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Charles Bawden

Another Tract for the Buryats  
with I. J. Schmidt's recently identified  
Kalmuck originals

Edited with an introduction by  
Hartmut Walravens

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## Introduction

When some years ago a monograph on Isaak Jakob Schmidt, the founder of Mongolian Studies<sup>1</sup> was published, the fact that the list of his publications showed two positions which were not available for inspection<sup>2</sup> created both curiosity and dissatisfaction. Nothing matching the brief available description was found in the major collections of Mongolian books until an entry in the old catalogue of the German Oriental Society (Halle) provided a clue. Prof. Bawden studied and translated this tract which turned out to be one of the missing links.<sup>3</sup> This booklet consisted of two sections, or texts, and obviously matched item 4 in the Schmidt bibliography. As the title indicated the little work was targeted at the Buryats and was apparently a translation or rewritten version of an originally Kalmuck work which was unknown at the time. The little work was noteworthy for at least two reasons:

- It seemed to be the first extant Christian tract in Mongolian of the Protestant mission, published under the auspices of the Russian Bible Society. And it allowed glimpses of the work of the translators who struggled with the necessity to express terms and concepts alien to tradition in the Mongolian language. As Prof. Bawden pointed out the terminology was by no means standardized yet and one noticed the endeavour to find and apply the most appropriate terms. The 1815 translation of the gospel of Matthew into Kalmuck<sup>4</sup> by Schmidt may have been of some assistance but the gospel would not solve the issue of presenting in adequate and concise form the essence of Christianity.
- In contrast to later Mongolian translations by Schmidt and his collaborators, sponsored by the Russian Bible Society (Russkoe Biblejskoe Obščestvo), this booklet has an imprint also in Russian indicating that it had been printed by Nikolaj Greč's printing-shop. In a number of books the

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1 *Isaak Jakob Schmidt (1779–1847)*. Leben und Werk des Pioniers der mongolischen und tibetischen Studien. Eine Dokumentation. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2005. 180 p. (Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes 56,1.)

2 3. *Kurze Darstellung der christlichen Glaubenslehre* (Kalmükisch) 26 S. sowie eine Übersetzung ins Mongolische 30 S. – 4. *Christliche Tractätlein zur Bekehrung der Burjäten, in zwey Abtheilungen*. St. Petersburg 1828. Mong. 28 S.; Kalm. 14 S.

3 Charles R. Bawden: *A Tract for the Buryats*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2009. 105 p. (Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes 67.)

4 *Evangelium St. Mathaei in linguam Calmuco-Mongolicam*, Petropoli: Drechsel 1815. 33 fol.

firm's name is given as N. Gretsches (the original German spelling of the name). The preface to the recent edition of the *Buryat Tract* assembles some biobibliographical information on Nikolaj Greč (1787–1867) without, however, being able to explain some basic issues:

– What was Greč's interest in printing Mongolian texts? Was it just a job like any other printing order? Or did Greč have a special interest in Mongolian, or perhaps just Oriental scripts or type? We know from Karl Tauchnitz in Leipzig, for example, that he printed a beautiful edition of the Qur'an because he considered this a challenge. And in 1835 he printed two Tibetan texts as suggested by Baron Paul Ludwig Schilling von Canstadt.<sup>5</sup>

– What type was used for the printing? We have some information on the cutting of the Kalmuck type that was used for the printing of the 1815 book. But what about the Mongolian type? It is known from other sources that Baron Schilling von Canstadt<sup>6</sup> had a larger Mongolian/Manchu type cut in 1817, and a smaller type in 1819. Or was it another type perhaps designed by Schmidt? Abel Rémusat wrote: „Dès 1817, M. de Schilling avait fait graver à Pétersbourg, par M. Fr. Gass<sup>7</sup>, un gros caractère mandchou-mongol; deux ans

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5 Konnte der Drucker und Verleger Karl Tauchnitz Tibetisch? *Aus dem Antiquariat* 2004:2, p. 83–91.

6 A. V. Jarockij: O dejatel'nosti P. L. Šillinga kak vostokoveda. *Očerki po istorii russkogo vostokovedenija* 6.1963, 218–253; L. I. Čuguevskij: Šilling Pavel Lvovič [Obzrenie fonda No 56 Archiva vostokovedov SPbF IV RAN]. *Vstuplenie i publikacija I. F. Popovoj. Pišmennye pamjatniki vostoka* 4.2006, 249–262; P. Gurevič: Šilling-fon-Kanštadt, baron Pavel L'vovič. *Russkij biografičeskij slovar'* 23.1911, 276–280 (German version of the last item in Walravens, see note 8).

7 Friedrich (Fedor Ivanovič) Gass had been employed by the Mint and pursued his studies at the Academy of Art. He became Schilling's assistant and deputy in the lithographic printing shop. The Manchu and Mongol founts were apparently to be used for the project of printing the five language dictionary of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission as submitted by Pavel Kamenskij (archimandrite Petr). Here we find – so far – the only connection with the Gretsches printing shop: Schilling had proposed the publication of the dictionary, and Gretsches was supposed to do the printing which was a difficult matter: The idea was to print the Russian, Latin, Manchu and Mongol by movable type first and then print the Chinese characters by lithography. The printed samples were very satisfactory but the project did not materialize as Kamenskij was sent to China, and thus the language expert and supervisor was gone. See L. I. Čuguevskij: Iz istorii izdanija vostočnych tekstov v Rossii v pervoj

après (en 1819) il en a fait exécuter un nouveau plus petit et plus commode, à Leipsick, par Schelter. Les mêmes modèles ont servi pour l'un et pour l'autre. C'est du dernier que M. de Schilling a offert généreusement le fonte au Conseil de la Société, et l'on n'a pu qu'accepter avec empressement et reconnaissance cette occasion d'enrichir notre typographie d'une aussi précieuse acquisition. Le même caractère, dont M. Schilling avait aussi prêté les matrices à la Société Biblique, a servi en 1822 à l'impression de l'excellente traduction de l'évangile de Saint-Mathieu, faite en mandchou par M. Lipowzoff.<sup>8</sup>

After the *Buryat Tract* was published the search for further texts, especially no 3 of Schmidt's lost of publications went on. It was known that Vilnius University Library had a large number of Mongolian texts from the Kowalewski collection, but nothing was found in the manuscript department, that matched the requirements. After protracted searches a booklet was found in the department of printed books but this turned out, on inspection, to be another copy of the already published Buryat Tract. After further searches another text was found of which Konstantin Jahontov had already given the title years ago<sup>9</sup>: This item was not known from other sources and possibly matched the missing Schmidt no. 3. On closer inspection, Prof. Bawden noticed that its contents was very close to the previous text – so was it an earlier or later or parallel version? New questions arose.

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četvrtý XIX v. *Strany i narody Vostoka* 11.1971, 280–294. In the meantime Ms. I. F. Popova, director of the Institute of Oriental manuscripts, RAN, St. Petersburg, kindly made the first of the four proofsheets (printed in 1817) of the dictionary in question available to me. A comparison of the type faces shows that the dictionary type is closer to the Manchu type but also very similar to that of the (later) Schmidt tracts. Especially the t and k follow the Manchu style. In the absence of further data we may thus assume that Schilling's Mongol type was slightly adjusted in 1817 to print the Schmidt tract(s) in 1818.

- 8 Cf. H. Walravens: *Zur Geschichte der Ostasienwissenschaften in Europa*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1999, 93. N. Greč does not mention any professional contacts or the Mongol founts in his Baron Pavel L'vovič Šilling fon Kannštatt [!]. *Severnaja pčela* 30. VI. 1853, p. 567–568.
- 9 *Peterburgskoe Vostokovedenie* 1.1992, 330, no. 55: „Christian precepts“. (in: K. Alexeev, K. Yachontov: The J. Kowalevski's collection of Chinese, Manchu, Mongolian and Tibetan books in Vilnius).

While leafing through Walther Heissig's union catalogue of Mongolian books in German libraries<sup>10</sup> to look for a possible copy of Ferdinand Verbiest's Mongolian calendar<sup>11</sup>, the small Christian section was again investigated. It turned out that *Libri mongolici* 2, described as a Buryat printing carried the same title as the newly found Vilnius booklet.<sup>12</sup> The „Buryat printing“ with an accession date of 1887 turned out to be another copy of this tract. The accession date also provided a clue: Bernhard Jülg<sup>13</sup> who had been professor of classical languages at Warsaw and later Innsbruck universities, had been a student of the Altaicist Wilhelm Schott<sup>14</sup> and had published in 1866, and 1868, respectively, the Mongolian text of *Siddhi-kür*<sup>15</sup> and *Arĵi-borĵi*<sup>16</sup> in Innsbruck. In a letter to the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic*

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10 *Mongolische Handschriften, Blockdrucke, Landkarten*. Beschrieben von Walther Heissig unter Mitarbeit von Klaus Sagaster. Wiesbaden: Steiner 1961. XXIV, 494 p. (Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland 1.)

11 Ephemerides of 1680. Only two copies are currently known, one in Copenhagen and one in the University of Kansas, Lawrence. The beginning of this book was reproduced on table VII in G. Sharpe: *Syntagma dissertationum quas olim auctor doctissimus Thomas Hyde S. T. P. separatim edidit*. Vol. 2. Oxonii 1767. Cf. Noel Golvers: *Ferdinand Verbiest, S.J. (1623 - 1688) and the Chinese Heaven: the composition of the Astronomical Corpus, its diffusion and reception in the European Republic of Letters*. Leuven: Univ. Pr. 2003, Ill. 24. A copy of this interesting document was found among Walther Heissig's papers.

12 Heissig: *Blockdrucke*, p. 278: Burjatischer Typendruck. Titel (Titelblatt): *Neyite mongyol buriyad ulus irgen-ü agu ĵam-ıyan tebĉiged. [...] ĵirüken-ü gerel erıl qangyayĉi ĉindamani orosiba*.

13 L. Heizmann: *Bernhard Jülg, Universitätsprofessor und Sprachenforscher*. Oberkirch 1930. 27 p.

14 H. Walravens: *Wilhelm Schott (1802-1889). Leben und Wirken des Orientalisten*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2001. 220 p. (Orientalistik Bibliographien und Dokumentationen 13.)

15 *Die Märchen des Siddhi-Kür*. Kalmükischer Text mit deutscher Übersetzung und einem kalmükisch-deutschen Wörterbuche. Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus 1866. XVI, 223 p.

16 *Mongolische Märchen-Sammlung. Die neun Märchen des Siddhi-kür nach der ausführlicheren Redaction und die Geschichte des Ardschi-Bordschi Chan*. Mongolisch mit deutscher Übersetzung und kritischen Anmerkungen herausgegeben von Bernhard Jülg. Innsbruck. Wagner 1868. XVI, 256 p.



*Society* he had given valuable information on Mongolian Studies in Europe.<sup>17</sup> When he passed away in 1886, his Mongolian books were acquired by the Royal Library in Berlin – and there the accession date of 1887 comes in. Heissig's catalogue also described Libri mong. 1 which was said to be the Kalmuck original of the newly found tract<sup>18</sup>, and Libri mong. 3<sup>19</sup> was identified by Prof. Bawden as the Kalmuck version of the first part of the Buryat Tract. This serendipitous find provided interesting research material for further study:

– Now it would finally be possible to investigate the relationship between these very early Christian Kalmuck and Mongolian texts (which were not directly influenced by Chinese texts, as in the case of the Jesuits).

– It might be possible also to shed some light on a topic that had given some cause for speculation. What was the actual role of the two Mongolian nobles, Badma and Nomtu who had helped to turn the Kalmuck texts into Mongolian? There has been the suspicion that Schmidt did not have a hand in the Mongolian versions at all and that they were the exclusive work of the Mongol *zaisangs* (mainly Badma).

– As to the format and printing style it seemed obvious that all four texts had come from the same printing shop, judging from the type and the border decoration, even if they were neither dated nor carried Greč's imprint.

Was the work by Schmidt and Badma and Nomtu mainly printed by the short-lived Russian Bible Society? Hardly the 1827 editions of the New Testament in Kalmuck and in Mongolian because by that time the RBS had been dissolved by imperial command and the Holy Synod had taken over, and they were not in favour of these publications which they considered not in line with orthodox theology. The 1815 Gospel of Mathew was published by Friedrich Drechsler but at least two copies are known to carry a stamp: Rossijskago Biblejsk. Obščestva. While the Bible Society seems to have had

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17 B. Jülg: Present state of Mongolian studies. *JRAS* 14.1882, 42–65.

18 Heissig: *Blockdrucke*, p. 278: Kalmückischer Typendruck. 14 fol. Titel (Titelblatt): Neyide xalimaq ulusiyin ô žam yën tebčid [...] ünen möri üžülüqči žürükeni gerel erili xangyaqči čindamani orošibai. Christlicher Traktat mit einer Wiedergabe der Schöpfungsgeschichte und der Geschichte vom Sündenfall (1v-11v), mit den zehn Geboten (11v-13r), dem Glaubensbekenntnis (13r-13v) und dem Vaterunser (13v-14r).

19 Heissig: *Blockdrucke*, p. 278: Kalmückischer Typendruck. (Titel) (1r) *Dēdu ončo burxan yezüs kiristusiyn ibēlēr nūlese bosod nūliyin nekelgen-ēse yağaži γarxu üžülüqči nom. niyile xalimaq-tu orosixu bol-tuyai.*

a printing press it was probably used for the major printing jobs while specialized work was farmed out.

In the absence of other evidence it may be helpful to look at other works printed by Greč:

[Rossijskoe Biblejskoe Obščestvo]: *Bericht der Comität der russischen Bibelgesellschaft vom Jahre 4, 1816*  
St. Petersburg, gedr. by N. Gretsches 1817.

*Erster bis siebenter Bericht der Komität der Russischen Bibel-Gesellschaft: 1813-1819.*  
St. Petersburg 1815–1820.

Graefe, Christian Friedrich: *Ad audiendam disputationem, qua Demetrius Popoff dissertationem philologico-criticam de Colutho pro obtinenda adiuncti dignitate publice defendet invitat senior sectionis philologicae Dr. Christianus Fridericus Graefe: Insunt observationes criticae in Tryphiodorum.*  
St. Petersburg: Gretsches 1817.

*Von dem Zwecke der russischen Bibelgesellschaft...*  
St Pétersbourg: N. Gretsches, 1817.

*Heilige Bücher des Neuen Testaments unseres Herrn Jesus Christus.*  
Nach der Vatikanischen Ausgabe. Auf Kosten der Russischen Bibelgesellschaft herausgegeben. St. Petersburg: Gretsches, 1817. 808 p.

*La Sainte Bible contenant l'Ancien et le Nouveau Testament.* Traduite sur la vulgate par Mr. Le Maistre de Sacy [Sacy].  
Petersburg: N. Gretsches, 1817.  
Aux frais de la Société Biblique Russe, St. Petersburg, de l'imprimerie de N. Gretsches, 1817

*Hē kainē diathēkē tu Kyriu kai Sōtēros hēmōn Iēsu Christu.*  
Metaphrastheisa eis koinēn dialektōn. En Petropolei: Gretsches, 1817. 556 p.

*Reise zweyer Mitglieder der Russischen Bibelgesellschaft in den Ostsee-Gouvernements im Jahre 1816.*  
St. Petersburg: Gretsches, 1817. 36 p.

*Siegmund Freyherr von Herberstein*. Mit besonderer Rücksicht auf seine Reisen in Russland geschildert von Friedrich Adelung, ...  
St. Petersburg: gedruckt bey N. Gretsche, 1818. XXX, 513, [1] p. (20,5 cm)

Petersburgische Sammlung gottesdienstlicher Lieder für die öffentliche und häusliche Andacht evangelischer Gemeinen.  
St. Petersburg: Gretsche 1818. 776 p.

Sağang Sečen: *Geschichte der Ost-Mongolen und ihres Fürstenhauses* / Schmidt, Isaak Jakob.  
St. Petersburg: Gretsche 1829. XXIV, 509 p.

Nečaeŭ, Štefan: *Tentamen physiologico-physicum de calore animali auctore Stephano Netschayef*.  
Petropoli 1828: N. Gretsche.

*Observations sur une note de l'ouvrage intitulé: peintures de vases antiques etc. etc.* par A. Olénin.  
St. Petersburg 1818. 95 p.

*Einige Worte über das Kreuzbrunnenwasser des Marienbades in Böhmen als Heilmittel*.  
St. Petersburg: Gretsche, 1820.

Adelung, Friedrich von [1768–1843]: *Uebersicht aller bekannten Sprachen und ihrer Dialekte*.  
St. Petersburg: Gedr. bey N. Gretsche 1820.

Reiff, Karl Philipp: *Grammaire russe à l'usage des étrangers qui désirent connaître à fond les principes de cette langue, précédée d'une introduction sur la langue slavonne*.  
St. Petersburg: impr. de N. Gretsche 1821.

Sjögren, Andreas Johan (1794-1855): *Über die finnische Sprache und ihre Literatur*.  
St. Petersburg: Gedruckt bey N. Gretsche [1821].

Spasskij, Grigorij I.: *De antiquis quibusdam sculpturis et inscriptionibus in Sibiria repertis*. Petropolis: Gretsche, 1822. 6 p.

Köhler, Heinrich Karl Ernst von: *Beurtheilung einer Schrift: Alterthümer am Nordgestade des Pontus*.  
St. Petersburg: Gretsches 1823.

Suchtelen, Jan Peter van: *Précis des évènements militaires des campagnes de 1808 et 1809 en Finlande, dans la dernière guerre entre la Russie et la Suède*, par le L.-G. C. P. de S\*\*\*  
St. Pétersbourg: de l'imprimerie de N. Gretsches, 1827. 220 p.

Sękowski, Joseph: *Lettre de Tutundju-Oglu-Moustafa-Aga, véritable philosophe turk [Sękowski] à M. Thaddée Bulgarin, rédacteur de l'Abeille du Nord*.  
[St. Petersburg:] de l'imprimerie de N. Gretsches 1828. 76 p.

A few of the titles may actually be Greč's publications. The catalogues which were consulted are not always clear about this. It becomes evident from this list that Greč printed a number of items for the Russian Bible Society. Later on this was followed by the famous letter of Józef Sękowski (1800–1858) who would become his collaborator in editing the *Ėnciklopedičeskij leksikon* A. Pljušara<sup>20</sup>, and Isaak Jakob Schmidt's *Geschichte der Ost-Mongolen* (Erdeni-yin tobči). There is no evidence to assume a deeper interest in Oriental languages on his side at that time – he may either have sympathized with the goals of the Bible Society, or had expert printers who were able to do these specialized jobs (printing Mongolian, Greek, German and French texts).<sup>21</sup>

It may be useful to researchers to summarize the state of knowledge regarding the Calmuck and Mongolian types used for these early works:<sup>22</sup>

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20 Cf. *Istorija otečestvennogo vostokovedenija do serediny XIX veka*. Moskva: Nauka 1990, 212.

21 He does not say anything in his Reminiscences about his printing Oriental texts but he points out the religious interests of Czar Alexander, and the fact that Prince Golicyn, president of the Russian Bible Society (RBS), became Minister of Public Instruction in 1817; thus the RBS became an important political factor. Greč notes: „Кто не принадлежал к Обществу библейскому, тому не было хода ни по службе, ни при дворе.» (Greč: *Zapiski o moej žizni*. Moskva: Zaharov 2002, 245.

22 Cf. Charles R. Bawden: W. A. Unkrig's correspondence with the British & Foreign Bible Society. *ZAS* 14.1980, 82–83.

*Kalmuck:*

large type                    1813 – The first application was the printing of the Gospel of Mathew, 1815.

small type                    ca. 1822 – It was used, e.g. for a medical handbook, written in Russian by Osip Kirillovič Kamenickij (1802) and printed in Kalmuck in 1823<sup>23</sup>, and the New Testament of 1827.

„That Kalmuck type, which the BFBS had agreed to pay for some years before, had never been manufactured. Now that Schmidt’s Kalmuck St. Matthew was in being, with a Russian Bible Society prepared to promote it, there was a pressing need for a Kalmuck fount. Between them, the two men designed one and got it manufactured. Typically, [Rev. John] Paterson claimed the credit for this himself, writing:

Mr. Schmidt had put into my hands specimens of the Calmuck, and after studying the nature of the writing, I succeeded in reducing it to such order that it could be cut in type, and printed in the usual way – an attempt which had not hitherto been made. I was also directed to a type-cutter, a self-taught German, a very clever, ingenious person, and by him, under the direction of Mr Schmidt, I had a fount cut, and the printing commenced in the course of the year.<sup>24</sup>

There is nothing inherently improbable in this. While in Sweden, Paterson had studied the whole craft of printing and book-making, and knew what was required. However, Moravian records attribute the successful creation of the Kalmuck type to Schmidt alone. Both men were rather acquisitive of fame.<sup>25c</sup>

*Mongol*

large type	by May 1818 <sup>26</sup>	used for printing Schmidt’s tracts
small type <sup>27</sup>	1823–1826?	used for printing the New Testament of 1827 <sup>28</sup>

23 Copy in the Wellcome Library, London.

24 Considering the fact that Schilling had the Mongol fount cut by Gass it is possible, not to say likely that Gass was responsible for the Kalmuck type, too.

25 Charles R. Bawden: *Shamans, lamas and evangelicals*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul (1985), 53–54.

26 According to a letter by an anonymous Moravian to the Bible Society agent Paterson the Mongol type was ready (May 1818). *Buryat Tract*, 16. – This fount may have been the adjustment of the «dictionary type» by Gass, mentioned above.

27 „Both of the NT versions of 1827 were printed by means of a newly made font that was smaller, yet both had been cast in St. Petersburg some time

„Both tracts and gospels were printed in St. Petersburg with types developed by, and belonging to, the RBS. The RBS was responsible for producing the gospels [...] The Bible Society’s Mongolian type was ready for use by mid-1818, and in May of that year some copies of the Lord’s Prayer were printed off as a first test-piece. there was plenty of copy for the press. The two gospels and a tract composed in Mongolian by Schmidt were ready for printing, and Schmidt was at work on a second tract. The first one had been printed by the end of 1818, when Paterson wrote home that he was having several hundred copies bound up to send to Siberia. A finished copy was sent to the Directors in February 1819 as a sample, and by May of that year, Edward, still in Irkutsk, had received the first hundred copies.“<sup>29</sup>

In the *Buryat Tract* Prof. Bawden quoted a communication from a letter of Dec. 10, 1818: „Sotman had read the Gospel of Matthews and the two tracts“ which, from today’s point of view, may refer either to the two tracts now under consideration, or the two parts of the *Buryat tract*. The newly found tract cannot have been printed before May 1818 in its Mongol version as the type was not yet available. If one wants to identify it with Schmidt no. 3, then Jülg’s suggestion of „1817“ could only apply to the Kalmuck version. But this is an open question.

Hartmut Walravens

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between 1823 and 1826. The bigger and older font, which had been used for the earlier prints had been cast in May 1818.“ Cf. Staffan Rosén: The translation history of the Mongolian Bible. *Mongolian Studies* 30.2008, 23.

28 Franz Babinger (in his biographical sketch of Schmidt, quoted after H. Walravens: *Schmidt*, 22) said: Die Übersetzung des Neuen Testaments wurde wirksam gefördert; zur Drucklegung waren indes eigene Lettern nötig, die unter Aufsicht und Anleitung Schmidts hergestellt wurden.

29 Cf. Charles R. Bawden: *Shamans, lamas and evangelicals*. op. cit., 223.