

## “I am the Fiddler of Erlig Khan” – The Bard as the Mediating Interpreter of the Hero in Kalmyk Epic Tradition

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### Introductory remarks

The Hungarian scholar Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna (1844–1913) recorded a considerable amount of linguistic and folklore material among the Astrakhan Kalmyks in 1871–1872.<sup>1</sup> He also collected fifteen unique tales (Bálint *utu tūli*)<sup>2</sup> and although he did not note down any epos,<sup>3</sup> half of the tales contain versified fragments inserted into the prosaic texts that have parallels in heroic epics of the Kalmyks and other Mongolian ethnic groups. While I was working with Bálint’s material, tale No. 10. attracted my attention due to its mythological motifs. The plot is about the son of the Oirats’ Richman (Bálint *Ōrdīn bayin*) who was born to fight with Erlig Khan’s warrior and is supported in his deeds by Erlig Khan’s (the ruler of the Underworld) fiddler (Bálint *xūrčī*).

From the rich mythological background of the tale here only the following motifs and motif-elements are discussed:

1. The hero is helped by the fiddler of Erlig Khan in defeating the warrior sent against him by the ruler of the Underworld.
2. The hero obtains the fiddler’s support via giving him his horse (the motif of an offering).
3. The fiddler gives advice to the hero how to defeat Erlig’s warrior and his sister (the motif of the support of a helping spirit).

<sup>1</sup> In details: Birtalan, Ágnes (ed. and intr.): *Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna, A Romanized Grammar of the East- and West-Mongolian Languages. With popular Chrestomathies of both Dialects*. (Budapest Oriental Reprints: Series B 3) Budapest, Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences - Csoma de Kőrös Society 2009. pp. XI–XIII. The research on folklore and dialects of Mongolian ethnic groups of the author is supported by the Hungarian Scientific Fund (OTKA K 100613).

<sup>2</sup> Translation of the fifteen tales with annotation: Birtalan, Ágnes: *Kalmyk Folklore and Folk Culture in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century. Philological Studies on the Basis of Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna’s Kalmyk Texts*. (Oriental Studies 15) Budapest, Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences – Elisita, Kalmyk Institute of Humanitarian Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences 2011. pp. 83–136. The transcription of Kalmyk lexemes and phrases follows Bálint’s system which is quite close to the present-day pronunciation.

<sup>3</sup> Among the Khalkhas Bálint collected not only original tales but he transcribed the *Geser* epic into spoken Khalkha on the basis of Schmidt’s version written in Uigur-Mongolian script (cf. Šmidt, I. Ja.: *Podvigi ispolnennago zaslug geroja Bogdy Gesser Hana, istrebitelja desjati zol v desjati stranah; gerojskoe predanie mongolov, s napečatannago v Pekine ekzemplara*. S. Peterburg, Imperatorskaja Akademija Nauk 1836; Schmidt, Isaak Jakob: *Die Thaten Bogda Gesser Chan’s, des Vertilgers der Wurzel der zehn Übel in den zehn Gegenden. Eine ostasiatische Heldensage*. St. Petersburg, W. Gräff – Leipzig, Leopold Voss 1839.). Unfortunately Bálint’s manuscript has been lost or has not been found yet.

4. The fiddler transforms the hero and takes him into the Underworld, but for the first time he does not understand Erlig's and his retinue's dialogue (the motif of the absence of the hero's real initiation).

5. The fiddler interprets the "language" used by the spirits for the hero (the motif of the helping spirit's mediation).

6. The hero is pursued by Erlig's envoys in various forms in order to steal his soul, but he overcomes them with the help of the fiddler's advice (the motif of rescuing souls cf. in shamanic narratives).

7. During his second visit into the Underworld the hero understands the dialogue of the spirits' world and overcomes Erlig's envoys again (the motif of the hero's initiation).

8. The hero marries the sister of the fiddler (the motif of the spirit spouse ?).

The chain of the selected motifs demonstrates the significant presence of the mythological background in the Kalmyk narrative tradition. The fiddler, Erlig Khan's entertainer plays a key role in the epic hero's development: primarily he is a mediator between the hero and the world layer of spirits, and later with his help the hero obtains initiation in the realm of Erlig Khan.

#### **Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna – the first Hungarian Mongolist in a classical sense**

Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna (13 March 1844 Transylvania, Szentkatolna, near Kézdivásárhely [today Târgu Secuiesc] – 26 May 1913 Transylvania, Temesvár [today Timișoara]) was one of the first versatile researchers of Mongolian languages.<sup>4</sup> He recorded folklore and religious material during his long lasting field work among the Kalmyks (1871–1872) and among the Khalkhas (1873).<sup>5</sup> Bálint started his research trip to Turkic and Mongolian speaking peoples in the summer of 1871 and after his arrival back in Hungary (1874), he started to process and edit his records. While he succeeded in publishing his Kazan Tatar material<sup>6</sup> he failed to issue the Kalmyk and Khalkha records. Nevertheless Bálint prepared an exceptionally precise transcription of that-time vernacular.<sup>7</sup> Both materials present the first long corpuses of 19<sup>th</sup> century Kalmyk and Khalkha spoken tongues. Though Bálint could not (or did not wish to?) work with his Mongolian material, he constructed a comparative grammar of Kalmyk and Khalkha and translated it with an additional chrestomathy into fairly

<sup>4</sup> On his life: Kara, György (ed.): *Bálint Gábor keleti levelei. Jelentése Oroszország- és Ázsiában tett utazásáról. Értekezése a mandsuk szertartásos könyvéről*. Budapest, Kőrösi Csoma Társaság 1973. [Gábor Bálint's eastern letters. His report on his journey in Russia and Asia and on his linguistic studies. His treatise on the Ritual book of the Manchus] and Birtalan: *Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna, A Romanized Grammar*. passim.

<sup>5</sup> Further data on his fieldwork, cf. Birtalan: *Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna*. pp. X–XVI.

<sup>6</sup> Text critical re-edition: Berta, Árpád: *Wolgatatarische Dialektstudien. Textkritische Neuauflage der Originalsammlung von G. Bálint 1875–76*. (Keleti Tanulmányok – Oriental Studies 7.) Ed. Apor, Éva. Budapest, Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Könyvtára 1988.

<sup>7</sup> *Nyugati mongol (Kálmik) szövegek*. (184 pages), Nr.: M. Nyelvtud. 4/109; [Western Mongolian (Kalmyk) texts]; *Keleti mongol (khalkha) szövegek*. (88 pages), Nr.: Ms1379/2; [Eastern Mongolian (Khalkha) texts].

good English. But this early achievement of Mongolian studies – that could become a milestone of international research – remained unpublished as well.<sup>8</sup> Concerning his working methods, circumstances of his recording activity, informants and his estimation about particular folklore genres, considerable amount of data are included in his *Report*,<sup>9</sup> his brief *Account*,<sup>10</sup> his letters<sup>11</sup> and his recently published fragmentary diary.<sup>12</sup>

The successful fieldwork method – which Bálint worked out among the Christianised Tatars in Kazan - was employed among the Kalmyks; therefore he worked mainly with schoolboys and teachers of the “Kalmyk foster home and school” (in Hungarian “Khalymik növelde és iskola”) in Astrakhan, where he spent eight months (end of September 1871 – May 1872). The Kalmyk text corpus was published recently: Birtalan, Ágnes: *Kalmyk Folklore and Folk Culture in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century. Philological Studies on the Basis of Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna’s Kalmyk Texts.* (Oriental Studies 15) Budapest, Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences – Kalmyk Institute of Humanitarian Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences 2011. The voluminous corpus includes a great variety of folklore genres, simple dialogues of Kalmyk vernacular and brief narratives on Kalmyk folk customs.

### **The Tales (Bálint *utu tūli*) in Bálint’s Kalmyk Manuscript<sup>13</sup>**

The tales constitute more than half of the Kalmyk manuscript and offer a very rich source material of 19<sup>th</sup> century Kalmyk vernacular and to a lesser extent of the formal language. Bálint also refers to a collection of folklore texts recorded by him in Kazan which included tales, but its fate is unknown.

“After living two and a half months in Kazan I mastered the spoken Kalmyk tongue so that I speak and write in it. After listening I collected words, folk tales, folk songs, riddles, materials representing the purest folk tongue for a little Chrestomathy.”<sup>14</sup>

On the recording of tales in Astrakhan Bálint commented as follows:

<sup>8</sup> Its first publication: Birtalan: *Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna, A Romanized Grammar.*

<sup>9</sup> Bálint Gábor Jelentése Oroszország- és Ázsiában tett utazásáról és nyelvészeti tanulmányairól. Mel- léklet öt khálýmik dano hangjegye. In: *Értekezések a Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Nyelv- és Szép- tudományi Osztálya köréből.* IV. (1875) pp. 1–19. [Gábor Bálint’s report on his journey in Russia and Asia and on his linguistic studies. With notes of five Kalmyk songs. In: Treatises from the Department of Linguistics and Aesthetics of the Hungarian Academy of the Sciences] cf. also Kara, György: *Bálint Gábor keleti levelei.*

<sup>10</sup> [Bálint, Gábor]: Jelentés az Akadémiához. In: *Akadémiai Értesítő.* V. (1871) pp. 244–245. [Report to the Academy. In: Proceedings of the Academy] cf. also Kara, György: *Bálint Gábor keleti levelei.*

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Kara: *Bálint Gábor keleti levelei.* passim.

<sup>12</sup> Zágóni, Jenő (ed. and intr.): *Szentkatolnai Bálint Gábor, Válogatott írások.* Budapest, [without publisher] 2005. pp. 7–58. [Selected writings of Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna]

<sup>13</sup> Bálint’s *Manuscript* pp. 36–139, in Birtalan: *Kalmyk Folklore and Folk Culture in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century.* pp. 83–136. There are two folk tales and some short anecdotes in the Khalkha collection, too (it is currently under elaboration).

<sup>14</sup> “1 harmadfél hónapi Kazánba lételem alatt magamévá tettem a kalmik népnnyelvet annyira, hogy rajta beszélek és írok; gyűjtöttem egy kis Chrestomathiára való anyagot, mely áll tulajdon hallomásom után följegyzett szók, népmesék, népdalok és talányokból, a lehető tiszta népnnyelven.” *Jelentés az akadémiához.* pp. 244–245 (cf. Kara: *Bálint Gábor keleti levelei.*). The Hungarian spelling follows Bálint’s original orthography.

“After the folk songs followed the recording of tales with more difficult [syntactic] structure. These [tales] were written down in Kalmyk script by young Kalmyks from various tribes, some of them visited the secondary school, some the surgical school, and others the elementary school and were considered to be good story-tellers. These tales written down in Kalmyk script were told sentence by sentence for me by my instructor according to the people’s pronunciation. This way we prepared the transcription that I read out to him and corrected [the parts] which I had heard incorrectly. The grammatical analysis and the interpretation of the tales followed thereafter. My tale collection prepared this way contains fifteen shorter and longer folk tales written down with Kalmyk letters and in an abbreviated Hungarian transcription. All the texts recorded from the Kalmyk tongue are transcribed in both ways [i. e. in Kalmyk script and in translation].”<sup>15</sup>

Bálint named all his tales as *utu tūli*<sup>16</sup> “long tales” and marked them with numbers without giving any titles. A list of tentative titles is provided below, referring either to the protagonist or the main event of the plot in accordance with the motif-catalogue of László Lőrincz.<sup>17</sup> These pseudo-titles might help the reader to find further parallel material and also identify the plot with tales of Mongolian or any other ethnic groups.<sup>18</sup>

First tale *Bojšry* “The sparrow” pp. 36–38.<sup>19</sup>

Second tale *Köwūn moyā xoyr* “The boy and the snake” pp. 39–41.

Third tale *Kūnē zayā* “Human fate” pp. 42–45.

Fourth tale *Moyā köwūn* “The snake lad” pp. 46–50.

Fifth tale *Tarwǰ xān* “The Steppe-eagle khan” pp. 51–55.

Sixth tale *Zul-šar Arsln bātr* “The Lamp-yellow Lion hero” pp. 56–61.

Seventh tale *Mīs, noxā, xulyñ* “The cat, the dog and the rat” pp. 62–67.

Eighth tale *Ačit köwūn* “The benefactor son” or *Öwgnā ĵurwn köwūn* “The old man’s three sons” pp. 68–74.

Ninth tale *Önčn köwūn* “The orphan boy” pp. 75–81.

Tenth tale *Ördīn Bayin kūn ba Erlg nomīn xān* “Oirats’ Richman and Erlig, the Khan of the Holy Teaching” pp. 82–88.

<sup>15</sup> “A dalok gyűjtését követte a nehezebb szerkezetű népmeséké, melyeket részint a gymnasiumba, részint a sebészeti tanodába, részint pedig az elemi iskolába járó és jó mesélőknek tartott, különböző törzsű, fiatal khalyimikok irtak össze khályimik írással. Ezen khályimik írásu meséket tanítóm a népkiejtés szerent nekem mondatolta és így láttuk el átírással; ezen átírást azután én fölolvastam és a netán roszul hallottakat kijavított, erre következett a mese nyelvtani fejtegetése és értelmezése. Az így eszközölt mesegyűjteményem 15 hosszabb és rövidebb népmesét tartalmaz khalyimik betűkkel és rövidített magyaros átírással. A khalyimik nyelvből gyűjtött anyag mind ilyen kettős írásu.” Bálint: *Jelentése*. p. 12.

<sup>16</sup> On the Kalmyk folklore genre terminology, cf. Lőrincz, L[ászló]: La terminologie du folklore Kal-mouck. In: *AOH XVIII*. (1965) pp. 149–158, on p. 156.

<sup>17</sup> Lőrincz, László: *Mongolische Märchentypen*. (BOH XXIV, Asiatische Forschungen 61). Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó 1979.

<sup>18</sup> The translation and motif analysis of the tales cf. Birtalan: *Kalmyk Folklore and Folk Culture in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century*. pp. 83–136.

<sup>19</sup> Pages in Bálint’s original Manuscript.

Eleventh tale *Čulūn xar bātr* “Stone-black hero” pp. 89–95.

Twelfth tale *Ulādā bātr ba Čon-bawγā* “Ulaadaa hero and the Wolf-wife” pp. 96–104.

Thirteenth tale *Xānī kūkn ba zāsngīn köwūn* “The khan’s daughter and the nobleman’s son” pp. 105–114.

Fourteenth tale *Žiryļčn Ulān Xačir* “The Glad Red-faced [hero]” pp. 115–125

Fifteenth tale *Kecū Berk bātr* “The Hard Solid hero” pp. 126–139

The Bálint-corpus is particularly remarkable concerning tale motifs and formulae, but less interesting from the point of view of the style of the formal language used in story-telling. For several reasons the original language of expert story-tellers appear distorted: first of all the majority of the informants – as it is obvious from Bálint’s above statement – were school-boys, who remembered without doubt the commonly repeated formulae of the Kalmyk tale-heritage: such as the beginning and closing formulae, the detailed description of the hero’s social and natural environment, the motif of fights of the protagonist and the antagonist and the epithets. By contrast, they simplified and sometimes minimised passages connecting particular motifs, repeating frequently the expressions: “then, later, thereafter, thereupon, meanwhile”; these connecting passages are created in a simple colloquial manner in most of the tales.<sup>20</sup>

Bálint’s tales offer a broad scale of mythical beings representing the pantheon of Kalmyk folk religion. Bálint’s main informants, the schoolboys and teachers can be considered as practitioners of the syncretic mixed religious practice – we can call folk religion – in their everyday life and on feast days. They were aware of the beings folk religious pantheon according to the plot of the tales and information emerging in ethnographic texts noted down by Bálint.<sup>21</sup> Phenomena of that time folk religious ritual practice can be traced by carefully studying the material as well. Various spirits and deities of the Kalmyk pantheon appear in Bálint’s texts, first and foremost in the tales. Here, I highlight only some mythical beings from the far more numerous ones in order to create the mythological background of the spirit-mediator in question, i. e. Erlig Khan’s fiddler – in connection to the central topic of the present conference. In the Kalmyk tales an accentuated role is given to the *zavāč* (written in other sources

<sup>20</sup> Nonetheless these fragments are important in the research of the strategies of language usage and provide valuable material for the 19<sup>th</sup> century idiom.

<sup>21</sup> Birtalan: *Kalmyk Folklore and Folk Culture in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century*. pp. 137–167.

also as *zayaači*) spirit<sup>22</sup> and to the *mangs/mūs*.<sup>23</sup> The demonic *šulm*, the *birmin-šulm-xan*<sup>24</sup> and *erlg* as the messenger spirit from the Underworld<sup>25</sup> also appear frequently. From among the animal-shaped spirits the hare, the fox and the wolf (this later appears in both positive and negative roles) are the most frequent figures in the tales. As I plan to devote a separate article to investigating all these mythological beings and narratives connected to them, here I do not go into further detail.

### The Tale No. Ten of Bálint's Kalmyk manuscript

The tentative title of the tale is *Ördin Bayin kün ba Erlg nomīn xān* "Oirats' Richman and Erlig, the Khan of the Holy Teaching"; it occupies the pages 82–88 in Bálint's manuscript.<sup>26</sup> According to the Mongolian emic genre-comprehension the tale belongs to the group of *šidet ülger* (Khalkha) "magic tale", as the magical and supernatural elements are represented in it extensively. The main motif-clusters around which the narration is structured are the followings:

<sup>22</sup> "Łayayači (mong.), jayaač (khal.), zayači (kalm.), zayagša, zayaaši (bur.) „Schöpfergeist, Demiurgos, guter Geist der Menschen“; mong. *ĵayaġan* „Schicksal“, *ĵayaġa-* „Schicksal verursachen“ + *-γci* (Nomen actoris) „Schicksal Verursacher“. ... In den oir.-kalm. Epen spielen die *zayači* als Schenker eines Erben den kinderlosen Alten, eine Rolle, und kommen in verschiedenen Gestalten vor: Berggeist, Sippenahne, himmlischer Bote der Götter, heiliger Einsiedlerlama (spätere Gestalt)." Birtalan, Agnes: Die Mythologie der mongolischen Volksreligion. In: *Wörterbuch der Mythologie. I. Abteilung. Die alten Kulturvölker* 34. Lieferung. Ed. Schmalzriedt, Egidius – Haussig, Hans Wilhelm. Stuttgart, Klett-Cotta 2001. pp. 879–1097, on pp. 1001–1002. In more details: Kičikov, S. A.: Archaische Motive bei der Herkunft des Helden und ihre Umbildungen in den Jangyār-Versionen. In: *Fragen der mongolischen Heldendichtung* III. (Asiatische Forschungen 91). Wiesbaden, Otto Harrassowitz 1985. pp. 301–337, on pp. 311–313. On the various appearances of the *zayāč* in Kalmyk tales: a travelling old man on camelback, old woman, soul of ancestors, local spirit, Lama cf. Nadbitova, I. S.: *Sjužety, obrazy i stilevyje tradicii kalmyckih volšebnyh skazok*. Elista, KIGI RAN 2011. pp. 39, 135–136.

<sup>23</sup> "Mangyus (mong.) „Dämon, böser Geist“, *mangas* (khal., ord., etc.), *mangadxai* (bur.), *mangs/mūs* (oir.-kalm.)." Birtalan: *Die Mythologie*. pp. 1009–1010; in more detail: Lórinicz, L[ászló]: Die Mangus-Schilderung in der mongolischen Volksliteratur. In: *Mongolian Studies*. (BOH XIV.) Ed. Ligeti, L[ouis]. Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó 1970. pp. 309–340. In Bálint's tales the *mangs* appears mostly as an anthropomorphic enemy or in some cases as an ally of the hero.

<sup>24</sup> For the group of demons called *šulm(n)* (Kalm.), *simnus*, *šumnus* (Mong.), *šulam*, *šulmas* (Khal.), *šolmo*, *šolmos* (Bur.) cf. Birtalan: *Mythologie*. pp. 1043–1044. For Birmanen cf. Krueger, John R.: Sanskrit Loanwords in Kalmyk. In: *Kalmyk-Oirat Symposium*. (Kalmyk Monograph Series 2) Philadelphia, The Society for the Promotion of Kalmyk Culture 1966. pp. 181–189, on p. 184; in folk tales (Šara Birmis xaan): Sangadžieva, N. B.: O žanrovom sinkretizme pesen eposa Džangar. In: *Jangyār boln epičesk ūdältin törlmūd. Oln-ulsin nomin čülyna materialmud 1990 ĵilin noxa sarin 22–24./Džangar i problemy epičeskogo tvorčestva. Materialy meždunarodnoj naučnoj konferencii 22–24 avgusta 1990 goda*. Elst/Elista, APP Džangar 2004. pp. 241–245, on pp. 243–244.

<sup>25</sup> "Die Boten, die für Erlig Khan Seelen rauben, und andere Untertanen, die in der Hölle die sündigen "Seelen" quälen werden auch *erlig* genannt." Birtalan: *Die Mythologie*. pp. 981–983.

<sup>26</sup> Birtalan: *Kalmyk Folklore and Folk Culture in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century*. pp. 108–111. The whole text and its translation cf. in the Appendix of present article.

Motive-cluster	Main motif
I. The Oirats' Richman is childless; his fate spirit blesses him with sons but they are supposed to die as they are predicted by the fate spirit.	Main motif: the inescapable destiny.
II. The Oirats' Richman tries to elude destiny hiding his last son – the hero of the tale – under the ground since he is supposed to die in a war, though this son is bound by his fate to Erlig Khan, the ruler of the Underworld	Main motif: tricking to escape the predicted destiny.
III. The last son's fate is changed by a helping (?) spirit, that is offered a horse and in return he gives advice to hero about how to escape his predicted destiny (how to overcome Erlig Khan's warrior).	Main motif: trial of predicted destiny.
IV. The helping (?) spirit is a bard in the realm of the Underworld and he initiates the hero in the spirits' realm in order to escape his predicted destiny.	Main motif: initiating into a new destiny.
V. The hero achieves a new destiny, a spirit-ally and a spirit-spouse (?).	Main motif: circumstances of creating a new destiny.

The leitmotif of the tale is, without doubt, destiny, starting from the motif of the divination and warning of the *zayāč* spirit, through the motifs of the tricks against the predicted destiny, up to the solution via the benefit of the helping spirit (the *xūrči*). The elements in the motif-clusters III–IV recall the motif of the “grateful dead (ghost)”;<sup>27</sup> the hero (cf. the traveller in other tales with this motif)<sup>28</sup> helps on his

<sup>27</sup> Aarne-Thompson-Uther 505/508; cf. Supernatural Helper 500–559.

<sup>28</sup> From the numerous tale variants with the same motif, cf. e. g. the German *Des Todten Dank* in *Deutsche Hausmärchen*. Ed. Wolf, J[ohann] W[ilhelm]. Göttingen, Dietrich'sche Buchhandlung –

way to the mortal battle with Erlig's warrior, an anthropomorphic being via offering him his horse twice (in detail cf. below). It is not said explicitly in the narration that this "being" is a deceased man. He claims to be a "man" accompanied by a demonic being. The hero's choice (offering his horse to the more human-like being) is appropriate and his action will ensure him the assistance of the creature (i. e. Erlig Khan's fiddler – as we learn later). The motif of the grateful dead is known among the Kalmyks, too; cf. the tale No. 15. in Ramstedt's collection<sup>29</sup> and it is referred in Lőrincz's Motif index as *Der Dank des toten Schuldners* (508).<sup>30</sup>

### The hero and his helper (helping spirit ?)

The main hero is not mentioned by name, only as Oirats' Richman's son. His primary supporting figure, Erlig Khan's fiddler names himself as "*Bi Erlek nomīn xāna xūrči bi.*" "I am the fiddler of Erlig Khan of the Holy Teaching". His main task is the solving of the hero's problems; he is connected to the hero via his offerings: as he is given twice the hero's horse. In the narrative he appears twice for the hero in pair with a demonic being (no closer identification).

"Thereafter the boy rode his blood-coloured chestnut and led his brown horse with eight wings. While he was going, his chestnut horse he was riding, stopped. Thereafter the boy left his chestnut horse and rode his brown horse. While he was going, his chestnut horse was coming from behind with a man wearing a gown and a naked man without a gown on its back. Upon arriving those two men said to the boy:

– Have you given this horse of yours to me wearing a gown or to him without a gown? – The boy said:

– I give it to you wearing a gown. – And he gave it to the man wearing a gown. Thereafter those two men left and disappeared. The boy went further and opposite him there was sitting a man with hair and a man without hair holding his horse. Thereafter they said:

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Leipzig, Fr. Chr. Wilh. Vogel 1851. pp. 243–250; the analysis of the motif in Hungarian folklore: Dégh, Linda: Adalékok a 'hálás halott' epizód mesei és mondai formálódásához. In: *Ethnographia* 68. (1957) pp. 307–318. [On the motif of grateful dead in tales and sagas].

<sup>29</sup> Ramstedt, Gustaf, John: *Kalmückische Sprachproben. 1. Kalmückische Märchen*. 1. Ges. u. hrsg. von G. J. Ramstedt. (Suomalais-Ugrilainen Seuran Toimituksia = Mémoires de la Société Finno-Ougrienne. 27/1.) Helsingfors 1909. pp. 74–104. Further tales with the same motif: Manjin Zärlg in *Xal'mg tül's*. I. Elst, Xal'mg degter yaryač 1961 [Kalmyk tales] pp. 121–127; the soul of the deceased belongs already to Erlig Khan's realm, but in order to thank for the hero's help, it returns to the human world and saves his life three times. A detailed analysis and further variants: Gorjaeva, Baira Basangovna: *Kalmyckaja volšebnaja skazka: Sjužetnyj sostav i poetiko-stilevaja sistema*. Elista, KIGI RAN 2011. pp. 40–41.

<sup>30</sup> Lőrincz: *Mongolische Märchentypen*. pp. 257–258.



[85] – Will you give this your horse to me having hair or to him without hair? – The boy said:

– I will give it to you having hair. – And he gave his horse. Thereafter the man without hair disappeared. That one without hair was a demon,<sup>31</sup> the one with hair was a man.”<sup>32</sup>

In fact the hero simply left his horse on his way, but it can be considered as an offering to the spirits (cf. the motif of compensation of the deceased's debt); apparently two spirits rivalled for the blood coloured chestnut (Bálint *cusun zērde möri*) horse. The spirits appeared to the boy first from behind as a man wearing a gown and a naked man not wearing a gown (Bálint *debeltä kün, debel ügä nücügün kün*), later in front of him as a man with hair and a man without hair (Bálint *üsün ügä kün, üsütä kün*). In both cases they ask for the horse and the hero gives it first to the man wearing a gown and then to the man with hair, i. e. to the creature of a more acceptable human appearance. The other being, the demon (Bálint *šulms*) disappears, while the one called a “man” in the text (*kün*) remains and revealing his real nature (he is the fiddler of Erlig Khan) gives advice to the hero how to defeat Erlig's warrior and escape his predicted, destined fate. The hero's enemy must be eliminated by shooting into his right eye; moreover the enemy's younger sister must be eliminated as well (as demonic beings usually have family members that must be killed not leaving behind any possible avengers).<sup>33</sup>

The fiddler (Bálint *xūrči*), the hero's helper is a fairly interesting figure in the plot. The hero's support (his horse offering) turns him into a helper, though it is not developed during the story why he needs the hero's horse. As stated above, presenting the horse can be understood as an offering for the future helper (7.10. Belohnung der Helfer).<sup>34</sup> His actual role reveals immediately after getting the offering (the blood coloured chestnut horse) and thereupon the spirit gives his first advice: how to kill the destined enemy Erlig Khan's warrior (NB! His name is Ulādā batar which is known from the Kalmyk epic tradition) and how to eliminate beings connected to him (in order to avoid the revenge of blood-kin in this case the enemy's younger sister – according to the usual epic motif 10.6.10. Vernichtung von Angehörigen/ Helfer des Feindes).<sup>35</sup> Though after killing his enemy and pursuing his sister, the hero hesitates to take her life and only upon his horse's demand kills her at the opening of the Underworld.

<sup>31</sup> Bálint *šulmus*, Kalm. *šulm, šulms*, in detail cf. above and also the *Tale No. Nine* in Bálint's material: Birtalan: *Kalmyk Folklore and Folk Culture in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century*. pp. 105–108.

<sup>32</sup> Birtalan: *Kalmyk Folklore and Folk Culture in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century*. p. 110.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Heissig, Walther: Innere Logik und historische Realität des Erzählmodells: Die Tötung von Mangusmutter und Mangussohn. In: *Fragen der mongolischen Heldendichtung III. (Asiatische Forschungen 91)* Wiesbaden, Otto Harrassowitz 1985. pp. 95–111.

<sup>34</sup> Heissig, Walther: *Erzählstoffe rezenter mongolischer Heldendichtung. I–II. (Asiatische Forschungen 100)* Wiesbaden, Otto Harrassowitz 1988. p. 850.

<sup>35</sup> Heissig: *Erzählstoffe rezenter mongolischer Heldendichtung*. p. 852.

“Thereafter the boy shot him in the right eye. That man died. That man’s younger sister ran to her yurt and escaped. [86] The boy pursued her from behind and caught her. Having caught her he ran further. There was a hole in front of him. He arrived at the hole and he was not able to kill at all, because she was so beautiful. Thereafter his horse said:

– Kill her immediately! – The boy killed her and ran away.”

The hero’s next encounter with his helper happens immediately after eliminating the enemy’s sister at the opening of the Underworld and he takes with him. The helper belongs to the Underworld and is wholly aware of what is destined to happen to the hero. He is a transcendental helper (7.9. Übernatürlicher Helfer, 7.9.4. Schutzgeist),<sup>36</sup> in all probability a helping spirit with magical abilities (metamorphosis in appearances in front of the hero, power of transforming the hero and his horse, understanding the spirits’ tongue).<sup>37</sup>

Why a fiddler (a bard)? The mediators are often entertainers, as the shamans and other communicators with the worlds of spirits and deities do not only feed the spirits by offering food and drink, but also entertain them with their appearance, voice and objects used during a ritual. The fiddler can be understood as one of such mediators who – via the power of making music and singing – became an integral part of Erlig Khan’s realm. The bard’s initiation to the Underworld is a well-known mythologeme in many cultures, just to mention the closest parallel, the story of the origin of *Jangyr* epic<sup>38</sup> or the story of the origin of the tale among the Mongols (Soxor Tarwā).<sup>39</sup> The first *jangyrč* “*Jangar*-performer” obtained his skills to perform *Jangar* epic from the Underworld. The motif of the aetiological myth contains an element that probably gives an answer to the problem: why a fiddler (bard) is the mediator spirit. The first *Jangar*-performer told his story about his Underworld journey and indicated that the *Jangar* was sealed on his tongue by the ruler of the Underworld, Erlig Khan as a reward, a compensation for his untimely visit into his realm.

“Als ich, wie ihr wisst gestorben war, wurde meine Seele zur Hölle, durch die Schreckengegend der Birid, vor den Thron Aerlik Chans geführt. Eine Menge fremder

<sup>36</sup> Heissig: *Erzählstoffe rezenter mongolischer Heldendichtung*. p. 850.

<sup>37</sup> The role of helpers originating from the spirits’ world is discussed by Nadbitova, too: cf. Pomoščniki geroja – mifologičeskie personaži, zagrobnye pomoščniki. Nadbitova: *Sžužety, obrazy i stilevyje tradicii kalmyckih volšebnyh skazok*. pp. 133–143.

<sup>38</sup> Bergmann, Benjamin: *Nomadische Streifereien unter den Kalmücken in den Jahren 1802 und 1803*. I–IV. Riga 1804–1805. II. pp. 207–210; Schorkowitz, Dittmar: *Die soziale und politische Organisation bei den Kalmücken (Oiraten) und Prozesse der Akkulturation vom 17. Jahrhundert bis zur Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts*. Frankfurt am Main – Bern – New York – Paris, Peter Lang 1992. pp. 409–411; Taube Erika: *Volksmärchen der Mongolen*. Aus dem Mongolischen, Russischen und Chinesischen übersetzt und herausgegeben von Taube, Erika. München, Biblion Verlag 2004. p. 12.

<sup>39</sup> Birtalan: *Mythologie*. p. 1041 (with further references).

Wesen umgaben den Thron des Chans. Einige spielten auf Churr (Geigen), andere auf Zurr (Flöten), andere auf Domburr, Kängärgä, Bischkurr.<sup>40</sup>

According to this narrative recorded at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Benjamin Bergmann, the Underworld (Hell) is full of splendour, art and amusement. The role of the helper of Bálint's hero fits into this conception and seems to be a spirit – entertainer of the lord of the Underworld. In Mongolian aetiological myths both the ability and the musical instruments of bards originate from spirits' world. In her monograph, devoted to the musical and performing culture of the Mongols, Carole Pegg surveyed most of the plots on this topic.<sup>41</sup> It is needless to emphasise how much respect the performers of epic have in the community, they are believed to be able to communicate with spirits and via the performance of epics not only entertain them, but also influence them and activate their supporting power for the benefit of the community – similarly to the shamans.<sup>42</sup>

The fiddler in Bálint's tale entertains the lord of the Underworld, but he has found a task in the human world, too, i. e. to assist a human being, whom he examined before (the motif of horse offering).

### The motif of descent into the Underworld<sup>43</sup>

The narration goes further and the helper (helping spirit) does not only save the hero's life two more times, but also initiates him, making him understand the spirits' tongue. The Underworld is not depicted in the tale, except its entrance (Bálint *nükünä ama*, lit. “the mouth/opening of the hole”) is mentioned and Erlig Khan's dialogues go on in there without any further allusion to more details. I suggest naming Erlig Khan's realm Underworld<sup>44</sup> and not Hell, due to the limited description and enumeration of sufferings and typical beings that inhabit the Buddhist-type Hell in the Mongolian folk

<sup>40</sup> Bergmann: *Nomadische Streifereien unter den Kalmücken*. p. 410.

<sup>41</sup> Pegg, Carole: *Mongolian Music, Dance and Oral Narrative*. Seattle – London, University of Washington 2001. pp. 100–102, *passim*.

<sup>42</sup> On this phenomenon, cf. Taube, Erika – Taube, Manfred: *Schamanen und Rhapsoden. Die geistige Kultur der alten Mongolei*. Leipzig, Koehler und Amelang 1983. pp. 188–221; Pegg: *Mongolian Music, Dance and Oral Narrative*. pp. 112–115; Somfai Kara, Dávid: Living Epic Tradition among Inner Asian Nomads. In: *Rediscovery of Shamanic Heritage* (Bibliotheca Shamanistica 11.). Ed. Hoppál, Mihály – Kósa, Gábor. Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó 2003. pp. 179–191.

<sup>43</sup> Here I do not intend to go into the details of the abundant literature on Mongolian Buddhist descent into the Hell (Molon toyin, Čoyiiǰid dagini, Naran gerel, etc.). In folk tales the motifs of descent into the Underworld or Hell and related motif-elements, cf. Lórinčz: *Mongolische Märchentypen*. Nos. 292–294. pp. 151–152, some examples: Balm sang tales in: Vladimircov, B. Ja.: *Obrazcy mongol'skoj narodnoj slovesnosti. (S.-Z. Mongolija)*. Leningrad, Institut Živyh Vostočnyh Jazykov imeni A. S. Enukidze 1926. pp. 85–90; on Balan-Senge: Potanin, G. N.: *Očerki Severo-Zapadnoj Mongolii. Rezul'taty putešestvija ispolennago v 1879 godu po poručeniju Imperatorskago Russkago Geografičeskago Obščestva*. IV. *Materialy etnografičeskie*. S. Peterburg, Tipografija Kiršbauma 1883. pp. 241–243, on Dalan xudalč pp. 243–244, Anǰin Xūramč: 244–246.

<sup>44</sup> Birtalan: *Die Mythologie*. pp. 1057–1058, and further references.

religious understanding. By contrast, the above mentioned tale No. 15 from Ramstedt's collection contains three descents, and also the names of the hells where the hero's helper (the grateful dead transformed into a Lama novice, a *manji*) is supposed to suffer: *šöwög tam, galt tam, usn tam* "Pfriemenhöhle, Feuerhöhle, Wassrehöhle".<sup>45</sup>

Even though the protagonist defeated Erlig Khan's warrior, the ruler of the Underworld does not want to let the hero escape his predicted fate; he sends soul-stealing messengers after him which always appear in pairs (as in other narrations).<sup>46</sup> The fiddler, we can call him "the helping spirit", turns the hero's horse into an anklebone and the hero into a smaller size (cf. 11.1.3.1. Verkleinern in Feuerzeugtasche),<sup>47</sup> throws away the anklebone and puts the hero into his pocket or the chest of his gown according to a typical motif in Kalmyk tales. They descend into the Underworld and the fiddler lets the hero listen to Erlig's intention aimed to eliminate him. This fragment might be the allusion to the beginning of the hero's initiation to become able to understand the spirits' communication.

"Have you heard these words? – The boy said:

– First, I don't know their language, [87] secondly [I heard only] your fiddle's tune. – Thereupon the fiddler told him everything."

The hero does not understand the spirits' tongue but he can hear the tune of the fiddler's instrument. This motif resembles the shamanic initiation received in the spirits' worlds and the role of the helping spirits as interpreters for the shaman. I am inclined to explain this motif-element as the hero's connection only to his helping spirit which the hero gained for himself via offering his horse. The hero is taken into the Underworld to receive knowledge (here in the tale-motif: the knowledge on how to escape Erlig's scheming).

The further plot of the discussed motif-cluster is aimed to demonstrate how the hero overcomes Erlig's messengers, – appearing in pairs – trying to fulfil the order of the Underworld's ruler. First two male demons (Bálint *šulam*) appear to bring the hero (i. e. the hero's soul) to Erlig Khan. They turn into a pair of arrows and as soon as the hero puts them into his quiver, they could kill him and the soul would get to the Underworld's ruler.

"Erlig the Khan of the Holy Teaching said:

– He killed Ulaadaa hero and his younger sister. Is there anybody who could kill him and bring his soul<sup>48</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Ramstedt: *Kalmückische Sprachproben. 1.* pp. 102–103.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. the series of anecdotic narratives about the Oirat trickster, Balm sang: Vladimircov: *Obrazcy mongol'skoj narodnoj slovesnosti.* pp. 85–90.

<sup>47</sup> Heissig: *Erzählstoffe rezenter mongolischer Heldendichtung.* p. 853.

<sup>48</sup> Bálint *sümüsün* 'i, cf. Kalm. *sünsn, sümsn*, Mong. *sünesün*, Khal. *süns* one of the souls of living beings, the most commonly used expression for soul; in details, cf. Birtalan: *Mythologie.* pp. 1038–1039, 1045–1046.

here? To the man who will bring that boy I will give half of my dependants. – Thereafter two demons said:

– We two will bring him here.

– How will you two bring him here? – Thereupon they said:

– When that good young man who overcame his enemy returns, we both will transform into two nice arrows and lie [on his way]. He will pick us up in order to put us into his quiver,<sup>49</sup> and thereupon we will kill him.

– Well, it’s good. – And [the khan] let them go.”

Upon the fiddler’s advice the hero breaks the arrows and so the legs and arms of the demons are broken, too. For the second time, the fiddler takes the hero into the Underworld again in the previous way (turning him into a smaller form and putting him into his pocket) in order to make him hear Erlig’s further plan. This time two female demons (*Bálint šulam*) will try to steal the hero’s soul. They turn into a nice cloth and tasty food in order to harm the hero.<sup>50</sup>

“They<sup>51</sup> arrived with broken legs and arms. Thereafter Erlig Khan also said:

– Now, who will bring him [to me]? – Saying so, he looked for somebody.

– We will bring [him to you]. – Said a demon woman who arrived with her daughter.

– How will you bring [him]? – Said [the khan]. Thereupon these [demons] said:

– That good young man who overcame his enemy will return home. His mother sewed for him a fine gown, his father prepared for him a dish called *tüid*.<sup>52</sup> We both will go into the gown and the food and kill him.

– Well, it’s good. – Said [the khan] and sent [them] away.”

<sup>49</sup> Lit. *Bálint biyedän dürikü*, Kalm. *bīdān dürx*, lit. “put it on his body”.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. the appearance of *ada*-spirits: Birtalan, Ágnes: *Ada: A Harmful Female Spirit in the Mongolian Mythology and Folk Belief*. In: *The Role of Women in the Altaic World. Permanent International Altaistic Conference 44<sup>th</sup> Meeting, Walberberg, 26–31 August 2001*. (Asiatische Forschungen 152.) Ed. Veit, Veronika. Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz Verlag 2007. pp. 19–33. passim.

<sup>51</sup> I. e. the demons sent previously.

<sup>52</sup> *Bálint tüid* there is no such lexeme in the dictionaries or in parallel texts; its meaning needs further research.

But this time the hero already understands the spirits' tongue, so he has become initiated into the *modus* of understanding the communication of the spirits.

“Thereafter the fiddler appeared and said to the boy:

– Have you heard it?

– Yes, I have heard it.”

However, even if he heard the demon's saying, the fiddler gives him advice how to overcome them.

“– Now, return home, collect nine white pieces of felt of the yurt, set a big fire, throw into it the gown and the food [88] and look at it. Meanwhile those two [demons] will transform into a horsefly and a fly<sup>53</sup> and they will try to fly away. That time catch them both, give them to the dogs Khasr and Basr<sup>54</sup> and come back. – The boy left. He arrived home, collected the nine white pieces of felt of the yurt, set a big fire, threw into it the gown and the food and looked at it. Meanwhile those two [demons] transformed into a horsefly and a fly and flew away. The boy caught them both, gave them to the two dogs and ran back.”

The two demons return to their lord entirely burnt and without success. The boy returns into the Underworld for the third time and understands Erlig's utterance, who blesses him with a long life. The fiddler offers the hero his sister (a spirit-spouse?) and his sworn brotherhood (assistance of the helping spirit).

“[Erlig Khan] said:

– Well, what can I do now? That boy didn't do anything against me, his destiny was to go and die in a war. Well, now I will bless him with a long life. – Thereafter the fiddler came out and said:

– Well, now return home. [The khan] blessed you with a long life. – Then the boy became [sworn] brothers with that fiddler. That fiddler married his younger sister to our boy. Thereafter our boy arrived home, married and lived peacefully in joy.”

The motif of sworn brotherhood (7.5.6. *Bruderbund/anda*)<sup>55</sup> appears in Ramstedt's

<sup>53</sup> Typical appearance of the soul. Birtalan: *Die Mythologie*. p. 1038.

<sup>54</sup> Bálint Xasar, Basar, Kalm. Xasr, Basr, or Asr, Basr two dogs frequently occurring in the Mongolian epic tradition, usually as destroyers of the hostile forces, cf. Birtalan: *Mythologie*. p. 945.

<sup>55</sup> Heissig: *Erzählstoffe rezenter mongolischer Heldendichtung*. p. 850.

tale about the grateful dead, too. Becoming an *anda* (Mong. *anda bol-*, in Oirat and Kalmyk tales rather *ax dūi bol-*)<sup>56</sup> accompanies the hero's encounter with future companions and allies, and concerns the transcendental helper, too.<sup>57</sup> In Ramstedt's tale the grateful deceased, the companion of the hero gets rid of the Underworld and lives together with the hero; moreover he marries the Chinese emperor's daughter. In Bálint's tale there is no further information about the fiddler's fate, we learn only about their entering into sworn brotherhood and the hero's marriage with the fiddler's sister. This last motif seems to be incomplete; the informants finished the narration quite suddenly. One can simply suppose – without having obvious evidence – that the hero's wife, coming from the spirits' world is probably a spirit-wife. However, this is only a hypothesis that needs further parallel material to be proven.

### Conclusion

From the above chain of motifs a well-definable mythological world view emerges. Here I demonstrated some of its main phenomena in the context of the world comprehension of the practitioners of folk religion. The informant, as stated above, was a schoolboy (it is clear from his narrating style), who was aware of the world view of his community. He uses the mythological terminology and motifs instinctively, without any problem of understanding them. The threefold world view appears, though here only in the realms of people and the spirits living in the Underworld. The transfer point to the Underworld is a hole and the hero seems to be able to penetrate there with the help of his helper (a helping spirit). The benevolence of the helping spirit can be gained via offering. The hero undergoes a kind of shamanic (?) initiation – although this motif is not revealed in details. The phenomenon of such kind of initiation is known for the members of the community. The mythical beings are demonstrated in their usual role (the ruler of the Underworld, the demons) which proves again their presence in the common comprehension of the world. The role of the bard – here a fiddler – who descends, and in the present tale even lives, in the Underworld is also a well-known phenomenon worldwide among various peoples. It is particularly important among the Kalmyks, whose bard of the *Jangar* epos obtains his ability to perform the epics from the Underworld. In *Tale No. Ten* recorded by Bálint the bard lives in the Underworld entertaining the Underworld's ruler, Erlig Khan, and becomes the helping spirit initiating the hero to understand the spirits' communication. However, this motif and the consequences of the initiation – whether the hero becomes a mediator or what happens to him possessing this ability – is not revealed in the narration.

<sup>56</sup> On the historical background of this folklore motif, cf. Birtalan, Ágnes: A Western-Mongolian Heroic Epic: Iḡ Tiw. A Story About the Sworn Brotherhood. In: *CAJ* 48:1 (2004) pp. 8–37; Birtalan, Ágnes: Rituals of Sworn Brotherhood (Mong. *anda bol-*, Oir. *and*, *ax dūü bol-*) in Mongol Historic and Epic Tradition. In: *Chronica. Annual of the Institute of History, University Szeged*. 7–8. (2007–2008) Szeged pp. 44–56.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Nadbitova: *Sjužety, obrazy i stilevyje tradicii kalmyckih volšebnyh skazok*. pp. 133–143.

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Appendix I.

Tenth tale  
10. *Utu tūli*<sup>58</sup>

Once<sup>59</sup> there lived<sup>60</sup> a rich man called Oirats' Richman.<sup>61</sup> That rich [man] had goods of nine elbows size,<sup>62</sup> his livestock filled his land. [But] he did not have any sound of a crying child.<sup>63</sup> Thereafter the old man [sic!] went to the fate spirit.<sup>64</sup> Arriving at his fate spirit, he said:

– You have blessed us with such a lot of goods and livestock. Now, bless us with the sound of a crying child, please! – Thereupon the fate spirit said:

– Although I could bless you with a child, but no son<sup>65</sup> will stay [alive]; that is why I do not have anything to bless you with.<sup>66</sup> – Thereupon the old man said:

– If it is true that the Oirats' Richman will have a child, grant [him] the pleasure and bless [him] [with a child].<sup>67</sup>

– Well, return [home]! I will bless you with a son. That son will go into the water and die. After him I will bless you with another son that will die under the legs of horses. After him I will bless you with another son, but that son will die in the war. – Thereafter the old man returned home. The son, who was destined to die in the water, was born. That old woman and that old man kept him away from water. While they were protecting [their son from water], once the old woman and the old man were preparing and drinking milk brandy exactly at noon<sup>68</sup> and without pouring out the water for the milk brandy they fell asleep. While they were lying, their son crawled and fell into the water of the milk brandy and died. Thereafter the son, who was destined to die under the legs of horses, was born. That old man and the old woman went to a place where there were no horses. That son was walking holding on to the yurt's wall. While he was walking this way, a stallion came [to the yurt] and trod the

<sup>58</sup> *Manuscript* pp. 82–88.

<sup>59</sup> *Bálint kezānā*; the initial formula is shorter than in other tales of the *Manuscript*.

<sup>60</sup> *Bálint bāidek sājī bolna* “there have lived”; typical initial formula in Kalmyk tales.

<sup>61</sup> *Bálint Ōrdīn bayin*, Kalm. *Ōrdīn bayn*.

<sup>62</sup> *Bálint Yisen toxa turšu edtä, maln' i yazarār dūrīng sājī bolna*. Kalm. *Yisn toxā turš edtä, mal n' yazrār dūng sāj boln*. Epic formula expressing the richness of the hero; however the epithet *yisn toxā turš* “nine elbows long” is somewhat unusual.

<sup>63</sup> Typical formula in Kalmyk tales.

<sup>64</sup> *Bálint zayāči*, in details cf. chapter *Bálint's Kalmyk tales (genre, motives)* and the notes of the Third tale.

<sup>65</sup> *Bálint köbūn kūkūd*, Kalm. *kōwūn kūkd* refers to the male children and not to both sexes, cf. *kōwūn kūkn* “sons and daughters”.

<sup>66</sup> *Bálint zayadik min' i ügä*, Kalm. *zayādg min' ugā* “I do not have anything to bless you with”.

<sup>67</sup> *Bálint Ōrdīn bayanyāsu köbūn yarba gekū neren boltoya zayaton*. Kalm. *Ōrdīn bayngās kōwūn yarw gex nern boltxā zayāt!* The lexeme *nern* “name” is ambiguous in the sentence; read probably *nērn* (?) “in fact, in truth”.

<sup>68</sup> *Bálint ike üdlā* read Kalm. *ik üdlā*, i. e. around 12 o'clock. Cf. Kalm. *yal üd* “gerade um 12 Uhr” (Ramstedt 455), *narn üd* “polden” (Muniev 545), Khal. *jīn üd, ix üd* “high noon” (Bawden 398).

boy that was walking grasping the yurt's wall dead from outside [the tent's wall]. [83] Thereafter the son, who was destined to die in the war, was born. Thereafter the old man put his son into a nine elbow [deep] pit dug under the goods on the honoured place;<sup>69</sup> and scattered besides him a lot of fruits and fed him [there]. Thereafter the boy was there until he reached the age of seventy years.

Earlier The Oirats' rich khan and Erlg, the Khan of the Holy Teaching<sup>70</sup> were once discussing [the following]:

– If a good lad is born from among your dependants and if a good lad is born from my dependants, let us make them fight. – For this reason Erlg, the Khan of the Holy Teaching sent a letter to the Oirats' rich khan: “A good lad was born from among my dependants. If there is a good son born from among your dependants, send him to me!”<sup>71</sup> Thereafter the Oirats' rich khan opened his yellow book<sup>72</sup> that does not fail [the truth]<sup>73</sup> and looked at it. In the book there was the following: “The man who will fight with Ulaadaa hero,<sup>74</sup> who has a yellow spotted horse the size of a mountain,<sup>75</sup> is the seventy-year-old [son]<sup>76</sup> of the Oirats' Richman. Thereafter the khan sent five warriors and ordered them to bring the Oirats' Richman's son. The five warriors arrived and said:

– The khan ordered to give your son to him! – Thereupon the Oirats' Richman said:

– What a son could I have? – The five warriors returned to the khan and said:

– He said that he had no son. – Thereupon the khan said:

– If the man can be unreliable, a book can be unreliable, too. – And opened the book to look at it again. [84] It was in that book: “The man who will fight with Ulaadaa hero who has a yellow spotted horse the size of a mountain is the seventy-year-old [son] of the Oirats' Richman. That boy is in a nine elbow [deep] pit dug under the goods on the honoured place.” – Thereafter the khan sent twenty-five warriors and ordered them:

<sup>69</sup> Bálint *baranan'i doro*, Kalm. *barānā n' dōr*; it is a usual motive in the Kalmyk tales: the honoured place is the hiding place of heroes, cf. *Fouth tale*.

<sup>70</sup> Bálint Erlek nomīn xān, Kalm. Erlg nomīn xān, Mong. Erlig nom-un qan, Khal. Erleg nomīn/nomon xān is the ambivalent ruler of the Underworld or in the Buddhicised mythology of the Underworlds. In details cf. Birtalan: *Mythologie*. pp. 981–983.

<sup>71</sup> Bálint *naran* read *nāran*.

<sup>72</sup> Bálint *bičik*, Kalm. *bičg* lit. “writing”.

<sup>73</sup> Bálint *šam gesegeg*, is an incomprehensible expression, the correct interpretation needs further investigation. In square brackets a logical interpretation complementing the sentence has been given.

<sup>74</sup> Bálint Ulada bātur, read Kalm. Ulādā bātr, cf. Khal. Ulādaī (?). Cf. Bordžanova, T. G.: Antroponimija kalmyckih narodnyh skazok. In: *Onomastika Kalmykii*. Ed. Bardajev, E. Č. – Monrajev, M. U. – Očir-Garjajev, B. E. Elista, Kalmyckij Naučno-Issledovatel'skij Institut Istorii, Filologii i Ekonomiki 1983. pp. 96–100.

<sup>75</sup> Bálint *ulān dūnggā* read Kalm. *ulān dūnggā*.

<sup>76</sup> There is a gap in the original text.

– Turn his yurt upside down and bring [the boy] here! – The twenty-five warriors arrived, and rummaged the honoured place. The Oirats' Richman said:

– Instead of taking my son, take from my goods. – The twenty-five warriors went to the goods [of the Oirats' Richman] to take some of them instead of taking the boy. Thereafter the Oirats' Richman's son said [to his father?]:

– It will bring ill fame, send those twenty-five warriors. – And [his father?] sent them away. Thereafter the boy rode his blood-coloured chestnut and led his brown horse with eight wings. While he was going, his chestnut horse he was riding stopped. Thereafter the boy left his chestnut horse and rode his brown horse. While he was going, his chestnut horse was coming from behind with a man wearing a gown and a naked man without a gown on its back. Upon arriving those two men said to the boy:

– Have you given this horse of yours to me wearing a gown or to him without a gown? – The boy said:

– I give it to you wearing a gown. – And he gave it to the man wearing a gown. Thereafter those two men left and disappeared. The boy went further and opposite him there was sitting a man with hair and a man without hair holding his horse. Thereafter they said:

[85] – Will you give this your horse to me having hair or to him without hair? – The boy said:

– I will give it to you having hair. – And he gave his horse. Thereafter the man without hair disappeared. That one without hair was a demon,<sup>77</sup> the one with hair was a man. That man said:

– I am the fiddler of Erlg, the Khan of the Holy Teaching. Now, go away from here. While you are going for seven days and seven nights, there will be a dark black fog. While the fog stays, two armies will fight [there] in front of you. Between those two armies will stay the man you are going to fight with. Shoot into the right eye of that man, so that man will die. Thereafter that man's younger sister will run to her yurt and will try to escape. Then pursue that girl, catch her and rush in the direction of the Sunrise. A hole will be in front of you, kill that maid and throw her into the hole. If you run away [from that place], I will be again at the gap of that hole. – Said [that man] and disappeared. Thereafter the boy went away. While going, seven days and seven nights passed and there was a dark black fog. There was a fog there and there were two armies fighting [in the fog]. Between those two armies Ulaadaa Hero was standing. Thereafter the boy shot him in the right eye. That man died. That man's younger sister ran to her yurt and escaped. [86] The boy pursued her from behind and caught her. Having caught her he ran further. There was a hole in front of him. He arrived at the hole and he was not able to kill at all, because she was so beautiful. Thereafter his horse said:

<sup>77</sup> Bálint *šulmus*, Kalm. *šulm*, *šulms*, in detail cf. *Ninth tale*.

– Kill her immediately! – The boy killed her and ran away. In front of him at the gap of the hole the previous young man was standing. Thereafter that young man turned the boy’s horse into an anklebone and threw it away, put the boy himself into his bag and left.

Erlg the Khan of the Holy Teaching said:

– He killed Ulaadaa hero and his younger sister. Is there anybody who could kill him and bring his soul<sup>78</sup> here? To the man who will bring that boy I will give half of my dependants. – Thereafter two demons said:

– We two will bring him here.

– How will you two bring him here? – Thereupon they said:

– When that good young man who overcame his enemy returns, we both will transform into two nice arrows and lie [on his way]. He will pick us up in order to put us into his quiver,<sup>79</sup> and thereupon we will kill him.

– Well, it’s good. – And [the Khan] let them go. Thereafter the fiddler came out [of Erlg’s place] and asked the boy:

– Have you heard these words? – The boy said:

– First, I don’t know their language, [87] secondly [I heard only] your fiddle’s tune.

– Thereupon the fiddler told him everything.

– Take those two arrows, break them and run here to me. – Thereafter the boy left. While he was going, there were two nice arrows lying [on his way]. The boy took those two arrows, broke them and ran back. That young man was standing at the hole-gap. Again he put the boy into his bag. Thereafter those two [demons] arrived one week later. They arrived with broken legs and arms. Thereafter Erlg Khan also said:

– Now, who will bring him [to me]? – Saying so, he looked for somebody.

– We will bring [him to you]. – Said a demon woman who arrived with her daughter.

– How will you bring [him]? – Said [the Khan]. Thereupon these [demons] said:

– That good young man who overcame his enemy will return home. His mother sewed for him a fine gown, his father prepared for him a dish called *tüü*.<sup>80</sup> We both will go into the gown and the food and kill him.

<sup>78</sup> Bálint *sümüsün*’i, cf. Kalm. *sünsn*, *sümsn*, Mong. *sünesün*, Khal. *süns* one of the souls of living beings, the most commonly used expression for soul; in details, cf. Birtalan: *Mythologie*. pp. 1038–1039, 1045–1046.

<sup>79</sup> Bálint *biyedän dürükü*, Kalm. *bīdān dūrx*, lit. “put it on his body”.

<sup>80</sup> Bálint *tüü* there is no such lexeme in the dictionaries or in parallel texts; its meaning needs further research.

– Well, it's good. – Said [the Khan] and sent [them] away. Thereafter the fiddler appeared and said to the boy:

– Have you heard it?

– Yes, I have heard it.

– Now, return home, collect nine white pieces of felt of the yurt, set a big fire, throw into it the gown and the food [88] and look at it. Meanwhile those two [demons] will transform into a horsefly and a fly<sup>81</sup> and they will try to fly away. That time catch them both, give them to the dogs Khasr and Basr<sup>82</sup> and come back. – The boy left. He arrived home, collected the nine white pieces of felt of the yurt, set a big fire, threw into it the gown and the food and looked at it. Meanwhile those two [demons] transformed into a horsefly and a fly and flew away. The boy caught them both, gave them to the two dogs and ran back. The previously mentioned young man was standing at the gap of the hole. He threw away the boy's horse in the shape of an anklebone and put the boy himself into his bag / pocket. Those two [demons] arrived burnt in fire. [Erlg Khan] said:

– Well, what can I do now? That boy didn't do anything against me, his destiny was to go and die in a war. Well, now I will bless him with a long life. – Thereafter the fiddler came out and said:

– Well, now return home. [The Khan] blessed you with a long life. – Then the boy became [sworn] brothers with that fiddler. That fiddler married his younger sister to our boy. Thereafter our boy arrived home, married and lived peacefully in joy.

Appendix II.

The *Tenth Tale* in Bálint's manuscript

<sup>81</sup> Typical appearance of the soul. Birtalan: *Die Mythologie*. p. 1038.

<sup>82</sup> Bálint Xasar, Basar, Kalm. Xasr, Basr, or Asr, Basr two dogs frequently occurring in the Mongolian epic tradition, usually appear as destroyers of the hostile forces, cf. Birtalan: *Mythologie*. p. 945.

82.

10. Uta Auli.

Mezänä Ördön bajin gedek bajin baidek sānji bolna.  
 Tere bajin jisen toqoz turū edtä, malni qararar Pärün  
 sānji bolna. Tere bajinda ulıxu kükiñin ün ügä sānji  
 bolna. Tünäsün öböğön «ajäci kalaw qarad jaböba.  
 Lajä cüdän isäd Keläbe» cime ike mal, ed zajābala,  
 oda manda nēge ulıxu kükiñin dü zajāxan ton «  
 gebe. Teikülä zajācini Keläbe» čamädu «ajasa  
 gebe čigi, köbün. Kükiñin toksoñ ügän töldü zaja.  
 dik-miri ügä «gebe. Teikülä öböğön Keläbe»  
 Ördön bajınayasa köbün qarba gekü nellen  
 boltoqan, zajāton «gebe. » Ke, säin xäri, nēge  
 köbü zajasu-bi, tere köbün usundu orözi üküki,  
 Lünä darüni basa nēge köbü zajasu-bi, tere kö-  
 bün aduna köldü orözi üküki, Lünä darüni  
 basa nēge köbü zajāsu-bi, tere köbün dāi.  
 nä köldü orözi üküki «gebe. Tünäsün öböğön  
 gerdän xäriči iräbe. Usunda orözi üküki köbün  
 qarba. Tere emēgen öböğön xojus tere köbügän  
 usunda cerläd bāibe; teigeči cerleči bāitelni  
 emēgen öböğön xojus ike üdä ärtkän nerēči  
 uyad ärtkän usünä asxal ügä unäd odta. Un-  
 tuči Reptelni köbünä mülköči jabäd tere ärt-  
 kän usunda unäd üküči odta. Tünäsün xojus  
 ni aduna köldü orözi üküki köbün qarba. Tere  
 emēgen öböğön xojus adun ügä qarartu odän  
 bāibe. Tere köbünä teremäsü bāriäd jabödik bolna,  
 teigeči bāitelni nēge ajirya adun küci iräd,  
 teremäsü bāriäd jaböči jabotson köbügi terem  
 yadzasu ükiläd alad orkoba.

Li

Li

7-10

0087



Түүндэ даруни даймэ Көлдү орōжи икүү Күү  
 Көлүн җарба. Түүнэсүн ибигүн тере Көбүгән  
 барананн доо җисен тоҗа турсу җарат малад  
 тере милкүндү Көбүгән орткәд, өйрөнн Кесек  
 олон теремес асхәд бәилҗәбе. Түүнэсүн тере  
 Көбүн түүндән бәйгә бәйҗи арбан дол ан на.  
 сунду Кирбе. Керәнә Ордин бәҗин җән, Эр-  
 лек номин җән җоҗус Келексен сәнҗи « Чи-  
 ни алоптәсу сәин Көбүн җарад, минн алоптәсу  
 сәин Көбүн җардих болҗула җоҗусәгүнн дәил.  
 дәлеҗе уексен сәнҗи болнә. Тегәд тере Көлдүн  
 Эрлек номин җән Ордин бәҗин җәнду биҗик  
 илҗәҗи болнә » минн алоптәсу сәин Көбүн җат-  
 ба, Чи алоптәсу сәин Көбүн җараксан болҗонн  
 наран илҗәҗексен бәидек болнә. Түүнэсүн Ордин  
 бәҗин җән җанҗесеге есе ендедек Сара биҗигән  
 секәд җәлҗәбе, тере биҗиктүнн бәидек болнә »  
 Уландҗигә Сара сәҗор мөрүтә Улада Бәтүрта  
 дәил Бәҗә Күн Ордин бәҗинә арбан дол ата  
 ... җеҗи бәидек болнә. Түүнэсүн җән Табун  
 бәтүрҗиге Ордин бәҗинә Ала Көбүгинн абиҗитә  
 тен җед илҗәҗексен болнә. Табун Бәтүр ирәд  
 Ордин бәҗинәҗиге Келәбе » Тамәҗиге җән Көбүгән  
 аса җеҗи Келәбе » гебе. Тей Күлә Ордин бәҗин  
 Келәбе » нанду җүн Көбүн билә? » гебе. Табун  
 Бәтүр ирәд җәнду Келәбе » тере тен, нанду Көбүн  
 үгә генә » гебе. Тей Күлә җән Келәбе » Күн мөрүтә.  
 җула, биҗик лиҗи митүрүтә җумун сәнҗи » җед  
 даҗәд секәд ирәбе. 0088

84.

Tere bičiktüni baidar bolna. Män būnge  
 šara cōxos mōrītā Mlada bātunta dāilbēxi  
 Rūn Ōrdin bajina arban dolata, Kore Kōbūni  
 baranārii doro jisen to ŋa turšu yarastu bāi.  
 nā „geči baidar bolna. Tūnāsūn xan xurin tabun  
 bātūriqi» gerini xamtatād abči irēten „gebe.  
 xurin tabun bātur irād barāqini udulād ab.  
 ba. Ōrdin bajin Kelēbe » mini Kōtū abxār, cae  
 mini edāsū abton „gebe. xurin tabun bātur  
 unā Kōtū abxār edāsūni abija gēd ed tala.  
 ni Kīsād odba. Tūnāsūn Ōrdin bajina  
 Kōbūn Kelēbe » mū nexen bolju gēd, Kore  
 xurin tabun bātūriqi jabōton <sup>šād</sup> jabūlqi orko.  
 ba. Tūnāsūn Kōbūn cusun cerde mōriān unād  
 nāimen kibertā boro mōriān Kōtōlād yarād  
 jabōba. Jabōqi jabōtolni unāqi ~~jabōtolni~~ jabot.  
 son 12 erde mōriāni colād bāibe. Tūnāsūn Kōbūn  
 cerde mōriān ŋajāqi orkād boro mōriān unād  
 jabōba. Jabōqi jabōtolni ardasūni cerde mō.  
 riāni nēge debeltā Rūn, debel ŋgā ni cūgūn Rūn  
 xojus unād Kīsāi irēbe; Kīsāi irād Kore xojus  
 Kōbūndū Kelēbe » ene mōriān debeltā wandu ŋōl.  
 čī (ŋōlū-či), debel ŋgā iūdū ŋōl-či? „gebe. Kōbūn  
 Kelēbe » debeltā čamādu ŋōnā-bi „gēd debeltā  
 Rūndū ŋgād orkoba. Tūnāsūn ker xojus Rūn  
 ŋgā bolād odba. Kōbūn jabōqi jabōtolni om.  
 wōni isūn ŋgā Rūn, iūtā Rūn xojus mōriāni  
 bāriqi sūditi bolna.

0089

41

85.

|| он-

Түнэсүн хөдөн Келэбэ » энэ мөриэн үсүтэ нан-  
 ду өзгөнтө, үсүн үгэ үндү өзгөнтө? » гебе. Кө-  
 бүн Келэбэ » үсүтэ чаманду өзгөнтө-биэгэд өзгө-  
 Түнэсүн үсүн үгэ Күн үгэ болд олда. Тере  
 үсүн үгэ Күн сүлмүс сэнжи, надаркиси Күн сөн-  
 жи. Тере Мүн Келэбэ » би Эрлек номин Хана түр.  
 Чи-би, гебе, Чи ода түнэсүн жато, жабөжи жаботол-  
 -чии долан сө, долан өдөи Хараагуу Хара бу-  
 дан болу. Аере будан эрксөфүлэ өмнө-чии хо-  
 жул эрэк дэилдэд эрксөксон байдек болно.  
 » Тере хожул эрегин Хоронду хере чамала дэилдө.  
 Хү Күн эрөчи (эрксөжи) байдек болу » Чи хере  
 Күнэ барун нүдэрни Хад орко, Леилдэ хере Күн  
 икэд одоу. » Түнэсүн хере Күнэн-чии дү Күтүн.  
 ай герадэн харад Хулүлү, хере чакту Чи хере  
 Күн Күжи Күчэд бэрижи абад || маран харагуу ү-  
 рүк тала доптола, өмнө-чии нэге нүкүн байдек  
 болу, хере нүкүндүн Чи хере Күн Күжи алд,  
 дакэд доптолхулэ-чии нүкүнэй амкн дөне  
 Харагалдагу-би » гэд үгэ болд олда. Түнэсүн  
 Күбүн харад жабөба. Жабөжи жабөтолүс долан  
 сө, долан өдөи Хараагуу Хара будан болу.  
 Будан эрксөфүлэ хожул эрэк дэилдэд  
 эрксөксон байдек болно. Тере хожул эрегин  
 Хоронда Улада Батат эрксөксон байдек бол-  
 но. Күбүн Түнэсүн хере Күнэ барун  
 нүдэрни Хад оркоба, хере Күн икэд олда.  
 хере Күнэ дү Күтүнни герадэн харад Хулүлү.

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[бо]

86

Kōbūn ardasuni Kōgād bāriād abba, bāriji  
 abād carān yarād doptolba. Ömnöni nēge  
 ničkün bāidek bolna. Tere ničkündü irād  
 Kōbūn Kūkegi Jēgād säiten düni alāji  
 jadād bāibe. Tünäsün möri ni Kelēbe » ötör  
 ala! « gebe. Kōbūn alāji orkad, carān dopto-  
 lād yarba. Ömnöni ničkünä amba dōre sāki  
 zalü cokči bāidek bolna. Tünäsün tere  
 zalü Kōbūn ä möri ni šaya Kēgād xayāji  
 orkoba; bijeni xayayalāji orkad orād orka.  
 Erlek mömün xān Kelēji bāidek bolna » Ula,  
 da Bratur dü Kūkütäginä alāba, oda tere  
 Kūgi alād sümüstini asarāji ökü Kūn bāin-ü?  
 tere Kūgi asarāji öksön Kündü aloptūni  
 örältini ögñä-bi « gebe. Tünäsün nēge tojus  
 sulmu Kelēji bāidek bolna » biden xojuron  
 abči irēkü-biden « gebe. Ta xojus jayāji  
 abči irēnā-ta? « gebe. Tei Kūlä eden Kelēbe »  
 tere dāigān daraksan sām kalū xāriji jabo-  
 ŋu, tünä ömnöni biden xojus, xojus säiten  
 sumun bolād Keptekü-biden, tere manigi abād  
 bijedän dūrükü, Kēgād tere caklu biden Kū-  
 niigi alāju-biden « gebe. » Ne sām « ged jaba-  
 lād orkoba. Tünäsün xūsči yarā irād  
 Kelēbe » ođaki Keleksen ügi sonsoba-či? «  
 gebe. Kōbūn Kelēbe » nēgedegäs bi tedenä  
 kele mēkēsi-bi (medekü-bi-bi),

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6.

87.

Хожис дууар тана хүрэн ахис болна. « гебе. Теикүлэ хүрчи сугаригини Келэжи өггөбө. » Ёи Асере хожис сүмфиги абад, хуулжи оркэд наран доптолад ире « гебе. Түнэсүн Көбүн жарад жалба. Жабжи жаботолни, нэге хожис сөитен сумун Кептешек болна. Көбүн Асере хожис сүмфиги абад хуулжи оркэд, гедеган доптолад Кирсад ирөбө. Тере залу нилкүнә аман дөре зокчи бәидек болна. Баса Көбүги харталалжи оркэд орад одо. Түнэсүн Асере хожис долә хонорсон чаклу Кирчи ирөбө; жар. Көл. ир хууруорсон Кирчи ирөбө. Түнэсүн. Эрлект хән Дакэд баса Келөбө » одо Мен Ауниги абчи ирөнә « гэд Кү хәйбе. » Биден абчи ирөнә-биден « гэд нэге шүлму бабәжа Кәкү » Агән хожурон ирөбө. Тажайәжи абчи ирөнә-га. » гебе. Теикүлэ еден Келөбө » Асере дәйгән дараксан сәин залу гертән хәритә, Асере Күнә эжини нэге сәин дебел ужужи табиксен болку, абанни нэге сәин тид гөдөк хото Кәжи А. биксен болку, Агәд биден дебел хото хожурон орад аләжү-биден « гебе. » Не сәин, Агәгәд оркөбә. Түнэсүн хүрчи жарчи ирәд Кө. бундү Келөбө » сонос ба-чи? « гебе. » Сонос. ба-би « гебе. » Ёи одо гертән орад, гертән јисен саяан иткөгәс сугһүжи оркэд иткәл күлөжи оркэд дебел хото хожисәгини тајәжи

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88.

orkād šalǰāzi bāi! tere carku tere xojar  
 bökünä batana xojus bolād nisād yarǰu;  
 či tere carku tere xojusāgi bāriǰi abād, xasar  
 basat xojus noxadān ökäi orkād ire "gebe.  
 Kōbün yarād jabōba. Gestān isād Kōbün  
 gerān jisen cayan idēkegās cagluǰi orkād  
 ire yal sülčǰi orkād debel xoto xojusāy al  
 dotōro xajǰi orkād šalǰāyād bāibe. Teigeǰi  
 bāitelni böküni batana xojus bolād, ni-  
 sād yarči jabōdok bolna. Kōbün tere xojusāgi  
 bāriǰi abād xojus noxadān ökäi orkād doptō-  
 lād küsād irebe. Sāki zalūni mükünä anda  
 dēre zokči bāidek bolna. Mörüni sāya  
 Rebtā xajǰi orkād bijāni xaptayalǰi  
 orkād orād odta. Tere xojusni yalda kiliäk-  
 sen küsči irebe. "Ne, oda jaǰu-bi?" geǰi  
 bāiyād Kelēbe, tere Kōbün nandu jumna Kēksen  
 ōgä bilä, tünä ebērāni dāinā Köldü orōǰi  
 äküki fūbini bilä, gebe; Ne oda tündü  
 ufa nasu ökü jumunagebe. Tünäsün xūsči  
 yarči isād Kelēbe "Ne, oda či xāri, čamā-  
 du ufa nasu ögǰbe "gebe. Tegeād Kōbün tere  
 xūsčita afa-dü bolba, tere xūsči dü Kōbün  
 mana Kōbündü ögǰbe; Tünäsün mana Kōbün  
 gletān isād babajayān abād xūmǰulōn  
 žisǰād bāibe.

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