

Cornelius Rahmn and his works on the Kalmuck language

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Mongolian language studies in Sweden

Although there is no academic tradition for Mongolian language studies in Sweden, some individuals have from time to time made noteworthy contributions to this field. Best known among these is no doubt Philip Johan Stralenberg (1677-1747), whose famous description of Northern and Eastern Eurasia from 1730 contains a rather extensive Kalmuck wordlist (see also Krueger 1975a). Stralenberg had been an officer in the army of the Swedish king Charles XII, who was defeated by Peter I of Russia at Poltava in 1709. Like many other Swedish officers he was captured and sent to Tobolsk in Siberia, where he collected materials about Siberian geography and languages. He was allowed to return to Sweden in 1722, and he published his book in Stockholm in 1730. He spent his last years at his brother's castle Fröllinge in the small southern Swedish village Getinge (incidentally the same village where I grew up in the 1940s and 50s without knowing anything about Stralenberg).

Another Swedish prisoner of war who made a notable contribution to Kalmuck studies was Johan Gustaf Renat (1682-1744), who was captured first by the Russians at Poltava and later by the Dzungars, and spent 17 years in Dzungaria. When he could return to Sweden in 1734, he brought with him two maps, the first detailed maps of the Oirad area in Central Asia, now held by Uppsala University Library (see Poppe 1955).

Although rather many Swedish missionaries were working in Mongolia during the first half of the 20th century, only one of them, Folke Boberg (1896-1987), published anything on the language. Boberg was a missionary in Inner Mongolia from 1922 to 1951. He published a textbook of Mongolian in 1946 and a Mongolian-English dictionary in three volumes in 1954. The well-known Swedish-American Mongolist James Bosson has told me that one reason why he became interested in Mongolian was that when he was a high school student in Stockholm he happened to get a summer vacation job in the office where this dictionary was being printed and became fascinated with the strange-looking script.

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In my opinion, an earlier missionary, in fact the first Swedish missionary to Asia, Cornelius Rahmn, was the one who made the most valuable contribution to Mongolian language studies, but since his works exist only in manuscript form they have remained unknown to most scholars in the field (although they are mentioned by Bawden 1985:283). During my stay as a guest researcher at The Centre for Northeast Asian Studies of Tohoku University from May to August 2008 I worked on these manuscripts, with the aim of making their contents accessible to other researchers. Here I will make a short presentation of Rahmn and his works on Kalmuck.

Cornelius Rahmn

Cornelius Rahmn was born in 1785 in Göteborg (Gothenburg), Sweden's second largest city, as the son of an artillery officer. He studied law at Lund University, but never worked in the legal profession. Instead he turned to the church and became a chaplain with the Göta artillery in 1810. John Paterson, a member of the London Missionary Society who lived in Sweden for some years after 1807, became acquainted with Rahmn, and in 1817, Rahmn was recruited to accompany the English missionary Edward Stallybrass to open the Society's mission for the Buriads at Irkutsk in Siberia (note1).



Figure 1. Cornelius Rahmn. By courtesy of Göteborgs stadsmuseum.

On their way to Irkutsk, the two missionaries first spent some time in St. Petersburg, and in December 1817 they left for Moscow, where they were received by emperor Alexander I who showed a sympathetic interest in their mission. On 19 January they left Moscow on sledge together with their wives, Sarah Stallybrass and Betty Rahmn, both pregnant, and the Rahmns' daughter Hanna, who was two years old. After two months' journey they arrived at Irkutsk on 16 March 1818.

Because of Betty Rahmn's poor health, the Rahmn family had to leave Irkutsk already in May 1819, and they moved to Sarepta to work among the Kalmucks. Sarepta had been founded as a Christian colony by the Moravian United Brethren (or "Herrnhutians") in 1765. It was situated to the south of Tsaritsyn (later Stalingrad and now Volgograd), where the small Sarpa river flows into the Volga; it is now renamed Krasnoarmejsk and is a southern suburb of Volgograd city. Rahmn stayed there for almost four years, still working for the London Missionary Society, although he lived among the Moravian Brethren. In June 1823 he was forced by the Russian authorities to stop his missionary activities, and moved to St Petersburg, where he stayed until 1826, when he became an international secretary at the headquarters of the London Missionary Society. In 1832 he became pastor for the Swedish congregation in London, and in 1841 he returned to Sweden to become pastor of the small rural parish Kalv (then written Kalf) in southwestern Sweden, where he stayed until his death in 1853.

During his stay among the Kalmucks, Rahmn started to translate the Bible into Kalmuck, since he was dissatisfied with the translations by Isaac Jacob Schmidt, who belonged to the church of the Moravian Brethren. The extent of these translations and their whereabouts are not known; they may have been lost when his letters and other documents were burned after his death (Bawden 1985: 282-3). The dictionary and grammar dealt with here were possibly written in preparation for this translation work.

Rahmn's Kalmuck manuscripts

Three manuscripts by Rahmn which deal with the Kalmuck language, numbered R162, R163 and R164 are held by Uppsala University library. A fourth manuscript (R165) is written in Classical Mongolian.

Manuscript R162 is a Kalmuck-Swedish dictionary, written on light blue paper, ca 18×22 cm. The text on the cover page is: *Författaren till detta Kalmuckiskt-Svenska lexicon är prosten i Kalf (Göteb.) stift Cornelius Rahmn hvilken 1817-25 verkade som missionär i Wolgatrakterne, Inköpt 26/4 1889 af Rahmns änka.* [The author of this Kalmuck-Swedish dictionary is the pastor of

Kalf (Göteborg diocese) Cornelius Rahmn, who 1817-25 was a missionary in the Volga areas. Bought 26/4 1889 from Rahmn's widow]. There is no title page and no foreword or other explanation from the author.

The manuscript consists of 281 numbered pages, two empty pages, and a final page, number 284, which has the heading *Förtekning på ord, hwilka i brist af fullt motswarande i kallmuckiskan, öfwersättas med phraser el. composita* [List of words which, lacking a perfect correspondence in Kalmuck, are translated with phrases or compounds]. This page contains translations of Swedish words into Kalmuck. The main part of the dictionary contains about 8,000 Kalmuck words, written in the old Kalmuck (Oirad or Todo) alphabet, each with a Swedish translation. Rather many of the words have a German translation as well, written in old German "blackletter" handwriting (*Kurrentschrift*), corresponding to printed *Fraktur* style. Each page is divided into two parts by a vertical line. In the larger left-hand part of the page, the words are arranged alphabetically according to the Kalmuck script, and the right part contains additional words or examples, usually derived from or otherwise related to those to the left, or at least in the same alphabetic section.

Manuscript R163 is a Swedish-Kalmuck wordlist. It has no cover page but the number R163 and the text *Corn. Rahmn. Svenskt Kalmuckiskt lexicon inköpt 26/4 1889 till Ups. Univ. Bibl.* [Corn. Rahmn. Swedish Kalmuck dictionary bought 26/4 1889 to Uppsala University Library] is written on the first page. It is written on light grey (first half) and light blue paper, ca 22 × 34 cm. It consists of 129 written but unpaginated pages (and rather many empty pages interspersed between them). Most pages are divided into three columns, and each column contains Swedish words beginning with a certain letter combination, e.g. *Ab, Ac*, etc., and their Kalmuck translations. Within each column the words are more or less in Kalmuck alphabetical order, which reveals that Rahmn most probably made this wordlist by going through the Kalmuck-Swedish dictionary from the beginning to the end, writing down each word in the relevant column. Thus it is basically an index to the Kalmuck-Swedish dictionary. Sometimes the Swedish translation is slightly different from that given in the Kalmuck-Swedish dictionary, and there are also a few additional words not found in the dictionary.

Manuscript R164 is a Kalmuck grammar, written on light blue paper, ca 18×22 cm. The text on the cover page is: *Corn. Rahmn, Kalmuckisk grammatika, köpt till Ups. U.B. 26/4 1889* [Corn. Rahmn, Kalmuck grammar, bought to Uppsala University Library 26/4 1889]. The manuscript contains two versions of the grammar. The first version has the heading *Kalmuckisk grammatik* [Kalmuck grammar] and consists of 37 unpaginated pages. The second version has the heading *Anmärkningur hörande till kallmuckiska språkets grammatik* [Remarks belonging to the

grammar of the Kalmuck language] and consists of only 14 unpaginated pages. There are two additional pages listing adverbs with Swedish translations, two pages of mono- and disyllabic words in Kalmuck only, one page containing *The Lord's Prayer* (after Schmidt) with interlinear Swedish translation, one page of Kalmuck words written syllable by syllable and one page showing the Kalmuck digits.

The first version of the grammar is more complete and the information in it seems more accurate than in the second version. My impression is that the second version is a sketch written before the first and more final version. Inspection of the manuscript shows that the two versions originally were two different manuscripts bound together, most probably in the wrong order.

The fourth manuscript, R165, is also written on light blue paper, ca 22×36 cm. The text *Köpt 26/4 1889 af prosten Corn. Rahmns änka* [Bought 26/4 1889 from Dean Corn. Rahmn's widow] is written on it. It consists of 142 pages written in Old Mongolian script. On the inside of the cover, Rahmn has written *Cornelius Rahmn Irkutsk 1819*, and 1 Тетрадь [1st notebook] is written on top of the first page. My impression is that Rahmn wrote this manuscript while he was learning Classical Mongolian.

The grammar

Rahmn's grammar is written in Swedish, and Kalmuck words are given in the Kalmuck script. Here I will describe the first, more complete version of the grammar. It consists of two parts, called *Ortographie* [Orthography] and *Etymologie* [Etymology; i.e. morphology]. The first part is only slightly more than two pages and gives a list of the Kalmuck letters, and of all combinations of a consonant and a vowel, in Kalmuck script and in a transcription with Latin letters (see Figure 2). It is obvious that Rahmn intends the Latin letters to be pronounced as in German, which is natural, since German was a kind of scientific World language at the time, and furthermore Rahmn was working among the German-speaking Moravian Brethren. The vowels are transcribed *a, ä, i, o, u, ö, y*, i.e. IPA [a, ε, i, o, u, ø, y]. Most consonants are transcribed in the expected way (see Figure 2). The sibilants and affricates are given as *ss, sch, s, z*, i.e. [s, ʃ, z, ts]. There are also 'double vowels' which are transcribed as *oh, uh, yh*, and Rahmn says that they are lengthened. The small diacritic stroke which is usually taken to denote a long vowel is described as an accent, and Rahmn says that the long vowels cannot take the accent.

The second, 'etymology', part takes up the remaining 35 pages. As in other grammars from this time, the word 'etymology' refers to word structure and inflection, i.e. to what is now

Kalmuckisk Grammatik

I. Orthographie

§. 1.

Kalmuckiska Språket äger 7 Vocaler och 14 Consonanter. — De Consonanterna äro sig skrifvas för sig utan i forening med Vocal-tecknen, tykomer man genom denna sammansättning 98 Syllabetecknen. — Wispa bokstafvar blifva och anmärkande skrifwa då de stå smid uti ett ord, eller äro anmärkande stäffvar. — Bifwen gifwas trene Dubbelvocaler, hvilka äro Kalmucks kalckas Forlangor.

+ men enligt det gamla handskriften och följande förkortning i handskriften. Termen är detta skrifv sål.

ä a.	ä na.	+ä ba.	ä cha.	ä ga.	ä da.	ä ta.
ä ä.	ä nä.	ä bä.	ä kä.	ä gä.	ä dä.	ä tä.
ä i.	ä ni.	ä bi.	ä ki.	ä gi.	ä di.	ä ti.
ä o.	ä no.	ä bo.	ä cho.	ä go.	ä do.	ä to.
ä u.	ä nu.	ä bu.	ä chu.	ä gu.	ä du.	ä tu.
ä ö.	ä nö.	ä bö.	ä kö.	ä gö.	ä dö.	ä tö.
ä y.	ä ny.	ä by.	ä ky.	ä gy.	ä dy.	ä ty.

ä la.	ä ma.	ä ja.	ä ra.	ä fa.	ä scha.
ä lä.	ä mä.	ä jä.	ä rä.	ä fä.	ä schä.

Figure 2. The first page of the grammar.

termed ‘morphology’. It deals with nouns, adjectives, numerals, pronouns, question words and verbs.

For the nouns, Rahmn recognizes eight cases: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, vocative, two different instrumentals, and ablative. Rahmn says that first instrumental is formed with **jēr/bēr** (note2) meaning ‘through’. Second instrumental is formed with the particle **lyge** (in everyday language contracted to **lē**) or more often with **tēgan** (contracted to **tei**) meaning ‘together with’. His second instrumental thus corresponds to what is now usually called ‘comitative’.

The accusative has three different forms according to Rahmn, with the suffixes **-i** (or zero), **-ijigi** or **bēn**. The last form occurs only in the singular, he says, but no differences in meaning are mentioned. He recognizes five declensions for the nouns, depending on their final letters.

For the adjectives, Rahmn notes that many are derived from nouns by the suffix **-tei** (**-tai**, **-tu**). He also notes the intensification of adjectives by a prefix, as in **xabxara** ‘pitch black’ (from **xara** ‘black’). The sections on numerals and pronouns consist mainly of lists of the different forms and (for the pronouns) their inflection.

In the section on verbs, Rahmn gives conjugation tables for two verbs, which he regards as auxiliaries, **bajixu** ‘to be’ and **bolxu** ‘to become’, and exemplifies the conjugation of other verbs with **abxu** ‘to take’ (the verb **yzeky** ‘to see’ is used as the example word in the second version of the grammar). He says that the verb has been investigated only incompletely. This can be seen also by comparing the two different versions of the grammar which basically agree in the sections on nouns and pronouns, but for the verbs, the terminology and contents differ rather much between the two versions, and both differ from the terminology used for verb forms in the dictionary.

One interesting point is subject agreement in the verb forms. In the tables of verb conjugation, the monosyllabic personal pronouns (first person singular **bi** ‘I’, second person singular **ci** ‘you’ and second person plural **ta** ‘you’) are often suffixed to the verb but the disyllabic first person plural (**bida** ‘we’) is never suffixed. Thus a commonly occurring pattern is like the one for the “second perfect”:

abalai bi	‘I have taken many times’
ci abalai ci	‘you have taken many times’
abalai	‘he has taken many times’
bida abalai	‘we have taken many times’
ta abalai ta	‘you have taken many times’

ede abalai ‘they have taken many times’

Perhaps the pronoun following the verb should be regarded as cliticized rather than suffixed; it is usually written as a separate word. Whenever agreement suffixes (or cliticized pronouns) occur in Rahmn’s verb conjugation tables, he conforms to this pattern (including the deletion of first person singular **bi** in subject position). The other alternative is to have the pronoun in subject position only, as in his “second present”:

bi abdag	‘I use to take
ci abdag	‘you use to take
abdag	‘he uses to take
bida abdag	‘we use to take
ta abdag	‘you use to take
ede abdag	‘they use to take

Thus, subject agreement is not as widespread in Rahmn’s material as it is in modern Kalmuck, where it occurs for first person plural as well, and is also more obligatory.

Rahmn’s grammar, like other European grammars of that time, uses the well-known European languages, especially classical Latin, as a pattern, but there are not so many signs that Rahmn pressed the language into a Latin form. An obvious case of this, however, is his recognition of the vocative as a separate case, for which there is no support in Kalmuck. Another characteristic of grammatical descriptions of the time is the almost complete negligence of syntax. Even major and conspicuously different features of the syntax, like the verb-final (SOV) word order in Kalmuck, were not considered worth mentioning in a grammar.

The dictionary

As mentioned above, the main part of the dictionary, written on the left side of each page, is ordered in Kalmuck alphabetical order, but quite many words, written to the right, seem to have been added after the main part was written (Figure 3). Many of these are derived words, such as passives and causatives. I get the impression that Rahmn worked systematically with an informant to elicit derived verbs, since, as I know from personal experience with this kind of work, it is very unlikely that so many derived words are encountered in speech or texts. It is interesting to note that Rahmn has no term for ‘causative’, a category usually not found in European languages, although it is very common in Kalmuck. About 800 derived causative verbs are recorded in the dictionary, compared to only around 250 passives, a category which

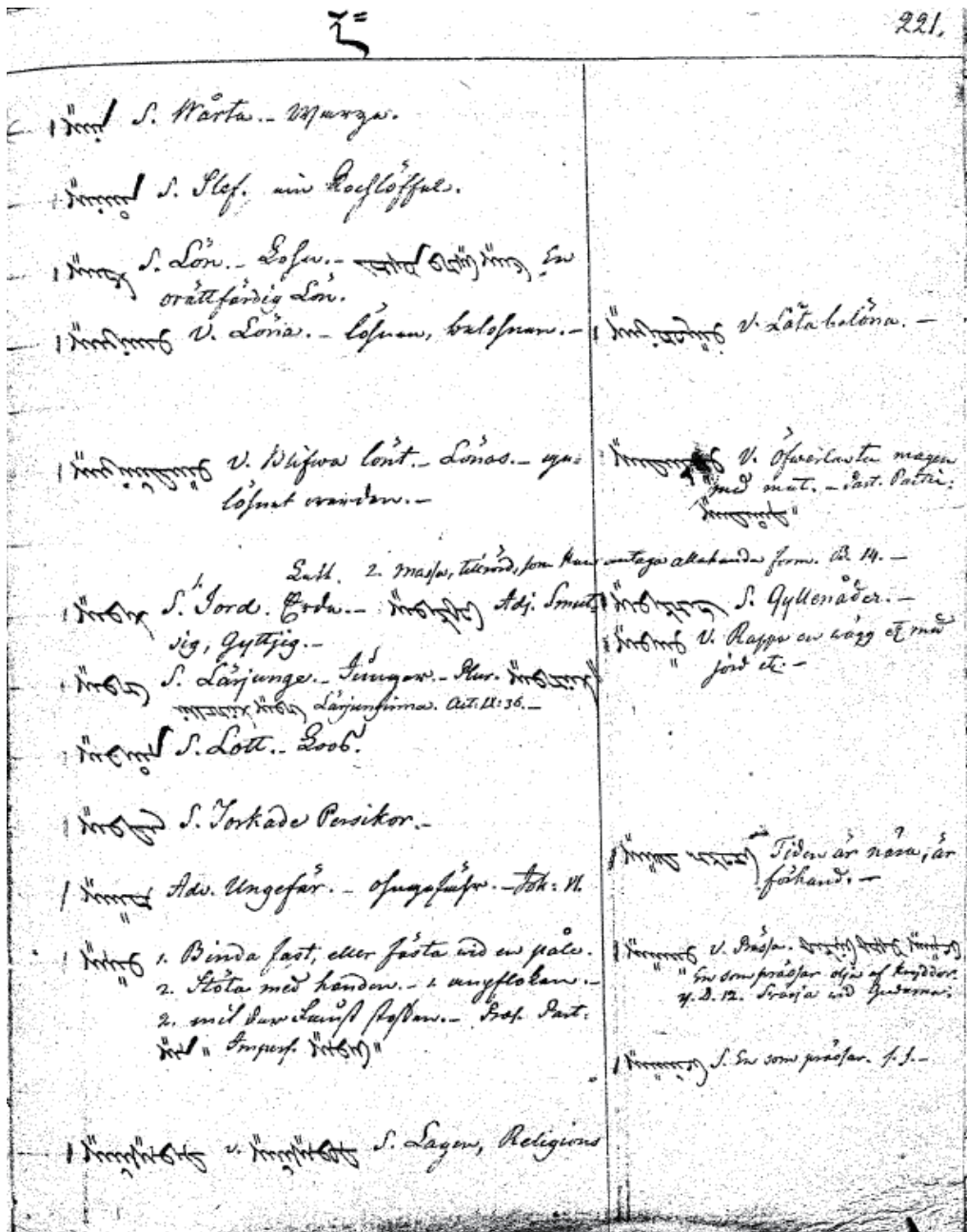


Figure 3. A page from the dictionary (with the word šabariŋ).

is well-known in European languages. The passives are usually translated by Rahmn with the corresponding Swedish verb in the passive, formed with the auxiliary *bliva* ‘to become’ or with the suffix *-s*. Similarly, causatives are often translated as *låta* ‘let’, *göra att någon* ‘make someone’ or *orsaka någon att* ‘cause someone to’ plus the verb. Towards the middle of the manuscript Rahmn seems to have tired of writing down routine translations like this and often leaves out the translation of the verb and writes only *Pass.* or even just *P.* for the passives, and phrases like *låta etc.*, *göra etc.*, or just *låta* – for the causatives.

For most words, the word-class is indicated. For the verbs, which are always given in the ‘infinitive’ form, ending in **xu** or **ky**, there are no problems with this, but it is obvious that Rahmn has had some difficulties with nouns and adjectives, which, as is well known, are less clearly distinguished in Mongolic languages than in many European languages. In rather many cases, it can be seen in the manuscript that Rahmn has changed the labelling and translation from an adjective to a noun, or the other way around.

In addition to the simple and compound Kalmuck words, Rahmn gives some sentence examples, in most cases with Swedish translations. Many of these have a reference to the text they are taken from. The most frequently cited text is the Bible. The only Kalmuck Bible translations at that time were those by Isaac Jacob Schmidt (1779-1847), who published the *Gospel according to St. Matthew* in 1815, and the three remaining Gospels and the *Acts of the Apostles* in 1821, both in St. Petersburg (Bawden 1985: 110, 281). These are the only books of the Bible that Rahmn refers to. I suppose that Rahmn generally cites Schmidt, but since I have not been able to consult Schmidt’s Bible translations, I cannot exclude the possibility that some of the Bible citations are Rahmn’s own proposals for translation. In a few places Rahmn mentions Schmidt’s translation explicitly, apparently to show that he is not himself responsible for the information given. In addition to the quotations from the Bible, Rahmn also quotes some Buddhist Kalmuck texts, most often *Yligerijin dalai* (usually abbreviated as YD) but also *Bodhi mör* (B).

Rahmn often gives inflected forms of nouns and verbs; most often the genitive and plural for nouns, and participles for verbs. They are also often provided with a reference to the source they are taken from, the same sources as for the sentence examples.

Kalmuck spelling

The Kalmuck script was created in 1648 by Zaya Pandita (1599-1662) as a modification of the Mongolian script to make it closer to the spoken language (see e.g. Kara 2005). It is still used to some extent by the Oirads in China although its use is discouraged by the Chinese

authorities who prefer to regard Oirad as a dialect of Mongolian and promote the Mongolian script and a language standard based on the Chahar dialect.

It is interesting to look at some details in Rahmn's spelling of Kalmuck words. He does not tell anywhere in the manuscripts how he worked with the grammar and dictionary. It is rather clear that he wrote the Kalmuck examples himself, but he does not tell how he learned the script. It would have been interesting to know if he always learned the spelling from a Kalmuck teacher, or if he sometimes listened to spoken words and wrote down what he heard. There is quite a lot of variation in the spelling, especially for the vowels, but if this comes from Rahmn or from his informants is not easy to know (and perhaps not very important). It can be mentioned that all Kalmuck vowels occur also in Swedish (although with slightly different pronunciation in some cases), so Rahmn should have had no difficulty to distinguish them.

There is no discussion of the pronunciation in Rahmn's grammar except that a Latin script transcription of the Kalmuck letters is given, and for a few words in the dictionary an indication of the pronunciation is given as well, presumably for words where Rahmn thought that the pronunciation was very different from the written form (in most cases due to reductions).

From Rahmn's enumeration of how consonant+vowel combinations are written, it can be seen that the letter **x** (which he transcribes *ch*) occurs only before the (back) vowels **a**, **o**, **u**, while **k** occurs only before the (front) vowels **e** (*ä*), **i**, **ø** (*ö*), **y**, and also that **g** is written in different ways in these positions (reflecting allophonic variation). Rahmn does not give any labels for the back and front vowel classes, on which Kalmuck vowel harmony is based (called male and female vowels in traditional Mongolian grammar). He seems to have been unaware of vowel harmony, which he never mentions, and his Kalmuck spellings often violate vowel harmony. For example, the rule that the 'infinitive' suffixes **xu** and **ky** should be attached to back-vocalic and front-vocalic verbs, respectively, is certainly adhered to in most cases, but far from always, and the same is true for other suffixes. In the dictionary he does mention one rule related to vowel harmony, in the entry for the concessive particle **bēsu**, where he states (in translation): "in connection with verbs ending in **ky** it is written **bēsu**, but with those ending in **xu** it is written **bāsu**".

Although the Kalmuck script was intended to be close to the spoken language when it was designed in 1648, it does not reflect later phonological changes. The variation found in the Kalmuck spelling might, however, indicate some facts about the phonological development. Doerfer (1965) has collected Western European texts from 1692 to 1827 which contain

Kalmuck words written with the Latin or Cyrillic alphabet and on pp. 17-24 he gives a short overview of what these sources tell about the historical development of Kalmuck, including its phonology. The features he treats include:

Loss of **g** in the perfect participle suffix **gsan/gsen**, which, according to Doerfer's material, takes place during the 18th century, i.e. before Rahmn's manuscripts were written. Rahmn always writes **g** here, but this probably just means that he adheres to the spelling norm; he does not tell whether or not this **g** is pronounced.

Fronting of [a], conditioned by [i] in the next syllable, took place during the first part of the 19th century, i.e. at the time when Rahmn was among the Kalmucks (the corresponding fronting of [o] takes place later). These changes are usually not reflected in Rahmn's material; again, this may just mean that he follows the spelling norm, although there is at least one case of variation that might indicate ongoing fronting of **a**: **šabi** ~ **šebi** 'pupil'.

Changes that occur later according to Doerfer (not until the second half of the 19th century), are fronting of [o], and reduction of non-initial vowels. These changes should thus not be reflected in Rahmn's material. As just mentioned, this holds for the fronting of [o], but there is quite a lot of variation in the spelling of non-initial short vowels in Rahmn's dictionary, suggesting that vowel reduction was already taking place. This is in fact one of the most common sources of spelling variation in the dictionary; a few examples are: **abxoi** ~ **abxui** 'capital', **ajiga** ~ **ajaga** 'drinking vessel', **amisxal** ~ **amisxul** 'breath', **kyryl** ~ **kyrel** 'metal', **tabtai** ~ **tabtei** 'well'.

Another change that Doerfer dates to the second half of the 19th century is the monophthongization of diphthongs. Here I will discuss vowel combinations written with one of the rounded vowels **u**, **y**, **o**, **ø** as the first element, and the graphic vowel symbol **y** as the second element. A complication here is that the letter **u**, which is properly written as **y** with an additional stroke, is often written without this stroke, i.e. as **y**, in old texts. After another vowel (except **i**) only the form without the stroke occurs in Rahmn's manuscript. Following a strict letter-for-letter transliteration the combinations with the four rounded vowels should then be written **uy**, **yy**, **oy**, **øy**, but since the graphic vowel **y** is most probably pronounced as [u] in combination with the back vowels **u** and **o**, I will write **uu**, **yy**, **ou**, **øy** instead. The combinations **ou**, **øy**, are usually the reflexes of Old Mongolian **ahu* and **ehy*, respectively (as reconstructed by Svantesson et al. (2005)), and were probably diphthongs at the time when the Kalmuck script was created (see e.g. Krueger 1975b).

Rahmn says that the combinations **uu**, **yy** and **ou** are lengthened and transcribes them as *uh*, *yh*, *oh*, presumably meaning [u:], [y:], [o:]; he does not mention the combination **øy**

although it occurs frequently (in more than 400 words) in the dictionary. One of the earliest published grammars of Kalmuck, Bobrovnikov (1849), contains a rather extensive and, as far as I can judge, reliable section on pronunciation. Bobrovnikov says (pp. 18–19) that **yy** and **ou** are alternative spellings of **øy** and **uu**, respectively, and that they are pronounced [y:] and [u:]. The modern standard of the Kalmuck (Oirad) script used in China, as given by Jamca (1999), writes these vowels as **yy** and **uu**.

Vowel length can also be indicated with a small diacritic stroke. This length mark is not attached to **u** or **y** in modern Oirad script (Jamca 1999: 14), but this is sometimes (but not very frequently) done by Rahmn, who calls the length mark an accent. The different spellings and pronunciations are compared in the following table:

	Original	Rahmn	Bobrovnikov	Modern
uu	[u:]	[u:]	[u:]	[u:]
ū	—	[^ˈ u]	—	—
yy	[y:]	[y:]	([y:])	[y:]
ȳ	—	[^ˈ y]	—	—
ou	[ou]	[o:]	([u:])	—
ō	[o:]	[^ˈ o]	[o:]	[o:]
øy	[øy]	[?]	[y:]	—
ō̄	[ø:]	[^ˈ ø]	[ø:]	[ø:]

Rahmn probably heard long Kalmuck vowels (with the length mark) as stressed (or accented) since long Swedish vowels always are stressed. If his transcription of **ou** as *oh* really means [o:] (against Bobrovnikov’s ‘long u’, [u:]) is difficult to know. Since Rahmn uses the German, and not Swedish, sound values of the Latin letters in his table of the alphabet, and also since *h* can indicate vowel length in German, but not in Swedish, the most probable interpretation is that his *oh* does mean [o:] as in German. Since Swedish long **o** is ambiguous between the pronunciations [o:] and [u:], he might also have meant [u:], a suggestion that is supported by the fact that there is rather frequent variation between **ou** and **uu** in Rahmn’s dictionary.

Conclusion

It is interesting to compare Rahmn’s work with the Kalmuck grammar (1851) and dictionary (1852) by the German missionary Heinrich August Zwick (1796–1855) who belonged to the Moravian Brethren and was living at Sarepta while Rahmn was there. Zwick’s grammar is more comprehensive than Rahmn’s, but the dictionaries have about the same size. I have

not compared the dictionaries in detail, but there are some obvious similarities, such as the great number of derived verbs in them. Another, rather curious fact suggests that Zwick had access to Rahmn's material when he wrote his dictionary. This concerns a word **šabariŋ**, translated as *gyllenåder* by Rahmn (Figure 3). This Swedish compound, literally meaning 'golden vein' is unknown in modern Swedish, but according to the historical dictionary of the Swedish Academy (*Svenska Akademiens ordbok*) it means 'hemorrhoids'. Zwick lists the same word with the glossing *der goldene Adler* 'the golden eagle'. This word **šabariŋ** is found also in Ramstedt's (1935) Kalmuck dictionary (*šawrŋ*, translated as *der golden-adler*) with a reference to Zwick, and it is listed by Krueger (1978/84) who translates it as *golden eagle*, referring to Zwick and Ramstedt. Krueger did not find the word in any of the texts he used for his dictionary, and I have not found **šabariŋ** or a similar word meaning 'eagle' in any Kalmuck or Mongolian dictionary. There are similar words meaning 'hemorrhoids' however: Cyrillic Kalmuck *шамбrcг* (*šambrcg*) (Korsunkiev 1992:57); Old Written Mongolian *šambaram*; Cyrillic Mongolian *шамбарам* (*šambaram*). Krueger lists the Written Kalmuck forms **šambaram**, **šambrum**, **šamuruun**, and Ramstedt gives *šambvrŋ*, *šambvrŋ*, all meaning 'hemorrhoids'. My guess is that Zwick used Rahmn's material and misunderstood Swedish *åder* 'vein' as corresponding to German *Adler* 'eagle'.

Rahmn's grammar and dictionary were never published, but my impression is that they were more or less completed and only minor additions would have been needed to get them into a publishable form. Perhaps he never intended to publish them, but just to use them himself for his Bible translations. The fact that he wrote in Swedish suggests this, since it is not easy to imagine who, except Rahmn himself, would read works on Kalmuck in Swedish.

Although Rahmn's Kalmuck grammar is short and sketchy and there seem to be some misunderstandings in it, I think it still has an interest as documentation of Kalmuck at an early time. At the time when Rahmn wrote his grammar, most probably while he was in Sarepta 1819-23, no Kalmuck grammar had been published in any language. The first published grammars are those of Popov (1847), Bobrovnikov (1849) and Zwick (1851).

The dictionary, although left in a less finished state than the grammar is perhaps even more valuable as documentation of the language at an early time. It is earlier than the published dictionaries in European languages (Zwick 1852, Golstunskij 1860) and contains a relatively large word material.

During my stay at Tohoku University I have translated Rahmn's grammar into English and transcribed, translated and rearranged the dictionary, and hope soon to be able to publish it in a form useful for scholars of Kalmuck and of Mongolic languages in general.

Notes

- (1) The account for Rahmn's life is based on Jansson (1951) and Bawden (1985).
- (2) Words printed in boldface are transliterated from the Kalmuck script used by Rahmn.

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