

Tradition of Records Creation of Mongolia: XIII-XX
Century

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[국문초록]

몽골에서의 기록생산 전통: 18-20세기

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근대 이전 몽골 부족의 기록생산은 토바어, 훈누어, 슴베어, 거란어, 한자 등 여러 고대 언어에 의해 십여 종의 기록에 집중되어 있음을 발굴기록을 통해 알 수 있다. 최초의 몽골어 기록생산은 소고도어의 영향을 받은 몽골비사라고 할 수 있다. 소고도어에 기반한 몽골문자는 13세기 이후 몽골의 기록생산에 사용되었으며 위구르어와는 다른 독창적인 문자이다. 칭키즈칸의 석문은 몽골제국의 공문 생산의 증거이며 소고도어로 쓰여졌다. 이후 몽

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골제국의 기록생산은 몽골제국이 여러 나라에 보낸 기록을 통해 알 수 있다. 몽골의 전통기록은 고지, 포고, 칙서, 임명장 등 여러 형태가 있으며, 제목, 본문, 결재 부분으로 구성되어 있다. 본고에서는 몽골 전통문서의 형식과 구성요소에 대한 설명을 제공한다. 17세기 이후 몽골의 공식문서는 13세기의 문서 양식에 기초하고 있다.

주제어: 몽골기록, 기록생산, 소그도어, 칭키즈칸 석문, 몽골비사

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Mongolia is a state that records the events including establishment of state, raise and falls, and had inherited them to their descendants in any political situations. This can prove by diplomatic letters of 13th century from Mongolian kings to outer world and original documents and records in National Archive since 1674. Nomadic civilization, with constant war affair and a country being sandwiched between two big states, national script, language and the culture could not have been easily keep. However, the Mongolian public records creation has descended to us, which are a part, our intellectual heritage. This culture started when the Mongolians started using unified script, which had developed time to time and descended until early 20th century.

As a script is the main aspect of records management and creation, I would like to make a brief introduction to Mongolian script history.

In historical documents, the ancient days Mongolian tribes had their own script for their governing and communicating with other states. The scripts of Khoid Tsenkher Cave¹⁾ and 1983's exploration of Hunnu tombs of

Buregkhangai mountain of Bulgan province,²⁾ are proven that ancient nomads had 9–10 kind of scripts. Also Wei and Soung dynasty's historical records mentioned the Toba has invented new script and has created many books in Sumbe language. For example, 425 AC in Wei dynasty's historical records; Toba's has invented the script that has about 1000 letters and used it for communicating other states, invented "criminal law", crowning authority, allocates military officers and crowns. And also in historical records mentioned; BC 192 Modun Shanio of Hunnu dynasty has sent official letter to Chinese queen Gao-Kheu, Kitan dynasty in AC920 has invented great script³⁾ based on Chinese characters, in AC 925 small script based on Uighur script,⁴⁾ and Kitan's great script has about 1,000 letters. Later Zurchid has invented their own great and small scripts based on Kitan's great and small scripts.

Let us focus on how and since when did Mongolian script has invented and how was the documentation of public affair in Mongolian script and records creation.

- 1) Khoid Tsenkher Cave is located 30 km westward from the centre of Mankhan sum of Khovd province. Historical values of the Khoid Tsenkher cave date back to the Upper Paleolithic Period (40,000–12,000 years ago), and registered in the UNESCO "World Cultural Heritage" List in 1996.
- 2) The paintings, which existing along two sides of "Altan khun" tolgoi, that found by the archaeological excavations from Uvgunt area of Buregkhangai mountain of Bulgan province in 1983, were studied comparing with over 10 alpha characters system in the world and decided that it is not a common signs but it is a character that giving an any information.
- 3) The Kitans were existed nomadically in the north of the Great Wall in China during the 4–5th Century. Kagan Ambagyan founded the Kitan state in 911. Lubugu, a grandson of Ambagyan, and a scholar named Tulyubu developed a Grand Alphabet based on the Chinese hieroglyphics in 920.
- 4) Later, Tela, a son of Ambagyan, developed a Minor Alphabet based on the Uyghur script in 924–925.

The origin of Mongolian script is still controversial but, generally scholars agreed in following two aspects; adopted from Uighur⁵⁾ dynasty and Uyghur adopted from Sogdo language and most of scholars agreed in second aspect.

Scholar Sh. Gaadamba mentioned and concluded “Mongolian script originated 1200–1500 years from Mongolian Secret History” and “but, in 13th century the language influenced by Uighur script, and it has transferred to Uighur purposely”. And in the other hand scholar Ts. Shagdarsuren’s investigation tells “there are facts that, in 13th century Mongolians have not adopted Sogdo script from Uighur but in 6–7th centuries both Mongol and Uighur adopted at same time Sogdo script from current Tajik’s aunt sisters”

The one clear thing is: Mongolians had their own script, communication that not adopted from their neighbours China, Tangud and Tibet. Possibly, Chinese character is too difficult to be adopting for nomadic civilization and it could influence to their own language.

Tangud and Tibet dynasties proclaimed Buddhism as state religion from Soronzongombo King’s era (7th century) but Mongolian did not adopted their script.

Chinese pronunciation is completely different from Mongolian and to invent the characters for pronunciation may were easier.

According to Uighur, Sogdo and Mongol language pronunciation, vocabulary and Ghengis Khan’s rock script, Mongolian Secret History and recent researches many scholars agreed on for the event of Mongolians did not adopted their script from Uighur but, adopted from Sogdo language.

5) Uyghur Khaganat existed from AD 745 to 840. The Uyghurs were a nomadic people of Turkish origin and their language belongs to the Altaic language family. They created their script by improving the Sogdian alphabet, and its wrote in the history as a Uyghur script.

Foreign scholars also consider that Mongolians have had their own script from ancient days. For example, Russian scholar Yury Kruchkiny's opinion "Mongolians already have had their own language before teacher Cyril has invented the Bulgaria-Slav script in 963", that means Mongolian scripts much older than Russian's scripts. Also Chinese scholar Boushang considered that the Mongolian script belongs to 10th century.

To sum all of this, Mongolians had their own scripts before 13th century and from the reliable source that we have, Ghengis Khan established the Great Mongol Empire and proclaimed Mongolian script as a state script and therefore Mongol nations united in one script for their official documentation and archives. Meantime there were several times of attempts to replace the state script. For example, in 1267 by Khubilai King's decree Pagva Lama Lodoijaltsan's Durvuljin Script, in 1648 Zaya Bandid Namkhajamts' Tod script, in 1686 Khalkha aimag's Undur Gegeen Zanabazar's Soyombo scripts are invented. However, these scripts have not really speared all over the country and the records creation culture have remained until Cyrillic script has adopted in 1946. The public affairs have held by Latin in 1946 and from 1950, it transformed to Cyrillic. This event has influenced in traditional documentation, but some items have kept.

Scholar G. Norovsambuu mentioned that there are many remains such as "A fact is that Ghengis Khan proclaimed Mongolian script as a State Script: 6 line Mongolian script of great khans' stamp of 1206 and 1246, Ghengis Khan's rock script of 1225, Tulguu and Tugsuu's rock cave's script 1225 of Inner Mongolia, Ganisu province, Ugudei khan's decree script on rock 1240, Munkh Khan's statue script 1256 and 13-14th century's stamps and many documentations."⁶⁾

6) Historical development and modern time of Archives organization in Mongolia.

In section 203 of Mongolian Secret History: Ghengis khan decreed as Shikhikhutag as a state judge and should punish thief, un sharp the lie, kill the must be killed, punish the must be punished. In addition, divide all state's properties and record in blue book. Any issues discussed with me and records in white paper by blue script and it should not change in generation to generations. Since then, public affairs documentation and archive have started.

The Ghengis Khan's rock script⁷⁾ of 1225 is the main evidence that, Mongolians had literature language and ancient tradition for documentation. The next evidences are the 13–14th century's official letters and documents from Mongolian khan's to abroad. Example:

- 1246's Letter to Roman Pop Innocent from Mongolian great khan Guyug
- From Il Khan Argun to French crown Phillip in 1289 and letter to 4th Pop Nikolai
- 1302's Letter to Roman Pop 8th Bonifast from Il Khan Gazan
- 1305' Letter to French crown Phillip from Ulziit Khan etc.....

In official scripts of Ghengis's rock scripts:

- Honorable vocabulary has writing in upper line⁸⁾
- Scripts structure in paper /stone/ is well organized and line spacing are accurate.
- The common procedures has identified such as stamp has sealed on cover sheet of documents and on joint of sheets, on date⁹⁾

Ulaanbaatar, 2001, p.16.

7) First G.I. Spassky researcher found it near the Kharkhira River in 1818, and bring it in Petersburg. Now this script is in the Ermitaj Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia and the National History Museum of Mongolia preserving a copy of this script.

8) *ibid.*

The content and condition of script show that Mongolians were strong and retention of vocabularies shows there were specific procedures for documentation.

Mongolians considered many issues such as the communicating/conserved condition, general way, consequences, content, retention period for titling the documents. For example: “Shaviin Gozgor-”, “Khulsan Bichig-rolled letter” that tells conserved condition, “Nugalbar Bichig-Wrapped script” creation condition, “Gerees garsan temdegt bichig / gerees garsan bichig-symbolic script from Home/script from Home” to show content, “urgukhtses-offering menu” titled due to communicating condition.

On the other hand, account is a file gradually made which includes copied incoming document account, copied outgoing account.

However, I would not introduce all of this documentation but, only Tradition of Records Creation.

Official document is a communicational activity between organization and personals. As I mentioned about 13-14th century, documents is divided in many types such as offering, declaring, informing, ordering, dispatching and it is generally called folded script /manuscript. This name originated the action to transporting and archiving the documents it folded right to left smoothly. The length of paper was depends on the text but, paper size was about 24-26 cm high; fold size was 10-24 cm.

1. Document structure

Official document/manuscript's structure is consists of three main sector of header, texts, and approval.

9) *ibid.*

In header structure of documents: the name and covers of document included

In the first blank sheet of wrapped document: up in the middle location writes only “Offering Script”, “Declaring Script”, “dispatching script”, “ordering script” and sealed with stamps instead of titling the documents.

The receiving organization or personal seals in special paper and stick it to the front of the document to identifying of document officially delivered. This tradition has same principle with documentation work’s “delivery docket of document to organization”.

In cover seal is for write the document’s origin, content, date and recipient. In 19th century’s second decades started to use special engraved seals. The seal for cover sheet includes question for document’s title, date, address, signature tables and it had filled up carefully. In the end of the title section of received document writes “purpose of delivery”, “purpose of hand over”, “purpose of inform” and in original copy sealed by selection of “hand over source”, “informing source”, “delivery source” etc question.

2. Text structure

The script includes beginning content and the end. In the beginning of the text mention about the script writer like “the letter of Lkhamsuren and Bilguun who are liegemen of Tusheet khan province’s village account assistant Puntsagnamjil”.¹⁰⁾ Then mention recipient’s address and title like “informing to you who is missionary minister In Khuree for judgement”.¹¹⁾ To express the honor to the recipient, only the first part of the recipient’s name used to written on.

10) National Central Archive, 8th fold.

11) ibidem.

Writer or crowns used to have current phone book of all recipients that tells their address and titles to write accurate delivery to recipients.

The content of letter was very ponderous and detailed that mentioned purpose, reason of the letter creation, what action should be taken, issues, event location etc.

It is interesting that, Mongolians used to use their communicating organization, personal title, and uses relative vocabularies. To punctuate this:

1. From lower level to state ministry, representative minister, general, provincial administrative department the following vocabularies used for beginning. "To your consideration", "Purpose of informing", "Purpose of Offer", "Reason of Declaring" and in the end of text "As we found", "Begging you" etc and finishes the letter as "Offering for this reason", "Informed for this reason", "Offered"

2. In between same level of organizations or personals communicating starts respective to each side such as "the reason for your consideration", "the reason of suggestion" and end of text "for your appraise" and finishes the letter as "for your consideration", "have sent this for this reason"

3. In between same level of organization or personal in normal communicating the letter starts as "reason to send", "reason to sending" and finishes with "consider this", "sent", "sent due to this reason"

4. In the letter from higher level organization to lower organization but to higher level personal starts with "Reason to send the order", "Reason to transferring the order" and finishes with "Clarify", "Sent due to this reason", "transferred the order"

5. In letter from higher organization or personal to lower organization it starts with "reason of the order", "Examined", "Ordered" and finishes with

“Ordering due to this”

3. Approval structure

Date, stamp, signature are included. In the beginning of the document includes writer, title, from whom to who, therefore there were no signature in approval part. However, the recipient who receives the letter should sign in cover sheet for “meet with” section. In addition, sender signs off in the original copy of the letter for approval.

4. Other structure of documents

Date: the documentation prepared by organization had one wrap size of empty space for date of prepare and stamp for its approval. This locates in the middle space of last sheet of the document. In some document, the date has written not in empty space but in just end of the text. The date should write fully in the letter from lower level organization to higher-level organization as “head month’s 15th of the 6th year of Mongolian Independence”. If the sender has no seals and stamp the letter date should also written fully as above. In some letters there are date of unknown governments (has not mentioned which government).

Seals and stamps: Seals and stamps are the main tools for official documentation process. There are some similar but, not likely the same historical information in Mongolian Secret History and Yuan Shi state History related to Mongolian’s stamp and seal usage in governmental activities.

In Yuan state history book’s 124 sections tells “when Ghengis Khan conquered Naiman tripe, Tatatunga were captured with stamp in his pocket. Ghengis khan asked him: when every Tayan territory became

mine, why are you keeping this stamp and where were you going? It is my crown's order to keep it. Ghenghis khan considered him as honest and asked what this stamp is? It is for withdraw and income the wages and to use is for honor the intelligent. This answer makes Khan happy and made him his nearby advisor” from since then he declared the stamp for its uses and allocated him as stamp holder.

In 196th section of Mongolian Secret History: “there was one man have escaped from Tayan tribe. Khasar ordered to Bat to catch him alive and bring him to me. As he sees there was on stamp on him. Khasar told him, all of your soldiers followed me, where are you going with this? My humble body will follow the order until my death. I will bring this stamp to my former master. However, I was not lucky to be capture. Khasar: which tribe do you belong to? What is your title? Tatantunga my origin is Uyghur land, name is Tatatunga. My master handed over this stamp to me to approve incomes and outcomes of magics. Khasar: what would you gonna use this stamp for Tatatunga: choosing the good man and declare him to send to some job.”

Later in year 1206 that Temujin crowned as Ghengis Khan, educational minister, stamp minister Tatatunga showed white stone engraved stamp to participants and read the script “under the eternal sky Great Mongol State declaring, glorify this, afraid of it” and hand it over to Ghengis khan. This stamp has passed to 22 khans of Mongolia until 1370–1634 the era of small khans

The state stamp used by khans until the Ligden khan. From 17th century, Mongolians started to use stamp, seals, and signatures for different purposes.

By the independence declaration in 1911/12/29 of Mongolia, and Bogd

Khan Javzandamba became king of Mongolia, some changes had made in documentation. For example, they created the state stamp that says “the stamp of Bogd khan who controls his state and state religion” in Soyombo, Durvuljin, Khudam Mongol scripts. Mongolian script stamps for ministries and governmental departments to recording governmental tasks in Mongolian language. This stamp has supported by Great Mongol State’s political traditions.

Documentation classified as urgent and ordinary due to its retention period. The urgent document is not interruptible by anyone and has following indications:

Stick the fedder in envelope

Draw bird or bird with letter in cover sheet of document /fly, fly/

Draw Horse hoof /transfer it on urgent horse/

Draw red line across or incline

Mongolians focused on urgent letter’s marking from 13th century. Professor B. Rinchin’s research says: on Argun Khan’s letter to French crown Phillip tells “in the past urgent Mongol post which has bird and says ‘fly and fly’ tradition originated from 13th century’s ‘spread your wings’ In some letter envelopes’ corners there were horse hoofs has been described and written as ‘gallop’ is the meaning of the urgent letter”¹²⁾

5. Conclusion

Based on the records of 13–14th century, archival documents and origins in the late 17th century Mongolians followed the rules for their records creation as below:

12) B.Rinchen., Article “Reason of the Mongolian post and postal mark” (1950).

1. Line spacing options.
 2. Text position. Text had written on the top of paper 2–5 cm, on the bottom 1–3 cm. Also in one fold of folded script was on in average 5–7 lines.
 3. To write above the line. Generally following words such as “king”, “petition”, “decree”, “grant”, “Bogda Khan” and titles of famous people was wrote as a type–word above the line.
 4. To write parallel (alignment). People that are similar with their titles, positions and name of the countries had written parallel in documents and letters.
 5. To write from paragraph. To write from paragraph had forbidden. Only when “I am a sinful slave.... please forgive me” so forth wrote in the private and documents for apologize, then “I am a sinful slave” word was wrote from paragraph. In other occasion it used rarely.
 6. Beginning of line. Particle, suffix, conjunction were not wrote at the beginning of line.
 7. Stated word. Stated word used at the beginning and end of documents.
 8. Urgent letter. In the 13th century was settled the rule to classify the urgent letters and send its per post.
- Above rules were improved and continued traditions to the early 20th century.
- Social development is effects to science, technique technology, industry and service, the organization and peoples’ functions, lifestyles and documentation tasks. Governmental development is essentially to documentation.
- There were no such government in the history without secretary and

staff. Secretary is main responsibility is to manage documentation in each level, and carrying out and controlling the documentations. Mongolia has such charter since thousands of years and it has improved in 13th century and passed to present.