

MONGOLIA

KOPPE, KLAUS. Translator and Editor. *Mongolische Epen XII: Julia aldar Quyán und Uyan mönggün qadayasun*. Recorded by Pürevijn Chorloo. Asiatische Forschungen 118. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1992. v + 389 pages. Bibliography, facsimile of Mongol text. Cloth DM 124.—; ISBN 3-447-03279-0. ISSN 0571-320X. (In German)

Among the epic traditions of the Mongolian peoples the less researched are those of the southern and eastern parts of Mongolia. As W. HEISSIG writes,

In the end of the eighteenth century, after Burdukov and Vladimircov collected the major epics of the Kalmucks and the Burjats, the impression was that only in the Oirat tribes could one still find living epics. But research carried out up to the middle of the twentieth century showed that not only in the northern and the Khalkh Mongolian regions, but also in the eastern and southern parts a great number of epics still exist and are widespread. (1972, 1:348)

These epic pieces were usually recited by individuals who were either born in the nineteenth century or acquired their knowledge from nineteenth-century singers. This allows us to date them to the nineteenth-century Mongolian heroic epos.

The publication of Mongolian and Central Asian epics with transcriptions or transliterations and translations by Russian and West European scholars began in the last century; more than one third have now been translated into European languages (see HEISSIG 1988, 1:1). From approximately the middle of the 1950s the publication of epics started in Inner Mongolia (NEKHLUDOV and TUMURCEREN 1982, 35). These are often not documented and have undergone certain changes.

The Bonn series of publications on Central Asian and Mongolian folklore texts has long published the "classic" texts of famous epics like *Zangar*, *Geser*, and *Khan Qaranqui*. The volume under review represents a specimen of a "postclassic" or "second-range" epic. The fact that it is from the Uriyanghai only increases our interest in it. It is divided into two parts. Part 1 consists of an introduction (3–21), German translation (21–145), appendix (notes and index) (145), personalia (145–58), a list of names of horses and colors (158–60), toponymy (160–65), glossary (165–75), comparison of the two versions (175–201), commentary to the German text (201–209), bibliography (209–14), and list of abbreviations (214–15). Part 2 presents a facsimile of the manuscript in the handwriting of the Mongolian scholar P. Chorloo.

This is a very useful and thorough study. In his introduction the author explains the origin of the two variants of the analyzed manuscript and partly introduces a third version (8, 9) (HEISSIG 1988, 2:622–23; NEKHLUDOV 1984, 23). This allows him to elucidate an interesting problem: whether the text is an independent work or a precursor to (or a part of) a major epic (8–14). This is a profound and a highly compact analysis that avoids superfluous repetition; in its comparison of the parallel versions it addresses only the sections and narration lines that differ, and offers respective translations. The translation itself is accurate, and the amount of reference literature utilized by the author for his research, translation, and very useful glossary is quite impressive.

Perfectionists might note certain shortcomings. The book might have been easier for other researchers to use, for example, if the transcription had been included with the text (it is omitted in the present volume) and if the translation had been printed on facing pages. Comments by Chorloo are included in the manuscript (287, 389) in the form of a traditional

colophon and are used by the author in his introduction (4); they are, however, absent from the text translation. Since they are present in the manuscript these marked colophones/ comments should, I think, appear in the translation as well. The same applies to words that have asterisks in the manuscript. These are accompanied by explanations that helped in the translation or are present in the appendix in some form. They are, however, absent from the translation, which might make for a more trim-looking layout but which takes the translation farther from the manuscript. Though all names appearing in the manuscript are translated and commented upon in detail in the appendix, it might have been useful to supply the original names with their German renderings in the translation.

These reservations do not change the fact that this volume will please those involved in the study of Central Asian epics and form a sound contribution to the existing series of *Asiatische Forschungen*.

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Galina AVAKIANTS
Hitotsubashi University
Tokyo

SIBERIA

JACOBSON, ESTHER. *The Deer Goddess of Ancient Siberia: A Study in the Ecology of Belief*. Studies in the History of Religions, Volume LV. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1993. xxii + 291 pages. Map, plates, bibliography, index. Cloth Gld. 140.00/US\$80.00; ISBN 9004092680; ISSN 0169-8834.

The Deer Goddess of Ancient Siberia will be of interest to all those who desire a deeper insight into the iconography of what is known as Scytho-Siberian art. During the second half of this century much archeological fieldwork has been carried out in North and Central Asia and adjacent regions. As a result it has become evident that the Early Nomadic culture, which incorporated certain seminomadic elements, controlled the vast steppe and mountainous regions from China in the east, from Persia and Greece in the west, and from the edge of the Siberian Taiga in the north. This research has also traced the outlines of the ancient cultures of South Siberia in such areas as present-day Gorno-Altayskaya Autonomous Oblast' (A.O.), Tukvinskaya A.O., Khakasskaya A.O., and the area around Lake Baikal. Archeological evidence for these cultures is found in thousands of rock carvings, rock paintings, stone mounds, and altars, as well as in the monumental stelae found within funerary or other ritual complexes from the Neolithic down to the Bronze Age, and further into the first millennium BC.

To understand the intent of this book we must know that Esther Jacobson, an art historian at the University of Oregon, challenges existing theories on Early Nomadic cosmology by examining the symbolic structures as they appear in the art and archeological sources