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TURKIC AND MONGOLIAN LITERATURE

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Part One

TURKIC LITERATURE

(A. Kayumov)

Chaghatay/Uzbek literature

By the year 1500 it is probable that the expansion of the Turkic languages had reached the geographic limits that exist today; and within the Turkic zone too, the major language territories of today had been established. Bābur (see below) tells us that within Ferghana around Andijan, the people were ‘all Turks: not a man in town or bazaar but knows Turki’.¹ But in the district of Isfara, comprising four subdivisions, the ‘people are all Sārts [settled agriculturists], and Persian-speaking’.² This linguistic division is reflected in the drawing of boundaries between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in Soviet times, when Ferghana was shared out between the two republics. Andijan, as we might expect, went to Uzbekistan, and Isfara to Tajikistan.

Of the Turkic spoken around Andijan, Bābur says, ‘the spoken words are correct according to the literary language; the writings of Mīr ^cAlīshīr Nawā’ī, though he was brought up in Herat, are in the same language’.³ It is to be assumed, then, that what now became the literary language was spoken over an area extending from Ferghana into Khurasan.

While Chaghatay Turki is sometimes assumed to be identical with modern Uzbek, the latter in its literary form shows considerable influence of Kipchak (Qipchāq), Turkmen and Iranian idioms,⁴ and it is perhaps safer to maintain a distinction between the two, confining the name Uzbek to a relatively recent period, and using the name Turki or Chaghatay Turki for its precursor. (‘Turkish’ is now reserved in English for Ottoman Turkish and its Republican successor with a Latinized script.)

¹ Bābur, 1995, p. 5; 1922, Vol. 1, p. 4.

² Bābur, 1995, p. 7; 1922, Vol. 1, p. 7.

³ Bābur, 1995; 1922, Vol. 1, p. 4.

⁴ *EP*, art. ‘Turks: Languages’ (G. Hazai), p. 713.

The rise of Chaghatay literature, and its splendid flowering in the late fifteenth century with ^cAlīshīr Nawā'ī (1441–1501) as the major figure, was dealt with in the previous volume.⁵ But soon thereafter came Bābur's memoirs, the *Bābur-nāma*, a work that can also rightfully claim a place in world literature.

Zahīru'ddīn Muhammad Bābur (1483–1530) occupied the throne of Ferghana at the age of 12. Driven from his homeland in Transoxania and losing both Ferghana and Samarkand, he ultimately built an empire for himself: king in Kabul in 1504, he went on to forge the great Mughal empire in India in 1526. Bābur took the unusual decision to keep a record of his adventures, observations and opinions. His memoirs constitute the first true autobiography ever written in the Islamic lands. The decision to write the record in Chaghatay Turki and not in Persian, the universal language of culture and literature at that time, is even more extraordinary. Perhaps the decision was a logical consequence of the fact that for Bābur these diaries were a mirror of his own intimate personal life, which he could best express in his native tongue; the pages were written for himself and an intimate circle, and perhaps for his descendants. He therefore made no attempt at ornateness or rhetoric, which a more literary or pompous audience would have expected. Indeed, Bābur's Chaghatay is fluid, idiomatic and colloquial. It is 'written in a simple, unaffected and yet very pure style',⁶ which is devoid of the sumptuous Persian artifice and literary contrivance, with its fondness for rhyming synonyms and seemingly endless parallel constructions, that, indeed, characterize the Chaghatay prose of Sultān Husayn Bāyqarā and ^cAlīshīr Nawā'ī.⁷ It should be noted that the *Bābur-nāma* also contains a wealth of information on the history, literature, language and ethnography of various peoples of Central Asia, and on the plants, animals and scenery of a vast area extending from Ferghana to India.

Bābur's poetry, too, is an outstanding example of the Chaghatay literary output in the sixteenth century. His *ghazals* (odes), *rubā'īyyāt* (rhymed quatrains, sing. *rubā'ī*) and verse epistles are full of tender love; they reveal sincere, truly human feelings – the joy of meeting, longing for the beloved and belief in infinite faithfulness and love. The theme of the homeland is also dear to Bābur's heart:

Lack of happiness caused me much suffering.

⁵ See *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, Vol. 4, Part 2, pp. 381–2.

⁶ A judgement of Mīrzā Haydar Dughlāt, his contemporary and the author of the *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī* (see Haydar Dughlāt, 1898, p. 14).

⁷ [Matter up to this point has been added by the Editors.] The memoirs have been translated into English, notably by Beveridge (Bābur, 1922), with extensive annotation. A recent more idiomatic translation is by Thackston, 1996, accompanied by a very useful introduction, but lacking detailed annotation. For a French translation, see Bacqué-Grammont, 1985. A critical edition of the original text prepared by Mano (Bābur, 1995) is also now available. For Bābur's expression of feelings related to the arts, see Adle, 2000, pp. 184–6.

All I attempted ended in failure.
 Having forsaken my native land, I went to India.
 Alas, what a dark fate has befallen me!

Bābur carried Chaghatay Turki to India, where he carved out an extensive dominion. His son Kāmran (d. 1557) and his grandson Akbar's regent, Bayram Khān (d. 1561), have both left *dīwāns* in Turki, which have been retrieved and published. In the Transoxania that Bābur left behind him, Turki poetry was patronized by °Ubaydullāh Khān (1533–9), the Uzbek khan of Bukhara, who himself composed verses under the pen-name °Ubaydī; these are extant and have been published.

Among the significant works of Turki literature in the first half of the sixteenth century mention should be made of the poet Muhammad Sālih (1455–1535), who produced the *Shaybānī-nāma*, a versified account of the events of the period 1485–1506, connected with the life and travels of the Uzbek ruler Shaybānī Khān (1500–10). In the sixteenth century historical literature in the language was further reinforced by translations of Sharaf °Alī Yazdī's history of Timur, the *Zafar-nāma*, and of the Persian version of Tabarī's world history, the *Tārīkh-i Tabarī*. Among other sixteenth-century works mention should also be made of the poem the *Qissa-i Sayfu'l Mulūk* [Story of Sayfu'l-Mulūk] by Majlisī; and a collection of philosophical, instructive and religious tales, the *Gulzār* [The Flower Garden] as well as the *Miftāh ul-°adl* [The Key of Justice], both by °Abdu'l Wahāb Khwāja.

The most important historical work in Turki after Bābur's memoirs was almost certainly the *Shajara-i Turk* [The Turks' Genealogy], written by Abū'l Ghāzī Bahādur Khān, ruler of Khiva (1643–63). The work gives a history of Chinggis Khan, his ancestors and descendants, especially the Shaybanids, bringing it down to 1644. From that year onwards, the narrative was supplied by Abū'l Ghāzī Khān's son and successor Anūsha Muhammad (1663–87); he completed and closed the work in 1665.

Endless wars between local lords struggling for power, and the ruin of the country as a result of these internecine conflicts, naturally aroused popular protest. It was as an expression of such protest that the seventeenth-century Uzbek poet Turdī Farrukhī (c. 1700) produced his critical verses. Addressing the elders of the clans and tribal groupings, Turdī wrote:

Raise your heads from a common collar, and clothe yourselves in a common garment, So that outwardly and inwardly you shall have a single collar, one and the same sleeves.

The verses of Bābā Rahīm Mashrab (executed in Balkh in 1711) were enormously popular among his compatriots. He used the latitude allowed to love poetry (*°ashqiya*) to challenge existing traditions. His verses also convey gloomy meditations on his people's condition and a protest against oppression and injustice. The same sentiments are echoed in

the writings of his younger contemporary, Huwayda of Chimian (d. 1798). The religious tradition in poetry was simultaneously carried on by Sufi Allāh Yār (c. 1700) from Yangi Kurgan, who wrote *masnawīs* (poems in couplets) on religious themes.

The poem *Husn o dil* [Beauty and the Heart] (1778) by Nishātī, a poet from Khwarazm, sings the praises of the beloved and elevates heroes who are devoted to the ideals of love, goodness and nobility. The poets Sayqalī of Hisar, Sayyadī and Nādir celebrated similar qualities. Their respective poems *Bahrām o Gulandām*, *Tāhir o Zuhrā* and *Haft gulshan* [Seven Flower Gardens], composed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, are significant contributions to Uzbek epic verse.

Uzbek poets of the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries continued faithfully along the path traced out by °Alīshīr Nawā'ī. The *masnawī* was the dominant form in epic verse. Prose passages were sometimes included in poems. The dominant forms of lyric poetry were the *ghazal*, the *rubā'ī* and the *mukhammas* (pentameter). Literary prose also abounded with verses and *saj'* (rhymed prose). The literary language differed from common speech and written literature was mainly intended for the highly educated reader. Popular adaptations of works of literature had, therefore, to be produced for a wider readership. Bilingualism prevailed in literature. Almost all the poets wrote in both Chaghatay Turki and Persian; and many of them also had an excellent knowledge of Arabic.

Some widely appreciated poets such as Rāqīm (c. 1800), Mu'nis, Firūz, Āgāhī, °Avaz Otār-oghli, Bayānī and Kāmil lived and worked in Khiva. Information on 52 Khivan poets is given in the *Anthology of Poets of Khwarazm* compiled by the poet Laffasī (twentieth century). An important figure on the literary scene in Khwarazm in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was Mu'nis (d. 1829), who besides being a poet wrote a historical work, the *Firdaus al-iqbāl* [Heavenly Garden of Glory], finished by his nephew, Āgāhī (1809–74). Muhammad Āgāhī was also the author of a 5-volume history of Khwarazm and he translated many literary and historical works into Turki. He is the author of a compilation of poems entitled the *Ta'wīzu'l āshiqīn* [Talisman of Lovers] in which he complains about the difficult lives of worthy people and the unfairness they have to face.

An important literary centre developed in Kokand (Khoqand) in the first half of the nineteenth century and many lyrical and epic works were produced there. One may mention Amīr (the pen-name of °Umar Khān, ruler of Kokand, 1812–22), Adā, Makhmur (d. 1844), Gulkhānī, Hāziq, Nādir, Akmal and Ghāzī, and the poetesses Nadira (1793–1842), wife of °Umar Khān, Uvaysī, Mahzuna and Dilshād. An anthology of the Kokand poets (*Tazkira Majmū'a-i shā'irān*) compiled by Fazlīn 1821 contains examples of the work of more than 70 poets.

Chaghatay Turki in Xinjiang

The Uighur language spoken in Xinjiang belongs to the Eastern Turkic family and is, therefore, close to Uzbek. This explains why Chaghatay Turki could enjoy, along with Persian, the status of the literary language of that area throughout our period.⁸

Unfortunately, no work in Chaghatay Turki written in Xinjiang in the sixteenth century is known to have survived, but manuscripts from the seventeenth century have been preserved. Some lyrics of Muhammad Amīn Khiraqatī ‘Gumnām’ (1634–c. 1724) show the influence of the Uzbek poet Mashrab; and he also left a *masnawī* called the *Muhabbat-nāma o mahnat-kāma* [Book of Love and Object of Labour]. In the eighteenth century Muhammad Abū Salāhī from Kashghar wrote the *Gul o bulbul* [Flower and Nightingale], also a *masnawī*.

The increasing influence of the *khwājas* (mystics) who came from Transoxania was another factor behind the writing of works in Chaghatay Turki. Muhammad Sādiq Zalīlī, a poet, wrote the *Tazkira Khwāja Muhammad Sharīf Buzurgwār*. Khwāja Jahān °Arshī, ruler of Yarkand (1736–56), patronized translations into Turki from Persian, including Firdausi’s *Shāh-nāma*, while he wrote a *dīwān* himself, which has been published. Muhammad Sādiq Kashgharī (fl. 1768–9), a disciple of the *khwāja*, translated Mīrzā Haydar Dughlāt’s *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī* into Turki. Mahmūd Churās’ famous *Tārīkh*, a history of the khans of Kashghar (written c. 1670), was also translated into Turki late in the eighteenth century under the title *Alti Shahar khanlarinin tarikhi* [History of the Khans of Alti Shahar].

Kazakh literature

The *akin* (poet) has always had a place in the literature of the Kazakh people, a place that became ever more prominent in the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries with the emergence of the Kazakh khanates. The songs of Bukhār Jirau (c. 1693–c. 1787), an adviser to Ablai Khan (1771–81), were especially popular. He was a vocal opponent of internal wars and appealed to the people to maintain peace and concord. The verses of the poets Tājiqāra, Shālāqin and Jānkisī, who propounded the same ideas, were widely popular in the eighteenth century.

In the first half of the nineteenth century Mahambet Utimisuf (1804–46) occupied a prominent position on the political and literary scene. He was the hero of a popular uprising

⁸ It may be of some interest to note that when the ruler of Kashghar in 1712 sent an embassy to the Mughal emperor Bahādur Shāh (1707–12), the letter accompanying it was probably in Uighur: Bahādur Shāh, who knew Chaghatay Turki well, read it aloud, but remarked that its language was a little different from the Turki he knew (Hādī Kāmwar Khān, 1980, p. 131).

against the oppression and despotism of those in power. An important feature of his poetry was that it was both sung out and written and so bridged the gap between oral poetry and written verse.

Karakalpak (Qara-Qālpāq) literature

Although Karakalpak literature is rooted in an age-old oral tradition, it was only quite recently that a written literature came into being. The main Karakalpak writers are Jian Jirau, Kun Khwāja, Ajiniyaz (Hāji Niyāz) and Berdakh (Birdāq). Ajiniyaz (1824–78) wrote both in the Karakalpak language and in Kazakh. His lyrics combine civic themes with the theme of love and are of a high artistic level. Berdakh (1827–1900) is the most important representative of Karakalpak literature, but belongs essentially to the period after 1850. His verses contain sentiments of affection for the homeland. He freely acknowledges his debt to masters in other Turkic languages:

I ran away from jingles,
I learnt grammar from Nawā'ī,
Fuzūlī helped me to string words like pearls.
I searched for eloquence and I found
No defects in the words of Makhtumkuli [Makhdum Qulī].

Kyrgyz literature⁹

The Kyrgyz oral folk tradition is many centuries old. The poets expressed the thoughts and aspirations of the people in their tales (*dāstāns*). Few of these folk poets set down their compositions in written form.

During the first half of the nineteenth century the folk poet Kalygul (1785–1855) composed *Akyr zamān* [Doomsday] and Arystanbek (1824–78) wrote the *Tār zamān* [Time of Suffering]. Both lived in the Issyk-kul region. Their works, devoted to a description of the harsh life of their compatriots, were highly popular. Folk poets of later times, Qilich Shimirkanov or Molda Qilich (1875–1917) and Is'hak *akin* (Is'hāq, b. 1880), continued these traditions.

⁹ Some facts have been incorporated here on the basis of a note from Dr Anara Tabyshalieva. It should be noted that the description of the history of literature in all languages in this volume has 1850 as its rough terminal point – Eds.

Turkmen literature

Turkmen literature is best reflected in its poetry. Dovletmammet (Daulat Muhammad) ‘Azadi’ (1700–60) composed didactic verses in Turkmen, but Turkmen poetry reached its high point with his son Makhtumkuli (Makhdum Qulī) ‘Piraqi’ (Firāqī) (1733–83). Exaltation of and love of humanity and a whole-hearted commitment to its wellbeing are the leitmotifs of Makhtumkuli’s lyrics:

Whoever is known to the people for his goodness
Will be thanked and raised high.
He who does evil, who has forgotten what is good,
Loses respect, and shall be held as lower than a dog.

Makhtumkuli sings the praises of his homeland. The poet teaches that the loss of one’s country is the greatest of misfortunes:

O heart, I exhort you,
Forsake not your motherland,
Serve not an alien,
One who is beneath you and unworthy.

The main representatives of Turkmen literature of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century are the poets Mamedvali (Muhammad Walī), ‘Kamina’ (1770–1840), Seyyidnazar Seyyidi (Sayyid Nazar Sayyidī) (1775–1836), Kurbandurdy (Qurbān Durdy), Zelili (1785–1846), Mullā Nepes (Nafas) (1810–62) and Murād Tālibī (1766–1848). All of them were influenced by the poetry of Makhtumkuli. They continued his tradition in Turkmen literature, the essence of which was the praise of goodness and justice, truth and beauty.¹⁰

Turkic epic poetry

Much literature in the Turkic languages was orally transmitted, and in such literature epic tales occupied a special place. The Kyrgyz epic poem *Manas* is one of the major works of oral folk poetry (see Volume IV, Part Two, pp. 403–10, for a detailed study). The warrior Manas unites all the Kyrgyz clans under his leadership and revives the Kyrgyz state in the Talas region. He then carries out the Great March, which ends in victory. The warrior Almambet shows himself to be a true comrade-in-arms of Manas in all his campaigns and battles. Kanukai, the daughter of the ruler of Bukhara, is faithful to her lifelong friend

¹⁰ See Gulī, [1366/1988](#). This book contains unpublished documents and extracts from poems.

Manas and exemplifies loyalty, faithfulness and courage. The task begun by Manas is continued by his descendants. Semetei, the son of Kanukai and Manas, and their grandson Seitek are shown as uniting the Kyrgyz under their leadership and guidance to act successfully against all opponents. The *Manaschis*, *Manas* story-tellers, keep in their memory more than 250,000 verses of this epic.

The epic poem *Alpamysh* is very popular among the Uzbeks. It is in two parts, the first of which is devoted to the love of the warrior Alpamysh for the beautiful Barchin. This love withstands many trials and tribulations and is ultimately triumphant. The first part of the poem ends with the marriage of the lovers. The second part deals with the evil deeds of Kalmuk (Qalmāq) invaders in the land of Barchin's parents. Alpamysh struggles heroically against the Kalmuk khans, defeats the self-styled ruler Ultan and proceeds to unify the dispersed Kongrat (Qonqrāt) tribes. Alpamysh is no conqueror. He unites his people and establishes peace and order in the land. The love of Alpamysh and Barchin forms a thread running through the entire poem, giving it a special fascination and charm.

The Kazakh epic poem *Koblandy batir* deals with the great deeds of the warrior Qoblandī against foreign invaders. The tale relates how Toqtar Bī and Anāluq of the Kipchak clan are overjoyed at the birth of a son in their old age. The child, whom they call Qoblandī, grows into a bold and fearless youth famed for his skill as a hunter and as a champion in martial contests. He wins the hand of the beautiful Kortkā, daughter of Khān Koktim. When the Qizilbāsh begin to lay waste to the Kipchak lands, Qoblandī leads the struggle against them. Following a number of victories and misfortunes, Qoblandī beats ᶜĀlamgīr, the enemy leader, in single-handed combat and saves his clan from the yoke of the aggressors.

The Karakalpak epic the *Kirk kiz* [The Forty Maidens] creates images of heroic defenders of their native lands. The events of the poem are set in Karakalpak country in the Aral Sea area. The Forty Maidens, headed by the beautiful and intrepid heroine Gulaim, wage war against the enemy hordes that have attacked their land, with the support of their fellow countrymen. Gulaim, leader of the Forty Maidens, is portrayed as a patriot and a fearless leader. There is also an amorous strain in the poem, expressed in a somewhat humorous tone (e.g. scenes of the passage of the herdsman Zarintāj, Gulaim's fiancé, and other scenes). The scenery of the Karakalpak country is described in *The Forty Maidens*, which dwells on the beauty of its steppes, rivers, lakes and flower gardens. There are also passages that reflect conditions of the day-to-day existence, family life and occupations of the people.

The epic of Korkut is a Turkmen creation. The Turkmen tribe of Bayundur is at the centre of attention in the Oghuz epic poem the *Kitāb-i Dedem Korkut*, which contains

many legends. The events relate to the period between the middle of the fourteenth century and the middle of the fifteenth century. The Bayundur tribesmen are depicted in the poem as leaders of the Oghuz. The songs of which the poem consists deal with a number of subjects. *The Song of the Bold Domrul* tells the story of a youth who raises his sword against Azrail, the angel of death. Nobody goes to the assistance of the youth. Only his young wife is prepared to sacrifice herself for Domrul. Tales of the blinding of the Cyclops Denegez by the young Oghuz warrior Bisat are also popular.

The epic tale of Sālors of Kazan tells the story of how the entire Kazan family is seized by *giaours* (infidels), who prepare a savage punishment for the captives. Aided only by a herdsman, Kazan and his men rescue the captives. The infidels are harshly punished for their evil deeds. Korkut himself was a wise patriarch, an adviser to the khan. His sayings are set down in the book as a separate collection of aphorisms.

The *dāstāns* (tales), songs, proverbs, riddles and other forms of Turkic folklore, first transmitted orally and now in written form, have greatly enriched the literature of the Turkic peoples.

Part Two

THE EPIC TRADITION AND HISTORICAL LITERATURE IN TURKIC

(*ĭ. Togan*)

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, an Egyptian historical source tells us of:

a book called the *Oghuz-nāma* which goes from hand to hand among the Oghuz Turks. In this book occurs the story of a person named Dabakuz [Tebeköz, Tepegöz] who ravaged the lands of the early Turks and killed their great men. They say he was an ugly and loathsome man with a single eye on the top of his head. . . They have many well-known tales and stories about him, which circulate among them to this day and are learned by heart by their sagacious men who are skilled in the playing of their lute [*kopuz*].¹¹

The cycle of legends of Oghuz Khan, the legendary ruler of the Oghuz, consists of the different versions of the history of Oghuz Khan as well as offshoots of this cycle, such

¹¹ Lewis, 1982.

as *Köroğlu* or *Guroğlu*. Many different legends are found within the *Oghuz-nāma* texts. Even the well-known account of the conversion to Islam of the Karakhanid ruler Satuq Bughra Khan has aspects that tie it to the *Oghuz-nāma* lore.¹² Some scholars see a relationship between Alp Bamsy (Bamsy Beyrek) of the *Kitāb-i Dedem Korkut* and Alpamsha (Alpamysh); others emphasize that ‘its plot is connected with heroic folk-tales sung among the people of the Altai’.¹³ A similar connection to the *Oghuz-nāma* is visualized for the epic of *Manas*. The hero’s magic horse (the winged *tulpar*, the *kirat*, the *akkula*) are motifs that can be found in *Guroğlu* (*Köroğlu*), *Alpamysh* and *Manas*; whereas the hero’s miraculous birth, his magic invulnerability, his sleep of death are what bring *Alpamysh* and *Manas* together.

The *Oghuz-nāma* legends describe the struggle between Oghuz and Turk, at the end of which the Oghuz people came to be known as Turks. But in legend and lore it is Oghuz Khan who survives the struggle. In offshoots of the *Oghuz-nāma* such as *Guroğlu* (*Köroğlu*), *Alpamysh* and *Manas*, a great variety of Turkic peoples seek their heritage.

While the *Oghuz-nāma* tradition with its variants is shared throughout Central Asia and Anatolia, the Chinggisid tradition exemplified in the *Chinggis-nāma* is particular to Central Asia and the Volga-Ural region. Works that used the Chinggisid tradition as their starting-point were known as *Chinggis-nāmas* or *Khān-nāmas*.

There are different versions of works known as *Chinggis-nāma* which were extant both in the Volga-Ural region and in the Tarim basin. The Volga-Ural version known as the *Daftar-i Chinggisnama* survives in more than 40 manuscripts. The *Chinggis-nāmas* traditionally start by focusing on Chinggis Khan but are often extended to recount the deeds of non-Chinggisid figures such as Edigü Beg in the tales of *Edige* and *Temür* in the *Timur-nāmas*. The popularity of Edige, the hero who did not subordinate himself either to a khan (Toqtamysh) or to a *beg* (Temür), is shown by the number of *Edige* editions published in many of the former Soviet republics.

The *Chinggis-nāma* literature portrays the struggles between the two brothers, Tatar (some of the pre-thirteenth-century Turks as well as later Turkic people are still known as Tatars) and Moghul. Out of this struggle emerged the Turco-Mongol people in history, Turkic in speech but with traditions of their rulers going back to Chinggis Khan. It is of great interest to see how these two developing traditions, conveyed orally but written down from time to time, continuously went on being incorporated in what may be called the more formal historiography of the Turkic peoples.

¹² Togan, 1930, pp. 3–53.

¹³ Giffen, 1999, p. 92.

This historiography was initially heir to the universalistic approach that had been derived in Persian from the historiographical method adopted in the Arabic annals of Ya^cqūbī and Tabarī.¹⁴ During the Mongol period (thirteenth–fourteenth centuries) this framework was expanded with the addition of a new component, the Turco-Mongol one. In Iran, the Ilkhānid vizier Rashīdu'ddīn's work the *Jāmi^c al-tawārīkh* [Collection of Histories] (in Arabic and Persian, early fourteenth century)¹⁵ is the best illustration of this new trend. The Turkic and Mongolian annals incorporated into the *Jāmi^c al-tawārīkh* make us aware of the rich repertoire of formerly untapped information that existed in the form of oral traditions. *The Secret History of the Mongols*¹⁶ and the *Shengwu qinzhenglu*,¹⁷ two real histories written in the thirteenth century for the Mongols in Inner Asia and China, were the forerunners of the *Jāmi^c al-tawārīkh* in the conversion of Mongolian oral tradition into written history.

This trend of incorporating oral traditions into historiography continued well into the nineteenth century. What was mainly new was that, although the starting-point of the histories remained Adam and, then, Noah in accordance with the Islamic tradition, the emphasis shifted to the genealogies of Turco-Mongol lore. The universalistic trend was thus narrowed down, though the methodology itself remained unchanged.

There were two aspects to this methodology: one was the need for contextualization;¹⁸ the second, the use of oral traditions. To meet the need for contextualization, histories either started with the Islamic or the Chinggisid framework or both. When they were used together, the latter, at least in theory, stood in contradiction to the former, because the latter emphasized dynastic rule, whereas the former emphasized religion. But for the people who wrote their own histories this theoretical contradiction did not present any problems. From the nineteenth century onwards, on the other hand, as assertions of identity and the desire to be known as separate peoples on particular territories grew and the concept of nation took root, the Islamic framework began to be discarded.

The second aspect of the methodology is that when the past of a given group was increasingly emphasized, oral accounts provided the writer with much of the information (real or imaginary) that he needed. In this case the Chinggisid tradition at hand provided a

¹⁴ *EF²*, art. 'Yakubī' (C. Brockelman); Frye, 2000, p. 154.

¹⁵ Bosworth, 2000, pp. 148–50.

¹⁶ Bira, 2000, pp. 156–8.

¹⁷ Pelliot and Hambis, 1951.

¹⁸ Strictly speaking, writing the history of nation states does not require contextualization; nation states are regarded as given. Among the Turco-Mongol peoples, with their nomadic background, the need for context seems to be associated with their need to define themselves in cosmological terms. What was cosmological at the beginning evolved later into religious and tribal contexts which we today call ethnic history.

convenient framework, especially since all rulers of Turkic peoples in Central Asia directly or indirectly claimed a Chinggisid lineage. Modern historiography, on the other hand, struggled for a long time to liberate history from elements of legend and lore. Accordingly, while the historiographical works from Central Asia of our period show how particular traditions perceived the past, modern criticism of these works is directed to discover and expunge what had only been imagined. Today, however, there is an increasing concern with the perceptions these works display and the material and social context in which they need to be placed. Thus works which had earlier been discounted as factually unreliable are now often being restudied from this point of view.¹⁹

A modification of the universalist approach of Rashīdu'ddīn, by narrowing it down to the Turco-Mongol world and thus providing a context, was a process that had already started in Timurid times.²⁰ This localization should be understood in terms of peoples rather than geographic regions. The Turco-Mongol people at this time were to be found in the Tarim basin, in Transoxania, Khurasan, the Kazakh steppes, the Volga-Ural region and the (former) Dasht-i Qipchaq (Kipchak steppe, modern western Kazakhstan).

By the sixteenth century, histories of the Turco-Mongol world were being woven around stories of the *Chinggis-nāma* and *Oghuz-nāma*. A chronological look at historiographical works from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century shows how they sometimes incorporate both the *Oghuz-nāma* and the *Chinggis-nāma* traditions, and sometimes treat them separately. We can see many examples of Turco-Mongol historiography in the Turkic languages. One of the earliest examples is the *Tawārīkh-i Guzīda-i Nusrat-nāma* [Selected Histories of the Book of Victory], which covers the period up to the year 1505 during the reign of Shaybānī Khān. The material for the first part of this work of disputed authorship draws on both the *Oghuz-nāma* and *Chinggis-nāma* texts. Earlier, under the Timurid ruler Ulugh Beg (1394–1449), a historical work, the *Shajaratul Atrāk* [Genealogy of the Turks], had been written in Persian by making use of the Islamic framework interwoven with the *Oghuznāma* and *Chinggis-nāma* traditions. The *Tawārīkh-i Guzīda-i Nusrat-nāma* does not dwell on the Islamic framework, but uses the *Oghuz-nāma* and *Chinggis-nāma* to connect the Chinggisid Shaybānī Khān to earlier ethnic traditions and history.

Another work from the sixteenth century is that of Ötemish Hājī, written in Eastern Turki in the middle of the sixteenth century and known as the *Tārīkh-i Dust Sultan* or simply the *Chinggis-nāma*. This work starts with the history of Chinggis Khan and deals with Ulus Jöchi of the Golden Horde; as Hoffman notes, it considers Khwarazm, Astarkhan and

¹⁹ As, for example, in Penrose, 1975, and DeWeese, 1994. Philology is also a great source of insights here, as Penrose, 1975, pp. 4–5, points out.

²⁰ Bosworth, 2000, pp. 150–2.

Tuva as one country.²¹ The work is a mine of information on the Noghays in the Dasht-i Qipchaq, and on Crimea. For this reason it was incorporated into the work of the Crimean ʿAbduʿl Ghaffār, which is how it became known to modern scholarship. In terms of language, it incorporates both Kipchak and Oghuz elements, a characteristic of Khwarazm. Only a very few copies exist. One incomplete version was published as the *Chingiz-name* by Abuseidova.²² The complete Istanbul manuscript is being prepared for publication.²³ Besides the legend and lore, the work is rich in its use of such political and cultural terminology as ‘partner to rule’ for power-sharing in tribal sovereignty.

In the seventeenth century the Khivan ruler Abūʿl Ghāzī Bahādur Khān wrote two works: the *Shajara-i Turk*, which is based on the *Chinggis-nāma*, and the *Shajara-i Tarākima* which incorporates the *Oghuz-nāma*. The former work, a general history of the Turco-Mongol peoples written in Chaghatay, is available in a French translation.²⁴ It is an example of how the Islamic tradition that started with Noah’s son Yafeth became linked first with the *Oghuz-nāma* tradition, and then with the Mongol tradition which goes back to the Mongol ancestress Alan Goa. Among the works consulted by Abūʿl Ghāzī were the *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh* and many *Oghuz-nāmas* as well as *Chinggis-nāmas*. He speaks of 17 different *Chinggis-nāmas*. The *Shajara-i Tarākima* [Genealogy of the Turkmens] is a history of the Turkmens who are also Oghuz. This work of Abūʿl Ghāzī is a good illustration of how written materials, such as the *Oghuz-nāma* of Rashīduʿddīn²⁵ and others, could be used as sources of information alongside oral traditions, such as those known from the *Kitāb-i Dedem Korkut*.²⁶ The use of the Oghuz or Chinggisid framework facilitated the shift from an Islamic to a Turco-Mongol context, while providing an opening for increasingly localized histories. Such tribal histories, or histories of small groups, continued to be written among the Kazakhs, Kyrgyz and Bashkirs where tribal ties and memories were strong.

In addition to universalist history and the history of certain peoples (local annals), we also find historical accounts centred around single persons. The unique example of an autobiography is furnished by the famous memoirs of Bābur in Chaghatay; his daughter Gulbadan Begum also left her memoirs, though in Persian. Bābur’s contemporary, Shaybānī Khān, on the other hand, made himself known through literary works which

²¹ Hoffman, 1969, Vol. 6, pp. 72–4.

²² Yudin et al., 1992.

²³ See DeWeese, 1994.

²⁴ Desmaisons, 1871.

²⁵ For which, see Jahn, 1969.

²⁶ Lewis, 1982.

make the reader aware of the mentality of that time.²⁷ Mīrzā Haydar Dughlāt of Kashghar (1499–1551) is another statesman who wrote a history of the Turks, the *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī*, in Persian in the mid-sixteenth century. Haydar Dughlāt made use of earlier historical works and appended to it an eye-witness account of his own time. It was a model followed by Abū'l Ghāzī, writing a century later.

In other cases the accounts were written by a third person. One of the earliest examples of such works is Muhammad Sālih's *Shaybānī-nāma*, composed in verse in Chaghatay Turki. It followed the model of the *Shāh-nāma* of Firdausi, a style much in vogue among the descendants of Shaybānī Khān, who also had their histories written in this form, e.g. the *Ubaydullāh-nāma* and the *Abdullāh-nāma*.

Trends similar to those in historiography can also be seen in hagiography. Writing history that focuses on one person was a well-established tradition within hagiography, where the context was provided by the *silsila*, the chain of preceptors going back mostly to °Alī, but in the case of the Naqshbandis, to Abū Bakr. Some of these hagiographies had a structure similar to historical works such as Haydar Dughlāt's *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī*, where the past was written using historical works and the contemporary circumstances were described on the basis of the author's own observations. Some were accounts of a specific saintly line, like the *Tazkira-i °Azīzān* [Notices of Friends] (1768–9) by Muhammad Sādiq Kāshgharī; others were translations of earlier works with additions of accounts of that time. Examples of such hagiographical works include the *Majmu'at al-Muhaqqiqīn* (1793–4) by Sādiq Yārquandī²⁸ and the *Tazkirat al-Hidāyat bi'l Hayriyat*, both of which were written in praise of a saint in the eighteenth-century Tarim basin.

Together with all these works seeking for context and containing oral traditions, we become aware of yet another trend which paved the way for the changes in the nineteenth century. In this new trend, existing oral accounts were disregarded. One of the earliest such works is the *Tārīkh* [History] (in Persian) of Shāh Mahmūd Churās (*fl.* 1670), which is very different from his own hagiographical work, the *Anīs al-Tālibīn* [Friend of the Seekers]. Churās' *History* presents detailed annals of the Chaghatayid dynasty of khans in the Tarim basin. He includes oral traditions in his hagiographical work, but excludes them from his *History*. Although we do not know why he did so, we can see him and contemporaneous

²⁷ See Bodrogligeti, 1993–4, pp. 85–100; 1994, pp. 41–57.

²⁸ This work was written in Persian, but was subsequently translated into Eastern Turki by Mulla Muhammad Satqin (Storey, 1953, Vol. 1, p. 1035).

authors in the Ottoman empire as forerunners of a new trend in which historians dealt with facts rather than traditions and myths.

Part Three

MONGOLIAN LITERATURE

(G. Kara)

The late sixteenth century saw the adoption of Buddhism and the renewal of the cult of Chinggis Khan among the Mongols. Both had as their context the contemporary attempts to restore the unity of Mongolia as a political entity. Through his alliance of 1578 with the Dalai Lama, Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho, the Altan Khan of the Southern Mongol Tümed opened the way for Tibetan spiritual influence to penetrate Mongolia. Mongolia now received not only Buddhist but also other ancient Indian literary works. Other princes of the Northern and Western Mongols joined his cause. New monasteries, settled centres of religious and cultural life, were founded in the Blue City (Hohhot), the Altan Khan's capital and elsewhere, for instance, in the Orkhon valley near the ruins of Karakorum, where Erdeni Dzuu, the 'Jewel Shrine', was built.

In distant corners of the Mongol world many learned monks and literate laymen were eager to find and copy the extant old Buddhist writings, to prepare translations into Mongolian and to write new works. To mention only two of them, the medieval version of the *Eulogy of Manjushri's Names* was re-edited in 1592 and Shirab Sengge's early thirteenth-century translation of the *Golden Beam Sutra* was reprinted. Ayushi Güüshi, a disciple of the third Dalai Lama, not only created an extended alphabet for the exact rendering of Indian names and words but also developed a new style and rewrote several old translations, including Shirab Sengge's version of the magic *Books of the Five Guardians* (Sanskrit: *Pancharaksha*).

Shire'etu Güüshi Chorji (fl. early sixteenth century) is the translator of the stories of *The Wise and the Fool* (also known as the *Ocean of Parables*). He also translated the *Hundred Thousand Songs* of the Tibetan hermit poet, the 'Cotton-Clad Mila', and his *Vita* (at the request of Prince Tsoktu of Khalkha), and the 12-volume *Yum* section of the Buddhist canon (the stanzas of a long postscript exalt the Altan Khan and the Golden Clan of

Chinggis, ‘reincarnation of Indra, the king of gods’). Shire’etu put the moving story of the generous Prince Immaculate All-Perfect (Dri-med Kun-ldan) into good Mongolian verse. This is akin to the Indian Buddhist *Vessantara Jataka*, which too was very popular among the Mongols. ‘If you like to cry, read Ushaandar, if you like to laugh, read Iladandi,’ they say; the latter name refers to the tragicomic Brahman Niladanda in a tale of the *Ocean of Parables*. Shire’etu’s and others’ Mongolian version of the non-canonical story of Monk Molon, who saves her sinful mother from the bottom of hell, was the source of popular hand-painted picture books, some simply and others lavishly illustrated.

Another favoured narrative of Tibetan origin was *Lady Chojjid’s Travels in and Return from the Underworld*, where all sins are duly punished. Real travel accounts follow later; among these are the itinerary of the Khalkha monk Jibdzundamba’s journey to Erdeni Dzuu in the late eighteenth century, the account by the Tsongol abbot Dambadarjaa, Dzaya’s son, of his Tibetan journey in 1734–41, the Oirat Baaza Bakshi’s pilgrimage, etc. See also the Zaya Pandita’s travels in his *Vita*.

By order of the Chahar Ligdan Khan, the last ruler who tried to revive the Mongol empire, a great number of men of letters took part in the compilation of the Mongolian *Kanjur* (1629), the core part of the Buddhist scriptures. Many works in it received versified postscripts glorifying the sponsor, the ‘Holy Emperor’, as Chinggis Khan’s avatar. Many of these verses are repeated in the Manchu (Qing) imperial edition of the Mongolian *Kanjur*. Some large books are known in several independent versions; for instance, the canonical *Ocean of Parables* was also translated in the seventeenth century by Toyin Gūūshi, the Abaga Tsulrimloroi, the Oirat Zaya Pandita, etc. Gunggaa Odser, Dayun Darkhan Siku Gūūshi and Samdan Sengge are the most frequently mentioned Mongol translators in the *Kanjur*. They contributed much to creating standard forms of literary expression in Mongolian.

Some of the finest monuments of Mongolian verse are preserved in the Chinggisid Prince Tsoktu’s rock inscriptions (1624) in west-central Mongolia. In the first of these inscriptions, which is a religio-political text, the prince pays homage to Buddhist deities and the ‘Holy Emperor’, his ally, the Chahar ruler. The second inscription from the same year contains a song of 1621, in the quatrains of which the warrior prince confesses his longing for his beloved aunt and in colourful images suggests that feelings can unite gods in heaven and rulers on earth, bodhisattvas in the Akanishta paradise and the enlightened ones among people, custodians in hell and officials of the rulers, poor and hungry humans and beasts as well as aunt and nephew despite all the distance and differences. The last quatrain is the benediction:

If we cannot meet again in this life,

Let it be so that we care and help each other
By all means in all our future lives
Like a mother loves her only little child.

The date of the first inscription is also given in the years of Chinggis Khan, who had now become a symbol of Mongol unity. A fragmentary manuscript of a poem entitled *The Prince's Worry* (found in 1950 in central Mongolia) is thought to be by Tsoktu.

Chinggis Khan's glorious figure and his sayings reappear in seventeenth century writings in verse and prose such as the *Great Confession*, the *Key for the Mind* (a rather didactic Buddhist poem) and in the witty *Orphan Boy's Dispute*, in which Chinggis Khan's Nine Great Knights are engaged in a discussion with the Orphan Boy about drinking. The Orphan (and the text) argues in favour of moderation. The *Story of the Two Grey Steeds* of Chinggis Khan, known in both verse and prose versions, relates how Chinggis' two favourite horses feel neglected and flee from their lord, how he grieves, how his men try in vain to catch the fugitives and how the elder horse longs for Chinggis and finally how, the elder persuading the younger, they themselves return to him.

The tragic story of *Prince Ubashi* (in prose with dialogues in verse) is a literary echo of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century wars between the Eastern and Western Mongols. Unable to find the Oirat army, the Khalkha prince's warriors capture a brave Oirat boy. Interrogated by the prince, he defies torture and death and does not reveal his people's hiding place. His heart is sacrificed to the Khalkha standard, but he turns out to be the guardian spirit of the Oirats and leads them to victory. The Khalkha forces perish in the battle.

The writing of histories of the country, its noble families and their faith, starts in this period. The *White History* (1578) of the Khutughtu Chogchasun Jiruken Daiching Sechen Khongtaiji, or the Holy Wise Prince of the Ordos, has come down to us in several later copies. Piously ascribed to Emperor Qubilay, this compilation preaches the Two Principles, i.e. the equality of religious and secular rule where the latter should be the generous donor. A most original work in verse is the history of the Altan Khan's deeds, the *Jewel Translucent Sutra* (1607?). The *Yellow History* was one of the sources of the classical *Jewel Summary* (1662) of the Ordos Prince Sagang the Sage, who, following its Tibetan models, begins with the Indian myth of cosmogony and connects the lineages of the Indian rulers and the Buddha's clan with that of the Tibetan emperors and the ancestors of Chinggis Khan. It abounds in historical legends (for instance, the anecdote as to how the khan takes the form of a grey-haired old commoner and artfully suppresses his boastful brothers' pride; and the story of the courageous Lady Mandukhai, who fought for the cause of Dayan Khan, her ruler, who was still a child but already her husband). It is adorned with

numerous poetical passages both of Sagang's own inspiration (for instance, with philosophical stanzas) and of oral or written tradition (see, for instance, the long funeral song that accompanies the starting of the cart with Chinggis' corpse, or the lament of Toghon Temür, the last Yüan emperor). In the eighteenth century, Sagang's *Summary* was printed in Manchu and Chinese translations. Similar histories with common passages are the *Shorter (Anonymous) Golden Summary* and Lubsangdandzin's *Longer Golden Summary*. The latter author still had access to a version of the thirteenth-century *Secret History* and copied long passages of it into his work.

Oktoquin Dalai, the Oirat Zaya Pandita (1599–1662), studied in Tibet and travelled between his homeland and the Volga to disseminate the Buddha's Law among Eastern and Western Mongols. To eliminate the ambiguities of the Uighur letters in which Mongolian was written, he created the Clear Script (1648) and established a new literary language to bridge the gap between that of the old books and the living tongue. He translated many works from Tibetan and wrote ornate colophons in verse. A long translation of his is that of the Tibetan apocryphal *Mani bka'-'bum* [Pearl, the Hundred Thousand Words], which he finished for the Oirats in a monastery on the upper Irtysh, under the 'western side of the Altai bearing various berries' (1644). Its two heavy volumes were printed in the Uighur script in 1735 in Beijing, the Qing capital. This Pandita's life is known from his faithful disciple Ratnabhadra's *Moonlight* (1690s), which is full of reliable information about his teacher's deeds, his contemporaries and the tempestuous times in which they lived. In Biligun Dalai's *Wish-fulfilling Gem Rosary* (1679), the Vita of Monk Neichi, we learn about the life of another famous Oirat who worked among the Eastern Mongols.

Agwaangchoidan Shirabdarjai's *Pearl Rosary* (1729), written first in Mongolian and then in Tibetan, is a voluminous biography of the first Jangjaa/ Lcang-skya Khutughtu, the influential Buddhist high priest and a prolific Tibetan writer in Beijing, which was the main centre for the block-printing of Mongolian and Tibetan books in the Chinese part of the Qing empire. Head of the Beijing Tibetan school in the early eighteenth century, the 'tetraglot' Chinggisid nobleman Gombojab compiled the short genealogical history of Chinggis Khan's Golden Clan called the *Flow of the Ganges*. He also authored a Tibetan history of Chinese Buddhism, published a Mongolian textbook, *Easy Learning Tibetan*, for his compatriots, and took an important part in the preparations of the Qing imperial edition of the 333-volume print of the Mongolian Buddhist scriptures that included not only the *Kanjur* (1717–20) and the *Tanjur* (1742–49), but also the huge literary *oeuvre* of Blo-bzang grags-pa Tsong-kha-pa, the great reformer of Tibetan Buddhism, as well as the collected works of the first Jangjaa Khutughtu. Among other Indian literary works, the

Tanjur transmitted to the Mongols Kalidasa's *Cloud Messenger*, Dandin's *Mirror of Verse* and Panini's *Grammar*.

Religious and secular history and genealogies intertwine in the Jarut monk Ulemji Biligtu Erdeni Gūūshi Dharma's *Thousand-Spoked Golden Wheel* (1739), the Ordos Gūūshi Lubsanglunggrub's *Lamp of Wisdom* (1757) and the Baarin nobleman Rashipungsug's *Crystal Rosary* (1774–5). A much later work in the same tradition is Jimbadorji's *Crystal Mirror* (1837). Fewer Oirat histories were written or have survived: two such are the eighteenth-century lama-physician Gabang Sharab's work and the *History of the Four Oirats* (1819) by the Khoshot prince Ba'atur Ubashi Tūmen. The first Buriat histories appeared only in the late nineteenth century, except for the *Khori Buriat Chronicles* by D. Darbaayin (1830s). According to the myth preserved in the *Khori Buriat Chronicles*, their Eleven Forefathers descended from the union of their ancestor with a swan-maiden, captured while bathing in a lake. Buriat chronicles and a ballad preserve the memory of Shildei Janggi, who transgressed the Russo-Chinese frontier, then newly established across his pastures; he was sentenced and beheaded. (A song similar to the Buriat ballad but altered and attached to another event is known from Ordos.) The first Selenga Buriat (= Northern Khalkha) history was written by D. D. Gempilon in 1833.

Parallel to the revival of Buddhist literature, the shamans' invocations and rituals as well as prayers and benedictions of folk religion – for instance, the cult of fire and wedding ceremonies – were written down in verse and prose and copied in numerous manuscripts.

A prose and verse block-printed version of the Mongolian *Geser* epic appeared in Beijing in 1716. The narrative came from eastern Tibet, presumably in the late sixteenth and during the seventeenth centuries; making its way from oral tradition to writing and back to oral tradition in the next centuries, it fell on fertile soil in the Mongol pastures, and its influence is felt up to the far northern Buriat folklore in the epics, *Abai Geser Khubuun* and *Alamzhi Mergen and His Little Sister Aguu the Fair*. It became as indigenous as the *Khan Kharangui* epic of the Khalkhas, the *Jangar* of the Kalmuks and many other sagas of the Eastern and Western Mongols. The Indo-Tibetan tales of the *Bewitched Corpse* reached the Mongols and engendered similar collections in the seventeenth century. Tradition holds that Indian refugees brought the tales of the *Thirty-two Wooden Men* to the Mongols at about the same time.

A Buddhist priest and versatile writer, Mergen Gegen of Hohhot, Lubsangdambijalsan by name and Urat by origin (1717–66), has left a huge *oeuvre* consisting of religious lyrics, songs, prayers, benedictions, hymns, eulogies, didactic poems and versified dialogues as well as vivid scholastic debates, competitions in question-and-answer form, verses for rituals and an *Altan Tobchi* [Golden History] (1765). In addition, he compiled a new translation

of the Saskya Pandita's *Treasury of Good Sayings*, in Tibetan-style isosyllabic Mongolian verses with a strong beat:

Let us rejoice here in health for ever
 In this great and marvellous country
 By the merit that the precious lord
 The holy Chinggis gathered in the past.

With these lines he begins a feasting song of seven strophes. In a prayer he writes:

I am silly to keep silk and cloth like vows,
 O Teacher, lead me to salvation.
 Your country where you live, ah ah oh
 Is on the bank of the Shindang river, oh oh ah. . .

He then starts a playful song which turns into pious advice. Such strophes already occur in the Sa-skya Pandita's *Sayings*. In a long debate with the Kalachakra priest of the White Lotus Shrine (Badgar), he answers the first question:

That what is higher than anything
 Means heaven, the sky,
 And the one called 'a mirror with no cracks'
 Means the sun and the moon,
 O skilful priest of charms.

The poet converses with birds about the *samsara* (universe) in a dialogue (15 stanzas). In a drinking song (7 stanzas) he offers his fellow priests brandy that he calls the gift or the ambrosia of Tantric deities; in another song he presents the mutton brought in 'by the merit of the wide land of Mongolia' for the banquet of friends bound by 'immaculate blessing' and 'all buddhas' grace'.

Already an old lama, Agwaangdampil (1700–80), who had also participated in the Mongolian edition of the Buddhist canon, put Blo-bzang bstanpa'i rgyal-mtshan's (1708–64) Tibetan novel of the *Moon Cuckoo* into Mongolian verse and prose. This is the story of a young king whose human body and throne are stolen by his treacherous minister while the king takes the body of a dead bird. The king in the bird's body reaches enlightenment and preaches the Buddha's teaching for the benefit of all sentient beings.

The Chahar Gebshi Lubsangtsulrim (1740–1810), monk, translator, founder of the Monastery on the White Mountain in Chahar, printer, writer and poet, wrote a Mongolian biography of Tsong-kha-pa (*Source of All Happiness*, 1791) and presented one more version of the Sa-skya Pandita's aphorisms in sophisticated Mongolian verse with a commentary. He also composed an elegant version of the Arthasiddhi story and translated *The*

Pearl Rosary: Teaching on the Two Principles of Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho, the fifth Dalai Lama (1787). In his admonitions he ridicules superstition and hypocrisy:

Not the bark of dogs at dawn in front of a door is an evil omen,
 But the cry of a drunken monk at dawn is indeed an evil omen.
 Not an evening cock-a-doodle-do is an evil omen,
 But the evening wail of a drunken monk is indeed an evil omen.

He also enjoys parallels like the following:

Bitter is the smoke of the bad grass and the bad wood smoke.
 Bitter is [to hear] what the bad men utter.
 Bitter is [to see] what the bad monks do.
 Bitter is [to feel the heat of] the sun in a bad summer.

In his ritual for the cult of fire he says:

It is a pleasure to the playful lover to enjoy the union
 With the lovely, delightful playmate, pleasant to mind,
 But grief seizes him when he thinks about separation and lonely death
 Like that of a little lark struggling in a hawk's talons.

He composed a verse on *Gratefulness for the Parents' Grace* and wrote *The Story of Seven Maidens*. He deals with literary theory in the *Source of All Prosperity* (1786). He also wrote in Tibetan; his collected Tibetan works in 10 volumes contain many rituals, prayers, hymns to be pronounced at incense offerings for the God of the Fireplace (its Mongolian original printed in Chahar was widely known), for the White Old Man of the mountains and for the Chinese god of war Guanlaoye (often identified with Geser Khan, the divine epic hero), and rituals involving mare's-milk libations, etc. His life, *The One that Makes the Lotus of the Faith Smile* (1817), was written by his disciple Lubsangsamrubnima.

Chinese popular novels and short stories in both written and oral form, in the original and in Manchu translations, then in Mongolian, began to attract Mongol audiences, especially in the south-eastern communities in the late eighteenth century. Storytellers retold in prose, or sang in Mongolian, verses of some of these narratives translated into Mongolian and copied in Chinese-style double-leaved notebooks. In the early nineteenth century, Kasbuu, a Tümed or Harchin Mongol, presented an abridged Mongolian version of Cao Xueqin's famous novel in Chinese, *The Dream in the Red Chamber*, along with a critical essay on the work.

An Urga abbot, Agwaangkhaidub (1779–1838), chastises the misdeeds of his fellow-monks who do not obey the Buddha's Law. In his short allegoric *Talk of the Sheep, the Goat and the Ox* he condemns killing.

A great figure of lyric and didactic poetry and a pioneer of the Mongol theatre was Rabjai, the Fifth Noble Saint of the Eastern Gobi (Dulduit's son Dandzinrabjai, 1803–56). He studied in several monasteries and travelled extensively in his homeland and on the other side of the Great Gobi up to eastern Tibet. He composed religious hymns and worldly songs in Mongolian and Tibetan. In one of his famous poems in the form of a conversation of an *Old Man with the Birds*, he too, like the Chahar Gebshi, deals with the question of eternal change and the ephemeral nature of existence. In a religious song he prays:

Deign to give us the grace of food that we do not starve.
 Deign to give us the grace of friends that we do not become orphans.
 Deign to give us the grace of a body that does not get old.
 Deign to give us the grace of vigour that does not know affliction.

In the five-times-five alliterative verses, parallel strophes of his *Five Offerings*, he extols the beauty carried by the sense organs and fields of sensation (sight, voice, fragrance, flavour and touch). This poem, born out of Tantric gnostics, has remained very popular in Mongolia. Its tone and content may be illustrated by the following quotation:

When the deed is done that we wanted to do
 In *this* life-time in the human world
 Let us rejoice and float together
 In the bottomless sea of joy which is like
 The pleasures of the wishful gods.

The Two, another song with Tantric ideas, is built on the principle of duality:

Father and Mother are the Means and the Wisdom.
 The Buddha and the Devil are the Superior and the Inferior.
 Pleasure and Pain are the Wish and the Strife (*küsel kisal qoyar*).

In the song *The Lucid Blue Sky* we read about the emptiness of all phenomena (8 quatrains). Rabjai's long poem *The Four Seasons* symbolizes the periods of human life: childhood, adulthood, old age and death. He describes the summer festivities in some 100 lines and sings songs about graceful teachers, magnificent horses and unforgettable lovers.

Rabjai's large moralistic work, the *Paper Bird* (i.e. the kite), written in verse in 1825, is preserved in several manuscript copies. It is not his only contribution to the didactic genres of Mongol literature. A similar work is his *Comfort for the Heart* (maxims in some 370 lines). In a verse where he bitterly condemns the evil deeds of the world, he goes on to repeat:

Be ashamed! Be ashamed!

Rabjai also composed a musical drama in verse: rewriting the *Moon Cuckoo* story, he himself arranged its performance (in the summer of 1831) on a twolevel stage to show parallel acts. He personally selected and trained the singers from among the people and designed their costumes.

Sandag the Fable-Teller (1825–60), Rabjai's compatriot and contemporary, master of improvised rhymes and the genre of the allegorical monologue, served in the suite of a local nobleman. His bright alliterative soliloquies speak of transitoriness and mortality, the vanity of pride (*The Words of the Melting Snow* and *Thus Spoke the Thistle Blown Away by the Wind*) and servility (*Thus Spoke the Dog Abused but Fed*); in *The Lament of the Wolf Encircled by the Hunters* the desperate beast remembers his better days. Injustice is ridiculed in Sandag's *Words about the Good and the Bad Dignitaries*.

The lyric verses of Jirgal Onchikhonov, who fell in the war against Napoleon, may be considered the beginning of a new Kalmuk literature.

Although nearer to the main Mongol territories than the Kalmuks, the small Mongol-speaking nation of the Daur in Manchuria developed their own literature in the Manchu script in the eighteenth century. Examples of their rich and unusual poetry are Chintungpu's *Drinking Song*, his *Song of the Sower* (48 quatrains) and the *Song of Fishing*, Amgulang's poem about his visit to the Russo-Chinese border and Maamagchi's song about the hardships he met on his journey to the Ganjuur Sume fair.

Wangchingbala (1794–1877), an Eastern Tümed nobleman, high official and soldier, who worried about his nation's fate in the decaying Qing empire, began (1830) to write a historical novel, the *Blue Book of How the Great Yüan Empire Rose*. He wrote the first 8 chapters himself; his seventh son Injannashi (1837–92) continued this first and largest novel of pre-modern Mongolian literature (in the extant versions only 69 of the supposedly 120 chapters are found; 60 chapters deal with Chinggis Khan's life, the rest with Ögedey's reign). In his substantial introductory essay (*Summing Up*), Wangchingbala expounds the aims of his writing, explains his view of history and gives the reasons behind the fall of the empire.

Wangchingbala's brothers wrote fine poems and prose. In his verses, the eldest brother Gularansa (1820–51) comments on the uselessness of the Great Wall ('Ridiculous are you, Great Wall...'). Concerned for his father's life, he blames the British who started the Opium War. And he wonders why people trust this vain world, which he compares to a

children's game. The diary of Gungnechuge (1832–66) keeps alive the memory of the earlier days of the family. Sungweidanjung (1834–98) mourned his brothers in moving verses.

Part Four

MONGOLIAN LEXICOGRAPHY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

(*Sh. Bira*)

The new cultural and literary requirements during our period encouraged innovations and reforms that took place both in the Mongolian language and in its writing system. From the end of the sixteenth century, a new period in the history of the Mongolian language began: it is called classical Mongolian by linguists. This classical language was used until recently as a vehicle for the development of literature and learning in Mongolia, and its literary norms were adopted everywhere in the Mongolian-language world.

With extensive translation work, linguistics and lexicography made good progress. Various kinds of dictionaries were compiled, including explanatory dictionaries of the Mongolian language, and bilingual and multilingual dictionaries. To mention but a few of them: the *Mongγol-un üsüqun quriyay san bičiq* [The Concise Mongolian Dictionary], the *Manju, Mongγol, Tübed, Nangkiyad dörben jüγil-ün üsüq qabsury ay san toli* [The Four-Language (Manchu-Mongolian-Tibetan-Chinese) Dictionary], the *Manju, Tübed, Mongγol, Uyγur, Nangkiyad tabun jüγil-ün üsüq-yer qabsurya san toli* [The Five-Language (Manchu, Tibetan, Mongolian, Uighur and Chinese) Dictionary] and many others. Tibetan-Mongolian dictionaries, like those by Güngγajamtso, güng Gombojab, Alasha Dandar lharamba, Choyibel toyin and many others, were also composed. Special mention must be made of the large comparative lexicon of Tibetan and Mongolian called the *Merged qarqu-yin orun*, which was compiled by a team of learned translators. It was an excellent terminological dictionary which worked out all of the terms drawn not just from purely religious literature, but from all types of writings, including scientific, linguistic, mathematical, astronomical and medical texts. This lexicon played a major role in the systematization of terminology in the Mongolian language and enriched it with sophisticated technical terms many of which are, even now, not obsolete.

Historiography serves to illustrate the unusual surge in literary creativity among the Mongols since the end of the sixteenth century. History writing began gradually to develop on the basis of the rebirth of early Mongol historical traditions and under the ever-increasing influence of Indo-Tibetan religious, hagiographical and historical literature. As a result there emerged a new type of historiography which may be called a genealogical Buddhist historiography of the Mongols.

Out of the earliest known historical writings that have survived from the period of the 'Mongol renaissance' one must mention the anonymous *White History*,²⁹ revised and edited by Khutughtu Setsen Khongtaiji at the end of the sixteenth century; *The History of Altan Khan*,³⁰ supposedly composed by Uran Tang?ari?tayun Kiya Sariman (or Sriman); and the *Čiqula kereglegeči*³¹ by Manjushri güüshi Shiregetü Tsorji. Characteristically, their authors were prominent representatives of the 'Mongol renaissance' who distinguished themselves not only by their literary talents, but also by their political and religious activities. Their works are important because they laid down the methodological and philosophical basis of a new type of Mongol historiography. It was in the *White History* that the scheme of the three Buddhist monarchies, India, Tibet and Mongolia, was first expounded. This scheme was later borrowed by Mongol historians. In the same book the conception of a Buddhist state philosophy, according to which the cornerstone of the state administration is a close alliance of the khan's power and the Buddhist Church, the so-called Two Orders, was suggested. The following is taken from this book:

The core of holy religion is the Lama, the ruler of Dharma, and the head of the state is the khan, the possessor of earthly authority. The laws of the true Dharma, similar to a sacred silken cord, are unabated, and the laws of the mighty khan, like a golden yoke, are invincible.³²

The author of the *Čiqula kereglegeči*, Manjushri güüshi Shiregetü Tsorji, elaborated mainly philosophical problems of Mongol historiography on the basis of the sutra, the *Abhidhannakosa*. The author's main point is that history is not just the history of humankind, but the history of the universe. The history of a particular country, in this case, of Mongolia, is merely part of worldwide history in its Buddhist sense. This is why, according to his theory, history begins with the genesis of the universe.

The seventeenth–nineteenth centuries are characterized by the further formation and development of the genealogical and Buddhist type of historiography. Of the historical works that appeared during this period, the following books should be mentioned: the

²⁹ The full Mongolian name is *Arban Buyantu Nom-un Cagan Teüke*.

³⁰ This history is called by different names. In its published edition it is entitled *Erdeni tunumal neretü sudur*.

³¹ Its full title is *Čiqula kereglegeči tegüs udq-a-tu neretü sasdir*.

³² *Cagan teüke*, 1981, p. 72.

anonymous *Sira Tuyuji* [The Yellow History], the *Altan Tobči* [The Golden Button] by Lubsandanjin, the *Erdeni-yin Tobči* [The Precious Button] by Sayan Setsen, the *Asara? ci neretüyin teike* [The History by Asarayci], the *Altan Kürdün Mingy an Kigesütü* [The Golden Wheel with a Thousand Spokes] by Dharma güüşhi, the *Bolor Erike* [The Crystal Rosary] by Rashipuntsaq, the *Bolor Toli* [The Crystal Mirror] by Jimbadorji, the *Erdeni-yin Erike* [The Precious Rosary] by Galdan and others.

Alongside these works Mongol historians, mainly lamas, wrote histories in the Tibetan language. It is an interesting fact that in the period under discussion the Mongols created a large corpus of literature in Tibetan which may be truly called the Tibetan-language literature of the Mongols.³³ This literature occupies a prominent place in Mongol history. It is sufficient to mention such works as: the *gSalba'i me-long* [The Clear Mirror] by Zaya bandid Lubsanprenlei; *The History of Buddhism in India, Tibet, China and Mongolia*, the so-called *aPag bsam lJon bZang*, by Sumpa kampo Eshibaljir; *The History of Buddhism in China* by Güng Gombojab; *The Biography of Tsonkoba* by Lubsanchultum; *The History of Buddhism in Mongolia* by Tsembe Güüşhi; and *The History of Buddhism in Mongolia* by Darmatala, among others.

Mongol historiography developed not only quantitatively over time, but grew richer in terms of content as well. It should be noted that Buddhism greatly broadened the Mongols' outlook on history. Regarding the history of their own country as an integral part of universal history, Mongol chroniclers dedicated a special introduction to Buddhist cosmology in their histories. Their basic philosophical concept was that the inorganic and organic worlds constitute an indissoluble unity in the process of universal cosmic evolution. According to this concept, there first appeared an inorganic world, the so-called *saba yirtinčü*, and subsequently everything that is animate, the so-called *sime yirtinčü*, came into being. The cosmic evolutionary theory of Buddhists was also applied to social history.

The overwhelming interest of the Mongols in Buddhism eventually led them to an Indo-centric interpretation of history. They believed that India, the birthplace of Buddhism, was the *primo locus*, the original home, of humankind. They also believed that social history began with the appearance of the first legendary king of the Buddhists, Mahasammata (Mong. Mahasammadi or Olan-a ergögdegsen). And Mongol chroniclers did their best to link the genealogy of the Mongol khans with that of Mahasammata, as he was considered by Buddhists to have been the forefather of all kings. Although this attempt had nothing to do with historicity, it had far-reaching consequences for the development of a new historical and political outlook of the Mongols.

³³ Bira, 1960, p. 3.

The fact that Mongol historians were fervent Buddhists, however, did not prevent them from being loyal to the history of their own country. Like all national historians, Mongol writers of history saw everything from a Mongol point of view and tried to glorify the history of their khans by means of Buddhism. The genealogical history of the Mongol khans continued to occupy a central place in the works of Mongol chroniclers. It is characteristic that during our period the old Mongol tradition of writing history, which may be termed the tradition of the *Mongγ ol-un Niγ ča Tobčiyān* [The Secret History of the Mongols], was successfully revived. And the rebirth of old Mongol historical traditions went along the lines of both oral history and written literature.

In this respect one should especially refer to the above-mentioned *Altan Tobči* by Lubsandanjin. It is likely that the book was written either at the very end of the seventeenth century or at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The greatest merit of Lubsandanjin as a historian is that he restored old Mongol historiographic traditions, successfully using sources of the thirteenth century, particularly the *Secret History of the Mongols*. Scholars have shown that of the 282 paragraphs of the *Secret History*, 233 are incorporated into the *Altan Tobči*. At the same time, the *Altan Tobči* of Lubsandanjin represents a unique syncretism of Mongol historical traditions with Buddhist ideology. Following the Buddhist scheme of writing history analysed above, Lubsandanjin wanted to substantiate not only the early but also the sacred origin of the Mongol khans, from Mahasammata through the Tibetan kings. He devoted particular attention to the cult of Chinggis Khan. He excelled his predecessors in extolling Chinggis Khan, elevating him to the ranks of true Buddhist Chakravartin kings, the advent of whom was allegedly foretold by the Buddha himself.

One should observe that Lubsandanjin did not reduce his writing of history solely to Buddhist mythology. Sometimes history clearly prevails over Buddhist dogma. He pays much attention to reproducing wise exhortations, teachings and sayings pronounced by historical personalities, particularly Chinggis Khan. Many of the 'utterances' of Chinggis actually go back to early Mongol *yosuns* (customs) and *jasas* (laws). The author himself claims that he 'wrote in his book what was uttered and conveyed by the sages from the time of Sutu Boyda Chinggis Khan, that it should become a law unto future generations'.³⁴ He recites many political admonitions and testaments traditionally ascribed to Chinggis Khan. Lubsandanjin calls these admonitions 'the nutriment of the state and the key of administration'.³⁵

Chinggis Khan himself can serve as an example of devotion to the interests of the state when he utters the following aphorism, according to Lubsandanjin:

³⁴ Lubsandanjin, 1937, p. 68.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 34.

When my body in *alda*-height takes a brief respite,³⁶
 How might not my kingdom weaken.
 When my entire body takes a rest,
 How might not my whole kingdom be ruined.
 Let my body in *alda*-height grow fatigued,
 Lest my state not weaken.
 Let my whole body be troubled,
 Lest my whole kingdom not be ruined.³⁷

Lubsandanjin devoted the second part of his work to the history of the Mongols in the post-empire period, down to the beginning of the seventeenth century. By means of reproducing mostly oral historical traditions, he was able to present an overall picture of the epoch when the country was living through dissolution and internecine wars. At the same time he traced the genealogical history of the so-called small khans, the Chinggisids, who ruled Mongolia, as well as the genealogy of the Mongol nobility.

The next important work of Mongol historiography that is worth noting is the *Erdeni-yin Tobči* of Sayan Setsen. Compiled in 1662, it enjoyed great popularity among the Mongols. The history consists of a brief introduction, seven divisions and a colophon. The main part contains a history of the origin and formation of the universe, the appearance of the first living beings and a people on the earth, the history of Mongolia, and so on. It is true that Sayan Setsen wrote his history in full accord with the general scheme which had been worked out by his predecessors. But under this scheme he brings such a solid historical base that his work in places goes beyond these limits. The best pages of his work are devoted to the post-empire period, up to the second half of the seventeenth century. As a ruling Chinggisid prince, Sayan Setsen was able to hear many things from his kinsmen, the preservers of the old traditional tales of the Golden Clan. Of great interest is the genealogical history of the Mongol nobility belonging to the leading branch of the Chinggisids.

In the extended colophon of the book, written in boldly complex allegorical verses and affording not only historical but literary interest, one finds the author's philosophical reflections on the problems of history and life. He sets forth his understanding of the historical experience not only in the form of religious morality, but also in a general form of rules of worldly wisdom.

Among the works of larger historical genre, we should mention the *History of Da-Yuan*, the so-called *Dai yuwan-u Bolur Erike* [The Crystal Rosary] written in 1774–5 by

³⁶ *Alda* is the distance between the tips of the middle fingers of the outstretched arms of a man.

³⁷ Lubsandanjin, 1937, p. 52.

Rashipuntsag, and the *Bolur Toli* [The Crystal Mirror] written in 1834–7 by Jimbadorji. Both these histories illustrate the level of maturity that Mongol genealogical and Buddhist historiography reached in the last two centuries. And both of the books are remarkable for the multitude and variety of sources and diversity of subjects dealt with by their authors. They enlarged the scope of sources by extensive use of Chinese, Manchu and Tibetan materials. And their philosophy of history was inevitably inspired by the ideas of Buddhist canonical sutras. Like the above-mentioned history of Sayan Setsen, these two works are among some of the most perfect historical compilations of the Mongols.

Rashipuntsag's *Bolur Erike* is a voluminous work consisting of five big books, each having several subdivisions devoted to the different periods of Mongol history. It is the fullest history ever written by a Mongol author of the Yüan (Mongol) dynasty of China. Some characteristic features of the book should be emphasized. Unlike most Mongol chroniclers, Rashipuntsag does not begin the history of Mongolia from a Buddhist cosmology, nor does he assign a special place to the genealogy of the Indian and Tibetan kings, although he does not explicitly reject the traditional attempts of Mongol authors to link the genealogy of their khans with that of the Indian and Tibetan kings.

Rashipuntsag distinguishes himself by reconstructing the early history of the Mongols by means of Chinese sources, which contain many more materials on the ancient history of the Mongols than Mongol sources. Thus he demonstrates the significance of Chinese sources for the study of Mongol history. At the same time, he displays a keen analytical and critical approach towards his sources. He is rightly considered to be a founder of critical Mongol historiography. He is displeased with what he sees as a prejudiced interpretation and distortion of Mongol history in Chinese sources. He notices in one place that 'Chinese sages with softness of their brush secretly praise their country and ingeniously humiliate the other country.'³⁸ It must be admitted, however, that Rashipuntsag is obviously less critical and even partial in regard to his Mongolian sources. He even tries to justify some old Mongol legends and stories, like that of Alan Goa, the foremother of the Golden Clan of Chinggisids. He is rather nationalistic while interpreting the history of his own nation.

The *Bolur Toli* of Jimbadorji stands out for the wide range of subjects it covers. It is not solely the history of Mongolia; it also contains the history of other countries, including India, Tibet, Khotan, China, some countries of Central Asia, the Near East and Europe. The descriptions of Turkey, its capital Istanbul, the sacred city of Mecca, Russia and the Russians, and their cities (like Moscow and Astrakhan), and Germany and the Germans were quite a discovery for Mongol historiography of those days.

³⁸ Rashipuntsag, 1941, p. 11.

Jimbadorji naturally pays most attention to the history of his own country, to which he devotes the third book of his work. He succeeds in writing the most complete history of the Mongols against a background of the history of other countries. He actually digresses from genealogical history to a narration in which more attention is paid to the political history of the country and Mongolia's relations with neighbouring countries. The author makes the fullest use of the Tibetan sources available to him.

It is interesting to observe that the author of the *Bolur Toli*, in the colophon of his book, considers his purpose in writing history. He says: 'It is not to praise myself as a learned man who reads a good deal of books, but rather to make history known to those who know the Mongolian script' because 'with the coming of the worst time those who are seriously interested in books' or who 'correctly understand the genuine meaning of books' have become fewer than ever before.³⁹ And he goes on to say that his:

intention will be achieved if those who have read this history understand what kind of political deeds had been done before or remember the sages of religion [and] so differentiate between good and bad deeds, improve themselves and get rid of wrong deeds and remember good and bad consequences.

His creed was: 'A man who does not know about his country and his ancestors is like an ape lost amidst rocks.'⁴⁰

³⁹ Jimbadorji, 1984, p. 589.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 488.