

Histoire secrete des Mongols; Monuments en ecriture phags-pa [and] Pieces de chancellerie en transcription chinoise; Monuments preclassiques 1: XIIIe et XIVe siecles

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add, however, I 2a: *Čid, Čitavan, Širavasd,* 2b *badir,* 5b *bari-nirvan,* 6a *budgali,* 7b *lagšan,* 12b, 19a7 *silüg,* 13b *surtaban,* 14a *sagardigam,* 14b *anagam,* 15b *nisvanis,* plur., Uig. *nizvani-lar,* 16a, 32b *riyakirid,* 20a *baramid,* b *baramanus,* plur., 24b *arši,* 27a *nayud, költi,* 42b *bertegčin,* II 20b *ubasi, ubasanča,* 45bl *asangki* etc.; though the Uighur Vajracchedikā, for which see now G. Hazai and P. Zieme, *Berliner Turfantexte* I, 1971, represents a translation from Chinese, it is full of Indo-Sogdian and -Tokharian terms which might have been exploited in translating the Mongolian text from the Tibetan), the Oirat version which renders even the foreign proper names in Mong. words follows the Tibetan translators' purist practice. All the Mong. versions are of course closer to the Tibetan translation than to the Sanskrit original. (A fourth early translation, Toyin Guiši's work, conserved in a ms brought by Prof. Ligeti from Inner Mongolia, is edited by Dr Alice Sárközi in *Acta Orient. Hung.* XXVII, 1973).

Some notes seem to be repeated, thus I 10b1 = 26a4 = 33b2 (*alfiyas*), 10b3 = 18a1 (*yaγun ügületele*), 19a2 = 28a1 (*toγtaγa-*), 6bl = 17a5 = 25a6 = II 3a13 (*öngge*, cf. also Uighur *öng*), 16b3 = 18a1 = 41a7 (*ked be bögesü*, add: *ked*, plur. of *ken*) etc., 26a2 must be identical with 33b1, in both cases *tetürü alfiyas* being synonymous and meaning "false." II 1b *bsyaba* is to be read *bsinba* representing an Amdo dialectal form. For III 5b, cf. also SH *qoj* "remainder." For I 18a5 see Uig. *lab buši* "alms," Suv.

This is the first time we have the critical edition of three parallel Mong. translations of the same work. It is sure that the book offers us important materials for and valuable comments on linguistic and philological problems of late Middle Mongolian and early Oirat Buddhist translations.

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Histoire secrète des Mongols. By Louis Ligeti. Pp. 268. Monumenta Linguae Mongolicae Collecta I. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó. 1971. $4.80.

Monuments en écriture 'phags-pa [and] *Pièces de chancellerie en transcription chinoise.* By Louis Ligeti. Pp. 170. Monumenta Linguae Mongolicae Collecta III. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó. 1972.

Monuments préclassiques 1: XIII^e et XIV^e siècles. By Louis Ligeti. Pp. 169. Indices Verborum Linguae Mongolicae Monumentis Traditorum I. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó. 1970. $3.60.

These three small volumes (hereafter MLMC I, MLMC III, and IVLMMT I, respectively) represent the first full publication of what should be a most important contribution to Mongolian studies. The eminent Hungarian scholar Louis Ligeti is attempting no less than complete publication of all extant works in Mongolian prior to the early 17th century (the MLMC series), concordances of each document (the Indices verborum series), and—eventually—what will be the first full dictionary of Middle Mongolian. (This last is mentioned IVLMMT I, pp. 3-4). The texts are presented in new systems of romanization for the three writing systems employed for Middle and pre-classical Mongolian: the quasi-syllabary in Chinese characters, the 'phags-pa alphabet, the pre-classical Uighur-based Mongol script. Considering the nature of these writing systems, and the paleographic and philological puzzles offered by this complex corpus, one can only be reminded of the *Secret History's* description of the 'quagmires and tangled woods' of Mt. Burqan-qaldun, which formed 'so impenetrable a forest that a glutted snake could not creep in'.[1]

The MLMC volumes are two of the fifteen which have seen publication since 1963 in a provisional edition under the series-title *Mongol Nyelvemléktár* (*Mongol Language Monuments*). The circulation of this series was restricted to scholars in Hungary, and a very few specialists elsewhere.[2] The present editions are intended for more general distribution, and have prefaces and other explanatory material in French rather than Hungarian.

MLMC I presents the entire text of the well-known *Secret History of the Mongols* (hereafter SH). While this is a vast improvement over the earlier Haenisch, Kozin, Pelliot, and Shiratori editions, its shortcomings are very serious indeed. In his excellent review of this volume, de Rachewiltz (op. cit. pp. 230-1) lists well over a hundred points in the text which, in his opinion, need rectifying, and concludes as follows:

> . . . perhaps the most distressing shortcomings of the new edition is the all too frequent omission and misplacing of hyphens, diacritical signs, and apostrophes, and the inconsistent use of lower case and upper case. This, combined with the uneven typeface, with letters and words constantly falling out of alignment, and the generally poor quality of the printing, results in a text which is in almost all respects inferior to that of the first edition. In its present form the new edition is not reliable and should not be used without referring in each case to the earlier one; something, however, which is impossible for the majority of readers, since

[1] SH § 102, trans. Igor de Rachewiltz, p. 148 of *Papers on Far Eastern History* 4 (Sept. 1971); Canberra: The Australian National University.

[2] Cf. de Rachewiltz' review of MLMC I and IVLMMT I in *Asia Major*, 18 (1973), 229-32.

the first edition is now a bibliographical rarity. It is to be hoped, therefore, that Professor Ligeti and his colleagues will issue before long a new, and thoroughly revised, edition of this important work.

More usable for most purposes is de Rachewiltz' own edition of the SH, in the volume somewhat misleadingly titled *Index to the Secret History of the Mongols* (Indiana University Publications, Uralic and Altaic Series, Volume 121; Bloomington 1972). This extremely valuable work contains, in addition to the index verborum, the complete SH text in a new and careful edition. (It might be noted that in neither the de Rachewiltz nor the Ligeti volumes are details of particular text-readings discussed or defended. The latter states, MLMC I, p. 11, that publication of a critical apparatus is intended elsewhere).

MLMC III consists of two parts. Pp. 9-127 deal with the Mongolian documents in the 'phags-pa script (1269-1352): never before has the entire corpus been assembled in one place, including items discovered since 1941. Each document is presented first in a very narrow transliteration, then in an interpretive transcription; both of these new systems are briefly but adequately explained in the introduction (pp. 13-9). The second part of the volume (pp. 129-66) presents, in transcription, the work usually known as the *Hua-i i-yü*. These twelve letters between the Court or the Emperor and various Mongols were transcribed into Chinese characters between 1368 and 1389, using virtually the same system employed for the SH. (Note that the title *Hua-i i-yü* is used also for a Mongolian-Chinese glossary of the same period: this is not included in the present volume, but will certainly have to be referred to in the eventual dictionary of Middle Mongolian).

IVLMMT I presents nine separate indices verborum to the nine inscriptions and documents dating from between 1224 and 1346 which will be presented in MLMC II.[3] These are the following (listed in the order in which they are indexed): the Stone of Chinggis Khan, 1224-5; a Mongolian 'clause' in the Chinese edict of the Empress Töregene, 1240; the legend on the Mongolian seal of Güyüg on a letter to Pope Innocent IV, 1245;[4] the inscription in honor of Möngke, 1257; the Qara-qorum inscription, 1346; the *Bodistv-a čary-a avatar* and commentary, a Turfan fragment, 1312; the inscriptions for Chang Ying-jui, 1335, for Jigüntei, 1338, and of Prince Aruγ, 1340. Each word of each text is listed, with precise reference and with citation of all inflected forms. The immediate context is given for nearly every form.

The pre-classical Mongol script of these documents presents many severe problems. Ligeti has developed a new system of transliteration which comes as close as is practicably feasible to reflecting faithfully the orthographic peculiarities of this script. Unfortunately it is impossible at this time to discuss or evaluate this new system here, since it is not explained in the volumes thus far available to me: presumably it is to be described in detail in MLMC II. Mongolists everywhere will eagerly await publication of this and the remaining volumes of this valuable series.

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An Introduction to the Burmese Writing System. By D. HAIGH ROOP. Pp. xiii + 122. Yale Linguistics Series. New Haven and London: YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS. 1972. Paperback. $5.00.

This is a beautifully clear and carefully organized book that presents the intricacies of the Burmese writing system a little at a time in "programmed" installments, punctuated by frequent summaries, exercises, and review tests to consolidate the student's mastery of the material. The previous authoritative work on this subject (R. B. Jones and U Khin, *The Burmese Writing System*, ACLS, Washington 1953; henceforth "J-K") is now twenty years old; it suffers from a cumbersome romanization, is too concise for easy comprehension, and does not sufficiently distinguish between regular/common spellings and irregular/rare ones. Although Roop is indebted to J-K for much of the material in his Chapters 6 and 7, where various fine points and irregularities in the writing system are presented, the first five chapters are entirely his own, and are far superior to J-K in clarity and pedagogical effectiveness.

Chapter 1 ("Initial consonants; vowels") introduces the consonants in small groups according to their point of articulation, starting with the labials. Right after the labials four vowel-symbols are presented (first-tone /i, u, ei, a/), cleverly chosen both to avoid tonal complications and to illustrate the principle that vowel-signs may appear on all four sides (above, below, right, left) of the syllable-initial consonant. Next we get the dental consonants. At this point the honeymoon is over—we

[3] On the unnumbered page following p. 170 of MLMC III, the MLMC II volume is listed as consisting of 291 pages, with a publication date of 1971. On the page following, IVLMMT II is listed as follows: 'Monuments préclassiques. 1. XIII^e et XIV^e siècles. Deuxième partie. Par Louis Ligeti. 382 pages. Budapest 1971. Akadémiai Kiadó.' IVLMMT III will be the indices to MLMC III, and is here listed as 'Sous presse.' I have not seen any of these volumes.

[4] According to de Rachewiltz *op. cit.* p. 232, 1245 is an error for 1246.