



Monuments préclassiques I: XIIIe et XIVe siècles by Louis Ligeti; Monuments en écriture 'Phags-Pa: Pièces de chancellerie en transcription chinoise by Louis Ligeti; Monuments préclassiques I: XIIIe et XIVe siècles. Deuxième partie by Louis Ligeti

Review by: Gerard Clauson

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, No. 2 (1973), pp. 172-174

Published by: Cambridge University Press

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25203470>

Accessed: 26/08/2012 08:10

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Cambridge University Press and Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

<http://www.jstor.org>

such as "c.i.a.p.a.l." for "common in all periods and languages", which are not very attractive typographically but the justification for which one sees after trying to think of an alternative.

The price is high, but not exorbitant for a book of such complexity, with so small a potential market. One trusts that most scholars who cannot afford to buy a copy will be asked to review it.

For some forty years now the Türk Dil Kurumu has been brooding over an etymological dictionary of the Turkish language of all places and periods. Now that Sir Gerard has done the basic work, it is to be hoped that the T.D.K. will get on with the easier part of the enterprise.

G. L. LEWIS.

MONUMENTS PRÉCLASSIQUES I: XIII^e ET XIV^e SIÈCLES.

By LOUIS LIGETI. (*Monumenta Linguæ Mongolicae Collecta*, II.) pp. 294. Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1972. \$5.80.

MONUMENTS EN ÉCRITURE 'PHAGS-PA: PIÈCES DE CHANCELLERIE EN TRANSCRIPTION CHINOISE. By LOUIS LIGETI. (*Monumenta Linguæ Mongolicae Collecta*, III.) pp. 170. Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1972. \$3.90.

MONUMENTS PRÉCLASSIQUES I: XIII^e ET XIV^e SIÈCLES. DEUXIÈME PARTIE. By LOUIS LIGETI. (*Indices Verborum Linguae Mongolicae Monumentis Traditorum*, II.) pp. 382. Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1972. \$7.80.

In 1964 and the following years our Honorary Fellow Professor Louis Ligeti published a number of small books of early Mongolian texts in a series called *Mongol Nyelvemléktár*. He has now begun to publish the same and some additional texts in a very clear facsimile typescript, with the introductions and comments in French instead of Hungarian, in a series entitled *Monumenta Linguæ Mongolicae Collecta*. The first volume, not reviewed here, contains the text of the *Secret history*. The second is a revised edition of the first volume in the old series and contains the surviving texts of the 13th and 14th centuries written in the first Mongolian official alphabet. It has 294 pages and contains a good deal of additional matter not included in the old edition of 176 pages. The third volume contains all the texts at present known written in the 'Phags-pa (in future 'P.) alphabet and also transcriptions of the Mongolian texts written phonetically in Chinese characters which form Part II of the Mongolian-

Chinese *Hua-J i-yü* of A.D. 1389, but not the vocabulary in Part I which falls outside the scope of this series. It includes as text IV an important inscription of Qubilai, first published after the original volume had appeared. There are minor rearrangements of the other texts, and the texts of four seals included in the earlier volume have been excluded, the first two because they are Chinese, the second two because they are seals of a Dalai Lama in Tibetan, and probably in Tibetan seal characters and not 'P.

Parallel to the *Monumenta* series a new series entitled *Indices Verborum Linguae Mongolicae Monumentis Traditorum* is being published. The first volume in two parts, only the second reviewed here, contains lists, without translations, of all the words in each text in volume II of the *Monumenta*.

No one is better qualified than Professor Ligeti to edit a series of texts in the oldest known phase of Mongolian, to which he had devoted particular attention, and his friends and colleagues are under a great debt of gratitude to him for collecting in these volumes texts which have hitherto been scattered over a wide range of publications in Europe, Asia, and North America, some of which are not easily accessible to all scholars, and editing them with the most meticulous care. If I venture to criticize them on some rather unimportant points this must not be taken as undervaluing their outstanding merits.

It seems to me that in volume II Professor Ligeti has given himself more trouble than the circumstances require or even justify by employing an extremely elaborate system of transcription. The texts published in this volume are all written in the first Mongolian official alphabet, which was an adaptation of the Uyghur alphabet as it was used at the beginning of the 13th century. By that time that alphabet had become, with the possible exception of the Pehlevi script, the most ambiguous and unsatisfactory alphabet that has ever been used. Several letters represented more than one sound and some letters had become indistinguishable from others unless they were marked by one or two dots, which were more often than not omitted. In particular:

(1) *n*, unless one dot was placed over it, was indistinguishable from *a/e* and in the final position both these letters were indistinguishable from *z* (a sound unknown in Mongolian).

(2) *s* and *š* were indistinguishable unless two dots were placed under the *š*.

(3) One letter represented both *y* and *q*, and, in Arabic loanwords, '*ayn* and the intervocalic hiatus

(medial *hamza*), and was indistinguishable from *an/na/en/ne* unless a dot was placed over the *n*. Two dots could be placed over this letter to indicate that it represented *q* but as often as not by the 13th century they were used to indicate that it represented either *q*, *γ*, or the other (Arabic) sounds and not *an*, etc.

(4) Two letters had originally represented the spirant *ð* and the plosive *t* respectively, but by the 13th century both were used to represent indiscriminately *d*, *t*, and, where it survived, *ð*, a sound unknown in Mongolian. Professor Ligeti has gone to enormous trouble to indicate the values of these two letters in various positions, but there is no evidence that the Mongolian scribes were any less indiscriminate than the Uyğur scribes in their use.

What it amounts to, therefore, is that any transcription of a 13th or 14th century Mongolian text must be based on certain assumptions. If a particular word is still pronounced in the same way as that indicated by the 'P. and early Chinese transcriptions the safest assumption is that it was pronounced in the same way in the intervening period. For example, "pure" was spelt *ari'un* in 'P. and the recognized spelling in the Mongolian People's Republic is *ariun*; a spelling *ariyun* is justified for the intermediate period only if the *γ* is regarded as silent and not a clearly pronounced velar fricative. If the ancient (as defined above) and modern pronunciations are markedly different, then the pronunciation in the intervening period is uncertain unless light is thrown upon it by such independent authorities as the Mongolian vocabularies in Arabic script.

Turning now to volume III in the series I have one or two points to make. The first relates to the two 'P. letters numbered 4 and 5 in the list on p. 13. No. 4 occurs only in Mongolian texts, including Turkish and Persian loanwords in those texts, No. 5 only in Chinese texts and Chinese loanwords in Mongolian texts. It is one of the oddities of the Mongolian spoken in China in the 13th and 14th centuries that the same 'P. letter, No. 4, is used to represent what were two quite different sounds in Classical Mongolian, the voiced velar fricative *γ* in words like *yurban* "three" and the unvoiced velar plosive *q* in words like *qoyer* "two". Similarly in the Chinese transcriptions of the *Secret history* and the texts in Part II of this volume the same range of Chinese characters is used to represent both sounds. The conclusion must be that in this dialect the two sounds had converged into one. The question is what this common sound was. Professor Ligeti,

following tradition, represents it by *q*, but it seems to me that it must have been *γ*, for two reasons. The first is that there are in the 'P. texts loanwords borrowed from Turkish *čoyluy* "brilliant", *yarly* "edict, command", *yaryu* "judgement", and *bayši* (originally Chinese) "religious teacher", and from Persian *bāy* "garden". The obvious Mongolian equivalents are *čoytu*, *jarly*, *jaryu*, *bayši*, and *bay*; *q* would be quite out of place here. The second is that the equivalent with back vowels of the verbal suffix which is *-tügei* with front vowels must have been *-tuyai*, not *-tugai*. If this is right, then No. 5, representing a Chinese sound, could not have been *γ*; the obvious alternative is the unvoiced velar fricative *χ*; *xoy* and *xuai* are plausible transcriptions of the words spelt *huang* and *huai* in the Wade system.

The difference between No. 42 on page 14, transcribed *o*, and No. 43, the same letter with an additional stroke, transcribed *ö*, is purely orthographic. 'P. texts are written in syllables, either open (*bo*, *do*, etc.) or closed (*bol*, *bos*, *dor*, etc.). All the letters of a closed syllable must be joined together and the purpose of the additional stroke in No. 43 is to join the final consonant to the rest of the syllable. If, for example, *bol* was written with No. 42 for the *o*, there would be no junction and it would be read *bo la*. This does not mean that the pronunciation of *o* was the same in open and closed syllables, very likely it was not, but merely that it was not the function of the additional stroke to indicate such a difference.

Text III is some very disjointed 'P. words engraved at the end of a long Chinese edict on stone, see the facsimile, Plate V, in Poppe, 1957 (the full title is in the bibliography on p. 127). The simplest explanation of it is that the Chinese edict of A.D. 1283 was promulgated to take the place of an earlier Mongolian edict, probably, like text V, on paper, which had been partially destroyed, and that the letters on the surviving fragments had been copied at the end of the Chinese edict to give it greater authority. The third line of the text consists of three fragments of a dating formula copied in the wrong order (day, month, year instead of year, month, day). The word before *jil* "year" is damaged, only the initial *b-* is clear. Professor Ligeti tentatively reads it *buc*; to me it looks more like *bars*, giving a date in a leopard (or tiger) year. The only possible such year is 1278, which allows for a plausible gap of five years between the original edict and its replacement.

The word lists in the *Indices Verborum* series

will provide invaluable material for the etymological dictionary of Mongolian which still awaits a compiler. They give complete lists of all the words in each text and quote with a line reference all the contexts in which each word occurs. There must be very few languages, if any, for which such elaborate words lists have been compiled.

GERARD CLAUSON.

DIE GESCHICHTE DER OGUZEN DES RASID AD-DIN.
[By] KARL JAHN. (Forschungen zur Islamischen Philologie und Kulturgeschichte, IV.) (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Klasse, Denkschriften, Bd. 100.) pp. 78. Wien, Hermann Böhlau Nachf., 1969.

DIE CHINAGESCHICHTE DES RASID AD-DIN. [Translated by] KARL JAHN unter sinologischem Beistand von HERBERT FRANKE. (Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Geschichte Mittelasiens herausg. von Robert Göbl, I.) (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Klasse, Denkschriften, Bd. 105.) pp. 75. Wien, Hermann Böhlau Nachf., 1971.

The significance of the second volume (Browne's Series II) of the *Jāmi' al-Tawārikh* lies "in the fact of its being the first attempt to record the history of all the great nations of the continent of Eurasia".¹ It is thanks mainly to the devoted endeavours of Professor Jahn that this part of Rashid al-Din's encyclopædic work is now available to specialist and non-specialist alike. His edition and translation of the *History of the Franks* appeared as long ago as 1951; in 1965 he published facsimiles of the Persian and Arabic text of the *History of India*; and there have now followed, in quick succession, the *History of Oghuz and the Turks* (1969) and the *History of China* (1971). He is at present preparing a translation of the only remaining section, the *History of the Jews*.

Of all these sections the *History of Oghuz and the Turks* presents the greatest interest. It is the most elaborate recension of the *Oghuz-Nāma* or "Oghuz Saga", in which the mythical adventures of the eponymous ancestor of the Oghuz Turks are intermingled with a garbled account of the Saljuq conquests in Western Asia. Oghuz is shown, as a new-born babe, refusing his mother's milk until she confessed Islam, i.e. the monotheism of Abraham,

and, as he grows up, becoming involved in hostilities with his heathen relatives. Here perhaps is a reflection of the historical or semi-historical Saljuq, as shadowy a figure as the Salian Frank Merovic, from whom the Merovingians traced their descent. Of the Toquz-Oghuz, who fought against the T'u-chüeh in the Khangai mountains, we find here no mention, nor, for that matter, of the T'u-chüeh themselves, the first of the Turks to adopt the name by which they are still known. Like Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*, the *Oghuz-Nāma* is rather an historical romance than a chronicle. It is significant that both Rashid al-Din's version and the fragment edited by Bang and Rahmati were compiled during the period of Mongol domination, and Professor Doerfer² has made the plausible suggestion that the saga, in the form in which it has come down to us, is to be regarded as a propaganda work designed to raise Turkish national feeling. The Yalghuz Aghach ("Lone Tree") near Bukhara, where Oghuz rests on his return from his conquests in the West, is, as Jahn tells us (p. 43, n. 1), also mentioned by Nizām al-Dīn Shāmī. One wonders whether it might not be identical with the "Arbre Sol" or "Arbre Sec" of Marco Polo. The place which Jahn (p. 48) reads as *Qūm t.ngizi*, one of the winter encampments of the Üch Oq, is perhaps Qum Sengir (Qum Sengiri?), the region on the Urungu in Western Mongolia where the Great Khan Güyük died.

The *History of China*, as Professor Herbert Franke has demonstrated,³ is derived from a Buddhist chronicle, now lost, on which the history of Nien-Ch'ang in the Chinese Tripitaka is based. The Sinological annotation is provided by Professor Franke, and Chinese names, when they have been satisfactorily identified, are spelt in the text of the translation in accordance with the Wade-Giles system, the spellings in the Persian original being indicated in the footnotes. The *History* itself is, as Franke has observed,⁴ chiefly of interest as showing "what an educated Persian living about 1300 A.D. knew of China and her past". This applies in particular to Rashid's introduction, in which, *inter alia*, he describes, for the first time in the West, the process of block-printing and explains the Chinese system of writing, which he regards as superior to

² "Der Name der Mongolen bei Rašid ad-Din", in *Rashid al-Din Commemoration Volume (1318-1968)*, ed. by J. A. Boyle and K. Jahn, Wiesbaden, 1970, 68-77 (72).

³ "Some sinological remarks on Rašid ad-Din's History of China", *Oriens*, IV, 1951, 21-26 (22-23).

⁴ Op. cit., p. 21.

¹ Karl Jahn, *Rashid al-Din's History of India*, The Hague, 1965, ix-x.