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On the Identification of the Mongolian “Golden” Fragments from Dzungaria*

Abstract

The article presents the results of the discovery and text-critical analysis of the Mongolian-language “golden” manuscript fragments brought to Russia and Europe from Dzungaria in the 18th century. At present 34 fragments have been detected in various depositories. The fragments belong to one set of the Mongolian Kanjur most likely dated from the first half of the 17th century. The list of the texts, to which the fragments belong, is given at the end of the article. The text-critical analysis of the fragments reveals that they contain a plethora of preclassic orthography and spelling of loanwords. Three fragments contain the text of the hitherto unknown Mongolian version of the Bhadrakalpika-sūtra, which differs from Dayičing Tayiji’s translation included in the bulk of the Mongolian Kanjur copies.

Keywords: Dzungar fragments, Mongolian Kanjur, “golden” manuscripts, manuscriptology, text-critical analysis

Recent years have witnessed an increased academic interest in the so called Dzungar fragments – separate folios of the Buddhist canonical text in the Tibetan and Mongolian languages brought to various Russian and European depositories from one of the abandoned Dzungar monasteries in the 18th century. Of these, the fragments of the Mongolian-

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† On the Dzungar fragments see Alekseev 2015, p. 203, 2017, pp. 40–41, 2019; Alekseev and Turanskaya 2015; Alekseev, Turanskaya, and Yampol’skaya 2014; Alekseev, Turanskaya, and Yampolskaya 2015, 2016; Heissig 1979,
language Kanjur written in gold on a black and blue background (abbreviated as JGF) are of special interest due to their outlook and a certain proximity to the Golden Kanjur kept at the Academy of Social Sciences of Inner Mongolia.

The article represents the final stage of detection, identification and text-critical analysis of JGF preceding the publication of the complete JGF texts. By now 34 folios have been discovered in the following depositories:

- Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, Russian Academy of Sciences (IOM): 20 fragments, pressmark K 37;
- British Library (BL): four fragments, pressmarks Sloane 2838 (a), 2838 (b), Stowe 32 F. 13 and F. 14;
- Library of the University of Glasgow (LUG): three fragments, pressmark PL 61;
- National Library of France (BNF): two fragments, pressmark Tibétain 464;
- Berlin State Library (SB): one fragment, pressmark Ms. or. Fol. 477;
- Francke Foundations, Halle (FF): one fragment, pressmark R.-Nr. 48;
- Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel (HAB): one fragment, pressmark Cod. Guelf. 9 Extrav.;
- Kassel University Library (KUL): one fragment, pressmark Ms. orient. Anhang 3;
- Linköping City Library (LCL): one fragment, pressmark OL 3.

The bulk of JGF do not have any markers (like a work or chapter title) that would allow them to be associated with specific canonical texts. Moreover, some of the folios have lost their segments with the markers of the Kanjur sections and volume signatures. Therefore, the identification of JGF was first carried out with the use of the searchable e-texts of the Tibetan Kanjurs accessible at The Buddhist Canons Research Database\(^2\) and the Resources for Kanjur & Tanjur Studies.\(^3\) Then the corresponding fragments were located within the manuscript Kanjur preserved in the St. Petersburg State University Library (PK), the only complete Mongolian manuscript Kanjur known so far. Finally a thorough text-critical collation of JGF and PK was implemented. The research performed allows certain assumptions to be made about the repertoire and structure of the Kanjur, to which JGF belonged, and for it to be correlated with other Mongolian manuscript Kanjurs.

Interestingly, all the JGF folios belong solely to the initial, i.e. ka volumes, of the Kanjur sections, which leaves open the possibility that only these volumes were produced or brought to the Dzungar monasteries. The identification of JGF demonstrated that seven of the 34 folios belong to the five texts of the Dandir-a, thirteen – to the Yum, two – to the Olangki, three – to the one text of the Erdeni dabqurliği, and four – to the one text of the Vinay-a sections of the Mongolian Kanjur. The list of the canonical texts to which JGF belong is provided in the Appendix to the article. It includes the titles of texts in Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Mongolian; the references to the two existing catalogues of the


\(^{2\text{ BCRD.}}\)

\(^{3\text{ RKTS.}}\)
Mongolian Kanjurs by Z.K. Kas’yanyenko⁴ and L. Ligeti⁵ as well as to A Catalogue of the Comparative Kangyur compiled by P. Hackett.⁶ For the JGF fragments the folio number, the depository, the section/chapter of a text, and the folio(s) numbers of the corresponding fragment in PK that was used for the text-critical collation are given.

Apart from three fragments all JGF represent the same Mongolian translations of the Kanjur texts as those included in PK. Evaluating the results of the text-critical collation of JGF and PK as a whole would be problematic, because the Mongolian Kanjurs amalgamate texts that were translated asynchronously and may preserve peculiarities of the former versions and copies. The results of the analysis may even vary for the textual fragments written down by different scribes. Nevertheless, as at present only 34 JGF folios are available for the study, conclusions can be reached about a certain “concentration” of orthographic and linguistic characteristics in both manuscripts.

Both JGF and PK contain a plethora of preclassic orthography and it is difficult to find specifics that exist in one manuscript and not in the other. Nevertheless, in the cases of variant readings between two manuscripts JGF would reveal a higher concentration of certain orthographic characteristics even within the framework of rather restricted textual materials.

First of all, in JGF the Uyghur dâleth is repeatedly used to denote “t” in the possessive suffixes and clitic -tan, a combination of the possessive and plural suffixes: čarai-dai, diür-den, erke-den-nûyud-i, gergei-den, ijarur-dani, ijarur-danu, öngge-den, sedkil-dei, tangyarti-dan (cf. PK: čirai-tai, düriten, erketen-nûgûd-i, gergei-ten, ijarur-tan-i, ijarur-tanu, önggeten, sedkil-tei, tangyari-tan). In contrast, only three such cases can be found in PK: ijarur-dan-u, kûrdû-den, ujeskülen-dei (cf. JGF: ijarur-tan-u, kûrdûn, ujeskülen-tei).

Secondly, JGF reveal multiple cases where the letters “q” and “γ” are found with front vowels and “k/g” – with the back vowels: bayalig-ud-un, bilig-luγ-a, buγaküli, čidabagü-iüü, dildûyidügsan, erke-den-nûyud-i, örösiyenggü-luγ-a, ridi kûl-nûyud-i, sakyalig-ud, sonosbagü (cf. PK: bayalité-ud-un, bilig-lüγe, büklî-i, čidadâyu-uu, dildûyidûsân, erketen-nügûd-i, örösiyenggü-lüγe, ridi kûl-nügûd-i, sakyalité-ud, sonosbaγu) in comparison with only two such cases in PK: dengseliýsan-i, mergen-luγ-a (cf. JGF: dengseliýsgen-i, merged-lüγe).

Similarly, JGF exceed PK with regard to cases where words can be written separately: ali-ba, amur-a,⁷ čoγ-tu, dayin-i darûsân, es-e, jîrâyalqu-i, ner-e-idümü, nisvanis, qarangû-i, tamay-a-laydaqui, tus-a with some of these cases repeated several times (cf. PK: alîba, amura, čoγtu, dayîni daruwsan, ese, jîrâyalqu, nereyidüümü, nîsvanîs, qarangû, tamayalaydaquí, tusâ). Lesser such cases are found in PK: dayin-i daruwsan, kejiye-de, mingy-a-tu (cf. JGF: dayîni daruwsan, kejiyede, mingyatu).

Also, relative to PK, JGF offer the archaic spelling of some loanwords, e.g. lam-a, indira, mudur-a, qi včir-a, hung/huung, ubadiy-a etc. (cf. PK: blam-a, indra, mudr-a, hi/

⁴ Kas’yanyenko 1993.
⁵ Ligeti 1942–1944.
⁶ Hackett 2012.
he’ včir, huun’, ubadini). In the two cases where India is mentioned, JGF give endkeg (sic) while PK – enedkeg and hindkeg. To this JGF add a much more restricted use of the Galik alphabet, e.g. oom, kećari, tatagata, qang etc. (cf. PK: o’m’, k’e’ j’arii, d’a ta-a g’ata, ham’) and the characteristic use of “i” at the beginning of the transcribed Tibetan and Sanskrit words, e.g. irjudči < Tib. rgyud kyi, irgalbo < Tib. rgyal po, injan-a < Skr. jñāna (cf. PK: rgyud’ kyi, rgyalpo ‘i, inyan-a).

Notably, PK has a number of scribal mistakes indicating that the scribes did not have a complete understanding of the text. Thus, for example, qamūy onol-un qayān < Tib. rtoṅ pa thams cad kyi rgyal po ‘king of all comprehensions’ is mistakenly changed in PK to qamūy nom-un qayān ‘king of all Dharmas’; arilwysan < Tib. rnam dag pa ‘utterly pure’ – to ügülgesen ‘the one, who said’; beke < Tib. snag tsha ‘ink’ – to bey-e ‘body’; itegel < Tib. mgon po ‘protector’ – to sedkil ‘thought’; olge < Tib. spo ‘summit of a mountain’ – to olgie ‘alms’; qangyan < Tib. tshim ‘to satisfy’ – to qayān ‘king, khan’; tari < Tib. sgrol ma, (Skr. tāra) ‘the saviouress’ – to tarn ‘mantra’; öber-iün öber-iün düi-ner-i < Tib. rang rang gi sring mo ‘each own sister’ is rendered in PK as öber öber-iün-tür-ner-i, where the word düi was turned into the dative-locative suffix --tier and so on.

Three JGF fragments represent the hitherto unknown Mongolian version of the Bhadrakalpika-sūtra that differs from the Dayičing Tayiǰi’s (late 16th–early 17th centuries)11 translation included in the bulk of the Mongolian Kanjur copies (see the Appendix Nos. 9.1–9.3). Two of them, preserved in the Berlin State Library and Linköping City Library, have already been examined and published.12 Recently, a fragment kept in the British Library was added to the list (JGF-BL). The folio was purchased among other Mongolian fragments by the Scottish traveler John Bell (1691–1780) in the city of Tobolsk during his journey through Siberia. A note of this event is marked in his travel essays during his journey through Siberia. A note of this event is marked in his travel essays

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8 In transcription of Mongolian text the following symbols are used for the Galik letters and editorial marks: <…> – glosses and interpolations, d’ – ꔨ, d” – ꔩ, d* – ꔨ, e’ – ꔧ, g’ – ꔨ, j’ – ꔩ, k’ – ꔨ, m’ – ꔨ, o’ – ꔨ.

9 The use of two forms hindkeg and enedkeg denoting “India” or “Indian” for dating Mongolian texts of the 17th century is confusing. On the basis of the fact that the form hindustāmi is found in the Mukaddimat al-Adab dating to the 14th–15th centuries (Poppe 1938, p. 185) and an analysis of the different versions of Mongolian texts, some scholars see the form hindkeg representing the older reading. (Heissig 1957, pp. 77–78; Kollmar-Paulenz 2002, p. 164) Nevertheless, the form ānātāk was used in the Uyghur literary monuments even before the 13th century (see Nadeliaev et al. 1969, p. 173; Weiers 1969, p. 56 n. 1). Besides, other scholars adhere to the opposing position. Thus, for example, according to A. Sárközi 1982, p. 467, “in later texts the form Hindik is more frequent” than enedkeg. In our opinion, both forms were equally in use in Mongolian texts at the turn of the 16th–17th centuries. The most eloquent evidence of this is the use of both forms almost on the same page of the Erdeni Tunumal, see Elverskog 2003, p. 254 line 598, p. 255 line 613; Kollmar-Paulenz 2001, p. 174 stanza 147, p. 175 stanza 150).

10 According to W. Heissig 1966, pp. 43–47, the use of prosthetic vowels in the transcription of words in other languages aids dating such Mongolian texts to a time no later than the 16th–first half of the 17th centuries. It was especially characteristic of the texts produced in Ordos and Tümed at the turn of the 16th–17th centuries (Heissig 1961, p. 575).


12 For details see Alekseev and Turanskaya 2015; Alekseev 2020.
for the year 1719. Having returned home, he presented it to the learned antiquarian Sir Hans Sloane whose collection became the foundation for the British Museum.

This is the 24th folio, belonging to the second chapter (Mong. böög) of the Bhadrakalpika. Its text-critical collation with the corresponding PK fragment located on the folio 5v (Eldeb section, volume ka) adds some interesting new details of the differences between the two Mongolian versions of the sūtra, several of which are given below.

Thus, for example, Tib. rgyal chen bzhi’i ris kyi lha ‘the gods in the abode of the Four Great Kings’ is rendered in JGF-BL as almost the reverse translation into Sanskrit čatur maqaraṭa kayika-taki tngri, where Skr. kāyika ‘belonging to an assemblage or multitude’ is the equivalent of Tib. ris ‘group, section, type, class’. PK gives a more conventional dörben maqaraajas-un ayimay-un tngri. Tib. gtams pa bye ba sum khri denoting an extremely large number is translated as yurban tūmen költi kanikar-a toyatan, where kanikar-a < Skr. kaṅkara means ‘a particular high number’. PK gives mingyan nayud költi yurban tūmen. Similarly, Tib. ‘khor los bsgyur ba’i rgyal po, i.e. ‘cakravartin, universal monarch’ > JGF-BL: čakirvad vs PK: kūrdiṇī (sic) orčyuluči qayax; Tib. mi ‘khrugs pa [Buddha] Akṣobhya’ > JGF-BL: aksobi vs PK: īlū quḍqulači. An analogous adherence to the preservation of Sanskrit words is encountered in the 14th century Mongolian translation of the Pañcarakṣā. Here, Akṣobhya is also rendered as aksobi, cakravartin – as čakirvadi and Tib. tshangs rigs kyi lha ‘the gods in the Abode of Brahmā’ – as braqmakayig dakis tngri. In the late 16th century translation by Ayusi Güsi the majority of these terms were translated from Tibetan word by word.

Judging by the identification of JGF and the results of their text-critical collation with PK the Kanjur that they are a part of, belongs to the 1628–1629 Ligdan Khan’s manuscript recension and most likely dates from the first half of the 17th century. In common with the Hohhot Golden Kanjur, in some aspects of their orthographic and linguistic characteristics, JGF reveal a higher density of preclassic elements.

The presence amongst JGF of the fragments of a hitherto unknown and possibly more archaic version of the Bhadrakalpika-sūtra correlates well with the inclusion of the 14th century Mongolian translation of the Pañcarakṣā into the Hohhot Golden Kanjur. Both texts are different from the later translations by Dayičing Tayiǰi and Ayusi Güsi included into the rest of the Mongolian Kanjur copies. This fact allows it to be suggested that within the Ligdan Khan’s recension there were at least two groups of Kanjurs – one with the more archaic translations of the abovementioned texts and another, where they were substituted for the later ones.

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13 Bell 1763, p. 193.
14 See Scott 1904, p. iii; Ayscough 1782, pp. 903–904.
15 Monier-Williams 1899, p. 274.
17 See, for example, Aalto 1961, pp. 31, 59, 77.
18 For a description of the Buddhist terminology in the two translations of the Pañcarakṣā see Sárközi 2010.
Appendix

I Dandir-a Section, Volume ka

1 Skr. Paramādibuddhodhrīta-śrī-kālacakra-nāma-tantrarājā, Tib. mChog gi dang po'i sangs rgyas las phyung ba rgyud kyi rgyal po dpal dus kyi 'khor lo zhes bya ba, Mong. Anggān-u degedū burqan-ācā yārghyasan čoŋ-tu čaŋ-un kūrdūn neretū d’and’iris.<un> qāyan.19

Ref.: Kas’yanenko 1993: No. 3; Ligeti 1942–1944: No. 3; Hackett 2012: No. 387.
1.1 F. 140 (BL, Stowe 32 F. 13). 5th bölg. PK: 36r.
1.2 F. 164 (IOM-1). 5th bölg. PK: 42r–42v.

2 Skr. Śrī-sarvabuddha-sama-yoga-ḍākinījāla-sambhara-nāma-uttaratantra, Tib. dPal sangs rgyas thams cad dang mnyam par sbyor ba mkha’ ’gro ma sgyu ma bde ba’i mchog ces bya ba’i rgyud bla ma, Mong. Čoŋ-tu qamūṣ burqad-hūŋ-a tegsi barildwēči d*agini yelvi jirjAlan-un mongli neretū degedū d’and’r-a.

Ref.: Kas’yanenko 1993: No. 7; Ligeti 1942–1944: No. 7; Hackett 2012: No. 391.


Ref.: Kas’yanenko 1993: No. 8; Ligeti 1942–1944: No. 8; Hackett 2012: No. 392.

Ref.: Kas’yanenko 1993: No. 9; Ligeti 1942–1944: No. 9; Hackett 2012: No. 440 (a).
F. 276 (IOM-2). PK: 73r.

4 Tib. Ki’i (kye’i) rdo rje mkha’ ’gro ma dra ba’i sdom pa’i rgyud kyi rgyal po. In PK this text is the part of the Mong. Qi včir-a neretū dandaris-un qāyan.23

Ref.: Kas’yanenko 1993: No. 9; Ligeti 1942–1944: No. 9; Hackett 2012: No. 440 (b).

19 Except for No. 4 of the list the Mongolian titles of the texts are given according to PK.
20 The numbers of the IOM fragments are given according to the list in Alekseev, Turanskaya, and Yampolskaya 2016: 95–101.
22 The only text title preserved in JGF.
23 See above.
24 For the description of the fragment see Weston 2018, p. 192.
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Ref.: Kas’yanenko 1993: No. 10; Ligeti 1942–1944: No. 10; Hackett 2012: No. 441.

5.1 F. 335 (IOM-3). 7th – 8th bölög. PK: 88r.

5.2 F. ? (IOM-17). 8th bölög. PK 88v–89r.

II Yum Section, Volume ka

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6.3 F. ? (BL, Sloane 2838 (b)). 6th bölög. PK: 23v.

6.4 F. 153 (IOM-6). 10th bölög. PK: 41r.

6.5 F. 156 (IOM-4). 10th bölög. PK: 41v–42r.


6.8 F. 278 (IOM-8). 19th bölög. PK: 75r.


6.12 Two fragments of F. 348 (IOM-9, 21). 22nd bölög. PK: 89v–90r.


III Olangki Section, Volume ka

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25 The incip. and term. in Alekseev, Turanskaya, and Yampolskaya 2016: No. 17 should be swapped.
26 The incip. and term. in Alekseev, Turanskaya, and Yampolskaya 2016: No. 20 should be swapped.
27 The number of the folio in Alekseev, Turanskaya, and Yampolskaya 2016, No. 4 should be changed from 56 to 156. The foliation contains a hardly visible cross denoting a hundred.
28 The description of the folio see in Weston 2018, p. 192.
29 The incip. and term. in Alekseev, Turanskaya, and Yampolskaya 2016, No. 19 should be swapped.
30 For fragment No. 21 the incip. and term. in Alekseev, Turanskaya, and Yampolskaya 2016: No. 21 should be swapped.
7.3 F. 153 (BNF). 10th–11th keseg. PK: 38v.
7.4 F. 211 (IOM-12). 16th keseg. PK: 55r.

IV Erdeni Dabquriği Section, Volume ka

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V Eldeb Section, Volume ka

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9.1 F. 24 (BL, Sloane 2838 (a)). 2nd bōlōg. PK: 5v.

VI Vinay-a Section, Volume ka

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31 The fragment is published in Knüppel 2014, pp. 11–14, pp. 95–98. In M. Knüppel’s transcription the recto and verso sides of the folio are confused.
32 For the description and analysis of the fragment see Alekseev and Turanskaya 2015.
33 For the description and analysis of the fragment see Heissig 1979, pp. 200–202; Alekseev 2019.
34 See the description of the folio in Weston 2018, p. 192.
Abbreviations

BCRD The Buddhist Canons Research Database
BL British Library
BNF National Library of France
FF Francke Foundations
HAB Herzog August Bibliothek
IOM Institute of Oriental Manuscripts
JGF Dzungar “golden” fragments
KUL Kassel University Library
LCL Linköping City Library
LUG Library of the University of Glasgow
PK St. Petersburg manuscript Kanjur
RKTS Resources for Kanjur & Tanjur Studies
SB Berlin State Library

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