

# Cornelius Rahmn's Kalmuck Dictionary

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## Introduction

This work is a translation and rearrangement into a more usable form of the Kalmuck–Swedish dictionary compiled by Cornelius Rahmn (1785–1853). The dictionary, which exists as a manuscript held by Uppsala University Library, Sweden, was most probably written while Rahmn was a missionary in the Kalmuck area in 1819–1823. The dictionary is fairly large, containing more than 7,000 words and many example sentences. It precedes any published Kalmuck dictionary.

Rahmn's manuscript contains Kalmuck words written in the old Kalmuck (Oirad) alphabet and Swedish glosses. I have transliterated the Kalmuck words into the Latin alphabet, kept Rahmn's Swedish glosses and added English translations of them.

## The Kalmuck language

The Kalmucks are Western Mongols (Oirads) who came from western Mongolia and northwestern China to Russia in the 1630s and settled in the lower Volga area, to the north and northwest of the Caspian Sea. Many of them returned to China and Mongolia in 1771. The name 'Kalmuck' is normally used of those living in Russia (and of those who were in Russia but returned to China or Mongolia), while 'Oirad' is used of those living in China and Mongolia. Although Kalmuck and Oirad are sometimes described as different languages, they are basically the same, and I will use the terms 'Kalmuck' and 'Oirad' more or less interchangeably. Rahmn calls the people and the language 'Kalmuck' (or sometimes 'Mongolian'), never 'Oirad'; the latter term is in fact not even listed in his dictionary.

The Oirads originally used the Old Mongolian script, but in 1648, an Oirad (or Kalmuck) script was created by Zaya Pandita (1599–1662), who modified the Mongolian script to make it reflect the spoken language better (see e.g. Kara 2005). Unlike the Old Mongolian script, which does not distinguish /t/ ~ /d/, /o/ ~ /u/ and /ø/ ~ /y/, the Oirad script is more or less phonemic. Also called the Clear Script (*todo bicig*), it is still used to some extent by the Oirads in China although its use is discouraged by the Chinese authorities, who, preferring to regard Oirad as a dialect of Mongolian, promote the Mongolian script and a language standard based on the Chahar dialect. Similarly, Oirad is regarded as a dialect of Mongolian proper in Mongolia, where standard Halh Mongolian written in the Cyrillic alphabet is the only widely used written language. The Cyrillic alphabet has replaced the old script among the Kalmucks living in Russia as well, but the written language used by them is based on the Kalmuck/Oirad language, rather than on Mongolian. However, the

great majority of Kalmucks living in Russia do not speak or write Kalmuck any more, using only Russian.

### Cornelius Rahmn

Here I will give a brief account of Rahmn's life, based on Jansson (1951), on Bawden (1985) and on Rahmn's daughter Hanna's biography of her father (Brusewitz 1893).

The son of an artillery officer, Cornelius Rahmn was born in 1785 in Göteborg (Gothenburg), Sweden's second-largest city. He studied law at Lund University but never practised it. Instead he pursued an ecclesiastical career, becoming a chaplain with the Götaland Artillery Regiment in 1810. John Paterson, a member of the London Missionary Society who lived in Sweden for some years after 1807, made Rahmn's acquaintance, and in 1817 Rahmn was recruited to open the Society's mission for the Buriads at Irkutsk in Siberia together with the English missionary Edward Stallybrass (1794–1884).

On their way to Irkutsk, the two missionaries first spent some time in Saint Petersburg before leaving in December 1817 for Moscow, where they were received by Emperor Alexander I, who showed a sympathetic interest in their mission. On 19 January 1818 they left Moscow by sleigh together with their respective wives, Elizabeth (Betty) Rahmn and Sarah Stallybrass, both pregnant, and the Rahmn's daughter Hanna, who was only two years old. After a two-month journey they arrived at Irkutsk on 16 March 1818.

Because of his wife's poor health, Rahmn and his family had to leave Irkutsk as early as May 1819. They moved to Sarepta to work among the Kalmucks. Sarepta had been founded as a kind of Christian colony by the Moravian United Brethren (or 'Herrnhutians') in 1765. It is situated to the south of Tsaritsyn (later Stalingrad and now Volgograd), where the small Sarpa river flows into the Volga. Today it is part of Krasnoarmeysk, a southern suburb of Volgograd. Rahmn stayed there for four years, still working for the London Missionary Society despite living among the Moravian Brethren. In June 1823 the Russian authorities forced him to cease his missionary activities, at which point he moved to Saint Petersburg. He stayed there until 1826, when he became an international secretary at the headquarters of the London Missionary Society. In 1832 he became pastor of the Swedish congregation in London, and in 1841 he returned to Sweden to take over the small rural parish of Kalv (then written 'Kalf') in southwest Sweden, where he remained pastor and dean until his death in 1853.

During his stay among the Kalmucks, Rahmn started to translate the Bible into Kalmuck because he was dissatisfied with the existing translations made by Isaac Jacob Schmidt (1779–1847), who belonged to the church of the Moravian Brethren. The extent of Rahmn's translations and their whereabouts are not known; they may have been lost when some of Rahmn's letters and other documents were burned after

his death (Bawden 1985:282–283). It may be that the dictionary and grammar were written in preparation for the Bible translation.

In addition to Swedish, Rahmn knew at least German and English (his wife Betty was Scottish), and like other Swedish clergymen at that time he had studied Latin, Classical Greek and Biblical Hebrew. He was thus well prepared for carrying out his linguistic work and for translating the Bible.

### Rahmn's manuscripts

Three manuscripts by Rahmn which deal with the Kalmuck language, numbered R162, R163 and R164, are held by Uppsala University Library. There is also a fourth manuscript (R165), written in Classical Mongolian (see Svantesson 2009).

Manuscript R162 is a Kalmuck–Swedish dictionary, written on light-blue paper, 18×22 cm. The text on the cover page reads: *Författaren till detta Kalmuckiskt–Svenska lexicon är prosten i Kalf (Göteb.) stift Cornelius Rahmn hvilken 1817–25 verkade som missionär i Wolgatrakterne, Inköpt 26/4 1889 af Rahmns änka* [The author of this Kalmuck–Swedish dictionary is the Dean of Kalf (Diocese of Göteborg), Cornelius Rahmn, who in 1817–1825 was a missionary in the Volga region. Bought on 26 April 1889 from Rahmn's widow]. There is no title page and no foreword or other explanation from the author.

The manuscript consists of 281 numbered pages, two empty pages, and a final page, number 284, which has the heading *Förteckning på ord, hvilka i brist af fullt motsvarande i kallmuckiskan, öfwersättas med phraser el. composita* [List of words which, lacking a perfect correspondence in Kalmuck, are translated by phrases or compounds] and contains translations of some Swedish words into Kalmuck. The main part of the dictionary contains more than 7,000 Kalmuck words, written in the old Kalmuck alphabet, each with a Swedish translation. Most words have a German translation as well, usually less detailed than the Swedish one. This is written in old German 'blackletter' handwriting (*Kurrentschrift*), corresponding to printed *Fraktur* style. Each page is divided into two parts by a vertical line. In the wider left-hand part of the page, the words are arranged alphabetically according to the Kalmuck script. The right-hand part contains additional words or examples, usually derived from or otherwise related to those on the left, or at least belonging in the same alphabetical section.

Manuscript R163 is a Swedish–Kalmuck wordlist. It has no cover page; the number R163 and the text *Corn. Rahmn. Svenskt Kalmuckiskt lexicon inköpt 26/4 1889 till Ups. Univ. Bibl.* [Corn. Rahmn. Swedish Kalmuck dictionary bought on 26 April 1889 for Uppsala University Library] is written on its first page. The paper is light-grey (first half) and light-blue, 22×34 cm. The manuscript consists of 129 written but unpaginated pages (and 33 empty pages interspersed between them). Most pages are divided into three columns, with each column containing Swedish words beginning with certain letter combinations (e.g. 'Ab, Ac') and their Kalmuck

translations. Within each column the words are roughly in Kalmuck alphabetical order, indicating that Rahmn most probably compiled this wordlist by going through his Kalmuck–Swedish dictionary from beginning to end and writing down each word pair in the relevant column. Thus it is basically an index to the Kalmuck–Swedish dictionary. Sometimes the Swedish translation is slightly different from that given in the Kalmuck–Swedish dictionary, and there are also a few additional words not found in that dictionary.

Manuscript R164 is Rahmn’s Kalmuck grammar, written in Swedish. It has been translated into English and published by Svantesson (2009).

## The Kalmuck script and its transliteration

The Kalmuck script is transliterated as shown in the following table (page 5). The order of the letters is that used by Rahmn; several different alphabetical orders occur in other sources. In addition to the standard letters of the Kalmuck alphabet (#1–27), Rahmn uses a number of *galig* letters (#28–35) in foreign words, usually Buddhist terms of Indic origin, but also some modern loans from Russian.

Rahmn describes the pronunciation only by giving a transcription into the Latin alphabet of each Kalmuck letter in the table of the Kalmuck alphabet included in his grammar (see also Svantesson 2009:101–102). It is obvious that he intends the Latin letters to be pronounced as in German, which is natural, not only because German was a kind of scientific world language at the time, but also because Rahmn was working among the German-speaking Moravian Brethren. In general, the German pronunciation of a letter corresponds to its IPA value, with these exceptions: *ä*, *ö*, *ng*, *ch*, *ss*, *sch*, *s*, *z* correspond to IPA [ɛ, ø, ŋ, x, s, ʃ, z, ts]. For a few words, presumably where Rahmn considered the pronunciation to be very different from the written form – in most cases because of reductions – he included in his dictionary an indication in Latin letters of the pronunciation.

Rahmn transcribes **h** (#29) as *i*, which must be due to a misunderstanding. This letter is found only in a few words in the dictionary. The letter here transliterated as **o** (#34) is transcribed by Rahmn with the Swedish letter *å* (pronounced [o]), perhaps to distinguish it from **o**; it is found only in final position, where it corresponds to **-u-a** in the Old Mongolian script (Bobrovnikov 1849:384); it occurs only in two words in the dictionary. The letters **b** (#10) and **g** (#15), as well as **k** (#12), **ḳ** (#13), **p** (#30) and **ḑ** (#31), form ligatures with vowels. It should be remarked that the combinations **bo** and **by** are not distinguished in the script, as written by Rahmn. Furthermore, the letters **o** (#4) and **u** (#5) are sometimes difficult to distinguish in Rahmn’s handwriting.

*The Kalmuck alphabet*

The columns show: (1) the letter in a modern font; (2)–(4) the initial, medial and final forms of the letter in Rahmn’s handwriting; (5) the transliteration used here; (6) the transcription given in Rahmn’s grammar (based on German pronunciation).

1	ᠠ	ᠠ	ᠠ	ᠠ	a	a	19	ᠲ	ᠲ	ᠲ	–	t	t
2	ᠡ	ᠡ	ᠡ	ᠡ	e	ä	20	ᠯ	ᠯ	ᠯ	ᠯ	l	l
3	ᠢ	ᠢ	ᠢ	ᠢ	i	i	21	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	m	m
4	ᠣ	ᠣ	ᠣ	ᠣ	o	o	22	ᠵ	ᠵ	ᠵ	–	j	j
5	ᠤ	ᠤ	ᠤ	ᠤ	u	u	23	ᠷ	ᠷ	ᠷ	ᠷ	r	r
6	ᠥ	ᠥ	ᠥ	ᠥ	ø	ö	24	ᠰ	ᠰ	ᠰ	ᠰ	s	ss
7	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	y	y	25	ᠱ	ᠱ	ᠱ	ᠱ	š	sch
8	ᠨ	ᠨ	ᠨ	ᠨ	n	n	26	ᠵ	ᠵ	ᠵ	–	z	s
9	ᠨᠠ	–	ᠨᠠ	ᠨᠠ	ᠨ	ng	27	ᠴ	ᠴ	ᠴ	–	c	z
10	ᠪ	ᠪ	ᠪ	ᠪ	b	b	28	ᠠ	–	ᠠ	–	w	w
11	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	–	x	ch	29	ᠬ	–	ᠬ	–	h	i
12	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	–	k	k	30	ᠮ	ᠮ	–	–	p	
13	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	–	ḵ	k	31	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	–	ṗ	p
14	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	–	g	g	32	ᠮ	–	ᠮ	–	ṅ	
15	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	–	g	g	33		–	ᠮ	–	ḍ	
16	–	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	g	k	34		–	–	Δ	ʔ	á
17	ᠮ	ᠮ	–	–	ḡ		35	ᠮ				i	
18	ᠠ	ᠠ	ᠠ	ᠠ	d	d							

*Ligatures with b and g*

ᠪᠠ	ba	ᠪᠡ	be	ᠪᠢ	bi	ᠪᠣ	bo	ᠪᠤ	bu	ᠪᠥ	bø	ᠪᠮ	by
		ᠪᠢ	ge	ᠪᠢ	gi					ᠪᠥ	gø	ᠪᠮ	gy

*Ligatures with ḡ*

*Vowels with the length mark*

ᠠ	ā	ᠡ	ē	ᠢ	ī	ᠣ	ō	ᠤ	ū	ᠥ	ō	ᠮ	ȳ
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

*Double vowels*

ᠠ	ou	oh	ᠠ	uṽ	uh	ᠠ	oy	ᠠ	yy	yh
---	----	----	---	----	----	---	----	---	----	----

The *galig* letter transliterated here as **ḡ** (#35, corresponding to the Tibetan semivowel [j]) combines with **b** and **g** and a few other letters in Rahmn's spelling. The combination with **b** has become a letter of its own in the modern form of the Kalmuck alphabet and is used for the sound [dʒ] (transcribed as *dsch* in Rahmn's grammar); this combination is transliterated as **bj** here.

The distribution of vowels (and of some of the consonants) is governed by vowel harmony, which requires that a Kalmuck word must contain only back vowels (**a**, **o**, **u**) or only front vowels (**i**, **e**, **y**, **ö**). Vowels from different classes cannot co-occur in the same word, except for the 'neutral' **i**, which can occur in back-vocalic words although it is a phonetically front vowel. In traditional Mongolian grammar, back and front vowels are called 'male' and 'female' vowels, respectively. Rahmn was apparently unaware of vowel harmony, which he never mentions, and his Kalmuck spellings often violate vowel harmony. For example, he usually but far from always complies with the rule that the 'infinitive' suffixes **xu** and **ky** should be attached to back-vocalic and front-vocalic verbs, respectively, and the same is true for other suffixes. In the dictionary, Rahmn does mention one rule related to vowel harmony, in the entry for the concessive particle **běsu**, where he states (in translation): 'combined with verbs ending in **ky** it is written **běsu**, but with those in **xu** it is written **bāsu**'. There is a similar passage in the grammar, about the 'fourth gerund' marker **lāran/leren**.

From the table in Rahmn's grammar describing how consonant + vowel combinations are written, however, it can be seen that the letters **x** (#11) and **g** (#14) occur only before the back vowels **a**, **o**, **u**, while **k** (#12) and **g** (#15) occur only before the front vowels **e**, **i**, **ö**, **y**. Similarly, the less frequent letters **ḡ** (#13) and **ḡ** (#17) are not found before front vowels. This makes it possible to use the transliteration **g** unambiguously for three different Kalmuck letters: #14 which occurs only before back vowels, #15 which occurs only before front vowels, and #16 which occurs only before consonants or word-finally. There are a few exceptions to this in the dictionary: 'back' **g** (#14) is found in the wrong context in the words **aḡtai** and **mengöyci**, and 'front' **g** (#15) in **ḡaliḡaḡga** and **grahā**.

One complication is the Kalmuck letter **u** (#5), which differs from **y** (#7) only by the presence of a stroke, which is often left out in environments where the pronunciation [y] is not possible. I transliterate the letter **y** (#7) as **u** when it denotes the sound [u], i.e. in back-vocalic words, after the 'back' consonants **x** (#11) and **g** (#14), and also after the vowels **a**, **u**, **o**. This is unproblematic in the combinations **xu**, **gu** (with back **g**, #14), where the letter **y** always has the sound value [u], and also in the combinations **au**, **uu**, **ou**, where the letter **u** (#5) is never written as the second element. In other environments, however, it is not always possible to decide if a word is back- or front-vocalic, especially since Rahmn's spelling often violates vowel harmony. In such cases I have written **u** instead of **y** only if I am reasonably sure, for example by comparison with the modern Kalmuck form, that the word is back-vocalic. There may be mistakes in the transliteration of these words, but Rahmn's original spelling can always be retrieved from the transliteration. It should

also be remarked that, since the combinations **bo** and **by** are written in the same way by Rahmn, the transliteration **bu** also refers to the same graphic syllable as these.

Vowel length is indicated with a small diacritic stroke, which is transliterated with a macron over the vowel (**ā, ē, ī, ō, ū, ō, ȳ**). Rahmn calls the length mark an accent. He probably heard long Kalmuck vowels as stressed (or accented) since long Swedish vowels are always stressed. In the modern Oirad script, this length mark cannot be attached to **u** or **y** (Jamca 1999:14), but Rahmn sometimes does so (though not very frequently). It is not always easy to see if a length mark is present or not in Rahmn's handwriting, especially before final **d** (#18), which he often (but far from always) writes with a stroke at the top. Although this is probably just a graphic variant of **d** in some cases, I have written the preceding vowel with a macron when the stroke is clearly present (except when the vowel preceding **d** is preceded by another vowel, in which case the length mark should never occur; see below).

Rahmn says that the combinations **uȳ, yy** and **ouȳ** are lengthened 'double vowels' and transcribes them as *uh, yh, oh* in his grammar, presumably meaning [u:], [y:], [o:]; he does not mention the combination **oy** although it occurs frequently in the dictionary. Rahmn also says that the lengthened vowels cannot combine with the 'accent' (length mark).

One of the earliest published grammars of Kalmuck, Bobrovnikov (1849), contains a rather extensive and, as far as I can judge, reliable section on pronunciation. Bobrovnikov says (pp. 18–19) that **yy** and **ouȳ** are alternative spellings of **oy** and **uȳ**, respectively, and that they are pronounced [y:] and [u:]. The combinations **oy** and **ouȳ** are usually the reflexes of Old Mongolian \**ehy* and \**ahu*, respectively (as reconstructed by Svantesson et al. 2005), and were probably diphthongs at the time when the Kalmuck script was created (see e.g. Krueger 1975). In Modern Kalmuck they have been monophthongized to [y:] and [u:]. The modern standard of the Kalmuck (Oirad) script used in China, as given by Jamca (1999), writes these vowels as **yy** and **uȳ**. It is difficult to know whether Rahmn's transcription of **ouȳ** as *oh* really means [o:] (as against Bobrovnikov's 'long u', [u:]). Since Rahmn uses the German, and not Swedish, sound values of the Latin letters in his table of the alphabet, and since *h* can indicate vowel length in German, but not in Swedish, the most probable interpretation is that his *oh* does mean [o:] as in German. Since the letter *o* is ambiguous between the pronunciations [o:] and [u:] in Swedish, Rahmn might also have meant [u:]; this is supported by the rather frequent variation between **ouȳ** and **uȳ** in his dictionary.

There is a great deal of spelling variation in Rahmn's manuscripts. In modern Kalmuck, originally short vowels in non-initial position are reduced to non-phonemic schwas or even completely deleted (see e.g. Svantesson et al. 2005:186), and the schwas are not written in the Cyrillic Kalmuck orthography. This development must have started in Rahmn's time, since there is a great deal of variation in his spelling of non-initial vowels; very often the same word is written in two or even three different ways because of this. The above-mentioned case of

frequent variation between **ou** and **uu**, as well as between **oy** and **yy**, may reflect ongoing monophthongization. There is also some variation between **u** and **o** in initial position, perhaps due to dialect variation. It can be mentioned that all non-reduced vowels of (at least modern) Kalmuck occur in Swedish as well, although with slightly different pronunciations in some cases, so Rahmn should have had no difficulty distinguishing them. See also Svantesson (2009) for some more facts about the phonological development of Kalmuck that can be culled from Rahmn's material.

There is also some (but less frequent) variation between the consonants **c** ~ **z**, **s** ~ **š** and **x** ~ **g** (#14). This may indicate real variation, but may also be due to the graphic similarity of these letters.

The present spelling standard for the Oirad script as used in China is somewhat different from that used by Rahmn. The main differences are that the diphthongs **ou** and **oy** have merged with the monophthongs **uu** and **yy**, respectively, and that two new letters denoting [tʃ] and [dʒ] have been introduced. These sounds were originally palatalized variants of **c** and **z**, which became phonematic at some point in the historical development of Kalmuck. There is no indication in Rahmn's material that **c** and **z** are palatalized before **i**; in the table of syllables in his grammar, the combinations **ci** and **zi** are transcribed as *zi* and *si*, i.e. [tsi] and [zi], respectively.

### Information given in the dictionary

As mentioned above, Rahmn's dictionary contains over 7,000 words, written in the Old Kalmuck script, approximately in Kalmuck alphabetical order. Almost all words have a Swedish translation, and a German translation is often provided as well.

For most words, the word class is indicated. As regards the verbs, which are always given in the 'infinitive' form, ending in **xu** or **ky**, this is unproblematic, but it is obvious that Rahmn had some difficulties with nouns and adjectives, which, as is well known, are less clearly distinguished in Mongolic languages than in many European languages. It is often clear from the manuscript that Rahmn has changed the labelling and translation from an adjective to a noun, or the other way round.

The dictionary contains many derived words, in particular passive and causative verbs. My impression is that Rahmn must have worked systematically with informants to elicit derived verbs, since, as I know from personal experience, it is very unlikely that so many derived words would be encountered in speech or texts. It is interesting to note that Rahmn lacks a terminology for the derived verbs, except for the passive, a well-known category in European languages. In particular, he has no term for 'causative', a category usually not found in European languages but very common in Kalmuck. About 750 derived causative verbs are recorded in the dictionary, but only around 240 passives.

In addition to simple, derived and compound Kalmuck words, Rahmn gives many phrase and sentence examples, usually with Swedish – but not German –

translation. Some of them lack translation altogether. Many of the examples include a reference to the text they are taken from. The most frequently cited texts are the Bible and some Buddhist Kalmuck texts, in particular the *Yligerijin dalai* (usually abbreviated as *YD*) but also *Bodhimör* and a few others. The only Kalmuck Bible translations existing at that time were those by Isaac Jacob Schmidt, who published the *Gospel according to Saint Matthew* in 1815 and the three remaining Gospels and the *Acts of the Apostles* in 1821, all printed in Saint Petersburg (Bawden 1985:110, 281). These are indeed the only books of the Bible that Rahmn refers to. I suppose that Rahmn generally cites Schmidt, but since I have not had access to Schmidt's Bible translations, I cannot exclude the possibility that some of the Bible citations are Rahmn's own proposed translations. In a few places, Rahmn refers explicitly to Schmidt's translations, apparently to point out that he is not himself responsible for the information given, or to criticize a translation.

Rahmn often gives inflected forms of nouns and verbs; most often the genitive and the plural for nouns, and participles for verbs. They are often accompanied by a reference to the source they are taken from; the sources used are the same as for the sentence examples. Rahmn also gives encyclopaedic information in some of the entries in the dictionary, often referring to 'Pallas', i.e. *Sammlungen historischer Nachrichten über die mongolischen Völkerschaften* (1776/1801) by Peter Simon Pallas (1741–1811).

### Rahmn's Swedish glosses and some translation problems

Rahmn's Swedish spelling has been modernized here, except for the spelling of proper names. This is usually unproblematic, mostly involving mechanical changes related to the Swedish spelling reform of 1906. They include the change of Rahmn's *hw*, *fw* and *f* to *v*, when they represent the sound [v] (e.g. *hwit* 'white', *gräfwä* 'to dig', *löf* 'leaf', *öfre* 'upper' > *vit*, *gräva*, *löv*, *övre*). Rahmn writes *w* (*wid* 'wide') for modern *v* (*vid*). Other changes made in the spelling reform include the replacement of the combination *dt* with *tt* or *t* (*rödt* 'red', *brändt* 'burnt' > *rött*, *bränt*), the replacement of the combination *qw* with *kv* (*qwinna* 'woman' > *kvinna*) and, in many words, the replacement of *e* with *ä* (*fjerde* 'fourth' > *ffjärde*).

Some obsolete forms used by Rahmn, such as *fyratio* 'forty' have been replaced with their modern equivalents (*fyrtio*). Swedish spelling was not completely standardized in Rahmn's day, and he sometimes uses idiosyncratic, perhaps dialectal or hypercorrect, spellings, such as *wissla* 'weasel' for modern *vessla*. In a few cases the old spelling disambiguates words, such as the neuter forms *hwitt* 'white' and *widt* 'wide', both written *vitt* in modern Swedish.

Only the spelling is modernized; obsolete morphological forms, in particular the subject agreement forms of verbs, have not been changed.

There are some problems with the translation of the Swedish glosses. In many cases, the Swedish words are more or less ambiguous, and often there is no context

to disambiguate them. If I know the meaning of the Kalmuck word, or have found it in other dictionaries, I have used that knowledge to choose what I believe to be the intended meaning, and in some cases the German gloss has been used for disambiguation purposes. Some mistakes may remain, however.

A related problem is the fact that some words have changed their meaning since Rahmn's time. For example, the words *ganska* and *rolig* mean 'rather' and 'funny' in modern Swedish, but meant 'very' and 'calm' to Rahmn. The Swedish dictionary compiled by A.F. Dalin (1850/1853) and the historical Swedish dictionary of the Swedish Academy (Svenska Akademien 1893–) were very useful for finding older meanings, as well as the meanings of now-obsolete words, but there may remain cases where I was not aware that an older meaning existed or where it is difficult to decide which meaning was intended.

There were also a few obsolete or dialectal words that I did not manage to find in any Swedish dictionary, for example the word *påsmjolk*, a compound with the literal meaning 'bag milk'. In this case, Rahmn's German gloss *Quark* gives the translation 'cottage cheese', which is reasonable since such cheese can be made by filtering milk through some kind of a bag.

### Relation to other Western works on Kalmuck

Rahmn's dictionary is earlier than the published dictionaries in European languages (Zwick 1852, Golstunskij 1860) and contains a relatively large number of words. It is interesting to compare it with the published Kalmuck dictionary (1852) compiled by the German missionary Heinrich August Zwick (1796–1855), who belonged to the Moravian Brethren and was living at Sarepta while Rahmn was there. Rahmn's and Zwick's dictionaries are about the same size. I have not compared them in detail, but there are some obvious similarities, such as the great number of derived verbs in both of them. As is clear from Krueger's dictionary of written Kalmuck (1978/1984), there are also quite a few words which are found only in Rahmn's and Zwick's dictionaries, but not in any other dictionaries or texts. Krueger compiled his dictionary from published and unpublished texts and also included words from Zwick's dictionary (and from other dictionaries), but he did not have access to Rahmn's manuscripts. For some words, Zwick's dictionary is Krueger's only source, and about one-third of those words are found in Rahmn's manuscript as well, according to a word count I made of a section of the dictionaries. Krueger (1973:68) also says that 'it appears that he [Zwick] relied heavily on the Bible translations and on some works such as the *Üliger-ün dalai* in Kalmyk'. Unlike Rahmn, Zwick gives no references to his sources, but the ones mentioned by Krueger are exactly the ones that Rahmn refers to most often.

One might ask whether Rahmn had any dictionary material from the German missionaries at his disposal. The existence of some spelling and grammatical mistakes in Rahmn's German glosses suggests that he did not. Zwick often gives

exactly the same German gloss as Rahmn (with any mistakes corrected). There is also another, rather curious fact suggesting that Zwick had access to Rahmn's material when he wrote his dictionary. This concerns the word **šabariḡ**, translated as *gyllenåder* by Rahmn. This compound, literally meaning 'golden vein', is unknown in modern Swedish, but according to the historical dictionary of the Swedish Academy (Svenska Akademien 1893–) it used to mean 'haemorrhoids'. Zwick lists the same word with the gloss *der goldene Adler* 'the golden eagle'. This word **šabariḡ** is also found in Ramstedt's (1935) Kalmuck dictionary (*šawrḡ*, translated as *der golden-adler* 'the gold-eagle' with a reference to Zwick, and it is listed by Krueger (1978/1984) who translates it as *golden eagle*, referring to Zwick and Ramstedt (but not to any of the texts that Krueger excerpted). I have not found the word **šabariḡ** or any similar word meaning 'eagle' in any Kalmuck or Mongolian dictionary, and it is unknown to native speakers consulted by me. However, there are similar words meaning 'haemorrhoids': Cyrillic Kalmuck *шамбрыг* (*šambrcg*) (Korsunkiev 1992:57), Old Written Mongolian *šambaram* and Cyrillic Mongolian *шамбарам* (*šambaram*). Krueger lists the Written Kalmuck forms **šambaram**, **šambrum**, **šamuruḡn**, and Ramstedt gives *šamb<sup>o</sup>rrḡ*, *šambvrrḡ*, all meaning 'haemorrhoids'. Thus it seems that Rahmn was right and Zwick was wrong. My guess is that Zwick used Rahmn's material and misunderstood the Swedish *åder* 'vein' as corresponding to the German *Adler* 'eagle' (or perhaps made a slip of the pen and wrote *Adler* instead of *Ader* 'vein').

Rahmn's dictionary and grammar were never published in his time, but my impression is that they were more or less completed and that only minor additions and editing would have been needed to bring them to a publishable state. Perhaps he never intended to publish them, only to use them himself for his Bible translations. The fact that he wrote in Swedish suggests this, since it is not easy to imagine who, except Rahmn himself, would read works on Kalmuck in Swedish.

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