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REVIEW ON

Histoire secrète des Mongols
de Paul Pelliot
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severe critic of Bhartrhari. To him Bhartrhari is the poet of a useless class, the lettered but frustrated office-seeker. His poetry is, par excellence, literature of escape (Q 59, E 81). His love "shows nothing but unsatisfied desire," his renunciation is "a hankering to be realized in the vague future, with growing disgust" (E 80-81, surely K. 301 is excepted from this judgment).

This criticism I find stimulating even when I disagree, for too little attention has been given to the social origins of Indian literature. Personally I feel that the status concept is more useful than that of class in examining such origins. To me Bhartrhari represents that part of the Brahmin status group that was tempted away from the proper and useful social function of the group. The beauty and the sorrow of his poetry are the products of temptation and disappointment.

But if either of these interpretations explains the mood of the poems it does not explain the expression. Beethoven too was a hanger-on at rich men's houses and a singularly frustrated one. The poetry of Bhartrhari remains beautiful and sometimes truly great. Kosambi, even with his strong social conscience, is well aware of this. And we may be thankful that he is, for it has led him to do more for our enjoyment of Bhartrhari than has been done these many centuries.

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Pelliot spent many years working on this book and its publication was impatiently awaited by all Mongolists. Pelliot's premature death prevented him from completing this brilliantly planned work; all that was found in his papers was the reconstruction of the text and the translation of the first 185 paragraphs of the total 288 paragraphs. No commentary and no notes were found. Thus it is impossible to understand what conceptions guided Pelliot when choosing his system of transcription. In certain respects, those missing parts of his work would be of even greater importance than what has been published, because there are already several other reconstructions and translations of the Secret History.

Pelliot's transcription coincides, in general, with that used for the Written Mongolian: ē = English ch; j = Eng. j; š = Eng. sh; q = velar postlingual consonant; ā and ą = German œ and ū (or French eu and u). There is only one deviation from the usual transcription: a instead of e. Pelliot's preference for a cannot be justified from the point of view of Mongolian phonology, because Mongolian e is a closed e and, besides, there is in the Colloquial Mongolian the vowel ā in *a in certain positions, e.g., Kalmyk bāri “keep,” tārān “tariyan “field,” and so on. The hPags-pa script, on the other hand, has two characters for c-sounds: one for e and another for a closed, narrow e, e.g., ebečin "disease," ēde “these,” ejen “master,” èlein “messengers,” ēse "not," ēnyke “peace," dēgni “heaven," tērī-un “first,” etc. Therefore, it is beyond doubt that in the language of the Secret History, which coincides, in general, with that of the hPags-pa script, there was ē and not ā in the following words: ebečin "disease," ēde "these," ejen "master," èlein “messengers,” ēnke "peace," ēse "not," tengeri or tengri “heaven,” etc.

Pelliot also uses two characters for i: one for the front vowel i and another for the back vowel i of the Turkic type. This is not an innovation, because B. Ya. Vladimirov already used i only in front-vocalic words and transcribed the same vowel with ṭ in back-vocalic words (Sanskritnaya grammatika, Leningrad, 1929). In this connection we must point out that at the time when the Secret History was written the back vowel *i had already merged with *i in almost all cases. This process began in the Proto-Mongolian and its consequence was the palatalization of consonants and the
development of *γ > ᵐ, *τ > ᵐ, *d > ʒ, *s > š: ayil < *ayil < *ayil “nomad house,” ṭilayun < *tilayun < *tilayun “stone,” ajirya < *adirya < *adirya “stallion,” siruva < *siruva < *siruva “earth.” There was no i in Common Mongolian, except for the syllables qi and yi, which were preserved longer than all the others. Thus in manuscripts of the fourteenth century we still find such forms as qiiinča “sin” and so on. The Moghul language in Afghanistan, too, preserved qi and yi, in which the vowel i is, in Ramstedt’s opinion, a back vowel (Mogholica, pp. 50-51). The group qi occurs several times in the language of the ḫPags-pa script, e.g., joqiyqay “to establish,” saqiqc’in “those who protect, protectors,” but sometimes k’i is substituted for this group: tak’iya “hen.” The ḫPags-pa script does not have any special letter for i and the vowels in qi and k’i are rendered by the same letter. But the presence of the consonants k and g in the syllables ki and gi in the language of the Secret History is evidence that i could not be a back vowel: otherwise we should expect qi and not ki.

Therefore, Pelliot’s transcription of such words as avugjitu (§13), yadanggi (§14), klabar-a (§22), kilkasun-bar (§55), algineč (§37), kiyan (§50), kirtad-un (§53), taki (§55), tavan (§85), and so on, in which the velar q (in Haenisch’s transcription k) developed into k, is ample proof that *i had already merged with *i: otherwise q would not have become k. Thus if even the groups qi and yi, which, as remarked above, were preserved longer than all other groups with i, had already become ki and gi, this is proof that there was no i at all in the language of the Secret History.

Pelliot also renders the i-element in diphthongs with i : hoi (§12), asuqai (§24), akui-dur (§25), and so on. Such diphthongs never existed in Mongolian and they are impossible from the phonophysiological point of view. Even in the Turkic languages, where there is a sharp distinction between i and î, there are only i-diphthongs, e.g., ai or ay “moon.”

The Chinese transcription, with few exceptions, does not distinguish between o and ô, u and ü, such forms as oka (§19), köölü (§56), ügülü (§53), hinür (§55), and so on, are forms reconstructed with regard to the Mongolian dialects. Therefore, it is difficult to decide what o and u mean in cases where the word concerned is unknown in Colloquial Mongolian. Pelliot admits in all such cases the possibility that o may be o as well as ô and that u may be both u and ü, e.g., tüünür (§50 and another form tun-a), büyür (§53 and buyür), and so on. But there is often the danger that back-vocalic words may be transformed into front-vocalic ones and vice-versa, and, indeed, we find in the romanization of the text numerous forms which need correction: jocíi (or joćiî §51), the name of Chingis Khan’s son, which is now jocíi and never jocíî and means “guest”; the name of the lake is buyür or buyir and not büyür (§53); the word möyilsün “bird-cherry tree” (§74) is only möyilsun (cf. Buriat moštorn, Khalkha mošt-mošt “id.”); the name of the sülüs tribe (§82) can be only sulus because in §120 we find the ablative form sulus-aça.

The verbal forms bui and buyu seem to have nothing in common with the defective verb bui “to be” and must not be transcribed as büi and buyü (§85, 20), because the traditional Mongolian reading is bui (and even boi) and buyü, and in the Aga-Buriat dialect bui developed into bi, i.e., with a back ɨ : cf. xaranqay < *qaranqay “darkness.”

The Secret History is, from the point of view of its language, a difficult text and contains many passages which are difficult to understand and translate adequately. We do not know whether Pelliot made his translation directly from the Mongolian text or from the Chinese interlinear translation and to what degree he took the latter into consideration. We do not know why Pelliot sometimes rejects the Chinese interpretation of words and expressions and sometimes fully agrees with it. Pelliot’s translation is in general precise and excellent, but there are also passages which need correction. It is impossible to subject his translation to a thorough revision in this brief review, and, therefore, we confine ourselves to a few examples.
**§92:** tārā aldaqān gūʿun yākā dawu-bar bariya gūʿun aldaba kāʿin qaylaiqū-tur " comme cet homme qui l'avait laissé échapper criait à grande voix: Saisissons-le; j'ai laissé l'homme échapper..." The correct translation must be: "when that man who let him escape shouted with a loud voice: 'I let the prisoner escape,'..." The word bariya is not a voluntative of bariy "to seize" but a noun: cf. Kalmuck (RAMSTEIN) bārāʾ "*bariya* Arrest, Haftung, Pfand," Ordos (MSTAERT) barā " fers qu'on met à un prisonnier," barātā " portant des fers (prisonnier)." In this sentence bariya is not a verb but a syntactical attribute to gūʿun "man." In HÄNISCH'S dictionary there is no such word, but HÄNISCH'S translation (Die geheime Geschichte der Mongolen, Leipzig, 1948, p. 16) is correct: "Der Gefangene ist entkommen" (better: "I let the prisoner escape").

**§96:** bōkōrā-yin bōksā-tūr čāk ārī-yin čāājī-tūr atuqai ["Cette pensée] demeurera à la pointe de mes reins, au diafragme de ma poitrine." HÄNISCH translated this in the following manner: "Ich will dir anhängen wie der Hintere an der Lenden und die Brust am Halse" (p. 21) Both translations are inadequate. This is an interesting passage, as it shows that the Chinese transcribers did not understand the Mongolian text, which seems to have been written in the Uighur script. It is known that the Uighur script sometimes renders different sounds with the same letters, e.g., k and g. If we substitute g for k in bōkōrā and čākārī and take into account the fact that g becomes ' in the language of the Secret History, this passage must read as follows: bōkōrā-yin bōksā-tūr čāk ārī-yin čāājī-tūr atuqai. This is a well-known Mongolian proverb: cf. Khalkha būr būsanda tār ātādāna "the kidneys are in the back, the sacred [thought is] in the chest." In the Secret History this appears in another recension: "that of the kidneys must be in the back, that of the holiness in the chest."

**§111:** qatar mausā Čīlgār bi, qatan Ījin-tūr qalqu bolun qamanq Mārkit-tā huntawu (?) qaraću mausā Čīlgār, qara ārīvīn-dūr ārī-yin ārīvīn bolba... qumar maus Čīlgār bi qutuqtai suta Ījin-i quriyajtu irāq bolun, qotola Mārkit-tā huntawu (?) bolba. Translation: mauvais Čīlgār avide (?) que je suis! Étant sur la dame Ījin, j'ai été un fléau pour tous les Mārkit. Mauvais et vil Čīlgār, je suis arrivé au rang de mes << têtes noires >> ... mauvais Čīlgār raqase (?) que je suis. En venant et recueillant l'ūjin sainte et auguste, j'ai été un fléau pour l'ensemble des Mārkit. Mauvais Čīlgār pourri, je suis arrivé au rang de mes têtes desséchées." This passage must be translated in another manner. First of all, we must again reconstruct the Mongolian text according to the rules of the Uighur spelling and remember that t/d and q/y are not distinguished (especially in ancient texts). We reconstruct this passage as follows:

qadar mayai Čīlgār bi qutan Ījin-dūr qalqu bolun qamunq merkid-te untayu qaraću mayu Čīlgār qara terigūn-dūr-iqen kürtekī bolba.

qunar mayu Čīlgār bi quturqai suta Ījin-i quriyajtu irqī bolun qotola merkid-te untayu bolba.

qokir mayu Čīlgār qokimai terigūn-iqen kürtekī bolba bi.

The word qatar must be read qadar "outside, appearance," qalqu means "to offend," huntawu=untayu (~ Mo. untayu, Khalkha un'tu) "anger," the expression terigūn-dūr-iqen kürtekī is well known and means "to pay with his head" (or "to lose his head"), qunar "cloth" (a well-known word), quriya- "collect, to take, to confiscate," qokir "miserable," qokimai terigūn "skull." The only possible translation is: "I, Chilger, of poor appearance, I caused anger in all the Mārkit, when offending the queen Ījin. The plebeian, bad Chilger paid with his black head. ... I, Chilger poorly clothed, I caused anger in all the Mērkits, when coming to take the holy and august Ījin. The miserable, bad Chilger, I paid with my skull." HÄNISCH'S translation of this passage (p. 28), though not very precise, is better than that of PELLiot.
There are several passages misunderstood by the Chinese transcribers and, therefore, also by the translator. We chose these passages purposely, because mistakes in the Chinese transcription prove that the original was written with Uighur letters, which can be easily confused. For instance, one who did not understand the text could easily incorrectly transcribe the words in question. The original was transcribed according to the phonetic system of the hPags-pa script and it is not impossible that the original text was first rewritten with the hPags-pa letters and contained mistakes which were automatically reproduced in the Chinese transcription. All these questions will find a satisfactory solution in the future, but it is beyond doubt that the transcribers sometimes did not understand the text.

PELLIOT's work is a great achievement, but it is, together with all works of his predecessors on the Secret History, only the beginning of large-scale research. In this connection, we may express our deep sorrow that PELLiOT himself was not destined to continue his research on the Secret History.

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It is a pleasure to see that in a period when interest in humanities is losing ground, the Literary Association of the Osaka City University has begun to publish a new quarterly devoted to this field. The articles cover general interest in humanities as well as some specific items dealing with China and Japan. I should like to mention those which are within the scope of our journal. In the first number, TANIYAMA Shigeru 谷山茂 publishes an important article on the concept of "purity" in Japanese poetry, "Seifubi to sono tenkai" 清風美とその展開. He has discussed the origin of the terms kiyo 清 pure and saya; the latter has its origin in the onomatopoeia sayasaya, the noise of the running water in a brook or the noise of a gentle wind, and has the connotation of purity and transparency. In the second and third paragraphs, TANIYAMA has examined these two terms and their usage in the Man'yoshū 驚集 and in ancient Japanese prosody. In the fourth paragraph he has dealt with these concepts in the Kokinshū 古今集. In the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth paragraphs he has shown how these concepts of purity and transparency were treated by Mibu no Tadamine 千本忠岑, one of the well-known 36 poets, by FUJIIWARA Kintō 藤原久承 (966-1041) and by FUJIIWARA Toshinari 俊成 (1114-1204). In the last paragraph TANIYAMA has cited the importance of these poetic terms during the Kamakura period (1185-1333). In the same number, HAMADA Atsushi 濱田敬 publishes the first part of an article on obstructed sounds and those represented by a final "Sokuon to hatsuon" 嘳音と擦音.

In the second number the following articles are printed: the second and last part of HAMADA's composition, a very interesting work by YAMANE Tokutarō 山根徳郎 on the city-planning of Ta-tu, capital of the Yüan dynasty, "Gen daito no heinen haichi" 元大都の平面配慮. KANDA Kiichirō 神田喜一郎 has contributed an article on Nomura Kōen, author of a Chinese poem of the ts'ü 詩 genre, "Wasuraretaru tenshi sakka Nomura Kōen ni tsuite" 忘れられた填詞作家野村喜園について and an informative article by MAEDA Masato 前田正人 on the publications of 1949 dealing with Japanese language studies. He mentions the publication of the new quarterly Kikan kokugo gaku 季刊 国語学 in 1948 in which appeared many important articles on the Japanese language. MAEDA Masato especially mentions several works of TOKIYAMA Motoki 池谷誠記 dealing with the history of the Japanese language. He also mentions articles published in the monthly journal Kokugo to kokubungaku 国語と國文學. MAEDA brings to the attention of the reader the interesting article by IKEGAMI Tei'zō 泷田禎造 in Kokugo kokubun 國語國文, No. 1, on the pronunciation in Japanese of the h sound which disappeared in an intervocalic position toward the end of the eleventh century, but not in compounds like haka "mother" or asahi "morning sun." He also mentions the newly published book of