-

stem nouns is characteristic to genitive, dative-locative, ablative, commitative and directive cases, while *n* disappears before other case markers.

Oirad case markers are usually attached to phrases, and formally only the last member of a multi-word phrase takes them (plural markers behave similarly, too).

### 3.2.1. Nominative

Nominative is an unmarked case in Oirad and this is the usual case of the grammatical subject of the sentence.

Ex:4 *Siwir-də mini e:žə-Ø jumə uj-dəg bā:ž.*

Siberia-DAT 1P.SG.GEN mother-NOM something sew-PART.HAB be-PRAET.IMP

In Siberia my mother was sewing things.

Another role of the nominative case is forming attributes. There is no formal distinction between attributes and the modified element, the same noun in nominative can occur both as a head noun and a modifier.

Ex:5 *Eməgtä-Ø kümən-Ø ger-än zü:n tal-ar γoldu: su:-dəg bā:-sən.*

woman-NOM person-NOM yurt-GEN left side-INSTR mainly sit-PART.HAB be-PART.PERF

Women (lit. female person) usually were sitting on the left side of the yurt. (forrás)

Ex:6 *mini barun Ø γar Ø əm tuγ ü:nd-än öwd-žä-nä.*

1P.SG.GEN right-NOM hand-NOM-1P.SG.POSS very here-REF.POSS hurt-CONT-PRAES.IMP

My right hand really hurts here. (forrás)

The nominal predicate of a clause or sentence also occurs in nominative as a rule.

Since *n*-stem nouns preserve their final nasal in nominative, but this form is not their shortest stem variant, it would be an argument for treating *-n* as a marker of nominative. Although historically the final nasal of *n*-stems show some possible relations with nominative, such classification would imply the appearance of other problems.

Due to the Khalkha influence exercised on the Oirad dialects spoken in Western Mongolia, the dropping of final nasal of *n*-stem nouns in nominative occur sometimes in these dialects.

### 3.2.2. Accusative

The primary role of the accusative case is indicating the direct object of a verb, but it also has other important grammatical functions. Oirad distinguishes two types of objects: indefinite object and definite object. Indefinite object is unmarked (except at *n*-stems, where it is marked by dropping the final nasal), while definite object is marked by one of the variants of the accusative case suffix. Definite object is a certain, well-defined thing or person that has some

emphasis in the context. Nominals having an attributive qualifier, a demonstrative or possessive determiner are usually treated as definite objects, but object may be definite in the absence of these conditions, too.

The accusative marker has several allomorphes depending on the stem type and the particular dialect. The most common markers are *-g* after vowel stems and *-ig* after consonant stems. The final nasal of *n*-stem nouns usually drops out in accusative.

Ex:7 *Bi: end a:w-ig külä-ž su:-žä-n.*

1P.SG here father-ACC wait-CONV.IMP sit-CONT-PRAES.IMP

I am waiting [my] father here. (DM.Oyun:71)

Ex:8 *Inə maŋγəs-ig xuyər ba:tər-t-an ögə-yə.*

this demon-ACC two hero-DAT-REF.POSS give-VOL

I give this demon to my two heroes. (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

Ex:9 *Atxər xar maŋγəs-an tolxa-g čapč-ad al-je.*

winding black demon-GEN head-ACC cut.off-CONV.PERF kill-PRAET.IMP

He cut off the head of the winding black demon and killed him. (forrás)

Ex:10 *Köwün or-ad irə-x-där taran-as-a negə atxə tara-Ø ög-če*

boy go.in-CONV.PERF come-PART.FUT-on grain-ABL one palm grain-ACC-REF.POSS give-PRAET.IMP

When the boy went in, she gave him one handful of grain from her grain. (forrás)

Ex:11 *Axə-m mörən xu:r tat-x-ig sur-ad täwən žil bol-ba.*

brother-1P.SG.POSS horse fiddle pull-PART.FUT-ACC learn-CONV.PERF five year become-PRAET.PERF

My brother was learning playing on horse-headed fiddle for five years. (PINK:236)

Ex:12 *Sara-g na:r jow-ul-Ø*

Sara-ACC here go-CAUS-IMPER

Send Sara here! (DM Oyunčečeg 2009:71)

In Kalmyk also a variant *-Ag* occurs (instead of *-ig*), mostly in the Torgud dialect.<sup>71</sup> According to Oyunčečeg the same *-Ag* suffix is present in Deed Mongol, too, where it is used after reduced vowel stems.<sup>72</sup> E.g. Kalm-T *olən* ‘many’ > *ol-ag*, *negən* ‘one’ > *nəg-äg*, *xojər* ‘two’ > *xojər-ag* (Убушаев 2010:167).

<sup>71</sup> Н. Н. УБУШАЕВ, *Проблема сложения диалектной системы калмыцкого языка и ее функционирование*, 167.

<sup>72</sup> ОЮНЧЕЧЕГ, *Degedü mongγol-un aman ayalγun-u sudulul*, *Öbür mongγol-un arad-un keblel-ün qoriy-a*, 2009, 71–72.

According to Pawla Dorj the general suffix is *-ig* after consonant stems in Sart Kalmyk, but there is a variant *-gi*, which is also used with *n*-stems, too, and their final nasal does not drop out. He also gives an alternative form *-Ag* used with numerals only.<sup>73</sup> Somfai mentions *-gi* as the only accusative marker<sup>74</sup>, while at Tenishev *-g* is used after vowel stems and *-ig* after consonant stems (including *n*, which is preserved in accusative here).<sup>75</sup> If the accusative case marker is followed by a personal possessive marker, its final *g* usually drops out, but sometimes remains. The allomorph without *g* reminds the original Common Mongolian accusative marker *-i*, which is also attested in Written Oirad and Written Mongolian.

Ex:13 *altn am'i-m öršä-Ø*  
 gold life-ACC-1P.SG.POSS spare-IMPER  
 Spare my golden life! (WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926)

It is worth to note that similarly to final nasal of *n*-stem nouns final *n* of perfect participle (*-sən*) may also be dropped in accusative.

Ex:14 *ta: jamər ši:dwər ɣar-ɣə-s-ig-tn med-sü-b g-ä:d adɣə-ʒ bā:-nä-b.*  
 2SG.POL what.kind.of decision go.out-CAUS-PART.PERF-ACC-2P.POSS know-OPT-1P.SG say-  
 CONV.PERF be.impatient-CONV.IMP be-PRAES.IMP-1P.SG  
 I very impatiently want to know what kind of decision you made. (forrás)

Some examples show that drop out of the final nasal of *-sən* is not obligatory in all cases:

Ex:15 *Tü:n-ä ir-sən-ig med-lä.*  
 that-GEN come-PART.PERF-ACC know-PRAES.PERF  
 [He] got to know that he/she arrived. (WMO-Ö Баттулга–Бадамдорж 2005:94)

Accusative case marker is also used to indicate the (mostly animate) subject of dependent clauses (except serialization) if it is not the same as the subject of the head clause (finite clause). This is not the only option and dependent subject stands in genitive or nominative in certain situations.

Ex:16 *Emč-ig tana-d ir-xə-də bi: ger-t-än uga bilä-w.*  
 doctor 2PL.GEN-DAT come-PART.FUT-DAT 1P.SG house-DAT-REF.POSS NEG be-PRAES.PERF-1SG  
 When the doctor came to you I was not home. (XO Čoyijungjab 1987)

<sup>73</sup> Д. ПАВЛА, *Хар холин хальмгуд болн теднэ келн*, 26–27.

<sup>74</sup> D. SOMFAI KARA, *Sart-Kalmyks - Kalmyks of Ysyk-köl (Karakol, Kirghizstan)*, 203.

<sup>75</sup> Э. Р. ТЕНИШЕВ, *Иссык-кульских калмыков язык*, in *Языки мира. Монгольские языки, тунгузо-маньчжурские языки, японский язык, корейский язык*, Москва, Издательство «Индрик», 1997, 67–73: 71.

### 3.2.3. Genitive

The basic function of the genitive case is expressing relation between nominals. The allomorphes of the genitive case marker are *-in* after consonant stems (except *n*-stems), *-A* after *n*-stems and *-n* after vowel stems. Stems ending in *ŋ* and monosyllabic vowel stems take a *-gin/γin* allomorph of the genitive marker. In Kalmyk instead of *-in* allomorph *-An* is more characteristic to the Torgud dialect, while Dörwöd often uses *-n* even with consonant stems.<sup>76</sup>

The primary function of genitive case is creating possessive phrases, linking the possessor and the possession together. The head noun of the possessive structure is the possession and the adnominal possessor takes the marker of the genitive case.

- Ex:17     *Ger-än bosx-an barun zü:n xoyər xažud-ar xoyər te:rəm salγə-ž täw-čk-äd [...]*  
yurt-GEN doorstep-GEN right left two beside-INSTR grating.wall divide-CONV.IMP put-INTENS-  
CONV.PERF  
They divide two grating walls at the right and left side of the yurt's doorstep [...] (WMO-Z)

### 3.2.4. Dative-locative

Dative-locative is a multi-purpose case in Oirad, it may be used in a wide variety of contexts. Marker of the dative-locative case is *-t* after consonants *b, d, g, r, s, š*, and suffix *-d* after vowels and other consonants.

Dative-locative case expresses the location of a non-moving object, that is relative to the thing holding the dative-locative ending, but is not defined exactly. This location could be on, beside, under or inside an object depending on the context. If the locative meaning of the dative-locative suffix is not enough to express the required context, then Oirad uses postpositions for the more precise determination.

- Ex:18     *negə dalä xažu-d gurwn köwün na:-čə-ž*  
one ocean side-DAT three man play-CONV.IMP-...  
“beside an ocean, three boys were playing” (WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926)
- Ex:19     *ke:rə, kü:n, äil ugo: gazər-tə okə-žə*  
steppe man ...-... land-DAT leave-...  
“he leaved [them] in the steppe, where weren't any man or ail” (WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926)

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<sup>76</sup> Н. Н. УБУШАЕВ, *Проблема сложения диалектной системы калмыцкого языка и ее функционирование (автореферат)*, 44.

Ex:20 *xoit-an žil-d-än öwəlз-Ø*  
 after-REF.POSS year-DAT-REF.POSS spend.a.winter-IMP...  
 “spend the winter here next year” (Ba.)

Marker *-d/t* expresses the ultimate object or the direction of an action.

Ex:21 *žä: xoj-ulə Be.žən-də o-čə ixi na:dm-də kür-č ir-žə*  
 well two-COLL Beijing-DAT go-CONV.IMP great festival-DAT arrive-CONV.IMP come-PRAET.IMP  
 “so, they both went to Beijing and arrived to the great festival” (WMO-M, Владимирцов 1926)

Ex:22 *terə nojən tawən tüšmə-d-in örän-də or-ž mörgül ke-žə.*  
 that nobleman five official-PL room-DAT go.in-CONV.IMP  
 That nobleman went in into the room of the five officials and prayed. (WMO-Z)

Besides, the Dative-Locative suffix is the most common ending for indicating the time of an action, and in this case it expresses the exact time. The time-indicative function is used, when the suffix is connected to verbal nouns or words meaning time and period. E.g.: WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926 *nadlā xarγ<sup>a</sup>x<sup>a</sup>d<sup>a</sup> keltā yowlā* “when he met me, he had his tongue yet”.

The acting subject of a passive sentence marked by the Dative-Locative suffix, too. It can also indicate causality, too, which could be observed in other Mongolian dialects, but especially typical of the Oirad. For example the Oirad dialects often use *yünd* “why” instead of a form derived from *yā-* “what to do, how to do”.

### 3.2.5. Ablative

The **Ablative** case has the *-ās/ās* suffix after consonants and short (reduced) vowels, and *-gās/gās* after long vowels and *η*. This suffix indicates the local or temporal starting point of an action or the person who should react upon the action.

WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982 *Tā n<sup>a</sup>r xamāγās xārān oč yowā ul<sup>a</sup>s<sup>a</sup>w* “Where are you going from, and where are you going to?”

WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *en-č<sup>n</sup> xōn kenā xōn gej asūj<sup>l</sup> xar’ūld<sup>a</sup>k ulsās<sup>a</sup>* “whose sheep are these sheep – he asked from the shepherding people”

WMO-Z *En<sup>e</sup> tüšm<sup>ü</sup>dās kүүk<sup>ü</sup>d γar<sup>a</sup>lg<sup>u</sup>ā* “No child has born from this official”

WMO-Z *Tanā taw<sup>a</sup>n tamγān tüšm<sup>ü</sup>dīn tendās irūw* “I came from your five seal-officials”

WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926 *en<sup>e</sup> köwūn γar<sup>a</sup>sn gej<sup>l</sup> xānās surj<sup>l</sup>* “What did this boy do? – he asked the khan”.

The same suffix expresses, that something is originated from somewhere, or it is a member of a group.

WMO-Z *kōwūn orād ir<sup>l</sup>xdār tarānāsā neg<sup>e</sup> atx<sup>a</sup> tarā ögčē* “when the boy went in, she gave him one handful of grain from her grain”

WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926 *tūnās<sup>ā</sup> gaksxn tay<sup>l</sup>k xubx<sup>a</sup>rnā* “Only one stick breaks from them”.

The Ablative also can express causality, namely that an event or action take place in consequence of something or somebody, marked by Ablative ending. The Oirads use the Ablative suffix also in comparisons. E.g.: *nadās öndr* “taller than me”; *xam<sup>a</sup>gās sān* “better than any other”.

Especially in folklore texts an archaic variant *-ēc* can occur, which is a borrowing from Written Oirad. E.g.: WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *tūn-ēc<sup>e</sup> xō<sup>i</sup>n<sup>ö</sup>* “after that”.

Ex:23 *Enā tüšmā-d-ās kü:kād γar-əl-gua.*  
this official-PL-ABL child go.out-PRIV  
No child has born from this official. (WMO-Z)

Ex:24 *Tana tawən tamγ-an tüšmā.d-in tend-ās ir-ü-w.*  
2P.SG.POL.GEN five seal-GEN official-PL-GEN there-ABL  
come-PRAET.PERF-1P.SG  
“I came from your five seal-officials.” (WMO-Z)

### 3.2.6. Instrumental

The suffixes of the **Instrumental** case are *-ār/ār* after consonants (except *η*) and *-gār/gār* after vowels and *η*. Before the Instrumental ending the *n* stem disappears.

This suffix indicates the instrument of the acting, that doesn't have an equal role with the subject. The meaning of this instrument includes the transport vehicles, mounting animals, the speaking in a language and the person, who is forced to do something in a causative sentence.

Ex:25 *Xō:n cayan čulu-γar temd<sup>e</sup>g tāw-čā-žā*  
sheep white stone-INSTR sign put-INTENS-PRAET.IMP  
He put there a sign with a sheep white stone. (WMO-Z)

Ex:26 *tolγa-gin xadg-ar bo:-γad, cayan da:wu-γar bürk-äd*  
head-GEN silk.shawl-INSTR bond-CONV.PERF white cloth-INSTR cover-CONV.PERF  
“he bound his head with a silk shawl and covered with a white cloth” (WMO-Z)

The word takes an Instrumental ending if it means a material, that was used to make something. Mostly the Oirads use attributive structure to determine the material of a thing, where the attribute stays in Nominal case (with *n* stem), and the form with Instrumental could be used if the word structure contains a verb.

WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982 *Zalū zandār tūlš kē* “Make firewood from young santal!”

WMO-Z, Цолоо 1965 *Noktīg zōl<sup>᠔</sup>n yumār kēd<sup>᠑</sup>g* “The head-stall is made from something soft”.

Besides, the Instrumental ending has local and temporal meaning, too. It can be used to indicate the location of a (probably) moving object, the exact place of which cannot be determined, only its route or approximately location is known. The temporal meaning has a similar indeterminative feature and suggests only the approximately time of an action. The Instrumental is used, when a word indicates the method of acting<sup>77</sup>, or if the action takes place according to something or somebody’s opinion, custom, etc. It can express also causality, too.

Ex:27 WMO-Z *Em<sup>᠑</sup>ktā küm<sup>n</sup> gerān zūn talār yoldū sūd<sup>k</sup> bās<sup>᠔</sup>η* “the women usually were sitting at the left side of the yurt”

Ex:28 WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926 *ömār<sup>a</sup> yow<sup>᠔</sup>y<sup>a</sup>* “let’s go to south”.

Ex:29 *Xö:n caγan čulu-γar temdэг täw-čэ-žе*  
sheep white stone-INSTR sign put-INTENS-PRAET.IMP  
He put there a sign with a sheep white stone. (WMO-Z)

Ex:30 *Tolγa-g-in xadg-ar bo:-γad, caγan da:wu-γar бүрк-äd [...]*  
head-ACC-... silk.shawl-INSTR bound-  
He bound his head with a silk shawl and covered with a white cloth. (WMO-Z)

### 3.2.7. Comitative

Marker of the comitative case (*-la/lä*) has the similar role than sociative, but it occurs in somewhat different contexts.

Ex:31 *nadlä xarγэ-хэ-дэ kel-tä yow-la*  
1P.SG.COM meet-PART.FUT-DAT tongue-SOC go-PRAES.PERF  
“when he met me, he had his tongue yet” (WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926)

Ex:32 *tūn-lā ad<sup>l</sup>*  
“similar to him”. (WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926)

There is an other function of the Sociative 2, namely its temporal meaning. It can fulfill temporal function being connected to both nouns and verbal nouns, however in the case of the

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<sup>77</sup> Generally, in Mongolian languages (including Oirad) there is no formal difference between nouns (“adjectives”) and adverbs.

latter the Nomen Futuri is practically the only one suffix, that can be observed.<sup>78</sup> E.g.: *örünlää* “at the morning”; *üdlää* “at midday”.

### 3.2.8. Sociative

The *-tā/tää* marker of Sociative case indicates the participant of an action, who has an equal role with the subject during the acting.

Ex:33 *jow-žə jow-tl-n negə zalu-ta xary-ld-wa*  
go-CONV.IMP go-CONV.TERM-3P.POSS one young.man-SOC meet-COOP-PRAET.PERF.EMPH  
While [he] was going [he] met a young man. (WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926)

Ex:34 *ter<sup>e</sup> kü:kd-üd-tä suryul<sup>i</sup> ki:-gäd*  
that child-PL-SOC practice do-CONV.PERF  
“he practiced with the children” (WMO-Z)

Ex:35 *A:wə-m ta: terə tamγ-an tawən tüšmə-d-tä-gän nä:rlə-Ø-tən*  
father-POSS.1P.SG 2P.SG.POL that seal-REF.POSS five officer-PL-SOC-REF.POSS feast-IMPER-2P.POL  
Oh my father, make a feast with your five seal-officers! (WMO-Z)

There is a denominal suffix with the same form, which forms nouns expressing, that something or somebody has the thing, what the original word means. E.g.: *mör'tää kümn* “a man having a horse”.

Most of the scholars consider this two suffix as one and same ending of the Sociative case, which has two functions. It's true, that both of them have a common origin, even the Sociative meaning of *-tā/tää* is a result of secondary development, but their usage is different, so I consider it as separate suffixes.

### 3.2.9. Directive

Directive case answers the question „in what direction” and it is mostly used with verbs of motion. It is marked by three suffixes in various Oirad dialects: *-Ur*, *-Ad* and *-IU*. The basic suffix is *-Ur*, which is a typical Oirad variant, not found as a directive in other Mongolic languages. Variant *-Ad* mostly occurs in the Torgud dialect, but it is also documented in other dialects, too (Jakhchin<sup>79</sup>, Ööld<sup>80</sup>, Deed Mongol<sup>81</sup> etc.). Suffix *-IU* is present in Western

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<sup>78</sup> The members of the Nomen Futuri + Sociate 2 structure have already joined together, and forms the Adverbium Successivi.

<sup>79</sup> Ж. ЦОЛОО, *Захчины аман аялгуу*, 71.

<sup>80</sup> С. БАТТУЛГА – Д. БАДАМДОРЖ, *Өөлд аман аялгууны ойллого*, Улаанбаатар, 2005, 100.

<sup>81</sup> ОYUNЦЕЧЕГ, *Degedü mongγol-un aman ayalyun-u sudulul*, 79.

Mongolian Ööld and Minggad<sup>82</sup>, as well as in Deed Mongol with *-rU* as its free variant in the latter.<sup>83</sup>

Ex:36 *nama:gə usən-ur xäi-sn bi-lä*

1P.SG.ACC water-DIR throw-PART.PERF be-PRAES.PERF

“they threw me into the water” (WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926)

Concerning the origin of Oirad *-Ur* there are three ideas in the literature. According to Poppe’s opinion *-Ur* is the direct equivalent of a synchronically non-productive suffix *\*-γur/gür* present in other Mongolian languages in some prolicative adverbs only (e.g. WM *dege-gür*, Khal. *de:g-ü:r* ‘above’, WM *dou-γur*, *doγuγur*, Khal. *do:g-u:r* ‘below’)<sup>84</sup>. Sanžeev offers a similar explanation, but also adds a locative suffix (WM *-a/e*), stating that *-Ur* comes from the *\*-a/e + \*-γur/gür* compound.<sup>85</sup> Cendee and Ubušaeв writes that *-Ur* is a shortened and grammaticalised form of word *uru* (WM *uruγu*) ‘downward, toward’ (also used as postposition in Oirad similarly to several other Mongolic languages).<sup>86</sup> The most plausible idea is the first one, since a *-γur/gür > U:r > -Ur* change fits perfectly into the common sound changes observed in Oirad, while adding *-a/e* to the original form is not necessary for explaining the today’s suffix (see *-γad/ged > -Ad* for similar change). On the other hand an *\*uruγu > \*-u:r > -Ur* development is rather problematic and the expected final form would be *-rU* (see Khal. *-rU*: directive case marker), even if the example of Buriad ablative case marker *-hA:* is a possible (but somewhat different) parallel for such development.

Suffix *-Ad* is most likely derived from *ö:d* (WM *ögede*) ‘upward, toward’, which is also used as a directive postposition.<sup>87</sup> Suffixes *-lU* and *-rU* are what really come from *uru* ‘toward, upward’. Consonant *l* in the place of the original *r* is a result of dissimilation: originally this variant was probably used only after noun stems ending in *r*<sup>88</sup>, but later its use was extended to other stems, too (see free alternation in Deed Mongol), and further, it became the only variant in Ööld and Minggad. Similar process is observable recently in some dialects (or at least

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<sup>82</sup> Ю. ЦЭНДЭЭ, *Ойрад аялгууны хэл зүй*, 148.

<sup>83</sup> ОҮҮНЦЕЧЕГ, *Degedü mongγol-un aman aγalγun-u sudulul*, 79.

<sup>84</sup> N. POPPE, *Introduction to Mongolian Comparative Studies*, Helsinki, Suomalais-Ugrilainen Seura, 1955, 205.

<sup>85</sup> Г. Д. САНЖЕЕВ, *Сравнительная грамматика монгольских языков*, vol. I, Москва, 1953, 175–176.

<sup>86</sup> Ю. ЦЭНДЭЭ, *Ойрад аялгууны хэл зүй*, 148; Н. Н. УБУШАЕВ, *Проблема сложения диалектной системы калмыцкого языка и ее функционирование (автореферат)*, 48.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>88</sup> Dissimilation of *r* to *l* in a vicinity of another *r* is a common process in Mongolian (see WM *arčiyur* ~ Khal. *aļčur* ~ Oir. *arčul* ‘scarf, kerchief’; WM *irüger* ~ Khal. *jörö:l* ~ Oir. *jöräl* ‘blessing’, etc.).

idiolects) of Khalkha, where *-IU:* is used after all noun stems (in contrary to standard Khalkha, where *-IU:* occurs only after stems ending in *r*).

There are also postpositions in Oirad fulfilling the same role as the directive case marker: *tal* (< 'side, steppe, plain') and *züg* ('direction'). Although these two postpositions are categorised as case marker suffixes by Čimai<sup>89</sup>, they did not reach this level as it was already pointed out by Buyanöljei.<sup>90</sup> Unlike the equivalents of WM *uruγu* and WM *ögede*, postposition *tal* and *züg* are not typical as directive in other Mongolic languages except Oirad.

### 3.2.10. Equative

Equative case (terminative or comparative in some sources<sup>91</sup>) and its *-cA* suffix mostly shows the vertical extent (height or depth) of an object in comparison with another object.

Ex:37 *Büslür-cä taran urγə-ž.*

waist-EQU grain grow-PRAET.IMP

Grain grew waist-high. (Цэндээ 2012)

Ex:38 *Xö:n-ä xar turu-ca casən or-la.*

sheep-GEN black hoof-EQU snow fall-PRAES.IMP

Snow fell as thick as the height of a sheep's black hoof. (Цолоо 1965)

Ex:39 *Bajən γol-in usən mörn-ə gedəs-cä wä:-n.*

Bayan river-GEN water horse-GEN belly-EQU be-PRAES.IMP

The water of Bayan river is as high as the belly of a horse. (Oyunčeečeg)

Suffix *-cəg* given by Oyunčeečeg as a marker of the same case as *-cA* in Deed Mongol<sup>92</sup> is probably of different origin. Her examples show that *-cəg* always follows the genitive case form of nouns and also its meaning differs from that of the equative described above (expresses size in general and not only vertical extent). Oyunčeečeg calls this case *kiri kemjijen-ü teyin ilγal* ('case of extent and measure'), which is not exactly the same category as equative. Since *-cəg* is always preceded by a noun in genitive case, it is fairly a real case suffix and probably it is a variant of *činä* (WM *činege*) 'as big as', but the relation of the two forms is not clear.

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<sup>89</sup> E. ČIMAI, *Oyirad ayalγun-u čiglekü-yin teyin ilγal-un «tala, jüg»-ün tuqai angqan-u ajiylalta*, in «Kele ba orčiγulγa» 4 (1992), 25–29.

<sup>90</sup> E. BUYANÖLJEI, *Oyirad ayalγun-u čiglekü dayaburi üge «tal-a . jüg»-ün tuqai*, in «Kele ba orčiγulγa» 3 (1993), 24–28.

<sup>91</sup> N. POPPE, *Introduction to Mongolian Comparative Studies*, 206; Н. Н. ПОППЕ, *Монгольский словарь Мукаддимат ал-Адаб*, Москва, Ленинград, Издательство Академии Наук СССР, 1938, 75.

<sup>92</sup> ОYUNČEEČEG, *Degedü mongγol-un aman ayalγun-u sudulul*, 77.

Ex:40 *Tolγa-n=cəg šaŋγərcəg-tä tosən bä:-nä.*  
 head-GEN=as.big.as stomach-SOC butter be-PRAES.IMP  
 There is a stomach with butter as big as a head. (Oyunčeečeg:78)

Historically there are examples of more abstract use of the equative case (e.g. Muqaddimat al-Adab *čisuča* 'до крови'<sup>93</sup>), but synchronically it is quite rare in Oirad and limited to expressing physical extent.

### 3.3. DOUBLE DECLENSION

Double declension is a typical feature of the spoken Oirad, and although can be found in other Mongolian languages, too, there it has lesser importance. The double declension means, that two case suffixes are connected to one word, and of course it changes the role and the meaning of the word. The second suffix is connected to the first as it were the word's stem, so the above mentioned rules are effective. There are certain suffix pairs, that can be used together, but by no means all combinations are correct. The most frequent base suffix is the ending of Genitive and Dative-Locative case. After the Genitive suffix almost each case ending can follow (except the Terminative), and it is used mostly at words denoting persons, so the second suffix refers to things or persons (family, etc.) belonging to that person.

Ex:41 *Manā-d tüür sa:tə-ž xo:l idə-Ø-tənə*  
 1P.PL.EXCL-DAT temporary delay-CONV.IMP meal ear-IMPER-2P.POL  
 "Stay a little bit with us, and eat some meal!" (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

Ex:42 *Že:l-där cä: idä aw-ad awγa kü:kd-üid ir-nə*  
 rope.of.the.foals-DAT tea bring-CONV.PERF woman child-PL come-PRAES.IMP  
 "Women and children bring tea to the rope [of the foals]" (WMO-Z, Цолоо 1965)

Ex:43 *Önä γurwən kümən Alta-g öwrəl-ž jow-sar Galdən bošγət xa:n-a-d ir-žä.*  
 that three man Altai-ACC go.around.by.south-CONV.IMP go-CONV.ABT Galdan Boshogtu khan-GEN-DAT come-PRAET.IMP  
 "That three men have went round the Altai by south and arrived to Galdan Boshogtu khan"  
 (WMO-Z, Цолоо 1965)

Ex:44 *Xo:r-an Mōnggən xa:n-a-γur gar-ad gü:-lg-äd yow-ž*  
 later-REFL.POSS Mōnggön khan-GEN-DIR go.out-CONV.PERF run-CAUS-CONV.PERF go-PRAET.IMP  
 "After that he rode away toward Mōnggön khan" (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

<sup>93</sup> Н. Н. Поппе, *Монгольский словарь Мукаддимат ал-Адаб*, 75.

Ex:45 *ger-än bosx-an barun zü:n xojər xažu-d-ār xojər te:rəm sal-γə-žə täw-čək-äd*  
 yurt-GEN doorstep-GEN right left two side-DAT-INSTR two grating.wall separate-CAUS-CONV.IMP  
 put-INTENS-CONV.PERF  
 “they divide two grating walls at the right and left side of the yurt’s doorstep”. (WMO-Z)

### 3.4. PLURALS AND COLLECTIVES

Grammatical number of nominals has two categories in Oirad: singular and plural. Singular is always unmarked, while plural is either unmarked or marked by one of the various plural markers. The choice between different plural markers is based on phonological and semantic factors, but at synchronic level the plural form of several nouns is apparently lexically encoded.

The most common plural markers are *-d*, *-s*, *-Ud*, *-mUd* and *-nər*, but some dialects have other variants, mostly the combinations of the basic forms (double plural).

Suffix *-d* is attached to *n*-stem nouns and also to consonant stems ending in *l* or *r*, and replaces the final sound of the word stem.

Suffix *-s* is mostly attached to vowels stems and stems synchronically ending in a consonant, but historically going back to a ...

Suffix *-mUd* is a typical Oirad plural marker, not found in other Mongolian languages. This form is obviously comes from the ..., but the conditioning factor of the labialisation is not clear. Historically According to the Written

The *-nr* suffix can be connected to words denoting persons or personified beings, only (professions, relatives, etc.). E.g.: WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982 *hēy<sup>e</sup> awgān<sup>a</sup>r bānū<sup>̄</sup> gēd dūdjē* “Hey, are the women here? – called them”; WMO-Z *dū<sup>̄</sup> axn<sup>a</sup>rtāγān xuwāj<sup>i</sup> id<sup>i</sup>t<sup>e</sup>η* “eat it dividing between your brothers and sisters!”.

The *-d* suffix is used at words ending on *n*, *r* or *l*, and sometimes on long vowels taking its origin from a diphtong. The *-d* drops out the final consonant or vowel. There are no semantical restrictions. The nouns derivated by the *-č/čn* derivation suffix, Nomen Actoris and Nomen Perfecti always have *-d* as its plural form. Sometimes also the nouns, that’s Written Mongolian form has *-sun/sün* ending take the *-d* suffix, but in this case not only the last sound disappears, but the whole syllable. E.g.: WMO-Z *Āw<sup>a</sup>m tā ter<sup>e</sup> tamγān taw<sup>a</sup>η tūšm<sup>ü</sup>dtāgān nār<sup>i</sup>l<sup>ä</sup>n* “Oh my father, make a feast with your five seal-officers!”.

Rarely the *-d* plural suffix can be connected to nouns, which had originally a diphtong at the end. When the *-d* is connected to it, the *i* element of the diphtong is replaced ( $V + i \Rightarrow V + d$ ), which in spoken Oirad results in *d* preceded by a reduced vowel. E.g.: *noxā* “dog”  $\Rightarrow$  *nox<sup>d</sup>* “dogs”.

The *-s* suffix is a relatively rare form for common purposes, and connected to words with long or reduced vowel ending. E.g.: *ügs* “words”; *noxās* “dogs”.

The most common plural suffix is *-ud/üüd*, *-gūd/güüd*, *-nūd/nüüd*, which can be used at any kind of words, it can be connected to persons, animals, objects, etc. The suffix *-ūd/üüd* follows after consonant and short (reduced) vowel endings, *-gūd/güüd* after *η*, while *-nūd/nüüd* after long vowels, and rarely after some consonants.

Ex:46 *Žu:n nāmən bayə bodəη-yud dü:r-üd su:-žä.*  
 hundred eight small boar-PL become.full-CONV.PERF sit-PRAET.IMP  
 “The one hundred and eight small heroes all were sitting” (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

Ex:47 *Dörwən ö:ld-üd sal-ž nü:-x-d-ä dörwən ö:ld-in ura: gi-dəg du: zoka-ž du:l-cγa-žä.*  
 four Ööld part-CONV.IMP migrate-PART.FUT-DAT-REF.POSS four Ööld-GEN calling say-PART.HAB  
 song compose-CONV.IMP sing-PLUR-PRAET.IMP  
 When the four Öölds parted and moved on, they composed and sang a song called ‘The calling of the four Öölds’.” (WMO-Z, Цолоо 1965)

Ex:48 *ter<sup>e</sup> kü.kd-üd-tä surγul<sup>i</sup> ki:-gäd*  
 that child-PL-SOC practice do-CONV.PERF  
 “he practiced with the children” (WMO-Z)

There is a typical Oirad plural ending *-mūd/müüd*, which mostly can stay after *r*, *x* and *l*, but few exceptions are possible. Todaeva says, that in the Oirad dialects of Alašan it can occur after any consonant except *n*.<sup>94</sup>

Ex:49 *Tana arwən nä:mən ba:tər-mud-in arwən yes-dəx-iyə bol-su*  
 2P.SG.POL.GEN ten eight hero-PL-GEN ten nine-ORD-3P.POSS become-OPT  
 “I become the nineteenth of your eighteen heroes.” (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

The *-čūd/čüüd* and *-čül/čüül* suffixes have a collective meaning, and can be connected to words denoting quality or attribute of persons. Although these suffixes are usually considered as plural endings, in fact they are denominal derivative suffixes, since form nouns denoting the entirety of the original meaning. E.g.: *bagčūd* “childrens”; *moηglčūd* “Mongols”; *öwgčül* “the elders”.

There is an archaic plural form *-n*, which occurs only in few cases. It forms the *-tn* plural of the *-tā/tā* derivation suffix (Mong. *-tai/tei + n* ⇔ *-tan/ten* ⇔ *-tn*), which however mostly lost its plural meaning. E.g. *küčtn* “the ones, who have strength; the strength ones”.

<sup>94</sup> Todaeva, B. H.: *Mongol'skie jazyki i dialekty Kitaja*. Moskva 1960, pp. 29-30.

Besides, the *-n* is used after the Genitive case + *-x* suffix. The *-x* suffix indicates, that something belongs to somewhere, and often used after the Genitive, referring to a thing or person, that belongs to the original word. If also the *-n* suffix is added, then it shows the plurality of the belonged things (rarely) or persons (frequently). E.g.: *manāxn* “we, ours, somethings or somebodies that belong to us” (⇐ *manāx* “ours, something that belongs to us” + *-n* ⇐ *manā* “our ...” + *-x*)

Ex:50 *Mönggən xa:n-a-xən mana kürgən kür-äd irə-w g-äd [...]*

Mönggön khan-GEN-COLL 1P.PL.GEN son.in.law arrive-CONV.PERF come-PRAET.PERF say-  
CONV.PERF

“Our son-in-law arrived – said the people in the khan’s court [...]” (WMO-T, Цолоо-Загдсүрэн 1982)

The usage of the plural suffixes is relatively varied and sometimes a little inconsistent. The plural ending often can alternate with an other (but not always), and even double plural suffixes can be observed, too. These double plural suffixes are *-dūd/dūd* (⇐ *-d* + *-ūd/ūd*), *-nrmūd/nrmūd* (⇐ *-nr* + *-mūd/mūd*), *-sūd/sūd* (⇐ *-s* + *-ūd/ūd*), *-mūs/mūs* (⇐ *-mūd/mūd* + *-s*) E.g.: *dūnrmūd* “younger brothers”; *kūmsūd* “the people”; *ūlmūs* “mountains”; *xatdūd* “wives”.

Some unusual plural forms can occur at the personal pronouns, but these forms cannot be used with other words.

### 3.5. NUMERALS

Oirad numerals form a subclass of nouns and as such have a full nominal paradigm including common case markers, plural forms and derivational suffixes. Subclass of numerals is characterised by its special derivational morphology, which extends the set of common nominal derivational suffixes with suffixes that are typical of numerals only. ...

Oirad numerals are based on the decimal system and they can be either simple or compound. Simple numerals are independent lexical items, while compound numerals are built up from simple ones. Simple numerals include numbers from 1 to 9, decades from 10 to 90, as well as powers of ten. Depending on the certain dialect, the form of numerals can have minor variations. Basic numerals from 1 to 9 cannot be analysed synchronically as derivations or compositions, although diachronically there are traces of derivational suffixes and compound forms. Cardinal numerals from 1 to 9 are seen in the following table:

	<b>Common Oirad</b>	<b>Sart-Kalmyk<sup>95</sup></b>
1	<i>negən, nigən</i>	<i>negə</i>
2	<i>xojər</i>	<i>xojər</i>
3	<i>γurwən, γurun</i>	<i>γurwə</i>
4	<i>dörwən</i>	<i>dörwə</i>
5	<i>tawən</i>	<i>tawə</i>
6	<i>zurγan</i>	<i>zurγa</i>
7	<i>dolan</i>	<i>dola</i>
8	<i>nä:mən</i>	<i>na:mə</i>
9	<i>jisən / jüsən</i>	<i>isə</i>

Cardinal numerals from 1 to 9

Numerals for the decades from 20 to 90 are clearly derived from basic numerals from 2 to 9, but the way of derivation is synchronically not transparent.

10	<i>arwən, arun</i>
20	<i>xörən</i>
30	<i>gučən</i>
40	<i>döčən</i>
50	<i>täwən, tämən</i>
60	<i>žirən, žarən</i>
70	<i>dalən</i>
80	<i>näjən, najən</i>
90	<i>jirən</i>

Cardinal numerals for decades from 10 to 90

Cardinal numbers for powers of ten are expressed somewhat differently depending on the particular dialects. For hundred ( $10^2$ ) and thousand ( $10^3$ ) all dialects use the same words (*зу:n* or *zun* and *миγγән*), but higher powers are either simple numerals or compound ones:  $10^4$  is *tümən* or *arwən miγγən*,  $10^5$  is *bum* or *zun miγγən*,  $10^6$  is *saj*.

Numerals can be used as adnominal attributes and adverbial modifiers.

<sup>95</sup> D. SOMFAI KARA, *Sart-Kalmyks - Kalmyks of Ysyk-köl (Karakol, Kirghizstan)*.

### 3.5.1. Ordinal numerals

Ordinal numerals are formed by using suffix *-dægč*, which is a derivational suffix and connected to the short stem of numerals (without *n*). ...

The common Mongolic ordinal suffix (WM *-duγar/düger*) is known in Kalmyk as *-dwar/dwār* and it has a very limited scope of usage as *neg-dwār* ‘firstly’, *xojr-dwar* ‘secondly’, *γurwdwar* ‘thirdly’, etc.

Suffix *-dax* is also observed in Western Mongolian Oirad, probably as a result of Khalkha influence (< Khal. *-dax*).

- Ex:51 *Tana arwən nä:mən ba:tər-mud-in arwən yes-dax-iyə bol-su*  
2P.SG.POL.GEN ten eight hero-PL-GEN ten nine-ORD-3P.POSS become-OPT  
“I become the nineteenth of your eighteen heroes.” (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

### 3.5.2. Collective numerals

Collective numerals are formed using suffix *-ul(n)/ül(n)* (sometimes *-urn* at *xojər* “two”).

- Ex:52 *Xuj-ul wä:-žä-γäd udə-žä.*  
two.COLL be-CONT-CONV.PERF stay-PRAET.IMP  
“Both (two) of them were staying [there].” (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)
- Ex:53 *Žä: xoj-ulə Be:žən-d očə ixi na:dm-də kür-č ir-žə*  
well two-COLL Beijing-DAT go-CONV.IMP big festival-DAT reach-CONV.IMP come-PRAET.IMP  
So, they both went to Beijing and arrived to the great festival. (WMO-M Владимирцов 1926)

### 3.5.3. Multiplicative numerals

Multiplicative numerals are formed by adding suffix *-t*, but this is a rare form, and the Oirads mostly use postpositions instead it, or just a simple cardinal numeral (without the *n* stem) can express the repeated action.

- Ex:54 *Guru du:d-əx-də ser-ž=gua*  
three call-PART.FUT-DAT wake.up-PRAET.IMP=NEG  
“Called him three times, but he did not wake up.” (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)
- Ex:55 *č<sup>i</sup> gurw<sup>a</sup> xonāt ir<sup>e</sup>*  
“come back after three days (passing a night three times)” (WMO-M, Владимирцов 1926)

The numerals can fulfill any role in the sentence and can be declined similarly to the nouns. The higher numerals are derivated from the nuclear ones, and the elements follow each other

as they place value decreases. E.g.: *zuryān miḡn yisn zūn tawn* “6905”; *xoyr zūn ḡirn gurwn* “263”.

A cardinal numeral in attributive position refers to the quantity of the attributed word, and the latter should not have a plural suffix (some exceptions can occur).<sup>96</sup>

Ex:56 *ʒu:n nāmən baḡə bodəḡ-ḡud dū:r-äd su:-ʒä.*  
hundred eight small boar-PL become.full-CONV.PERF sit-CONV.IMP  
“The one hundred and eight small heroes all were sitting” (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

Ex:57 *Tawən ʒu:n de:rəḡč-tä Ornə Ulanda gi-dəḡ kümən dä:rəld-əw.*  
five hundred robber-SOC Orn Ulanda say-PART.HAB man encounter-PRAET.PERF  
He encountered a men, called Orn Ulanda, who had five hundred robbers. (WMO-T, Цолоо–  
Загдсүрэн 1982)

Ex:58 *A:wə-m ta: terə tamḡ-an tawən tüšmə-d-tä-gän nā:rlə-Ø-tən.*  
father-POSS.1P.SG 2P.SG.POL that seal-REF.POSS five officer-PL-SOC-REF.POSS feast-IMPER-2P.POL  
Oh my father, make a feast with your five seal-officers! (WMO-Z)

Sometimes a cardinal numeral can follow after a list of nouns having the same function in the sentence. This numeral (equal with the number of the list members) just indicates the relation of the words, and if there is a noun case ending needed, its suffix is connected to the numeral only. The value of the numeral can be two, three or four, and practically no higher values occur.

Ex:59 *amr-igə ös-kə-kčə e:ʒ-ən a:w-n xojər=l*  
love-ACC grow-CAUS-PART.ACT mother-3P.POSS father-3P.POSS two=LIM  
“the mother and father, who raise the love”. (WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926)

The **ordinal numerals** in Altai Oirad dialects are formed using the common Oirad *-dgč* suffix, but the Xalx *-dugār/dügēr* ending occurs, too. Sometimes also the *-dx* suffix can be observed, that can be the result of the Xalx influence (see Xalx *-dax/dex*, *negdex ödör* “Monday [= first day]”).

Ex:60 *Tana arwən nā:mən ba:tər-mud-in arwən yes-dəx-iyə bol-su*  
2P.SG.POL.GEN ten eight hero-PL-GEN ten nine-ORD-3P.POSS become-OPT  
“I become the nineteenth of your eighteen heroes.” (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

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<sup>96</sup> Few exceptions can occur, especially under the influence of old written texts, since e.g. the Middle-Mongolian language used the plural forms in wider range.

The **collective numerals** are derived using suffix *-ūl(n)/ū̄l(n)* (sometimes *-ūrn* at *хоур* “two”).

Ex:61 *Xuj-ul wā:-žā-γād udə-žā.*

two.COLL be-CONT-CONV.PERF stay-PRAET.IMP

“Both (two) of them were staying [there].” (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

Ex:62 *Žā: xoj-ulə Be:žən-d očə ixi na:dm-də kür-č ir-žə*

well two-COLL Beijing-DAT go-CONV.IMP big festival-DAT reach-CONV.IMP come-PRAET.IMP

So, they both went to Beijing and arrived to the great festival. (MinV)

The **multiplicative numerals** can be formed by adding the *-t* suffix, but this is a rare form, and the Oirads mostly use postpositions instead it, or just a simple cardinal numeral (without the *n* stem) can express the repeated action. E.g.: WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982 *Гурū dūd<sup>a</sup>xd<sup>i</sup> serjg<sup>u</sup>ā* “Called him three times, but he didn’t awake”; WMO-M, Владимирцов 1926 *č<sup>i</sup> gurw<sup>a</sup> xonāt ir<sup>e</sup>* “come back after three days (passing a night three times)”.

### 3.6. PRONOUNS

#### 3.6.1. Personal pronouns

Oirad uses three persons in singular and plural, but there are no personal pronouns for Sg. 3. and Pl. 3., since its original *\*a* and *\*i* forms falled off from the usage, and the demonstrative pronouns took its place. The personal pronouns can be declined as nouns using the noun case endings, but during the declension its stems can be changed.

The Altai Oirad personal pronouns somewhat differs from those of the other Oirad dialects, and. there we can observe some forms, that are closer to its Xalx equivalents. E.g.: *nadās* (Ablative, Sg. 1.), Kalm., OirT. *nanās*, Xa. *nadās*; *nadār* (Instrumental, Sg. 1.), Kalm., OirT. *nanār*, Xa. *nadār*, etc.

Personal Pronouns							
	Singular						
	1 <sup>st</sup> person	2 <sup>nd</sup> person		3 <sup>rd</sup> person			
		Impolite	Polite	Near		Far	
<b>Nominative</b>	<i>bī</i>	<i>čī</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>en</i>	<i>en</i>	<i>ter</i>	<i>ter</i>
<b>Accusative</b>	<i>namāg</i> <i>nāmāg</i>	<i>čamāg</i> <i>čamāg</i>	<i>tanīg</i>	<i>ūnīg</i>	<i>enūnīg</i>	<i>tūnīg</i>	<i>terūnīg</i>
<b>Genitive</b>	<i>minī</i>	<i>čini</i>	<i>tanī</i>	<i>ūnā</i>	<i>enūnā</i>	<i>tūnā</i>	<i>terūnā</i>
<b>Dative-Locative</b>	<i>nadd</i>	<i>čamd</i>	<i>tand</i>	<i>ūnd</i>	<i>enūnd</i>	<i>tūnd</i>	<i>terūnd</i>
<b>Ablative</b>	<i>nadās</i>	<i>čamās</i>	<i>tanās</i>	<i>ūnās</i>	<i>enūnās</i>	<i>tūnās</i>	<i>terūnās</i>
<b>Instrumental</b>	<i>nadār</i>	<i>čamār</i>	<i>tanār</i>	<i>ūgār</i>	<i>enūgār</i>	<i>tūgār</i>	<i>terūgār</i>
<b>Sociative 1</b>	<i>nadtā</i> <i>nadtā</i>	<i>čamtā</i> <i>čamtā</i>	<i>tantā</i> <i>tantā</i>	<i>ūntā</i>	<i>enūntā</i>	<i>tūntā</i>	<i>terūntā</i>
<b>Sociative 2</b>	<i>nadlā</i> <i>nadlā</i>	<i>čamlā</i> <i>čamlā</i>	<i>tanlā</i> <i>tanlā</i>	<i>ūnlā</i>	<i>enūnlā</i>	<i>tūnlā</i>	<i>terūnlā</i>
<b>Directive</b>	<i>nadūr</i>	<i>čamūr</i>	<i>tanūr</i>	<i>ūnūr</i>	<i>enūr</i>	<i>tūnūr</i>	<i>terūnūr</i>
	Plural						
	1 <sup>st</sup> person			2 <sup>nd</sup> person			
<b>Nominative</b>	<i>bid</i>	<i>bidnūs</i>		<i>mānr</i>	<i>mānūs</i>	<i>tānr</i>	<i>tānūs</i>
<b>Accusative</b>	<i>bidnīg</i>	<i>bidnūsīg</i>		<i>mānrīg</i>	<i>mānūsīg</i>	<i>tānrīg</i>	<i>tānūsīg</i>
<b>Genitive</b>	<i>bidnī</i>	<i>bidnūsīn</i>	<i>manā</i> <i>manā</i>	<i>mānrīn</i>	<i>mānūsīn</i>	<i>tānrīn</i>	<i>tānūsīn</i>
<b>Dative-Locative</b>	<i>bidnd</i>	<i>bidnūst</i>	<i>mand</i>	<i>mānrnt</i>	<i>mānūst</i>	<i>tānrnt</i>	<i>tānūst</i>
<b>Ablative</b>	<i>bidnās</i>	<i>bidnūsās</i>		<i>mānrās</i>	<i>mānūsās</i>	<i>tānrās</i>	<i>tānūsās</i>
<b>Instrumental</b>	<i>bidnār</i>	<i>bidnūsār</i>		<i>mānrār</i>	<i>mānūsār</i>	<i>tānrār</i>	<i>tānūsār</i>
<b>Sociative 1</b>	<i>bidntā</i>	<i>bidnūstā</i>	<i>mantā</i> <i>mantā</i>	<i>mānrntā</i>	<i>mānūstā</i>	<i>tānrntā</i>	<i>tānūstā</i>
<b>Sociative 2</b>	<i>bidnlā</i>	<i>bidnūslā</i>	<i>manlā</i> <i>manlā</i>	<i>mānrnlā</i>	<i>mānūslā</i>	<i>tānrnlā</i>	<i>tānūslā</i>
<b>Directive</b>	<i>bidnūr</i>	<i>bidnūsūr</i>		<i>mānrūr</i>	<i>mānūsūr</i>	<i>tānrūr</i>	<i>tānūsūr</i>
	Plural						
	3 <sup>rd</sup> person						
		Near			Far		
<b>Nominative</b>	<i>ed</i>	<i>ednr</i>	<i>ednūs</i>	<i>ted</i>	<i>tednr</i>	<i>tednūs</i>	
<b>Accusative</b>	<i>ednīg</i>	<i>ednrīg</i>	<i>ednūsīg</i>	<i>tednīg</i>	<i>tednrīg</i>	<i>tednūsīg</i>	
<b>Genitive</b>	<i>ednā</i>	<i>ednrīn</i>	<i>ednūsīn</i>	<i>tednā</i>	<i>tednrīn</i>	<i>tednūsīn</i>	
<b>Dative-Locative</b>	<i>ednd</i>	<i>ednrnt</i>	<i>ednūst</i>	<i>tednd</i>	<i>tednrnt</i>	<i>tednūst</i>	
<b>Ablative</b>	<i>ednās</i>	<i>ednrās</i>	<i>ednūsās</i>	<i>tednās</i>	<i>tednrās</i>	<i>tednūsās</i>	
<b>Instrumental</b>	<i>ednār</i>	<i>ednrār</i>	<i>ednūsār</i>	<i>tednār</i>	<i>tednrār</i>	<i>tednūsār</i>	
<b>Sociative 1</b>	<i>edntā</i>	<i>ednrntā</i>	<i>ednūstā</i>	<i>tedntā</i>	<i>tednrntā</i>	<i>tednūstā</i>	
<b>Sociative 2</b>	<i>ednlā</i>	<i>ednrnlā</i>	<i>ednūslā</i>	<i>tednlā</i>	<i>tednrnlā</i>	<i>tednūslā</i>	
<b>Directive</b>	<i>ednūr</i>	<i>ednrūr</i>	<i>ednūsūr</i>	<i>tednūr</i>	<i>tednrūr</i>	<i>tednūsūr</i>	

### 3.6.2. Demonstrative Pronouns

The demonstrative pronouns refer to a thing itself, its location or some features. The Oirad uses the following demonstrative pronouns, some of which have verbal origin: *en* (*in*) “this”, *ter* (*tir*) “that”, *ed* “this ones”, *ted* “that ones”, *end* (*ind*) “here”, *tend* (*tind*) “there”, *īgān* “in this direction”, *tīgān* “in that direction”, *īm* “this kind”, *tīm* “that kind”, *edū* ~ *ödū* “this much”, *tūdū* “that much”, *īg-* “to do this”, *teg-* “to do that”.

The demonstrative pronouns can be declined as any noun using the noun case suffixes, however the *en* “this” and *ter* “that” change its stem during the declension<sup>97</sup>, and usually just few case suffixes are used with certain pronouns. The verbal pronouns *īg-* “to do this” and *teg-*

<sup>97</sup> The demonstrative pronouns *en*, *ter*, *ed* and *ted* are used as personal pronouns, too, in Sg. 3. and Pl. 3. The declension of these pronouns see at the personal pronouns.

“to do that” acts as any verb and any verbal noun, verbal adverb, imperative or tense ending can be added.

### 3.6.3. Interrogative Pronouns

Interrogative pronouns can be declined as any noun, and can fulfil any role in the sentence except the predicate. The Oirad interrogative pronouns are similar to those of the other Mongolian dialects, the only significant difference is the form of “where”: *xamā* “where” (Mong. *qamiya*), *al’d* “where, to where”, *al’dās* “from where”. The other interrogative pronouns are the following ones: *yūn* “what”; *ken* “who”; *yamr* “what kind”; *al’* “which”; *kezā* “when”, *kedū* “how much”, *kedn* “how many”, *yāgād* “why”; *yagj* “why”; *yūnd* “why”.

### 3.6.4. Reflexive Pronoun

The most common reflexive pronoun in Oirad is *ewr* “oneself” (< Mong. *öber*), which has a plural variant *ewrsän*. Reflexive pronouns take case markers similarly to common nouns.

Ex:63 *ewr-in-ä seləm aw-ad [...]*  
self-GEN-REF.POSS sabre take-CONV.PERF  
Taking his own sabre [...] (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

Ex:64 *ewr-än ükə-jə ge-žə bod-ad [...]*  
self-REF.POSS die-VOL say-CONV.IMP think-CONV.PERF  
I will die by myself – he thought [...] (WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926)

Sometimes word *bij* ‘body’ and its plural form *bijs* may act as reflexive pronouns, too.

Ex:65 *ta jow-ad bij-än negə šinž-äd ir-i-t*  
2P.SG.POL go-CONV.PERF self-REF.POSS one check-CONV.PERF come-IMPER-2P.SG.POL  
Go, check it yourself and come back! (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

## 3.7. POSSESSIVE MARKERS

### 3.7.1. Personal possessive markers

Beside the Genitive case, the so-called personal possessive markers can express possessive relations, too. These markers are taken their origin from the Genitive case forms of the personal pronouns. The personal possessive marker is the very last morpheme in the word, it is preceded by the plural suffixes and case endings.

Personal Possessive Markers		
	Singular	Plural
1 <sup>st</sup> person	-m	-mdn
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	-čn	-tn
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	-n/n', -ī, -y	-n/n', -ī, -y

There are two variants for 3<sup>rd</sup> person: *-n/n'* and *ī* or *-y*. The *-n/n'* is the common Oirad form, while *-ī* and *-y* are typical of Torgūd and Urānxā.<sup>98</sup> It is not a unique Altai Oirad form, because there is a similar form at Todaeva, she states, that the Öölds in Alašan have a personal possessive marker *-y* in 3<sup>rd</sup> person.<sup>99</sup>

Ex:66 WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982 *Ket<sup>e</sup> nut<sup>a</sup>gt<sup>a</sup>n xamāw* “Where is your homeland?”

Ex:67 WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982 *Kür<sup>e</sup>l alt<sup>n</sup> dūlxīy<sup>e</sup> üms<sup>i</sup>č awād* “Putting on his bronze and gold helmet”

Ex:68 WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *altn amīm öršā* “spare my golden life!”;

Ex:69 *A:wə-m ta: terə tamγ-an tawən tüšmə-d-tä-gän nä:rlə-Ø-tən.*  
 father-POSS.1P.SG 2P.SG.POL that seal-REF.POSS five officer-PL-SOC-REF.POSS feast-IMPER-2P.POL  
 Oh my father, make a feast with your five seal-officers! (WMO-Z)

Ex:70 WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926 *ter sä<sup>i</sup>xn maxn cusn am 'sksn kelī-č<sup>n</sup> üjīy* “let me see your tongue, which tasted that good blood!”.

### 3.7.2. Reflexive possessive markers

The existence of the reflexive possessive marker is a characteristic feature of Mongolian languages. This suffix can be attached to nouns, verbal nouns and some verbal adverbs having nominal or verbal noun origin. The suffix indicates, that the word belongs to the subject of the sentence. The subject possessive marker stays after the plural and case suffixes, and never occurs together with the personal possessive markers, so it is the very last morpheme of the word. The suffix has a base form *-ān/ān* and *-n* after the Instrumental, Ablative and Directive case ending, but often the Xalx forms are used that doesn't have *n* at the end (Xa. *-ā/ē/ō/ō*). The Sociative 2 has a somewhat irregular form with subject possessive marker, and instead of simple *-lā/lā* the *-lār/lār* variant occurs, which is the contraction of Sociative 2 (*-lā/lā*) and Instrumental (*-ār/ār*). The *-lār* form as a variant of Sociative 2 occurs in Written Mongolian

<sup>98</sup> Sambuudorj, O.: *Torgud aman ayalguunii temdeglel*. pp. 31-32.; Birtalan Ágnes: *Written and Spoken Oirad*.

<sup>99</sup> Todaeva, B. H.: *Mongol'skie jazyki i dialekty Kitaja*. pp. 33-34.

(-*luyabar/lügeber*), in some western Buriat dialects, and in several dialects as the member of the Adverbium Successivi.<sup>100</sup> In the Oirad dialects (including Altai Oirad, Kalmyk, etc.) the *-lār/lār* form occurs only together with the subject possessive marker.

If the word or the case suffix connected to it ends on a long vowel, then a connecting consonant *g* appears.

<b>Noun case suffixes with subject possessive marker</b>	
<b>Nominative</b>	∅
<b>Accusative</b>	-ā(n)/ā̄(n)
<b>Genitive</b>	-ānān/ā̄nān, -īnān/īnān
<b>Dative-Locative</b>	-dā(n)/dā̄(n), -tā(n)/tā̄(n)
<b>Ablative</b>	-āsn/ās̄n, -āsā/ās̄ā
<b>Instrumental</b>	-ārn/ār̄n, -ārā/ār̄ā
<b>Sociative</b>	-tāgā(n)/tāḡā(n)
<b>Comitative</b>	-lārn/lār̄n
<b>Directive</b>	-ūr̄n/ūr̄n
<b>Terminative</b>	-cāgān/cāḡān

E.g.: WMO-Khot *bi arw<sup>a</sup>n nām<sup>ā</sup>n nastādān en āld irsn* “I came to this family when I was eighteen [at my age of eighteen]”; WMO-T Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982 *Dalyā cayān šāz<sup>a</sup>ndān kegēd* “Pouring into his big white cup ...”; WMO-T Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982 *Ar<sup>a</sup>g xurd<sup>a</sup>n ulānā unād* “Riding his beautiful red [horse] ...”; WMO-Z *dū axn<sup>a</sup>rtāγān xuwāj<sup>i</sup> id<sup>i</sup>t<sup>e</sup>η* “eat it dividing between your brothers and sisters!”; WMO-Z *Ō āw<sup>i</sup>m bitā γarān salābcilt<sup>a</sup>n* “Oh, my father, don’t thrash your hand!”; WMO-Z *Āw<sup>a</sup>m tā ter<sup>e</sup> tamγān taw<sup>a</sup>η tüsm<sup>ū</sup> dtāgān nār<sup>i</sup>t<sup>ā</sup>n* “Oh my father, make a feast with your five seal-officers!”.

<sup>100</sup> Poppe, N.: *Introduction to Mongolian Comparative Studies*. MSFOu 110., Helsinki 1955, pp. 203-204.

## 4. VERBAL MORPHOLOGY

### 4.1. VOICE MARKING

Oirad uses suffixes for marking voice of verbs. Voice marking may be treated as a part of deverbal derivation and as such these are the only really productive derivative suffixes forming verbs from verbal stems.

#### 4.1.1. Passive

The basic marker of the passive verb form is *-gd*, but after certain verb stems that diachronically end in a consonant *-d* or *-t* variants are used.

Ex:71 *altən tamγə aldə-gdə-la*  
gold seal lose-PASS-PRAES.PERF  
The golden seal has been lost. (WMO-Z)

Ex:72 *nojə bolə-m köwü medə-gdə-n-ü?*  
lord become-PART.POSSIB boy know-PASS-PRAES.IMP-INTERR  
Does somebody know a boy, who may become a lord? (WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926)

Ex:73 *Mini e:ž bol bajəd-in nutg-t zalə-gdə-ž ir-sən*  
1P.SG.GEN mother TPC Bayad-GEN land-DAT invite-PASS-CONV.IMP come-PART.PERF  
My mother was invited and came to the Bayad land. (WMO-B)

In passive structures it is not necessary by all means to indicate the real active “subject” if it is not important or already known from the context, however if it is present, the Dative-Locative suffix (*-d*) is added.

#### 4.1.2. Causative

The most common suffixes for causative are *-ül/üül* and *-lg* (after long vowels), but sometimes a *-g/x* suffix, and the lengthening of the verb stem’s short vowel occur, too. In causative structure the Instrumental suffix (*-ār/ār*) marks the thing or person, which/who is forced to do something. Sporadically the causative verb form can have passive meaning, and even can denote, that the subject just lets to happen an event or action.

Ex:74 *Xa:n Si:r-ig xo:ra-γan jow-ul-žä*  
Khaan Siir-ACC further-REF.POSS go-CAUS-PRAET.IMP  
He let Khaan Siir to go on. / He sent Khan Siir further. (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

Ex:75 *Ger-än bosx-an barun zü:n xoyər xažud-ar xoyər te:rəm salγə-ž täw-čk-äd [...]*  
yurt-GEN doorstep-GEN right left two beside-INSTR grating.wall divide-CONV.IMP put-INTENS-

CONV.PERF

They divide two grating walls at the right and left side of the yurt's doorstep [...] (WMO-Z)

Ex:76 *Xa:ly-ar gar-γə-žä-xə biš gi-sən dom-ta učər-ta yum bä:-nə*  
door-INSTR go.out-CAUS-CONT-PART.FUT NEG say-PART.PERF incantation-SOC reason-SOC thing be-  
PRAES.IMP

It has a reason and story that they do not take out him/her through the door. (WMO-Z)

Ex:77 *önä sö:-gin dotər γaγa šilən bä:šij bär-ül-Ø gi-žä.*  
this night-GEN in outside glass building build-CAUS-IMPER say-PRAET.IMP

Build a glass building during tonight! – he said. (WMO-Z)

Ex:78 *awγä-γän ger tal-an jow-ul-žə.*  
wife-REF.POSS yurt side-REF.POSS go-CAUS-PRAET.IMP

[He] sent his wife to the yurt. (WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926)

### 4.1.3. Co-operative, collective and pluralitive

The three derivation suffixes staying in the title are usually discussed separately, but I decided to take them together, since its meanings often overlaps one another.

The *-ld* suffix of the Cooperative expresses an action, which is performed by two or more persons, and during, as well as due to the action the participants have some influence on each other.

Ex:79 *Barun guj-an taš-ad baš taš inä-ld-äd su:žä.*  
right thigh-REF.POSS beat-CONV.PERF ONOM RHYME laugh-COOP

They were beating their right thigh and laughing together” (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

Ex:80 *Tawən zu:n de:rətmč-tä Ornə Ulanda gi-dəg kümən dä:rə-ld-əw.*  
five hundred robber-SOC Orn Ulanda say-PART.HAB man bump-COOP-PRAET.PERF

“He encountered a men, called Orn Ulanda, who had five hundred robbers.” (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

Ex:81 *jow-žə jow-tl-n negə zalu-ta xary-ld-wa*  
go-CONV.IMP go-CONV.TERM-3P.POSS one young.man-SOC meet-COOP-PRAET.PERF.EMPH

While [he] was going [he] met a young man. (WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926)

The Collective's meaning somewhat differs, and just indicates, that the action is performed by more than one person.

Ex:82 *ax-n' xary-ld-n üzə-lc-n bu:-γad [...]*  
older.brother encounter-COOP-CONV.MOD look-COLL-CONV.MOD dismount-CONV.PERF

brothers encountered and looked at each other, and dismounted [from their horses] [...] (WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926)

The *-cgā/cgā* suffix indicates plurality, too, however in contrast to the previous one it expresses, that there is not only one action performed by more persons, but several separate actions, which go on simultaneously.

Ex:83 *Dörwən ö:ld-üd sal-ž nü:-x-d-ä dörwən ö:ld-in ura: gi-dəg du: zoka-ž du:l-cya-žä.*  
four Ööld part-CONV.IMP migrate-PART.FUT-DAT-REF.POSS four Ööld-GEN calling say-PART.HAB  
song compose-CONV.IMP sing-PLUR-PRAET.IMP  
When the four Öölds parted and moved on, they composed and sang a song called ‘The calling of the four Öölds.’ (WMO-Z, Цолоо 1965)

The meanings of the three suffixes described above are just approximately definitions, and often each of them just express, that there are more persons participating in the action, and nothing else.

#### 4.1.4. Intensifier

The iterative (*-čk* or *-č*) expresses a perfect or sudden action, and doesn’t change the verb’s meaning significantly. This suffix comes from the Adverbium Imperfecti + *ork-* ~ *ok-* “to throw away” structure, which have exactly the same meaning and occurs parallelly with its short form.

Ex:84 *terə šowu ter köndi-də tö:r-sn bä:-žə bä:-tlə ter gü: üz-äd gü: al-čək-čə.*  
that bird that valley-DAT circle-PART.PERF be-CONV.IMP be-CONV.TERM that mare see-CONV.PERF  
mare kill-INTENS-PRAET.IMP  
While that bird was circling in the valley, it saw the mare and killed her. (WMO-M, Владимирцов 1926)

Ex:85 *Xö:n cayan čulu-γar temd<sup>g</sup>g täw-čə-žä*  
sheep white stone-INSTR sign put-INTENS-PRAET.IMP  
He put there a sign with a sheep white stone. (WMO-Z)

#### 4.1.5. Continuative

The *-jä/jä*, *-čā/čā* suffix is the shortened form of the Adverbium Imperfecti + *bā-* “to be” structure. It is used very frequently and expresses the same as its original form, namely continuity. It means that the action takes longer time, and doesn’t finish within few moments. The shortened and the original forms occur parallelly and have no difference in the meaning, but I consider the short form as a separate derivative suffix, since it became under the rules of the vowel harmony.

## 4.2. MODAL MARKERS

The Oirad dialects have several imperative forms for different purposes. These forms mostly correspond with the similar endings of Written Mongolian, Written Oirad, Xalx, Buriat and other Mongolian dialects, but some typical and peculiar forms exist, too.

The verbs in imperative can stay merely at the end of the sentence (including the case of citing), and there are only few phrases, where an imperative stays in mid-sentence position, but in these cases it has lost its original meaning. The imperative forms are connected to certain persons and number, and could be used only in these well-defined cases. Some imperative suffixes can hold a limited set of personal predicative endings.

The simplest imperative form has no suffix and is equal with the verb stem. It expresses a strict demand, an order or command in Sg. or Pl. 2., and could also be used toward persons with younger age, lower position, or simply in case of informal relations.

Ex:86 *zalu zand-ar tülš kä:-Ø*

young santal-INSTR firewood do-IMPER

Make firewood from young santal! (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

Ex:87 *či yurwə xon-ad irə-Ø*

2P.SG three spend.a.night-CONV.PERF come-IMPER

Come back after three days (passing a night three times)! (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

Ex:88 *altn am'i-m örsä-Ø*

gold life-ACC-1P.SG.POSS spare-IMPER

Spare my golden life! (WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926)

Ex:89 *önä sō:-gin dotər γaza šilən bā:šij bār-ül-Ø gi-žä.*

this night-GEN in outside glass building build-CAUS-IMPER say-PRAET.IMP

Build a glass building during tonight! – he said. (WMO-Z)

If the personal predicative ending **-tn** (*-tŋ* in Zaxčín<sup>101</sup>) follows after the verb stem, then it modifies the meaning of the pure imperative, and expresses a polite request in Sg. 2. or Pl. 2. Poppe and Sanžeev write, that the Oirad *-tn* form probably goes back to the Mong. *-γtun/gtün*, but Sanžeev also finds possible, that it is connected with the first element of Mong. *-tuyai/tügei*.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Coloo, Ĵ.: *Jaxčiniü aman ayalguu*. pp. 76-77.; Pürewjaw, E.: *Jaxčín aman ayalguunii jarim onclog*. p. 3.

<sup>102</sup> Poppe, N.: *Introduction to Mongolian Comparative Studies*. MSFOu 110., Helsinki 1955, p. 254; Sanžeev, G. D.: *Sravnitel'naja grammatika mongol'skih jazykov*. Glagol. Moskva 1964, pp. 102-104.

- Ex:90 *mana-d tür sa:tə-ž xo:l idə-tənə*  
 1P.PL.EXCL.POSS-DAT temporary stay-CONV.IMP meal eat-IMPER.POL  
 Stay a little bit with us, and eat some meal, please! (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)
- Ex:91 *düi: ax-nər-ta-γan xuwa-žə idə-tən*  
 younger.brother older.brother-PL-SOC-REF.POSS divide-CONV.IMP eat-IMPER.POL  
 Eat it dividing between your brothers and sisters! (WMO-Z)
- Ex:92 *und-an u:-tən xo:l-an id-tən gi-žə kel-lä*  
 drink-REF.POSS drink-IMPER.POL meal-REF.POSS eat-IMPER.POL say-CONV.IMP say-PRAES.PERF  
 Drink your drink and eat your meal! – he said. (WMO-Z)
- Ex:93 *a:wə-m ta: terə tamγ-an tawən tüšmə-d-tä-gän nā:rlə-Ø-tən*  
 father-POSS.1P.SG 2P.SG.POL that seal-REF.POSS five officer-PL-SOC-REF.POSS feast-IMPER-2P.POL  
 Oh my father, make a feast with your five seal-officers! (WMO-Z)

The imperative ending  $\bar{t}$  could be used either for impolite and polite purposes, depending on the personal predicative ending connected to it. Together with the Sg. 2. personal predicative ending  $-č$ , it expresses the same as the verb stem, but the Sg. and Pl. 2.  $-t$  indicates a polite or plural form. This imperative form cannot be used without  $-č$  or  $-t$ , and could be followed only by these personal predicative endings. By Wandui's opinion, the Dörwöd has a back vowel variant  $-ič/\bar{i}t$ .<sup>103</sup>

- Ex:94 *Ta su:-γi-t.*  
 2P.SG.POL sit-IMPER-2P.SG.POL  
 Sit down, please! (WMO-D, Вандуй 1965)
- Ex:95 *ta jow-ad bij-än negə šinž-äd ir-i-t*  
 2P.SG.POL go-CONV.PERF self-REF.POSS one check-CONV.PERF come-IMPER-2P.SG.POL  
 Go, check it yourself and come back! (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)
- Ex:96 *amr mendə morl-i-tə*  
 peaceful health leave-IMPER-2P.SG.POL  
 Leave peacefully and healthy! (WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926)

Although  $-īč$  and  $-īt$  are typical Oirad forms, there are several examples on similar forms in Xalx ( $-āč$ ), Buriat ( $-īš$ ), Ordos ( $-āč$ ), Xorčin ( $-āš$ ), Aruxorčin ( $-āč$ ), etc.<sup>104</sup> Except the Buriat form ( $-īš$ ), each parallel has  $\bar{a}$  (according to the rules of vowel harmony) instead of Oirad  $\bar{i}$ . The

<sup>103</sup> Wandui, E.: *Dörwöd aman ayalguu*. p. 119.

<sup>104</sup> Todaeva, B. H.: *Mongol'skie jazyki i dialekty Kitaja*. p. 40.

meaning of Buriat form is close to Oirad, so it is used in Sg. 2. only, but the other variants somewhat differ and express polite request toward both close and respected persons in Sg. 2. and Pl. 2.<sup>105</sup>

By Coloo's and Sambuudorj's opinion Zaxčïn and Torgūd have a Sg. 2. polite imperative ending *-jū/jū*, and in Zaxčïn occurs its Sg. 2. or Pl. 2. variant *-tnjū/tnjū*, too.<sup>106</sup> However these are just the forms mentioned above, with an additional confirmative particle (*jū < jā +* interrogative particle *ū* "is it okay?"), so I think it's not necessary to consider them as separate forms.

Ex:97 *nü:dəl sä:xən gi-dəg ä:l-än ɣaza-ɣur jow-tən=žu*  
 migration beautiful say-CONV.HAB yurt.camp-GEN outside-DIR go-IMPER-2P.SG.POL=CONF  
 Go by the outside of the yurt camp called *Nü:dəl sä:xən*, is it okay? (WMO-Z, Цолоо 1965)

The imperative form on *-ārā/ārā* is mostly typical of Xalx and Buriat, however – may be under the influence of Xalx – it can occur in Oirad, too. Sanžeev doubts the existence of this suffix in Oirad, and states, that Popov's and Ramstedt's data are not established properly.<sup>107</sup> It's true, that there is no such form in Kalmyk, however the Oirad dialects of Western Mongolia sometimes use it. This opinion is supported also by Birtalan<sup>108</sup> and Sambuudorj,<sup>109</sup> who provide examples, too. By all means the question is decided by the fact, that the *-ārā/ārā* suffix occurs several times in Vladimircov's collection and other folklore texts.

Ex:98 *Ža: sä:n jow-ara*  
 well good go-IMPER.POL  
 Well, have a pleasant journey! (lit. Go well!) (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

Ex:99 *ca:-ɣur na:-ɣur ir-ārā*  
 that.side-DIR this.side-DIR come-IMPER.POL  
 Please come by this way and that way! (WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926)

The imperative form *-txā/txā* (concessive) is the direct descendant of Mong. *-tuyai/tügei*. Depending on the context it can express a command, request, wish or desire, in any person,

<sup>105</sup> Some Xalx grammars defines *-āč/ēč/ōč/ōč* as a form, that could be used in informal relationship only, but the direct experiences don't support this opinion.

<sup>106</sup> Coloo, J.: *Jaxčïnii aman ayalguu*. p. 76.; Sambuudorj, O.: *Torgud aman ayalguunii temdeglel*. p. 38.

<sup>107</sup> Sanžeev, G. D.: *Sravnitel'naja grammatika mongol'skih jazykov. Glagol*. Moskva 1964, p. 98.

<sup>108</sup> Birtalan Ágnes: Written and Spoken Oirad. In: *The Mongolic Languages*. Ed. by Juha Janhunen. Expected publishing in 2001

<sup>109</sup> Sambuudorj, O.: *Torgud aman ayalguunii temdeglel*. p. 38.

both plural and singular. The *-txā/txā̄* suffix is frequently connected to the auxiliary verb *bol-* “to become”.

Ex:100 *γurwn mörā čini bol-wl mini awγā-g čī ab-txā*  
 three competition 2P.SG.POSS become-CONV.COND 1P.SG.POSS wife-ACC take-CONC  
 If you win the three competitions, let’s take my wife! (WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926)

Ex:101 *Awidā-n dergādā tör-x bol-tyā*  
 Amithaba-GEN beside be.born-PART.FUT become-CONC  
 Let’s born beside Amithaba! (WMO-U, Владимирцов 1926)

The suffix **-g** can be used in Sg. 3. and Pl. 3. (sometimes Sg. 2. or Pl. 2.), and it expresses permission or approval to do something.

The voluntative and optative forms of Sg. 1. and Pl. 1. are *-s(ū)/s(ū̄)* and *-ī, -y, -yā/yā̄*, which express intention, desire or a future action. The suffixes can follow after neither long vowel endings, consonants or reduced vowels.

Ex:102 *Tana arwən nā:mən ba:tər-mud-in arwən yes-dəx-iyə bol-su*  
 2P.SG.POL.GEN ten eight hero-PL-GEN ten nine-ORD-3P.POSS become-OPT  
 “I become the nineteenth of your eighteen heroes.” (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

Ex:103 *Oda bi ba:xən untə-jə amrə-jə*  
 now 1P.SG little sleep-VOL rest-VOL  
 Now I will sleep and rest a little bit. (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)

Ex:104 *ewr-än ükə-jə ge-žə bod-ad [...]*  
 self-REF.POSS die-VOL say-CONV.IMP think-CONV.PERF  
 I will die by myself – he thought [...] (WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926)

Ex:105 *ter säixn maxn cusn äm’s-ksn kel-i-čən üz-ij*  
 that beautiful flesh blood taste-PART.PERF.ARCH tongue-ACC-1P.SG.POSS see-VOL  
 Let me see your tongue, which tasted that good flesh and blood! (WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926)

Ex:106 *ömärə jow-əjə*  
 along.south go-VOL  
 Let’s go to south! (WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926)

The *-āsā/ūsā̄* (desiderative) ending expresses a wish or hope, that something happens.

Ex:107 *amrg-m ir-āsā*  
 dear-1P.SG.POSS come-DES  
 “If only my dear would arrive.”

The suffixes *-wzā/wzā̄*, *-ūzā/ūzā̄*, *-zā/zā̄* (dubitative) express a fear, that something happens, a wish to avoid an event or action.

Ex:108 *namr-in budḡ-dā törä-wüzä*

autumn-GEN fog-DAT lose-DUB

I wish you will not lose in the autumn fog. (WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926)

#### 4.2.1. Prohibition

The Mongolian languages use a prohibitive particle that precedes the prohibited verb. In Oirad it has 2-3 phonetic variants originated from Mong. *bütegei* ~ *bitegei* “no, don’t”: *bičā̄*, *bičkā̄*, *bitkā̄*, *bitā̄*. Theoretically the prohibitive particle can be used with any imperative form, however occurs only with a limited set of them.

Ex:109 *ger-tə bitkā̄ iškər-Ø nügəl gi-dəg-čənə terə bā̄:-x-gua=ju=da*

yurt-DAT PROH shout-IMPER sin say-PART.HAB-2P.SG.POSS that be-PART.FUT-NEG=INTERR=EMPH

Do not shout inside the yurt! That is a sin, isn’t it? (WMO-Z)

Ex:110 *o: a:w-əm bitā̄ yar-an salabčəl-tən*

oh father-1P.SG.POSS PROH hand-REF.POSS thrash-IMPER.POL

Oh, my father, do not thrash with your hands, please! (WMO-Z)

Ex:111 *bičkā̄ xāi-tn*

PROH search-IMPER.POL

Do not search [for him], please! (WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926)

Ex:112 *ta: bitkā̄ ükə-tān*

2P.SG.POL PROH die-IMPER.POL.EMPH

Do not die, please! (WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926)

#### 4.3. TENSE-ASPECT MARKERS

Oirad has four tenses, suffixes of which can stay at the end of the sentence only, so these often called *verbum finitum*. These suffixes can be followed by the personal predicative particles, interrogative or emphatic particles only.

<b>Tenses</b>	
<b>Praeteritum Perfecti</b>	-w( <i>ā</i> )/w( <i>ā̄</i> )
<b>Praesens Perfecti</b>	-lā/lā̄
<b>Praeteritum Imperfecti</b>	-j( <i>ā̄</i> )/č( <i>ā̄</i> )
<b>Praesens Imperfecti</b>	-n( <i>ā</i> )/n( <i>ā̄</i> )

Suffix *-w* (**Praeteritum Perfecti**) expresses past perfect, that is probably a relatively long past, but it can be a recent past, too, depending on the context. The suffix often has an emphatic long vowel.

Ex:113 *jow-žə jow-tl-n negə zalu-ta xary-ld-wa*  
 go-CONV.IMP go-CONV.TERM-3P.POSS one young.man-SOC meet-COOP-PRAET.PERF.EMPH  
 While [he] was going [he] met a young man. (WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926)

Ex:114 *ža enə altən tamγə ken xulyal-žə awə-w*  
 well this gold seal who steal-CONV.IMP take-PRAET.PERF  
 Well, who did steal this golden seal? (WMO-Z)

If the Sg. 1. personal predicative ending (*-w*) follows after the *-w* of the Praeteritum Perfecti, then the latter becomes vocalized and develops to *ū* or *ū̄*.

Ex:115 *tana tawən tamγ-an tüšmə-d-in tend-äs ir-ū-w*  
 2P.SG.POL.GEN five seal-GEN official-PL-gen there-ABL come-PRAET.PERF-1P.SG  
 I came from your five seal-officials. (WMO-Z)

An other ending to express past is *-lā/lā̄* (**Praesens Perfecti**), which mostly refers to recent past usually witnessed by the subject.

Ex:116 *jä: güic-lä*  
 well finish-PRAES.PERF  
 Well, I finished it. (WMO-M, Владимирцов 1926)

Ex:117 *narn-ä abyä zü:d zü:dl-lä*  
 sun-GEN wife dream dream dream-PRAES.PERF  
 The wife of the Sun had a dream. (WMO-U, Владимирцов 1926)

- Ex:118 *altən tamγə aldə-gdə-la*  
gold seal lose-PASS-PRAES.PERF  
The golden seal has been lost. (WMO-Z)
- Ex:119 *und-an u:-tən xo:l-an id-tən gi-žə kel-lä*  
drink-REF.POSS drink-IMPER.POL meal-REF.POSS eat-IMPER.POL say-CONV.IMP say-PRAES.PERF  
Drink your drink and eat your meal! – he said. (WMO-Z)
- Ex:120 *nadlä xarγə-xə-də kel-tä jow-la*  
1P.SG.COM encounter-PART.FUT-DAT tongue-SOC go-PRAES.PERF  
When [he] encountered me, [he] had his tongue yet. (WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926)

The third past ending is *-j* (**Praeteritum Imperfecti**), which expresses a longer past that was not seen by the speaker. This form has a wide-spread usage in folklore texts, often with an emphatic lengthening (*-jā*).

- Ex:121 *xo:ran möŋgən xa:n-a-γur γar-ad gü:-lg-äd jow-ž*  
after Möŋgən khan-GEN-DIR go.out-CONV.PERF run-CAUS-CONV.PERF go-PRAET.IMP  
After that he rode away toward Möŋgən khan. (WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982)
- Ex:122 *terə nojən tawən tüšmə-d-in örän-də or-ž mörgül ke-žə.*  
that nobleman five official-PL room-DAT go.in-CONV.IMP  
That nobleman went in into the room of the five officials and prayed. (WMO-Z)
- Ex:123 *yamr am<sup>l</sup>tn-ä maxn cusn amtäxn san-žə gi-ž sur-xla [...]*  
what.kind animal-GEN fleash blood tasty remind-CONV.IMP say-CONV.IMP ask-CONV.COND  
When he asked, that which living being’s meat and blood seemed to be tasty [...] (WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926)
- Ex:124 WMO-Z *önäd<sup>ä</sup>r ik<sup>l</sup> sonīm bollā* “Today was a very interesting thing”.

Present and future are expressed by suffix *-n* (**Praesens Imperfecti**), which has an emphatic variant *-nā/nā̄*. The time indicated depends on the context, so for example if the sentence contains a temporal adverb referring to the future, the *-n* suffix refers to future, too. However in some complex verb structures the Praesens Imperfecti can express present only (see later).

- Ex:125 WMO-Z *yū kesnīg bī sām med<sup>ə</sup>xg<sup>ä</sup> bānā̄* “I don’t know, what did I do at all”
- Ex:126 WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926 *tūnās<sup>ä</sup> gacxn tay<sup>k</sup> xubx<sup>a</sup>rnā̄* “Only one stick breaks from them”
- Ex:127 WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926 *tegsn xö<sup>n</sup> čamāg<sup>i</sup> alnāw* “after that I will kill you”.

#### 4.4. PARTICIPLES (VERBAL NOUNS)

The verbal nouns are transitional forms between the nouns and verbs. They can be declined as the simple nouns – case endings, plural suffixes (sometimes), personal possessive endings and subject possessive marker can be connected to them. However it's impossible to derive new nouns or verbs from a verbal noun. Beside the nominal ones, the verbal nouns have verbal features, too, so a verbal noun can have subject, object and other complements. The verbal nouns can be subject, object, attribute or predicate in the sentence, and using the case endings they can fulfill other roles, too. If a verbal noun is the predicate, then personal predicate endings can be connected to it. A verbal noun can refer to both the actor and the acting in general.

Verbal Nouns	
<b>Nomen Perfecti</b>	<i>-sn</i>
<b>Nomen Imperfecti</b>	<i>-a/ā</i>
<b>Nomen Futuri</b>	<i>-x</i>
<b>Nomen Usus</b>	<i>-dg</i>
<b>Nomen Actoris</b>	<i>-gč, -kč</i>
<b>Nomen Possibilitatis</b>	<i>-m</i>

**Nomen Perfecti** expresses an action begun and finished in the past, or its executor. The action's distance from the present depends on the context. Its suffix is *-sn*, but sometimes – especially in folklore texts – the archaic *-ksn* form occurs, too. The ending *n* of the Nomen Perfecti acts similarly to the *n* stem of the nouns during the declension, so in certain cases (Accusative, Instrumental, etc.) drops out.

Ex:128 WMO-Z *dal<sup>a</sup>η nas<sup>a</sup> kürs<sup>ā</sup>n öwg<sup>ō</sup>n tüšm<sup>ū</sup>d tamγān γaz<sup>a</sup>r ors<sup>a</sup>n* “an old official, who has reached seventy, went into the office”

Ex:129 WMO-Z *önāx<sup>ā</sup> sokt<sup>a</sup>s<sup>a</sup>η küm<sup>ū</sup>n uxān orād ködl<sup>ā</sup>xdār* “when that drunken man regained his consciousness and made a move”

Ex:130 WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926 *ter sāl<sup>i</sup>xn maxn cusn ām 'sksn kelī-č<sup>n</sup> üjȳ* “let me see your tongue, which tasted that good blood!”.

Nomen Perfecti in predicative position is often followed by the emphatic particle *yum*, and therefore a new form *-sīm* appears.

Ex:131 WMO-Z, Цолоо 1965 *Dörw<sup>o</sup>dūd Ulāny<sup>o</sup>md od<sup>i</sup>ḡ sūsīm giḡ dūllōw* “I heard that the Dörwöds went to Ulāngom and settled down there”.

**Nomen Imperfecti**’s *-ā/ā̄* suffix is a rare form in Oirad. It expresses an action (or its executor), which was begun in the past, but already continues in the present.

Ex:132 WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982 *Tā n<sup>a</sup>r xamāyās xārān oč yowā ul<sup>a</sup>s<sup>a</sup>w* “Where are you going from, and where are you going to?”

Ex:133 Ba. *Minī tom kū, Kūrlā giḡ bāḡā* “My elder son is Kūrlā”.

**Nomen Futuri** (*-x*) expresses an action in the present or future, but in some structures this present could be the present of a past event.

Ex:134 WMO-M, Владимирцов 1926 *očxdārñ ene-č<sup>i</sup>n čamā abx<sup>a</sup>* “when you go there, he takes you”

Ex:135 WMO-U, Владимирцов 1926 *ter xanā kūk<sup>i</sup> abč-irwl, Narnā köl urḡ<sup>x</sup>* “if you bring the khan’s daughter, the leg of the Sun will grow out”

Ex:136 WMO-Z *Buc<sup>a</sup>xdāñ ez<sup>e</sup>n xānā alt<sup>a</sup>ḡ tamḡ<sup>a</sup> xulyālād apč<sup>ḡ</sup>jē* “When came back, stole the golden seal of the khan”

Ex:137 WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926 *nadlā xarḡ<sup>x</sup>a<sup>d</sup>a keltā yowlā* “when he met me, he had his tongue yet”.

The Nomen Futuri and the emphatic particle *yumn* results in *-xmn, xīmn* or *-xīm*.

Ex:138 WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *xoyr nüdāñ an’āt, xoyr čik<sup>i</sup> atxāt orxīmn* “he will go in closing his two eyes and gripping his two ears”

Ex:139 WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *Bi Cayān lus ged<sup>e</sup>k bāxīmn* “I’m *Cagān lus*”.

**Nomen Usus** has *-dg* suffix and mostly expresses a regular or usual action (or its subject), but sometimes it’s meaning could be equivalent with Nomen Futuri.

Ex:140 WMO-Z, Цолоо 1965 *Ḷaxč<sup>i</sup>n xošūnā dot<sup>r</sup>r xulxāčḡḡ šītḡ<sup>e</sup>d<sup>i</sup>g xū<sup>i</sup> bāḡē* “In the *Zaxč<sup>i</sup>n xošū* there was a law that convicted the thieves”

Ex:141 WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *en-č<sup>i</sup>n xō<sup>i</sup>n kenā xō<sup>i</sup>n geḡ asūḡ<sup>i</sup> xar’ūld<sup>a</sup>k ulsās<sup>a</sup>* “whose sheeps are these sheeps – he asked from the shepherding people”

Ex:142 WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926 *tegāt xortīn moyā idd<sup>i</sup>k bolḡ<sup>i</sup>* “and then he became eating poisonous snakes”.

If the interrogative particle or the Sg. 1. personal predicative ending follows the Nomen Usus, then its *g* drops out.

Ex:143 WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982 *Xamā kürd<sup>i</sup>wl<sup>e</sup>* “Where are you going?”.

The *-dg* of *Nomen Usus* and the emphasizing particle *yumn* develops to *-dmn*, *-dīmn* or *-dīm*.

Ex:144 WMO-Z, Цолоо 1965 *In<sup>i</sup> dūg odā Jaxč<sup>n</sup>, Ōld, Torgūd<sup>d</sup> dūldīm* “At present Zaxčins, Ōölds and Torgūds sing this song”

Ex:145 WMO-Z, Цолоо 1965 *Ikō irt bosād adūndā yowdīm* “They usually wake up very early and go to the herd”

Ex:146 WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *bas<sup>a</sup> tergn čirdīm* “they also pull a cart”

Ex:147 WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *en<sup>e</sup> yamr yum keb<sup>e</sup>dīm* “what is a thing lies here?”.

**Nomen Actoris** somewhat differs from other verbal nouns, since it refers to the executor of the action only, and cannot refer to the action in general. However it cannot be considered as a deverbal derivative suffix (as *-č/čn*) because it can have an object and other complements of verbs. The *Nomen Actoris* doesn't refer to any particular time, it can be construed in general. Although the *Nomen Actoris* is rare in the colloquial speech, it is frequently used in folklore texts.

Ex:148 WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *amrīg<sup>i</sup> ösk<sup>ö</sup>kč<sup>i</sup> ēj<sup>n</sup> āwn xoy<sup>r</sup>-l* “the mother and father, who raise the love”.

The **Nomen Possibilitatis** indicates an action, that may be performed. It is often used together with the postposition *casū*, and in this case can be translated by “when”.

Ex:149 WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926 *noy<sup>i</sup> bol<sup>o</sup>m köwū med<sup>e</sup>kd<sup>e</sup>nū?* “Does somebody know a man, who could become a lord?”.

The Kalmyk passive verbal noun form *-ātā/ātā* doesn't occur in Western Mongolian Oirad.<sup>110</sup>

#### 4.5. VERBAL CONVERBS

The verbal adverbs are verb forms, that have just relative temporal meaning and cannot be used at the end of the sentence (except *Adverbium Imperfecti*). Practically the verbal nouns are used to connect phrases to a whole sentence, and indicate the kind of the relations between the actions. Although a verbal noun cannot be an independent predicate, can be the member of a complex verbal predicate.

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<sup>110</sup> Bitkeev, p. C. – Doraeva, R. p. – Pavlov, D. A. – Pjurbeev, G. C. et al.: *Grammatika kalmyckogo jazyka. Fonetika i morfologija*. Elista 1983, pp. 247-248.

Beside the traditional verbal adverbs of Written Mongolian and Written Oirad, there are several new forms in spoken Oirad, that take their origin from a nominal structures, and at present they can be considered as independent verbal adverbs.

**Adverbium Imperfecti** connects to actions that perform simultaneously or (sometimes) follow each other immediately. The suffix of Adverbium Imperfecti is *-j* after verb stems, the Written Mongolian form of which ends on vowel or *l*, while the *-č* suffix follows after stems originally having consonant ending.

Ex:150 WMO-Z *dū axn<sup>a</sup>rtāγān xuwāj<sup>i</sup> id<sup>i</sup>teγ* “eat it dividing between your brothers and sisters!”

Ex:151 WMO-M, Владимирцов 1926 *jāxoyūl<sup>a</sup> Bēj<sup>i</sup>nd<sup>e</sup> oč<sup>i</sup> ixī nādm<sup>a</sup> kürč-ir<sup>j</sup>* “so, they both went to Beijing and arrived to the great *nādm*”

Ex:152 *terə nojən tawən tüšmə-d-in örän-də or-ž mörgül ke-žə.*  
that nobleman five official-PL room-DAT go.in-CONV.IMP

That nobleman went in into the room of the five officials and prayed. (WMO-Z)

When the verb stem ends on *d* in spoken Oirad, it often drops out, and the Adverbium Imperfecti’s *-j* becomes *-č*.

Ex:153 WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *neg<sup>e</sup> dalā xajūd<sup>a</sup> gurwn köwūn nāč<sup>i</sup>j<sup>i</sup> (nād- “to play”)* “beside an ocean, three boys were playing”

Ex:154 WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982 *Tā n<sup>a</sup>r xamāγās xārān oč yowā ul<sup>a</sup>s<sup>a</sup>w* “Where are you going from, and where are you going to?”.

Adverbium Imperfecti is frequently used in complex verbal structures, where the members just modify the meaning of the other. In these structures mostly the first member having the *-j/č* ending expresses the primary meaning and the second verb is an auxiliary verb, but this latter’s suffix indicates the time of the whole structure.

Ex:155 WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *ter<sup>e</sup> köwūnā awγā kök torγn xubcsn ümsj-awāt* “the wife of that men has put up the blue silk cloth”

Ex:156 WMO-Z *Za en<sup>e</sup> alt<sup>a</sup>γ tamγ<sup>a</sup> ken xulyāl<sup>j</sup> aw<sup>a</sup>w* “Well, who did steal this golden seal?”.

**Adverbium Modale (-n)** fulfills a similar role to the Adverbium Imperfecti, but almost exclusively it occurs in complex verbal structures only.

Ex:157 WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982 *Tūnē dundōdn<sup>i</sup> töwkn<sup>o</sup>n sūjē* “He lived taking its middle”

Ex:158 WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *axn<sup>i</sup> xaryldn üj<sup>i</sup>lcn būγāt* “the brothers met and looked each other, and dismounted [from the horse]”.

**Adverbium Perfecti** (*-ād/ā̄d*, or *-gād/gā̄d* after long vowel stems) indicates an action, that was finished before the beginning of the next one. The size of the gap between the two actions depends on the context, but usually it is a relatively short period.

Ex:159 WMO-Z, Цолоо 1965 *Ikō irt bosād adūndā yowdīm* “They usually wake up very early and go to the herd”

Ex:160 WMO-M, Владимирцов 1926 *ter<sup>o</sup> šowū ter kōndīd<sup>o</sup> tōrsn bāj<sup>i</sup> bāt<sup>o</sup> ter gūjāt, gūalč<sup>i</sup> kč<sup>i</sup>* “while that bird of prey was circling in the valley, saw the mare and killed her”

Ex:161 WMO-Z *önāx<sup>ā</sup> sok<sup>o</sup>s<sup>o</sup>η küm<sup>i</sup>n uxān orād ködl<sup>i</sup>xdār* “when that drunken man regained his consciousness and made a move”.

If there are more verbal adverbs follows each other with the same suffix *-ād/ā̄d*, then it often expresses, that all of the mentioned actions take place simultaneously, but before the main action of the sentence.

WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *xoyr nūdān an’āt, xoyr čik<sup>i</sup> atxāt orxīm* “he will go in closing his two eyes and gripping his two ears”

Ex:162 WMO-Z *toljāgīn xadgār bōyād, caγān dāwūγār bürkād* “he bound his head with a silk shawl and covered with a white cloth”.

In contrast with the forms above, Adverbium Perfecti is relatively rare in complex verbal structures, however it is not without precedents.

Ex:163 WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982 *Xān Sīr ūnēr untād ögčē* “Xān Sīr on this fell asleep”

Ex:164 WMO-Z *Buc<sup>o</sup>xdān ez<sup>o</sup>n xānā alt<sup>o</sup>η tamγ<sup>o</sup> xulyālād apč<sup>i</sup>jē* “When came back, stole the golden seal of the khan”

Ex:165 WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926 *kelnīg<sup>i</sup> garγ<sup>o</sup>xlā, kelnīg<sup>i</sup> xarād<sup>o</sup> awād-ok<sup>o</sup>j<sup>i</sup>* “when he put his tongue out, the swallow has taken it”.

Adverbium Perfecti has a feature which is not typical of the verbal adverbs, namely that it can stay at the end of the sentence as predicate, and it could be negated similarly to the verbal nouns, using the negative particle *ugā* or its short form *-gō/g<sup>u</sup>ā*. However it can be sometimes difficult to decide, what is the end of the sentence, since the Mongols use Adverbium Perfecti very frequently, and in colloquial speech they often don’t complete their sentences, so it seems, that Adverbium Perfecti stays at the end.

If a sentence should contain more similar verbal adverbs from the above mentioned ones, then – just in order to avoid the monotonous repetition – often mixed forms are used, and in this case the difference between the meanings could be reduced or even ignored.

**Adverbium Abtemporale** (-*sār/sār*) indicates an action that has took long time. Whether the action was finished or not before the beginning of the next one, it depends on the context. The Adverbium Abtemporale's -*sār/sār* ending is the modern form of Mong. -*γsaγar/gseger*, which is originally the Nomen Perfecti (Mong. -*γsan/gsen*) with the Instrumental suffix (Mong. -*γar/ger*). Besides, in today's Oirad the Nomen Perfecti (-*sn*) + Instrumental (-*ār/ār*) structure exists, too, and since the Nomen Perfecti's *n* drops out similarly to the *n* stem of nouns, it has the same form as Adverbium Abtemporale. However there is an other meaning, what the -*sār/sār* morpheme can express, namely the causality, which follows from the being of the Instrumental suffix. The question arises, that should we separate the two forms having probably different origin on the basis of the mentioned meanings, or not? The decision also can depend on the currency of the meanings and the frequency of the usage, which are different among the Oirad dialects. In Kalmyk for example, the Adverbium Abtemporale is practically never used to indicate a long action, and always expresses causality, so it seems to be unnecessary to separate the two morphemes. However in the Altai Oirad dialects the two meanings are well-separable, and both occur several times, so we can consider these as two morphemes: one is Adverbium Abtemporale, which indicates a long action, and the other is the Nomen Perfecti + Instrumental structure, which expresses causality. The following examples show role of Adverbium Abtemporale:

Ex:166 WMO-Z, Цолоо 1965 *Önē yurw<sup>a</sup>η küm<sup>e</sup>η Altāg öwr<sup>l</sup>lj yowsār Γald<sup>a</sup>n-boš<sup>γ</sup>ot xānād irjē*. “That three men have went round the Altai by south and arrived to Γaldan Bošoqtu khan”.

The **Adverbium Contemporale** is not common in the Oirad dialects, but its -*mgc* suffix sometimes occurs in Altai Oirad, and expresses, that the first action is immediately followed by the other one. E.g.: *irmgc* “right when he arrives”.

As I mentioned, the -*mgc* suffix is not typical of the Oirad dialects, it rather can be found in Xalx and some Inner Mongolian dialects (Čaxar, Ordos, Xorčin, etc.)<sup>111</sup>, so its existence in Altai Oirad may be result of the Xalx influence.

Sambuudorj and Birtalan mentions also suffixes -*ηgā/ηgā*, -*ūt/ūt* and -*ngūt/ngūt*, which express the same as -*mgc*<sup>112</sup>, but these are not common Oirad forms, too. Suffix -*ηgā/ηgā*

<sup>111</sup> Todaeva, B. H.: *Mongol'skie jazyki i dialekty Kitaja*. p. 43.

<sup>112</sup> Sambuudorj, O.: *Torgud aman ayalguunii temdeglel*. p. 36.; Birtalan Ágnes: *Written and Spoken Oirad*.

and *-ūt/ūt* occur also in Bargu Buriat, while *-ngūt/ngūt* in Xalx, Čaxar and some other Inner Mongolian dialects.<sup>113</sup>

The most common suffix for expressing conditionality is **Adverbium Conditionale**'s *-wl*, which has a variant *-ūl/ūl* and an archaic form *-wās/wās*. The former one is just a phonological variant and result of a usual phonological development in the Mongolian languages, namely the drop out of the intervocalic spirants. The *-wās/wās* form has no direct connection with *-wl* (Mong. *-bala/bele*), and it is the modern equivalent of Mong. *-basu/besü* and Oir. *-bāsu/bēsü*. Beside its conditional meaning, Adverbium Conditionale can express temporal meaning, too, and can be translated by “when”.

Ex:167 WMO-Z *malxāγār bel<sup>ε</sup>k ögs<sup>ā</sup>n bāw<sup>ū</sup>l ter<sup>ε</sup> malxāg bolūl ärūt<sup>ā</sup>j<sup>i</sup> öms<sup>ā</sup>jānā* “if somebody presents a cap to someone as gift, he cleanses it and then puts up”

Ex:168 WMO-U, Владимирцов 1926 *ter xanā kūk<sup>i</sup> abč-irwl, Narnā köl urγ<sup>u</sup>x<sup>u</sup>* “if you bring the khan’s daughter, the leg of the Sun will grow out”

Ex:169 WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *gurwn mör<sup>’</sup>ā čin<sup>i</sup> bolwl min<sup>i</sup> awγāg č<sup>i</sup> abtxā* “if you win the three competition, let’s take my wife”.

The verb *bol-* “to become” is frequently used as auxiliary verb, so occurs with Adverbium Perfecti, too. Its conditional form (*bolbl*) has a shortened variant *bol*, which can be used after nouns and verbal nouns equally with the complete verbal adverb.

Ex:170 WMO-Z, Цолоо 1965 *Bod mal xulxāls<sup>a</sup>n bol xör<sup>n</sup> taw tašürd<sup>a</sup>n<sup>a</sup>* “If somebody stole a cattle, he was flagellated 25 times”.

The Adverbium Conditionale and the conditinal particle *bol* can be used as subject determinative, and can be translated by “as concerns ...” or “if we look at ...”.

Ex:171 WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982 *En<sup>ε</sup> Ĵanγ<sup>a</sup>r bolūl xar<sup>š</sup>g<sup>u</sup>ā* “As concerns *Ĵangar*, he never retreats”.

The *-wl* suffix has a limited spread among the Oirad dialects. It can be found in the Altai Oirad dialects and Alašan’s Torgūd, but practically absent in Kalmyk. The Kalmyk rarely uses the *-wās/wās* form, especially in folklore texts, and the *-wl* suffix appears in exceptional cases only.

The **Adverbium Successivi** has two variants, there are *-xlā/xlā* and *-xlār<sup>n</sup>/xlār<sup>n</sup>* suffixes. The first one is the contraction of Nomen Futuri (*-x*) and Sociative 2 (*-lā/lā*), while the second

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<sup>113</sup> Todaeva, B. H.: *Mongol’skie jazyki i dialekty Kitaja*. p. 43.

one is almost the same, just an Instrumental ending (*-ār/ār*) and the subject possessive marker are added.

Both *-xlā/xlā* and *-xlār/xlār* expresses, that right after the finishing of an action, the other one begins, and usually it can be simply translated by “when”, however sometimes it can indicate conditionality, too.

Ex:172 WMO-Z *nilx kūkdīg bol<sup>a</sup>xlār sūdā xapč<sup>č</sup>j<sup>i</sup> yowād gēč<sup>d</sup>k* “as regards the infants, usually take them into the armpit and lose”

Ex:173 WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926 *yamr am'tnā maxn cusn imtāxn sanj<sup>ž</sup>? gič surxlā* “when he asked, that which living being’s meat and blood seemed to be tasty”

Ex:174 WMO-D, Владимирцов 1926 *kelnīg<sup>i</sup> garγ<sup>a</sup>xlā, kelnīg<sup>i</sup> xarād<sup>a</sup> awād-ok<sup>o</sup>j<sup>i</sup>* “when he put his tongue out, the swallow has taken it”.

The *-xlā/xlā* ending corresponds to Mong. *-qula/küle*, Oir. *-xulā/külē*, and occurs in few Mongolian dialects only. Beside the Oirad, it exists in Ordos, Xorčin and Aruxorčin only, however the *-xlār/xlār* has more parallels (e.g. Xalx, Buriat, etc.).

The *-xlā/xlā* variant is not so frequent in Altai Oirad as in Kalmyk, where it is practically the only form that expresses conditionality. The Altai Oirad dialects mostly use Adverbium Conditionale (*-wl*) to express conditionality and sometimes Adverbium Successivi’s *-xlār/xlār* variant, which in turn is very rare in Kalmyk. It seems to be possible, that the *-xlā/xlā* form has been forced back due to the Xalx influence, since this suffix doesn’t exist in Xalx, however the equivalent of *-xlār/xlār* occurs as *-xlār/xlār/xlār/xlār*.

The *-xār/xār* suffix of **Adverbium Finale** acts as final clause, and indicates an action, what the subject wants to perform.

Ex:175 *čamtā xarg<sup>a</sup>ldxār yowlā* “I went to meet you”.

The Adverbium Final is just the contraction of Nomen Futuri’s *-x* and Instrumental suffix *-ār/ār*, however traditionally the Mongol grammars consider it as a separate verbal adverb, so I didn’t deviate from this approach.

**Adverbium Concessivi** has several suffix variants. The original is the contraction of Praeteritum Perfecti’s *-w* and the *čign* particle, which resulted in *-wčg*, *-wčn* and *-wč*, and after the phonological development already seen at Adverbium Conditionale, the *-ūč/ūč* variant appeared. At present each variants are usable and current in spoken Oirad.

This suffix expresses an opposition, and connects to a verb, that denotes an action, which precludes or can preclude the performing of the following one, but the latter takes place yet.

Ex:176 WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *cāsn nimgn bolwūč<sup>g</sup>* “although the paper is thin ...”.

**Adverbium Terminale (-tl)** expresses that the main action of the sentence goes on while the marked action doesn't finished (the two actions are simultaneous), or finishes before the beginning of the next one (the two actions follow each other). Beside it, in some cases the *-tl* suffix can be translated by “when”, or even can express an opposite (especially with verb *gi-/ge-* “to say”), like Adverbium Concessivi.

Ex:177 WMO-M, Владимирцов 1926 *ter<sup>e</sup> šowū ter köndā<sup>ḍ</sup> tōrsn bāj<sup>i</sup> bāt<sup>l</sup>a ter gū<sup>ū</sup>ājāt, gū<sup>al</sup>č<sup>k</sup>č<sup>i</sup>* “while that bird of prey was circling in the valley, saw the mare and killed her”

Ex:178 WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *yowj<sup>i</sup> yow<sup>l</sup>n neg<sup>e</sup> jalūtā xarγ<sup>l</sup>dwā* “while he was going, met a young man”.

In Vladimircov's texts we can observe a morpheme (*-xdār/xdār*), that has no direct parallels in the literature, and although it occurs in the today's dialects, too, there is no similar suffix described in Oirad and Kalmyk grammars. This ending expresses simultaneity and its role close to the Nomen Futuri + Dative-Locative structure.

Ex:179 WMO-M, Владимирцов 1926 *očxdār<sup>n</sup> ene-č<sup>i</sup>n čamā abx<sup>a</sup>* “when you go there, he takes you”

Ex:180 WMO-Z *yam<sup>a</sup>r neg<sup>e</sup> küm<sup>ū</sup>n nas<sup>a</sup> bar<sup>a</sup>xdār terīg barūn xāv<sup>i</sup>rgār n' keptū<sup>l</sup>ād* “when somebody deads, we lay him on his right ribs ...”

Ex:181 WMO-Z *kōwūn orād ir<sup>e</sup>xdār tarānāsā neg<sup>e</sup> atx<sup>a</sup> tarā ögčē* “when the boy went in, she gave him one handful of grain from her grain”.

It's obvious, that *-xdār/xdār* is a complex morpheme, but its origin can be explained differently. May be, it is the contraction of the Nomen Futuri (*-x*), the Dative-Locative ending (*-d*) and the Instrumental suffix (*-ār/ār*). The first two members of the complex are already exist as a frequent morpheme connection to express simultaneity, since the Dative-Locative ending has a temporal meaning. The third member (Instrumental) has a temporal meaning, too, even there are examples of its usage in similar structures, like Adverbium Successivi's *-xlār<sup>n</sup>* (= Nomen Futuri + Sociative 2 + Instrumentalis + subject possessive marker).

The other possible explanation is that the complex morpheme concerned takes its origin from the contraction of the Nomen Futuri and postposition *dēr* “on, above” or *dōr* “below”. We can offer this explanation on the basis of some parallels, where the mentioned postpositions have temporal meaning. In the Xalx dialect both of them are used after verbal nouns to express, that an action takes place right after an other (e.g.: *yaw<sup>a</sup>x dēr* “right when he/she leaves”; *irs<sup>e</sup>n dor* “right when he/she arrived”).

Both of the etimologies have some probability, however the latter one can be backed up with one more parallel, namely the Zaxčín and Torgūd data of Coloo and Sambuudorj, that refer to the suffix *-sindr*.<sup>114</sup> By both authors this suffix expresses that right after the finishing of an action begins an other one. The suffix is the contraction of Nomen Perfecti and the postposition *dor* “below”, and exactly corresponds to its Xalx parallel. All these support the second variant on the etimology of *-xdār/xdēr*, but don’t rule out the first one.

Coloo and Sambuudorj refer to some interesting conditional forms in Zaxčín and Torgūd. These are *-jm, -jmč, jmt, -jglām, -jglāmč, -jglāmt, -jglāj̄m, -jglāj̄mč* and *-jglāj̄mt* in Zaxčín<sup>115</sup>, while *-jm, -jmč* and *-jmč* in Torgūd<sup>116</sup> (of course the *-č* and *-t* endings are personal predicative endings). As the author write, these suffixes express the same as Adverbium Conditionale’s *-wl*.

Ex:182 WMO-Z, Цолоо 1965 Үнiг суγ<sup>а</sup>лj čidw<sup>l</sup> Dörw<sup>õ</sup>n Öldin tūx, es čidj<sup>i</sup>glēj<sup>m</sup> Dörw<sup>õ</sup>n Öldig bidnūs ezl<sup>nē</sup> “”.

These suffixes seem to be a little bit strange and concerning their origin there are no clear etimologies. Sambuudorj tries to explain it as the contraction of Adverbium Imperfecti and Mong. *amui* or *yum*.

#### 4.6. NEGATION ON VERBALS

The final verbal endings can be negated using the prepositional negative particle *es*. The *es* is the modern equivalent of Mong. *ese*, however the other Written Mongolian negative particle *ülü* doesn’t occur in spoken Oirad. In contrast to the Xalx or Buriat dialect, Oirad frequently uses the negation of final verbal suffixes, while the former ones mostly use verbal nouns in negative sentences. Originally there were some differences between the usage of the two prepositional negative particles, but these differences disappeared even in Written Oirad, and due to this development the Mong. *ülü* form completely fell out from the usage in the spoken Oirad dialects.

As an only exception, the negation of Praeteritum Imperfecti can be formed also by *-gō/g<sup>u</sup>ā*, which is not a typical phenomenon in the Mongolian languages.

Ex:183 WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982 *Gurū dūd<sup>a</sup>xd<sup>i</sup> serjg<sup>u</sup>ā* “Called him three times, but he didn’t awake”.

The *es* can be used also for the negation of verbal adverbs, too, but in fact it occurs with conditional forms only. E.g.: *es yowbl* “if he doesn’t go”.

<sup>114</sup> Coloo, J.: *Jaxčínii aman ayalguu*. p. 77-78.; Sambuudorj, O.: *Torgud aman ayalguunii temdeglel*. p. 36.

<sup>115</sup> Coloo, J.: *Jaxčínii aman ayalguu*. p. 77.

<sup>116</sup> Sambuudorj, O.: *Torgud aman ayalguunii temdeglel*. p. 35.

The Adverbium Imperfecti, Adverbium Modale and Adverbium Perfecti has a negative equivalent by the suffix *-lgō* or *-l ugā*. It expresses, that an action takes place without happening an other event.

Ex:184 WMO-Z *ardān erg<sup>e</sup>j xälālg<sup>u</sup>ā yowna* “goes, without turning back and looking backward”

Ex:185 WMO-Z *āγ<sup>a</sup> xay<sup>a</sup>l<sup>a</sup>lg<sup>u</sup>ā xay<sup>a</sup>d<sup>a</sup>kg<sup>u</sup>ā* “we never throw off a cup without breaking it into pieces”.

In final position the Adverbium Perfecti can be negated also by *-gō/g<sup>u</sup>ā* or *ugā*, and it mostly expresses, that an action didn’t take place, yet, but probably it will happen in the future.

The negative form of verbal nouns is formed by *-gō/g<sup>u</sup>ā* or *ugā*, and the negative forms act similarly to the originals, so it can be anything in the sentence, and can be declined using the noun case suffixes. The negative verbal nouns are often used as predicates, instead of the final verbal forms with *es*, but it is not so frequent as in Xalx.

Ex:186 WMO-Z, Цолоо 1965 *Īmd xulxāc<sup>d</sup> zok<sup>x</sup> yosār xandāg<sup>u</sup>ā dīg xānā xūl<sup>i</sup> tōγāg<sup>u</sup>ā, bok<sup>o</sup>r kecū d gād torγ<sup>o</sup>n<sup>a</sup>* “So when an ail didn’t receive the thief properly, they fine it saying, that it is an untidy ail, which doesn’t respect the khan’s law”

Ex:187 WMO-Z *zē küm<sup>u</sup>nd<sup>u</sup> dal<sup>a</sup> tāw<sup>i</sup>xg<sup>u</sup>ā* “we don’t give the shoulder-blade to a granddaughter”

Ex:188 WMO-Z *baxnā dēgūr alx<sup>a</sup>d<sup>a</sup>kg<sup>u</sup>ā* “we don’t step over the doorstep”

Ex:189 WMO-B, Владимирцов 1926 *xān olsn ugā* “the khan didn’t find it”

Ex:190 WMO-Z *Yostā med<sup>e</sup>xg<sup>u</sup>ā* “I don’t know it at all”

Ex:191 WMO-Z *yū kesnīg bī sām med<sup>e</sup>xg<sup>u</sup>ā bānā* “I don’t know, what did I do at all”

Ex:192 WMO-T, Цолоо–Загдсүрэн 1982 *Ijlēn bars<sup>a</sup>n būrān sanāg / Med<sup>e</sup>j bol<sup>a</sup>xg<sup>u</sup>ā büšū* “It is not possible to know the intention of a camel stallion, that lost his companion, isn’t it?”.

Nomen Futuri has a parallel negative form *-šgō/šg<sup>u</sup>ā* or *-š ugā*, which however can be used to express impossibility, too.

Ex:193 *En<sup>e</sup> Jāγ<sup>o</sup>r bolūl xar<sup>i</sup>šg<sup>u</sup>ā* “As concerns *Jāngar*, he never retreats”

Ex:194 *Bi adā enēs xōrān / Īm ker<sup>e</sup>g kīšgōwē* “I won’t do henceforth anything like that”.

After verbal nouns also the negative particle *biš* can occur. It mostly expresses, that the action doesn’t take place, but instead of it another action performs. At Nomen Futuri the *biš* particle has a short variant *-š*.

Ex:195 WMO-Z *Xālyār garg<sup>a</sup>jāx<sup>a</sup> biš giš<sup>n</sup> domtā uč<sup>i</sup>rtā yum bān<sup>a</sup>* “It has a reason and story, that they don’t take out him/her through the door”.

## 5. VOCABULARY

Vocabulary of Oirad dialects consists of mostly common Mongolian words. These common words are either of Mongolian origin or loanwords being present in all Mongolian languages (it means the relatively older layer of loans). Nevertheless there is a significant number of Oirad words not found in or being less typical of other Mongolian languages. These lexical items characteristic to Oirad can be divided into groups discussed below. The list is far not complete of course, it is just an excerpt from the vocabulary of Oirad for illustrative purposes.

### 5.1.1. Words of common Mongolian origin having quite different or uncommon surface form in comparison with other Mongolian languages

- *a:ɣ* ‘cup’ – Mong. *ayaya(n)* ‘cup’; Khal. *ayag* ‘cup’
- *ca:r* ‘beyond sg, in that direction’ – Mong. *činaysi* ‘beyond sg, in that direction’; Khal. *ca:š* ‘beyond sg, in that direction’
- *car* ‘ox’ – Mong. *šar, čar* ‘ox’; Khal. *šar* ‘ox’
- *dewl* ‘caftan, garment’ – Mong. *debel, degel* ‘caftan’; Khal. *de:l* ‘caftan’
- *e:m* ‘collar-bone’ – Mong. *egem* ‘collar-bone’; Khal. *egem* ‘collar-bone’
- *gesn* ‘stomach’ – Mong. *gedesün* ‘stomach’; Khal. *gedes* ‘stomach’
- *ɣa:za* ‘outside’ – Mong. *ɣadaɣa* ‘outside’; Khal. *gada:* ‘outside’
- *ɣosn* ‘boots’ – Mong. *ɣutal, \*ɣutalsun* ‘boots’; Khal. *gutal* ‘boots’
- *ɣujr* ‘flour’ – Mong. *ɣuril, ɣulir* ‘flour’; Khal. *gulir* ‘flour, noodles’
- *iškä* ‘felt’ – Mong. *isegei* ‘felt’; Khal. *esgī* ‘felt’
- *žiwɾ* ‘wing’ – Mong. *žigür* ‘wing’; Khal. *žigūr* ‘wing’
- *köwün* ‘boy’ – Mong. *köbegün* ‘boy’; Khal. *xū* ‘boy’
- *kümn* ‘man’ – Mong. *kümün* ‘man’; Khal. *xün* ‘man’
- *manž* ‘novice’ – Mong. *bandi* ‘novice’; Khal. *bandi* ‘novice’
- *maxla:* ‘hat, head-gear’ – Mong. *malayai* ‘hat, head-gear’; Khal. *malgai* ‘hat, head-gear’
- *mö:rsn* ‘cartilage’ – Mong. *mögörsün* ‘cartilage’; Khal. *mögörs* ‘cartilage’
- *na:r* ‘this side of sg, in that direction’ – Mong. *inaysi* ‘this side of sg, in that direction’; Khal. *na:š* ‘this side of sg, in that direction’
- *nurɣn* ‘spine, back’ – Mong. *niruyun, nuruyun* ‘spine, back’; Khal. *nurū(n)* ‘spine, back’; Bur. *n'urgan* ‘spine, back’
- *örgn* ‘jaw’ – Mong. *eregüü* ‘jaw’; Khal. *erū(n)* ‘jaw’
- *su:* ‘armpit’ – Mong. *suɣa* ‘armpit’; Khal. *suga* ‘armpit’
- *uga, -go* ‘not’ (negative particle) – Mong. *ügei*; Khal., Bur. *ügüi, -güi*
- *üs, üsn* ‘milk’ – Mong. *sü, üsün* ‘milk’; Khal. *sū(n)* ‘milk’

- *ut* ‘long’ – Mong. *urtu* ‘long’; Khal. *urt* ‘long’
- *xama* ‘where’ – Mong. *qamiya* ‘where’; Khal. *xa:*, *xa:na* ‘where’
- *xö:n* ‘sheep’ – Mong. *qonin* ‘sheep’; Khal. *xoni(n)* ‘sheep’
- *xurɣn* ‘finger’ – Mong. *quruɣun* ‘finger’; Khal. *xurū(n)* ‘finger’; Bur. *xurgan* ‘finger’
- *jasx* ‘to arrange’ – Mong. *ǰasaqu* ‘to arrange’; Khal. *jasax* ‘to arrange’

### 5.1.2. Words formed on the basis of common Mongolian roots, where the word does not exist in other Mongolian languages or it has different form

- *al'd(ar)* ‘where’ – Mong. *ali* ‘which’, *qamiya* ‘where’; Khal. *ali* ‘which’, *xa:*, *xa:na* ‘where’
- *ködlmš* ‘work’ – Mong. *ködelmüri*, *aǰil* ‘work’; Khal. *xödölmör*, *aǰil* ‘work’
- *manydr* ‘tomorrow’ – Khal. *marga:š* ‘tomorrow’
- *örün* ‘morning’ – Mong. *örlüge* ‘morning’; Khal. *öglö* ‘morning’
- *xawsn* ‘rib’ – Mong. *qabiryan* ‘rib’; Khal. *xawirga* ‘rib’

### 5.1.3. Words existing in other Mongolian languages, but having a different meaning (quite different or additional meaning)

- *arat* ‘fox’ – Mong. *ariyatan*, *arayatan* ‘carnivorous animal’; Khal. *ara:tan* ‘carnivorous animal’
- *dasx* ‘learn’ – Mong. *dasaqu* ‘to get accustomed or used to’; Khal. *dasax* ‘to get accustomed or used to’
- *degtr* ‘book’ – Mong. *debter* ‘book, volume, copybook’; Khal. *dewter* ‘booklet, copybook’
- *elkn* ‘genus’ – Mong. *elige(n)* ‘liver’; Khal. *elge(n)* ‘liver’
- *ködlx* ‘to move, to work’ – Mong. *ködelkü* ‘to move’; Khal. *xödlöx* ‘to move’
- *kü.ndx* ‘to talk, converse’ – Mong. *kügüneldükü* ‘to talk, converse’; Khal. *yarilcax*, *xöröx* ‘to talk, converse’
- *nom* ‘science, religious doctrine’ – Mong. *nom* ‘religious doctrine, religious book, book’; Khal. *nom* ‘book, religious doctrine’
- *surx* ‘to ask’ – Mong. *surqu* ‘to learn, to study, to ask’; Khal. *surax* ‘to learn, to study’, Bur. *huraxa* ‘to learn, to study, to ask’
- *xalx* ‘face’ – Mong. *qačar* ‘face’, *nigür* ‘face’; Khal. *xacar* ‘face’, *nür* ‘face’
- *xarɣx*, Kalm. *xarɣcx* ‘to meet’ – Mong. *aɣulǰaqu* ‘to meet’; Khal. *üljax* ‘to meet’
- *xa:ly* ‘road’ – Mong. *qayalya(n)* ‘gate, door’; Khal. *xa:lga(n)* ‘door’
- *xä:sn* ‘cooking pot’ – Mong. *toyu(n)*, *toyuya(n)* ‘cooking pot’; Khal. *togö(n)* ‘cooking pot’

#### 5.1.4. Words (loans or of other origin) mostly or exclusively typical of Oirad dialects

- *arxd* ‘leather bag for holding kumiss’ – Mong. *köküür* ‘leather bag for holding kumiss’; Khal. *xöxür* ‘leather bag for holding kumiss’
- *asxn* ~ *asyn* ‘evening’ – Mong. *oroi* ‘evening, late’; Khal. *oroi* ‘evening, late’
- *aju* “bear” (< Turkic)
- *a:šx* ‘to approach, to come’ – Mong. *ayisui* ‘to approach’; Khal. *oirtox* ‘to come’
- *ärg* ‘irrigation canal’ (< Turkic)
- *ä:r* ‘fork’ – Mong. *serege* ‘fork’; Khal. *sere:(n)* ‘fork’
- *čačmg* ~ *čačwg* ‘a kind of female hair decoration’ (Khoton < Turkic)
- *čigän* ‘kumiss’ – Mong. *ayiray* ‘kumiss’; Khal. *airag* ‘kumiss’
- *erkn* ‘doorstep’ – Mong. *bosoγ-a*, *bosoγan* ‘doorstep’; Khal. *bosgo(n)* ‘doorstep’
- *kičk* ‘pup, young dog’ (< Turkic) – Mong. *gölüge* ‘pup, young dog’; Khal. *gölög* ‘pup, young dog’
- *kīlŋ* ~ *kīlg* ~ *kīln* ‘shirt’ – Mong. *čamča* ‘shirt’; Khal. *camc* ‘shirt’
- *lawšg* ‘a kind of female garment’
- *lug* ‘all, every’ – this word is known among Oirads of Western Mongolia and China, but missing from Kalmyk; Mong. *bügüde* ‘all, every’; Khal. *bügd* ‘all, every’
- *mal’a* ~ *mälä* ‘whip’ – Mong. *tasiγur* ‘whip’; Khal. *tašūr* ‘whip’
- *ödmg* ‘bread’ (< Turkic)
- *samyn* ‘older woman’ – Mong. *samayan*, *emegen* ‘older woman’; *emgen* ‘older woman’; Bur. *hamga(n)* ‘wife, woman’
- *sewgr* ‘girl’ – Mong. *keüken* ‘child, girl’; Khal. *xūxen* ‘girl’
- *terlg* ~ *terlk* ‘women’s caftan’ (< Turkic)
- *te:rm* ‘the grating wall of the yurt’ – Mong. *qana(n)* ‘the grating wall of the yurt’; Khal. *xana(n)* ‘the grating wall of the yurt’
- *terz* “window” (< Turkic)
- *tewn* “a big needle” (< Turkic)
- *tōku* (Torgud) ‘the footwear of Torguds’
- *tüntg* ‘pillow, cushion’ – Mong. *der-e*; Khal. *de(en)r* ‘pillow’
- *xäläx* ‘to see’ – Mong. *qaraqū* ‘to see’; Khal. *xarax* ‘to see’
- *xarač* ~ *γarač* ~ *γarac* ‘the smoke-hole of the yurt’ – Mong. *toγonu* ‘the smoke-hole of the yurt’; Khal. *toono* ‘the smoke-hole of the yurt’
- *xot* (1) ‘food’ – Mong. *qoγula* ‘food’; Khal. *xōl* ‘food’
- *xot* (2) ‘stomach’ – Mong. *qodoγudu* ‘stomach’; Khal. *xodōd* ‘stomach’

## **5.2. INFLUENCE EXERCISED ON OIRAD BY OTHER LANGUAGES AND DIALECTS**

### **5.2.1. Turkic languages**

The influence of Turkic languages on Mongolian is a well-known phenomenon and has been studied for long time. This influence consists of several layers, it was exercised in different periods of time by different languages and dialects of Turkic origin, and its effect is also different concerning various Mongolian languages and dialects. The traces of most earlier contacts between Turkic and Mongolian can be observed in all Mongolian languages and these early layers affect both the vocabulary and some parts of the morphology. Later on, after the collapse of the Mongolian Empire, Oirads were the most significant group of Mongolian origin living in the close neighbourhood of Turkic people.

Oirads living in the territory of today's Eastern Turkestan had close relations with Turkic people for long time and it has exercised a significant influence on Oirad, mostly in form of loanwords. Their neighbours were speakers of various Turkic dialects (Turki, Kipchak, etc.) on one side, and Mongolians on the other side. The vicinity of other Mongolian groups and relations with them probably helped to maintain and preserve the common Mongolian vocabulary of Oirad, but still numerous word have been taken over by Oirad from Turkic languages. Various groups of Turkic origin assimilated by the Oirads (see Khotons in Western Mongolia) also contributed in the increasing of Turkic loans in Oirad dialects.

Kalmyks who had been migrated to the region of Lower Volga and Caspian Sea from Dzungaria in the 17<sup>th</sup> century became separated from other Mongolian groups and surrounded by Turkic (mostly Tatar and Kipchak) people and Russians. These Turkic dialects and exercised a significant influence on Kalmyk in the form of loanwords.

Sart Kalmyks are the another Oirad group strongly influenced by Turkic, namely Kyrgyz. Since Sart Kalmyks speaking their Mongolian tongue are all bilingual or trilingual in Kyrgyz and Russian, this dialect also was affected by those languages.

### **5.2.2. Russian**

Kalmyk is the Oirad dialect strongly influenced by Russian. Although Kalmyks are living in the close neighbourhood of Russians since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, due to the nature of their interrelations the influence of Russian remained relatively small for long time. Increasing impact of Russian begun in the 20<sup>th</sup> century together with the forced settling of Kalmyks from their nomad lifestyle, and especially after the deportation of the Kalmyks to Siberia in 1943 and their return in 1956. Recently the high dominance and prestige of Russian among the Kalmyks

threats seriously the long-term survival of their language, since a significant part of Kalmyks do not speak their Oirad language very well or do not speak it at all.

### **5.2.3. Mongolian dialects**

Oirads living in Western Mongolia have gone under strong influence of the neighbouring Khalkha dialects since long time. Vladimircov already pointed out the results of this influence on the basis of his material collected in Western Mongolia at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>117</sup> Recently Khalkha – as the official language of the country – affects Oirad (and other) dialects increasingly through public education, media and mass communication. The slow assimilation of Western Mongolian Oirad to Khalkha seems to be unavoidable, but language revitalization programmes could pull back or reverse this process.

### **5.2.4. Other languages**

There are two more languages exercising great impact on Oirad dialects: Chinese and Tibetan. Chinese has a huge influence on all Mongolian languages spoken in the territory of China. Oirad dialects of Eastern Turkestan however are in a relatively fortunate position, since Xinjian is a multi-ethnic area where Chinese language and population could not get the majority especially in rural areas.

Tibetan is most important concerning Deed Mongols living in Gansu and Qinghai. Several groups of Deed Mongols live there surrounded by Tibetan majority and significant groups were already assimilated by them. Deed Mongols living in Henan Mongol Autonomous County in Qinghai already changed their tongue to a local Tibetan dialect and only few people speak their original Mongolian language.

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<sup>117</sup> Б. Я. ВЛАДИМИРЦОВ, *О двух смешанных языках Западной Монголии.*

## 6. HISTORY OF THE OIRAD DIALECTS

No general and comprehensive work has been published on the history of spoken Oirad dialects, and evidently there are a lot of questions to be cleared up in this field. Some minor publications dealing with narrow details have been published, and we have the imposing books of D. A. Susejeva and D. B. Gedejeva on the letters of Kalmyk khans and their language focusing on the 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>118</sup>. Gerhard Doerfer also has published a really useful book with facsimiles of several European sources of Oirad and Kalmyk languages dated between 1692 and 1827, and he also drew a draft on some aspects of the Oirad language's history in his book.<sup>119</sup> Of course, publications dealing with the history of Mongolic languages contain several useful information concerning Oirad, but we still have unsolved questions. Some additional material that has been published recently can push the researches further: the publication of Cornelius Rahmn's Kalmyk grammar and dictionary from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Jan-Olof Svantesson<sup>120</sup>, and also the Kalmyk-Khalkha grammar and Kalmyk field-work material of Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna collected between 1871–1872 and published by Ágnes Birtalan.<sup>121</sup>

Thorough analysis of available sources is inescapable in order to make clear and well-grounded statements concerning the history of Oirad. Creating the full image requires analysis of several well-known and little-known changes occurring in present day dialects of Oirad including (but not limited to) the following ones:

Phonetic and phonological changes:

- palatalizing effect exercised on illabial and labial back vowels (/a/ and /u/, /o/) by /i/ of non-first syllables, and its impact on the set of phonemes
- breaking of /i/ in the first syllables

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<sup>118</sup> Д. А. СУСЕЕВА, *Письма калмыцких ханов XVIII века и их современников (1713-1771 гг.)*, Элиста, Джангар, 2009; Д. А. СУСЕЕВА, *Письма калмыцких ханов XVIII века. Опыт лингвистического описания*, vol. Том I, Элиста, 2002; Д. А. СУСЕЕВА, *Грамматический строй калмыцкого языка XVIII века (Морфология и морфонология)*, Элиста, Калмыцкий институт гуманитарных исследований РАН, 2011; Д. Б. ГЕДЕЕВА, *Письма наместника Калмыцкого ханства Убаши (XVIII в.)*, а cura di Э. У. Омокаева, Элиста, Калмыцкий институт гуманитарных исследований, 2004.

<sup>119</sup> G. DOERFER, *Ältere Westeuropäische Quellen zur Kalmückischen Sprachgeschichte (Witsen 1692 bis Zwick 1827)*, Wiesbaden, Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 1965.

<sup>120</sup> J.-O. SVANTESSON, *Cornelius Rahmn's Kalmuck grammar*, in «Turkic Lang.» 13 (2009), 97–140; J.-O. SVANTESSON, *Cornelius Rahmn's Kalmuck Dictionary*, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz Verlag, 2012.

<sup>121</sup> Á. BIRTALAN, *Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna, A Romanized Grammar of the East- and West-Mongolian Languages. With popular Chrestomathies of both Dialects*; Á. BIRTALAN, *Kalmyk Folklore and Folk Culture in the mid-19th Century. Philological Studies on the Basis of Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna's Kalmyk Texts*.

- formation of long vowels from VCV complexes, paying particular attention to cases where  $V_1 \neq V_2$  and Oirad script uses *ou* and *öü*
- formation of long vowels from diphthongs
- shortening and reduction of vowels in non-first syllables
- labializing effect of labial consonants exercised on vowels
- possible changes in quality of /ö/ and /ü/ (neologism or archaism)
- changes of Common Mongolian affricates /č/ and /j/
- spirantization of /k/ in back vowel words and in the suffix of nomen futuri
- loss of the initial consonant in the suffix of the perfect verbal noun (nomen perfecti)

Changes in morphology and syntax:

- evolution of personal possessive markers
- evolution of personal predicative markers
- grammaticalization of verb *bayi-* 'to be'
- evolution of negation, changing role of *ügei*, *biši*, *ese* and *ülü*

Lexical changes to be examined mostly concern borrowings from Turkic, Chinese (especially in Xinjiang and Qinghai), Russian (especially in Kalmykia), Mongolian Proper (Xinjiang and Western Mongolia) and Tibetan (Qinghai). Researches on the influence of these languages however should not be limited to the lexicon since they exercised influence on the Oirad sound system, morphology and syntax, too.

The two main research tasks to be done concerning these processes enlisted above are

- determining their absolute and relative chronology
- separating original features of Oirad (heritage from Common or Middle Mongolian) from its new inventions

Although some attempts have been made already for solving some of these questions, there is much to clear up in more details.

## **6.1. SOURCES ON THE HISTORY OF THE OIRAD DIALECTS**

The two sources of the researches on the history of Oirad dialects are written monuments and also data from the modern spoken dialects. Concerning the primary sources, the historical monuments of the Oirad language there are several sources that can be used to have an overview on the progress of changes that took place in Oirad during the centuries, and draw conclusions concerning its evolution. Of course, beside the comparative analysis of today's Oirad dialects

and the study of interlingual contacts, the most valuable sources of information are written monuments. The value and usefulness of these written sources can be very different depending on several factors. Some of them provide a lot of reliable information, while others are almost useless for certain purposes. Naturally, the type of the writing system, the content, the author and also the historical and language context deeply influence the extent of information that can be extracted from a source, but these are not the only aspects that matter.

Written sources can be categorized on the basis of several aspects, and one of the most important aspects is the origin of the source: internal or external. Internal sources of Oirad authored by native speakers of the language are written in either Uighur-Mongolian script and the so called Oirad or Clear script, while external sources authored by foreigners are mainly in Roman and Cyrillic scripts, and there are some minor glosses in text written in Arabic, Tibetan, Chinese or Manchu scripts.

If we consider Oirad as one of the direct descendants of Middle Mongolian, then we should include Middle Mongolian monuments written in various scripts into the researches concerning the history of Oirad. It is very hard however to distinguish those Middle Mongolian monuments that can be considered as Oirad or at least characterized by some undoubtedly Oirad features, so these will be not discussed here, and I will focus on those written sources of later times that are clearly related to Oirads.

The most earlier internal sources of such type are monuments written in Uighur-Mongolian script in the common and supra-dialectal literary language of the Mongols. These sources are not the direct reflections of the Oirad language or dialects of those times, but documents written in the common Mongolian literary language possibly bearing some traces of Oirad.

The most valuable internal sources of history of the Oirad language are monuments written in Oirad “Clear” script, after its invention in the middle of the 17th century. These monuments are almost always closely related to Oirads, but their underlying language is far not always the direct equivalent of the contemporary Oirad speech. The capability of Clear script to reflect the sound set of contemporary Oirad (and also other Mongolian dialects) made the infiltration of colloquial elements into the written language very easy, and especially that is why Clear script documents are so important for studies on the history of Oirad language.

External sources of Oirad include monuments written by authors of various nationality and written in various scripts. The earliest source is probably Rashid ad-Din, who in his *Jami at-Tawarikh* written in Persian with Arabic script mentions an Oirad word for knife, which is interpreted variously by scholars, but may be related to today’s Oirad *utxa*. Although this gloss is clearly connected to Oirads, since the author states that this is an Oirad word, other early external sources of Mongolian cannot be directly connected to Oirads. Only sources of later

times, mostly written by Europeans can be considered as certain monuments of the Oirad language.

There is an interesting source however, which is internal in the sense that it is a Mongolian source, but external because it is not Oirad, but a 17th-century Written Mongolian chronicle of Eastern Mongolian authorship: this is *Sira Tuγuǰi*, which has a passage where it describes the victory of Manduqai Sečen qatun over the Oirads. Manduqai orders that the defeated Oirads shouldn't use words WM *ayiray* 'kumis' and WM *ordun* 'palace', but they have to use WM *čigege* and WM *örgüge* instead. These words are the equivalents of today's Oirad *čigä* and *örgä*, and independently of the historical reliability of this passage, this probably an other evidence of dialectal differences between Eastern Mongolian dialects and Western Mongolian Oirad of that time.

European sources on Oirad dialects started to appear mostly in the 17th century, when the Russian expansion in Siberia made possible establishing direct contacts with the Oirads living in Jungaria. Russian-Oirad relations became even closer when a part of Oirads under the leadership of Xoo Örlöq migrated westward from Jungaria to the shores of the Caspian sea and the lower flow of Volga in today's South Russia. This region was considerably closer to Europe and the Western world, so the relations also became more intensive. The Oirads living there are called Kalmyks today, but in earlier sources this name can also denote Jungarian Oirads, too.

Beside Written Oirad texts, the most significant sources on the history of Oirad language are various European documents written in Roman or sometimes Cyrillic letters. The most earlier remarkable source is the Kalmyk wordlist of Nicolaes Witsen, published first time in 1692 in his book *Noord en Oost Tartarye*. Witsen was a Dutch scholar and politician, who collected materials mostly concerning Russia and Siberia from travellers, merchants or anyone else who travelled through these territories. His Kalmyk material is very important, since this vocabulary is the earliest large corpus of the Kalmyk lexicon written more or less phonetically with Roman letters, so it provides valuable information on the sound system of the 17th century Kalmyk language.

Another Kalmyk vocabulary was published by Philip Johan von Strahlenberg (1676–1747), a Swedish officer who fell into Russian captivity during the battle of Poltava in 1709. He was deported to Siberia, where he lived until 1721 and during his stay he collected various materials concerning the language and culture of neighbouring ethnic groups. His book entitled *Das Nord- und Östliche Theil von Europa und Asia* appeared in German in 1730 and quickly became a popular publication in Europe. Strahlenberg's book also contained a Kalmyk vocabulary, which probably reflects the Oirad dialect spoken in Jungaria. There is no direct evidence, but probably this vocabulary was collected by somebody else, and not Strahlenberg, and he only

published it in his book. The vocabulary itself is very important and interesting, but contains a lot of mistakes, so it should be used with care. Comments of John Krueger on Strahlenberg's vocabulary are very useful for that.

Peter Simon Pallas is a well known scholar of German origin, who worked in Russia for decades. Beside his works in natural sciences he also published books on the languages and cultures of ethnic groups living in Russia. The vocabulary of world's languages edited by him and entitled *Linguarum totius orbis vocabularia comparativa*, and also his two volume work on Kalmyks, *Sammlungen historischer Nachrichten über die mongolischen Völkerschaften* provide valuable material for studying the Kalmyk language. He was the first one who published a Kalmyk folklore text, two songs from the 18th century. As he wrote in his book a lot of his Kalmyk materials were not collected by himself but provided by Johan Jählig.

Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna is a Hungarian linguist, who carried out a fieldwork among the Kalmyks in 1871-1872, and later went to Urga in Mongolia in 1873 to collect Eastern Mongolian material. He wrote a grammar of East and West Mongolian languages in English, focusing on the living speech instead of the written language, and also compiled a chrestomaty of his collected texts, such as folklore texts, legal documents, conversations, and so on. In his grammar and chrestomaty he used a Romanized transcription of Kalmyk, mainly of phonetic character, but with some obvious traces of Written Oirad influence. His works remained unpublished until recent times, when Ágnes Birtalan has published the grammar in facsimile with an introduction, and also the complete annotated translation of the Kalmyk texts. Bálint's descriptions in the grammar and his texts reflect the Kalmyk speech of the second half of the 19th century very well.

There are other sources of course from various authors of the 18th and 19th centuries, with different amount of Oirad and Kalmyk glosses, words and sometimes whole sentences. I should mention here Johann Christian Schnitscher, a Swedish officer, who took part in a delegation sent to the Kalmyk Ayuki khan from China in 1715, and also Johann Eberhard Fischer, Johann Peter Falk, Benjamin Bergmann, and of course people somehow connected to the mission of the Moravian Church in Sarepta: Johann Jählig, Justus Friedrich Malsch, Cornelius Rahmn, Isaak Jakob Schmidt and Heinrich August Zwick. These people and some other authors all provided less or more material that can be useful for studies on the history of Oirad language.

The comparison of different sources, internal ones in Oirad script and external ones mainly in Roman script can solve a lot of open questions. I will mention here only one example, the problem of labial harmony in Oirad. As it is well known most of today's Oirad dialects are characterized by the lack of labial harmony, so for example they say *dörä* 'stirrup' instead of Khalkha *᠔ᠡᠫᠦᠬᠬ᠎ᠠ* or Buriat *᠔ᠶᠫᠦᠬ᠎ᠠ*, and also suffixes have two harmonic variants only, instead of

four as in Khalkha, Buriat and Inner Mongolian dialects. Since Written Mongolian is also characterized by lack of labial harmony, some scholars, especially in Mongolia try to connect these two variants of Mongolian and state that the original underlying language of Written Mongolian should be a predecessor of Oirad, and labial harmony that can be observed in Written Oirad texts is a mere orthographic feature, an invention of Zaya Pandita. It is a quite interesting idea, but it is not proved by written sources. Not only Written Oirad texts show labial harmony, but also the European authors mentioned above provide texts, where labial harmony is clearly an existing feature in Oirad, especially before the 19th century. Only texts from the 19th century show consistently the absence of that, so probably spoken Oirad was also characterized by labial harmony and the absence of this feature is an innovation started to spread only in the 18th century. This process can be followed by the written sources and also some evidences of today's Oirad dialects prove that at least in word stems labial harmony existed in Oirad. Concerning the labial harmony in suffixes, there is no certain material, so it requires further investigation.

## **6.2. THE CLEAR SCRIPT AND WRITTEN OIRAD AS HISTORICAL SOURCE OF THE OIRAD DIALECTS**

Monuments written in the Clear or Oirad script form the second largest corpus of the Mongolian literary tradition preceding the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the largest one concerning the Oirad language and literature in the given period. Due to this important role and some other factors such as the (rarely utilized) ability of the Oirad script to relatively precisely reflect the living speech, researches on the history of the Oirad language (and Mongolic in general) require the extensive study of Oirad script monuments. This research should be carried out with increased thoroughness and carefulness taking into consideration several aspects discussed in the present paper, since the reflection of the spoken language in Written Oirad sources is often obscure and puzzling to some extent.

Oirad script is important for studying the history of Oirad language because its monuments represent the largest corpus of sources related to this language from the creation of Oirad script in 1648 by Zaya Pandita until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although correspondence between written texts and contemporary spoken dialects is often quite loose, the proper and careful analysis of sources in Oirad script can provide new and valuable data on the Oirad language's history, especially if data from sources in other scripts (e.g. Latin, Cyrillic, and Arabic) are also involved.

In order to put to use an Oirad script source, first we have to determine its underlying language, the language in which it was written. Although Sanskrit or Tibetan glosses are

common in some sources and even Telengits have used the Oirad script for a while<sup>122</sup>, we can exclude here non-Mongolic languages since our focus is the history of Oirad. So the language is clearly Mongolic or even Mongolian, but saying that sources in Oirad script are simply written representations of the Oirad language is undoubtedly an over-simplification. There are at least two questions to be examined here more thoroughly: 1) Was the Oirad script used for writing a Mongolian dialect other than Oirad? 2) What does Oirad really mean?

Let's begin with answering the second question since it is required for answering the first one. Oirad is the language of several Western Mongolian groups known in general as Oirads and Kalmyks and living scattered in Asia from Western Mongolia through China's Xinjiang to the Eastern shore of the Caspian Sea. Their present-day living spoken language has several non-standardized dialects (Dörwöd, Torgud, Khoshud, Bayad, etc.) and a standardized one used in Kalmykia as an official language. Oirad also has newer and older written forms (some of them are obsolete) in three writing systems (Oirad, Latin and Cyrillic scripts) with additional orthographies and variants. Latin and Cyrillic based variants will not be discussed here, only the variants written in Oirad script and usually called Written Oirad collectively. Written Oirad has a standardized, but today non-official variant used in Xinjiang and based on the somewhat modified form of Zaya Pandita's Clear script. Since it is a quite recent variant, it is much less important for studying the history of Oirad and will be neglected here. What is more important for us, is the corpus of sources written in Oirad script and datable between 1648 and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These are sources in so-called Written Oirad, but what is Written Oirad in real? Does it correspond to one or another spoken Oirad dialect? Is it something uniform, unvarying and non-changing? If it did change, what was its original form, how did it change and why?

When a language gets written down first time, its written form directly reflects one of the variants and registers of the living spoken language. This direct correspondence however usually ceases and becomes more distant. Changes of the spoken language are reflected in the written texts to some extent, but written language becomes an independent register or variant (or even a dialect) of the given language with its own life and own changes – or on the contrary it will be characterized by conservatism and lack of changes. This is the case with the adopting of the Uighur alphabet to Mongolian: the written form became separate and – due to its conservatism – quite distant from the spoken language. The ambiguous letters of the Uighur-

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<sup>122</sup> Б. Я. ВЛАДИМИРЦОВ, *Сравнительная грамматика монгольского письменного языка и халхаского наречия*, 26; Х. ЛУВСАНБАЛДАН, *Тод үсэг, түүний дурсгалууд*, Улаанбаатар, БНМАУ Шинжлэх Ухааны Академи, Хэл зохиолын хүрээлэн, 1975, 61.

Mongolian script and the growing distance between the spelling and the pronunciation have lead Zaya Pandita (1599–1662), a Buddhist monk-scholar of Oirad origin to the idea of a reform. He has created new diacritics, letters and modified variants of the existing graphemes in order to write the sounds of the contemporary language unambiguously, and also simplified the system of positional allographs.

When Zaya Pandita has invented his new script, he also created a new literary language – now usually we call it (and its descendants) Written Oirad, but in Zaya Pandita’s time the language was called simply Mongolian, while the script was referred to as *todorxoi üzüq* or *todo üzüq* ‘clear script’. This literary language and its orthography were closer to the contemporary spoken language than Written Mongolian in some aspects (e.g. indicating long vowels with separate letters), but had a plenty of features very far from the spoken idioms (e.g. neglecting vowel harmony in the case of certain suffixes, excessive use of verb *üyiledkü* ‘to perform, to do’ not typical of Mongolian). It is clearly not true, that Zaya Pandita’s literary language is the direct equivalent of the “contemporary Western Mongolian” and “he has handed down to us the exact pronunciation of Western Mongolian in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century” as stated by Udo Posch<sup>123</sup> and some other scholars. György Kara describes it as a mix of colloquial and bookish elements<sup>124</sup>, which is true for its later forms, but less characteristic for the original variant appearing in Buddhist translations. The very original idea of Zaya Pandita is probably closer to B. Ja. Vladimircov’s opinion, who writes that the language of Zaya Pandita’s Buddhist translations is a purely artificial creation, and it is not even similar to any Oirad dialect.<sup>125</sup>

Zaya Pandita’s aim with reforming the Uighur-Mongolian script and creating a new literary language was not to provide a more precise and effective writing system for the Oirads only, but he targeted the whole Mongolian community. As X. Luwsanbalдан cites from *Üzügiyin nayiralʼa* (‘Composition of letters’) ascribed to Zaya Pandita, he created his script in order to make it easy for the Mongols – and no Oirads are mentioned here.<sup>126</sup> The political situation in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century pointed towards a possible unity or at least closer alliance of Eastern and Western Mongols (against the Manchus), the emerging Buddhism and its strengthening positions also made a positive atmosphere for cultural innovations, and as it is obvious from

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<sup>123</sup> U. POSCH, *The Syllabic Groups and Their Further Development in the Written Oirat Language: Part 1*, in «Cent. Asiat. J.» 3 (1957) 3, 206–219: 209.

<sup>124</sup> G. KARA, *Books of the Mongolian Nomads. More than Eight Centuries of Writing Mongolian*, Bloomington, Indiana University, Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 2005, 148.

<sup>125</sup> Б. Я. ВЛАДИМИРЦОВ, *Сравнительная грамматика монгольского письменного языка и халхаского наречия*, 25–26.

<sup>126</sup> Х. ЛУВСАНБАЛДАН, *Тод үсэг, түүний дурсгалууд*, 23–24.

life and his travels to various Eastern and Western Mongolian territories, Zaya Pandita himself had a wider perspective, so it is quite plausible that he created his script for all the Mongols. Why did it not succeed as he expected? That has probably several reasons, but surely not because his script was not suitable for writing Eastern Mongolian dialects or because his literary language contained too much features taken from the spoken Oirad dialects and differing slightly from the Eastern dialects. The main point here is that if Zaya Pandita's literary language was created for all Mongols, it could not rely significantly on an Oirad dialect, but had to bear a common Mongolian character.

As such I suppose that Written Oirad, the literary language created by Zaya Pandita for mostly religious purposes in its original form was not either the direct equivalent of the contemporary spoken Oirad (or other Mongolian) language or the language of Oirad folklore texts and heroic epics as stated by D. A. Pavlov.<sup>127</sup> Most probably it recorded the way how the Mongols and Oirads (or at least Zaya Pandita) read out loudly and pronounced formal and religious texts written in Uighur-Mongolian script. This clerkly pronunciation of Written Mongolian texts has been following the phonetic changes of the spoken language (e.g. spirantization of *q*) and also phonological ones to some extent (e.g. long vowels), but still greatly insisted to the written letters and morphemes, even to those that did not exist in the spoken language anymore. Insistence to the written forms lead also to such "misunderstandings" that some Written Mongolian suffixes having the same graphical representation in their front and back harmonic variants (due to the same grapheme for medial *a* and *e*) were treated as front vocalic and transferred to Written Oirad as non-harmonic suffixes or postpositions with front vowels: *-ēce* < *-ača/eče*, *-yēr* < *-iyar/iyer*, *-bēr* < *-bar/ber*, *-yēn* < *-iyan/iyen*. This is clearly an artificial invention not characteristic to any Mongolian dialect.

By representing this clerkly pronunciation, Zaya Pandita's literary language could be far enough from the different dialects of spoken Mongolian (including Oirad) to serve as a supra-dialectal literary language. So, the new script and the new orthography did not change too much the archaic style of written texts being distant from the colloquial speech, but made their reading clearer and easier. Even Written Mongolian texts could be easily transcribed to Oirad script (and some evidences prove that it was done sometimes).

Now if it is clear enough what Oirad means and what is the relation of Oirad to Zaya Pandita's original literary language, then we can answer our first question: was the Oirad script used for writing a Mongolian dialect other than Oirad? The answer is yes, it was. Specifically,

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<sup>127</sup> Д. А. ПАВЛОВ, *К вопросу о создании «тодо бичиг»*, in *Записки Калмыцкого научно-исследовательского института языка, литературы и истории*, vol. Выпуск 2., Элиста, 1962, 109–132: 113.

in its original and first form it was not used for writing either an Oirad dialect or any variant of spoken Mongolian, but a supra-dialectal literary language.

However this situation rapidly changed. Due to various, probably mostly political reasons (Oirad-Khalkha conflicts) Zaya Pandita's invention did not reach wider (if any) popularity among Eastern Mongols and only Oirads (including Kalmyks) have started to use it. Since Clear script had a very good and precise system for indicating the sounds of the contemporary spoken Mongolian, this feature facilitated the infiltration of colloquial elements into the written language. Inasmuch as Oirads were who used the new script, colloquial elements of their speech started to infiltrate Zaya Pandita's literary language and it became Oirad or Written Oirad – clearly distinct from Written Mongolian and typical of Oirads only. As time progressed this colloquialization became stronger and stronger, but it was not even and uniform everywhere. Religious texts and Buddhist translations kept the original bookish and clerkly character for long time, historical texts (e.g. *Sarayin gerel* 'Moonlight', the biography of Zaya Pandita) have borrowed more from colloquial speech, while official and personal letters contained a lot of colloquial forms. Written Oirad became a mix of archaic, artificial and colloquial elements whose ratio depended on the era, location, context, author and some other factors. As Written Oirad is not equal with spoken Oirad, but reflects its influence, they have separate, but partly overlapping history. One can study Written Oirad's history in whole as the history of a written language, but only its colloquial elements matter when history of spoken Oirad concerned.

Since Oirads living on huge territories of Asia did not have a central authority controlling the unification and standardization of their literacy (except of modern Xinjiang), just the unifying influence of some local cultural centres (monasteries, chancelleries) could exercise some effect on the variants of Written Oirad. As a result of this, Written Oirad had vivid and diverse varieties, a lot of orthographical variations – the same colloquial element could appear in many forms, but mostly with minor differences only.

Dating a certain written monument is an essential factor when it is used as source of study for the history of language. There are some lucky cases when the monument contains a proper dating of itself (especially private and official letters), but usually determining the date of a monument's creation requires the examination of several aspects. Furthermore there are at least two dates that are important: date of the text's authoring and date of its recording in writing. These dates are often different, mostly because a written document is a copy of an earlier one. Actually this is true for most of the larger and longer sources written in Oirad script: monuments that survived are copies or even copies of copies. A copy (and here we talk about a copy made by rewriting or transcribing the original text, and not about copies created by some kind of

printing process or photocopy) is surely not valueless, but it should be treated with extreme carefulness and source criticism (see more at Originals and copies).

At present the earliest surviving Oirad script documents are from the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century: letters of Galdan khan and his envoys to the Russian Tsar from 1691.<sup>128</sup> Currently this date determines the time-frame in which the history of Oirad dialects can be studied on the basis of Oirad script. Monuments from the 18<sup>th</sup> century are incomparable more numerous, and from the 19<sup>th</sup> century we have even more sources.

Periodization of Written Oirad sources is a rather puzzling question. X. Luwsanbaldan tries to divide the history of Written Oirad into two roughly determined periods from 1648 to the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and from the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century to 1924 in Kalmykia and up to the present in Xinjiang. He states that during the first period the original form of Zaya Pandita's literary language was in use lacking any distinct features typical of spoken Oirad (this seems to be far from the truth), and the second period is characterized by strong colloquial influence and even the disappearance of Zaya Pandita's original rules (this is also an exaggeration I think).<sup>129</sup>

In my opinion such periodization has not too much sense, since the genre is what mostly determines the character of a certain source, although it is clear that later sources contain colloquial elements in increasing amount. If a certain period should be set apart in the history of Written Oirad, then I would choose the period of its modern, standardized form used today in Xinjiang (starting from the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century).

Sources, which are copies of an earlier original, should be treated with great carefulness. Not only unintentional mistakes, typos or slips of the pen made during the copying process can cause problems for the researchers, but intentional or unintentional editing of the text, too. A copyist often makes changes in the original text, adjusts its orthography to his contemporary usage and standard (e.g. writes *uu* and *üü* instead of *ou* and *öü* as in *xuučïn* and *xoučïn*, *tuuji* and *touji*), replaces some words, phrases or proper names seeming obscure and/or archaic, or corrects some places where he found a mistake (at least by his opinion – not always correctly). This all is not necessarily a result of intentional action, sometimes it is caused by his everyday routine and habits.

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<sup>128</sup> G. КАРА, *Books of the Mongolian Nomads. More than Eight Centuries of Writing Mongolian*, 141; Н. П. ШАСТИНА, *Русско-монгольские посольские отношения XVII века*, Москва, Издательство восточной литературы, 1958; J. R. KRUEGER, *Three Oirat-Mongolian Diplomatic Documents of 1691*, in «Cent. Asiat. J.» 12 (1969), 286–295; Д. КАРА, *Поправки к чтению ойратских писем Галдана*, in *Исследования в восточной филологии*, Москва, Наука, 1974, 55–59.

<sup>129</sup> X. ЛУВСАНБАЛДАН, *Тод үсэг, түүний дурсгалууд*, 62–63.

If multiple copies of the same original exist they can be used for reconstructing the original text, at least to some extent. It may turn out however that this original is not the real original, but an older copy being the common source of further copies.

As it was already mentioned above the genre and topic of Written Oirad sources highly determines the occurrence of colloquial elements useful for historical studies of the spoken dialects. Religious texts, especially Buddhist translations made from Tibetan are the most conservative and most artificial sources. These translations often hardly could be considered as real Mongolian texts, since Zaya Pandita (and his pupils following his method) translated Tibetan to Written Oirad almost word by word, copying even the grammatical structures, word order and syntax of the original.<sup>130</sup> This means that these translations hardly can add anything to the history of spoken Oirad except some conclusions that can be drawn from the sound marking system of the Oirad script.

Authored texts form a very different group of sources having much more colloquial influence. Even *Sarayin gerel* ('Moonlight') the biography of Zaya Pandita (or at least its available copies) written by his pupil Radnabhadra and dated to 1691, contains some colloquial forms (e.g. *zarliya:sa*:<sup>131</sup> instead of *zarliq-ēce-yēn*) and lexical elements typical of Oirad (e.g. *γaza*:<sup>132</sup>, Written Mongolian *γaday-a* 'outside'). Later historical sources such as the *Xošuud noyun ba:tur ubaši tümeni tüürbiqсан дөрбөн ойиридийн түүке* ('History of the four Oirads compiled by the Khoshud prince Bātur Ubaši Tümen') or the *Xalimaq xa:diyин түүжйиги хура:ји бицгисен тобчи* ('A summary written by collecting the history of the Kalmyk khans') and several others that are not connected to Zaya Pandita and the Buddhist church contain considerably more colloquial elements (phonetic, morphologic, syntactic and lexical, too).

The most useful and colloquial genre is letter. There are numerous letters available starting from the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. A considerable corpus of letters of the Kalmyk khans from the 18<sup>th</sup> century has been published by D. A. Susejeva and D. B. Gedejeva<sup>133</sup>, and letters from the

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<sup>130</sup> N. YAKHONTOVA, *The Mongolian and Oirat translations of the Sutra of Golden Light. Paper read at the conference «Silk Road documents: the transmission of the Suvarnaprabhasottamasutra». Beijing: November 22, 2006.*

<sup>131</sup> Г. Н. РУМЯНЦЕВ – А. Г. САЗЫКЫН (Edd.), *Раднабхадра: Лунный свет*, Санкт-Петербург, Институт востоковедения Российской Академии наук, Санкт-Петербургский филиал, Центр «Петербургское Востоковедение», 1999, 25.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 17; Г. ЯДАМЖАВ – Б. БАТ-АМГАЛАН (Edd.), *Раднаабдраа. Равжам Зая Бандидын тууж сарны гэрэл хэмээх оршив*, Улаанбаатар, Түүх соёл, хэл бичиг судлалын тод номын гэрэл төв, 87.

<sup>133</sup> Д. А. СУСЕЕВА, *Письма калмыцких ханов XVIII века и их современников (1713-1771 гг.)*; Д. А. СУСЕЕВА, *Письма калмыцких ханов XVIII века. Опыт лингвистического описания*, Том I; Д. А. СУСЕЕВА,

beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and sent to I. J. Schmidt during his service in Sarepta, Russia at the mission of the Moravian Church (United Brethren) have been published by John. R. Krueger and Robert G. Service.<sup>134</sup> These two collections are the most easily accessible sources, although there are some individual letters published elsewhere and various archives keep more of them still unpublished.

There are several other genres of course (X. Luwsanbaldan makes 15 distinct categories<sup>135</sup>), but these three are the most important and hopeful ones.

The author of a source is an important factor during researches for several reasons. The more we know about the author, the more accurate conclusions can be drawn from the source. An author's personal makes easier to date and localize a source and connect its content to a particular dialect or language variant. Comparing sources written by the same author helps to make investigations concerning the penetration of certain phenomena. An author's ethnic, social, educational and professional background provides a lot of information about the context of a written text.

As we made distinction between dates of a text's authoring and its recording, we should make the same distinction concerning the authors, too. So, two types of authors exist: author of the text itself and a scribe writing it down. These two can be one and same person or two (or more) different persons as in the case of copies.

Author of a text mostly determines its morphological, syntactical, lexical and stylistic character, but phonetic features and spelling may depend on the scribe. Even an accurate scribe can add the reflection of his own dialect (mostly pronunciation) to a copy and leave traces of his orthographic habits.

As it was mentioned before, studying the history of Oirad dialects requires the analysis of colloquial elements occurring in Written Oirad. These elements cover a wide range of linguistic phenomena including phonetics and phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon.

Due to the peculiarities of Oirad script and its orthographical traditions, its usefulness for solving open questions of Oirad's history enlisted above is not equal. There are cases where little new expected from Written Oirad sources, and others where they are promising. In

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*Грамматический строй калмыцкого языка XVIII века (Морфология и морфонология); Д. Б. ГЕДЕЕВА, Письма наместника Калмыцкого ханства Убаши (XVIII в.).*

<sup>134</sup> J. R. KRUEGER – R. G. SERVICE (Edd.), *Kalmyk Old-script Documents of Isaac Jacob Schmidt 1800-1810: Todo Biciq Texts, Transcription, Translation from the Moravian Archives at Herrnhut*, Wiesbaden, Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2002.

<sup>135</sup> X. ЛУВСАНБАЛДАН, *Тод үсэг, түүний дурсгалууд*, 81–82.

general, phonetic and phonological changes are reflected in Written Oirad partially, while morphological, syntactical and lexical changes can be traced to far more extent.

Let's provide some examples to phonetic changes. Question of suspected changes in quality of Kalmyk /ö/ and /ü/ ([ø] > [ø] and [ʊ] > [y]) discussed and supposed by Doerfer<sup>136</sup> probably cannot be solved on the basis of Written Oirad since this change (if present) does not affect the phonological system and could not be reflected by this script. On the contrary, strong palatalization of vowels, lack of labial harmony, changing of diphthongs into long vowels are phenomena that can leave clear traces in Written Oirad. Even some phonetic changes that do not interfere with the phonological system can be traced on the spelling of glosses of foreign words or samples of non-Oirad proper names.

### 6.2.1. Long vowels in the Oirad script

Studying Written Oirad and its monuments is an important part of researches on the history of Oirad dialects, since it may reflect some characteristic features of the spoken language of certain periods. It is still unclear to what extent the spoken language had influence on the Oirad script and in what stage of its development was the language itself, which the script was based on. There is also an unresolved question concerning the vocalic system of Written Oirad, namely the existence or absence and the quality of long vowels. There are two ideas regarding this question: a traditional one and another idea established by G. Jamiyan<sup>137</sup>, and supported by scholars like G. D. Sanžeev<sup>138</sup> or Š. Luwsandendew. In what follows, I will briefly describe both ideas, and then compare them, highlighting their deficiencies and advantages, in order to solve the debate.

According to the traditional view, Written Oirad language has 7 short and 7 long vowel phonemes: /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, /ö/, /u/, /ü/ and /a:/, /e:/, /i:/, /o:/, /ö:/, /u:/, /ü:/. The latter ones reflect the long vowels of the contemporary spoken dialects, which have mostly developed from the V<sub>1</sub> +  $\gamma/g/y$  + V<sub>2</sub> structures of Written Mongolian.<sup>139</sup> There are two different ways used by the Oirad script to indicate vowel length. The first is letter duplication, which is used in the case of /u:/] and /ü:/ in forms of *uu* or *ou* (= /u:/) and *üü* or *öü* (= /ü:/). The second letter in the sign of the long /u:/ has no diacritical mark, since the first one exactly determines the velar quality of

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<sup>136</sup> G. DOERFER, *Ältere Westeuropäische Quellen zur Kalmückischen Sprachgeschichte (Witsen 1692 bis Zwick 1827)*, 21–24.

<sup>137</sup> Г. ЖАМЬЯН, *Тод үсгийн зөв бичих дүрэмд урт эгигийг хэрхэн тэмдэглэсэн тухай асуудал*, in «Монголын судлал» VII (1970) 20, 257–270.

<sup>138</sup> Г. Д. САНЖЕЕВ, *Лингвистическое введение в изучение истории письменности монгольских народов*, Улан-Уде, 1977.

<sup>139</sup> In what follows, the V<sub>1</sub> +  $\gamma/g/y$  + V<sub>2</sub> structure will be referred to as long-vowel-complex.

the word.<sup>140</sup> The *uu/üü* forms are mostly used (especially in earlier sources), when  $V_1 = V_2$ , and *ou/öü* stay in the place of Written Mongolian  $V_1 + \gamma/g + V_2$  structures, where  $V_1 \neq V_2$ . The *ou* and *öü* type marking is more frequent in the earlier sources of Written Oirad, and later it has often changed to the simple duplicated variant (*uu, üü*).<sup>141</sup>

Similarly to /u:/ and /ü:/, also /i:/ is indicated by a kind of letter duplication: *iyi* in word stems and suffixes after consonants, or *yi* in suffixes after short vowels. E.g. *čiyiq* ‘dampness’; *talayin* ‘of the field’, etc. In the latter case the word-ending vowel is silent, and the drop-out of the first *i* can be explained by the practice of Written Mongolian that tries to avoid writing two vowels next to each other.

Another way of length-marking beside letter duplication is used at /a:/, /e:/, /o:/ and /ö:/. The length of these vowels is indicated by a diacritical mark, called *uda:n*, which is a small stroke at the right side of the main line of the script. E.g. *ba:tur* (WM *bayatur*) ‘hero’; *emēl* (WM *emegel*) ‘saddle’; *inēdün* (WM *iniyedün*) ‘laughter’; *xōsun* (WM *qoγosun*) ‘empty’; WO *bō* (WM *böge*) ‘(male) shaman’.

The *uda:n* also occurs after *u, ü* and *i*, and it results in forms that look like the letters for /a:/, /e:/, /o:/ or /ö:/. E.g. *barīd* (WM *bariyad*) ‘taking’; *bičīd* (WM *bičiged*) ‘writing’; *xanīdun* (WM *qaniyadun*) ‘cough’; *yabūd* (WM *yabuyad*) ‘going’; *ükūd* ‘dying’ etc. These words have “strange” form, which could not be found in any Mongolian dialect, and some scholars think that it does not fit into the phonological and grammatical system of Mongolian languages, so needs re-evaluation.

Ĵamiyan’s conception tries to explain the “strange” forms mentioned above, and says that Written Oirad, which exactly reflects the spoken Oirad dialect of the contemporary period has 7 short vowels (/a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, /ö/, /u/, /ü/), but the number of long ones is only 5 and not 7 as mentioned before. These 5 long vowels are /a:/, /e:/, /i:/, /u:/ and /ü:/ (/o:/ and /ö:/ do not exist), which can occur only after vowels and do not form phonematic pairs with the short vowels. The  $V + \bar{V}$  structures correspond to the long-vowel-complexes of Written Mongolian, so the script reflects a stage in the development of Oirad dialect, where the  $V_1 + \gamma/g + V_2$  structures has not developed to long vowels yet, but the intervocalic consonants have already disappeared. Although Ĵamiyan does not say that, it practically means a vocalic system similar to Middle-Mongolian’s.

<sup>140</sup> Sometimes *uu* (= /u:/) is transcribed with *uü* and *ouü*, as the *waw* without diacritical mark means *ü*, but this is not adequately substantiated and absolutely unnecessary – it is rather a transliteration than a transcription.

<sup>141</sup> Up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century the change of *ou* to *uu* was practically completed, but the *öü* has often remained in contrast to *üü*.

The long /u:/ and /ü:/ have no special, independent letter or diacritic, simply indicated by its post-vowel position. Long /u:/ can stay only after /o/ and /u/ of any syllable, and after non-first-syllabic /i/. The long /ü:/ has the same features with /ö/ and /ü/. E.g. *oūla* (WM *ayula*) ‘mountain’; *cuūlyan* (WM *čuyulyan*) ‘assembly’; *ariūn* (WM *ariyun*) ‘clean’; *zöūn* (WM *jegün*) ‘left’; *küūken* (WM *keüken*) ‘girl’; *seriūn* (WM *serigün*) ‘cool’, etc.

The long /a:/ and /e:/ are represented by the same letter, which is always unambiguous, since the preceding vowel determines that the word has back or front vowels. This special letter is a short stroke on the right side of the script’s main line (the above mentioned *uda:n*), which was necessary to create as a result of the particular features of the Uigur-Mongolian script.<sup>142</sup> The /a:/ can stay after /a/, /o/ (any syllable), /i/ (non-first syllable) and /u/ (only before a suffix beginning with /a:/, if the word’s root has /u/ ending). E.g. *aa:jim* (WM *ayaJim*) ‘slowly’; *toa:* (WM *toya*) ‘number’; *takia:d* (WM *takiyad*) ‘making an offering’; *yabua:d* (WM *yabuyad*) ‘going’. The /e:/ can stay after /e/, /ö/ (any syllable), /i/ (non-first syllable) and /ü/ (staying before a suffix beginning with /e:/, if the word’s root has /ü/ ending). E.g. *temeēn* (WM *temegen*) ‘camel’; *böē* (WM *böge*) ‘(male) shaman’; *bičiēči* (WM *bičigeči*) ‘clerk’; *üküēd* (WM *üküged*) ‘dying’.

Ĵamiyan states that similarly to today’s spoken Oirad dialects, Written Oirad has no labial attraction in the case of long vowels.

Ĵamiyan’s idea was supported also by Sanžeev, although he made some corrections. In the place of the vowel’s length he suggested stress, so he corrected Ĵamiyan’s *ulaa:n* to *ulaán*, etc. Sanžeev rejected the exact correspondence of Written Oirad with the contemporary spoken dialect, saying that the written language reflects an earlier stage of the language (Middle Mongolian), which was outworn at the time of Zaya Pandita. He based this opinion on the case of Written Mongolian, which reflects an earlier stage of the language, when it was used.<sup>143</sup>

Both of the above two conceptions have advantages and some difficulties, too. First, we have doubts regarding the last statement of Sanžeev, concerning to the relation between the written and spoken Mongolian languages. His opinion cannot be accepted, since the example of Written Mongolian does not correspond to the real situation. Written Mongolian was certainly based on the living spoken language of the 11–12<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>144</sup> and only later it has differed from the

<sup>142</sup> The writing of *a* (marked by a small “theeth”, called *sidün*) in post-vowel position can result in misunderstanding, since this is also the letter for *n*.

<sup>143</sup> Г. ЖАМЪЯН, *Тод үсгийн зөв бичих дүрэмд урт эгшигийг хэрхэн тэмдэглэсэн тухай асуудал*; Г. Д. САНЖЕЕВ, *Лингвистическое введение в изучение истории письменности монгольских народов*, 94.

<sup>144</sup> There are no sources for Written Mongolian before the 13<sup>th</sup> century, but we can deem that Uigur script was used for writing Mongolian even before this time. The exact dialect it was based on is still unclear and may be it

spoken dialects, since the written language did not follow the changes of the living dialects and remained in its original or nearly original state. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century Written Oirad was not an old, traditional language, which has gone away from the continuously developing spoken language by the long time, but it was a newly created script and literary language, which could not be based on a language that was forgotten at this time. It does not mean that Written Oirad is equal with the spoken Oirad of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, since by all means it was made for not only the Oirads, but generally the Mongols. So it has no exact correspondence with any Mongolian dialect and took elements from many of them, beside its own theory-based features that cannot be found elsewhere.

Some scholars like Poppe or Luwsanbaldan state that the second vowel of the long-vowel-complexes was originally long. This idea intends to explain the long vowels of the modern Mongolian dialects, namely why the second vowel of the long-vowel-complexes assimilated the first one while the present long vowels came into being (e.g. WM *ayula* > Khal. *үүл*, Bur. *уула* ‘mountain’).

It is a well-known phenomenon in Mongolian that the intervocalic *g/γ* sometimes remains instead of disappearing in words like WM *baγa* > Khal. *бага* ‘small’; WM *daya-* > Khal. *дага-* ‘to follow’, etc. As Poppe says, the reason for this is that when the second vowel of  $V_1 + g/\gamma V_2$  complexes is long, the intervocalic consonant disappears, resulting in a secondary long vowel, but when it is not long, it remains. However, it has escaped his attention that there are several words where the intervocalic *g/γ* disappears in one dialect, and remains in another (e.g. WM *egem* > Khal. *эгэм*, Oir. *e:m*, Bur. *ээм* ‘collarbone’; WM *niryūn* > Khal. *нуруу*, Oir. *niryūn*, Bur. *нюрған* ‘back, backbone, spine’), moreover the two forms can exist in one and same dialect (e.g. WM *baγa* > Khal. *бага*, but WM *baγaqan* > Khal. *баахан* ‘small’). So Poppe’s idea is quite debatable, and concerning the length of the second vowel of long-vowel-complexes we prefer the suggestion of Sanžeev, namely that this vowel was not long, but at most only stressed. So below we use short vowels in the transcriptions instead of Ĵamiyan’s long ones.

The existence of *ou* and *öü* as elements of the traditional conception about Written Oirad needs some explanation. Do these two forms mean that the development of  $V_1 + \gamma/g + V_2$  structures to long vowel was not completed in the Mongolian (probably Oirad) dialect the Written Oirad language was based on? At first sight it seems to be quite possible, all the more so since the sources of later times often have changed the spelling of such vowels to *uu* and *üü*, presumably to further development. Although the appearance of *ou* and *öü* in places where no

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was not a direct ancestor of Middle-Mongolian and hence the today’s dialects, but a dialect which died out without descendants (Naiman, Kereit?).

original *ayu* or *egü* can be found makes this idea doubtful. Words like *terigöün* (WM *terigün*) ‘head’, *ögöüle-* (WM *ögüle-*) ‘to say’, *oyoun* (WM *oyun*) ‘intellect’ cannot be explained by *ayu* > *a’u* > *ou* or *egü* > *e’ü* > *öü* development. There are several words, where *ou/öü* corresponds to Written Mongolian *iyu/igü*, and – similarly to *ayu/egü* – it can be the result of labial assimilation, but sometimes WM *uyu/üyü* have *ou/öü* indicated forms in Written Oirad, too (e.g. *üzöür* < WM *üjügür* ‘point, tip’; *öürmeq* < WM *ügürmeg* ‘crumbs, crushed fragments’; etc.). The latter cannot be explained satisfactorily by dissimilation and goes to prove that *ou/öü* and *uu/üü* have no difference in meaning, both are marks of the same long vowel. That is proved also by the parallel and simultaneous existence of *ou/öü* and *uu/üü* forms in the same early sources, like the Subhashita translated by Zaya Pandita. It contains words, which disprove the idea that *ou* and *öü* are not equivalent with *uu* and *üü*: *šobuun* (WM *sibayun*) ‘bird’ instead of *šoboun*; *üzöür* (WM *üjügür*) ‘point, tip’ instead of *üzüür*; *būra-* (WM *bayura-*) ‘to decline, decay’ instead of *boura-*; *gišküül-* (WM *giškigül-*) ‘to let step on’ instead of *gišköül-*, etc.<sup>145</sup> After all we can state that Written Oirad marks /u:/ with *uu* or *ou*, and /ü:/ with *üü* or *öü*, which are equal. We have to answer the question by all means why the Oirad script has two marks for /u:/ and /ü:/. György Kara supposes that the *ou* and *öü* forms make it possible to read them in two ways, /ö:/ or /ü:/ according to the readers’ dialect. Nevertheless, it is imaginable that Written Oirad reflects an archaic form in case of *ou* and *öü*, which comes for example from the clerkly pronunciation of Written Mongolian texts, but it does not change the equivalence between *ou/uu* and *öü/üü*.<sup>146</sup>

As Ĵamiyan and Sanžeev say, the Written Mongolian *oγa* and *öge* are represented in Written Oirad as *oa* and *öe* (with the *uda:n* in the place of *a* and *e*), since the vowels of *oγa* and *öge* were not assimilated. E.g. *doloan* (WM *doluyan*) ‘seven’; *toa* (WM *toγa*) ‘number’; *böe* (WM *böge*) ‘(male) shaman’, etc. But there are several words, where *o/ö + uda:n* corresponds to Written Mongolian *oγo/oγu* or *ögö/ögü*, and there is no trace of *a* or *e* in the place of the second vowel. E.g. *boal* (WM *boγol/boγul*) ‘slave’; *toasun/toason* (WM *toγosun/toγusun*) ‘dust’; *xoasun/xoason* (WM *qoγosun/qoγusun*) ‘empty’; *söekü* (WM *sögökei/sögükei*) ‘a kind of boots’. In order to surmount the contradiction Sanžeev supposes that Written Mongolian *oγo/oγu* and *ögö/ögü* have an original form *\*oγa* and *\*öge*, so e.g. WM *boγol/boγul* comes from an earlier *\*boγal*, which is reflected in the Oirad script.<sup>147</sup> Even though this idea has no real base and there is no source material that would support it. If the *uda:n* is the diacritical mark of

<sup>145</sup> X. ЛУВСАНБАЛДАН, *Тод үсэг, түүний дурсгалууд*, 17–99.

<sup>146</sup> Concerning long vowels of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Oirad language see also Kara, Gy., 2005, p. 147.

<sup>147</sup> Г. Д. САНЖЕЕВ, *Лингвистическое введение в изучение истории письменности монгольских народов*, 108–109.

vowel length, then the words above are entirely explainable and it is not necessary to make one more supposition.

Beside *oyo/oyu*, another long-vowel-complex has result in /o:/ (*oa*) in Written Oirad in individual cases, namely *ayu* in WM *ayuški* ‘lung’ > WO *oški* (or *oaški* by Ĵamiyan and Sanžeev). It is unquestionable that in this word *ayu* could not develop to *oa*, but by way of bilateral assimilation could change to /o:/.

The vowel pairs or diphthongs of Ĵamiyan’s and Sanžeev’s conception should stay in the place of Written Mongolian or Middle Mongolian long-vowel-complexes. This means that the double vowels or diphthongs of Written Oirad correspond to a long-vowel-complex of Written Mongolian, which contains two vowels. Although there are numerous words which contain a long-vowel-complex in its Written Oirad form, but have no such features in the earlier Written Mongolian or Middle Mongolian sources. E.g. *oyoun* (WM *oyun*) ‘intellect’; *terigüün* (WM *terigün*) ‘head’; *ögöüle/ögüüle-* (WM *ögüle-*) ‘to say’; *ödügee* (WM *ödüge*) ‘now’; *xamiyaa* (WM *qamiya*) ‘where’, *kemee-* (WM *keme-*) ‘to say’, etc. This situation appears in several suffixes (or postpositions), too. E.g. *-eece* (WM *-ača/eče*); *-luyaa/lügee* (WM *-luya/lüge*); *-xulaa/külee* (WM *-qula/küle*); *-noyoud/nuyūud* (WM *nuyud/nügüd*); *-uud/üüd* (WM *-ud/üd*); *-duyaar/dügeer* (WM *-duyar/düger*), etc. It is totally incomprehensible and mysterious how could two vowels appear in the place of one. In contrast with Sanžeev’s conception, the existence of long vowels can explain properly the situation in question. Up to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the reduction of non-first-syllabic short vowels has already started in the spoken Mongolian dialects. It has resulted in the full or partial loss of the non-first-syllabic short vowels in texts, which were written in Uigur script and read in the living spoken language. Although in all probability there was a clerkly pronunciation of Written Mongolian texts beside the colloquial language, and often this pronunciation was close to the written text, practically it was a letter-by-letter reading. The monks and other clerks could not exceed the limits of the vocalic system of their language, so if they wanted to keep the non-first-syllabic short vowels of the written text in the pronunciation, they had to pronounce these vowels long. However sometimes it did not apply to all short vowels of a word, only the most important, phonematic vowels were pronounced long, in order to distinguish the words with similar pronunciation (e.g. WM *terigün* ‘head’ and WM *tergen* ‘cart’). In several cases the words of this clerkly “language” have infiltrated into the dictionary of colloquial language, which can be traced in many Mongolian dialects today, too.<sup>148</sup> This is what reflected in Written

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<sup>148</sup> E.g. Khalkha dialect has a similar feature, so some words borrowed from the clerkly pronunciation do not fit in the regular phonetical development and approximate the Written Mongolian form of the word. E.g. *xümüüs* (WM

Oirad, so the words mentioned above contain no diphthongs or two neighboring vowels, but only one long vowel, developed from an original short one.<sup>149</sup> The correct transcription of these words and suffixes is the following: *oyoun*, *terigüün*, *ögöüle/ögiüle-*, *ödügē*, *xamiya:*, *kemē-*, *-ēce*, *-luγa:/lügē*, *-xula:/külē*, *-nuγoud/nuγuud*, *-uud/üüd*, *-duga:r/dügēr*.

Another contradictory part of Ĵamiyan’s and Sanžeev’s idea is the labial attraction. It is well-known that labial attraction is typical of Written Oirad to a great extent, which in the case of short vowels is admitted by Ĵamiyan and Sanžeev, too. Written Mongolian words usually have a labial attractive form in Written Oirad, which are consistent if we use the traditional reading of Zaya Pandita’s script, but it breaks if we accept the other variant. Written Mongolian *ögede* has a Written Oirad form of *ödö* or *öedö* by the two theories, and the later obviously breaks the labial attraction, while the first keeps it consistently. It is doubtful that the word-ending vowel is assimilated by the vowel of the first syllable, and the vowel following directly the later one is not. If we suppose that the labial attraction of Written Oirad is only a particular feature of its spelling and does not reflect the real pronunciation, then that is no reason for transcribing words like *öedö*; on the contrary it means that it should be considered as *ödö*. There are several examples of this type: *börö* ~ *böerö* (WM *böger-e*) ‘kidney’; *töloši ügei* ~ *toaloši ügei* (WM *toyalsi ügei*) ‘countless’; *köqsön* ~ *köeqsön* (WM *kögegsen*) ‘chased’, etc.<sup>150</sup>

One of the main arguments of opposers of the traditional conception about Written Oirad is the “strange” form of words like *bičīd* ‘writing’; *xanīdun* ‘cough’; *yabūd* ‘going’; *ükūd* ‘dying’, etc. As we mentioned above, they say that these forms do not meet the rules of the vocalic system of any Mongolian dialect in past and present, consequently are incorrect and should be interpreted in another way. It is absolutely true that these words are not equal with the pronunciation of spoken dialects (I mean that *ī*, *ū* and *ü* do not indicate /i:/, /u:/ and /ü:/), but this is not the aim of the script. Similarly to several another written languages, Written Oirad has an etymology based spelling, which tries to keep the root of the words during the inflection. The short vowels of the non-first syllables are reduced and even completely disappear in final position in most spoken Mongolian dialects, and since this phenomenon already took place to

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*kümüs*) “people” instead of *\*xüms*; *tergüün* (WM *terigün*) “head” simultaneously with *türüün*; *ögiül-* (WM *ögüle-*) “to say” instead of *\*üül-* or *\*ögl-*; *xemee-* (WM *keme-*) “to say” instead of *\*xem-*, etc.

<sup>149</sup> Actually the earliest form of Written Oirad language as it was used by Zaya Pandita and his followers is probably exactly reflects the contemporary clerly reading of Written Mongolian texts. There are several clear evidences confirming that, but their detailed review do not fit into this study and should be discussed in a separate paper.

<sup>150</sup> The problem of labial attraction was also mentioned in Á. BIRTALAN – A. RÁKOS, *A kalmükök. Egy európai mongol nép*, 149; A. RÁKOS, *Beszélt nyelvi hatások az ojrát „világos írásos” szövegekben*, in M. YAMAJI – Á. BIRTALAN (Edd.), *Orientalista Nap 2001*, Budapest, ELTE Orientalisztikai Intézet, 2002, 81–89: 9.

some extent as early as in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the final /u/ and /ü/ had no phonemic role (however /i/ had and has also today). So in the case of *u* and *ü* the preserving of the root is the only reason why Written Oirad even indicates them, while in the case of *ī* the reason is its phonemic role. If a word ends in /i/, /u/ or /ü/ and the suffix begins with /a:/ or /e:/, then – taking into consideration the practice of Written Mongolian intending to avoid writing two vowels right next to each other – there is no other way to indicate the long vowel coming into being, but by using of *uda:n* after the letter of the word-ending vowel. It has no influence on the pronunciation, since Written Oirad does not connect tightly to any dialect. Two examples of the preservation of the word-ending vowel, where it has a phonematic sense are: *xarīd* < *xari-* (WM *qari-*) ‘to return’; *xara:d* < *xar-* (WM *qara-*) ‘to look’.<sup>151</sup>

The situation above is not the only one among the peculiar spelling features of Written Oirad, e.g. there is the case of *s* before *i*. The *s* consonant of Written Mongolian staying before *i* always developed to *š* in Middle Mongolian (if *si* belongs to the word’s stem), although the traditional Uigur script does not indicate it (e.g. *sine* ‘new’). Written Oirad always uses the letter of *š* in this case (e.g. *šine* ‘new’), and even if a word ends in *s* and a suffix beginning with *i* follows it, the word-ending *s* changes to *š* in the spelling, too (e.g. *xayašigi* < *xayas* ‘half’), although it corresponds to /s/ in the spoken language. This feature cannot be found in Mongolian dialects, it is simply a peculiar spelling, which later disappears, when the language of texts written in Oirad script goes away from the language of Zaya Pandita’s translations and gets closer to the spoken dialects.

The two conceptions described above concerning the long vowel system of Written Oirad language have divided the scholars for long time. The study intended to present some data, examples and ideas in order to further the solution of this question. These in my view, are enough to state that the ingenious, but sometimes deficient idea of Ĵamiyan does not meet reality. The etymology based spelling, the rule of labial attraction, the influence of clerkly pronunciation disprove his and Sanžeev’s conception, and prove the traditional view. So the Written Oirad language has long vowels in the place of long-vowel-complexes of Written

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<sup>151</sup> I already touched that in Á. BIRTALAN – A. RÁKOS, *A kalmükök. Egy európai mongol nép*, 148–149; A. RÁKOS, *Beszélt nyelvi hatások az ojrát „világos írásos” szövegekben*, 9. Kara György also draws a similar conclusion (G. KARA, *Books of the Mongolian Nomads. More than Eight Centuries of Writing Mongolian*, 147.). Concerning this question see also: Д. КАРА, *Книги монгольских кочевников (семь веков монгольской письменности)*, Москва, 1972, 83; Х. ЛУВСАНБАЛДАН, *Тод үсэг, түүний дурсгалууд*, 43–44; Н. Н. ПОППЕ, *Об отношении ойратской письменности к калмыцкому языку.*, in A. BORMANSHINOV – J. R. KRUEGER (Edd.), *Kalmyk-Oirat Symposium*, Philadelphia, 1966, 191–210: 202.

Mongolian, and there are two ways to indicate them: letter duplication and a diacritical mark, called *uda:n*.

### 6.2.2. Some examples of colloquial elements occurring in Oirad script documents of the 19th century

The literary language known as Written Oirad is the traditional written language of the Western Mongols or Oirads, including Kalmyks in South Russia, and Oirads in Xinjiang and Western Mongolia. It is written in the so-called Clear script or Oirad script that has been created in 1648 by the famous Oirad Buddhist monk Zaya Pandita (he is known also by his Tibetan title Nam mkha'i rgya mtsho, its Oirad variant Namkhajamtso and its translation Oqtoryuyin Dalai 'Heavenly Ocean'). Zaya Pandita's script and the literature written in this script were studied by a number of scholars. From the works of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the first grammars of A. Popov<sup>152</sup> and A. Bobrovnikov<sup>153</sup> should be mentioned here, as well as and H. A. Zwick's grammar and dictionary<sup>154</sup>, Cornelius Rahmn's grammar and dictionary (published only recently by Jan-Olof Svantesson)<sup>155</sup> and A. Pozdneev's chrestomaties and other works.<sup>156</sup> The most important studies and works of later times include the books of G. D. Sanžeev<sup>157</sup>, X. Luwsanbaldan<sup>158</sup>, György Kara<sup>159</sup>, N. S. Yakhontova<sup>160</sup>, as well as the dictionary of J. R. Krueger<sup>161</sup> and works of many others not listed here.

The script itself is based on the well-known Uighur-Mongolian script and intended to eliminate its deficiencies, create a consistent script that can clearly reflect the sounds of the

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<sup>152</sup> А. ПОПОВ, *Грамматика калмыцкого языка*.

<sup>153</sup> А. БОБРОВНИКОВ, *Грамматика монгольско-калмыцкого языка*.

<sup>154</sup> H. A. ZWICK, *Grammatik der West-Mongolischen das ist Oirad oder Kalmückischen Sprache*, Königfeld im Gr. Baden, 1851; H. A. ZWICK, *Handbuch der Westmongolischen Sprache*, Höfingen, I. N. Heinemann, 1853.

<sup>155</sup> J.-O. SVANTESSON, *Cornelius Rahmn's Kalmuck grammar*; J.-O. SVANTESSON, *Cornelius Rahmn's Kalmuck Dictionary*.

<sup>156</sup> А. ПОЗДНЕЕВ, *Калмыцкая хрестоматия для чтения в старших классах калмыцких народных школ*, Санктпетербургъ, Типографія Императорской Академіи Наукъ, 1907.

<sup>157</sup> Г. Д. САНЖЕЕВ, *Сравнительная грамматика монгольских языков*, I; Г. Д. САНЖЕЕВ, *Лингвистическое введение в изучение истории письменности монгольских народов*.

<sup>158</sup> Х. ЛУВСАНБАЛДАН, *Тод үсэг, түүний дурсгалууд*.

<sup>159</sup> Д. КАРА, *Книги монгольских кочевников (семь веков монгольской письменности)*; G. KARA, *Books of the Mongolian Nomads. More than Eight Centuries of Writing Mongolian*.

<sup>160</sup> Н. С. ЯХОНТОВА, *Ойратский литературный язык XVII века*, Москва, Издательская фирма «Восточная литература» РАН, 1996.

<sup>161</sup> J. R. KRUEGER, *Materials for an Oirat-Mongolian to English Citation Dictionary*, I; J. R. KRUEGER, *Materials for an Oirat-Mongolian to English Citation Dictionary*, II; J. R. KRUEGER, *Materials for an Oirat-Mongolian to English Citation Dictionary*, III.

contemporary Mongolian language and is suitable for all the Mongols. Oirad script has separate letters for marking short and long vowel phonemes, voiced and voiceless consonants, and reduces the number of positional allographs. The language that was used by Zaya Pandita for writing texts in the new script (mostly translations of Buddhist sutras) was mainly based on Written Mongolian and reflected its contemporary clerical pronunciation. This written language was archaic and also artificial in some respects, consequently, it was rather far from the contemporary spoken language. Thanks to the advantages of the script and despite of the artificial character of the new written language, Zaya Pandita's script quickly became popular and widespread among Oirads, but mainly due to political reasons it was never accepted by Eastern Mongols, and it became known as Oirad script. Although the Oirad written language retained its original bookish style in many respects up to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it incorporated more and more colloquial elements during the time. Since Zaya Pandita's alphabet could reflect the sound set of contemporary Mongolian and Oirad dialects very well, it was easy for colloquial elements to infiltrate the written language. This process was also facilitated by the fact that Written Oirad did not have such a standardised form as Written Mongolian, and the fall of the Jungarian Empire in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century eliminated the possible standardising influence of the Jungarian chancellery, too. Written Oirad was shaped by a number of individuals and local centres of literacy (e.g. monasteries).

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century significant changes took place in the Oirad literary tradition due to several reasons. Kalmyks in Russia officially abandoned their traditional writing system in favour of Latin and Cyrillic scripts, and also the Oirads of Xinjiang introduced significant changes in their orthography, making the written language closer to the spoken tongue. So the 20<sup>th</sup> century marks a new milestone in the history of Oirad script and the preceding 19<sup>th</sup> century together with the very beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is the period when the largest amount of colloquial elements could be observed and studied in Oirad texts belonging to the original Written Oirad tradition.

Beyond the changes in the native literary tradition of Oirads, the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries is the time when new corpora of the Oirad language became available in phonetic transcription suitable for thorough linguistic analysis. The first such corpus of the Oirad vernacular was collected among the Kalmyks in 1871 by Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna, who used a quite precise, but still not perfect transcription. Unfortunately these texts and his grammar of the East and West Mongolian languages were published only recently by Ágnes

Birtalan<sup>162</sup>, although minor excerpts from Bálint's material were published earlier.<sup>163</sup> Later on the works of V. L. Kotvič<sup>164</sup>, B. Ya. Vladimircov<sup>165</sup>, G. J. Ramstedt<sup>166</sup> and other noted scholars opened a new era in Oirad studies. Texts written in Oirad script mostly became obsolete for researches on the modern Oirad dialects, but they are still among the most valuable sources for diachronic studies.

Appearance of colloquial elements in Written Oirad texts is far not regular and consistent. It highly depends on the genre and content of written monuments, as well as the practice and individual preferences of their authors. As usual, monuments with a formal or religious content are written in more traditional style and show less colloquial influence. Documents concerning everyday activities or informal topics are influenced stronger by the colloquial speech. So sources that have the strongest influence of the spoken language are personal and business letters, while narrative texts, legal documents, codes and formal letters have less, but still significant traces. The most traditional monuments are canonical religious texts, especially Buddhist sutras translated from Tibetan. Folk-religious texts however may be strongly influenced by the colloquial language.

The living spoken language can appear in any segment of the written language, and its influence on the phonetics, morphology, syntax and lexicon of written texts could be observed frequently. Various texts contain different kinds of colloquial elements: some texts show only phonetic or morphologic features, while others are characterized by all types of colloquial elements. Usually, colloquial elements exist in parallel with more archaic traditional elements of the written language even in the same texts.

Separating the traces of colloquial influence from pure spelling and copy errors is a very important, but sometimes difficult task. Furthermore, not only errors and mistakes, but also certain simplifications in the spelling of words can be confusing to some extent. Such an orthographic simplification is the omitting of diacritical marks of certain letters when the writer thinks that the reading of a word is clear enough even without the diacritical marks. In these cases mostly the rule of vowel harmony ensures the correct reading: if the vocalism of a word

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<sup>162</sup> Á. BIRTALAN, *Kalmyk Folklore and Folk Culture in the mid-19th Century. Philological Studies on the Basis of Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna's Kalmyk Texts*; Á. BIRTALAN, *Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna, A Romanized Grammar of the East- and West-Mongolian Languages. With popular Chrestomathies of both Dialects*.

<sup>163</sup> E.g. L. NAGY, *Bálint's Journey to the Mongols and his Unedited Kalmuck Texts*, in «Acta Orient. Acad. Sci. Hungaricae» IX (1959), 311–327.

<sup>164</sup> В. Л. КОТВИЧ, *Опыт грамматики калмыцкого разговорного языка*, Прага, Калмыцкая Комиссия Культурных Работников в Чехословацкой Республике Ржевнице у Праги, , Издание вт 1929.

<sup>165</sup> Б. Я. ВЛАДИМИРЦОВ, *Образцы монгольской народной словестности*.

<sup>166</sup> G. J. RAMSTEDT, *Kalmückisches Wörterbuch*, Helsinki, 1935.

is clearly determined by the vowel of the first syllable or the presence of harmonising consonant pairs (*x-k*, *γ-g*) give a hint, then diacritical marks of further vowel letters are frequently omitted. Omitting a diacritical mark has been encoded into the system of Clear script from its very beginnings, since long /u:/ is originally indicated by a digraph *ou* and later by *uu*, where the diacritical mark of the latter vowel letter is always omitted, so it is written in the same way as *ü*.

Colloquial elements of Written Oirad are valuable sources for studying the history of Oirad dialects, and provide data for creating the relative and absolute chronology of changes that took place during the centuries. History of Oirad is a relatively unstudied field, there are no comprehensive works dealing with this topic except studies on limited text corpora. The present study is a part of an extensive research project that aims to collect both native and external sources on the Oirad language, and analyse them from diachronic and comparative aspects.

#### **6.2.2.1. Sources**

Despite of the fact that Oirad literacy produced a large amount of various texts during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the present study focuses on certain documents only and cites examples from the following four sources:

1. Collection of letters of the famous Mongolist Isaak Jakob Schmidt (hereinafter referred to as IJS). These letters were written by Kalmyk noblemen and commoners during the time when at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Schmidt was working as a shopkeeper in the mission of the Moravian Church in Sarepta near Tsaritsyn (today's Volgograd, incorporating also the territory of Sarepta). The letters addressed to Schmidt (or Šimed as he is usually mentioned by Kalmyks) are mainly on topics connected to his trading business with Kalmyks. The letters are kept in the archive of the Moravian Brethren in their centre in Herrnhut, and were published by John R. Krueger.<sup>167</sup>
2. A Kalmyk historical survey entitled *Xošuud noyon Ba:tur Ubaši Tümeni tuurbiqsan dörbön oyiradiyin tüüke* (hereinafter referred to as DÖT). This work was written at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (probably in 1819) by an educated Kalmyk nobleman, Bätur Ubaši on the basis of his father Tümen's earlier writings. It was published several

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<sup>167</sup> J. R. KRUEGER – R. G. SERVICE (Edd.), *Kalmyk Old-script Documents of Isaac Jacob Schmidt 1800-1810: Todo Biciq Texts, Transcription, Translation from the Moravian Archives at Herrnhut*.

times, first in a Russian translation by G. S. Lytkin and later in Oirad script by Pozdneev in 1885<sup>168</sup>, by Luwsandbaldan in 1976<sup>169</sup> and also by others.

3. *Altan erike* (hereinafter referred to as AE), which is a historical work written by Darmābadrā at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, probably in 1911. It contains a brief outline of Mongolia's and Tibet's history, and also valuable information concerning the history of the Jakhchins. Although this is not a 19<sup>th</sup>-century work it belongs to the same period of literary tradition. It was first published in 1997 by György Kara and J. Coloo in facsimile<sup>170</sup>, and later by B. Tüвшинтөгс and Na. Сүхбаатар in 2006.<sup>171</sup>
4. An account of the Kalmyk Bāza baqši on his journey to Tibet, written in 1893 (hereinafter referred to as BB). Although the original manuscript of this source has not been discovered yet, and it is known only from the printed edition of Pozdneev in 1894<sup>172</sup>, there is no real reason to exclude it from the corpus of the source materials on Written Oirad. Apart from the commentaries of Pozdneev, the language of this source was extensively studied by E. V. Bembeev.<sup>173</sup>

As for the mentioned and cited sources, they contain different amount of colloquial elements. Most colloquial elements could be found in the letters of Isaak Jakob Schmidt, while the most traditional text is probably *Altan erike*. Other sources are somewhere in the middle between these two. Although the author of *Altan erike* wrote his work mostly in a quite traditional and archaic form of Written Oirad, his text is also not free from spoken idioms and there are words consistently occurring in their colloquial form.

In order to demonstrate the difference between traditional forms and colloquial elements, each example provided here contains parallel data from Written Mongolian, traditional Written Oirad and modern Kalmyk. Of course, traditional Written Oirad does not have an exact

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<sup>168</sup> А. М. ПОЗДНЕЕВ, *Памятники исторической литературы астраханских калмыков*, Санкт-Петербург, 1885, 1–48.

<sup>169</sup> Х. ЛУВСАНБАЛДАН (Ed.), *Тод үсгийн дурсгалууд*, Улаанбаатар, 1975, 378–432.

<sup>170</sup> G. KARA – J. TSOLOO (Edd.), *The History of a Jakhachin Buddhist Monastery - Dharmabadra's «Golden Rosary»*, Budapest, MTA Altajisztikai Kutatócsoport, 1997.

<sup>171</sup> Б. ТҮВШИНТӨГС – Н. СҮХБААТАР (Edd.), *Баатар Увш туурвисан Дөрвөн ойрадын түүх оршив*, Улаанбаатар, Тод номын гэрэл төв, 2006.

<sup>172</sup> А. ПОЗДНЬЕВЪ, *Сказание о хождении въ тибетскую страну мало-дөрбётскаго Бāза-бакиши*, a cura di А. Позднѣевъ, Санктпетербургъ, Факультет Восточныхъ Языковъ Императорскаго С.-Петербургскаго Университета, 1897.

<sup>173</sup> Е. В. БЕМБЕЕВ, *Лингвистическое описание памятника старокалмыцкой ( ойратской ) письменности : « Сказание о хождении в Тибетскую страну Малодербетовского Бааза-багши*.

definition and standardised forms, so the same word or morpheme can occur in several variants in the sources. The author does not intend to give full list of these variants, only 1–2 parallel data will be provided here. Similarly, the colloquial elements mentioned here can not claim to be complete, the present study provides only a brief insight to the discussed topic.

### 6.2.2.2. *Phonetic changes*

Both the original quantity and quality of vowels of non-first syllables have changed in Oirad. Short vowels could drop out or be significantly reduced, while their distinction also has been neutralised. In the result of this neutralisation all those short vowels that did not disappear correspond to a neutral schwa (/ə/) in modern Oirad dialects. These changes are often reflected in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Written Oirad texts. Drop out of vowels is easily noticeable if the given vowel is simply missing in the written text 0.

- Ex:196    a    IJS 15:13 *xulγuna* ‘mouse’, WM *qulγan-a*, WO *xulγana*, Kalm. *хулһн*  
               b    IJS *xan-ba-bi* ‘satisfy-PRAET.PERF-1P.SG’, WM *xanuba bi*, WO *xanabai bi*, Kalm. *хануб*<sup>174</sup>

Since schwa has no direct equivalent in Oirad script, scribes could 1) rely on the literary tradition and write words according to the traditional orthography, 2) indicate the schwa with a vowel letter that seemed to be the most appropriate substitute (it is visible if the substitute letter differs from that of the traditional orthography), or 3) leave it out at all. The frequent and regular appearance of the former two in Written Oirad texts is a clear evidence of the presence of the schwa in the contemporary Oirad dialects. Apparently, vowel substitution (method 2) did not have unified and consistent rules, so many alternating variants can be observed. A frequent way of choosing the substitution letter is simply repeating the vowel of the preceding syllable. Example 2a–d demonstrates vowel repetition, 2e shows the drop out of the vowel, while 2f–g are examples of a simple vowel substitution.

- Ex:197    a    DÖT 30r10 *oyirid* ‘Oirad’, WM *oyirad*, WO *oyirod*, Kalm. *өөр᠔*  
               b    AE 15v02 *kitid* ‘China, Chinese’, WM *kitad*, WO *kitad*, Kalm. *кит᠔*  
               c    AE 9v10 *kürtüle*, IJS 143:10 *kürtülü* ‘to, until’, WM *kürtele*, WO *kürtele*, Kalm. *күртл*  
               d    BB 87:1 *γurbu* ‘three’, WM *γurba(n)*, WO *γurba(n)*, Kalm. *һур᠖(н)*  
               e    AE 3r07 *urid-yin* ‘before-GEN’, WM *urida-yin*, WO *urida-yin*, Kalm. *урдин*

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<sup>174</sup> Morpheme boundaries are indicated in the the primary examples only, not in the WM, WO and Kalm. parallels. Underlined texts show the demonstrated phenomena.

f IJS 21:2 *ilge-qšün* ‘send-NOM.PERF’, WM *ilegegsen*, WO *ilgēqsen*, Kalm. *илгэсн*

g IJS 21:5 *γar-γa-qson* ‘go.out-CAUS-PART.PERF’, WM *γarγaysan*, WO *γarγaqsan*, Kalm. *haphcn*

Not only short vowels, but also long vowels of non-first syllables became shorter (appr. equal with the length of short vowels of the initial syllables), however they retained their quality during this process. The shortening of original long vowels is reflected in modern Kalmyk Cyrillic orthography, but relatively rarely occurs in Written Oirad texts in consistent way and the occurrences are hard to distinguish from errors. As Pozdneev already noticed it<sup>175</sup>, the account of Bāza Baqši contains some examples of this phenomenon, which concerns not only original long vowels, but also long vowels developed from diphthongs, too 0.

Ex:198 BB 77:2 *düingge* ‘size (of)’, WO *düinggē*, Kalm. *дүггэ*

Fronting effect of vowel /i/ of non-initial (rarely first) syllables is a well-known and documented characteristic feature of today’s Oirad dialects. In the result of the process the original back vowels of the first syllables turn into front ones (/a/ → /ä/, /o/ → /ö/, /u/ → /ü/), or sometimes the consonant preceding /i/ is palatalised instead of the fronting of the vowel in the first syllable. The change of the vowel in the first syllable also changes the vocalism of the whole word, and – according to vowel harmony – the front vowel variant of suffixes are used during suffixation. Fronted vowels leave traces in Written Oirad texts in two ways: a) the spelling directly reflects the new vowel quality 0, b) the harmonising vowel of suffixes indirectly reflects the change, while the word stem (or at least its initial syllable) still contains a back vowel in its written form 0. The first method is possible only in the case of /o/ → /ö/ and /u/ → /ü/, but impossible with /a/ → /ä/, since /ä/ is a phoneme in spoken Oirad that has no letter in the Oirad script (because probably it was not present as a phoneme in the language when the script was invented by Zaya Pandita). Therefore /ä/ and its long pair /ä:/ are either not marked (so the spelling contains the original *a* or *ayi* letters) or substituted with another letter, e.g. the closest equivalents *e* and *ē*, or sometimes *ayi*.

Ex:199 a AE 33r09 *mörlö-böi* ‘go/travel-PRAET.PERF’, WM *morilabai*, WO *morilabai*, *moriloboi*, Kalm. *мөрлв*

b AE 12r06 *töyin* ‘monk’, WM *toyin*, WO *toyin*, Kalm. *төөн*

c DÖT 29v11 *zöri-n* ‘move.in.the.direction.of-CONV.MOD’, WM *žorin*, WO *zorin*, Kalm. *зөрн*

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<sup>175</sup> А. ПОЗДНЬЕВЪ, *Сказание о хождении въ тибетскую страну мало-дөрбётскаго Бāза-бакиши*, XVI.

- d AE 14v04 *nōrsö-q̄sön* ‘rest/ sleep-PART.PERF’, WM *noyirsaysan*, WO *noyirsoqson*, Kalm. *нөөрсөн*
- e BB 87:8 *dekēd* ‘again’, WM *dakiyad*, WO *dakīd*, Kalm. *дэкэд*
- f AE 31v14 *öyiröd* ‘Oirad’, WM *oyirad*, WO *oyirod*, Kalm. *өөрөд*
- g DÖT 29v13 *zörüülü-q̄sen* ‘devote.to-PART.PERF’, WM *joriyuluysan*, WO *zoriuluqsan*, Kalm. *зөрүлсн*

- Ex:200 a IJS *bar-ēd* ‘hold/take-CONV.PERF’, WM *bariyad*, WO *barīd*, Kalm. *бэрэд*
- b IJS *bayi-nei* ‘be-PRAES.IMP’, WM *bayinai*, *bayin-a (bayimui)*, WO *bayinai*, Kalm. *бээнэ*
- c DÖT 22v09 *bari-nē* ‘hold/take-PRAES.IMP’, WM *barinai*, *barin-a (barimui)*, WO *barinai*, Kalm. *бэрнэ*
- d DÖT 4r08 *bayi-q̄sen* ‘be-PART.PERF’, WM *bayiysan*, WO *bayiqsan*, Kalm. *бээсн*
- e IJS 153:11 *arbiḡi-bei* ‘grow/increase.in.number-PRAET.PERF’, WM *arbijibai*, WO *arbijibai*, Kalm. *эрвэжв*
- f AE 19v04 *bari-ul-ēd* ‘hold/ take-CAUS-CONV.PERF’, WM *bariyulayad*, WO *bariula:d*, Kalm. *бэрүлэд*

Another typical change that took place in the Oirad dialects during the last centuries is the change of original diphthongs to long monophthongs. Although traditional Written Oirad retains the original diphthongs, long vowels appear instead of them several times in many texts due to the influence of the spoken language 0.

- Ex:201 a DÖT 31v19 *zaluu-s-ta:-ḡa:n* ‘young.man-PLUR-SOC-REFL.POSS’, WM *jalayus-tai-ban*, WO *zaluustai-bēn*, *zaluustayiyān*, Kalm. *залустанан*
- b AE 30v02 *xōši* ‘after’, WM *qoyiysi*, WO *xoyiši*, Kalm. *хооран*
- c IJS 45:4 *xār-ār* ‘grace-INSTR’, WM *qayira-bar*, WO *xayira-bēr*, Kalm. *хээрэр*
- d IJS 161:6 *üüle-ten* ‘deed-POSS.2’, WM *üyile tanu*, WO *üyile tani*, Kalm. *үүлтн*

The neutralisation of diphthongs and long vowels in the spoken language has a less common side effect in writing: diphthongs and long monophthongs alternate not only in the spelling of

words and suffixes originally containing the former, but also in places, where diphthongs were never present 0.

- Ex:202 a AE 17v04 *širei* ‘throne’, WM *sirege*, WO *širē*, Kalm. *уурэ*  
 b DÖT 32r17 *köbüi* ‘son’, WM *köbegü(n)*, WO *köböü(n)*, *köbüü(n)*, Kalm. *хөвү(н)*  
 c DÖT 31r22 *zahuu-s-ta:-γayin* ‘young.man-PLUR-SOC-REFL.POSS’, WM *jalayus-tai-ban*, WO *zahuustai-bēn*, *zahuustayiya:n*, Kalm. *залустанан*

Rounding harmony is a phonotactic restriction in some of the Mongolic languages controlling the occurrence of non-close rounded and unrounded vowels in words (close vowels are not concerned). It is a progressive harmony, so the roundedness of a non-close vowel in a syllable determines the roundedness of non-close vowels occurring in the following syllables including word stems and suffixes, too. Most of modern Oirad dialects are characterised by the lack of rounding harmony, so suffixes with full (not reduced) non-high vowels have only two allomorphes according to labial harmony: the vowel is /a/ in back vocalic allomorphs and /æ/ in front ones. However, there are dialects (some variants spoken in Qinghai, Alasha and Western Mongolia) where rounding harmony can be observed in word stems and also in some suffixes. On the contrary, one of the most conspicuous features of traditional Written Oirad is consistent rounding harmony controlling both word stems and suffixes. It is not clear that rounding harmony of Zaya Pandita’s variant of Written Oirad is a mere orthographic feature or a reflection of a certain dialect of his time. Similarly, the origin of rounding harmony observable in some modern Oirad dialects should be studied, too: it can be an inherited feature or the influence of the neighbouring Mongolian dialects (Khalkha, etc.). Historical sources written by Europeans in Latin or Cyrillic script on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>-century Oirad suggest that rounding harmony was present in that time, and it disappeared only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as it is proven by later sources. Consequently, appearance of non-harmonising forms in Written Oirad texts is most likely the reflection of the changes that took place in the spoken tongue. Another possible, but less likely explanation is the influence of Written Mongolian, which is also characterized by lack of rounding harmony.

- Ex:203 a AE 17r08 *tō-tai* ‘number-SOC’, WM *toyatai*, WO *tōtoi*, Kalm. *моома*  
 b AE 13r11 *γomd-a:d* ‘complain-CONV.PERF’, WM *γomdayad*, WO *γomdōd*, Kalm. *хомдад*  
 c ISJ 21:9 *öq-ne-bi* ‘give-PRAES.IMP-1SG’, WM *öggün-e bi*, WO *\*öqnöi bi*, Kalm. *өгнөв*

When non-harmonising unrounded vowels are present only in the place of original short vowels of a word, then it is rather an example of vowel reduction and neutralisation than the reflection of the lack of rounding harmony 0.

- Ex:204 a IJS 137:6 *γomda-ba* ‘complain-PRAET.PERF’, WM *γomdaba*, WO *γomdobo(i)*, Kalm. *хомдө*  
 b AE 22r12 *odo-qsan* ‘go-PART.PERF’, WM *oduγsan*, WO *odoqson*, Kalm. *оден*

Vowel of the initial syllable can be assimilated under the influence of neighbouring labial consonants in Oirad. The most frequent example that is also well-attested in Written Oirad sources is modern /jow-/ ‘to go’, which is spelled as *yabu-* in traditional Written Oirad and *yob-* or *yobu-* in some texts with colloquial influence 0.

- Ex:205 a IJS 131:3 *yobo-ji* ‘go-CONV.IMP’, WM *yabuju*, WO *yabuji*, Kalm. *йовжэ*  
 b IJS 165:6 *yobu-xa-š* ‘go-PART.FUT-NEG’, WM *yabuqu bisi*, WO *yabuxu biši*, Kalm. *йовху*

### 6.2.2.3. Suffix variants

As it was mentioned Zaya Pandita’s variant of Written Oirad is characterised by archaic and sometimes artificial elements. This is well observable in the morphology, there are several suffices that are slightly differ from the corresponding morphemes of the spoken language.

The equivalent of Written Mongolian ablative case marker *-ača/eče* in Zaya Pandita’s original written language is a non-harmonising suffix (or postposition) *-ēce*. This artificial form takes its origin from the bookish reading of the Written Mongolian suffix, which is written separately and have a single surface form  $\text{ᠠᠴᠢ}$ . If it is treated as an independent word or postposition, it could be read as *eče* according to the rules of Written Mongolian, and this reading is the base of *-ēce* morpheme of Written Oirad. The same non-harmonising reading of Written Mongolian morphemes could be observed at other suffixes in Written Oirad, such as the marker of the instrumental case and the reflexive possessive.

Ablative case marker of the spoken Oirad language is different from the archaic *-ēce* form. Today’s Oirad dialects have two allomorphs: /-a:s/ and /-æ:s/ according to palatal harmony. Similar variants are well-documented in Written Oirad texts, even in sources from the 17<sup>th</sup> century (e.g. Galdan khan’s letter to the Russian tsar from 1691<sup>176</sup>). The allomorphes of the colloquial variants occurring in Written Oirad texts are the following ones: *-a:su/a:sa/a:s*, *-ēsü/ēse/ēs*, *-ōsu/ōs*, *-ōsü/ōs*. Allomorphes with rounded vowels can be

<sup>176</sup> Н. П. ШАСТИНА, *Русско-монгольские посольские отношения XVII века*; J. R. KRUEGER, *Three Oirat-Mongolian Diplomatic Documents of 1691*; Д. КАРА, *Поправки к чтению ойратских писем Галдана*.

either direct reflections of the spoken forms (it is true for earlier texts, since rounding harmony was probably present in Oirad of the 17–18<sup>th</sup> centuries) or influenced by the rule of rounding harmony of Written Oirad (in later texts, when rounding harmony did not exist in spoken Oirad).

- Ex:206
- a DÖT 14v18 *ax-a:sa-ni* ‘brother-ABL-POSS.3’, WM *aq-a-ača inu*, WO *axa-ēce inu*, Kalm. *ахасн*
  - b DÖT 2v19 *čay-a:su* ‘time-ABL’, WM *čay-ača*, WO *čaq-ēce*, Kalm. *уагас*
  - c IJS 15:5 *tayiš-a:su* ‘prince-ABL’, WM *tayisi-ača*, WO *tayiši-ēce*, Kalm. *тәәшәс*
  - d DÖT 29v20 *dor-ōsu* ‘below/down-ABL’, WM *doora-ača*, WO *dōro-ēce*, Kalm. *дорас*
  - e BB 86:10 *müren-ēse* ‘river-ABL’, WM *müren-eče*, WO *müren-ēce*, Kalm. *мөрнәс*

Original marker of instrumental case is also an archaising suffix: *-yēr* (after consonants, WM *-iyar/iyer*) and *-bēr* (after vowels, WM *-bar/ber*). The explanation for the non-harmonising character of these suffixes is very similar to that of the ablative case marker: the bookish reading of Written Mongolian suffixes. Colloquial forms in Written Oirad texts corresponding to today’s */-ar/* and */-ær/* suffixes are *-a:r*, *-ēr*, *-ōr*, *-ōr* and *-īr* (after stem final *i*). What concerns rounding harmony the situation is the very same as in the case of ablative. The use of colloquial forms of the instrumental case marker is so widespread in certain texts (such as Bāza Baqši’s account), that the archaic *-bēr* and *-yēr* variants do not occur at all.<sup>177</sup>

- Ex:207
- a DÖT 2r19 *balγas-a:r* ‘town/city-INSTR’, WM *balγasun-iyar*, WO *balγasun-yēr*, Kalm. *балһсап*
  - b DÖT 34r14 *emč-īr* ‘doctor-INSTR’, WM *emči-ber*, WO *emči-bēr*, Kalm. *эмчәр*
  - c IJS 45:4 *xa:r-a:r* ‘grace-INSTR’, WM *qayira-bar*, WO *xayira-bēr*, Kalm. *хәәрәр*
  - d IJS 125:4 *yos-ōr* ‘custom/manner-INSTR’, WM *yosu-bar*, WO *yosu-bēr*, Kalm. *үосар*
  - e DÖT *zōb-ōr* ‘correct/proper-INSTR’, WM *jōb-iyer*, WO *zōb-yēr*, Kalm. *зөвәр*

The modern form of the comitative (sociative in some sources) case marker (*/-la/*, */-læ/*, Kalm. *-ла/лә*) occurring together with the reflexive possessive is an etymologically compound suffix containing also the suffix of the instrumental case (*/-ar/*, */-ær/*): */-larən/* and */-lærən/*. Today the comitative and instrumental case markers of this compound are inseparable from each other

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<sup>177</sup> Е. В. БЕМБЕЕВ, *Лингвистическое описание памятника старокалмыцкой ( ойратской ) письменности : « Сказание о хождении в Тибетскую страну Малодербетовского Бааза-багши*, 55.

and form a single suffix (an allomorph of COM) relatively rarely attested in Written Oirad texts 0.

- Ex:208 a DÖT 22v13 *döü-lēr-en* ‘younger.brother/sister-COM-REF.POSS’, WM *degüü-lüge-ber-iyen*, WO *döü-lügē-bēr-yēn*, Kalm. *дүүлэрн*
- b DÖT 19r09 *albatu-la:r-an* ‘subject-COM-REF.POSS’, WM *albatu-luy-a-bar-iyen*, WO *albatu-luyā:-bēr-yēn*, Kalm. *алѳтлэрн*

The traditional Written Oirad markers of genitive case are *-i* (after *n*), *-n* (after diphthongs), *-yin* (after vowels) and *-iyin* (after consonants except *n*). The suffixes in the spoken language are */-īn/*, */-n/*, */-ān/*, */-æn/*, */-ā/* and */-æ/*. The latter four forms do not exist in traditional Written Oirad, but their representations frequently occur in colloquial texts. Vowel */ā/* of the suffixes can be represented in texts by *a:* and *ai*, while */æ/* by *ē*, *ei* and *ai* 0.

- Ex:209 a IJS 103:2 *zuun-ai* ‘hundred-GEN’, WM *ḡayun-u*, WO *zuuni*, Kalm. *зууна*
- b IJS 103:5 *mönggön-ei* ‘silver/money-GEN’, WM *mönggün-ü*, WO *mönggüni*, Kalm. *мөңгнэ*
- c AE *sar-a:n* ‘Moon-GEN’, WM *saran-u*, *sara-yin*, WO *sarayin*, Kalm. *сарин*
- d AE *šin-ēn* ‘new-GEN’, WM *sine-yin*, WO *sineyin*, Kalm. *шинин*, *шинэн*
- e AE *oul-a:n* ‘mountain-GEN’, WM *aḡula-yin*, WO *oulayin*, *uulayin*, Kalm. *уулин*

Suffix of reflexive possessive is the non-harmonising *-yēn* and *-bēn* in traditional Written Oirad, derived from WM *-iyan/iyen* and *-ban/ben* by similar way than the ablative and instrumental suffixes. Colloquial forms are *-a:n*, *-ēn*, *-ōn*, *-ōñ* and *-n* corresponding to the modern Oirad */-ān/*, */-æn/* and */-n/* variants.

- Ex:210 a DÖT 23v05 *ax-a:n* ‘older.brother-REF.POSS’, WM *aq-a-ban*, WO *axa-bēn*, Kalm. *ахан*
- b BB 87:12 *cayi-ḡa:n* ‘tea-REF.POSS’, WM *čai-ban*, WO *cai-bēn*, Kalm. *цэдхэн*
- c IJS 59:9 *bičig-ēn* ‘writing/document-REF.POSS’, WM *bičig-iyen*, WO *bičiq-yēn*, Kalm. *бичгэн*

There are some typical imperative forms of the Oirad dialects, which also occur in Written Oirad texts. Imperative */-tən/* and */-i:t/* express polite and formal request to 2SG or 2PL. Both morphemes are derived from the 2PL personal pronoun */ta/*.

- Ex:211 a IJS 25:6 *üzü-ten* ‘see-IMP.POL1’, Kalm. *үзтн*

- b IJS 59:10 *öq-tön* ‘give-IMP.POL1’, Kalm. *өгтн*
- c IJS 59:10 *sur-tun* ‘ask-IMP.POL1’, Kalm. *суртн*
- d IJS 21:4 *sur-ita* ‘ask-IMP.POL2’, Kalm. *сүрүм*

#### 6.2.2.4. *Morphosyntax*

The basic structure of expressing possession in Mongolian languages is formed by attaching the marker of the genitive case to the possessor, which precedes the possessed noun. Marking the possessor on the noun itself by a suffix is known, but far not common in Mongolian languages. Unlike other Mongolian languages where the latter structure is missing or has very limited use, modern Oirad dialects have developed and use the complete system of personal possessive markers. These markers derived from the genitive (or nominative) case form of the personal pronouns are practically unknown in traditional Written Oirad (similarly to Written Mongolian), but relatively frequently attested in some of the sources discussed here 0.

- Ex:212 a IJS 12:3 *bičig-ēs-ten* ‘writing/document-ABL-POSS.2’, WM *bičig-eče tanu*, WO *bičiq-ēce tani*, Kalm. *бичгэстн*
- b BB 86:12 *mörin-biden* ‘horse-POSS.1PL’, WM *morin bidan-u/manu*, WO *morin bideni/mani*, Kalm. *мөрмдн*

Similarly to personal possessive markers, personal predicative markers are also characteristic to Oirad. These suffixes are derived from the personal pronouns, too, and indicate the grammatical person and number of the subject when they attached to the finite form of verbs or nominal predicates. The modern Kalmyk forms are the following ones: 1SG *-б/б*, 2SG *-ч/-м*, 3SG *Ø*, 1PL *-вдн/видн*, 2PL *-ч*, 3PL *Ø*.

Although personal predicative markers are not typical in traditional Written Oirad texts, their first traces are attested in monuments from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The use of personal predicative markers is very common in later Oirad sources (as it is visible also on the example of documents discussed here), but highly depends on the content of the text. The markers are either written attached to the predicate or separately.

- Ex:213 a IJS 109:2 *sonos-ba-bi* ‘hear-PRAET.PERF-1SG’, WM *\*sonusba bi*, WO *\*sonosbo(i) bi*, Kalm. *сонсув*
- b IJS *ülü bayi-n=u ta* ‘NEG be-PRAES.IMP=INT.PART 2SG’ (‘won’t you please (do sg)’), WM *\*ülü bayi-n-a uu ta*, WO *\*ülü bayinuu ta*, Kalm. *\*үл бээнүт*

c BB 86:5 *xono-ba bide* ‘spend.the.night-PRAET.PERF 1PL’, WM *qonuba bida*, WO \**xonobo(i)*  
*bide*, Kalm. *хонувдн*

The examples taken from the four sources discussed here demonstrate that Zaya Pandita’s Clear script performs well in writing down the spoken tongue of the Oirads, and Written Oirad texts provide a large amount of information on the features and peculiarities of the contemporary language. The next step of the research on the history of Oirad dialects is creating a searchable corpus of Written Oirad monuments from different periods and different areas. A corpus of glossed texts and commented translations will be suitable for further linguistic and comparative analysis.

### 6.3. RESULTS OF COMMON MONGOLIAN SOUND CHANGES IN OIRAD

#### 6.3.1. Long vowels and VgV complexes

Certain sound clusters of Written Mongolian are known as the source of secondary long vowels in Mongolian languages. These VCV clusters contain a consonant (mostly *g*, *γ* or *γ*, and sometimes *b* or *m*), which is usually dropped out after spirantization. The diphthongs appearing after this process change to long monophthongs in the most of the present Mongolian languages, as in Oirad, too.

- WM *qayan*; WO *xa:n*; SHM *qahan*; Oir. *xa:n*; Khal. *хаан*; Bur. *хаан* ‘khan’
- WM *bayu-*; WO *bou-* ~ *buu-*; SHM *bawu-*; Oir. *bu:-*; Khal. *буу-*; Bur. *буу-* ‘to descend’
- WM *sayu-*; WO *sou-* ~ *suu-*; SHM *sa’u-*; Oir. *su:-*; Khal. *сүү-*; Bur. *хүү-* ‘to sit, to live’
- WM *tejiye-* ~ *tejiye-*; WO *tejī-* ~ *tezē-*; SHM *teji’e-*; Oir. *težä-*; Khal. *тэжээ-*; Bur. *тэжээ-* ‘to feed’

This change does not take place in each case, and there are several examples, when the intervocalic *γ/g* is preserved.

- WM *ebügen*; WO *öbögün* ~ *öbögön*; Oir. *öwgän*; Khal. *өвгөн*; Bur. *үбгэн* ‘old man’
- WM *emegen*; WO *emegen*; Oir. *emgän*; Khal. *емген*; Bur. *эмгэн* ‘old woman’
- WM *ünegen*; WO *ünegen*; Oir. *üngän*; Khal. *үнэг/нү*; Bur. *үнэгэн* ‘fox’

Since long-vowel-clusters sometimes do not turn into long vowels and in some words the consonant remains, it was necessary to suppose an explanation. By Poppe’s opinion the second vowel of the long-vowel-clusters could be either short or long. If it was a long vowel, the consonant dropped out and a secondary long vowel appeared. If the vowel was a short, nothing

happened, and the consonant was preserved.<sup>178</sup> This view however has some deficiencies, because the drop out and preservation of the intervocalic consonant is inconsistent, and the same word may change differently in various Mongolian languages or even in the same dialect.

In Oirad the intervocalic  $\gamma/g$  usually drops out, but there are several examples when preserved in Oirad, but disappears in other languages.

- WM *quruγu(n)*; WO *xuruγun* ~ *xurγun* ~ *xurγan*; Oir. *xurγn*; Khal. *хуруу*; Bur. *хурга/н* ‘finger’
- WM *niruγun*; WO *nuruγun* ~ *nuruu* ~ *nurγun*; Oir. *nurγn*; Khal. *nuruu*; Bur. *нюрга/н* ‘spine, back’
- WM *eregüü*; WO *örgün* ~ *örgön*; Oir. *örg* ~ *örgn*; Khal. *эргүү*; Bur. *үргэ/н* ‘jaw’;
- WM *yagaki-*; WO *yaγa-* ~ *ya:-*; Oir. *yaγ-*; Khal. *яа-*; Bur. *яа-* ‘what to do, how to do’

On the other hand there are numerous cases, when consonant  $\gamma/g$  is well-preserved in most of the Mongolian languages, but disappears in Oirad.

- WM *egem*; WO *ēm*; Oir. *ēm*; Khal. *эгэм*; Bur. *эгэм, ээм* ‘shoulde, collarbone’
- WM *mögeresün*; WO *mōrsön*; Oir. *mō:rsn*; Khal. *мөгөөрс/н*; Bur. *мөөрхэ/н* ~ *мэнгээрхэ/н* ‘cartilage’
- WM *suγu*; WO *sū* ~ *sou*; Oir. *su:*; Khal. *суга/н*; Bur. *хуга* ‘armpit’
- WM *nigül*; WO *nöül* ~ *nüül*; Oir. *nü:l* ~ *nügl*; Khal. *нүгэл*; Bur. *нүгэл* ‘sin’
- WM *kijayar*; WO *kiza:r*; Oir. *kizar* ~ *kezgär* ~ *kizgar* ~ *kizgär*; Khal. *хязгаар* ‘border’

Beside the most common  $\gamma/g$  sometimes the intervocalic *b* and *m* can disappear in the modern Mongolian languages, too. Oirad dialects preserved some words, where this intervocalic *b* disappeared in most of the Mongolian dialects.

- WM *kümün*; WO *kümün* ~ *köün* ~ *küün*; Oir. *kümñ* ~ *küm* ~ *kün*; Khal. *хүн*<sup>179</sup>; Bur. *хүн* ‘man’
- WM *debel* ~ *degel*; WO *debel*; Oir. *dewl*; Khal. *дээл*; Bur. *дэгэл* ‘caftan’
- WM *köbegün*; WO *köböün* ~ *köbüün*; Oir. *köwün*; Khal. *хүү*; Bur. *хүбүүн* ‘boy, son’

<sup>178</sup> N. POPPE, *The Primary Long Vowels in Mongolian*, in «J. la Société Finno-Ougrienne» 63, 1–19; N. POPPE, *On the Long Vowels in Common Mongolian*, in «J. la Société Finno-Ougrienne» 68 4, 1–31.

<sup>179</sup> The plural form of WM *kümüs* occurs in Khalkha as *хүмүүс*, but it is obviously a later borrowing from the written language, since the regular phonological development should lead to *\*хүмс*.

Some scholars state, that Oirad dialects preserved the long-vowel-clusters of Written Mongolian as diphthongs (or diphthong-like sounds) in few cases.<sup>180</sup> In fact some examples of such words occur in the already published Oirad texts, but these are folkore texts, where the influence of the written language cannot be excluded. E.g.: WMO-Z, Цолоо 1965 *ö:ldin neg ba:tärtä uwəlzzä* (< WM *ayulǰa-*) ‘He met an Ööld hero’.

### 6.3.2. Vi diphthongs

Beside the above mentioned relations the diphthongs also should be touched. Diphthongs of Written Mongolian are written as *VI + y + V2*, where *VI* or *V2* = *i*. Consonant *y* often comes from an original *ɣ/g*, which was followed by *i* (< *i/i*). These diphthongs (*ayi*, *eyi*, *oyi*, *uyi*, etc.) remain diphthongs in some Mongolian languages, and develop to long monophthong in others, such as in Oirad.

In Oirad the back diphthongs are mostly become fronted in the first-syllable (except *uyi*) during the change into long vowels, but in other syllables the result can be either a back or front vowel, and these occur even simultaneously. If a diphthong of a non-first syllable is fronted, the preceding vowels can remain back vowels, but if a diphthong of a first syllable turns into a long front vowel, then the other vowels of the word will be fronted, too, according to the palatal harmony

So, the original diphthongs in the first syllables result in the followings: *ayi* > *a:*, *oyi* > *ö:*, *uyi* > *u:*, *eyi* > *i:*, *üyi* > *ü:*. Diphthongs of non-first syllables change differently to certain extent: *ayi* > *a:/ä:* > *a/ä*, *oyi* > *a:* > *a*, *uyi* > *u:* > *u*, *eyi* > *ä:* > *ä*, *üyi* > *ü:* > *ü*.

- WM *sayin*; WO *sayin*; Oir. *sa:n*; Khal. *сайн*; Bur. *хайн*; Ord. *sān*; Mog. *sōin* ‘good’
- WM *dalai*; WO *dalai*; Oir. *dala* ~ *dalä*; Khal. *далай*; Bur. *далай*; Ord. *dalā* ‘ocean’
- WM *noqai*; WO *noxoi*; Oir. *noxā* ~ *noxä*; Khal. *нохой*; Bur. *нохой*; Ord. *noxō* ‘dog’
- WM *oyira*; WO *oyiro*; Oir. *ö:r*; Khal. *ойр*; Bur. *ойро*; ‘near’
- WM *siroi*; WO *šorō* ~ *široi* ~ *širō*; Oir. *šora*; Khal. *шорой*; Bur. *шорой*; Ord. *šorō* ‘earth, soil, dust’
- WM *uyila-*; WO *uyila-*; Oir. *u:l-*; Khal. *уйл-*; Bur. *уйл-*; Ord. *u'la-* ‘“to cry’
- WM *qarangyui*; WO *xaraxui*; Oir. *xarγxu* ~ *xarγyu*; Khal. *харанхуй*; Bur. *харанхий*; Ord. *xaraŋγī* ‘dark(ness)’
- WM *eyimü*; WO *eyimü*; Oir. *i:m*; Khal. *ийм*; Bur. *иймэ*; Ord. *īm* ‘such’
- WM *delekei*; WO *delekei* ~ *delkei*; Oir. *delkä*; Khal. *дэлхий*; Bur. *дэлхэй*; Ord. *delexī* ‘world’
- WM *tüimer*; WO *tüyimer*; Oir. *tü:mr*; Khal. *түймэр*; Bur. *түймэр* ‘fire, blaze’

<sup>180</sup> O. SAMBUUDORJ, *Az urianxai nyelvjárás hangtanának alapvető sajátosságai*, 147.

- WM *tedüi*; WO *tödȫ ~ tödöi ~ tödüi ~ tedüi ~ tedüü*; Oir. *tedü ~ tödü ~ tūdū*; Khal. *мөдүй*; Bur. *мүдүй ~ мэдүй*; Ord. *ted<sup>ü</sup>i* ‘so much’

### 6.3.3. Breaking of *i*

Oirad dialects preserved original short vowels of initial syllables quite well. There is an assimilation process known as breaking of *i*, which takes place in many Mongolian languages. Breaking of *i* means, that vowel *i* of the first syllable is assimilated by the vowels of the following syllables. This is a wide-spread phenomenon among the Mongolian languages, but its extent is different in each language. Some languages preserved *i*, while some others did not and the *i* was assimilated in almost every word. There is a tendency in Oirad to preserve *i*, but several examples of breaking can be observed, too.

If vowel *i* is not the initial sound of the word and it is followed by *a* or a secondary *a* (< *a*;) in the next syllable, the *i* may either break or not in Oirad, but does not palatalize the preceding consonant (as Khalkha and Buriad do it frequently). If vowel *i* is the initial of the word, breaking can either take place or not, too, but if the *i* breaks an prothetic *j* will appear.

- WM *miqan*; WO *maxa*; Oir. *max(n)*; Khal. *мах/н*; Bur. *мяхан*; Ord. *maxa*; Mog. *miqōn* ‘meat’
- WM *nilqa*; WO *nilxa*; Oir. *nilx*; Khal. *нялх*; Bur. *нялха*; Ord. *nilxa* ‘infant’
- WM *sira-*; WO *šira-*; Oir. *šar-*; Khal. *шар-*; Bur. *шара-*; Ord. *šara-* ‘to roast, to fry’
- WM *žiran*; WO *žiran*; Oir. *žirn ~ žarn*; Khal. *жар/н*; Bur. *жаран*; Ord. *žira* ‘sixty’
- WM *inaγ*; WO *inaq*; Oir. *inəg*; Khal. *янаг*; Ord. *inak* ‘friend, dear, lover’
- WM *imayan*; WO *ima:n*; Oir. *jaman*; Khal. *ямаа/н*; Bur. *ямаан*; Ord. *yama*: ‘goat’
- WM *ilaγa*; WO *ila:*; Oir. *ilä*; Khal. *ялаа*; Bur. *ялааһа/н ~ илааһан*; Ord. *ilō* ‘fly’

Vowel *i* usually breaks before *u* and *ü* in Oirad (even in initial position), and becomes *u* or *ü* consequently. The latter can be observed even in back-vowel words, if vowel *i*’s fronting effect takes place. In some words, where vowel *ü* of non-first syllables changes to *ö*, vowel *i* of the first syllable changes to *ö*, too.

- WM *čisun*; WO *čisun*; Oir. *cusn*; Khal. *цус/н*; Bur. *шуха/н*; Ord. *jusu* ‘blood’
- WM *nidün*; WO *nidün*; Oir. *nüdn ~ nidn*; Khal. *нүд/н*; Bur. *нүдэн*; Ord. *nüdü* ‘eye’
- WM *nilbusun*; WO *nilbusun*; Oir. *nülms ~ nülmsn ~ nulms*; Khal. *нулимс*; Bur. *нулимса/н*; Ord. *nulmusu* ‘tear’
- WM *ildü*; WO *ildü*; Oir. *üld*; Khal. *илд*; Ord. *üldü* ‘sword’
- WM *čidür*; WO *čidür*; Oir. *čödr ~ cüdr ~ čidr*; Khal. *чөдөр*; Bur. *шүдүр*; Ord. *čödör* ‘hobble’

Vowel *i* before a secondary *u* (< *u*.) mostly becomes *u* or sometimes *o* (if *u* < WM *ayu*), but if palatal umlaut takes place, then it becomes *ü*. There are only sporadic examples, when vowel *i* is preserved before *u*.

- WM *čilayun*; WO *čiloun*; Oir. *čulun* ~ *čolun*; Khal. *чулуу/н*; Bur. *шулуун*; Ord. *čilū* ‘stone’
- WM *sibaγun*; WO *šiboun*; Oir. *šuwun* ~ *šowun*; Khal. *шувуу/н*; Bur. *шубуун*; Ord. *šibū* ‘bird’
- WM *birayu*; WO *birou*; Oir. *bürü* ~ *börü*; Khal. *бярүү*; Bur. *бурүү*; Ord. *birū* ‘calf’
- WM *kirayu*; WO *kiruu* ~ *kiriü(n)*; Oir. *kirü*; Khal. *хяруу*; Bur. *хюруу*; Ord. *kirū* ‘hoarfrost’
- WM *bisiγun*; WO *bišüün*; Kalm. *bušu*; Khal. *бушуу*; Bur. *бушуу*; Ord. *bušū* ‘quick’

Before a secondary *ü* (< WM *egü*, *ügü*, *igü*) vowel *i* usually breaks, rarely remains or changes to *e*.

- WM *bilegü*; WO *bilöü* ~ *bilüü*; Oir. *bülü*; Khal. *билүү*; Bur. *бүлүү*; Ord. *bilū* ‘hone’
- WM *ilegü*; WO *ilöü*; Oir. *ülü*; Khal. *улүү*; Bur. *үлүү*; Ord. *ilū* ~ *ülū* ‘more, superfluous’
- WM *jigekün* ~ *jikeregün*; WO *zekerüün* ~ *zeküün*; Oir. *zekerün* ~ *zekün*; Khal. *жихүүн*; Ord. *jixūn* ‘cool, cold’
- WM *jisigü*; WO *jisü*; Oir. *žišü*; Khal. *жишүү*; Ord. *jışū* ‘inclined’

Before *a* (< WM *uya*) and *ä* (< *üge*) vowel *i* mostly becomes *o* or *ö*, sometimes *u* or *ü*, and in initial position a prothetic *j* appears.

- WM *jiruya*; WO *jirō*; Oir. *jora*; Khal. *жороо*; Bur. *жороо*; Ord. *jirō* ‘ambler’
- WM *jirγayan*; WO *zurγa:n*; Oir. *zurγan*; Khal. *зургаа/н*; Bur. *зургаан*; Ord. *jurγa* ‘six’
- WM *iruγar*; WO *irōl*; Oir. *yoral*; Khal. *ёроол*; Bur. *оёор*; Ord. *irōl* ‘bottom’
- WM *irügel*; WO *iröül*; Oir. *yöräl*; Khal. *ерөөл*; Bur. *юрөөл*; Ord. *örōl* ‘blessing’
- WM *čilüge*; WO *čilō*; Oir. *čölä(n)*; Khal. *чөлөө*; Bur. *шүлөө* ‘free, free time, free place, slit’

#### 6.3.4. Vowel fronting (palatal umlaut)

Short vowels of non-first syllables are strongly reduced in spoken Oirad dialects, so comparing the quality of these vowels with short vowels of Written Mongolian in similar positions seems meaningless. The only exception is vowel *i* only, since it has exercised significant influence on the development of the other vowels of the words.

Vowel *i* is characterized by a strong fronting effect, especially in back-vowel words, since due to the early *ī* > *i* development it occurs in back-vowel words, too. As a result of the effect of the *i* (both in first and non-first syllables) vowels of a back vocalic word could turn into front ones not only in Oirad, but also on certain other Mongolian dialects, too (Eastern Mongolian). During this process, vowel *i* ceases to be a distinctive phoneme in this position. Vowel *i* can affect not only the vowels, but also the consonants, too, and palatalize them (*n<sup>j</sup>*, *t<sup>j</sup>*, *d<sup>j</sup>*, *r<sup>j</sup>* and *l<sup>j</sup>* occur in Oirad).

In Altai Oirad the original WM *a* becomes *ä* in the surrounding of *i*, while *a:* becomes *ä:*, so a two new front vowel phonemes appear.

- WM *amin*; WO *amin*; Oir. *ämn*; Khal. *амь/н*; Bur. *ами/н* ‘life, living’
- WM *tabin*; WO *tabin*; Oir. *täwn* ~ *tämn*; Khal. *тавь/н*; Bur. *табин* ‘fifty’
- WM *talbi-*; WO *talbi-*; Oir. *täw-*; Khal. *тавь-*; Bur. *табу-* ‘to put down, to set free’
- WM *saki-*; WO *saki-*; Oir. *säk-*; Khal. *сахь-*; Bur. *саху-* ‘to protect, to guard’

Both *o* and *o:* turns into *ö* under the influence of *i*.

- WM *toγori-*; WO *tōri-* ~ *tōri-*; Oir. *tō:r-*; Khal. *тойр-*; Bur. *тойро-* ‘to go round’
- WM *γobi*; WO *γobi*; Oir. *gōw* ~ *gow<sup>j</sup>*; Khal. *зовь* ‘stepp with sparse grass’

Vowel *u* and *u:* change to *ü* and *ü:* (sometimes *ö*) in the surrounding of *i*.

- WM *qurim*; WO *xurim*; Oir. *xürm* ~ *xörm* ~ *xurm*; Khal. *хурим*; Bur. *хурим* ‘feast, wedding’
- WM *qubi*; WO *xubi*; Oir. *xüw* ~ *xüb* ~ *xöb*; Khal. *хувь*; Bur. *хуби* ‘part, destiny’
- WM *sayurin*; WO *souri* ~ *suuri*; Oir. *sü:r<sup>j</sup>*; Khal. *суурь*; Bur. *хуурь* ‘base, seat’

If vowel *i* of a non-first syllable follows a *č* or *ǰ*, then palatal umlaut does not take place.

- WM *balčir*; WO *balčir*; Oir. *balčr*; Khal. *балчир*; Bur. *балишар* ‘child’
- WM *aγujim*; WO *uujim*; Oir. *ūǰm*; Khal. *уужим*; Bur. *уужам* ‘wide’

Although in most of the cases only vowel *i* of non-first syllables fronts the surrounding vowels, sometimes vowel *i* of the first syllable has the same effect, too.

- WM *ilaya*; WO *ila:*; Oir. *ilä*; Khal. *ялаа*; Bur. *ялааһа/н* ~ *илааһан* ‘fly’
- WM *nilbusun*; WO *nilbusun*; Oir. *nülms* ~ *nülmsn* ~ *nulms* ~ *nulmsn*; Khal. *нулимс*; Bur. *нулимса/н*; Ord. *nulmusu* ‘tear’
- WM *birayu*; WO *birou*; Oir. *bürü*; Khal. *бярүү*; Bur. *буруу*; Ord. *birū* ‘calf’
- WM *kirayu*; WO *kiruu* ~ *kiriü(n)*; Oir. *kirü*; Khal. *хяруу*; Bur. *хюруу*; Ord. *kirū* ‘hoarfrost’

### 6.3.5. Affricates, velar and uvular stops

Changes of consonants are much more simple, there are just few important regular changes. Uvular stop *q* of Written Mongolian always result in *x* in Oirad, while *k* always remains in front vowel words and even in back vowel ones if followed by *i*. WM *ǰ* remains before *i* and becomes *ʒ* ([z] or [dʒ]) in other cases. Change of *č* is similar, it remains before *i* and becomes *c* else. However, there are some cases, when *č* and *ǰ* develops irregularly.

- WM *qaǰaγar*; WO *xaza:r*; Oir. *xazar*; Khal. *хазаар*; Bur. *хазаар*; Ord. *хаја:r*; Mog. *qada:r*; Dag. *xada:la* ‘bridle’
- WM *miqan*; WO *maxan*; Oir. *maxn* ~ *max*; Khal. *мах/н*; Bur. *мяхан*; Ord. *тахa*; Mog. *miqōn* ‘meat’
- WM *kümün*; WO *kümün*; Oir. *kümn* ~ *kömn* ~ *küm*; Khal. *хүн*; Bur. *хүн* ~ *хүүн*; Ord. *kün* ‘man’
- WM *kelen*; WO *kelen*; Oir. *keln*; Khal. *хэл/н*; Bur. *хэлэ/н*; Ord. *kele* ‘tongue, language’
- WM *ǰirüken*; WO *zürüken* ~ *züreken* ~ *züriken* ~ *zürken*; Oir. *зүркн*; Khal. *зүрх/н*; Bur. *зүрхэн*; Ord. *ǰürü<sup>k</sup>xe* ‘heart’
- WM *čilayun*; WO *čiloun*; Oir. *čulun* ~ *čolun*; Khal. *чулуу/н*; Bur. *шулуу/н*; Ord. *čilū*; Dag. *čolō* ‘stone’
- WM *čimügen*; WO *čimege* ~ *čimüge* ~ *čimgen*; Oir. *čimgn* ~ *čōtgn*; Khal. *чөмөг*; Bur. *сэмгэ/н*; Ord. *čōmögö* ‘marrow’
- WM *čirai*; WO *čirai* ~ *čira:* ~ *čirei* ~ *čirē*; Oir. *čirä*; Khal. *царай*; Bur. *шарай*; Ord. *čarā*; Dag. *šara<sup>i</sup>* ‘face’
- WM *kücin* ~ *kücün*; WO *küci* ~ *kücün*; Oir. *küčn*; Khal. *хүч/н*; Bur. *хүшэн*; Ord. *güci* ‘strength’
- WM *čayan*; WO *caγa:n*; Oir. *caγan*; Khal. *цагаан*; Bur. *сагаан*; Ord. *čaga:n*; Dag. *čiγa:ŋ* ‘white’
- WM *ǰiluγa*; WO *ǰilō*; Oir. *ǰola* ~ *ǰolo*; Khal. *жолоо*; Bur. *жолоо*; eh. Bur. *jolō*; Ord. *ǰilō* ‘bridle’
- WM *γaǰar*; WO *γazar*; Oir. *γazr*; Khal. *газар*; Bur. *газар*; Ord. *gaǰar* ‘land’
- WM *olǰa*; WO *olzo*; Oir. *olʒ*; Khal. *олз*; Bur. *олзо*; Ord. *olǰo* ‘quarry’
- WM *aǰirγan*; WO *aǰirγa*; Oir. *aǰrg* ~ *aʒrg*; Khal. *азрага/н*; Bur. *азарга* ‘stallion’
- WM *eje(n) ügei*; WO *ezen ügei*; Oir. *eǰgo* ~ *eǰgua*; Khal. *эзгүй*; Bur. *эжэзгүй* ~ *эзэгүй* ‘uninhabited’
- WM *ǰiyasun*; WO *zaγasun*; Oir. *zags(n)*; Khal. *загас/н*; Bur. *загахан*; Ord. *ǰagasu* ‘fish’
- WM *ǰögelen*; WO *zöülen* ~ *zöülün* ~ *zölön*; Oir. *ǰo:ln* ~ *zö:ln*; Khal. *зөөлөн*; Bur. *зөөлөн* ‘soft’

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