

Die Geheime Geschichte der Mongolen

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Journal of the American Oriental Society, Vol. 70, No. 3. (Jul. - Sep., 1950), pp. 203-206.

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Fri Sep 29 03:15:55 2006

the corresponding reference, thus listed, in the reference section. The latter task would have been much simplified if these references had been printed in clearly separated vertical columns instead of as a straggling undifferentiated sequence of horizontal lines. Even then, however, the scholar's task is not yet over, since the abbreviated titles listed in the references can be fully indentified only by consulting the bibliography. The latter is an impressive piece of work, but one wonders why Chinese characters are supplied only for its Chinese titles, but not for the names of their authors.

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Chinese Terms

chiao 教 *chün tzu* 君子 *jen* 仁 *ming* 命
chih 直 *hsiao jen* 小人 *min* 民

Die Geheime Geschichte der Mongolen. By ERICH HAENISCH. 2d edition. Pp. xviii + 184. Leipzig: OTTO HARRASSOWITZ, 1948.

The Secret History of the Mongols has received more attention from Mongolists and specialists from related fields than any other text in that language. In the opinion of the reviewer, the work of Haenisch is the last word to date on the subject; in bringing to bear the tools of Mongolistics and Sinology no one has been as accurate as he. The translation is the third volume in a series which together represent the efforts of twenty years in the elucidation of the text, the publication of the original text having appeared in 1937 (actually 1935),[1] a dictionary for the work in 1939,[2] and the first edition of the translation in 1940.[3] A preliminary presentation of part of the original text came from the author's pen in 1931.[4]

The title is somewhat misleading: the book is in fact not a secret history at all, although it is always referred to as such. Rather, it is a private history, *histoire intime*, composed at the order of Emperor Ogodai in the year 1240, setting down the ancestry and deeds of Chingis Khan, the founder of the dynasty of which Ogodai was the succeeding ruler. It was designed to be read at a great assembly of the Mongols, and was not for public circulation. Although many epic features are contained within it, as poetic passages, mythological elements, cliché-characterizations, nevertheless, it was not common domain. Guesses have been made as to its authorship, and Haenisch hazards the possibility that the adopted brother of Ogodai, Shigikhutukhu, the chief judge of the empire and the composer of the *jasak* (codex), was the one who set the work down (p. ii). Haenisch has definitely asserted that the text was originally in Uigur script.[5] The disparities between Uigur and Chinese are such that many forms have become obscured. The exact ascertainment of these forms may then indicate to us that the author was not of little culture, but that the errors attributed to him were actually the result of a faulty transcription system. It must be borne in mind that the establishment of the text presented almost as many difficulties as some of the classical problems of 19th century scholarship in regard to Egyptian or Iranian philological questions. For one thing, the original Mongol text was lost, and all that remained was a Chinese transcription. We do not even have the original Chinese transcription, but only later copies. Thus the decipherer of the text had to be a profound Mongolist as well as Sinologist. We are fortunate that in the person of

[1] Erich Haenisch, *Manghol Un Niuca Tobca'an (Yüan-ch'ao Pi-shi). Die Geheime Geschichte der Mongolen.* Aus der chinesischen Transkription (Ausgabe Ye Têh-hui) im Mongolischen Wortlaut wiederhergestellt, Leipzig 1934. This work originally appeared from the press of *Asia Major* in 1935, but was withdrawn from circulation because of the fate of *Asia Major*, until two years later when it was published by the Harrassowitz firm. I myself have only the 1935 edition. However, the 1937 publication differs only in the title page.

[2] Erich Haenisch, *Wörterbuch zu Manghol Un Niuca Tobca'an*, Leipzig 1939. The dictionary contains a list of Chinese syllables (pp. 185-187), together with Haenisch's transcription, thus affording a precise control of his method.

[3] Erich Haenisch, *Die Geheime Geschichte der Mongolen*, 1st edition, Leipzig 1940. By a happy planning, the edition appeared on the 700th anniversary of the composition of the work.

[4] Erich Haenisch, Untersuchungen über das *Yüan-ch'ao Pi-shi*, Bd. XLI Nr. IV der *Abhandlungen der Sächsischen A. d. W.*, Leipzig 1931, pp. 51 et sqq.

[5] *Manghol Un Niuca Tobca'an*, p. iv.

Professor Haenisch, both of these capacities were admirably filled.

The title was not in the form, *Yüan-ch'ao pi-shih,* since the dynasty Yüan was not even founded at the time of composition of the work. The Mongol original bore the title, *Mangḥol un Niuca Tobca'an* in Haenisch's transcription. Dr. N. N. Poppe has indicated that the form *to'oca'an* 'account' is probably more correct than *tobca'an* 'resumé,' in an as yet unpublished article. This rendering is borne out by the opinions of learned Mongols. There is also certain evidence to show that the first phrase, *Cinggis ḥahan no huja'ur* (Haenisch's transcription) 'The ancestry of Chingis Khan' is actually a heading and not part of the first sentence. This solution was already adopted in the edition of the work made in 1942 by Shiratori Kurakichi.[6] But by the new reading, the first line would run: 'The Ancestry of Chinggis Khan. There was a Grey Wolf full of fate begotten of high Heaven' (p. 1). There is very little else, aside from nuances of meaning, that needs to be done to Haenisch's work, and the author himself is much too modest: he is much closer to a definitive edition than even he claims to be. What remains to be done for a critical, definitive edition, rather than the reconstruction offered by Haenisch? Merely the establishment of the original written forms on the basis of the known Uigur script, the rendering of the poetical passages in the text as poetry, some of which are indicated in the notes by Haenisch, and the analysis of the Chinese oral rendering of the given Chinese forms in terms of the sound system of the 13th century, which is again known, and through which the Mongol original was sifted at the time of transcription. It is not the place here to review the entire literature on the Secret History, and the present status of research on the subject; this has already been done by Haenisch himself.[7]

Sufficient credit has been given by Haenisch to the services of Palladius Kafarov as the pathfinder in modern studies on the Secret History, for he was the first to accomplish the transcription, in Cyrillic letters, in the year 1878.[8] Similarly, the contributions of Yeh Te-hui in editing the Chinese transcription (as opposed to and in addition to the Chinese translation) have received full credit.[9] The contributions of Paul Pelliot are now on independent ground and must be judged as such, inasmuch as the edition of the Secret History by the latter has just reached the public.[10]

So much for the textual, literary and philological aspect of the work. As to the content, the Secret History is a goldmine for analysis of the social, historical and institutional role and structure of the Mongols in the 13th century. How rarely do we have a contemporary and native document on the emergence of a people from primitivism to hegemony over great civilizations, and this is precisely what the Secret History is. Quite frankly, even naively, it discloses the rough, mean, and yet aristocratic beginnings of Chingis, at that time still called Temujin. It tells how he attracted to himself followers, warriors, and gradually built up his power, *ex nihilo.*

It may be timely now to disclose certain errors in interpretation by the late Boris Ia. Vladimirtsov, insofar as a currency has been given to his ideas on the nature of Mongol society of the 13th century by the recent publication in a French translation of his Mongol Social Structure.[11] He attempted to depict the Mongols as a feudal regime at that time, and one of the arguments he used was the Mongol *qurultai* 'assembly' as parallel to the European feudal *consilium.* In the year

[6] Shiratori Kurakichi, *Onyaku-Môbun-Genchô-Hishi.* The Tôyo Bunko Publications Series C Volume VIII, Tokyo 1942. This book is a continuation of the work of his teacher Naka. Naka, a self-instructed Mongolist under difficult conditions, had succeeded in publishing a translation of the Secret History in 1907 under the title *Chingis-Khan-jitsuroku.*

[7] Erich Haenisch, Der Stand der *Yüan-ch'ao Pi-shi*-Forschung, ZDMG vol. 98, pp. 109 et sqq.

[8] Archimandrite Palladius Kafarov's work on the Secret History has remained virtually forgotten by the world of orientalists. It never was distributed on a world-wide scale, and only one or two copies are known to me to be extant, one in Leningrad and one in Finland, in the hands of G. J. Ramstedt. Cf. Haenisch ZDMG, p. 110 and p. 119.

[9] The edition of the *Yüan-ch'ao Pi-shih* by Yeh Te-hui in 1908 is the veritable starting point of the 20th century scholarship on the subject. It was the first critical edition in Chinese.

[10] Paul Pelliot, *Histoire Secrète des Mongols,* Paris 1949. This book forms volume I of his posthumous works and was prepared for publication by Louis Hambis. It consists of a restoration of the entire text and a translation of the first 6 of the 12 chapters. It is regrettable that a work awaited by a generation of scholars remains in an incomplete form.

[11] Boris Ia. Vladimirtsov, *Le Régime Social des Mongols, Le Féodalisme Nomade.* Translated by Michel Carsow, Paris 1948. Original in Russian, *Obščestvennyi Stroi Mongolov, Kochevoi Feodalizm,* Leningrad 1934.

1206, at the head of the Onon River, Chingis 'was the Mongol emperor designated by the great assembly (*qurultai~quriltai*) of the imperial princes (*köbegün*), members of the "golden clan" . . . .'[12] But there is no evidence, if one reads the Secret History in Haenisch's exact translation, of such a proceeding. The relevant passage in Haenisch is quite clear on the subject: 'Thereafter he (Chingis) sent messengers to the people in the felt tents [i. e. all his subjects, the nomads] and they gathered at the source of the Onon River in the Tiger-year (1206) and raised the nine-pointed banner. Thereupon they gave Chingis Khan the title Khan, emperor' (p. 91). The relevant word is *ulus* 'people,' which cannot be interpreted to mean only the nobles. All acclaimed Chingis emperor, not just the aristocracy. He gathered all his people, without distinction as to rank. That Vladimirtsov's is not a haphazard interpretation is shown by an identical narration of this event in his biography of Chingis Khan.[13] The gathering or assembly had had a long past behind it, and is an integral feature of Mongol life almost to the present. The context of the events of the year 1206 were the following: Chingis had just had his erstwhile ally, Jamukha, killed (ibid.). Moreover, he was about to embark on a series of decisive military campaigns, one undertaken in the very next year, for example, against the forest peoples of the Selenga and Yenisei districts (Ch. X). Much greater conquests were planned beyond that. And he chose the traditional assembly to cement his following to him, assure himself of a loyal home base for future operations, to get himself crowned emperor, and ascertain that there were no disaffective elements in his immediate surroundings. Thus, far from bringing the Mongols over into another historical epoch, from primitive to feudal, Chingis was reaffirming an old tradition. He was more conservative in respect to this, than revolutionary, or, rather, he was maintaining an old institution and submitting it to a new historic role.[14]

Another question raised by Vladimirtsov's social analysis relates to the exact rendering of the term *ulus*, which means not only 'people,' but 'subjects, tribe, state, empire, population, inhabitants.'[15] Vladimirtsov for purposes of his analysis renders the term as 'people-state' (*narod-gosudarstvo*) and 'people-patrimony' (*narod-udel*) in Carsow's translation.[16] The latter, 'people-patrimony,' is an arbitrary rendering for the purpose of making the Mongol people into serfs (patrimony-udel) and is not borne out by Haenisch.

Vladimirtsov again makes much of a certain passage between Jamukha and Temujin, building a distinction between sheep raisers who are democratic, and horse raisers who are aristocratic, Jamukha and Temujin respectively. Temujin tells Jamukha, in Vladimirtsov's version, 'Today, if we camp on the hill-slope, those who tend the horses will get tents; if we camp by the stream, those who tend the sheep and lambs will get food for their throats.'[17] But Haenisch renders this passage: 'Let us camp close to the mountain. Our horse herders should be able to come to the tents. Let us camp close to the mountain stream. Our sheep and lamb herders should get food for their throats' (pp. 30-31). Haenisch remarks with perfect justice the lack of basis for Vladimirtsov's interpretation (p. 153 note to para. 118). In truth, however, it should be added that Vladimirtsov in his later work on Mongol Social Structure admitted the lack of basis for this aristocratic-democratic opposition.[18] Nevertheless, certain overlays of this idea, if not the idea itself survive in his later writing, as the development of the feudal theory, so that it is in point to note the old basis of his error.

These are but a few of the possibilities for clarification of questions of Mongol society afforded by a study of the Secret History. Its total scope takes us from the mythological ancestry of Chingis Khan, becoming more and more factually reliable as the 12th century is approached, through the era of Chingis Khan himself, and ends in the year 1240. The colophon reads: 'The writing of this work was finished when we camped with the court

[12] Vladimirtsov, p. 150 (French translation).

[13] B. Ya. Vladimirtsov, *The Life of Chingis-Khan*. Translated by Prince D. S. Mirsky, London 1930, pp. 63-64.

[14] Cf. also W. Barthold, *Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion*, London 1928, p. 392.

[15] Haenisch, *Wörterbuch*, s. v. *ulus*.

[16] Vladimirtsov, *Régime Social*, p. 124.

[17] Vladimirtsov, *Life*, pp. 33-34.

[18] Vladimirtsov, *Régime Social*, p. 106. He attributes this notion of social opposition to Barthold and asserts that while the democratic-aristocratic opposition was present in a later period of Mongol history, it was not fully formed at this early era of Chingis Khan's life, only reaching completion at the end of the 12th century, i. e. when Chingis was about 40 or even older.

between the two places Dolo'an Boldakh, Seven Mounds, and Shilginchek, by the island Kode'e in the Keluren (Kerulen River) in the seventh month of the Rat-year (1240), at the convening of the Great Assembly' (p. 148). There is a short bibliography, twenty-two pages of notes, and an additional feature is the pictures and maps at the end.

The importance of the work for the study of the Mongol literature as well as society and history of the 13th century is unparalleled. The magnificent contribution of Haenisch in placing this work in a virtually definitive manner at the disposal of the scholarly world puts us deeply in his debt.

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The Western World and Japan: A Study in the Interaction of European and Asiatic Cultures. By G. B. SANSOM. Pp. xvi + 504. Illustrations, maps, index. New York: ALFRED A. KNOPF, INC. Distributed in cooperation with the International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1950. $6.00.

Since the publication of Sir George Sansom's *Japan: a Short Cultural History,* Far Eastern specialists have hoped the distinguished author would find opportunity to supplement his masterful work with a survey of Japan's emergence from isolation. *The Western World and Japan* ably fulfills that hope and adds luster to an already notable public and scholarly career. Most of his readers are, of course, already aware of his reputation as an outstanding authority on Japan. In this new book, he has called upon his experiences in consular and diplomatic posts, principally in Japan and Korea, from 1906 to 1940. In 1929-1930 Sir George Sansom served as President of the Asiatic Society of Japan. In 1935-36 and again in 1940-41 he was Visiting Professor of Japanese at Columbia University. Most recently, he was appointed the first Director of the East Asian Institute, Columbia University. His earlier *Historical Grammar of Japanese,* well known to specialists, has long since proved his ability not only to use a difficult language but to grasp its cultural and social significance.

In the present volume, the author had originally intended to supplement the earlier cultural history by describing in detail the effect upon Japanese social and political life of Western influences in modern times. Indeed, the major portion of the work is devoted to that subject (Part Two, Chapters 9-16). At one point, the author has occasion to write: 'Through all the copious Jesuit literature on Japan runs a strong current of affection and admiration for the Japanese people.' (page 174) It might be added that the same could be said of Sir George's history. His approach is marked with understanding, sympathy, and admiration for a society often 'governed by harsh principle, but nevertheless achieving in practice great urbanity and style.'

No one familiar with the critical transitional periods in Japanese history—the Taika, the Meiji, and even the present Occupation — will quarrel with the central theme of the major part of the work. In glaring historical contrast with the studied indifference of the Chinese toward foreign learning, the Japanese have displayed an eager interest in new teaching. And yet, although no nation has been more receptive, none has been more tenacious of its own tradition. Quite properly, then, the author treats the opening of Japan and the effects of the Western impact not only as the beginning of a new phase, but also the end of an old one. To overestimate the part played by Western influence is to misunderstand modern Japanese history. An example chosen from the author's analysis of early Meiji political institutions, often misunderstood by Western political scientists, will demonstrate the proper balance. Referring to the Meiji Constitution, Sir George concludes that 'it was surprisingly like the constitution that would have emerged in Japan if, without reference to foreign example, the government had logically pursued the line of development that it had already taken. . . .' (page 358).

Such an analysis, of course, properly puts increasing emphasis upon the Tokugawa Era, precedent to the Western impact, and introduces a criticism which is perhaps unfair. Sir George's objective is not to produce a detailed analysis of the Tokugawa. His survey is a welcome addition to the reconnaissance essay on Japan's emergence,