

REMARKS ON MIDDLE MONGOLIAN CONJUGATION

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This paper treats the Middle Mongolian period, specifically the conjugation of the language of the so-called preclassical linguistic records. From our point of view Ramstedt's work on Khalkha conjugation has primary importance.¹ The works of Vladimirtsov, Haenisch, Poppe, Doerfer, Street and Sanžeyev are also significant.²

On the basis of the former investigations one can accept as a working hypothesis that complex morphemes are numerous in Mongolian conjugation. This problem should probably be best examined in Middle Mongolian and so the conjugation of this period can be the clue historically to the whole Mongolian conjugation. That is why I have chosen this subject. Naturally there are many details to make clear. The general conclusions presenting themselves from the examination of the details are also to be drawn.

¹ Ramstedt, G. J., *Über die Konjugation des Khalkha-Mongolischen*. Helsingfors 1903. I refer to another work of his: *Einführung in die altaische Sprachwissenschaft. II. Formenlehre*. Helsinki 1952.

² Vladimircov, B., *Restes du participe présent en mongol*. *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Sciences de Russie*. 1924. p. 55-56. (In Russian.) Haenisch, Erich, *Grammatische Besonderheiten in der Sprache des Manghol un Niuca Tobca'an*. *Studia Orientalia XIV:3*, Helsinki 1950. Poppe, Nicholas, *Introduction to Mongolian Comparative Studies*. Helsinki 1955. Doerfer, Gerhard, *Beiträge zur Syntax der Sprache der Geheimen Geschichte der Mongolen*. CAJ, vol. I (1955), p. 219-267. Street, J. Ch., *The language of The Secret History of the Mongols*. New Haven, Connecticut 1957. Sanžeev, G. D., *Sravnitel'naja grammatika mongol'skix jazykov*. Glagol. Moskva 1963.

According to the morpho-centric character of this paper, the philological, phonetical and semantical connections are pointed out only where it is unavoidable.

0.1 In Mongolian the endings occurring after verbs are divided syntactically into four groups: a) modal markers, b) temporal markers, c) adjective-nominalizing particles, d) converbial particles. These endings can be added to any verb independent of its meaning. At the same time, they can be added to transitive verbs even if those are preceded by an object.

Further, these groups are divided according to negation or prohibition, i.e. the modal markers co-occur with *bÜ* 'not' and the others with *ese* or *ülü* 'not'. The following table shows this distribution:

Prohibitive word	co-occurs with the modal markers		
<i>bÜ</i> 'not'	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} -\emptyset \\ -yA \\ -dKU_n \\ -GlUd \\ -sU \\ -sUGAi \\ -tUGAi \end{array} \right.$		
Negative particle	co-occurs with		
	b)	c)	d)
<i>ese</i> 'not'	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} -JUGU \\ -bA \\ -lAGA \end{array} \right.$		
		<i>-GsAn</i>	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} -JU \\ -GAd \\ -tAlA \\ -GAsU \\ -bAsU \end{array} \right.$
<i>ülü</i> 'not'	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} -mU \\ -i \\ -yU \\ -d \\ -GUjAi \end{array} \right.$		
		<i>-KU</i>	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} -n \\ -rUn \end{array} \right.$

In negation there are also exceptions. In our preclassical corpus *-mUi* and *-KU* co-occurred once with *ese*, and *-GAd* and *-bAsU* with *ülü*. According to Street, semantically *ese*: 'non future', *ülü*: 'non past'. The predecessor of this more complete table can also be found in Street (1957: 3.122).

In the following I shall not give the conjugation as enumerated above.

1. From the stand-point of our subject the syntactical distribution of *-sU* 'optative' is especially interesting.

1.1 According to Street *-sU* is 'first person future particle' (1957: 3.122). However, two passages from § 124 of the Secret History contradict this interpretation: *šülegii irge | šülen bolqaŋu | manaqar bii megüdesii | qonoq-tur bii qojidasu* 'Let me not fail to make soup [from] a two-year-old sheep in the morning! May I not be late in the evening!'; *čo'orqatai tergen-i | či'ü inu bii či'üde'ülsii | tenggisgetei tergen-i | terge'ür de'ere bii te'üre'ülsii* 'Let me not loosen the wagon provided with a lock, the linchpin! Let me not break the wagon with *tenggisge* at the wheel-track!' According to this, *-sU*, refers to prohibition, and not negation, but temporal markers do not co-occur with prohibitive words in Mongolian. Therefore, it is more correct to take *-sU* as optative and thus *-sU* appearing in sentence-final position is a modal marker.

1.2 The *-sU* optative also occurs in the "converbial particles" *-bAsU* and *-GAsU*. In these "particles" *-bA* 'past', *-GA* 'imperfect' are temporal markers. They can also occur by themselves, independent of *-sU*. Therefore, both *-bAsU* and *-GAsU* are the complex of two morphemes. These complexes can appear only at the head of the subordinate clause, thus they form a functional unit on a syntactical level.

1.21 The problem here presents itself in morphological interpretation. According to Ramstedt, *-bAsU* derives from the joining of *-bA* 'past' + *a-* 'to be' + *-sU* 'optative', or perhaps from the contamination of *V + bA a- + -sU* (1903: p. 105). According to Sanžeyev for lack of positive, historically attested data Ramstedt's explanation can be considered only as a hypothesis. In his opinion, the forms with *-sU* have once (*italics mine*. Bese) come into being in two ways: they had been added to the temporal

markers either of the past or the present tense, or directly to the stem of the verb (1963: p. 145).

The above morphological analysis also represents the view of Sanžeyev. However, the word "once" is liable to exceptions, as the syntactical distribution of *-sU* in Middle Mongolian is a recent fact. According to the morphological distribution one can easily recognize the independent meaning of *-bA* 'past' and *-GA* 'imperfect' temporal markers from both *-bA.sU* and *-GA.sU*.

1.22 It is strange that the *-sU* optative modal marker could occur not only directly after the stem but after the temporal markers as well. That is, after the stem, *-sU* could be changed vertically with the modal markers on one side, on the other side it could follow them linearly. This strange feature had confused scholars and led them to arbitrary interpretations, although the relative mobility of certain modal or temporal markers is only one of the manifestations of the agglutinative system (cf. also 2.3). As the combination of these temporal + modal markers occurs exclusively at the head of the subordinate clause, the *-sU* optative after the sentence-final temporal markers is an index of the subordination.

Semantically, it is very interesting that *-sU* following the temporal markers loses its reference to 1st person and can refer to all persons. Considering that optative *-sU* does not occur after other temporal markers (e.g. *-mU*), in all probability the possibilities of the combinations of temporal + modal markers have been limited by the meaning in Mongolian. At least in Middle Mongolian—under certain syntactical conditions—tense and mood could be in a complementary relation.

2. According to Street *-dKUn* is the 'second person plural hortative particle' (1957: 3.121). This interpretation agrees with the general notion and is syntactically correct. However, on the morphological level there are many problems.

2.1 For segmenting *-dKUn* morphologically, several investigators have already seen possibilities. According to Ramstedt *-dKUn* derives from the secondary verbal stem *-tU-*, *-t-* similar to the optative *-tUGAi* (1952: p. 93). Poppe says: "The suffix of the future noun was taken by the secondary (passive) stem in *-d-* ~ *-da-*." (1955: § 195). But in Middle Mongolian, the passive

"stem" has three allomorphs (*-GdA-*, *-dA-*, and *-tA-*) and the *-d*-segment of *-dKUn* cannot be divided in this way. Sanžeyev has not taken any clear stand on the issue of *-dKUn*, he has only declared, against Poppe (1955: § 195), that *-GtUn* could hardly be formed from *-dKUn* by metathesis. And he is probably right in this conclusion.

2.2 For the morphological segmentation of *-dKUn* hortative "particle" I see the following possibilities: A praesens *-d*—that is a temporal marker—is known from Middle Mongolian. In *-dKUn* the *-KU* 'futuri' appears after this praesens temporal marker *-d*. This interesting addition of *-KU* 'futuri' to the temporal markers is not unique in the history of Mongolian. The same phenomenon exists in Modern Buriat, where *-AA* 'nomen imperfecti', *-αA* 'nomen futuri', *-hAn* 'nomen perfecti' and *-dAg* 'nomen usus' often occur after temporal markers, also. In this case, they are supposed to have a certain modality as well. Also Middle Mongolian, *-KU* in the meaning 'futuri.potential' is not in want of this nature. In my opinion, these facts prove sufficiently the occurrence of *-KU* after *-d* praesens in Middle Mongolian.

The meaning of this present *-d* is rather strange. Haenisch characterises it as "Emphase auf *-t*" (1950: p. 20). It is possible that this meaning contributed to turning *-dKUn* into a hortative "particle".

The *-n* after *-KU* is a plural suffix (8.23) that in Middle Mongolian can be added to the marker of *KU*- 'futuri' in accordance with the rules of sequence. Thus the Middle Mongolian *-dKUn* hortative "particle" is the complex of several morphemes.

2.3 It is interesting that in Middle Mongolian *-KU* 'futuri' possessed a relative mobility similar to *-sU* 'optative' (cf. 1.22; 6.21), that is, not only could it be added to the verbal stem directly but also to the temporal marker after the stem. The possibilities of the temporal marker + *-KU* complex could also be limited by the meaning.

3. The problem of *-sUGAi* and *-tUGAi* hortative "particles" intermingles.

In Street's grammar *-sUGAi* is the 'first person hortative particle,' and *-tUGAi* is the 'third person hortative particle' (1957: 3.121). This interpretation has long since been accepted by

Mongolists and sanctified by practice. It is, however, a problem of syntax, and here we are more interested in morphology.

3.1 There are difficulties here, too. It scarcely can be doubted that *-sUGAi* is the complex of morphemes. The first component is *-sU* 'optative', also occurring without *-GAi*. The morpheme status of the latter is proved just by the independent occurrence of *-sU*.

If the independent morpheme status of the two segments were proved, it would also be possible to segment *-tUGAi*.

3.2 Ramstedt derives this *-tU* from Turkish (1903: p. 73). Both Poppe (1955: § 200) and Sanžeyev (1963: p. 105–107) fail to explain it.

3.3 There are no data from Middle Mongolian for the independent usage of *-tU*, but it can be traced in Mogol. In any case, one can segment *-tUGAi* in Middle Mongolian and prove the morpheme status of the *-tU* segment with the help of *-sU.GAi*.

Syntactically, both *-sU.GAi* and *-tUGAi* occur in a similar setting: they are verbal forms closing the sentence.

Semantically, they have a common optative-concessive meaning. But they differ in the relation to persons: *-sU.GAi* is 'first person', *-tUGAi* 'third person.' The phonological difference manifesting itself in the opposition of *s:t* corresponds to this semantical difference. Disregarding the semantical and phonological characteristics here, these two "particles" are identical. Thus *-sU* and *-tU* are co-variants of a single optative form. In this respect *-tU* can be taken as an independent morpheme within *-tU.GAi*, in opposition to which *-sU* is the base-variant having a more expanded distribution.

3.4 I have no clear idea concerning the *.GAi* segment of *-sU.GAi* and *tU.GAi*. It can be the complex of *-GA* 'imperfecti' + *-i* 'praesens.emphatic' (cf. 7.22, 8.3, 9).

4. According to Street *-GtUd* is a 'second person hortative particle' (1957: 3.121). However, the singular Mo. *-GtUn* is in opposition to it, and so the *-d* from *-GtUd* is identical with Mo. plural *-d*. Thus, Middle Mongolian *-GtUd* is not a single morpheme either.

4.1 The possibility of segmenting *-GtU* has already appeared. Castrén saw a third person imperative in the *-G-* segment (cf.

Versuch einer burjätischen Sprachlehre, § 131). But Ramstedt rejected his supposition. His main argument is that the *-G* imperative in question goes back to **-gi*. However, he admits that he cannot solve the question of Mo. *-GtUn* (1903: p. 67–69). In Sanžeyev's opinion, the supposition of Castrén cannot be ignored. He points out the presence of *-tU* from *-tU.GAi* in *-GtU.d*. At the same time, he clearly understands that the interpretation of *-G* is the main point. According to him, *-GtUn* is missing from the dialects where **-gi* is known in the form of *-g + vowel*; moreover, the vowel added to *-g* can be a certain addition (1963: p. 102–106).

It can be emphasized—known also by Sanžeyev—that there are a lot of examples for the co-occurring of different modal markers in Mongolian dialects, especially in Buriat. Moreover, if *-GtU* were a single morpheme, a *-GtU* 'benedictive' and a *-tU* 'optative' would remain causing further complications.

Thus, in the question of *-GtU.d* I see truth on the side of Castrén—Sanžeyev according to whom the Middle Mongolian *-GtU.d* "hortative particle" is the complex of *-G* 'third person hortative' + *-tU* 'third person optative' + *.d* 'plural'. Probably, the reference 'second person plural' of *-G.tU.d* is confirmed by the *.d* 'plural'.

5. According to Street *-tAlA* ('till') occurs in adverbials with present-time reference, meaning 'so that X, until X, while X' where X is the meaning of the verbal with which *-tAlA* is in construction (1957: 3.3212). This interpretation also corresponds to the traditional one containing, however, a new element in the 'present time reference meaning.' Another question is whether to list *-tAlA* among the converbs will or will not later prove correct (cf. 11.1).

5.1 I can quote Ramstedt's opinion (1903: p. 111) from Poppe: "This converb is a dative form in **-a* of the deverbal noun in **-tal/*-dal*." (1955: § 234). Kozin supposed **-ta* to be a hypothetical Old Mongolian deverbal adjective-nominalizing suffix and *-la* as the shortened form of the sociative case ending **-lUGA*. Kotwicz pointed out that *-tAlA* is the complex of *-tA* (or *-dA*) imperfect deverbal adjective-nominalizing suffix + *-la* dative case ending. Sanžeyev has not given a ruling on the subject of *-tAlA*. For the sake of brevity, I will content myself with presenting my suggestion.

5.2 The syntactical environment of *-tAlA* is quite identical with that of *-bA.sU*, and *-GA.sU* and with the classical and dialectal *bA.lA* and *-bA.ǰU* "conditional particles". In this manner, they probably can offer good analogies for the question of *-tAlA*.

5.21 *-bA.sU* and *-GA.sU* are the complex of two morphemes: *-bA* and *-GA* are temporal markers, *-sU* is a modal marker (cf. 1.).

5.22 Colloquial Mongolian and modern dialectal *-bAlA* is also the complex of two morphemes. Its first element is *-bA* 'past'; the other one is *-lA* paragogic particle.

5.23 The colloquial Mo. and modern dialectal *-bAǰU* is analogous with *-bA.lA*. Its second element is the paragogic particle *-ǰU*.

5.24 As I have mentioned, the syntactical setting of the complex markers *-bA.sU*, *-bA.lA* and *-bA.ǰU* is identical. Because the Khalkhas read *-bA.lA* in every case, instead of the Written Mongolian *-bA.sU*, the meanings of *-bA.sU* and *-bA.lA* were probably closely related. We can also suppose a partial similarity of *-sU*, *-lA* and *-ǰU*.

The description of the Mongolian particles *-lA* (*ele*) and *-ǰU* is incomplete in many respects. Here, it is enough to say that in modern dialects, e.g. in Khalkha and Buriat, the particle *-l(A)* cannot stand after *-tAl(A)*. Similarly the particle *-ǰ(U)* cannot appear after *-bA.ǰ(U)*. If it were not so, identical elements would be repeated (**-tA.lA.lA*, **-bA.ǰU.ǰU*), which is nonsense in Mongolian. I have mentioned the repetition of identical elements, that is, with the help of these criteria I see the presence of the particle *-lA* (*ele*) in *-tAlA* provable.

However, the segmentation of *-tAlA* even in this way is very problematic. Semantically, the 'present time reference meaning' given by Street is acceptable because *-tAlA* co-occurs with the temporal marker *ese* 'non.future' (0.1). On the other hand, at present, we cannot trace the temporal markers **-t* (or **-tA*) 'non.future' from Mongolian. So this question is open. In my opinion, the first component of *-tAlA*—similar to *-GA.sU*, *-bA.sU*, *-bA.lA* and *-bA.ǰU*—is some kind of temporal marker, and the second one is a modal marker, more correctly a modal particle.

6. Street says in brief: '*-ǰU'U* 'non.fut.' with allomorphs *ǰ* before *iǰ* and *-ǰU'U* elsewhere' (1957: 3.122).

6.1 According to Ramstedt *-JUGU* is a **-ji* nomen verbale that has become specialized in the function of predicate. This **-ji* nomen has been preserved in Khalkha as an imperfective converb (1903: p. 83). Poppe: "The primary suffix of this form is **-ji* (**-di*/**-dī*) ~ **-ju*. In Written Mongolian this suffix forms the imperfective converb (vide § 232)." (1955: § 214.) Sanžeyev regards *-JUGU* as a complex suffix with *-ji* as first component (1963: p. 127). Obviously our authors feel compelled to suppose a *-ji* precedent, because the modern equivalents of Middle Mongolian *-JU* can be derived from this form only. I say *-JU* with *-U* because e.g. from the 347 occurrences in the text of the Secret History 343 are *-JU*. and only 3 are *-Ji*. (besides one which is *-Je*.) Thus, historically the problem is more complicated, than one could imagine. In any case, in Middle Mongolian *-JU* is the dominant form, especially if we include the *-JU* converb as well. Both *-JUGU* in sentence-final position and *-JU* converb can be negated by *ese*. This also proves that the *-JU* component of *-JUGU* and the *-JU* converb are identical.

-Ji refers to feminine gender (Doerfer, 1955: p. 249; and 10.1).

6.2 The problem of the supposed second component *-GU* and *-GAi* is also difficult.

Sanžeyev's comments in this respect are very interesting. He segments in two ways. In his opinion *-sU.GAi* and *-tU.GAi* can be segmented as *-sU.G.Ai* and *-tU.G.Ai* (1963: pp. 105, 109, 112, 128 and pp. 105, 112, 128). According to this, **-JiGAi* assumed on the basis of Middle Mongolian *-JUGU* could be **-Ji.G.Ai*. In his view *-Ai* here is an emphatical component (1963: pp. 112, 127, 128 or already Ramstedt, 1952: p. 85). *-G-* is supposed to be only a connective sound (1963: p. 127, 128). Opposing this opinion, in another place, Sanžeyev accepts that the *-GA-* component of **-JiGAi* could also be *-GA.i* from *-sU.GAi* and *-tU.GAi* or that it can be the nomen imperfecti *-GA*. But his result does not even satisfy him. Although, *-i* with good reason, can be accepted as an emphatic particle for expressing modal or other shades similar to *-bA:-bAi* (1963: p. 126), Sanžeyev contradicts himself here, and at the same time he fails to interpret the second component *-GU*.

6.21 In my opinion, the *.GU* component of *-JU.GU* is identical with the deverbal noun-forming suffix *-GU* (Street, 1957: 4.132). The same *-GU* appears in *-GU.JA.i* 'dubitative' (cf. 9.).

Actually, the *-GU* deverbal noun forming suffix is a specific variant of *-KU* 'futura.potential.' In my opinion, the *-GU₁* ('fut.') verbal final indicative particle (3.122), the *-GU₂* ('impf. adj. N') deverbal adjective-nominalizing particle (3.2212), the *kü* ('real') emphatic particle (3.6) and the *gü* ('real') emphatic particle (3.6) can be described as the single *-KU* 'futura.potential.' In this respect, Street neglected the rule of morpheme ambivalence in Mongolian (cf. 11.2).

Thus, Middle Mongolian *-JU.GU* is the complex of *-JU* 'imperfecti' and *-GU* 'futura.potential'.

6.22 The *.GAi* component occurring in the variants *-Ji.GAi* and *-JA.GAi* is in my opinion the sum of *-GA* 'imperfecti' and *.i* 'praesens' (cf. 3.4, 9.).

6.3 The variants *-JU.*, *-JA.*, and *Ji.* represent a separate problem, an obvious interpretation of which is offered in 10.3.

7. According to Street *-lAGA* is ('non.fut.') verbal final indicative particle' (1957: 3.122), and *-lUGA* is a 'rare verbal final indicative particle' (id.).

7.1 Ramstedt has already supposed a primary *-lǝ-* from Mo. *-lUGA* (1903: p. 81). This *-lA/-lU* does not occur independently in Middle Mongolian, but Dagur *-li* and Mogol *-la* sufficiently prove Ramstedt's supposition.

The interpretation of the second component *.GA* (Ramstedt, 1903: p. 81, and Sanžeyev, 1963: p. 126) however, is not worked out completely. In my opinion, the second component can be identified with *-GA* 'imperfecti' temporal marker.

Thus, *-lA.GA* is complex morpheme combined with *-lA* 'perfecti' and *-GA* 'imperfecti'. The Mo. *-lUGA* generally characterized as 'praesens perfecti' could also be combined in this way.

7.2 In the preclassical texts *-lU.* and *-li.* variants occur in addition to *-lA.* *-li* is Femininum (Doerfer, 1955: § 32). For the relation of *-lA.* and *-lU.* variants see 10.

8. The following oppositions in the preclassical texts are: *-mU* : *-mUi*, *-bA* : *-bAi*, *-GA* : *-GAi*, *-KU* : *-KUi*, *-JU.GU* : *-JU.GUi*, *-lA.GA* : *-lA.GAi*. From these oppositions an *.i* morpheme appears.

8.1 According to Doerfer, it is "völlig gesichert" that the form with *.i* is a plural here (1955: § 30–35, 37). However, at the same time Doerfer interprets *-KU* as masculine and *-KUi* as feminine forms (id. § 36). This is a serious contradiction. If *-mUi*, *-GAi*, *-bAi*, *-JU.GUi* and *IA.GAi* were plurals in opposition to *-mU*, *-GA*, *-bA*, *-JU.GU* and *-IA.GA*, that is, if this *.i* were a plural suffix, the *.i* segment, the independent morpheme status which appears from the above oppositions in the same way, in *-KUi* it would not be a suffix of plural, but some sort of Femininum. Apparently, Doerfer has no decisive proof for the plural suffix character of *.i*, nor for its feminine forming character. Therefore, none of his interpretations can be seriously considered.

According to Street, in the language of the Secret History there appears an *.i* 'particle forming suffix of undetermined meaning occurring after the temporal morpheme of verbal final particles' (1957: 4.51). This segmentation is beyond reproach, but he does not refer to the satisfactory identification of *.i*.

There is an *-i* 'praesens' in Middle Mongolian used as a temporal marker or rather a deverbal adjective-nominalizing suffix (Vladimirtsov; 1924: p. 55–56). I suppose that this *-i* arising from the above mentioned oppositions and appearing after the temporal markers is identical with *-i* 'praesens'.

8.2 Consequently, the above-described rule of *-i* 'praesens' can and must be amplified. As an approach to the problem, let us give some interesting examples.

8.21 To start with, let us choose *-KU* 'futuri' which in Middle Mongolian could be both temporal marker and deverbal adjective nominalizing suffix (cf. 6.21).

According to Poppe (1955: § 219), Doerfer (1955: § 36) and Street (1957: 4.51) *-KUn* is the plural of *-KUi*. However, besides *-KUi* and *-KUn* the 'futuri.potential.' *-KU* is also correct. As this is the simple form, it is more correct to suppose that *-KU* : *-KU.i* and *-KU* : *-KU.n* are oppositions. In this way *-KU* 'futuri' is in opposition to *-KU* 'futuri' + *.i* 'praesens' and *-KU* 'futuri' + *.n* 'plural'.

8.22 From the point of view of this segmentations the example offered by these words is very important: *ma.GU* 'bad' : *ma.GU.i* : *ma.GU.n*; *sama.GU* 'confusion' : *sama.GU.i* : *sama.GU.n*; *oGlor.GU* 'sky' : *oGlor.GU.i*; *buru.GU* 'mistake' : *buru.GU.i*, etc. The

appearance in these words of *.i* present (and of *.n* plural) is possible because of the nature of the suffix *.GU*.

It is interesting to note that besides *ma.GU.lA* 'to calumniate' ~ *ma.GU.i.lA* 'id.' is also correct. But according to our present knowledge **ma.GU.n.lA* is anomalous. That is, in opposition to the *.n* forms the \emptyset and *.i* forms are on the same level.

On the basis of the texts one can say that there are not great difference with regard to the syntactical usage of *-KU* and *-KU.i*; *ma.GU* and *ma.GU.i*; *sama.GU* and *sama.GU.i*. The fundamentally identical usage of the opposing forms can be explained by the fact that in Mongolian the morphological structure is often indifferent from the point of view of syntactical position. Of course, this feature makes it more difficult to explain the grammatical function and meaning of *-i* present in the connections dealt with here.

8.23 Here I cannot enter into the details of the problems of plural in Mongolian, but I should like to emphasize that essentially the *.n* 'plural' is only a denominal adjective-nominalizing suffix in Middle Mongolian. That is, it is not plural in the same sense as English *-s* or Hungarian *-k* are plurals. Regarding the meaning this *.n* suffix is rather a nomen collectivum, and in this respect it is a matter of determination similar to *-i* 'praesens' that can also function as denominal adjective-nominalizing suffix. That is why I do not think that *-KU.n*, *ma.GU.n* etc. are necessarily the plural of *-KU.i*, *ma.GU.i* etc.

8.3 Temporal marker (*-i* 'praesens') appearing after another temporal marker is a typical feature of agglutination in Mongolian. In such positions the *-i* 'praesens' can only be regarded as an emphatic suffix, a strengthening particle for expressing modal or other shades (Sanžeyev; 1963: p. 126), better to say: a durativum. Consequently, in my opinion *.i* occurring after temporal markers is 'praesens.durativum'.

8.31 The *-i* 'praesens' after *-KU* and *maGU*, *samaGU* etc. is to be explained in a partly different way. Here the *-i* 'praesens' as denominal adjective-nominalizing suffix is an index of adjectivization. That is, it has a function but in consequence of the complete indifference of Mongolian syntax towards morphological structure it is difficult to recognise the function of it.

9. According to Street *-UjA* ('I. fear'; with allomorphs *Uj* before *.iʒ* and *UjA* elsewhere): 'This particle refers to a future action which the speaker hopes will not come about' (1957: 3.122).

9.1 Morphologically *-GUjAi* is a complex form (cf. Ramstedt; 1903: p. 90-91; Poppe; 1955: § 202; Sanžeyev; 1963: p. 112-113).

The first component is a specified variant of *-KU* 'futuri.potential' (cf. 6.21).

The second component is identical with *-JA* 'surely' emphatic particle.

The third component is *-i* 'praesens. emphatic'.

9.2 Therefore, according to the morphological components *-GUjA.i* 'dubitative' semantically is the complex of meanings 'fut.potential' + 'surely' + 'praesens.emphatic'.

10. In preclassical texts one finds different variants of *-lA*, 'perfective' temporal marker. For example, the most important preclassical text, the Secret History, contains the following variants: *-la./-le*. (256 occurrences), *-lu./lū*. (27 occurrences), *-lāi* (4 occurrences). These variants raise a problem referring to the vowel components of the "non complex" temporal markers.

10.1 From the point of view of their vowel components the non complex temporal markers can be divided into three groups: a) group with *-A* (*-GA* 'imperfective', *-bA* 'perfective'), b) group with *-U* (*-KU* 'futuri', *-mU* 'imperfective', *-JU*. 'imperfective', *-yU* 'imperfective') and c) group with *-i* (*-bi*, *-ji*, *-li*, *-yi*). The last group is connected somehow with Femininum.

However, the following segmentation evidently presents itself: e.g. *-b* 'perfective' + *A* '– Femininum' and *-b* 'perfective' + *i* '+ Femininum' etc. As '+ Femininum' occurs in both groups, the group of *i* '+ Femininum' is identically opposed both to the *A* and *U* groups. So the problem can be reduced to the *A:U* opposition. The question is whether the *A:U* opposition dividing the temporal markers into two groups and appearing so peculiarly in *-lA*, 'perfective' temporal marker can or cannot be the medium of differences in the meaning.

10.2 There are further motives for raising the question. These are the following:

10.21 Only the forms with *A* take part in the complex of temporal + modal markers (cf. *-GA.sU*, *-bA.sU*; *-tAlA* is uncertain).

10.22 'Potential', is also a component of the meaning of *-KU* 'futuri'. (That is why the usage of *-d.KU.n* as "hortative particle" [cf. 2.] is possible). This too can be connected with

10.23 that *-sU* 'optative' is a *par excellence* *U* form and

10.24 the opinions concerning the etymology of the temporal markers.

10.241 Even Ramstedt thought it possible to combine the suffixes *-mU* 'imperfective' and *-m* or *-mA* 'nomen descriptionis.' His supposition is strengthened by further data: Modern Mongolian *-mjā* (→ *-m* 'imperfective' + *JA* 'emphatic particle: surely' + *i* 'praesens. emphatic') and Monguor *-m* 'imperfective' etc. (cf. Poppe, 1955: § 205).

10.242 The primary unvocalized form of *-bA* 'perfective' temporal marker is identical with *-b* deverbal noun forming suffix (Poppe, 1955: § 216).

10.243 *-yU* 'praesens imperfecti' probably is the form with *U* of *-i* 'praesens' (Poppe, 1955: § 210).

10.244 The temporal marker *-lA*. 'perfective' derives from *.l* deverbal noun forming suffix (Ramstedt, 1903: p. 81; Poppe, 1955: § 212).

Thus, in Mongolian certain temporal markers can be traced back to deverbal noun forming suffixes consisting of a single consonant.

On the basis of these facts, we can suppose that in Middle Mongolian the phonologically */- Consonant/* form must have been very important. That is, one can think that in Middle Mongolian a certain form of vocal harmony was compulsory in the suffixes for the vowels less burdened with function.

10.3 Consequently, in the temporal markers the possibility of *A* 'non potential' : *U* 'potential' co-variance presents itself. If it is going to be proved, the "variants" *-lA*. and *-lU*. would be the medium of two past tenses: *-lA*. 'past.non potential' and *-lU*. 'past.potential.' It is interesting that Written Mongolian *-luya/ -lüge* has preserved the form with *U*.

The same problem can be suspected in the case of the "variants" *-JU*. 'imperfecti' : *-JA*. 'id.' (cf. 6.2).

11. For summing up, let us draw some general conclusions referring to Middle Mongolian conjugation.

11.1 The author of the only grammar on Middle and especially on Preclassical Mongolian is Street who deals with conjugation in accordance with the conception of Ramstedt. I think that it is possible to review this conception. As a first step in Middle Mongolian, I eliminate from among the converbial particles the complex forms *-GA.sU*, *-bA.sU* and *-IAIA*. According to their grammatical function, they differ from the "pure" converbs. At the same time, *-msAr* is a pseudo-converb. It seems that in Middle Mongolian only *-n*, *-JU*, *-GA*d**, *-rA* and *-rUn* belong to the "pure" converbial particles.

11.2 In Middle Mongolian, the temporal markers *-JU*, *-GA*, *-KU* *-mU* and *-i* could belong both to the verbs and nouns as verba finita and participles. Therefore, these are to be considered ambivalent morphemes.

In all probability the great number of the ambivalent morphemes has a connection with the syntactical structure of the agglutinative system in which position is more determinant than morphology (cf. 8.22).

11.3 In Middle Mongolian, one can recognize rich combinations of temporal + modal markers, temporal + temporal markers and temporal + temporal + temporal markers. This is the characteristic feature of agglutination. Thus in Middle Mongolian conjugation the rule of agglutination manifests itself in special way, so to speak, under laboratory circumstances.

11.4 In the temporal marker + temporal marker complexes, the distinction between the two temporal markers is a difference of aspect, not of tense. In the temporal marker complexes, the *-i* 'praesens' represents an emphaticum or a durativum.

