

CRITICA

G. KARA, *Chants d'un barde mongol: Bibliotheca Orientalis Hungarica XII*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest 1970, 352 p.

This eminent book is a folkloristic and linguistic study of the works of the Jarut poet, Pajai.

In 1959 Kara had the unique opportunity of making a six week study-tour of the Chinese People's Republic, during which he visited Peking and Inner Mongolia. He investigated many, hitherto unknown or almost unknown Inner Mongolian dialects,¹ such as Ujumchin² Darkhan, Mōmingan, Abaga and Chakhar. His most interesting material originates from Köke Qota where he recorded a wide choice of the poetry of the Jarut poet. The Jaruts originally pertained to the Juu-uda confederation and speak an interesting dialect close to Kharchin. Our data on Jarut (LMong *Jarud*, pronunciation *jarōd*) were hitherto very scanty. A few travellers (e.g. Ligeti, Froze, Lattimore) some Chinese (e.g. *I-t'ung chih*, *Huang Ch'ing k'ai-kuo fang-lüeh*, *Mêng-ku yu-mu-chi* etc.) and Manchu (*Tongki fuqa sindaxa*

xergen-i dangse) sources mentioned them partly under other designations. Some references can be found in comprehensive works (Rudnev, Vladimircov, Poppe, Doerfer, Todaeva, Chinggeltei, Luvsanvandan, Rinchen) but hitherto no material was available for scientific investigation.

The book is divided into five chapters. The first summarizes the most important data on Jarut, the second based on the biography written by Asaraltu³ gives a detailed and fascinating description of the life of Pajai. In the third chapter we find texts (pp. 55–102), translations (pp. 103–168) and commentaries (pp. 169–223). The fourth chapter contains a study of the Jarut language of Pajai, the fifth is a glossary (pp. 285–338) of about 1.500 Jarut words.

The texts are of epic and lyrical character. We find passages from the Geseriada (Nos 1, 2, 3, 4, 5), from the story of the Valiant Hunter (Nos 6, 7), from the Mongolian adaptation of the Chinese novel, the Three Kingdoms (Nos 8, 9). Among the lyrical poems we meet with eulogies, elegies, love-songs. Satiric and actual poetry complete the choice. Some of the texts are of literary origin, other have clearly Chinese models but most of them are entirely or largely recreations of the compositions of Mongolian folklore. In some cases

¹ See his report: *Jelentés egy Kinában tett mongolista tanulmányútról* [Report on a Mongolist's Study-tour in China]: *A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Nyelv- és Irodalomtudományi Osztályának Közleményei* XVI (1960), pp. 423–427.

² G. Kara, *Sur le dialecte Ūjümüčin: Dissertationes Sodalium Instituti Asiae Interioris VII*, Budapest 1958.

³ Na. Asaraltu, *Aldartu qayurči Pajai-yin tuqai tanilqayulya: Monggol teike kele bičig* 1958: 11, pp. 9–19.

Kara has published both the chanted and the sung variants of the same text. The detailed notes and comments explain not only lexical problems (of which any folklore-text has more than the average) but also questions of prosody, metrics, genre, phraseology and style. Especially instructive are Kara's views on the initial formulas where he discusses the grotesque appearance of cosmogonical elements in the epic poetry. He considers these texts as scattered remnants of an old cosmogonical mythology, gives some rich comparative material and points to the fact that old shamanistic and lamaistic views are mixed up in the actual citations.

On the basis of fresh studies made by him and others he draws a new map of the ethnic distribution of the Mongolian epic poetry (p. 207) where we would have welcomed a more detailed study on the divergent characteristics and structures of the epic poetry of the several groups.

Original views are expressed in his remarks on Mongolian prosody. Polemizing with the views of Krueger and Tudenov, he points out that the equal duration of equivalent units (verses) gives the basis of the rhythmical construction of the poems. The duration is not based on a regular alternation of the long and short syllables but on the constant sum of the units of the parallel verses, where the duration of the syllables is independent of their phonetic quality.

In many places he calls the attention to such «book-forms» as *agöl* «mountain» (LMong *ayula* instead of *öl*), *alt-eyēr* (LMong *altan-iyar* instead of *alt-ār*). These forms are of particular interest. In the past there developed a lively discussion on the question of the primary long vowels in Mongolian. Sh. Hattori has forwarded a theory⁴ according to which the Proto-Mongol guttural stop *-g-* and the bilabial

stop *-b-* became fricatives and disappeared in those cases when they were followed by a primary long vowel (*bagātūr* > *bātar* «hero» but *egem* > *egem* «clavicle»). Hattori has himself recorded such «book-forms» among the Bargha-Mongols, in which connection he writes: «There is no guarantee however, that this reading [*ayu:lw*] is the result of traditional transmission of the spoken form in the past.»⁵ The same opinion is expressed without hesitation by Kara: «Que les longueurs sont secondaires et qu'elles n'ont rien commun avec les longueurs, supposées primitives, on peut l'affirmer par les divers équivalents dialectaux de certaines dissyllabes... à titre d'exemple je ne cite ici que le mot *dēl* (par exemple dans le Khalkha ou dans le jarut) — *dewel* (dans l'oïrat) — *degel* (dans le bouriate) «habit long» ...» (p. 251). I can only regret that Kara did not discuss the problems of the «book-language» in greater detail (one page and scattered remarks in notes only) because his material gives a good illustration of the influence of the «book-language» on the vernacular. Such a study would have been especially instructive because e.g. in the case of the Geseriada we have purely book-forms, written texts which are influenced by spoken forms, folklore-texts and last but not least an entire Geseriada of the same Pajai published in Kōke Qota in the same year that Kara visited the city.⁶

Kara is aware of the fact that the evaluation of Pajai's text is rendered difficult not only because of the literary influence on some of his texts, but also because of the lack of material from other Jarut speakers. Thus the «parole» facts can not be distinguished in all cases from the «langue» system. Kara is sufficiently

English version of his paper in Japanese published in *Gengo Kenkyū* XXXVI, October, 1959.

⁵ Cf. *Mongolian Studies*, p. 183.

⁴ Originally in: *Studia Mongolica* I:12, (1959), now an augmented version can be read in *Mongolian Studies*, ed. L. Ligeti, Budapest 1970, pp. 181–193 which is an

⁶ Pajai qurūrē, *Geser bayatur*, Kōkeqota 1959. On this work see e.g. p. 183 of the book under review.

cautious in his conclusions but the reader has to keep this in mind while using the material.

The phonetical description is detailed, exhaustive and brings much that is new to our knowledge. I only wonder why he used the symbol *h*- to denote the voiceless guttural fricative phoneme even when it has a laryngeal allophone. The voiced guttural stop has also an unvoiced laryngeal fricative allophone (e.g. *loht* «halter» ~ LMong *noyto*, *teḥš* «equal» ~ LMong *tegsi* *tuh-tumen* «numberless» ~ LMong *tüg-tümen* — where Kara's transcription is exceptionally phonetic and not phonemic), and there is no reason to choose this allophone as the central one in either case. Up till now we know of two cases where in present dialects the laryngeal *h*- is a phoneme. In Buriat it is the continuation of PMo **s*-, in some Monguor dialects (other than those described by Mostaert) it is the continuation of MMo *h*-. In both cases the *h*- is in phonemic opposition with the postpalatal fricative *x*-. This is not the case in Jarut.

The most important features of the Jarut are: PMo **č* > *š* PMo **k* (*k* and *k̥*) > *x*, PMo **o* is mid-low *o*, PMo **u* is mid-high *o*, PMo *ü* has a central-back *u* continuation, while PMo *ö* gives *ɛ* and *u*. A back vowel before *i* becomes front-vocalic.

Of special interest is the chapter on the place of Jarut among the other dialects. After reviewing the previous opinions illustrated with excellent little maps, Kara sketches the extension of some (phonological) isoglosses and tries to find the place of Jarut within the network of them. This is surely a more up-to-date method than the previous ones and deserves further refinement (e.g. synchronic and diachronic aspects have to be separated).

In discussing the historical development of Jarut Kara calls attention to the fact that the Jarut development **č* > *š* is attested also in Manchu (Juchen *ačun* > Manchu *aisin* «gold», Mong *čidür* → Manchu *sideri* «hobble») but exercising great

caution he does not decide whether this is of Mongolian origin in Manchu or a common regional feature in both. I would add here that such developments can also be, independent, as can be demonstrated e.g. by Kazak where the *č* > *š* development equally occurred.

The glossary will surely be one of the most frequently used parts of the book. The literary Mongolian equivalents of the Jarut entries will facilitate further studies on the historical phonology of Jarut.

Both the material and the method of its evaluation is a considerable step forward in the study of modern Mongolian dialects. We can only hope that works of a similar standard will fill the gaps on the map of the Mongolian dialects especially in Inner Mongolia.

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Татаро-монголы в Азии и Европе [Tatar-Mongols in Asia and Europe]. Collection of Studies, red. S. L. TICHVINSKIJ. Moscow 1970, 476 p.

The purpose of the present volume, as stated by S. L. Tichvinskij in his introductory study (*Tataro-mongoljskie zavoevanija v Azii i Evrope*, pp. 3—21) is to re-evaluate the role played by Genghis Khan and the Mongol conquerors on the basis of historical record. This collection of papers is designed to meet a real need with its thorough treatment and discussion of the available record. Here we have a very considerable work, developed on certain uniform lines of conception. All the articles are characterized by an up-to-date historical point of view aiming to offer an entire outline of the Mongol invasion in Eurasia. The essays, to a greater or lesser extent give the events in exact chronological order, with a special emphasis on the economic and social relationship between the conquerors and the inhabitants of the invaded areas.

In his study E. I. Kyčanov (*Mongolo-tangutskie vojny i gibelj gosudarstva Si Sja*, pp. 46—61) describes the chief historical