

## NOTICES OF BOOKS

Walther Heissig, *Helden-, Höllenfahrts- und Schelmengeschichten der Mongolen*, Manesse Verlag, 1962, 315 pp.

"That the descendants of Genghis Khan produced a literature is known only to a small circle of specialists." With these words Professor Walther Heissig begins his introduction to the little volume of translations under review, and it is an unhappy fact that his observation is perfectly correct. Compared with the popularity in Europe and America over the last century and more of Chinese and Japanese literature in translation, Mongol literature, which is indeed a less rich one, is more or less *terra incognita*, and readers whose only language is English have even less access to it than those able to read French and German. Geography has much to do with this. Mongolia, lacking a sea-coast, was never opened to western influences as other countries of Asia were. It has always been one of the most remote corners of Asia. Moreover, printing in Mongolia was traditionally reserved, almost without exception, for religious works, Buddhist sutras and prayers in particular, which by their nature have only a very limited appeal to the western reader. Poetry, stories and epics, with a few outstanding exceptions such as the seven chapters of the Geser Khan epic printed in Peking in 1716, circulated only in manuscript or by word of mouth. Some nineteenth century scholars did publish translations of what they heard or read. Heissig mentions Bergmann and Schmidt and might also have added the name of Jülg, but their books are too rare nowadays, in particular that of Bergmann published in Riga in 1804, to be of any practical importance for the ordinary reader. Even modern collections of Mongol folk-literature in translation, Poppe's *Mongolische Volksdichtung* or Mostaert's *Folklore Ordos*, are for one reason or the other not easy to acquire. Popularization is, in the reviewer's opinion, a duty of the scholar. By making his researches accessible and attractive to the public which after all supports him, he is only recognizing a simple moral obligation. Hence it is a great pleasure to welcome Heissig's little book, in which he offers to readers of German some 300 pages of Mongol literature, nearly all of which is here translated for the first time.

The choice of texts is, as the translator says, a subjective one, determined by what he has come across in his reading. Nevertheless, it does succeed in exemplifying the range and variety of Mongol writing. There are selections from the "wisdom-literature" associated with the name of Genghis Khan; two hitherto unknown cantos of the Geser Khan epic discovered by Heissig himself in Louvain; the story of Molon Toin, originating ultimately in India, which tells how the hero descended into hell to help his mother; a legend about how the Buddha was reborn as a wise magpie; two tales about the Münchhausen-like figure Dalan Qudalči; and a number of picaresque episodes from the cycle of tales attached to the wandering monk "Mad" Shagdar. The earlier pieces represent the pre-Buddhist tradition of Mongol literature, while the later ones illustrate the impression left upon Mongolia by lamaist Buddhism. They range from pious exemplification of the Buddhist virtues, as in the Molon Toin story, to implicit criticism of the clerical class in the tale of the magpie, and finally to the direct and often obscene attacks of Shagdar upon the misdeeds of the upper class, both lay and clerical, at the turn of the present century.

As far as can be judged by someone whose native language is not German, and who has not been able to compare all the original sources, these pieces have been skilfully and fluently translated. Mongol verse relies for much of its effect on the alliteration

of the initial syllables of succeeding lines, and on the parallelism which is musically enhanced by the possibilities of variation afforded by the alliterative scheme. Much use is made of formulas and clichés, so that altogether a translator has to pick his way carefully between the Scylla of a polished version which reads like modern prose and loses the flavour of the original, and the Charybdis of a literal version which might prove both quaint and indigestible. Heissig appears to have negotiated these straits successfully, though there are inevitably passages which one wishes had been rendered differently, while once or twice, at least in the Shagdar stories, it looks as if the text has actually been mistranslated. On page 283 Heissig translates *güng noyan üu yayiyus da: basa nigen-yi olqu-du amarqan*, as: "Der herzogliche Herr spielt hier keine Rolle, und ausserdem findet er schon eine, die ihm gefällt". But this ought rather to be: "It's all right for the prince, and anyway he can easily find another". The superfluous phrase "die ihm gefällt" can in fact be traced to a misreading of *amarqan* as *amaray* in Heissig's original article on Shagdar in *Studia Sino-Altica*, page 99. There are one or two errors also in the story on pages 294-6. "Zu dieser Zeit geleitete man den ehrwürdigen Panchen" should be "At this time the worthy Panchen was proceeding . . ." (Here *jalaran* has been misread as *jalan*.) "Wenn die Menge die Reihen durchbrach und die Ordnung sein liess" (*olan-i emki jirum-tai bayilyaqu geju*) should be translated: "to make the crowd keep in order." The verb *geju* has been mistaken also in the sentence *egün-i qosiyun čerig-üd sonusuyad jodoqu getele*, which does not mean "Wie die Bannersoldaten dies hörten, riefen sie: 'Schlagt ihn!'", but "The banner soldiers heard this and were on the point of beating him when . . ." Finally, the last sentence of the story has been misconstrued, blunting the point of the play on words, which Heissig has noted, in *chi-tien*, both the name of a legendary monk and also similar to the Chinese for "hen's egg". The Mongol text *Bančen qarin nama-yi takiyan öndege geju qočilaju bayina gejei* does not mean "Wenn mich der Panchen nochmals Hühnerrei nennt, macht er sich lustig" since on the one hand *qarin* means "contrariwise" not "nochmals" and on the other there is no conditional clause here, but: "On the contrary, the Panchen is making fun of me, calling me Hen's Egg."

However, one should not make too much of these slips, occurring as they do in the midst of so much enterprising and difficult translation. The Shagdar tales in particular are extraordinarily hard to understand. They are composed in a slangy colloquial, and rely frequently for their point on a local allusion, a pun, or on irony which is notoriously hard to detect in a foreign language. These stories, selected from a collection of over 100 published in China in 1959, and hence quite new to readers everywhere, will probably prove the most attractive extracts in the book.

The book is beautifully produced, richly illustrated with line drawings and coloured pictures culled from Mongol blockprints and manuscripts, and deserves a wide public beyond the academic world.

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Walther Heissig: *Beiträge zur Übersetzungsgeschichte des Mongolischen Buddhistischen Kanons*. Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Philologisch-historische Klasse Dritte Folge, Nr. 50. 59 pp., 20 plates. Göttingen, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht 1962.

The Russian Mongolist Vladimirtsov pointed out as early as 1927 the importance for the study of the history of the re-conversion of Mongolia to lamaism of the colophons attached to translations of scriptures. Professor Heissig has for some years past been working along the lines thus suggested, and has produced a series of important articles of which one may mention especially his *Zur geistigen Leistung der neubekehrten Mongolen des späten 16. und frühen 17. Jhdts.* (1954), *Zur technischen Durchführung der mongolischen Tandjurübersetzung* (1955) and *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte der mongolischen Kandjur-Redaktion der Ligdan Khan-Zeit* (1957). Various fortunate circumstances have combined to place at his disposal in the past few years a greatly increased amount of material: besides the books kept in European libraries which he has already exploited

he has been able to consult the big collection of Mongolica in the library of the International Academy of Indian Culture, New Delhi, while occasional relevant manuscripts have turned up elsewhere, for example in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, and in a small collection acquired in Tokyo in 1957 by F. Bischoff. On the basis of this mass of material Heissig has been able to produce three well-ordered and valuable contributions to the study of the history of the translation into Mongol of the Buddhist canon.

In his first essay on the alteration of colophons in the Kanjur of Ligdan Khan (1628-9) and its possible political background and implications, Heissig investigates further than in his 1957 article the reasons why the colophons of earlier translations of Buddhist texts were altered when these works were taken over into the complete translation undertaken by Ligdan Khan's editorial commission. He is able to quote from the 'dul-ba section of the Leningrad manuscript of the Kanjur five colophons which were suppressed in the 1718-20 printed version of the Kanjur which is itself certainly based upon the Ligdan Khan edition. These colophons give the names of nineteen translators, while, as Heissig says, the printed version of the same section preserves only six names. He considers that these colophons were suppressed not at the time of the K'ang-hsi printing of the Kanjur, but under the editorial commission of Ligdan Khan himself, and he finds the motivation for the erasure of the names in the fact that the most important of them is that of the Sharba Khutuktu. From other sources it is clear that Ligdan Khan fell out for some reason with the Sharba Khutuktu and banished him and rejected the Buddhist faith. Heissig concludes: "When the final version of the 'dul-ba section was put together, the Sharba Khutuktu must have been already in disgrace, and the editorial commission then suppressed the colophons with his name in order not to arouse the displeasure of Ligdan Khan." The sources for the history of this period are, as Heissig says, very scanty, and it is most gratifying that on the basis of careful and minute study of widely scattered material the author has been able to come to this interesting and very plausible conclusion. It is, indeed, unlikely that some early colophons would have been suppressed by the K'ang-hsi editors and others left, since personal and political differences would hardly have survived a whole century, and so a reason must be sought for the expurgation in the early seventeenth century. Moreover, at the very beginning of the printed Kanjur, thus in a part presumably translated first, the Sharba Khutuktu is mentioned with praise. Hence Heissig's conclusion is likely to be the correct one. Left still for enquiry is the problem why, if Ligdan Khan had as the legend states (see Heissig, *Familien- und Kirchengeschichtsschreibung der Mongolen I*, pp.152-3) banished the Khutuktu and rejected Buddhism, his editorial commission continued at all with the work of completing the Kanjur.

In his second essay Heissig discusses partial translations of the canon dating from the early seventeenth century and the translators responsible. He is able to name eight of the thirty-five members of the commission responsible for Ligdan Khan's Kanjur as active as translators at an earlier date in various places in Mongolia. Translations were being made in Tunet and Ordos in the first two decades of the century, and these include occasional texts from the Tanjur. Heissig touches on two main problems. That one Tanjur text was translated twice hints, he says, at possible preparatory work for a complete Tanjur translation into Mongol more than 100 years before the Tanjur was actually edited. Secondly he wonders how it was that Ligdan Khan was able to persuade so many scholars to leave other patrons and to work on his Kanjur edition. Did they come voluntarily, attracted by the grandiose project, were they compelled to come, or were translations they had already made simply taken over and supplied with new or altered colophons?

Heissig's third essay concerns the collection and censorship of old Mongol texts under the emperor Ch'ien-lung. That such a collection was made has long been known and in 1946 Heissig suggested that the action was undertaken in connection with the planned Tanjur translation. His examination of forty-nine manuscripts from Peking, each bearing a slip of paper with an inscription in Manchu, confirms that in 1743 religious texts were assembled for examination by the ICan-skya Khutuktu. Of these forty-nine, twenty-one are canonical, but only two are from the Tanjur. Heissig sees as one result of the collection the simultaneous editions of texts in four languages which

occurred during the later years of the reign, but for modern research its importance, he says, lies in the fact that it helped to preserve so many old texts dating from the early seventeenth century.

Heissig works in these essays with his customary attention to detail combined with a constructive imagination. Together they form a valuable contribution to a period of history not yet fully elucidated. Indexes of place-names, personal names and the titles of works greatly increase the usefulness of the book which is well illustrated by twenty facsimile photographs. Of these, the first three, taken from the Leningrad Kanjur manuscript, appear unfortunately to have suffered during the various photographic processes and are not fully legible. The other plates are perfect.

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Douglas H. Mendel, Jr., *The Japanese People and Foreign Policy, a Study of Public Opinion in Post-treaty Japan*. University of California Press, 1961, XV, 269 pp., 3 maps, index.

This is not a study of the relationship between Japanese public opinion and foreign policy, nor of the processes by which public opinion is formed, although these difficult problems are in need of study. It is rather an analysis of public attitudes towards major issues of foreign policy (self defence, U.S. bases, Okinawa, the Kuriles, atomic weapons and testing, Korea, and the "two Chinas"), and as such is a useful book for those interested in Japanese politics and foreign relations. It is based primarily on a vast number of public opinion surveys, some of which, in 1953 and 1957, were formulated and directed by the author. They are reported and briefly analysed, with sufficient background to give them meaning, and Japan's international position is briefly and well described in an introductory chapter.

In the past, Japanese governments have been known to show a certain disdain for public opinion. Since about 1955, however, the conservative government has felt its influence increasingly, and on several occasions has found it necessary to modify its public policy. It has also taken a few small steps toward explaining and defending its policies. As the present study shows, the government's basic policy of alignment ("alliance" seems too positive a term) with America is fairly strongly based on the general preference, even among many Socialist voters, for reliance on the "free world" rather than on neutralism or Communism. But on specific policy problems, the government has often been caught between this commitment to the "free world" and the public's rather wishful desire for more autonomy in foreign policy. Most Japanese want to be friends with everyone, and many would like to see the government somehow steering a course of maximum advantage to Japan somewhere between East and West.

This study documents and clarifies two generally known facts: conservative and socialist voters are not nearly so far apart as are the pronouncements of their parties, and younger and growing elements of the population are associated with the left wing Socialist Party. Conservative voters have disagreed most with their party on policies regarding American bases in Japan and Okinawa and on recognition of Communist China. These dissenters tend toward the Socialist position, and similarly, many Socialist voters approach the conservative position on certain issues. This, and the general feelings of fear and aversion to the recent extremism of both right and left, seem already to have brought a greater degree of caution and moderation to both parties. Students, urban dwellers and the better educated, all on the increase numerically, are among the most critical of the American connection and embrace in large numbers the unarmed neutralism and pro-Communist position of the Socialist Party. The significance of this for the future is limited, however, by the fact that young people, once secure in jobs and safely married, very commonly become quite conservative and respectable.

Mr. Mendel's work is careful and generally accurate, although I did notice one minor slip (the teachers' union is not made up of university teachers). In his writing, he often employs a kind of verbal shorthand which even in context sometimes lacks

precision: "candidate orientation" (voting for candidates rather than for parties), "voter and leader views" (views held by voters and leaders), "veteran leaders" (leaders of veterans' groups), "constitutional rearmament" (presumably rearmament by constitutional revision rather than by interpretation), "military expansion" (expansion of the military establishment). In general, however, the writing is clear enough, and there are some interesting sidelights. For example, although surveys showed Socialist voters as the most enthusiastic for unlimited political expression, they were almost unanimous in opposing political activity by veterans. This book will be of value to those interested in the contemporary scene in Japan. It should also serve as a corrective for those who either overstress the strength of the Communist influence on Japanese opinion or, conversely, the stability of the conservative majority (still roughly two-thirds) in the lower house of the Diet.

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