

THE INITIAL FORMULAE  
IN A COMMUNICATION OF A MONGOLIAN VICEROY  
TO THE KING OF KOREA

: 8.

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The initial formulae of Mongolian rescripts and letters of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries have captivated the minds of scholars for many years.<sup>1</sup> Władysław Kotwicz, "Formules initiales des documents mongols aux XIII-e et XIV-e siècles,"<sup>2</sup> was the first to deal with them comprehensively. Eric Voegelin, "The Mongol Orders of Submission to European Powers, 1245-1255,"<sup>3</sup> unaware of the article by Kotwicz, confined himself to formulae in a restricted number of documents, concerning which he reached some very convincing conclusions. Such initial formulae, we should observe, while reflecting certain basic features of their Turkish prototypes, are constant neither in structure nor content and reveal diachronic as well as synchronic variations and innovations which are attributable in part to geographical and institutional diversities of the *imperium mongolicum*.<sup>4</sup>

Two documents in colloquial Chinese, communications in the nature of ultimata from the Mongolian Viceroy Sartay,<sup>5</sup> delivered to the King<sup>6</sup> of Korea in 1231 and 1232 respectively, are found in the

*Koryō sa* 高麗史 (*Kao-li shih*)<sup>7</sup> 23.4r5-5v1 and 23.6r1-7/4. At the beginning of the communication of 1231 we find initial formulae for which no precise parallels have hitherto been adduced. Although I propose to deal with both communications in full in a separate study, it has seemed preferable at this juncture to discuss first the initial formulae in that of 1231 and the problems they present.

The text of these formulae of Sartay's communication reads as follows (4r5-7):

T'ien-ti ch'i-li 天底氣力

T'ien tao-chiang-lai-ti yen-yü 天道將來底言語

So-te pu-ch'iu-ti jen 所得不秋底人

Yu yen hsia-liao 有眼瞎了

Yu shou mei-liao 有手沒了

Yu chiao-tzu ch'üeh-liao 有脚子腐了

Sheng-chih 聖旨

Murakami Shōji 村上正二, "Mōko raichō no honyaku 蒙古來牒

の翻訳"<sup>8</sup> ("Translation of Mongolian Credentials in Goryeo-sa"), attempted complete translations of the communications into Japanese. In his *honyakubun* 翻訳文 ["translation"] of the communication of 1231<sup>9</sup> the text in question reads (p. 82):

Ame no chikara wo moteru あめの力をもてる

Amatsu kami no iute kitareru kotaba naru zo あ ま つ 神 の い う て  
 來 た れ る 言 葉 在 る ぞ。  
 matsurowazaru hito wo e taru ni あ つ ろ は ず る 人 在 得  
 た る に、  
 ni wo sokone taru ari 眼 を そ こ を た る あり、  
 te wo nakushi taru ari 手 を な く し た る あり、  
 ashi wo kizutsuketaru (bikko ni naru) ari 脚 を 傷 け た る (跛 に  
 なる) あり  
 to no seishi arishi wo motte, . . . . と の 聖 旨 あり し を も っ て, . . . .

["Having the Rescript of [which the text reads]:

'[These] are words which the Heavenly gods  
 Who possess Heavenly power have come speaking.  
 In respect of getting people who have not yet submitted,  
 There are some whose eyes [we] shall damage,  
 There are some whose hands [we] shall remove,  
 There are some whose legs [we] shall injure (shall cripple) . . . .']

Gari Ledyard, "Two Mongol Documents from the *Koryō sa*,"<sup>10</sup> translated the communications into English. In his version the same text reads (p. 228):

Strength of Heaven! Words spoken from Heaven: those people we get who do not braid their hair(?) will have their eyes blinded, their hands removed, their legs crippled! Edict.

B. M. Серов [V. M. Serov], *Поход Монголов в Корею 1231-1231 гг. и его последствия*<sup>11</sup> ["The Expedition of the Mongols into Korea of the Years 1231-1232 and Its Consequences"], for his part, had occasion to translate the documents into Russian directly from Ledyard's translations, the communication of 1231 being found on pp. 143-144 and that of 1232 on pp. 151-152. Although he introduced an occasional innovation of his own, Serov seems to have followed Ledyard's translations slavishly and uncritically without any concern for the problems posed either by the English translations or by the original texts themselves. His translation of the text with which we are here concerned reads as follows (p. 143):

<< Эдикт хана гласит: << Силы неба! Слова, изущие с неба: люди, не заплетающие своих волос, ослепнут, их руки отнимутся, а ноги будут искалечены! >> . . . >>.

[<< The Edict of the xan says: << Forces of Heaven! Words, coming from Heaven: People, not plaiting their hair, shall become blind, their hands shall be amputated, and the legs shall be crippled!>>]

In the South-Korean translation of the communications in the *Yōkchu Koryō-sa* 譯 注

高麗史 (*I-chu Kao-li shih*),<sup>12</sup> the text in question reads (p. 580, ll.9-11):

Hanül ūi kiryōk ( 氣 力 ) ūl kajin

hanūnim i naeryō ponaen malssūm isinira

uri ka pokchong ( 服 從 )-haji annūn cha( 者 ) tūl ūl chabannūnde

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*i tül ũn nun i mǒn cha* ( 者 ) *ka ikko*  
*son-i ttǒrǒjyǒ nagan cha* ( 者 ) *ka ikko*  
*tari ka ssǒgŭn cha* ( 者 ) *ka issǒtta.*  
*Kŭraesǒ sǒngji* ( 聖 旨 ) *ka naeryǒsǒ . . . .*

[These] are the words which the Deity  
 Possessing the power of Heaven has sent down.  
 As we have captured those who do not submit,  
 As for these,  
 There were those whose eyes are blind,  
 And there were those whose hands are fallen away,  
 And there were those whose legs are rotten.  
 Therefore, the Rescript having come down, . . . .

Б. Сумьябаатар [B. Sum'yaabaatar], "Солонгос туухийн сурвалж, монгмл хмйгээд  
 МОНГОЛЧУУДЫН ТУХАЙ (2)"<sup>13</sup> ["Solongos tūūxiin survalž, mongol xiīgeed mongolčūudyn tuxai (2)"]  
 ["On a Source of Korean History, Mongolia and the Mongolčūud (2)"], cited the text with which we are  
 here concerned on page 214, the North-Korean translation of it on page 215,<sup>14</sup> and gave his Mongolian  
 translation of the latter on page 217.

The North-Korean translation reads as follows (p. 215):

<< *Uri ka ch'ǒnŭi lŭl pattŭrǒ kiryǒk ũl paltong-hanŭn kǒs ini irǒni chǒrǒni mal man hamyǒnsǒ  
 chagi ũi chugyǒn ũl ttokttok-hage naenoch'i mot-hanŭn saramŭn mach'i nun i issǒdo mot pogo sujok ũl  
 tugodo ssŭl chul morŭnŭn kǒt kwa kat'ŭn cha ida. Yojǒn e hwangje ũi myǒngnyǒng ũro . . . .*>>

["Since, having received Heaven's intention ( 天 意 ), we exercise[its] ( 發 動 ) power  
 ( 偉 力 ), as for the man who merely speaks in this way and in that way and cannot express his own  
 ( 自 己 ) opinion ( 主 見 ) meticulously, he is the same as one ( 者 ) who, although he  
 has eyes, cannot see and, although having hands and legs ( 手 足 ), does not know how to use  
 [them].

"Previously ( 前 ) by order ( 命 令 ) of the Emperor ( 皇 帝 ) . . . ."]

Sum'yabaatar's translation of the latter reads as follows (p. 217):

*Bid tengeriin iveeleer augaa xūčūg olson bǒgǒöd xaış yaış xooson yarixyg erxemlež dotor bodloo ũl  
 gargax xūn bolvoos nūdteī bolovč yum xarž es čadax. gar xǒlteī bolovč tūūnee xereglež ũl čadaxtai utga  
 negen bolai. ũūniī ōmnǒ xaany zarligaar Salidai Xorčūin cergūg ilgeesen yavdal bol . . . .*

["We have got power and might by the protection of Heaven and, if there be a person who prizes  
 idle, empty conversation and does not express his inner thoughts, he is the same as one who, even though  
 he have eyes, is not able to see anything; even though he have hands and feet, is not able to use [them].

"Before this, as for the fact that Salidai Xorči had sent the army by order of the Xaan, . . . "

These introductory formulae present a number of problems, not the least of which is the exactitude of the text itself in the form in which it is found in the *Koryō sa* (*Kao-li shih*). It should be observed at the outset, however, that, with the exception of Ledyard and the South-Korean translator, all the translators—Japanese, Russian, North-Korean and Mongolian—have regarded the formulae as constituting

themselves the text of a rescript or edict in the mistaken assumption that the term 聖旨 (*sheng chih*) "rescript" which immediately follows the initial formulae closes rather than introduces the text of a rescript. It would, perhaps, have been visually better, however, if Ledyard had used a colon (:) instead of period (.) after the word "Edict." by which he translated the term, if only to make it perfectly clear that it refers to what follows and not what precedes, even though the initial formulae constitute the introductory part of the rescript as a whole. From his Russian translation—"ЭДИКТ ХАНА ГЛАСИТ" ["The Edict of the xan says"]—it is evident that Serov did not share Ledyard's opinion as to the manner in which this part of the communication is structured.

It is obvious from a perusal of the sundry translations that the scholars who have dealt with the formulae have been rebuffed by a number of apparent difficulties. Turning now to the initial formulae as such we find that they are essentially three in number—the third of the three consisting of a topic and three

comments. The first of the three are the words 天底氣力 (*T'ien-ti ch'i-li*) "The Might of

Heaven." Ledyard<sup>15</sup> regarded them as "an abbreviated form" of 長生天底氣力裏

(*Ch'ang-sheng T'ien-ti ch'i-li-li*) "In the Might of Everlasting Heaven,"<sup>16</sup> a translation of the Mongolian *Möngke tngri-yin küčün-dür* "In the Might of Everlasting Heaven." (Despite Ledyard's reference to Nicholas Poppe, *The Mongolian Monuments in ḥP'ags-pa Script*,<sup>17</sup> pp. 67-68, n. 1a, for a discussion of the ways in which *k'uč'undur/küčündur* ~ *küčün-dür* has been translated, I cannot believe that the Mongolian suffix of the *dativus-locativus* in *-dur/-dür* is to be comprehended in this instance as if it had the function of an instru-

mental in *-iyer*. For the meaning of 裏 (*li*) in this case cf. Erich Haenisch, *Untersuchungen über da-*

*Yüan-ch'ao pi-shih*, *Die geheime Geschichte der Mongolen*<sup>18</sup> and Antoine Mostaert, C. I. C. M. et Francis Woodman Cleaves, *Les Lettres de 1289 et 1305 des ilkhans Arḡun et Öljeitü à Philippe le Bel*,<sup>19</sup> where this question is discussed in considerable detail.) In translating *küčün-dür* as *ch'i-li-li* "in the might" the Chinese rendered the Mongolian original verbatim and precisely. The notion here is not that an action is performed "by the might of Heaven" in the sense of "by means of the might of Heaven," but rather "in the might of Heaven" in the sense of "in virtue of the might of Heaven," just as we say "in the name of" in English or *in hoc signo* "in this standard" in Latin. It is a nuance of locution—a delicate nuance—which should be observed in translation into English, as, indeed, it was, with an occasional exception, into Chinese.

"The abbreviated form in this document," Ledyard observed, "is, as far as I can learn, the only such instance."<sup>20</sup> Although he cited a passage from the *Hei-Ta shih-lüeh* 黑韃事略

[*Sketch of the Affairs of the Black Tatars*],<sup>21</sup> properly a passage from the pen of P'eng Ta-ya 彭大

雅,<sup>22</sup> an important passage, which I prefer to translate (11r3-5): "As for their constant expression

(其常談), it is always: *T'o-cho ch'ang-sheng t'ien-ti ch'i-li huang-ti-ti fu-yin* 托着

長生天底氣力皇帝底福蔭 'Relying on the Might of Everlasting Heaven

and the Fortune of the Emperor.' As for things which they wish to do, then they say: 'Heaven has caused

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[them to be ] thus.' As for things which have already been done by others, then they say, 'Let Heaven know (= decide).' There is never an item which they do not attribute to Heaven. From the Lord of the

Tatars 韃 主 [down] to his people, there is no [instance in which it] is not so," he overlooked another passage in the same text, properly a passage by Hsü T'ing 徐 霆<sup>23</sup> in reference to the

牌 (p'ai) or plaques, that is, badges of authority worn on the belts of the Mongols, in which we read

(15r1-2): "On the plaque are inscribed Hui-hui 回 回 [= Uiyur] characters, which seldom go

beyond such phrases as 長 生 天 底 氣 力 (Ch'ang-sheng T'ien-ti ch'i-li) '[In] the

Might of Everlasting Heaven.' " While the latter example does, it is true, have the words 長 生 (Ch'ang-

sheng) ("Everlasting"), it does not have the postposition 裏 (li) ("in"). In this respect it appears to

be comparable to the formula as we find it in the communication of Sartay. We might even cite as another similarly abbreviated translation of the same Mongolian formula (*Möngke tngri-yin küčün-dür*) the words *Dei fortitudo* "The Might of God" with which the *litterae certissimae atque verae* of Güyüg to Innocent IV open,<sup>24</sup> whereas a more literal Latin translation is *Per virtutem eterni Dei* "Through the virtue of the Eternal God" as it appears at the beginning of the *preceptum* of Möngke to Louis IX<sup>25</sup> and *Per potentiam Dei excelsi* "Through the Power of God on High," at the beginning of the *verba* of Eljigidei to Louis IX.<sup>26</sup>

The exceptions to the rule notwithstanding, I am of the opinion that in the text of the communication in the *Koryō sa* (*Kao-li shih*) there is a scribal inadvertence—one of many in both communications, to which I shall have occasion to draw attention in due course—which was occasioned by the fact that, his

eye being inadvertently attracted to the character 天 (t'ien) ("Heaven") (4r5) with which the com-

munication opens, the scribe wrote 天 (t'ien) a second time for 裏 (li) ("in") or, possibly,

through an inadvertence occasioned by a distraction, copied the lower part of 裏 (li) itself, as if it

were 天 (t'ien). If so, this not only means that the communication in its original form opened with

the words 天 底 氣 力 裏 (T'ien-ti ch'i-li li) ("In the Might of Heaven"), but also that the

second formula, concerning which more shall be said below, is not 天 道 將 來 底 言 語

(T'ien tao-chiang-lai-ti yen-yü) "Words Which Heaven Speaks," but rather 道 將 來 底 言

語 (Tao-chiang-lai-ti yen-yü) ("Words Which [We] Speak").

As for the formula *T'ien-ti ch'i-li-li* "In the Might of Heaven" as such, it would correspond to a Mongolian *Tngri-yin küčün-dür* "In the Might of Heaven," for an example of which cf. Francis Woodman Cleaves, "The Lingji of Aruy of 1340."<sup>27</sup> Two examples of a slight variant of the formula are found in

Ts'ai Mei-piao 蔡 美 彪, *Yüan-tai pai-hua-pei chi-lu* 元 代 白 話 碑 集 錄

[*Collected Records of Yüan Dynasty Pai-hua Stelae*],<sup>28</sup> which respectively open with the formulae

天 地 底 氣 力 裏 (T'ien-ti-ti ch'i-li-li) "In the Might of Heaven and Earth" and 天 地

的氣力裏 (*T'ien-ti-ti ch'i-li-li*) "In the Might of Heaven and Earth," both reflecting an unattested Mongolian *Tngri γajar-un küčün-dür*, which may be compared, however, with the words *de'ere Tenggeri γajar-un ihe'el* "protection of Heaven above and Earth [below]" in the *Mongγol-un niuča* [= *n' uča*] *to[b]č'a'an* or *The Secret History of the Mongols* which reads in the *Yüan-ch'ao pi-shih* 元

朝秘史<sup>29</sup> 6.25v3-5 as follows: *Ene tusa-yin činu hači uruγ-un uruγ-a činu hači qarī ulγu-yi de'ere Tenggeri γajar-un ihe'el medetügei*. "[As to] the benefit of this thy service, let the protection of Heaven above and Earth [below] know (= decide) how I shall return the benefit unto the seed of thy seed." The word *de'ere* is glossed 上 (*shang*) "above," *tenggeri*, 天 (*t'ien*) "Heaven," *γajar-un*, 地的 (*ti-ti*) "Earth of," and *ihe'el*, 護助 (*hu-chu*) ("protection").

In 氣力 (*ch'i-li*) "might" we have the earlier, alternate form of the more usual, present-day 力氣 (*li-ch'i*). As a translation of the Mongolian *güčü(n)* (~ *küčü(n)*) "might" in the *Mongγol-un niuča* [= *n' uča*] *to[b]č'a'an* or *The Secret History of the Mongols* § 260 cf. the *Yüan-ch'ao pi-shih*, *Hsü-chi* 續集 1.45r3: *tenggeri γajar-a güčü nemegdejü* "[his] might being increased by Heaven and Earth." The word *tenggeri* is glossed 天 (*t'ien*) ("Heaven"), *γajar-a*, 地行 (*ti hang*) "Earth by," *güčü*, 氣力 (*ch'i-li*) ("might"), *nemegdejü* 被添着 (*pei-t'ien-cho*) "being increased."

In 天底 (*T'ien-ti*) ("of Heaven") we have the determinative suffix 底 (*ti*) which alternates, as we have just seen above, with 的 (*ti*) in the language of this and comparable documents. Cf., e.g., Ed. Chavannes, "Inscriptions et pièces de chancellerie chinoises de l'époque mongole,"<sup>30</sup> where we read (p. 369, n. 2): "le mot 底 est l'équivalent de 的 moderne." For other examples of its use in this communication cf. 4r6, 4v6, 5r2, 5r5, 5r6, 5r7-8, 5r8-9, and 5v1 below. For the solitary example of 的 (*ti*) in the communication cf. 5r8 below. For the usage of this determinative suffix in Chinese cf. Lü Hsiang 呂湘, "Lun 'ti' 'ti' chih pien chi 'ti' tzu-ti yu-lai 論「底」「地」之辨及「底」字的由來 ("Notes on the Etymology of the Particle 'te'"),<sup>31</sup> Kao Ming-k'ai 高名凱, "Han-yü kuei-ting-tz'u 'ti' 漢語規定詞 '的'" ("La particule déterminative *ti* en chinois"),<sup>32</sup> Jaroslav prušek, "La fonction de la particule *ti* dans le chinois médiéval";<sup>33</sup> and P. Demiéville, "Archaismes de prononciation en chinois vulgaire."<sup>34</sup>

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