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## AUXILIARY VERBS IN MONGOLIAN

From the very earliest monuments we find in Mongolian expressions consisting of an auxiliary verb in a „finite“ form after a nominal or adverbial form of the main verb. These combinations express the „objective“ or/and „subjective“ aspects of the action of main verb. The „objective aspect“ is called in German „Aktionsart“ Certain verbs have their own „Aktionsart“, which is either cursive-durative or punctual-perfective, depending on their original meaning, while other verbs can be used in various aspects. These aspects are expressed in different ways in different languages, e.g. in several Indo-European languages through additions of various prefixes to the verbal stem<sup>1</sup>. The Mongol texts translated from Sanskrit show that the Sanskrit verbal prefixes are in general rendered in Mongolian by auxiliary verbs, e.g. **pra-iksante=qaraju orošibai**<sup>1</sup>a.

The „subjective aspect“ might be defined as referring e.g. to the part played by the subject of the action, viz. whether he performs it for himself or some other person. The active and the medium of Indo-European are one method of distinguishing between these aspects. The auxiliaries used in Mongolian for the same purpose are often called „descriptive verbs“<sup>2</sup>.

A comparison language of the „Secret History“ with the younger historical works deriving from it gives us valuable information about the historical development of the use of the auxiliaries. In some Mongolian languages of today certain old auxiliaries have been degraded to suffixes. This is an interesting corroboration of the hypotheses put forward to explain certain verbal forms in Indo-European languages.

Mongolian has two suppletive verbs „to be“, viz. **a**-and **bü**-which are used to express the cursive-durative „Aktionsart“ of the main verb: these expressions are thus very close to the „expanded tenses“ in English. We thus find **a**-after a Converbium modale MNT<sup>3</sup> 52 **qamuγ mongγol-i gabul qayan meden aba=ATN...meden yabuba**; MNT 90 **ge'ü sa'an aqu-yi jolayaγu=ATN sayan бүкүй-дүр jolyaγu**; MNT 185 **uruy-un uruy-a kürtele önečid-ün abliy-a abun atuyai** (=217, in 218 only **abtuyai**). While rendering MNT 209 **usun-i nitulun abai je ta** ATN takes the auxiliary as **ögbei**; the latter denotes an action as being carried out in favour of another person.

In older sources the present **amu** seems to occur after the Converbium imperfecti. Used after a Converbium modale the same form seems to have generated the later present in-**nam**, while the present in **-nā** has been traced back to the Converbium modale plus **ayu**. Even after a Converbium imperfecti the auxiliary **a**-is used to express the situation which serves

as a setting to what happened: MNT 89 *nutuylaḡu aqui-dur*=ATN *nutuy-laḡu büküi-dür*; MNT 99 *herüḡü aḡu üjeḡü bayasba*. In the Teheran documents the expression *bariḡu aḡai...ḡarliḡ* has been rendered „écrit à garder“ by Mostaert and Cleaves: the same sense is in my opinion found in the Phags-pa expression *bariḡu yabu'ayi ḡarliḡ*, since-as the above quotation of MNT 52 and ATN 52 shows—a and yabu-are synonymous in expressing the durative aspect.

The verb *bü*-seems to have supplied, since earliest times, certain forms lacking in the paradigm of *a*.-Further more, there seems to be a general trend to use *bü*-instead of *a*-even in the other cases. We find a very interesting parallel in MNT 4 *duwa soqor...ḡurban ne'ürüt ḡaḡar-a qaraqū büle'e*=AT' *ḡurban negüri ḡaḡar-a üjen bülüḡe*=ATN...*üjekü aḡuyu*; so also in MNT 147 *ken qarbulā'a ?*=ATN *qarbuysan ken bülüḡe ?* A combination of the Praesens perfecti of *bü*-with the Nomen futuri of the main verb is thus used to express a usual and iterative action in MNT 21 *sünid büri.-gegeyen inu ke'eli-dür minu singgegü büle'e...ḡarqu büle'e*, MNT 85 *ger-ün belge; sün tösürü'et esüḡ-iyen süni-de ödür čayitala bülükü büle'e*.

After a Converbum conditionale in protasis this above construction can express irrealis in apodosis. In protasis we often meet a Converbum conditionale of the auxiliary after a Nomen perfecti of the main verb. After a Converbum modale this auxiliary seems to express a durative action, and after a Converbum imperfecti the situation created by the action of perfective verb: MNT 98 *bürḡi-de bao'uḡu büküi-dür nigen manayār erte...ödür geyin büküi-dür*; in translations from Sanskrit, e.g. AG<sup>5</sup> *butarajū bükü-yi üjeḡü=vikīrnām dḡstvā*. The Converbum praeparativum after the Converbum imperfecti of the main verbs again renders a Sanskrit absolutivum: AG *bariḡu bürün=gḡhītvā, takiḡu bürün=pūjāḡ kṛtvā*. After a Converbum perfecti of the main verbs this form also expresses concessivity.

The present *bui*, connected with the above stem *bü*,-is e.g. in Khalkha and Ordos used as an auxiliary: *jawudḡi bī* „he is going“. The verb *bayī*-‘to be, to stay etc.’ also occurs after a Converbum modale to render a durative nuance: MNT 146 *qayilan uyilan bayiqu-yi...sonosču*. In tales it is often to be understood as a Praesens historicum, e.g. MNT 121 *širo,ai sačun sačun baiyimu*. In modern Khalkha this verb plays an important role in the negative conjugation. In Kalmuck and probably also in Mongour it drops its initial in sandhi, e.g. Kalm. *tsändž-ädž* ‘was boiling’.

A prospective nuance seems to be expressed through the auxiliary *bol*-after a Nomen futuri of the main verb, e.g. MNT 241 *tümet irgen-ü ökit abqu keyen odqu bolun*. A further peculiar feature in the use of this auxiliary is that we often meet it as the main verb the same sentence. The use of *bol*-from earliest records to the modern Mongolian languages, is most interesting,<sup>6</sup> and it obviously needs and deserves a special study, since it supplies parallels to idiomatic expressions in several other languages, including Finnish.

Like the modern Romanic languages and English, Mongolian also makes use of the verb *yabu*-‘to go’ to express the imperfective „Aktionsart“ of the main verb. Its development into an auxiliary of this kind can still be seen in cases like MNT 15 *yadaḡu yabumu*=ATN *yadaḡu yabun amu bi*. Several instances of this construction are to be found in MNT 110. The durative character of these constructions of Verba sentiendi is

especially clear: MNT 205 **sedkiĵū yabuĵū bi** rendered by Mostaert „pensant continuellement“, MNT 209 **bi mao' uilaĵu yabuĵu** „comme je sois mécontent (de lui)“. The possible distinction between the nuances of the construction containing a Converbum modale and of that with Converbum imperfecti of the main verb is not always easily made, of e.g. MNT 170 **anda-dur bi qatquldun yadan yabulu 'a** translated by Haenisch „ich habe schon früher nie gegen den Freund kämpfen gönnen“. It seems that in the written sources this auxiliary grows more and more common. It is common in modern languages too, though in connection with verbs like 'to sleep' e. g. Kalmuck uses the verb **kepte-** 'to lie down' as auxiliary of the cursive-durative aspect.

Even in the MNT we meet occurrences of **sayu-** 'to sit', 'to dwell', in which it seems almost to play the role of an auxiliary of the durative aspect; cf. my paper „Zum Periodenbau im Mongolischen“ in *Mongolian studies*, Budapest 1970, p. 16. In present-day Ordos e.g. **tšugidži sū-** „se quereller continuellement“; cf. further de Smedt-Mostaert, *Le Dialecte monguor 11*, Grammaire, Peking 1945, p. 134.

A typically Mongolian construction is the connecting of the Converbum modale of the main verb with **ile-** 'to send' to express the aim of sending. The same meaning is also expressed through the Converbum imperfecti, e.g. MNT 127 **ügüleĵū ilerün** „sent to say“: we have close parallels in Latin and in Romanic languages: **dicendo mittere** ~ **mandare** etc. In some instances the verb **ile-** seems to have a perfective function, cf. e.g. MNT 140 **belgütei...niru'u inu ebüdüglejū ququĵu ilebe. būri bōkō...ūkūĵū ilebe=ANT niruyun inu öbüdüglejū alaba. b...ükübe**. One might expect that, especially in case of an intransitive verb 'to die', the perfective „Aktionsart“ would be rendered e.g. with the aid of the verb **od-** 'to go'. We meet the latter e.g. MNT 91 **naran singgekū odba=ATN naran singgeĵū odba**, cf. the terminative perfective expression **ñi ma nub soñ** „the Sun setting went“ in Tibetan<sup>8</sup>. In modern languages like Kalmuck the perfective aspect of intransitives is expressed through **od-** after a Converbum imperfecti: **üküdž odw** „died away“, **nadadž odw** „stuck together“, **soktād untād odnā** „got drunk and fell asleep“.

Also **yorči-** 'to go away' seems to occur in certain expressions in the function of an auxiliary like **yar-** 'to go out'. Even **talbi-** 'to let loose' is used as a perfective auxiliary, e.g. MNT 32 **onan müren ö'edeqataraju yorčiĵu talbiba=ANT...qarin qataribasu**; similar expressions also occur in modern languages, e.g. Ordos **keledži tawi-** „dire d' avance“.

It is only natural that the terminative-perfective aspect of durative verbs should be expressed by using auxiliaries like **bara-** 'to finish, to expire', cf. MNT 75 **eres sayid bolun bara' asu**, MNT 146 **ödür geyin bara' asu**. e.g. in Ordos **bara-** is still used in the same way. It is also interesting to note that in Monguor the synonymous verb **ala-** 'to kill' is used as an auxiliary expressing a perfective-intensive aspect, but only with verbs denoting an unpleasant feeling.

After verbs of movement in particular **ire-** 'to come' seems to express the terminative-perfective aspect, cf. e.g. MNT 32 **ayisun buyu. gürčü irebesü=ATN ayisun irebesü**, and MNT 57...**nereyidčü iregse'er...ATN nereyidügsen ber**. A Converbum modale seems again to express the purpose of coming: MNT 120 **neyilen irebe** „came to join“.

The modern languages use the verb **orki-** 'to throw' as a perfective auxiliary, e.g. **aladži orxi-** 'to kill'. In Kalmuck the verb in this position has been degraded to a derivative suffix, e.g. **altškād** 'having killed, **uts-**

**kāw** 'drank out', **xulxālād awād oknā** 'steals away'. In the Secret History we meet the verb **a or** „to throw“ with what I consider a similar function, although e.g. Haenisch has always translated it literally, cf. MNT 19 **niji'eli ya'u baiyi'ulqun ququčiŋu o'orba**. A similar meaning might be seen in the synonymous verb **ge-**, e.g. MNT 11 **abaya-yu' an uruy-a ülü bolŋan doramjilaju qaŋajaju geŋü nöü' übe**, where ATN puts **orkiyad** in the text as a glossa...**qaŋaju (orkiyad) negübe**.

The Converbium imperfecti of the main verb connected with a form of the verb **ayisu-** 'To approach' is used to indicate that the action in question has been going on for some time and is now close to completion. In general the main verb is a verb of motion, but we also find MNT 91 **naraniŋgeŋü odba. dü'üšin bolju ayisu**, where ATN omits **ayisu**. An interesting case is MNT 94 **e' üsŋen ayisurun** where ATN gives **egüsken ayisurun** with the glossa **ireküi-dür** but AT 20 **egüsken abču ireküi-dür**. In Ordos we meet still more highly developed instances, e.g. **ene däl ojordzi äsui boldzi** „on a presque fini de coudre cette touloupe“.

The verb **ab-** 'to take' often occurs in older sources pleonastically after other verbs of taking, e.g. MNT 80 **bariŋu abču odba=ATN bariŋu abuyad odču**. The verb is later, and still in the modern languages, used to describe the action as performed in the interest of the subject. At the same time, however, it seems describe the action as perfective in my opinion this perfective aspect is more important than the „momentariness“ stressed by Lessing<sup>9</sup>, cf. e.g. Kalmuck **surdž aw-** 'to learn', **olād aw** 'to find'. Ordos **bi uge keledži bātar tere kün džabsarāsan awāt kelele** „pendant que je parlais cet homme m'a interrompu et a dit...“ The synonym **bari** 'to take' can also be used in the same function, e.g. Ordos **daxidzi dursü awxudu südzi baridži wādzi awxulij** „quand on prend encore une fois une photographie alors je me ferai photographier étant assis“.

It is quite natural that an action performed to the benefit of any person other than the subject is described by the verb **ög** 'to give', cf. e.g. MNT 200 **mun ŋamuqa-yin ile imayi yadaŋsan haran-i mökōri' üljü ögbe**, or 209 **güčütü-yin güjü' ün bökö-yin bögse daruŋu ögbe ŋe či**. In the modern languages this also occurs in cases where a material „giving“ is not possible, e.g. Ordos **bi üde nēgēd ögöj** „j' ouvrirai la porte“. This auxiliary has at the same time a perfective value since an action must be performed before it can be „given“ to another.

A subjective causality or finality is expressed by the verb **ke-** 'to say' as auxiliary: it forms a kind of Oratiorecta rendering the thought of subject e.g. MNT 23 **bodončar-a mungqay yadao' u buiyu keyen uruy-a ülü to 'an qubi ese ögbe** translated by Haenisch..., „ob seiner Dummheit und Schwäche“... In Kalmuck we have instances like **aln gewā** „he aimed to kill“, **jown gedz wātł** „when he was just about to go“ Several good instance of the modal use of this verb in Ordos are quoted by Mostaert in his Dictionary (p. 253 f.). In a very interesting study<sup>10</sup> A. Waley and C.H. Armbruster show a quite similar use of the verb 'to say' both in Chinese and in the Hamitic languages of Africa. In spite of the obvious parallelism of the Mongol and Chinese expressions of this type we thus do not need to reckon with Chinese influence in Mongolian.

A further interesting group of auxiliary verbs typical of Mongolian are the auxiliaries of politeness. We must, however, disregard that group in this connection.

In spite of the possibility of using prefixes, even Indo-European languages make use of auxiliary verbs in order to express the aspects. E.g.

In Sanskrit we meet in such a function verbs like *as- ∼ bhū-* 'to be' *as-* 'to sit' (*dhārayann āste* „he is holding“), *sthā-* 'to stand', *vart-* 'to stay, to remain', *vas-* 'to dwell', *kar-* 'to do', *car- ∼ i- ∼ gam-* 'to go' (*āvestitāni caranti*“ are being enveloped“, *mṛdyamānāni yanti* „are being crushed“); etc.<sup>11</sup> Old Iranian used correspondingly *ah-* „to be“ and *āh-* „to sit“, e.g. *yez ahi garō dərətəm* „when you are dwelling on the mountain“.<sup>12</sup>

Similar verbs express the cursive-durative aspect in Hindi<sup>13</sup> and other modern Indo-Aryan languages. In these languages there might also be some Dravidian influence, since expressions of this kind are normal in Dravidian<sup>14</sup>, e.g. Telugu *ā pani cedi pōtunnadi* „cette affaire va periclitant“ (*pō-* 'to go'), *āṭṭu cēyucu vaccinām* „so doing have I come“ > 'I have always been accustomed to do so' (*vaccu-* 'to come'); Gondi *rohci simṭ* is constructed in exactly the same way as Mongolian *ilejū ōg-a'* a similar expression is also quoted from the Hamitic languages *Kafa te ime*.<sup>15</sup>

In Latin the verbs *esse* 'to be', *stare* 'to stand', *ire ∼ vadere ∼ ambulare* 'to go' were used with the Ablativus gerundi, and these constructions then flourish in the Romanic languages, cf. e.g. Old Spanish *era escribiendo e contande* he was writing and counting.<sup>16</sup> The English use of the „expanded tenses“ of the type *he is hunting ∼ he goes hunting* is well known<sup>17</sup>.

It is, however, probable that even in Latin the Imperfect in-*bam* as well as the Future in-*bo* are to be traced back to original combinations of a nominal form of the verb and of the auxiliary \**bhu-* 'to be'. The original meaning of Latin *amabam* etc. was thus „I was loving“. As soon as it had adopted the function of a normal imperfect tense, a new durativum *amans eram* ∼ had to be formed.

We know for sure that the future tense of the Romanic languages has been derived in a similar way: Latin *amare habeo* > French *aimerai*. It has also been suggested that in the Semitic and Hamitic languages the verbal roots consisting of three radicals originate from combinations of two originally independent roots<sup>18</sup>.

The method of using auxiliaries to express both the objective and subjective aspects of the action is met with in Turkic, Tungus, Korean and Japanese, as shown by Yoshitake<sup>19</sup>. This close similarity to Mongolian can of course be regarded as a proof of the affinity of all these languages. On the other hand, this method is used in so many languages which cannot be considered as descended from any common ancestor that it might be defined as a linguistic „universal“. It seems that in no other language are so many auxiliaries used with so many forms of the main verb in so many different functions as in Mongolian<sup>20</sup>. Everyone interested in this type of linguistic universals should therefore acquaint himself with the Mongolian usage of the auxiliaries.

### Notes and References

1. Cf. e. g. Jens Holt. *Etudes d'aspect* (=Acta Jutlandica 15), Aarhus 1943
- 1a See e. g. Friedrich Weller, „Sanskritische Präpositionen im Spiegel mongolischer Übersetzung.“ (Central Asiatic Journal VIII, The Hague 1963, pp. I—26).
2. The Mongolian auxiliary and descriptive verbs are dealt with e. g. G. D. Sandzeiev (Sravnitel' naja grammatika mongol' skix jazykov. Glagol, Moscow 1963, pp. 67—71) and N. Poppe *Khalkha-mongolische Grammatik*, Wiesbaden 1951, pp. 89—91).
3. MNT=Monghol un niuca Tobca an, ed. by Haenisch. Leipzig. 1937.  
ATN=The Altan Tobči according to S. A. Kozin, *Sokrovennoje skazanije I*, Moscow-Leningrad 1941, pp. 321 ff
4. AT=The Mongol Chronicle Altan Tobči, ed. and transl. by C. R. Bawden. Wiesbaden. 1955.
5. AG=Altan Gerel, the Mongolian translation of the *Suvarnaprabhasasūtra*.
6. See e. g. Poppe I, c. p. 90.
7. See e. g. Pentti Aalto, *Untersuchungen über das lateinische Gerundium und Gerundivum*, Helsinki 1949, pp. 76—78 with further references.
8. See e. g. Jacques Bacot, *Grammaire du tibétain littéraire I*, Paris 1948, p. 134 ff.
9. F. Lessing, *Mongolian-English Dictionary*, Berkeley. 1960, p. 2.
10. Published in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies VII*, London. 1933—35, pp. 573 ff.
11. See e. g. B. Delbrück, *Vergleichende Syntax der indogermanischen Sprachen III*, Strassburg 1900, p. 12 ff.; *Altindische Syntax*, Halle 1888, p. 390 ff. and J. S. Speijer, *Sanskrit Syntax*, Leyden 1886, p. 298, as well as Louis Renou, *Grammaire sanscrite*, Paris 1961, p. 494.
12. Cf. Hans Reichelt, *Awestisches Elementarbush*, Heidelberg 1967, § 622—627 and § 671.
13. See Jules Bloch, *Indo-Aryan from the Vedas to Modern Times*, Paris 1965, pp. 282, 287 ff., and further Paul Hacker, *Zur Funktion einiger Hilfsverba im moderner Hindi* (=Abhandlungen der Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften und Literatur, 1958, 4), as well as V. Porizka, „Notes on R. V. Vales Theory of Verbal Composition in Hindī, Bengālī, Gujarātī and Marāth“, *Archiv Orientalni XXI*, Praha 1958, p. 144 ff.
14. See e. g. Jules Bloch, *The Grammatical Structure of Dravidian languages*, Poona 1954, p. 92 ff.
15. See e. g. Carl Meinhof, *Die Entstehung flektierender Sprachen*, Berlin 1936, p. 94.
16. See my study referred to above Fn. 7.
17. See e. g. Otto Jespersen, *The Expanded Tenses* (=Society for Pure English Tract Nr. XXXVI, London 1931, p. 524 ff.).
18. See e. g. Meinhof I. c.
19. S. Yoshitake, „Auxiliary Verbs in Mongolian“. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies V*, London 1928—30, pp. 523—539, and further A. von Gabain „Verbalkomposition im Türkischen“ (*Türk Dili Arastirmalari Yilligi Belleten*, Ankara 1953) as well as her *Altürkische Grammatik*, Leipzig 1950, *passim*.
20. There are, of course, many more types of the auxiliary construction than I have enumerated above.