On the 'Qahan' 中合罕 in the Language of the Secret History

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§1 This paper treats a problem on Qahan (中合罕) in the language of the Secret History of the Mongols. The literary form for this qahan is generally considered as qaγan. However, can the form qaγan of literary Mongolian correspond to qahan in the language of the Secret History? It is not necessarily correct. Following the transcriptional principle in the Secret History, we can expect qa'an instead of qahan for the literary form qaγan.

This is easily recognized by the following comparative table among the language of the Secret History, literary Mongolian, and modern Khalkha Mongolian.

SH[1]	PS[2]	Mo.[3]	Khal.[4]
((mountain)) 阿魯剌	a·ula	aγula	ūlɐ (ŋ) [уул (ан)]
((herd of horses)) 阿都兀孫	adu·usun	aduγusun	adūsɐ(ŋ) [адуус(ан)]
((shade)) 薛兀迭児	se·uder	següder	sūder [сүүдэр]
((long time)) 額兀舌(列)	e·uri	egüri	ūr [үү]
((to sit)) 撒兀-	sa·u-	saγu-	sū-[суу-]
((number)) 脱阿	to·o(n)	toγa	to [тоо]
((dust)) 脱斡孫	to· [o] su [n]	toγusun	tōs (oŋ) [тоос (он)]

(1) SH stands for the language of the Secret History of the Mongols.
(2) PS stands for Pagspa Script Mongolian.
(3) Mo. stands for literary Mongolian.
(4) Khal. stands for modern Khalkha Mongiloan.
Brackets show the cyrillic forms officially used in the Mongolian People's Republic.

((relay horses)) 兀剌阿	ula·a	ulaɣa	ulā [улаа]
((what? which?)) 牙兀	ya·u(n)	yaɣu (n)	jū (n) [юу(н)]
((poor)) 兀格兀	uge·u	ügegü	ügü [үгүү]
((to drink)) 兀兀-	(u·u-)	uɣu-	ū-[уу-]
((cloud)) 額兀列	(e·ule)	egüle	ül [үүл]

It is evident from the above examples—more examples can easily be furnished—that in the language of SH,-ɣ-(-g-) between the two vowels has already lost most of its phonetic substance and caused to produce long vowels in the modern Khalkha Mongolian and other dialects.

For example, a'ula, adu'usu(n), se'uder, e'ure, sa'u-, to'a, to'ɔsu(n), ula'a, ya'u(n), uge'u, u'u-, e'ule. Thus the two vowels before and after -ɣ-(-g-) are respectively at the stage of hiatus. This is quite the same in PS and Mo. as demonstrated in the above table. Then we can establish the following set.

SH	PS	Mo.	Khal.
?	qa'an	qaɣan	xāŋ [хаан]

It is very clear that we can put qa'an instead of qahan in the blank ? . In SH, there is only one Chinese character, 安, for the transcription of an (a'n). Thus 中合安 should be expected in SH.

According to the transcriptional principle, this 中合安 should be the only expected form, but we do find the form 中合罕 qahan, as well. Why? It is precisely this problem on 中合罕 that the author intends to touch upon and solve in this paper.

§2 In the Shiratori text[5] all these 中合罕 's are amended to 中合中罕. Naturally I do not agree with this revision as mentioned above.

Prof. Hattori has pointed out that, though all the volumes of SH give 389 examples of the form 中合罕, only three examples of 《中合中罕》

(5) Kurakichi Shiratori: A romanized representation of the Yüan-Ch'ao-Pi-shih Tokyo, 1943

(6) Shiro Hattori: A study on chinese character representing the language of the Secret History, Tokyo, 1946

(taken from 四部叢刊影印本). (See appendix.) We can easily imagine that this reason of 中合中罕 stands for qaqan～qaγan. For the examples of 《中合中罕》 are only three in number and 《-γ-(-g-)》 between the vowels, extinct in the Khalkha Mongolian, has already lost its substance in the language of SH. The author, therefore, cannot approve 《中合中罕》 in the Shiratori text. In the last chapter I mentioned why 《中合中罕》 appears in SH, though the expected form should be qa'an 《中合安》 as is clear from comparison among SH, PS and Mo.. This hypothesis is based on several considerations.

To present such considerations is the author's intention in this paper. We must, first of all, pay attention to the justifiable doubt as to whether 《中合罕》 transcribed as qahan, representing the sound in the 13th-century-Mongolian, as based upon SH.

§3 The above doubt seems to be very reasonable. But a little deliberation is enough to limit its possibility: it is not totally impossible, but, if ever, very insignificant.

It mainly depends upon the nature of the phoneme /h/ in Mongolian in those days.

This phoneme /h/ is generally defined as the initial /h/ in Middle Mongolian by Mongolian linguists. It seldom appears in the medial nor at the end, but always appears in the initial position.

For this traditional reason, one can say that 《qahan》 with /h/ in the medial, is quite exceptional. I stated above, however, with deliberation: "it is not totally impossible, but, if ever, very insignificant". That is, one cannot say that this phoneme /h/, in a strict sense, always appears in the initial position, even in Middle Mongolian. For instance:

亦協額罷 ((護助了)) ihe'eba [§ 145, 四 40 五]

亦赫額勒 ((護助)) ihe'el [§ 163, 五 34 十]

These examples demonstrate the medial 《-h-》. In the Houa-yi yi-yu (甲種本),

紫 只希因 jihi'in ((紫色)) [声色門 7, I 21 r]

麝 只哈児 ǰihar [7] ((麝香鹿)) [動物門 32, I 6r]

These are two more examples with 《-h-》 in the medial position. It was possible for 《-h-》 to appear in the medial position in those days, though limited to a few cases. In this sense we should not regard all 《qahan》 cases as exceptional. The form may exist in Middle Mongolian. Thus, the word meaning "emperor" may be qahan in the language which was based upon SH. What the author meant by "limited possibility, etc" precisely porints to this.

However, in view of the considerations presented under § 1, the existence of 《qa'an》 in the derivational forms 《中合阿訥 qa'anu》 "the emperor's" 《中合阿納 qa'ana》" to the emperor" and an overwhelming apperance of /h/ in the initial position in Middle Mongolian,—in view also of the fact that in PS qa'an, and not qahan,is found[8]—, we can assume that qa'an is a genuine form of Mongolian of the day. This leads the author to suspect that there may be some other reasons for employing 《中合罕》 instead of 《中合安》 in SH. The author gives a hearty support to this idea.

I will try to justify the reason why the interpreter employed 《中合罕》 instead of 《中合安》 in SH, in conjunction with another relevant problem. I wish to get two conclusions at a time in reference to this problem.

§ 4 Another relevant problem is that 《可温 ko'un (son)》 in SH is 《k'e· un》 in PS. There is a difference between 《ko》 and 《ke》 in the first

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(7) On page 30 in Vocabulaire-index Part II of "La Langue Mongole Des Transcriptions Chinoises Du XIV^{e} Siecle, Le Houa-yi yi-yu de 1839" Prof. M. Lewicki changes 《ǰihar》 into 《ǰiχar (ǯiχar)》, but he should have kept 《ǰihar》 refering to turc (al-Kāšγ) yïpar he showed. It may be possible for 《ǰihi'in》 to have existed in Mongolian in those days as turc (al-Kāšγ) yäpkin suggests. 《ibege-》 for 《ihe'e- (SH)》 and 《ibegel》 for 《ihe'el》 are found in Mo.. But 《ǰibigin》 for 《ǰihi'in》 is not found. The literary form of 《ǰihar》 is 《ǰiγar》 and the process of evolution of 《ǰiγar》 is transcribed in: *ǰipar>*ǰihar>ǰi'ar.

(8) 《ihe'el》 and 《ihe'e-(SH)》 are 《ihe'en》 and 《ihe-(gči) (PS)》. Thus, 《-h-》 is demonstrated. But qahan (SH) is qa'an (PS).

syllable. As you know, SH and PS are much the same. But as to this word, there is the above difference. As far as this matter is concerned, there has been an argument between Prof. Shiro Hattori and Prof. Shichiro Murayama. For details, see Numbers 24 and 25 of Gengo Kenkyu. Roughly speaking, Prof. Murayama proposed the difference between ko'un and k'e·un as a counter-evidence against Prof. Hattori's Pagspa theory.(9)

Prof. Murayama said, "The existing Secret History gives the word 可温 (可兀) in the meaning of a son, but PS gives 《k'e·un》. Thus, if the transcription of the existing SH was done on the basis of PS, the form 《ke'un (客温)》 should have appeared in SH. On the contrary, SH has 可温 and not 客温. Therefore it is unfavorable to Pagspa theory on this point." While Prof. Hattori said, "Furthermore Mr. Murayama seems to take the difference between PS 《k'e'unu》 and SH 可温 《koun》 to heart. This word was never transcribed 客温, 客兀 in SH but 可温, 可兀. I once mentioned that in my paper (Page 131, 1. 1.) entitled 'A study on Chinese characters representing the language of the Secret History'. The manuscript of the chapter was burnt down.That is to say that in my third transliteration 《客, 可》 are translated into 《ke, ko》 respectively. Considering the Chinese sound of these characters, as I demonstrated, they are [k'ʌiʔ²] [k'ə²] respectively. In Mongolian /kä'ün/is closer to [k'ɘün] than [k'ɘʔün]. They might think it better to use 可温 [k'əun] than 客温 [k'ʌiʔun].

Thereafter Prof. Murayama did not controvert against that. It is thought this problem has been closed. The author considers this matter from an aspect different from that of Prof. Hattori.

This word 可温, 可兀 ko'u(n) corresponds to χū (xyy) in Khal.. We

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(9) Prof. Hattori said in the Gengo Kenkyu, 19–20, "The existing Secret History was transcribed from Pagspa Script or was transcribed from Uigur Script on the principle of transcribing the Pagspa Script in terms of chinese character." The author calls it "Pagspa theory" here.

can assume a Middle Mongolian form ke'un and not ko'un (kö'ün) 可温 from the modern form хүн (хүү). This is also very closely demonstrated in the following table of comparison:

Khal.	Mo.	SH	Meaning
үүл (ūlə)	egüle	e'ule	((cloud))
үүд (ūdə)	egüde	e'ude	((gate))
үүн (ūŋ)	egün	e'un	((stem of the demonstrative pronoun ene (this)))
үүс-(ūs-)	egüs-	e'us-	((to spring from, appear))
дүү (dū)	degü(ü)	de'u	((little brother))
гүү (gū)	gegü(ü)	ge'u	((mare))
зүү (zū)	ǰegü(ü)	ǰe'u	((needle))

In this way, e'u in the language of SH turns into a long vowel үү (ū) in the modern Khalkha Mongolian. Thus, хүү in the Khalkha Mongolian should be ke'un in the language of the Secret History. I cannot help maintaining 可温 ko'un (kö'un) is an exceptional form. Besides in PS, it is k'e·un. There must be some reasons in having used 可温 instead of 客温 in SH.

§ 5 Generally speaking, in the process of studying the language of SH, we must consider the transcribing Chinese characters itself and the relations between the transcribing Chinese character and the meaning of the transcribed Mongolian. So far, I think the European researchers on the language of SH are at fault in this regard. For example,

'man' and' to reach' are 古温, 古兀, and 古児– in the transcribed forms in SH. According to these Chinese characters, both words had a voiced stop [g] in the initial in the 13 th century. So they were to be gu'u(n) 'man' and gur- 'to reach' in those days. However, in PS these two words are k'u'un, and k'ür(ge)-(k'ür(te)-). Up to now, no modern Mongolian dialects have a voiced stop in the initial of the two words. It is doubtful that SH has gu in the two words above mentioned.

Hence the author scrutinizes the examples of 古 in SH and finds

that 古 represents gü and kü. Fundamentally 古 was used for gü and why was it used for kü at a time? The Chinese characters to transcribe the Mongolian syllable kü are 曲, 枯 and 窟 (according to Prof. Hattori's work shown above). If the interpreter of SH transliterated ku'un and kur-, he must have written「曲温, 枯温, 窟温」「曲児-, 枯児-[10], 窟児-」. But in fact he used 古温 and 古児- consistently. This is attributed to the following two reasons:

①曲, 枯 and 窟 are not proper characters to express ku'un "man"

②曲, 枯 and 窟 have more strokes than 古. They are uneconomical.

Thus the interpreter selected the proper characters in meanings and strokes at the cost of sound. We can find such trials in places through the volumes of SH. This is why SH has 古温 and 古児-for k'u·un and k'ur- in PS. Basically the interpreter of SH tried to transcribe the Mongolian sound accurately, though sometimes he used the proper characters at some sacrifices of sound as I mentioned above. We should not forget this. It is nothing but the sacrifice of sound that SH has 客温 and 中合安 for k'e·un 'son' and qa'an 'emperor' in Middle Mongolian.

Without any reason, the interpreter did not sacrifice sound. To the literate Mongolians at the age of this interpretation, it was impossible to use 客 in transcribing ke'un meaning 'a son'. This is that 客 was very unproper character to express a son. Why was it so unproper? We will have to see the description of SH.

§6 SH tells us the following episode. Temujin (Genghis khan) spent his youthful days in incessant distress. Through the distress, he grew up to be the greatest hero of the day. He suffered an attack of Merkid (篾児乞惕) and had his newly-married wife Borte (孛児帖) plundered. It was Merkid's return that his father Yesgeiba'atur (也速該巴阿禿児) plundered Čiled's (赤列惕) wife of Merkid. The plundered Borte was

(10) 枯児- is seen in SH.

married to Čiled's little brother Čilger Boko (赤勃格児孛可). Afterward Borte was recaptured by Temuǰin. The rescued Borte soon gave birth to a son. Formally this was Temuǰin's eldest son. He named the son 拙赤 J̌oči. J̌oči in Mongolian means a guest c((客)). Temuǰin did not recognize this child as his real son.

His naming his son J̌oči 'a guest' means that the child was not his real son. Could the interpreter use the character 客 which means clear proof of the child not being a real son, for ke'un 'son'? Of course not. This is why 可温 is used instead of 客温 in SH. The phonetic difference between ke and kö is neglected. (Of the Chinese characters expressing Mongolian ko (kö) in SH, there are 可, 缺, 闊. 可 is selected because of their few strokes and proper meaning:)

Therefore if ke'un should be transcribed 客温 in SH, it was impossible. SH has enough reasons for using 可温 for k'e·un in PS. On this point it is understood that Prof. Murayama's confutation against Prof. Hattori's Pagspa theory is an unjustifiable protest.

§7 So far, it is very easy to understand the reason why SH uses 忒合罕 and not 忒合安 for qa'an in Middle Mongolian. 安 of 忒合安 is not a proper character in meaning "emperor" who is very rare and is on the highest dignity. I think 安 may be proper to other cases. But as to the transcription of qa'an, 安 has to give way to 罕. No other character is not so proper as 罕 meaning rare. In the interpretation of SH, some phonetical differences were neglected and in meaning the most proper character for qa'an was selected.

In short, it is proper to understand that 忒合罕 as well as 可温 is a kind of interpretational technique in SH.

Appendix I

忒合罕 qahan ㊀ 30 三; 32 五, 六, 十; 33 三, 五; 39 三, 九; 40 七; 44 七 ㊁ 44 五, 十; 48 六; 49 四 ㊃ 4 四, 七; 6 五, 六; 9 三; 10 四; 11 十; 13 一, 七; 14 一, 四; 15 二; 16 三; 17 四; 18 七; 19 八; 20 四; 26 二, 四,

九; 27七; 31七; 32一, 九; 33二; 37三, 九; 38八; 39四; 40七; 41二, 八; 43一; 45五, 八; 46六, 七, 十; 47四; 49二; 50二㊄1二, 六; 5七, 八; 7五; 9二; 11八; 12一, 四; 17二, 五; 19四; 20十; 22五, 六; 23一, 三, 五; 24一, 八; 25一; 28一; 29五, 七; 31六, 九; 32一; 33六; 37四; 38七; 39六; 46二; 47一㊅1一; 2八; 7六; 10一; 11三, 七; 12一; 14二; 18三, 六; 19二; 20四, 十; 34八; 35三; 38三; 39八; 43八; 44九; 45五; 46十; (49五)*; 51十; 53一㊆1五, 七; 2六; 3四; 7八; 14十; 18一; 20五; 24五; 31九; 32四; 42九; 44二, 五; 45三; 46十; 47十; 48七, 九㊇1七; 2二, 八; 4二, 五, 十; 6二, 五; 10一; 12十; 13二, 六; 14三; 21二; 24八; 27五, 七; 33三; 34十; 39五; 40八; 43一; 45十; 47四㊈1二; 3七; 5六; 7一; 8一; 9三; 11一; 19四; 20八; 21五; 22四; 23一; 24四, 五, 九; 27四; 31三; 32一; 39十; 40九; 44十; 45九㊉1二; 4五; 6八; 11二; 12六, 十; 13七; 16四; 18六; 21六; 22七; 25十; 27四, 六; 28四, 九; 29二; 31一; 37九; 39三; 40七; 41一; 43四, 八㊋1二; 2二, 七; 6八; 10六, 九; 11八; 12一, 九; 13九; 14六; 15一; 16三; 17一; 18四; 20一, 三, 七; 21八; 23七; 29七; 30一; 31三; 32一, 四, 九; 35一, 八; 36十; 39六; 41五, 九; 42四, 九; 43二; 45六, 十; 47七, 八; 50二㊋1四, 六; 2二, 十; 5三, 六; 7五, 十; 9五; 10三, 四, 六, 九; 12九; 13一; 14四; 15二, 五; 17四; 18三; 19五, 六, 八; 20八; 21二², 十; 22十; 23一, 四, 六, 八, 十; 24八; 26九; 28十; 30八; 31六; 33六, 九; 34一, 九; 36九²; 37二; 43八; 46十²; 47二; 51十; 54十; 55一, 十; 56一, 七; 57二, 八

中合罕突dur児 qahan-dur ㊃4一; 6一, 四; 22七; 32三㊄8十; 9四; 33六; 50三㊅5二; 45四; 49五㊆7五; 46九㊇12八㊉11一; 12二; 13六; 15七㊋(4二); 6六; 14九; 18二; 38七; 43九

中合罕都dur里顔 qahan-dur-iyan ㊃48二

中合罕魯阿 qaahn-lu'a ㊄36七

中合罕納 qahan-na ㊀33二㊃6九; 15四, 十; 18六㊄6三; 7一, 四㊅18十; 42八; 50五; 51九㊆14六; 23五; 42二; 45八; 46一; 47五㊇

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* a parenthesized one shows 中合中罕

1 四; 24 四 ㊂ 2 九; 5 二; 9 七; 14 七; 28 九

中合罕納察 qahan-nača ㊃ 28 二 ㊆ 48 二

中合罕泥 qahan-ni ㊀ 33 二 ㊁ 2 九 ㊁ 50 二 ㊃ 4 二; 27 七; 31 九 ㊄ 27 二 ㊂ 1 八; 14 二, 三; 33 九

中合罕訥 qahan-nu ㊀ 1 二; 30 四; 31 九; 32 五[2]; 33 四; 39 一; 40 一 ㊁ 1 八 ㊃ 8 四; 18 二 ㊆ 31 七; 47 四 ㊇ 26 十; 31 十 ㊂ 2 七; 14 一; 52 五, 十; 53 二

中合罕訥安 qahan-nu-an ㊆ 48 五

Appendix II

中合阿納 qa'an-a ㊃ 40 七; 46 六; 49 七 ㊄ 26 三; 27 七 ㊈ 28 三 ㊉ 27 四, 十 ㊂ 6 三; 8 四; 11 八; 20 七; 44 五; 46 六; 50 六

中合阿泥 qa'an-i ㊄ 50 九 ㊅ 45 二 ㊉ 18 八; 35 二; 36 一; 40 八 ㊂ 7 一; 9 四; 10 七; 12 二

中合阿訥 qa'an-u ㊃ 42 九; 49 八 ㊄ 9 六 ㊅ 8 一, 三 ㊈ 35 十 ㊉ 12 五; 33 二 ㊂ 8 五; 15 九; 16 八; 38 四[2]

中合阿訥埃 qa'an-u-ai ㊂ 15 八; 16 八; 45 三