

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Türkische und Mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen by Gerhard Doerfer
Review by: Gerard Clauson
Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, No. 1/2 (Apr., 1965), pp. 62-63
Published by: [Cambridge University Press](#)
Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25202816>
Accessed: 24/08/2012 14:38

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>

Japanese names suffer a good deal: Tokugawa appears as "Takugawa" several times and there are mistakes in the names of both the envoys who negotiated with Perry (p. 134, n. 69). It is possible that these are printer's errors, but they are too numerous to be overlooked. Finally, two suggestions: "Matsania" (p. 154, top) is probably Matsumae; and "Fatsisio" (pp.200-1) is probably Hachijō.

W. G. BEASLEY.

CONFUCIAN CHINA AND ITS MODERN FATE. By JOSEPH R. LEVENSON. Volume I: The Problem of Intellectual Continuity. pp. 223. Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., London. 1958. 28s. Volume II: The Problem of Monarchical Decay. pp. 178. (Same publisher.) 1964. 25s.

It may seem late in the day to review the first volume of *Confucian China and its Modern Fate*; it was published in 1958, but chapters from it appeared more than ten years ago, and its formulations are by now part of the vocabulary of sinologists. Equally it may seem too early to review Volume II, as the author promises a third volume which will not only add to but transform the other two: each volume is to shed light from a different angle on the same subject, rather like *The Alexandria Quartet*. So this will be a stop-gap report.

Volume I deals with the "intellectual" side of the decline of Confucianism, which entails an account of the shifts to shore up Chinese self-esteem against subversive Western ideas, Volume II with the "institutional" side, which requires a discussion of such Chinese concepts as the people's will, the Confucian Heaven, the amateur ideal, the balance between monarch and bureaucrat, and which benefits from enlightening comparisons from European history. On all these topics and many more besides Professor Levenson is acute and original. He spins an intricate web (his work must count as sinology's answer to speed reading), but the strands are always firm and the pattern works out. The question is whether his main strands coincide with the live issues in diverse historical situations. I must confess I felt uneasy about this at times, especially with regard to the treatment of the Taipings. But the predominant feeling is admiration at the mastery with which he translates situations into abstractions, sets them at each other, and yet keeps them under tight control. With such gifts Professor Levenson has already gone a long way towards making Chinese history "make sense in the same world of discourse in which we try to make sense of the West" (Volume II, p. ix).

D. E. POLLARD.

TÜRKISCHE UND MONGOLISCHE ELEMENTE IM NEUPERSISCHEN. GERHARD DOERFER. Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung älterer neupersischer Geschichtsquellen, vor allem der Mongolen- und Timuridenzeit. Bd. I Mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen. Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur: Veröffentlichungen der orientalischen Kommission, Bd. XVI. pp. xlvi and 557. Franz Steiner; Wiesbaden. 1963.

It has, of course, long been known that there are a great many Turkish and Mongolian loan words in Persian, and most Persian dictionaries contain highly unsystematic, and often inaccurate, notations of the origin of such words. There was, therefore, a crying need for a systematic study of the subject, and Dr. Doerfer has met this need with a thoroughness which will command the respect of all those who have taken an interest in it. In one respect he has been perhaps a little too systematic. For centuries before these loan words were taken into Persian there had been an interchange of vocabulary between various earlier Indo-European languages and Turkish, and between Turkish and Mongolian, so that Persian got from Turkish not only loan words which had always been Turkish, but also Turkish words which were earlier Indo-European or Mongolian loan words in Turkish, and from Mongolian not only loan words which had always been Mongolian, but also Mongolian words which were Turkish loan words in Mongolian. The principle which Dr. Doerfer has

adopted is to classify these loan words with reference to their immediate origin so far as Persian is concerned, with the result that this volume contains a number of Turkish words which reached Persian through Mongolian, while Mongolian words like *yasak*, "law code," etc., which reached Persian through Turkish are reserved for the second volume. This produces a certain initial confusion in the reader's mind, since without a careful study of each item, and there are 409 in the present volume, he will be inclined to complain, quite unjustly, that some words have got into the wrong volume. It would not be possible without taking up far more space than is available for reviews in this *Journal*, to discuss all the fascinating points which arise, on the lines of Professor L. L. Ligeti's long, and on the whole laudatory, review in the *Journal of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences*. Particular mention must, however, be made of Dr. Doerfer's long excursus on "the relationship between the so-called Altaic languages" in which he reaches the conclusion by the use of a variety of techniques, including mathematics and the calculus of probabilities, that the Turkish, Mongolian and Tungus languages are not descended from a common ancestor, and that the vocabulary elements which are common to two or more of them can be better explained by the assumption of a complicated and prolonged process of vocabulary exchange than by one of genetic relationship. Since this is precisely the conclusion which I reached by rather different methods I am naturally delighted. But it is no use blinking the fact that scholars of the traditional school who still believe in a genetic relationship will not be pleased, and if Dr. Doerfer is to be criticized it is not so much for reaching this conclusion, which is in my view inevitable, as for doing so in such a way as almost to invite a counter-attack. There is, as Professor Ligeti has pointed out, a certain didacticism in his presentation, an implication not only that he is right but also that every aspect of his argument is right. For centuries past, Arab scholars discussing difficult problems have presented their views and finished up with the words *wa'llāhu a'lam*. It would perhaps have been more prudent for Dr. Döerfer, too, to add "but God knows best". No doubt his prediction in his preface that he would make some mistakes was correct; he has made some; but in a subject as complicated as this, if a scholar starts out with the determination that he will never make a mistake of any kind he is likely to finish up by not publishing anything at all. And after all, most of Dr. Döerfer's mistakes, like the housemaid's baby, are only little ones, compared with the enormous field which he has covered with such remarkable erudition.

GERARD CLAUSON.

TRAVELS TO DISCOVER THE SOURCE OF THE NILE. Edited by C. F. BECKINGHAM. pp. 281; 50 illustrations and maps. University Press, Edinburgh. 1964. 50s.

The journey made by Bruce of Kinnaird to the source of the Nile was a great feat (if not as great as he claimed) and his account of his travels a worthy complement to it. He was interested in people, in all living things whether plants or animals, and could check his position by observation of the heavens. He was a big, powerful man, brought up to field sports, who could talk Arabic and had some fluency in Amharic and Tigre. The present extracts from his book begin with the landing at Massawa and end with the arrival at Aswan after crossing the desert to avoid the loop in the Nile. Travel was dangerous, for Ethiopia was in a state of anarchy, a king had recently been murdered, war-lords were fighting among themselves, while in lands which were nominally Turkish the local ruler could treat strangers much as he pleased without bothering about his immediate, though distant, superior. The pattern is familiar; officials who wanted to squeeze as much as they could out of the stranger, rumours of the traveller's wealth, opposition by men of religion, both Christian and Muslim, fear of one who talked with the stars, medicine as a means of obtaining toleration and success got by fore-telling an eclipse. The journey almost ended in disaster and Bruce had to jettison his heavy baggage, though he afterwards recovered it. In Ethiopia "Frank" had come to mean