SECTION 49

Aramaic Scripts for Altaic Languages

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Medieval Northern Iranians transmitted different forms of the Aramaic alphabet to the ancient Turks (6th–8th century C.E.) and perhaps to other non–Indo-European–speaking peoples of Inner Asia at earlier dates. A mid sixth century inscription found in Bugut, Mongolia, is an early monument showing Turkic usage of the Sogdian (Iranian) language and cursive script (SECTION 48). Non-cursive Sogdian script inspired the runiform alphabet of the ancient Turks, a highly original writing system of the region. Manichean Estrangelo (Aramaic) and Sogdian scripts were applied to the Turkic language of the Uyghurs and other Turks who were Manicheans or Nestorian Christians. The Sogdian and Brahmi (SECTION 30) scripts were used by their Buddhist countrymen. In the eleventh century, Arabic script came with Islam to the Turks of western and central Inner Asia (SECTION 61). No written document of the Huns or Avars of Inner Asia has been found, and only Chinese sources preserved the memory of the lost writing system of the Tabgach Empire (4th–6th century C.E.); its origin, type, and shape remain unknown. The vertical Uyghur variant of the Sogdian alphabet was applied to a Middle Mongolian dialect in Chinggis Khan's court (early 13th century); with some modification, it is still in use in Mongolia. The mid seventeenth century "Clear script," derived from the Mongolian "vertical" alphabet, became the writing system of the Western Mongols or Oirats (including the Kalmyks). In the Manchu Empire that embraced Manchuria, China, Mongolia, Tibet, and eastern Turkestan (from the 17th century to 1911), another modified form of the "vertical" alphabet was used to write the official Manchu language. The latest Inner Asian descendant of the Aramaic script is the Buryat alphabet (1905).

The runiform alphabet of the ancient Turks

Some early eighth century memorial inscriptions with the oldest known historical narratives in Turkic were discovered in the nineteenth century in the valley of the Orkhon River, Mongolia; hence the term *Orkhon* script. External resemblance of its characters to the Germanic runes (SECTION 24) evoked the name *runiform* alphabet or *Orkhon runes*. It has simple characters, easy to carve on wood or stone, but this does not entail the absence of curved elements. Rows read from bottom to top, char-

TABLE 49.1: *The Runiform Script of the Ancient Turks*

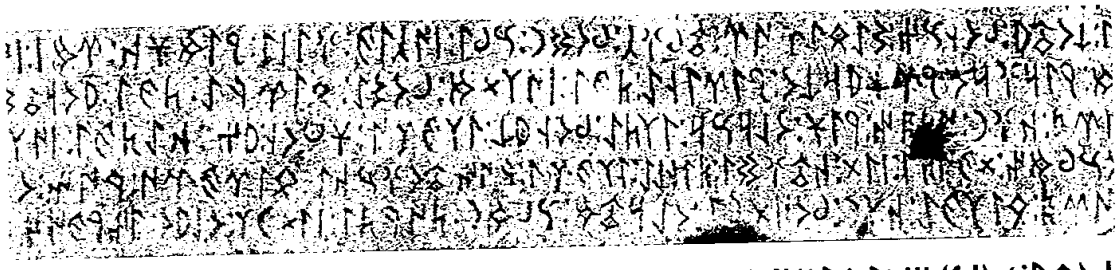
𐰀	a/e	𐰚	n^1
𐰁	ï/i/ë	𐰛	n^2
𐰂	ë (Yenisei)	𐰜	nt
𐰃	o/u	𐰝	nč
𐰄	ö/ü	𐰞	ñ
𐰅	b^1	𐰟	ng (ń)
𐰆	b^2	𐰠	p
𐰇	γ	𐰡	č
𐰈	g	𐰢	$č^i$
𐰉	d^1	𐰣	q
𐰊	d^2	𐰤	$q^ï$
𐰋	z	𐰥	q^o
𐰌	y^1	𐰦	r^1
𐰍	y^2	𐰧	r^2
𐰏	k	𐰨	s^1
𐰐	k^o	𐰩	s^2
𐰑	l^1	𐰪, 𐰫	š (or s^2 = š)
𐰒	l^2	𐰬	t^1
𐰓	lt	𐰭	t^2
𐰔	m	𐰺	word/phrase end marker

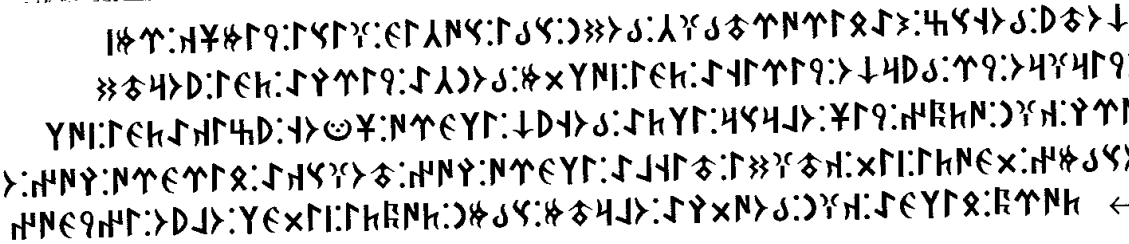
acters run from right to left, and word division is marked by two dots like our colon. This system of some forty characters serves to render at least 26 phonemes. In this case, the discrepancy between characters and phonemes is not the result of applying a rich foreign script to a relatively simple set of sounds (though it is possible that the ancient Turks were not the first users of this script). Rather, it is the consequence of defective vowel representation. Four characters render at least eight vocalic phonemes: 𐰀 *a = a/e* [a/ɛ]; 𐰁 *i = ï/i* [ɨ/i] and *ė* [e], an allophone; 𐰃 *o = o/u* [o/u]; and 𐰄 *ü = ö/ü* [ø/y]. These form two groups according to front versus back articulation, and a word contains vowels from only one of the two groups. This front/back harmony is combined with rules that predict the occurrence of the rounded/unrounded and high/mid/low vowels in the word. This system of vowels allows the simplification of vowel rendering, but vowels often remain unwritten. To decrease ambiguity, most consonants have two different characters, one used in back-vowel words, another used in front-vowel ones. Moreover, some letters indicate a high unrounded/rounded-vowel environment (e.g., the arrow-shaped 𐰥 q^o represents [ok/uk] or [ko/ku] (a pictogram? cf. Turkish *ok* 'arrow'). There is a single "neutral" character for each of the consonants *č* (beside another sign for *č* with a high unrounded vowel), *p*, *m*, *ñ*, *ng*, *z*, and for the intervocalic consonantal clusters *lt*, *nt*, *nč*; see TABLE 49.1.

This writing system was later used in the early Uyghur empire (8th century) and in eastern Turkestan; its "Yenisei" variant is known from ancient Kirghiz inscriptions

(9th century). It has distant cognates in the various runiform alphabets found in the Talas Valley in western Turkestan, and in southeastern Europe.

SAMPLE OF ANCIENT TURKIC





1. *Transliteration:* … t^2ür^{2}k°: b^2il^{2}ga :qγn^1 : b^1uüd^{2}ka : ul^{1}r^{1}t^{1}m : s^1b^1mn^1 :
2. *Normalization:* türk bilge qaγan bu ödke olurtum sabïmïn
3. *Gloss:* Türk Bilge Khan this time.at sat.I word.my

1. t^2ük°t^{2}i : s^2id^{2}gl^2 : ul^{1}y^{1}u : in^{2}y^{2}gün^2(m) … / … b^1us$^1b^1$mn^1 : d^2güt^{2}i :
2. tüketi ešidgil ulayu iniyigün(üm) bu sabïmïn edgüti
3. wholly listen further (my).younger.brothers this word.my well

1. s^2id^2 : qt^{1}γd^{1}i : t^1iṅl^{1}a : il^{2}gr^{2}ü : kün^2 : t^{1}uγs^{1}qa : b^2ir^{2}gr^{2}ü : kün^2 :
2. ešid katïgdï tïṅla. ilgerü kün toγsuq(q)a birgerü kün
3. listen thoroughly hearken forward sun rising.at to.the.right sun

1. u … / … t^2ür^{2}k : qγn^1 : üt^{2}k°n^2 : y^{2}iš : ul^{1}r^{1}s^{1}r^1 : il^{2}t^{2}a :
2. o(rtusïngaru) türk qaγan ötüken y^{2}ïš olursar èlte
3. middle.its.toward Türk Khan Ötüken Range sit.when country.in

1. b^1uṅy^{1}q° : il^{2}gr^{2}ü : šntuṅ : y^{1}ziqat^{2}gi : s^2ül^2 … / … m :
2. buṅ yoq ilgerü Šantuṅ yazïqategi sül(edim) … / …(süledi)m
3. need.less forward Shantung plain.to reaching campaigned.I campaigned.I

1. y^{2}ir^{1}γr^{1}u : y^{2}r^2 : b^1y^{1}r^{1}q°u :y^{2}ir^{2}iṅa : t^2gi : s^2ül^{2}d^{2}m : b^1unča :
2. yïrgaru Yir Bayïrqu yiriṅ etegi süledim bunča
3. to.the.left Yir Bayïrku land.his.to reaching campaigned.I this.much

1. y^{2}ir^{2}ka : t^2gi : y^{1}ur^{1}t^{1}d^1 … / … i : q°ut^{1}y^1 : b^1uṅs^{1}z : nčab^{2}ir^{2}ür^2 :
2. yirke tegi yorïtd(ïm) … / … i qutay bungsuz anča birür
3. land.to reaching proceeded.I … silk need.less so.much give

1.	$t^1b^1\gamma\check{c}$:	$b^1ud^1n^1$:	s^1b^1i :	$s^1\ddot{u}\check{c}ig$:	γis^1i :	$y^2im\check{s}q$:	r^2ms^2
2.	tabγač	budun	sabï	$s^1\ddot{u}\check{c}ig$	aγïs^1ï	yïmšak	ermiš
3.	Chinese	people	word.his	sweet	poison.his	soft	was

'(I), the ... Türk Bilge Khan, reigned at this time. Listen to my word perfectly, / and (you too) my younger brothers, listen well to this word of mine. Hearken thoroughly. / Forward, where the sun rises, and to the right, where the sun culminates, / When the Türk Khan reigned on the Ötüken Range, there was no need in the country. I campaigned forward (= eastward) up to the Shantung plain, ... I campaigned / I campaigned to the left (= northward) up to the land of Yir Bayïrku. I proceeded to so many lands. / (They) give so much (goods), / silk plentiful. The Chinese people's word was sweet and its poison was smooth.'

—From Köl Tegin's inscription, early 8th c., southern side (Radloff 1892, pl. XIX).

The Uyghur alphabet

Sogdian cursive script was adapted to the Turkic language of the Uyghur empire (8th–9th century) and was used by some Uyghur groups in Gansu (northwestern China) until the seventeenth century. The Sogdian alphabet borrowed by the Uyghurs is a reduced version of the Aramaic script; see TABLE 49.2. Used for Uyghur with slight modification, it later saw further changes. The originally horizontal lines are written vertically, in columns from left to right. Digraphs and trigraphs help to mark the rich set of Turkic vowels in initial syllables; thus aleph + aleph = initial *a*, aleph + yodh = initial *ï/i*, aleph + waw = initial *o/u*, aleph + waw + yodh = initial *ö* or *ü*; while waw in any other syllable can render any rounded vowel according to vowel harmony.

The Semitic tradition of defective writing of vowels survives in words like *tnkry* for *tengri* 'heaven' (where *nk* is a digraph for a velar nasal), *kwnkwl* for *köngül* 'mind', or yodh + resh + hooked resh + gimel for *yarlïγ* 'command'. Medial nun and aleph have the same form, and so do their main final forms. *d* is marked by lamedh (spirant *δ* in Sogdian), while hooked resh is used for *l* (this hook grows larger and larger, until it becomes a distinct symbol). Gimel and heth coincided and render the velar allophones of the voiced and unvoiced dorsal consonants (with or without diacritical dots). Kaph represents the palatal allophones of the same dorsal stops. Pe renders *b* and *p*. Samekh and shin merged as *s*. Tsadi marks the unvoiced palatal affricate *č*.

The written word has the shape of a vertical string of letters; positional variation of initial, medial, final, and independent forms is preserved. The sequence is interrupted by zain, which has no medial form and cannot be linked downward, and in the case of certain orthographical rules that prefer, e.g., an independent aleph after a gimel. Some nominal suffixes (case endings, etc.) are written separately after the stem, with the same space between stem and suffix as between words. Bold dots (sin-

TABLE 49.2: *Uyghur Script*[a]

Name[b]	*Uyghur*	*Initial*	*Medial*	*Final*	*Separate*	*Ligatures*	*Uyghur*
ʾaleph	e/vowel initial						ka/e
	a/e						pa/e
beth	w/v						
gimel	γ						
waw	o/u						
waw+yodh	ö/ü						ko/u/ö/ü
	o/u/ö/ü[c]						po/uö/ü
zain	z						
marked z	ž						
heth	x						
2-dotted	q						
yodh	y						ki/i
							pi/i
kaph	k/g						
lamedh	d/δ						
mem	m						ml
nun	n						
pe	b/p						
tsadi	č						
resh	r						
shin	s						
marked s	š						
tau	t						
hooked r	l						

a. Diacritics are often omitted. Some Uyghur alphabets have shin for samekh before pe; marked *z*, final *m*, and final *q* are added after hooked resh.

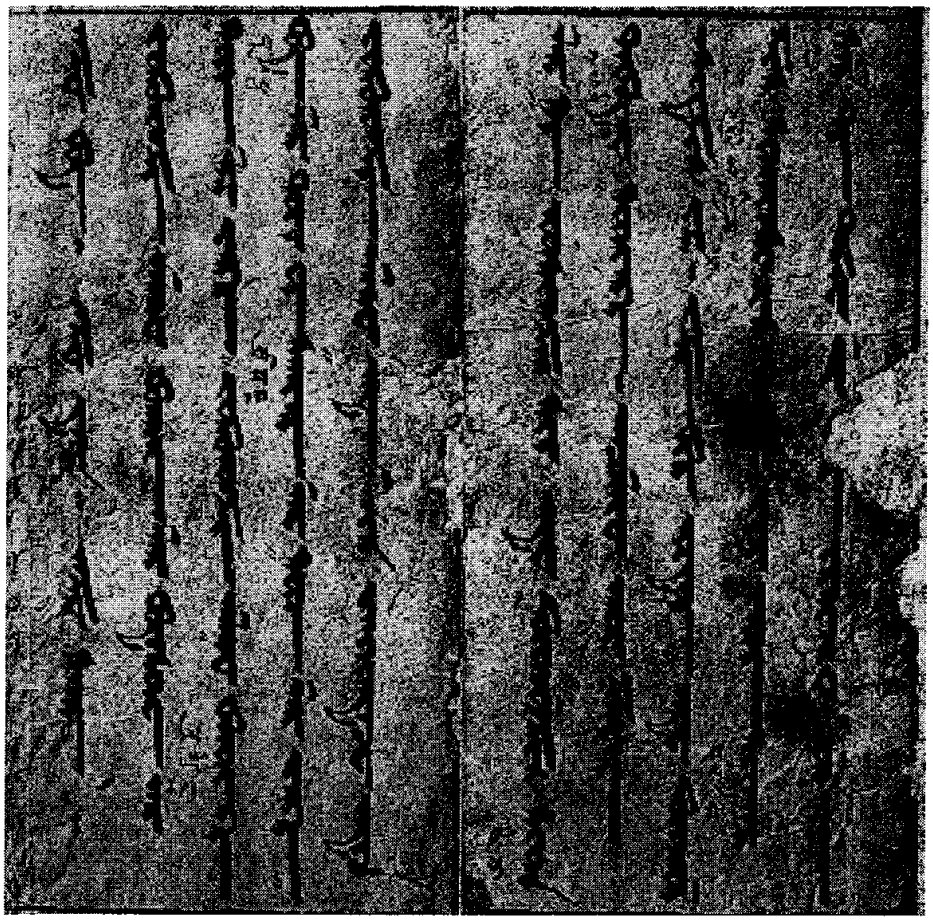
b. Hebrew name for the ancestral Aramaic letter.

c. In syllables other than the first.

gle, double, square, etc.) punctuate the text. In later Uyghur, strict distinction between the meaning of non-initial lamedh and taw is lost.

Uyghur calligraphy is based on Sogdian cursive; the Uyghurs developed their own cursive styles. The original alphabetical order of the Uyghur script is practically the same as that of Sogdian Aramaic. A mixed script is used in some texts where nouns appear in Chinese characters, while the rest is in the Uyghur alphabet. These logograms are to be read in Uyghur, as is clear from the suffixes attached to them. Interlinear Brahmi glosses often occur on the left side of Uyghur words of Indian origin.

SAMPLE OF UYGHUR (AND BUDDHIST HYBRID SANSKRIT)



1.	*Transliteration:*	nʾmw	pwδ :	nʾmw	δʾrm :	nʾmw	sʾnk : /	ywkwnwrmn
2.	*Normalization:*	namo	bud	namo	darm	namo	sang	yükünürmen
3.	*Gloss:*	[Skt.]	*namo*	*buddhaya n.*	*dharmaya n.*		*sangghaya*	[U.] prostrate.I

1.	ʾlqw	pwrxn-lʾr	pwδystβ lʾr /	qwt lʾr ynkʾ :	ywkwnwrmn	ʾlqw
2.	alqu	burxan-lar	bodistw-lar	qut-lar-ïnga :	yükünürmen	alqu
3.	all	buddha-s	bodhisattva-s	majestie-s-POSS.DAT	prostrate.I	all

1.	prti kʾ /	pwd lʾr	twyz un	šrʾβʾk-lʾr	qwt lʾr ynkʾ : /	ywkwnwrmn
2.	prati-ka-	bud-lar	tözün	šravak-lar	qut-lar-ïnga	yükünürmen
3.	pratyeka-	buddha-s	noble	śrāvakas-s	majestie-s-POSS.DAT	prostrate.I

1.	”lqw	”δ’ l’r yq	y’ntwrd’čy	”δyn / l’r q’	’wtswqm’q syz :	”δy
2.	alqu	ada-lar-ïγ	yanturdačï	adïn-lar-qa	utsuqmaγ-sïz :	adï
3.	all	danger-S-ACC	returner	other-PL-DAT	defeat-less	name.POSS

1.	kwytrwlmyš	syt’ / t’p’δry	qwtynk’ :	”nčwl’yw	’rwr :	m’nynk /
2.	kötrülmiš	Sitatapadri	qutïnga :	ančulayu	erür	mening
3.	elevated	Sitātapatrā	majesty.POSS.DAT	thus	is	my

1.	’šyδmyš ym :	ym’	pyr	’wydwn	”δy	kwytrwl/mys	str’y’strys
2.	ešidmiš-im :	yeme	bir	ödün	adï	kötrülmiš	Strayastris
3.	heard.of-mine	also	one	time.by	name.POSS	elevated	Trayastriṃśat

1.	tnkry	yyr ynt’	swd’r’m/š’l t’	tnkry l’r nynk	yyqylqw [ï]wq yn
2.	tengri	yėr-inte	Sudaramšal-ta	tengri-ler-ning	yïγïlγu-luq-ïn
3.	god	land-POSS	Sudharmaśālā-LOC	god-PL-GEN	meeting.place

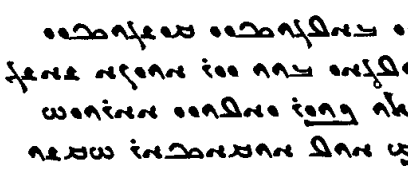
‘*Homage to the Buddha. Homage to the Law. Homage to the Community.* I bow before the majesty of all buddhas and bodhisattvas. I bow before the majesty of all pratyekabuddhas and noble shravakas. I bow before the majesty of Sitatapatra whose name is exalted, who turns away all the dangers, and who is invincible by others. Thus have I heard. At another time, He Whose Name Is Exalted [resided] in the realm of the Thirty-three Gods, in Sudharmashala, in the Assembly of the Gods.’

—Fragment of a Buddhist concertina-book with a Sitatapatra-text, printed in the 14th century, found in eastern Turkistan (Müller 1910: 51–52).

The Manichean script of the Uyghurs

Manichean Uyghurs also used another alphabet of Aramaic descent; see TABLE 49.3. Its lines run from right to left, with more letters retained from the Aramaic and fewer positional variants than in the Sogdian alphabet. Principles of vowel marking are the same as in the Uyghur script, but initial *ï/i* can be either aleph + yodh or ʿain + yodh. Gimel is transformed into two, slightly different, characters for *g*: one marks the velar, the other the palatal allophone of this voiced stop (or spirant). Kaph and qoph render *k*; either of them with one dot renders *x*, or with two dots, *q*. Daleth and lamedh have their original values, but a second *d* is more often used than daleth. Samekh and shin are distinguished. In writing a final vowel, yodh is often doubled, e.g. *ʿikii* ‘two’.

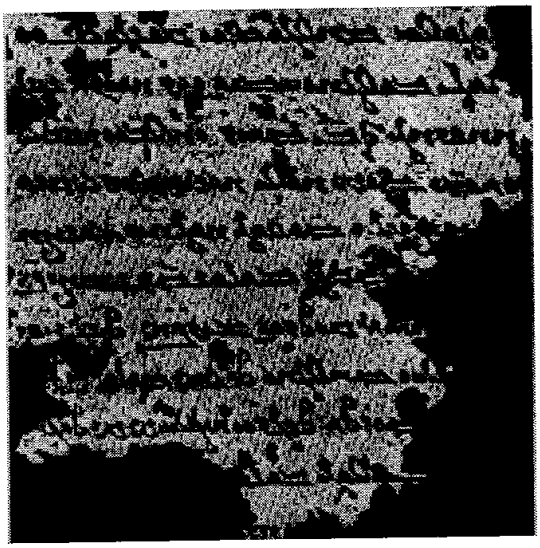
SAMPLE OF UYGHUR IN MANICHEAN SCRIPT



[’w]γwlyy b’lgwsyy myngwsyy
’wḍ bwlγ’y •• bww yyr ’wyz’ n’ng
”nd’γ tw kwyr y’lwyy ”rwyš
ywq kym ’wl ’wm’s’r šmnw

TABLE 49.3: *Uyghur Manichean Script*

Name	*Translit.*	*Initial*	*Final*
ʾaleph	e/vowel initial	𐫀	
ʾaleph+ʾaleph	a	𐫀𐫀	
ʾaleph medial = ʾaleph initial	e-, -a/-e	𐫀	
ʾaleph+waw	o/u	𐫀𐫁	
ʾaleph+waw+yodh	ö/ü or oy/uy	𐫀𐫁𐫂	
beth	b	𐫃	𐫄
gimel[1]	γ	𐫅	𐫆
gimel[2]	g	𐫇	𐫈
daleth	d	𐫉	𐫊
daleth[2]	ḍ	𐫋	𐫌
he	h	𐫍	
waw	w/v	𐫎	
waw+yodh medial	ö/ü	𐫎𐫏	
in 1st syll. after C	ö/ü	𐫎𐫏	
waw in non-1st syll.	o/u/ö/ü/w/v	𐫎	
zain	z	𐫐	
teth	t	𐫑	
yodh	y/i/ī	𐫒	𐫒
kaph[1]	k	𐫓	
kaph[2]	x	𐫔	
kaph[3]	q	𐫕	
lamedh	l	𐫖	
mem	m	𐫗	𐫘
nun	n	𐫙	𐫚
samekh	s	𐫛	𐫜
ʿain	vowel initial, ʿ	𐫝	
pe	p	𐫞	𐫟
tsadi	č	𐫠	𐫡
qoph[1]	k, x	𐫢	𐫣
qoph[3]	q	𐫤	𐫥
resh	r	𐫦	𐫧
shin	š	𐫨	𐫩
tau	t	𐫪	



[k]wyčyngᵓ qwpwγ ᵓwγᵓy •• ʿynčᵓ
[…] qmγ bwḍwnqᵓ nwmčyqᵓ
[…] rww mytryy bwrxᵓn tngryy
[ᵓwγ]lyy kᵓlgᵓy typᵓn kyg[…]
[…] kyrtw tngryy ᵓwγlyy mn mn tyg[ ]
[…] ʿylyg bwḍw[nwγ …]
[…] ḍ[yn]dᵓr […]

1. *Transliteration:* [ᵓw]γwlyy bᵓlgwsyy myngwsyy / ᵓwḍ bwlγᵓy •• bww
2. *Normalization:* oγulïï belgüsii mingüsii ud bolγay boo
3. *Gloss:* son.POSS token.POSS mount.POSS bull will.be this

1. yyr ᵓwyzᵓ nᵓng / ᵓᵓndᵓγ tw kwyr yᵓlwyy ᵓᵓrwyš / ywq kym ᵓwl
2. yėr üze neng andaγ tev kür yelvii arvïš yoq kim ol
3. earth on just such cheat fraud magic spell no who he

1. ᵓwmᵓsᵓr šmnw / [k]wyčyngᵓ qwpwγ ᵓwγᵓy •• ʿynčᵓ / […] qmγ
2. umasar šïmnu küčinge qopuγ uγay ʿïnča qamaγ
3. cannot.if demon force.POSS.DAT all.ACC will.be.able thus all

1. bwḍwnqᵓ nwmčyqᵓ /[…]rww mytryy bwrxᵓn tngryy / [ᵓwγ]lyy kᵓlgᵓy
2. buḍunqa nomčiqa ruu Mitrii burxan tengrii oγlïï kelgey
3. people.DAT teacher.DAT … Mithras Buddha god son.POSS will.come

1. typᵓn kyg[…]/[…] kyrtw tngryy ᵓwγlyy mn mn tyg[…]/[…]
2. tipen kig[…] … kirtü tengrii oγlïï men men tig[ ]
3. saying … true god son.POSS I I ?say

1. ʿylyg bwḍw[nwγ …] / […] ḍ[yn]dᵓr […]
2. ʿilig buḍunuγ ḍindar ...
3. country.ACC people.ACC elected

'The token and the mount of the [demon's] son will be a bull. On this earth there is no such cheat and fraud, sorcery and spell that he will not be able [to do]. He will be able [to do] all by the force of the demons. Thus [...] for the whole people and the teacher, [...] saying that the son of the god, the Mithras Buddha will come [...] the true son of the god [...] I [am], I [am ...] the country and the people [...] the Elected [...]."

—Fragment of a Mithras-text from eastern Turkistan, 9th–10th century (von Le Coq 1919: 5, lines 7–17).

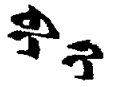
The Mongolian script

At the very beginning of the Mongol empire, the Uyghur alphabet became the writing system of the Mongols; see TABLE 49.4. The whole set of symbols together with the orthography was borrowed, and for several centuries no new letters were created for the few Mongol phonemes unknown in Uyghur. This led to additional ambiguities (e.g., initial yodh more often represents *ǰ* than *y*, while medial tsadi renders both *č* and *ǰ*). Thus, in the orthography without diacritics, *qačar* 'cheek' and *γaǰar* 'place' have the same written form. And though the Uyghur alphabet can distinguish *d* from *t*, no initial *d* is marked, since this phoneme did not occur initially in Uyghur (so Mongolian *dalai* 'ocean' is written with initial taw). Medial and final taw was later used for syllable-final *d*, medial lamedh (*d*) for both *d* and *t*. In the late, classical orthography (17th–18th century), the angular tsadi marks *č*, the smooth tsadi renders medial *ǰ*. Initial yodh remained ambiguous until Manchu hooked yodh was accepted for initial *y* (19th century). Zain had the same value as shin = *s*; it became obsolete for classical Mongolian. As in Uyghur, several schools of orthography existed, with or without diacritics, and attempts were made to avoid ambiguity.

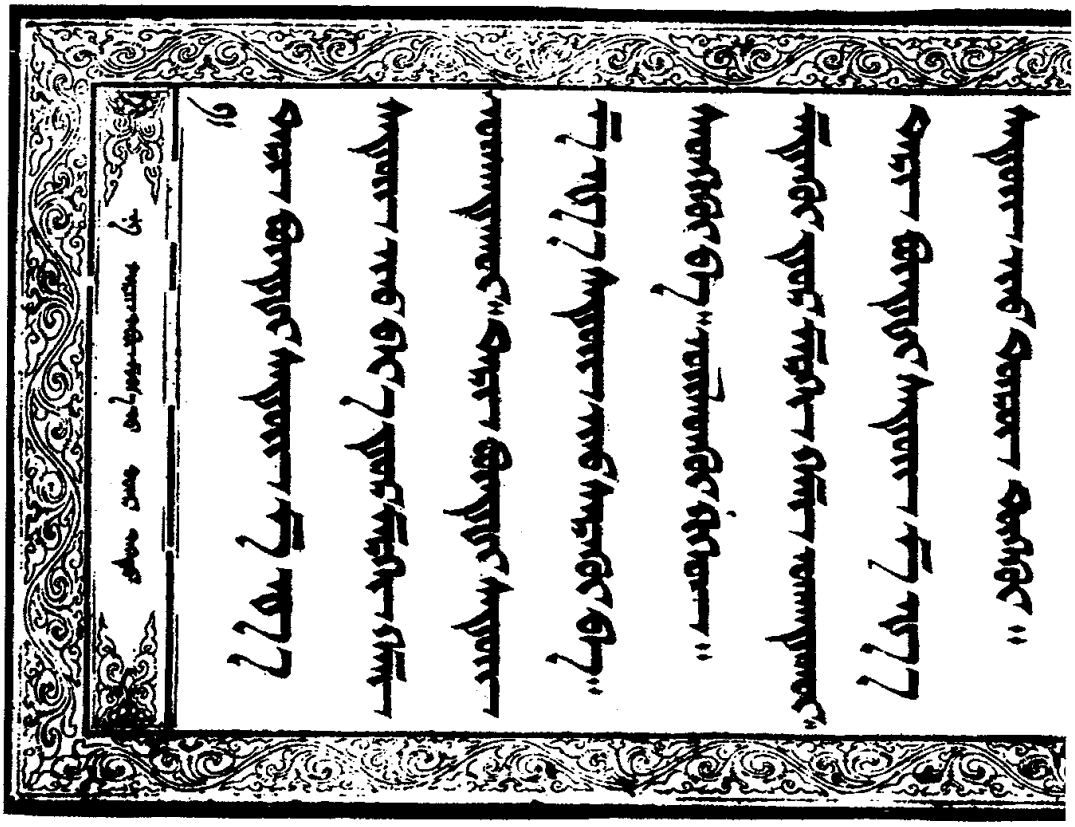
Dominance of this *vertical script* was challenged in 1269 by the introduction of Emperor Qubilai's *square script* or *imperial alphabet* ('Phags pa, SECTION 40)—and in the seventeenth century by the Manchu alphabet, the *clear script*, the *svāyambhu* script, and the *horizontal square script* (the latter two were invented by Jñānavajra, the Khalkha high priest). However, none of these offered the simplicity of the Uyghur-Mongol vertical script. In 1587 Ayushi created an amplified version of this alphabet for the exact transcription of Sanskrit and Tibetan words; his new symbol for foreign *h* was taken from Tibetan. A modern version of Ayushi's alphabet replaced the older Mongol renderings of Mandarin syllables.

The Mongol script is known in various handwritten, shorthand, printed, and ornamental styles. There exist several alphabetical orders, different from the Aramaic. In Inner Mongolia (China), this Mongol script now also serves for writing the Tungusic language Evenki. It was replaced by Cyrillic in 1946 in the Mongolian Republic, but recent political changes favor its revival. (For the use of Cyrillic in three varieties of Mongolic, see below.)

TABLE 49.4: *The Mongolian Script*

Mongol. Value	*Initial*	*Medial*	*Final*	*Separate*	*Miscellaneous*	*Mongol. Value*
a						
e						ba/e k/ga/e
i (yodh)						bi k/gi
o/u (waw)						
ö/ü=waw+yodh						
in non-1st syll.						bo/u k/go/u
n before vowel						
n syll./wd. final						
q						
γ before vowel						
γ syll./wd. final						
b						
s						
š						
s final (Uyg. z)						
t/d (taw)						
d/t (lamedh)						
l						Mongγol
m						
č						
ǰ/y (medial: *top*, ǰ; *bottom*, y)						ml
k/g						ǰa
r						
w/v						
h						
p						
f						

SAMPLE OF MONGOLIAN



1. *Transliteration:*	t'r'	pwβ'δhy s'δwβ'	m' h' ' /s'δwβ'	'ynw	p'y ' δwr	m'rk'n	
2. *Normalization:*	tere	bôdhi-saduva	ma-hā-saduva	inu	bey-e-dür	mergen	
3. *Gloss:*	that	bodhisattva	mahāsattva	3POSS	body-DAT	wise	

1. k'm'n / 'wq'qδ'qwy :	t'r'	pwβ'δhy s'δwβ'	m' h' ' / s'δwβ'	'ynw	serekü	
2. kemen / uqaγdaqui	tere	bôdhi-saduva	ma-hā-saduva	inu	sereküi	
3. saying should.know	that	bodhisattva	mahāsattva	3POSS	waking	

1. ba : / s'tkykwy	p' :	'wyl'tkwy	kyk't : / m'δ'kwy dwr	m'rk'n	k'm'n	
2. ba : / sedkiküi	ba	üiledküi	kiged	medeküi-dür	mergen	kemen
3. and thinking	and	acting	as.well	knowing-DAT	wise	saying

1. 'wq'qδ'qwy : /	t'r'	pwβ'δhy s'δwβ'	m' h' '/s'δwβ'	'ynw	twyrwn	twyk'kwy :
2. uqaγdaqui	tere	bôdhi-saduva	ma-hā-saduva	inu	törön	tügeküi
3. should.know	that	bodhisattva	mahāsattva	3POSS	born	spreading

'You should know: that bodhisattva and mahasattva is wise in (the knowledge of) body. You should know: that bodhisattva and mahasattva is wise in watchfulness, thinking, acting as well as perceiving. That bodhisattiva (is wise in the knowledge of) the sense organs and sense objects (lit. what is being generated and what is spreading.'

—From the printed Mongol Kanjur, vol. 49, folio 2A. Text without diacritics. Early 18th century blockprint.)

TABLE 49.5: *The Oirat "Clear Script"*

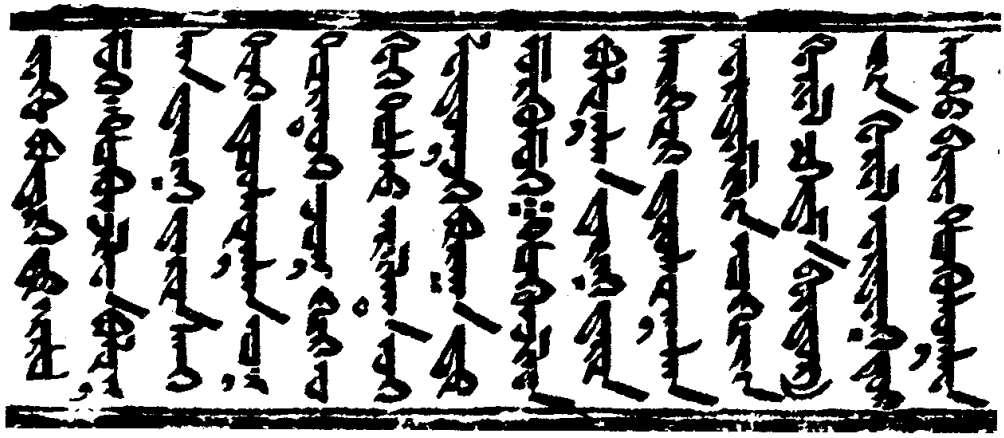
	Initial	*Medial*	*Final*	*Miscellaneous*	
a				after k or b	
e				after k or b	
i				after k or b	
o					
u					
ö				kö	
ü				kü	
vowel length (â)	-				
n				-ngg-	
b					
γ				-q	
g					
k				kâ	
x					
m					
l					
r					
t					
d					
y					
z-/j				init. c/č med.	
s				š	
w/v				-ng	

The "Clear script"

Derived from the Mongol vertical script by the Zaya Pandita Oktorguin Dalai (1648) to reflect the significant changes in the spoken language of his time, Clear script became the writing system of the Mongols of the West, the Oirats and Kalmyks; with some changes, it is still used in Jungaria, eastern Turkestan (see TABLE 49.5). All ambiguities of the vertical script were eliminated with the aid of new diacritics, e.g. a circle at the right for heth = *γ*; and new letters were derived from old variants. All short vowels have their own symbols. Voiced and unvoiced consonants are strictly distinguished. A new symbol (perhaps derived from an Indian alphabet) marks vowel length of *a*, *e*, *o*, and *ö*. Long *i*, *u*, and *ü* are rendered by double letters (while *i* + long-

mark = *iaa/iee*, *u* + long-mark = *uaa*, etc.). Positional variation is mostly eliminated, but initial vowels still have the mandatory initial aleph. Plain waw = *ü*, while waw with a stroke = *u*; both have separate medial and final variants (but plain waw represents *u* after *x/γ* or *o*—a rational abbreviation). Word-final *ng* is marked by a ligature. The syllable-final velar stop *q* is represented by a new letter (γ with a crescent), regardless of vowel harmony. A modified kaph is used for a palatal *k* before long *a*. Initial yodh is *y*; angular tsadi is *ǰ* or *z*, and smooth tsadi is *č* or *c*. In modern usage, two symbols taken from the Oirat version of Ayushi's alphabet resolved this ambivalence: marked angular tsadi = *ǰ*, while marked smooth tsadi = *č*. In modern orthography, case endings are written separately, like postpositions or particles, with initial aleph if necessary (as also in the old, classical Oirat written language). The alphabetical order of this script differs from those of the Mongol vertical and the Aramaic scripts. Since the 1920s Kalmyks in the (former) Soviet Union have had a number of Latin and Cyrillic orthographies.

SAMPLE OF OIRAT



1. *Transliteration:* ... / yeke bodhidu irō/müi : tögünčilen boluq/san dayini
2. *Gloss:* great bodhi.DAT pray doing.so become enemy.ACC

1. darun sai/tur dousuqsan oq/toryui coq kir ü/gei tōsu arilγan üi/ledüqči
2. suppress well completed heaven glory stain-less dust cleanse maker

1. burxandu / mürgümüi :: tögünčilen boluq/san dayini darun sayitur /
2. buddha prostrate doing.so become enemy.ACC suppress well

1. dousuqsan erdeniyin okiyin / gerel padma beṇdury[a]/yin gerel erdeni
2. completed gem top light lotus lapis lazuli light gem

1. dür/sütü beye tögüsügsen
2. shaped body accomplished

'(I) pray for the Great Enlightenment. (I) bow before the buddha, the Glory of Heaven, the Immaculate, he who became such (= Tathāgata), he who van-

quished the enemy, he who well completed (his task), and he who succeeds in cleansing the dust (of passion); (I bow before) the Light of the Top of the Gem, he who became such, he who vanquished the enemy, he who well completed (his task), and he who is perfect with a body of the appearance of the lotus, the bright gem of lapis lazuli.'

—From a 19th-century printing block in the Institute of Oriental Studies, St. Petersburg, with foreign h, p, ṇ, *and "subscript" Tibetan* y *with "inherent"* a.

The Manchu alphabet

In 1599 Nurhachi, founder of the Manchu Empire, ordered that a writing system be created for the Manchu language; see TABLE 49.6. Erdeni Bakshi added some new symbols to the Mongolian script, and this system, the "alphabet without dot and circle," was used until Dahai's reform of 1632, which introduced the "alphabet with dot and circle." Positional variation of the Mongolian letters is preserved, but all the ambiguities of Mongolian script are eliminated by diacritics and new symbols; hence this easternmost descendant of the Aramaic script is an ideal tool for recording Manchu phonemes and some allophones. Additional symbols make it possible to give an exact Manchu transcription of Mandarin Chinese. The new letters derived from those of the Mongol script are: *f* (hooked beth, before vowels other than *u* and *i*, where plain beth = *w* renders *f*); *p* (pe with indented bow); *š* (modified shin); t^1 (round initial taw for *t* before *a*, *o*, and Chinese *i*); d^1 (smooth lamedh for medial *d* before *a*, *o*); t^2 (pointed initial taw for *t* before *e* or *u*); d^2 (pointed lamedh for medial *t* before *e* or *u*); *y* (hooked yodh, while plain initial yodh = *j*); crossed kaph for foreign *k* before *a* or *o*; crossed shin = Chinese *c* (*ts'*); shin with vertical stroke = Chinese *j* (*ts*, pinyin *z*); zain = Chinese *zh* (pinyin *r*).

A dot on the left marks *n* before a vowel. The diacritic dot and circle that appear on the right side of the letter cannot be combined with each other. Dotted aleph = *e*, dotted waw = *u*, dotted gimel = *γ*, dotted kaph = *g*, dotted taw or lamedh = *d* (e.g., dotted round taw + waw = *do*, while dotted pointed taw + waw = *du*).

Gimel with circle = unvoiced velar spirant before *a* or *o*; kaph with circle = unvoiced velar spirant [x] before *e*, *u*, or *i*. Gimel with double dot on the left side = syllable-final *q*. Chinese *ï*, or the retroflex character of the preceding affricate (cf. pinyin *chi* and *zhi*), is marked by a circle below *č* or *ǰ*. After *s* and the alveolar affricates, a diacritic similar to an inverted shin marks the appropriate foreign vowel. The vowel *u* is marked by the digraph waw + yodh after dotted gimel and dotted kaph. If *u* is the second element of a diphthong, no dot is added (so Manchu *geu* 'mare' is transcribed *geo*). Punctuation is single and double tear-shaped dots, for smaller and larger units.

Competing with Chinese calligraphy, many styles were designed for seals and various ornamental purposes. The Manchu dialect of the Shibe people of China is still written in this script; it was formerly also the writing system for Mongolic Daur, spoken in China (now romanized).

TABLE 49.6: *Manchu Script*

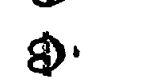
	Initial	*Medial*	*Final*	*Separate*	*Ligatures*	
a						ba ke
e						be
i						bi, ki
o						bo
u						bu, gu
ô[a]						
n before V						
n syll. end						
ng						
q[b]						
q syll. end						
k						
γ						
g						
k′						k′a
g′						k′o, g′o
χ						
x						
b						
p						
s						
š						

TABLE 49.6: *Manchu Script (Continued)*

	Initial	*Medial*	*Final*	*Separate*	*Ligatures*	
t^1						
t syll. end						
d^1						
t^2						
d^2						
l						
m						
č						
ǰ						
y						
r						
f						
w[c]						
c[d]						
cï; čï						Manǰu bitxe
j; ǰï						
jï						
ž						
sï						

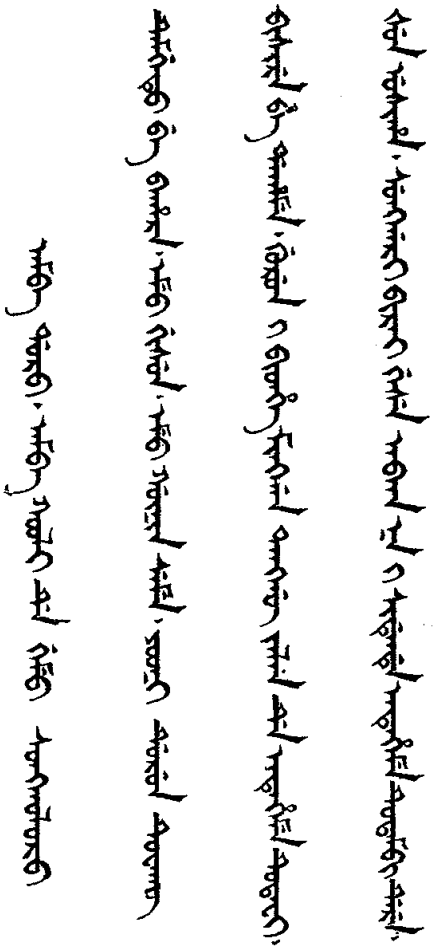
a. The digraph *o* + *i* (waw + yodh) is considered a compound symbol *ô* (also transcribed *ū*) which denotes *u* after *q*, *γ*, or *χ*, where the dot of the usual *u* cannot be used.

b. The letters *q* and *k*, *γ* and *g*, and *χ* and *x* mark the velar and palatal allophones of *q*/*k*, *γ*/*g*, and *χ*/x. The letters derived from tau and lamedh, namely *t*, t^1, t^2, d^1, and d^2, also define the value of aleph and waw they precede.

c. The letter *w* renders [f] before *i* and *u*.

d. The last eight units represent Northern Chinese segments and syllables.

SAMPLE OF MANCHU



1. *Transliteration:*	amba	doro .	amba	qooli de	gemu	songqoloro /	temgetu be		
2. *Transcription:*	amba	doro	amba	kooli-de	gemu	songkoloro	temgetu-be		
3. Gloss:	great	rule	great	law-in	all	following	seal-ACC		
1. baχara .	emu	gisun	emu	γônin	seme	yooni	doron	tuwaqô /	bisire be
2. bahara	emu	gisun	emu	gūnin	seme	yooni	doron	tuwakū	bisire-be
3. obtaining	one	word	one	mind	saying	whole	stamp	model	being-ACC
1. daχame .	gurun i	bitxe	mingγan	tangγô	ǰalan de	entexeme	tutafi . /		
2. dahame .	gurun-i	bithe	minggan	tanggū	jalan-de	enteheme	tutafi		
3. obeying	state-of	script	1000	100	age-in	eternally	having.held		
1. šun	usiχa .	sungγari	birai	gese	abqa	na i	sidende	entexeme	
2. šun	usiha	sunggari	bira-i	gese	abka	na-i	sidende	enteheme	
3. sun	star	Milky Way-of		like	sky	earth-of	between	eternally	
1. tutambi	dere :								
2. tutambi	dere								
3. hold	likely								

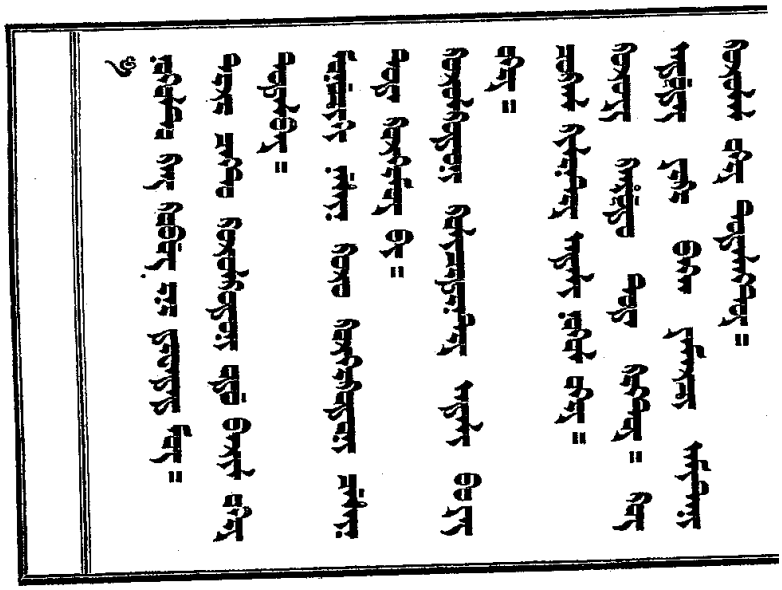
'Obtaining the Seal that wholly acts according to the Great Rule and the Great Law, fully obeying the given example unanimously and wholeheartedly, and keeping the script of the empire for thousands and hundreds of generations forever, it is likely to keep up between Heaven and Earth forever like the Sun, the stars, and the Milky Way.'

—From the emperor's preface of 1708 to the Manǰu gisun-i buleku bitxe [The Dictionary of Manchu] in the 1771 blockprint of its revised edition called Nonggime toqtobuχa Manǰu gisun-e buleku bitxe.

The Buryat alphabet

In 1905 in St. Petersburg, the learned lama Agwaan Dorzhiev (alias Vagindra) and the Buryat scholar Tsyben Zhamtsarano invented a script for modern Buryat (Northern Mongolian) on the basis of the Mongol vertical alphabet and the Western Mongolian clear script (TABLE 49.7). No positional variants are used; new letters, derived from the old ones for the Buryat sound system, have eliminated ambivalence. Vowel length and consonant palatalization are marked by diacritics (a vertical stroke and a small circle respectively). This alphabet was used in handwritten and typeset forms for some fifteen years, but was not able to replace the older, supradialectal, Mongol script, which remained in use until the introduction of a Roman and later (1939) a Cyrillic script for Buryat.

SAMPLE OF BURYAT



1. *Transliteration:*	nügültü	xang	xübûng	ene	devadad	müng : /	tere	cagto
2. *Gloss:*	sinful	king	son	this	Devadatta	same	that	time.DAT

1. xorolxodoni	üdô	baril	ügey	tohalbay : /	münôčigi	nâšin	xoro
2. hurting.DAT.POSS	revenge	holding-less		helped	now.too	hither	harm

TABLE 49.7: *The Buryat Alphabet*

Letter	*Transliteration*	*Phonetic Value*	*Letter*	*Transliteration*	*Phonetic Value*
	a	[a]		â	[a:]
	e	[e]		ê	[e:]
	i	[i]		î	[i:]
	o	[o]		ô	[o:]
	u	[u]		û	[u:]
	ö	[ø]		ô	[ø:]
	ü	[y]		û	[y:]
	g	[g]		w′	[w^{j}]
	k/x	[x]		s′	[s^{j}]
	ng	[ŋ]		r′	[r^{j}]
	ž	[ʒ]		l′	[l^{j}]
	č	[ʧ]		h′	[h^{j}]
	ñ	[ɲ]		$\bar{g}^{a}$	[ĝ]
	d	[d]		k̲	[k^{ˀ}]
	t	[t]		ǰ	[ʤ]
	n	[n]		d̲	[d̥]
	b	[b]		p̄	[p^{ˀ}]
	p	[p]		v	[v]
	m	[m]		f	[f]
	z	[z]		ǰ	[ʤ]
	c	[ts]		šč	[ʃʧ]
	w	[w]		ï	[ɨ]
	š	[ʃ]	PUNCTUATION		
	s	[s]		question mark	
	y	[j]		exclamation point	
	r	[r]		comma	
	l	[l]		period	
	h	[h]		beginning of text	

a. The last ten letters represent Russian and other foreign sounds.

1. xürgexüdüni câšin toha xürgemüy bi : / xorolxodoni
2. sending.DAT.POSS thither help send I harm-doing.DAT.POSS

1. xülicehentey adali boyang / ügey : / cuxal xilentey adali nügül
2. endured.SOC similar virtue no fury hatred.SOC similar sin

1. ügey : / xoroyng xar'ûdo toha xegtüy : xüng / adûhang yexe baga
2. no harm.GEN response.DAT help do.OPT human beast big small

1. yamarči amitani / xorolal ügey tuhalagtuy :
2. any.kind being.ACC harm-doing-less help.OPT

'The Sinful Prince is this Devadatta. At that time, when he did harm to me, I did not feel vengeful, but helped him. Even now, when he does harm to me, I still help him. There is no (greater) virtue than patience against harm-doing. (And) there is no (greater) sin than hatred. In response to harm-doing, do favor. Help humans and beasts, big and small, all kinds of living beings, without doing harm.'

—*From a brochure typeset in St. Petersburg, Burxang bagšing gegênî xur'ângoy namtar bolong Buyanto xang xübûni namtar orošibay [(Here) abide the Holy Teacher Buddha's Short Vita and Prince Buyanto's Vita] (1906?).*

Cyrillic script

Cyrillic script was introduced for Mongolic languages by Soviet authorities in 1939 (see SECTION 65), and in Mongolia in 1946 (TABLE 49.8).

Long vowels and diphthongs are written as vowel+vowel in Khalkha (i.e. Modern Mongolian) and Buryat; Kalmyk marks long vowels this way only in the first syllable of a word; in syllables after the first, short vowels are omitted, and long vowels are represented by a single letter. In Khalkha, -ий represents long *ii* following a palatal or palatalized consonant; -ы represents long *ii* following a non-palatal consonant. Khalkha orthography has complex rules specifying whether a short vowel in a syllable other than the first is to be written. "Buryat" is буряад *bur'ād* in Cyrillic Buryat, буриад *buriad* in Khalkha, and *buriyad* in Classical Mongolian. "Kalmyk" is хальмг *khal'mg* in Kalmyk, халимаг *xalimag* in Khalkha, and *qalimaγ* in Classical Mongolian.

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TABLE 49.8: *Mongolic in Cyrillic Script*

Letter		*Khalkha*	*Buryat*	*Kalmyk*
А	а	a	a	a
Ә	ә	–	–	ä
Б	б	b	b	b
В	в	w	(v)	w
Г	г	g	g	g
Һ	һ	–	–	γ (gh)
Д	д	d	d	d
Е	е	ye/yö	ye/yö	e/ye-
Ё	ё	yo	yo	
Ж	ж	ǰ	ǰ	ž (zh)
Җ	җ	–	–	ǰ
З	з	j (dz)	z	z
И	и	i	i	i
Й	й	i̯	i̯	y
К	к	(k)		k
Л	л	l	l	l
М	м	m	m	m
Н	н	n-, -ng	n-, -ng	n
Ң	ң	–	–	ng
О	о	o	o	o
Ө	ө	ö	ö	ö
П	п	p	p	p
Р	р	r	r	r
С	с	s	s	s
Т	т	t	t	t
У	у	u	u	u
Ү	ү	ü	ü	ü
Ф	ф	(f)		
Х	х	x	x	x (kh)
Һ	һ	–	h	–
Ц	ц	c	(c)	c (ts)
Ч	ч	č	(č)	č (ch)
Ш	ш	š	š	š (sh)
Щ	щ	(šč)		
Ъ	ъ	mute shwa "hard sign"		
Ы	ы	long ii	ei/ii	
Ь	ь	ĭ	palatalization	
Э	э	e	e	e initial
Ю	ю	yu/yü	yu/yü	yu initial
Я	я	ya	ya	ya initial

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