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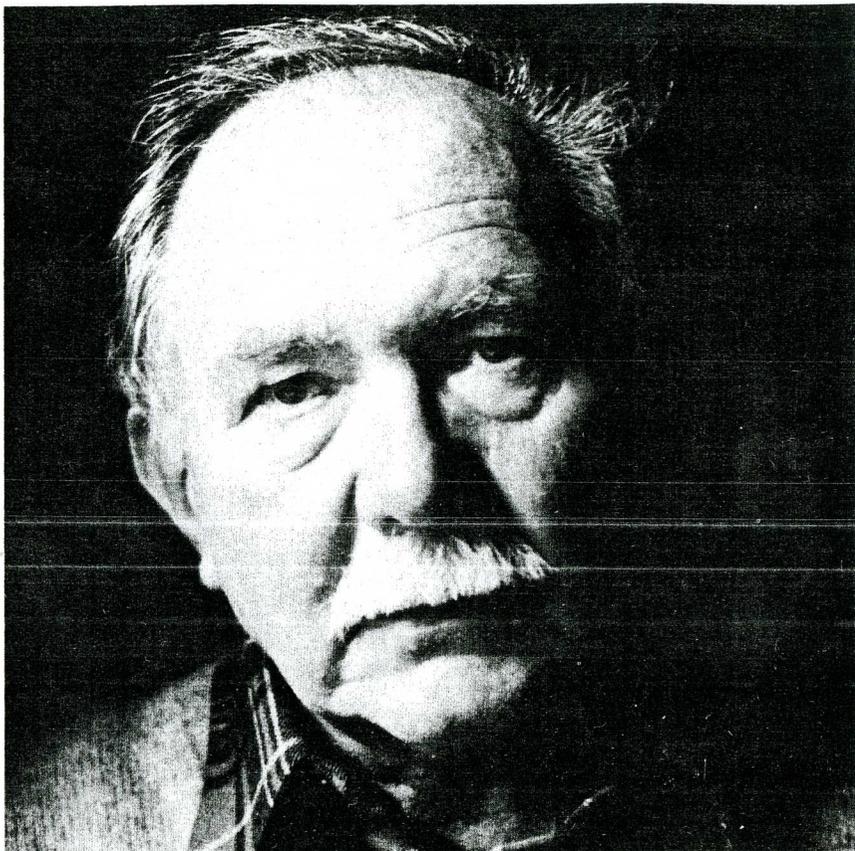
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zum 70. Geburtstag

1983

OTTO HARRASSOWITZ · WIESBADEN



Walther Heissig

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Festschrift für Walther Heissig
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Herausgegeben von
Klaus Sagaster und Michael Weiers

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OTTO HARRASSOWITZ · WIESBADEN

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THE NAMING OF CHARACTERS IN
MONGOLIAN FOLK-TALES

The aim of this paper is to analyse the naming of characters in Mongolian folk-tales. It is well-known that folk-tales always manifest general human behaviour. For this reason, a folk-tale character does not always have to be given a proper name. Consequently, characters in the Mongolian folk-tales may occur without proper names, such as Bur. *nege xübün* 'a boy', *dürben xübüd* 'four boys', Khal. *ax dū xojir* 'two brothers', *neg xān* 'a khan', *xojir exner* 'two wives', *xojir elš* 'two couriers', etc. Sometimes, these unnamed characters may also be more precisely denoted with an attribute such as Bur. *nege ügütei xübün* 'a poor boy', *nege basagatai übgen hamgan xojor* 'an old man and an old woman having a daughter', Khal. *tsetsen bāxan xū* 'a wise little boy', etc. Naturally, all this lies outside the scope of namegiving proper in Mongolian folk-tales. Most characters, however, like in other nations' folk-tales, carry proper names in Mongolian folk-tales. The great mass of these personal names came about spontaneously. Never regulated by law, they simply evolved out of everyday speech because they were needed.

The names of characters in the Mongolian folk-tales are of various types.

1. Some names of these characters are genuine personal names in Mongolian. Male names: Khal. I, 167 *Altan xū* from Khal. *altan* 'gold', cf. Khal., Kalm., Bur. *Altan* n. pr. m.; Bur. II, 56 *Bulad batar* from Bur. *bulad* 'steel; figur. strong', cf. Bur. *Bulad*, Khal., Kalm. *Bold* n. pr. m., syn. Khal. *Tömör*, Bur. *Tümer* n. pr. m.; Ord. 143 *mergen Džogtu* from Ord. *džogtu* ~ *džogtö* 'having embers or sparks', cf. Khal. *Tsogt*, *Čoytu tayiji*, Bur. *Sogto* n. pr. m.; Ord. 123 *Mönxö* from Ord. *möjxö* 'eternal', cf. Ord. *Möjxö* n. pr. m. and f., Khal. *Mönx*, Bur. *Müngxe* n. pr. m.; Khal. I, 167 *Möngön xū* from Khal. *möngön* 'silver', cf. Khal. *Möngön*, Kalm. *Möngn* n. pr. m.; Bur. II, 16–7 *Šono xān* ~ *Šono* from Bur. *šono* 'wolf', cf. Bur. *Šono*, Kalm. *Tšon* n. pr. m., while, as a personal name, *Tšono* appears seldom or never between the Khalkhas; Ord. 105 *Tögös* from Ord. *tögös* 'complete, end(ing), death; twins (children)', cf. Ord. *Tögös*, Khal. *Tögs* n. pr. m. (The real meaning of this name is 'End!', 'Finish!', i.e. the parents don't want more children, syn. Khal. *Otgon*, *Otgon-xū* n. pr. m. from Khal. *otgon* 'last-born child'.); Bur. I, 323 *Tümer xān* from Bur. *tümer*

'iron, metal', cf. Bur. *Tümer*, Khal. *Tömör*, Kalm. *Tömr* n. pr. m., syn. Khal. *Bat*, *Bex* 'Strong' n. pr. m. Lamaistic names: Bur. II, 133 *jaduu Doržo*, cf. Bur. *Doržo*, Khal., Kalm. *Dordž* n. pr. m. from Tib.; Khal. II, 21 *Baldan bajan*, cf. Khal. *Baldan*, Bur. *Baldang* n. pr. m. from Tib. Female names: Khal. I, 168 *Ojün awxai* from Khal. *ojün* 'intellect, mind; wisdom' or *ojū(n)* 'turquoise', cf. Khal. *Ojün* n. pr. m. and f., Bur. *Ojün* n. pr. f.; Bur. II, 138 *Seseg* from Bur. *seseg* 'flower', cf. Bur. *Seseg*, Khal. *Tsetseg* n. pr. f., *Čičig qatun* in Heissig 1958, III, 17v.

2. An even greater part of the names of characters playing a role in the Mongolian folk-tales do not exist as genuine personal names. All these names, as we shall see, will fall into one or the other of the following six classes:

2.1 Names derived from abstract nouns: Bur. I, 356 *Gurimša* a female from Bur. *gurim* 'rule, principle; custom' with den. n. *-ša* 'designating names of vocations'; Bur. I, 414 *xān Sagsa* a male, cf. Kalm. *tsaktsa* 'eine Krankheit; Ausschlag'; Bur. I, 414 *Xabsaralta mergen* a male from Bur. *xabsaralta* 'explanation', etc.

2.2 Names referring to the parts of the body: Khal. I, 136 *Erxi mergen* a male from Khal. *erxi* 'thumb'; Bur. I, 203 *Šegešxen* a female from Bur. *šegšexei* ~ *šegšēxen* 'little finger'.

2.3 Names of animals and birds: Bur. I, 321 *Hüleg taiža xübün* a male from Mo. *sülig* 'owl'; Bur. I, 246, II, 61 *Šāzgai xān* ~ I, 388 *Šāzgai bajan xān*, Ord. 120 *Šādžagā xan* ~ *Šādžagā alak xān* a male from Bur. *šāzgai*, Ord. *šādžagā* 'magpie'; Bur. II, 22 *Šebšexei* a male from Bur. West. *šebšexei* 'duckling'; Bur. II, 220 *Šorgölžon xān* ~ I, 260 *Šurgälžan xān*, Ord. 46 *Šurguldžin xān* a male from Bur. *šorgölžon*, Ord. *šurguldži*, *šurguldži* 'ant'; Bur. I, 363–65 *Tarbaža* ~ *Tarbažā* a female from Bur. *tarbaža* 'tawny eagle'.

2.4 Names of plants: Khal. I, 176 *Namtš mergen* ~ *Namtš mergen xū* a male from Khal. *nawtš(in)*, Bur. *nabša*, *namša* 'leaf (of a plant)'; Bur. I, 409, II, 10 *Xartaganān xān* a male from Bur. *xartaganān* 'a kind of grass'; Bur. I, 368, 382 *Xartagai* ~ *Xartagai xān* a male name may be a variant of the name *Xartaganān* because of Bur. II, 201 *Xartagān xān* ~ II, 202 *Xartagai xān*.

2.5 Names of objects and instruments: Bur. I, 261 *Degē* a male from Bur. *degē* 'hook'; Bur. I, 246 *Xaišata* a female from Bur. *xaišata* 'having scissors'; Khal. I, 190–91 *Tōsgo* ~ *Tōsgon emegen* a female from Khal. *tōsgo(n)* 'brick'.

2.6 Nicknames of mental and moral or physical characteristics: Bur. I, 201 *Güger hamgan* a female, cf. Bur. West. *gūgeger* 'beautiful'; Bur. I, 202 *Gelder bajan* a male, cf. Bur. *gelžer* in *gelžer-galžar geže jaba-* 'to step, walk awkwardly', Mo. *geldüri-* 'to walk slowly'; Khal. I, 154 *Namtai mergen* ~ *Namtai mergen öwgön* a male from Khal. *nam* 'low, short; quiet'; Ord. 158 *Öglögötsi* a

male from Ord. *öglögötsi* 'almsgiver, benefactor'; Bur. I, 202 *Šūdai bajan* a male from Bur. *šūdai* in *šūdai bišixan* 'small, little; diminutive' (or Bur. *šūdai* 'bag, sack'); Bur. I, 202 *Šūmar xübün* a male from Bur. *šūmar* 'quick, prompt'.

3. Another group of personal names in Mongolian folk-tales contains derivatives. They are actually pet-names formed with diminutive suffixes. Such derivative suffixes occur in genuine Mongol personal names, too.

3.1 The denominal noun-forming suffix *.BAi* occurs usually in the Buriat names. *I.e.* Bur. II, 31 *Anxabai mergen* a male from Bur. *anxa* 'primary, original, first'; Bur. I, 296 *Senxermei* a male from Bur. *senxir* 'light-blue, bluish (sky)'; Bur. I, 296 *Ulsarmai* a male from Bur. *ulsar* 'trachoma', cf. also Mo. *ulčagar* 'a person with inflamed or watery eyes, blear-eyed'. Cf. Bur. *Šodomoj* n. pr., cf. Bur. *šodogor* 'thin and short', *šodoi-* 'to be thin and short'; Bur. *Šarmai* n. pr. from Bur. *šira* 'yellow', etc. in Mitroshkina 1976, 61.

3.2 The denominal noun-forming suffix *.DAi* 'diminutive' has recently become productive in Buriat and Kalmyk names. *I.e.* Bur. II, 76 *Arbaldai mergen xān* a male from Bur. *arba(n)* 'ten'; Khal. I, 171 *Arlandai mergen xān* a male from Khal. *aršlan* 'lion'; Ord. 104 *Ereldi kū* a male from Ord. *ere* 'man, male', *ereldi* 'dog's name; male child (for fun: *oxidō* 'female)'; Ord. 51 *Xaraldā xān*, Khal. II, 16 *Xaraltai xān*, Bur. II, 31 *Xaraldai xān* a male from Mo. *qar-a* 'black, dark, obscure' in a secondary *qara.l.* which appears regularly before *.DAi*, cf. also *Qaraldai* n. pr. m. in the *Secret History of the Mongols*; Khal. I, 137 *Xöxdei mergen (xān)* a male from Khal. *xöx* 'blue; ash-coloured, dark (of face)'; Bur. I, 234 *Xulmā dai mergen* a male, cf. Bur. *xulmai-* 'to have ears laid back', *xulmagar* 'crop-eared'; Bur. I, 56 *Xurgadai bajan* ~ I, 61 *Xurgadai mergen* a male from Bur. *xurga(n)* 'finger, toe'; Khal. I, 166 *Xüreldei* a male from Khal. *xürel* 'bronze', cf. also Khal. *Xürel* a nick-name. (*Xüreldei* n. pr. is attested in Sodnom 1964, 107, although according to my informants this type of names does not occur in the naming of the Khalkhas.); Khal. I, 170 *Jösgöldei öwgön* a male in *Jösgöldei öwgönj jösön xū* 'the nine sons of the old Yösgöldei' from Mo. *yisügüle(n)* 'all nine, nine together'; Khal. I, 190 *Sösogdoi öwgön* a male from Khal. *sösog* '?'; Bur. I, 362 *Žorgōdoi mergen* a male, cf. Khal. *dzurgādai* 'a kind of tree', Ord. *džurgādā* 'tree of wisdom; n. pr. m.; sobriquet of a sixty years old man', Mo. *žiryuyadai* 'hexagonal'.

3.3 Denominal noun-forming suffix *.dAr* 'diminutive'. *I.e.* Khal. III, 144 *Jagāndar* a male from Khal. *jagān* 'pink, red (-cheeked)'; Bur. I, 409 *Nogōndar* a female from Bur. *nogōn* 'green'; Bur. I, 409 *Sagāndar* a male from Bur. *sagān* 'white'.

3.4 Denominal noun-forming suffix *.xAn* 'diminutive'. *I.e.* Khal. I, 191 *Džogdzōxon xū* a male from Khal. *dzogsoo* 'upright', Mo. *žoyšuy-a* 'standing,

upright; standing still; stopping'; Bur. I, 381 *Šüreldeḡen* a female from Bur. *šüre* 'coral'; Bur. I, 69 *Tābxan übgen* a male, cf. Bur. *tābari* 'riddle; mysterious', *tābagar* 'pretentious, arrogant'; Bur. II, 201–2 *Ünišexen* ~ *Ünešen* a male from Bur. *ünšen*, *ünešen* 'orphan; figur. lonely', *ünšexen* 'little orphan'.

4. Among the names of characters in Mongolian folk-tales are also compound names consisting of a noun with an attribute before it. Some of them can occur as a genuine Mongol personal name, too. Such names are Khal. I, 173 *Bajandžargal xūa* male from Khal. *bajan* 'rich, wealthy' and *džargal* 'happiness, enjoyment', cf. Khal. *Bajandžargal* n. pr. m. in Sodnom 1964, 74; Khal. II, 14 *Erdenedondog* a female from Khal. *erdene* 'jewel' and *Dondog* n. pr. m. from Tib.; Bur. I, 60 *Sagān Gerel basagan* a female from Bur. *sagān* 'white; light (of colour)' and *gerel* 'light, beam of light', cf. also Bur., Khal. Kalm. *Gerel* n. pr. f. (and m.), Khal. *Narangerel*, *Sarangerel* n. pr. f., and perhaps Khal. III, 123 *Sonin Tsetseg* a female from Khal. *sonin* 'interesting, marvellous' and *tsetseg* 'flower', cf. also Kalm. *Sonin* n. pr. m., Khal. *Sonindžargal* n. pr. in Sodnom 1964, 96.

4.1 In the folk-tales a nick-name or sobriquet as an attribute can also occur before a genuine Mongol personal name. *I.e.* Bur. I, 257 *Agū Nogōn* a female from Bur. *agū* 'vast, great' and *nogōn* 'green', cf. also Bur., Khal. *Nogōn*, Kalm. *Nogān* n. pr. f.; Ord. 227 *Tšagān Noxō* a male from Ord. *tšagān* 'white' and *noxō* 'dog', cf. also Bur. *Noxoi*, Kalm. *Noxā* n. pr. m.; Bur. I, 202 *Genen Erxe* a male from Bur. *genen* 'silly' and *erxe* 'right, power; capricious', cf. also Heissig 1958, IV, 12r *Erke*, Kalm. *Erke* n. pr. m.; Khal. I, 192 *Tsartsā Namdžil* a male from Khal. *tsartsā(n)*, *tsartsāxai* 'locust', cf. also *tsartsangi* 'sluggish, lazy' and *Namdžil* n. pr. m. from Tib.; Ord. 46 *Külir Rintšen* a male from Ord. *külir*, *küril* 'bronze' and *Rintšen* n. pr. m. from Tib.; Ord. 33 *Göxö Tuwū* a male from Ord. *göxö* 'ash-coloured, dark (of face)' and *Tuwū* n. pr. m.; Ord. 227 *Xuār Delger* a male from Ord. *xuār* 'smallpox; flower' and *delger* 'extensive, vast', cf. also Bur., Khal., Kalm. *Delger* n. pr. m.; Khal. II, 15 *Xar Luwsan xān* a male from Khal. *xar* 'black; jealous, envy' and *Luwsan* n. pr. m. from Tib.; Bur. II, 205 *Xara Tegše* a male from Bur. *xara* 'black; jealous' and *tegše* 'straight, equal', cf. *Tegš* n. pr. in Sodnom 1964, 101, which is rather a sobriquet in the Khalkha, and Khal. *Tegšee*, *Tegšbat*, *Tegšbajar* n. pr. m.; Ord. 138 *Sorondzon Gūmbū xān* ~ Bur. I, 138 *Suranzan Gombo xān* male from Ord. *sorondzon*, Bur. *suranzan* 'magnet' (Khal. *Sorondzon* may be a sobriquet) and Mo. *Gombo* n. pr. m. from Tib.

4.2 Some compound names can never occur as a genuine Mongol personal name. Such names are Bur. I, 388 *Altan Xurabša* a female from Bur. *altan* 'golden' and *xurabša* 'thimble'; Bur. I, 324 *Altan Šagai mergen* a male from Bur.

altan 'golden' and *šagai* 'anklebone'; Bur. I, 257 *Müngen Šagai* a male from Bur. *müngen* 'silver' and *šagai* 'anklebone'; Ord. 15 *Naran Gō* a female from Ord. *naran* 'sun' and *gō* 'pretty, beautiful'; Ord. 233 *Gō Setšin* a female from Ord. *gō* 'beautiful' and *setšin* 'wise'; Bur. II, 75 *Uran Mogoi xatan* a female from Bur. *uran* 'artistic, crafty' and *mogoi* 'snake'; Ord. 38 *Uran Degēdū* a female from Ord. *uran* 'clever, skilful' and *degēdū* 'higher, eminent', and perhaps Ord. 225 *Döbsin Džirgal* a male from Ord. *döbsin* 'peaceful, calm' and *džirgal* 'happiness'.

5. The second component in a compound name may be a colour-name, such as Khal. I, 180 *Bar Xar* a male from Khal. *bar* 'tiger' and *xar* 'black' in *Xalxān Bar Xar gedeg neg sain er* 'a good man of the Khalkha named B. Kh.'; Bur. II, 31 *Zutang Xara* a male from Bur. *zutang* 'soup, mash; iron. wash' and *xara* 'black'. It is just possible from the context that *xara* 'black' forms an integral part of these namens. On the other hand, however, in Bur. II, 31 *Temēn ulān xān* ~ II, 34 *Temēn xān* a male (from Bur. *temēn* 'camel') *ulān* 'red' may be interpreted as a component belonging to the title *xān* 'khan'. This possibility can only refer to the colour-names *xara* 'black', *šara* 'yellow', *tsagān* (~ *sagān*) 'white', and *ulān* 'red' in my corpus. Such cases are Bur. I, 297 *Želbeng xara taiža* a male from Bur. *želbeng* 'sorcery' and *taiža* 'a title'; Bur. II, 56 *Jagš sagān batar* a male from Bur. *jagšā* 'importunate person' and *batar* 'hero' an epithet; Bur. II, 221 *Dalda sagān xān* a male from Bur. *dalda* 'hidden'; Bur. II, 54 *Xōmei sagān batar* a male from Bur. *xōmei* 'fur on throat or belly of an animal'; Bur. I, 202 *Dangir šara abxai* a female, cf. Ord. *daŋxir* 'tall' and Bur. *abxai* 'princess (in folklore)', Bur. I, 356 *Gūlin šara xān* a male from Bur. *gūlin* 'bronze, brasa'; Ord. 134 *Ogotor ulān wang* a male from Ord. *ogotor* 'short'; Bur. II, 46 *Temē ulān xān* a male from Bur. *temē(n)* 'camel'; Bur. I, 205 *Udālagša ulān batar* a male from Bur. *udālagša* 'hesitant, dilatory, tardy'.

6. In Khal. I, 185 *dolōn xodžgor neg modžgor* 'the seven *x.* and one *m.*' *xodžgor* and *modžgor* denote characters being in opposition to one another. Khal. *xodžgor* 'bald' is an independent word, while *modžgor* is not. Regarding *xodžgor* 'bald', in spoken Khalkha, *xodžgor modžgor* 'bald, a kind of bald' represents a special type of co-ordination in which the second component is phonetically modified with *m-*, and in normal speech can never occur separately from its basic word. (On this subject see Bese 1957, 199–211.) Such a type of co-ordination may occur in the naming of characters of Mongolian folk-tales, too. *I.e.* Ord. 103 *Esergī Mesergī* names of two heroes. (*Esergī* and *Mesergī* also occur in the text of the tale separately from one another.) The basic word in these names may be Ord. *esergū* 'opposing; against', because *Esergī* and *Mesergī* are

characterized as two able, powerful heroes (*xojor tšidaltā bātur*) in the tale. In such cases, however, to identify the basic word is sometimes not quite easy. It may only be hypothesized that in the Ord. 50 *Džirgeldi Mergeldi* names of two heroes the basic word is *Džirgeldi*, referring in one form or another to Ord. *džirge*- ‘to chirp, chatter’, Mo. *ǰirgi*- ‘to chirp, chatter; to talk back, answer saucily’. The case of the Ord. 2 *Erwetši Merwetši* names of two brothers may be similar to the previous example. Here the basic word *Erwetši* may refer to Mo. *erbei*- ‘to bristle’, *erbeger* ‘bristling, disheveled’, *erbegen* ‘flitting back and forth’. I would like to make it perfectly clear, however, that these explanations are tentatives.

In Khal. II, 14–5 *Eldē Deldē*, the names of two brothers *Eldē* and *Deldē* also appear separately in the text of the tale. Against this, Bur. I, 363 the name *Tontoi Montoi* of a khan denotes only one character. These rhythmical phantasy-names don’t have basic components, therefore they are pseudo-co-occurencies.

It does not seem vain to me to suppose that investigations into the naming of characters in Mongolian folklore may be productive from several aspects with regard to Mongolian studies; therefore in my next paper I’ll try to give a general account of the development of names of characters in the epic songs of the Mongols.

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