
Les matériaux pour l'étude du chamanisme mongol, I: Sources littéraires, (= Asiatische Forschungen, Monographienreihe zur Geschichte, Kultur und Sprache der Völker Ost- und Zentralasiens. Band 3) by B. Rintchen; Herbert Franke; Nikolaus Poppe; Omeljan Pritsak
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REVIEWS

Les matériaux pour l'étude du chamanisme mongol, I: Sources littéraires, par B. Rintchen (= *Asiatische Forschungen*, Monographienreihe zur Geschichte, Kultur und Sprache der Völker Ost- und Zentralasiens. Herausgegeben für das Ostasiatische Seminar der Universität Bonn von Walther Heissig unter Mitwirkung von Herbert Franke, Nikolaus Poppe und Omeljan Pritsak, Band 3). 1959, Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden. XII + 124 pages in 8°.

The book under review is a valuable collection of materials on Mongolian shamanism. As the collector, Professor Rintchen, remarks in his Introduction, such materials have completely disappeared after twenty years of systematical destruction of Mongolian literature and other cultural valuables. Therefore, these materials are probably all that exists at the present time. They are not specimens of oral shamanist poetry but copies of ancient manuscripts. Some of the originals belonged to the teacher of the last Setsen Khan, others were obtained from the libraries of high lamas, collections of the late Tsyben Žamtsarano, from the libraries of some temples and monasteries which do not exist any longer, etc. The undersigned will not enumerate the texts published (all in the usual transcription), because their titles are given in the table of contents. I wish to mention, however, that some of the texts are benedictions spoken to the daughter-in-law, to the newly wed couple, prayers to the fire, to the god of the hunters, to Chingis Khan's spirit, to the god of the banner, etc. These texts are uncommonly interesting and represent a very high value. They are not followed by a translation and, therefore, it is to be hoped that someone will translate them in due time. Not dwelling on the contents of the materials published and being in no position to give their analysis in such a brief review, I wish to point out that Professor Rintchen's materials are extremely important from the historical and linguistic point of view, not to mention their importance for the studies of the primitive religion of the Mongols.

First of all, there occur in the texts proper names which fell long ago into oblivion soon after the collapse of the Mongolian Empire, e.g., the name of the Golden Horde city *Ükeg* on the river *Ifil*, i.e., Volga (p. 57); *majaris* "the Magyars, Hungarians" in the phrase *majaris-un urtu eber-tü köke üker* "the long-horned gray oxen of the Magyars" (p. 34), etc. Some texts mention the name of the Khorezm Shah Jelal ad-Din, cf. *sartayul-un jolulfin (sic!) sultang* "Sultan Jelal ad-Din of Turkestan" (p. 64). Cf. also the very interesting phrase *sayibar jaruysan jayun elčis-iyen sartayul-un jalalfin sultan qayan-a ükügüligsen-dür* "when he gave the Sultan-Khan of Turkestan, Jelal ad-Din, the opportunity to kill one hundred messengers of his who had been dispatched properly" (p. 74), which is an allusion to the execution of Chingis Khan's messengers in Otrar.

The texts give also a number of interesting and rare names of words. The god of fire is called here *El yalayıqan* "the national fire god", but sometimes (p. 76) his name is *al yalayıqan* "the red fire god", although *al* can stand for *el*, because the initial *e* is in many old texts written with two dents like *a*. Sometimes the god of fire is called by his Turkic name *oɣyalan* "Ot (i.e., Fire), the god of fire" (p. 26). The king of the mountains is here *Künfid* as in the Geser Saga (p. 71).

An interesting word is the verb *bili-* "to offer, to treat" in the phrase *šidi-yin idege-ber*

bilimüi "I treat with magic food" (p. 7) which is the primary stem of the word *bili'ür* "offering, sacrifice, treat" which occurs in the *Secret History*. Another rare word is *širuly-a* or *širulyan* in the expression *olja širuly-a* "booty" (pp. 46 and 47) which corresponds to *sirolya* in the *Secret History*.

A rare grammatical form (which also occurs in the *Secret History*) is the plural in *-γud* (*čaγaγčiyud*), cf. *mingγan čaγaγčiyud-un eke boluγai* "may she become the mother of one thousand white mares!" (p. 17).

In conclusion, it should be remarked that Professor Rintchen's work deserves the utmost attention as a valuable contribution to Mongolian studies.

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