PERMANENT INTERNATIONAL ALTAISTIC CONFERENCE (P.I.A.C.)

NEWSLETTER
The last issue (No. 25) of this so-called Newsletter was published more than two years ago, in May 1997. Thus, the title appears to be singularly inappropriate for a publication as erratic as ours. No can survive if there is nothing new, and in the case of the PIAC the information sent in by members has been so sporadic that by the time one piece arrived, the one received prior to it was no longer relevant. As Secretary General of the PIAC I had the choice between four alternatives.

1. Go after the news. This would be fairly easy and could be done by opening some of the now thousands of websites that clutter the electronic world. But all this material is open, anyway, to any member willing to surf the waves and would not justify the work involved in gathering, and sifting the material, and writing up the final version. It would have been a superfluous effort to secure funding for what might be a superfluous activity. Others, perhaps my successor, may think differently.

2. Change the title. This would have the disadvantage of confusing librarians who store past issues, and regularly enquire whether they missed receiving the latest of them. It would create a new publication associated with the PIAC, beginning with No. 1, and facing an uncertain future.

3. Call it quits.

4. Leave the Newsletter as it is, with some effort to produce it at least once a year. I decided to choose this solution. While, in fact, it brings very little that is useful new, it does serve the purpose of recording the activities of the PIAC.

An informal gathering that manages to meet for forty-two consecutive years is not a common phenomenon in the scholarly world of Oriental Studies. The PIAC is certainly an unusual organization and its activities deserve a written record, a task this Newsletter is able to accomplish. I think it is useful to have a listing of the places where our meetings have been held, to give the names of PIAC presidents and of the recipients of the Indiana University Prize for Altaic Studies, the PIAC Gold Medal. In some way then this should be regarded as the depository of our past. It perhaps could one day serve as the basic source of information on our activities. This issue was compiled to serve as a record of our immediate past activities as well as of our more lasting achievements represented by the X volumes so far published of the proceedings of our meetings.

Of course the Newsletter will remain open to all material relevant to our field of interest.

Denis Sinor
Secretary General
For the Record

40th PIAC MEETING

The 40th annual meeting of the PIAC was held June 2-6, 1997, in Provo (Utah, USA) under the presidency of Professor David B. Honey.

41st PIAC MEETING

The 41st annual meeting of the PIAC was held July 5-10, 1998, in Majvik,(near Helsinki, Finland), under the presidency of Professor Juha Janhunen.

Indiana University Prize for Altaic Studies

The Indiana University Prize for Altaic Studies (usually referred to as the "PIAC Medal") was established by Indiana University to honor an outstanding scholar for his or her life's work in Altaic Studies. The recipients of the award, consisting of a gold medal, are chosen by an international committee elected by PIAC members in the course of the meeting previous to that at which the Medal is awarded.

At the 40th annual meeting, held in Provo, the Medal was awarded to Professor Gerhard Doerfer (Germany).

At the 41st annual meeting, held in Majvik, the Medal was awarded to Professor Edward Tryjarski (Poland).

At the meeting held in Majvik, among some of the participants, misunderstandings became manifest concerning the mechanism through which the recipient of the Medal is selected. Some, mistakenly, thought that the president of any given meeting should serve on the Medal Committee of the next meeting. Irrespective of the merits or demerits of such an arrangement, it must be stated that it is not one that at present governs the selection of the Medal. According to the present rules, the Medal Committee consists of five members: the President of the meeting at which the Medal is awarded, the Secretary General, and three members of the PIAC, elected by secret ballot at the previous meeting. The president of any given meeting is not barred from serving on the Medal Committee of the next meeting, but his participation in the work of the Medal Committee depends entirely on the outcome of the secret ballot.
Election of the Secretary General

According to the constitution of the PIAC, the Secretary General is elected for a period of five years. Professor Denis Sinor's term of office expired at the 40th meeting, in 1997. At the PIAC Business Meeting he was re-elected for another term, ending in 2002 with the PIAC's 45th meeting.

Voting Rights

The PIAC has no paid membership. Participation at any given meeting depends largely on the location and on the hazards of individual obligations. Until the 47th meeting held in Provo, voting rights were held by those present at a given meeting who had attended at least three previous PIAC conferences.

At the Business Meeting of the 47th meeting it was decided that this rule be amended. Henceforth, only those participants who have attended at least three previous PIAC conferences *held in at least two different countries* will have voting rights at any given meeting.

The justification for this change lies in the fact that in the forty-seven-year history of the PIAC some countries hosted more than three meetings, and it could well be that some participants attended only those held in their own country. While welcome at the meetings, it was felt that such occasional participants, with very limited experience, and possibly little interest in the workings of the PIAC, should have no voting rights.
Meetings of the PIAC

Founded in 1957 during the 24th International Congress of Orientalists, the Permanent International Altaistic Conference (PIAC) held its first meeting in Mainz, West Germany, in 1958. Since then the PIAC has convened regularly every year:

2. 1959 Mainz (German Federal Republic)
3. 1960 Burg Liebenstein (German Federal Republic)
4. 1961 Cambridge (England)
5. 1962 Bloomington (Indiana, USA)
6. 1963 Helsinki (Finland)
7. 1964 De Pietersberg (Holland)
8. 1965 Wahlscheid (German Federal Republic)
9. 1966 Ravello (Italy)
10. 1967 Manchester (England)
11. 1968 Hørsholm (Denmark)
12. 1969 East Berlin (German Democratic Republic)
13. 1970 Strasbourg (France)
14. 1971 Szeged (Hungary)
15. 1972 Strebersdorf (Austria)
16. 1973 Ankara (Turkey)
17. 1974 Bad Honnef (German Federal Republic)
18. 1975 Bloomington (Indiana, USA)
19. 1976 Helsinki (Finland)
20. 1977 Leiden (Holland)
21. 1978 Manchester (England)
22. 1979 Ghent (Belgium)
23. 1980 Strebersdorf (Austria)
24. 1981 Jerusalem (Israel)
25. 1982 Uppsala (Sweden)
26. 1983 Chicago (Illinois, USA)
27. 1984 Walberberg (German Federal Republic)
28. 1985 Venice (Italy)
29. 1986 Tashkent (Uzbekistan, USSR)
30. 1987 Bloomington (Indiana, USA)
31. 1988 Weimar (German Democratic Republic)
32. 1989 Oslo (Norway)
33. 1990 Budapest (Hungary)
34. 1991 Berlin (Germany)
35. 1992 Taipei (ROC)
36. 1993 Almaty (Kazakhstan)
37. 1994 Chantilly (France)
38. 1995 Tokyo (Japan)
39. 1996 Szeged (Hungary)
40. 1997 Provo (Utah)
41. 1998 Helsinki (Finland)
42. 1999 Prague (Czech Republic)
Indiana University Prize for Altaic Studies
Awarded by an international committee of the PIAC

Recipients to date:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Antoine Mostaert (U.S.A.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Erich Haenisch (German Federal Republic)</td>
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<td>1965</td>
<td>Rinchen (Mongolian People's Republic)</td>
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<td>1966</td>
<td>Gyula Németh (Hungary)</td>
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<td>1967</td>
<td>Martti Räsänen (Finland)</td>
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<td>1968</td>
<td>Louis Ligeti (Hungary)</td>
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<td>1969</td>
<td>Sir Gerard Clauson (United Kingdom)</td>
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<td>1970</td>
<td>N.N. Poppe (U.S.A.)</td>
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<td>1971</td>
<td>Annemarie von Gabain (German Federal Republic)</td>
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<td>1972</td>
<td>V.I. Cincius (U.S.S.R.)</td>
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<td>1973</td>
<td>Walter Fuchs (German Federal Republic)</td>
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<td>1974</td>
<td>Owen Lattimore (U.S.A.)</td>
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<td>1975</td>
<td>Karl Jahn (Holland)</td>
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<td>1976</td>
<td>A.N. Kononov (U.S.S.R.)</td>
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<td>1977</td>
<td>Gunnar Jarring (Sweden)</td>
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<td>1978</td>
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<td>1979</td>
<td>John Andrew Boyle (United Kingdom) (Posthumous award)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>N.A. Baskakov (U.S.S.R.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Not awarded</td>
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<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Walther Heissig (German Federal Republic) and Denis Sinor (U.S.A.) were each awarded the Medal on the occasion of the PIAC's 25th anniversary</td>
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<td>1983</td>
<td>Shirō Hattori (Japan)</td>
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<td>1984</td>
<td>Karl H. Menges (U.S.A.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Aulis J. Joki (Finland)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Károly Czeglédy (Hungary)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Pentti Aalto (Finland)</td>
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<td>1988</td>
<td>Francis W. Cleaves (U.S.A.)</td>
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<td>1989</td>
<td>Johannes Benzing (German Federal Republic)</td>
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<td>1990</td>
<td>Omeljan Pritsak (U.S.A.)</td>
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<td>1991</td>
<td>Edmond Schütz (Hungary)</td>
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<td>1992</td>
<td>A.M. Shcherbak (Russia)</td>
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<td>1993</td>
<td>Not awarded</td>
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<td>1994</td>
<td>James Hamilton (France)</td>
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<td>1995</td>
<td>Jean Richard (France)</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>L.P. Potapov (Russia) and Denis Sinor (U.S.A.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Gerhard Doerfer (Germany)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Edward Tryjarski (Poland)</td>
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</table>
Published PIAC Proceedings


4th Meeting (Cambridge, England 1961): A short report was included in the proceedings of the 5th Meeting.


20th Meeting (Leiden, Holland, 1977): No Proceedings have been published.

21st Meeting (Manchester, England, 1978): No Proceedings have been published.

22nd Meeting (Ghent, Belgium, 1979): No Proceedings have been published.


25th Meeting (Uppsala, Sweden, 1982): Altaistic Studies. Papers Presented at the 25th Meeting of the Permanent International Altaistic Conference at Uppsala June 7-11, 1982. Edited by Gunnar Jarring and Staffan Rosén. Published as vol. 12 in the series Konferenser of the Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien (Stockholm, Almqvist & Wiksell, 1982). It can be ordered at a reduced price from the PIAC’s Secretariat.

26th Meeting (Chicago, Illinois, USA. 1983): No Proceedings have been published.


29th Meeting (Tashkent, USSR., 1986): No Proceedings have been published.


31st Meeting (Weimar, German Democratic Republic, 1988): No Proceedings have been published.


36th Meeting (Almaty, Kazakhstan). No Proceedings have been published.


40th Meeting (Provo, Utah, USA). Proceedings will be published in *Indiana University Uralic and Altaic Series.*
IN MEMORIAM
Eleonora Afanas'eva Novgorodova (1933-1996)

Mrs. Eleonora Afanas'eva Novgorodova was born in Moscow and died there in 1996. Mrs. Novgorodova was one of the leading experts on Central Asia’s Bronze Age. She studied at the Historical Faculty of the State University in Moscow and in 1965 obtained the degree "Candidate Nauk," equal to the western doctorate. From 1957 to 1961 she was a lecturer at the State University of Mongolia and a scientific collaborator at the Historical Institute of the Scientific Committee of Mongolia. From 1963 to 1966 she taught archaeology at the University of Friendship Between the Peoples in Moscow. She then became a member of staff of the Institute for Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (later of Russia).

Her main field of work was the archaeology of Mongolia and related areas. Her best known publications are:

1) Central'naya Aziya i Karasukskaya problema. Moscow 1965.

Her temperament and knowledge made all discussions with her an experience of courage and vitality.

Selected Bibliography

Abbreviations:

AMI = Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran, Berlin
BV = Brandenburgisches Verlagshaus
CAJ = Central Asiatic Journal, Weisbaden
SV = Seemann-Verlag, Leipzig
Un.V = Union-Verlag
UV = Urania-Verlag
Wz = Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Martin-Luther-Universität, Halle-Wittenberg, Gesellschaftswissenschaftliche-Sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe
WZ-Jena = Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena,
Z.F.A. = Zeitschrift für Archäologie
Monographs


a) Gradovi C mandale. Belgrad 1988 (serbokroatisch)

Der Tierstil in Eurasien. SV, Leipzig 1982

Die Ahnen Dschingis-Chans. VW, Berlin 1988


With H. Brentjes: Die Heerscharen des Orients. BV, Berlin 1991

Arms of the Sakas (and other Tribes of the Central Asian steppes). Rishi Publications. Varanasi 1996

Articles and papers


A Bes Statuette from the Altai. In: East and West, NS 19, 3-4, Rom 1969, S. 430


Mittelasien/Zentralasien als archäologisch-historische Forschungsaufgabe. In: Hallesche Beiträge, 1, Halle 1979, S. 8-20

Bemerkungen zu den Materialien buddhistischer Kunst in Mittelasien. In: Persica 8, Nederlands

Instituut voor het Nabije, Qosten 1979, S. 95-98 (mit 7 Abb.)


Klima- und Kulturentwicklung in Mittelasien. In: Das Altertum. 30, Heft 1, Berlin 1984, S. 5-16


Nomadenwanderungen und Klimaschwankungen. In: CAJ, 30, Heff 1-2, Wiesbaden 1986, S. 7-21

Em verlorenes "Kupfer-Gold"-Gefäß aus Sibirien. In: AMI, NF, 19, 1986, S. 269-272

Three Vessels of Metal and three Mirrors in the Curiosa Sibiriae by Daniel Gottlieb Messerschmidt. In: Journal of Central Asian Studies IX, Karachi 1987, S. 6-15


Die Fresken des Ögödei-Palastes in Kara-Korum in ihrer Bedeutung für die islamische Miniaturmalerei. In: CAJ, 32, 1988, S. 1-18


Die "dunklen Jahrhunderte" der frühen Eisenzeit und die Kulturgeschichte Mittelasiens. In: Hallesche Beiträge zur Orientwissenschaft, 12, Halle 1988, S. 5-24


Eine Tierkampfszene in Bronze. In: AMI. NF, 24, Berlin 1991, 5. lund T. 1


Fibeln in Kaukasien und im eurasiatischen Steppenraum. Studi micenei ed egeo-anatolici, XXXVII, Roma 1996, S. 105-122


Waffen der Steppenvölker I, Dolch und Schwert im Steppenraum vom 2. Jahrtausend V. Chr. bis in die alttürkische Zeit. In: AMI, 26, Berlin 1993, S. 5-45


Miniaturen zur Geschichte der mongolischen Eroberung des Irak und die Biographie des KUO KAM. In: AMI, XXVIII, 1997, S. 401-405

B. Brentjes
The Ancient India & Iran Trust

The Ancient India & Iran Trust is an independent registered charity established in Cambridge, England in 1978. In modern geographical terms, its areas of interest are the countries of South Asia – India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal – together with Afghanistan, Iran, parts of Central Asia and parts of South East Asia. The principle subjects include ancient languages, archaeology, the history of art and architecture, and related topics which form part of the stream of cultural development. The upper limit of the time scale is, and has remained, flexible, sometimes extending to the end of the Mughal period. The intention of the Trust is to promote education, interest and research in its field.

The Trust is the only institution of its kind in Europe. Brooklands House, a substantial Victorian house in Cambridge, was purchased in 1981 as a center for the Trust’s activities. Sir Harold Bailey at once moved in with his library, and continued to live there until his death at the age of 96 in January 1996. Sir Harold, Emeritus Professor of Sanskrit at the University of Cambridge, was one of the founding Trustees, and Chairman, of The Ancient India & Iran Trust. The author of several books and hundreds of articles, he had an immense knowledge of languages and he was also a kindly teacher, generous with his time both to his own students and to the many scholars and students who consulted him. Sir Harold’s library is unique, and reflects the man. Much, but not all, can be found in other libraries, but nowhere else can such a collection be found under one roof. In 1986 it was officially recognized as a library of national importance, and since his death in 1996 it has become the responsibility of the Trust he helped found.

Following the untimely death in 1983 of Professor Joan van Lohuizen in Amsterdam, Dr. Jan van Lohuizen brought his wife’s library to the Brookland House, where he himself lived and acted as Treasurer and Librarian. Unfortunately he died suddenly in 1990. Since Dr. van Lohuizen’s death, the Van Lohuizen Library has been included in the Trust’s holdings.

The Trust Library is an independent resource, unique in Europe as well as Britain, for knowledge of and research in the cultural heritage of ancient India, Iran, Central Asia, and the history of the Indo-Iranian languages. In the process of being catalogued, the library is open to the public and is regularly used by scholars from Europe, America, and the regions it covers.

During the academic year, fortnightly lectures of both popular and scholarly interest are a regular feature of the Trust’s activities. Larger meetings and seminars have also been organized.

The Chairman of the Board of Trustees of The Ancient India & Iran Trust is Raymond Allchin PhD FBA.

Contact information:

The Ancient India & Iran Trust
Brooklands House
23 Brooklands Avenue
Cambridge CB2 2BG, UK

Phone: (0) 1223 356841 Fax: (0) 1223 361125
E-mail: Indiran@aol.com
Website: members.aol.com/indiran
The Louis Ligeti Oriental Collection’s home page has appeared on the Internet

The Oriental Collection of the Szeged University Library was founded in 1974 by the Hungarian Mongolist and Turcologist Louis Ligeti, and opened late in 1987. The holdings contain approximately 11,000 documents (books, offprints and periodicals) in almost all fields of oriental studies, especially Altaistics, Sinology, and Tibetology.

Now a home page for the Louis Ligeti Oriental Collection is available on the World Wide Web at:

http://www.bibl.u-szeged.hu/~clio/html/ligeti.html

This website provides a virtual visit to the Ligeti Library including information about the collection’s material, services, and opening hours, a database with information on more than 5,000 of the collection’s documents, the donor’s life story, a list of his publications with reviews, and a list of articles about him.

In addition, this site provides links to information on conferences and exhibitions related to the 1100th anniversary of the settlement of the Magyars in Hungary as well as suggested readings including new books and articles on Hungarian prehistory. Also available are links to other oriental collections and libraries which have websites of their own (the British Library Oriental and India Office Collections, the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, the Oriental Department in the Library of the University of Leiden, etc.).

Agnes Paulik, librarian of the Louis Ligeti Oriental Collection Szeged
THE MONGOLIA SOCIETY, INC.

THE MONGOLIA SOCIETY
ESSAY COMPETITION

PURPOSE: To stimulate and encourage excellence in writing and research in the field of Mongolian Studies. Our goal is for students to reach a deeper understanding and appreciation of matters relating to the Mongols and Mongolian civilization.

ELIGIBILITY: Level 1, any student currently in an undergraduate or master's program.

Level 2, any nonstudent, professional, academic, or student studying in a Ph.D. program in Mongolian Studies or a relevant discipline.

AWARD: Level 1, One $100 award per year.

Level 2, One $100 award per year, plus winning paper will be considered for publication in Mongolian Studies: Journal of The Mongolia Society.

RULES: 1) The paper must be written in English on any topic relevant to Mongolian Studies.

2) It may have been previously submitted in a course, however, a clean copy must be submitted for this competition.

3) The paper must be typed, double-spaced, with footnotes wherever applicable, and should not exceed 50 pages.

4) Author's name must not appear anywhere on the paper in order to keep the author's identity anonymous; papers will be numbered for judging purposes.

5) The author must prepare a coversheet with his/her name, social security number, address, and telephone number. This information is to appear only on the cover sheet.

6) Scholarly essays will be analytical and not merely descriptive and be properly documented with footnotes and endnotes, in accordance with general academic standards.

7) Among the criteria considered significant will be clarity, focus and development of the subject or problem, quality of evidence, use of primary sources, and originality.

8) The same person cannot win the award again within a five-year time period.

DEADLINE: The papers are to be submitted to The Mongolia Society office by June 30th. The authors of the winning papers will be acknowledged at The Mongolia Society Annual Membership Meeting.
CIAA

Circle of Inner Asian Art

Honorary President
Professor A.D.H. Bivar

President
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Committee
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Madhuvanti Ghose
Lilla Russell-Smith
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Burzine Waghmar

The Circle of Inner Asian Art (CIAA), set up in 1995 at the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London, acts as a forum for discussion and for the exchange of information about the art of Inner Asia.

The Circle's focus is the non-Islamic art and archaeology of the area stretching from the Iranian world to western China, and from the Russian steppes to north-western India.

The Circle seeks to promote and increase the existing body of knowledge relating to this important area, laying particular emphasis on providing up-to-date information to its members about current international research projects and fieldwork.

Activities

The Circle's activities include:

• hosting monthly lectures by scholars of international repute

• promoting the exchange of information regarding Inner Asian art and archaeology through an international network of universities, museums and other organisations

• reporting on recently-completed or on-going fieldwork and new research

• the Newsletter, produced two times a year, also includes details of recent publications, international conferences, exhibitions and other current events.

Membership

We invite you to become a member of the CIAA. Benefits include:

• free monthly lectures

• receipt of the Newsletter two times a year

• reduced rates for seminars and workshops

• advance notice of special events

• access to the CIAA's international network

Circle of Inner Asian Art,
Department of Art and Archaeology,
School of Oriental and African Studies,
Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square,
London WC1H OXG, United Kingdom.
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- N° 66 - Les Balkans à l'époque ottomane : 45 F au lieu de 90 F
- N° 59/60 - Des ethnies aux nations en Asie centrale : 48 F au lieu de 95 F
- N° 77/78 - L'humour en Orient : 80 F au lieu de 160 F
- N° 72 - Modernités arabes et turque, maîtres et ingénieurs : 45 F au lieu de 90 F
- N° 75-76 - Oral et écrit dans le monde turco-ottoman : 80 F au lieu de 160 F
- N° 50 - Turquie, la croisade des chemins : 55 F au lieu de 110 F

Frais d'envoi : 29 F pour 3 numéros - Franco de port à partir de 4

Etudes et documents berbères :
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Nous avons le plaisir de vous adresser le numéro 3-4 des Cahiers d'Asie Centrale "L'héritage timouride - Iran - Asie Centrale - Inde - XVe - XVIIIe siècles".

Nous vous invitons à vous réabonner aux numéros suivants 5 et 6 en nous retournant le bon de commande ci-joint accompagné de votre règlement.

Avec nos remerciements, nous vous prions d'agréer, Madame, Monsieur, l'expression de nos salutations les meilleures.

Pascale de Châteaubourg
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Recent Publications on Turkology in China

by

NUI Ru-Ji

(China's Languages Department, Xinjiang University)

1. Chen Zongzhen et. al., Comparative Vocabulary of Turkic Languages in China, Nationality Press, Beijing, 1990, large 32 mo, 586 pp., cloth, 6.50 Yuan

2. Momin Abdulla, A Turkish-Uighur Dictionary, Nationality Press, Beijing, 1989, 18 mo, 1056 pp., cloth. 17.00 Yuan


6. Mirsultan Osmanow, Modern Uighur Dialects (in Uighur), Xinjiang Youngster Press, Urumqi, 1990, 277 pp., pbk., large 32 mo, 2.00 Yuan

7. Nesrulla, Muhebbet, Turkic Languages in China (in Uighur), Xinjiang University Press, Urumqi, 1988, 290 pp., 32 mo, pbk. 1.50 Yuan, cloth 2.30 Yuan

8. Abduquerim Rehman, An Outline of Uighur Folklore (in Uighur), Xinjiang University Press, Urumqi, 1989, 560 pp., large 32 mo, pbk. 5.00 Yuan, cloth 6.00 Yuan

9. Su Beihai, The Cultural History of the Kazak, Xinjiang University Press, Urumqi, 1989, 555 pp., large 32 mo, pbk. 8.00 Yuan, cloth 10.00 Yuan

10. Ablimit, Dildar, An Old Uighur Dictionary (in Uighur), Xinjiang Youngster Press, 1989, 548 pp., large 32 mo, cloth, 6.00 Yuan

The "Maadai-Kara" Epic - Its Background
And Its New Features

Efremova Maria, Russia

There exist many interesting ancient legends, tales and epics in the Altaic narrative tradition. More than a hundred are published by now, more than sixty are translated into Russian, some into German and English. Among them is the "Maadai-Kara" epic - one of the most popular in the Altai region now. We are going to talk about its background first, which is, actually, common for the majority of other epics as well.

Through the centuries there appeared in the Altai gifted narrators who carried on and gave a new life to this or that epic. They developed in themselves the talent for throat-singing - the so called "kai" - in which epics were traditionally performed. Such performances lasted for many hours or even days - with short breaks - and turned into special occasions by which the daily routine of the whole settlement was interrupted. In old times these performances, probably, were a part of some sacred rituals, for even nowadays the elders remember the reverend attitude with which people used to listen to the singers who were considered saints. Some of the singers lived in a village, and the village took it for a blessing, was proud of it and famous for this fact. Other singers travelled - and whenever they came to a settlement, the people put aside their household cares and duties to greet them almost as prophets and to enjoy their narrative art.

The singers learned from the older masters various plots, motives, traditional formulas and images. At first they imitated, learned the tale by heart and then developed the old story into their own original variants. A. Kalkin, whose variant of "Maadai-Kara" we know today, learned the kai technique from his father, he listened to the famous kaichies of the beginning of the century, the "Maadai" epic he learned from kaichy Ulagashev. Kalkin is called "the Altaian Homer", for though almost blind from his childhood and uneducated, he has a great memory and the talent for improvisation.

The epic song as a genre developed out of the sacred song and was based on the myth. But the myth, being sacred universal knowledge and carrying no signs of concrete time and place, differs from the epic song which refers to some more or less definite period of time and presents some important past events. Epics were composed not only in ancient times, some of the songs reflect, for example, the events of the 17th - 18th centuries.

At the early stage of its development the Altaic epic genre was based on a different mythology than that of the later shamanism: it was the world of monsters and hosts of the elements.

One of the well-known altaic philologists S. Surasakov divides the history of the epic song in Altai into three stages: 1) the epic of the tribal system period;
2) the epic of the early feudal period; 3) the epic of the feudalism period.

The first period generated the "archaic" epic which in its essence was a hunting epic. It was usually about heroes' meeting and fighting with the hosts of the lands and waters who appeared in the images of animals and birds. The main motives of these epics were: the hunting of the hero, the birth of his son while he is hunting, the enemy attack in his absence. To the hero himself magic forces and skills were generally ascribed.

The major character type was "mergen" - "the hunter", later it would be transformed into "batyr" - "the warrior".

The decisive change which influenced the life of the Altaic tribes and, of course, was reflected in the epics was horse-breeding. One of the most important motives therefore is that connected with horses. The main character can't become a mighty warrior without a horse. His horse is his best friend and adviser. This motive consists of minor episodes devoted to the horse: the hero's complaining about not having one, his search for one, catching it, fighting with it, trying it, their becoming friends. The horse also possesses magic crafts and skills.

The usual themes of the tribal system period were: heroes' fighting with monsters, their seeking in marriage, repelling enemies' raids, other themes reflecting different sides of the tribal life.

Very popular was the motive of close family relationships, mutual defense and help between the relatives, very often - a son's revenge for his abused father, yet the conflicts within the family and between tribes were reflected as well.

The epics of the second period picture numerous wars. The wars were long lasting, and not separate tribes, but big tribal unions took part in them. It is in this cycle of narratives that the notion of an "army" appeared for the first time, and much attention was paid to the description of the battle scenes. Two types of khans were opposed in these epics: aggressors and peace-makers who took pains to make the life of the peoples peaceful and prosperous. The latter type was an epic ideal and not a real historical type, though.

The third period was that of nomadic feudalism (13th century), when Altai was under yoke and tribute of Chingiskhan. The society split into two classes: "bais" and "zaisans" - on one side and enslaved cattle-breeders on the other. The epic of the time reflected the changes in the leading images: the khan was no longer the head of his people, but of his social class, and the main hero - the mighty warrior - was out of the common people - a shepherd or a hunter.

Thus, one can see the complicated evolution of themes, motives, plots, ideas, images, composition through the history of the Altaic epic development.

Let us also consider some traditionally predominant images, characteristic not only of the Altaic, but of other Turkic and Mongolic epics as well.

Very important for the Altai people was the image of the Mother-Nature and the patriotic imagery of their own native land. The key image was the Sacred Tree
that symbolized the center of the universe and the link between the three worlds - the earthly, the higher and the lower.

In most cases the Tree was a poplar - the so called "bai-terek", sometimes it could be a birch, a cedar or a willow. Usually the sacred poplar stood in front of the khan's "palacc" - "yurta" - oriented to the East according to the Turkic custom. Under the Tree sacred rites were performed, the heroes slept there to see prophetic dreams.

The Sacred Tree had its permanent attributes. In the foliage at the top of the Tree two golden cuckoos were sitting, on one of the middle branches - two golden eagles, and at the roots - two big dogs.

The cuckoos were famous for their prophetic singing and their wisdom. Their golden color symbolized the awakening of nature. But if one spoke of gray cuckoos, that meant sorrow and death. The dark and evil forces were personified in ravens that had demonic features and were known to be assistants to Erlik, the king of the underground world.

The golden eagles played the most active and functional part. They could soar high above, see everything, defend the hero from the evil spirits. To find someone's soul or to save the hero his horse often turned into a golden eagle. Such features ascribed to eagles-originated in the Altaic traditional belief that eagles are protectors of women and children. According to one of the beliefs shamans themselves descended from eagles. Eagles also carried them through the space during their magic rites.

Another sacred tree, a birch tree, was, as a rule situated on the tribal holy mountain, and enemies didn't know about that sacred place. The birch tree symbolized a blessing mother. In times of danger children were hidden by it.

Along with some other sacred objects the Tree was a symbol of eternal life and prosperity of the tribe. If the foe cut off or burnt the Sacred Tree and pulled out the rail-post, that meant death for the tribe.

The rail-post was also in the center of tribal life. The horses were bound there, important events took place by it. The rail-post was richly decorated, for it was believed that the upper part of it belonged to Yooch-Kurboostan - the heavenly god, and the lower part - to Erlik under the ground, this fact put the khan who possessed the middle part of it on one line with the gods.

Before we go on to talk about some other common constant images, let us enumerate the episodes common for many epics as well as for the one in question. These episodes are connected and go in a quite definite succession: 1) the birth of the hero; 2) enemy's attack; 3) the hero's upbringing by an old woman - the hostess of the tribal mountain; 4) the hero's journey to the enemy's land with the obstacles he overcomes on his way there; 5) his stay in the enemy's camp in the image of Tastarakai, the clownish beggar; 6) his looking for the foe's soul; 7) the destruction of the foe; 8) getting back home and a great feast.
These episodes are rich in typical images, which proves that the Turkic peoples borrowed imagery for their epics from one another.

For example, common are the obstacles - two giants, a yellow poisonous sea (denoted by the word which can mean also "a river" and in this case define the epic river Toybodym connecting the three worlds). The third hindrance - generally known as "the meeting and diverging rocks" - in the Altaic tradition is called "the opening and closing rocks".

For description and characterization of objects and persons different stylistic devices are used.

Typical are the constant epithets that often become a part of the name of the object they describe. Mountains and rivers are named by colors or the number of their peaks. They are also called "father", "mother", "lord", "tower" (meaning "defense"). The lodgings - yurts - are said to be made of gold, iron or stone, to have a hundred comers. Such hyperbolic epithets are employed to stress the beauty and solidity of the house.

White and black are the opposite colors for good and evil living beings. "Light-faced" are the good people, they have white flocks and herds. "Coal black" is the castle of the evil, their rivers, mountains and they themselves are also black.

Hyperbole is widely used to enumerate people and animals, to define the sizes of lands, to characterize heroic and demonic actions.

Similes and metaphors are numerous and various, both hackneyed and original.

In the epic tradition there exist also constant formulas that serve as charms and blessings, greetings and leave-takings, permanent attributes of the characters and their actions. Probably having originated as magic formulas they became indispensable in the epic narration.

The "Maadai-Kara" epic and its variants, which are recognized by the criterion of the presence of all the main motives and images and the similarity of the compositional and ideological structure, also possess all these common features, but with time they have acquired new plots, developed new interpretations of the old ideas and images. And, of course, the role of the singer is great, for he is each time the new author of the epic. He adds new colors and details depending on his experience and talent. So did Aleksei Kalkin. S. Surasakov notes that even between two recordings (1948, 1964) the singer has enriched and developed "his" epic a lot.

"Maadai-Kara" retains many archaic properties: it is traditionally called by the name of the father of the hero, the enemy of Maadai-Kara – Kara-Kula reminds one of a mythological monster, the conception of nature is mythological and pantheistic. But many new influences are evident: those of Buddhism - in the episodes with yellow lamas (in the Altaic epic yellow is the color of the evil shul-muses, so it shows the negative attitude to the lamas) and early Christianity - in the final part
of the epic the underground world is described where people and animals are being punished after death.

The major novelty in comparison to the archaic epic is the type of social relations: Maadai-Kara is the head not only of his tribe, but of a union of tribes, and more than that - the crisis of the union is shown: several tribes have left willfully while the old Maadai was sleeping, and he has to take his arms to force them to come back. At the same time Kara-Kula attacks Altai not just to drive away the cattle, but to enslave the whole people and to bring it to live on his land as he has already done with dozens of such nations. Maadai-Kara doesn't fight, for he is too old, and Kara-Kula is too strong. So he surrenders and remains with his tribes in the slavery.

His son as a folk hero has many new qualities. For instance, the episode of initiation of a young warrior in epics usually produced a comical effect, warrior's clothes and arms were too big for the boy and the horse was too strong. In this epic Kogydei-Mergen has already performed a heroic deed - he has killed many wolves and ravens, so at the moment of initiation everything fits him perfectly. He has all the traditional hero's characteristics: strength, wit, abilities of a magician, his anger is rash and great, his sleep is mighty, he loves challenging tasks and risks. New is his disinterestedness in the wealth of his defeated enemy and his father-in-law. He rejects the riches he has deserved, for his goal is to restore peace and to free the nations.

Some other new peculiarities are: the moral teaching, universal and very detailed, pronounced by the old lady who has brought the boy up; the episode of practicing witchcraft by shaman Tordor, that shows that shamanism as a religion appeared much later, for in archaic epics the heroes performed such rituals themselves; the episode of destruction of the foe's soul, which Kara-Kula, actually did himself, tearing two small birds where his soul was hidden (the epic motive brought by the ancient shamanism) differs from the scenes of a long lasting single combat or a battle that are pictured in other epics.

Formally the epic's arrangement is much more complex than in ancient ones. Events and actions of the heroes are painted with great detail, the description of the appearances, clothing, weapons are very thorough and accurate.

This fragmentary analysis shows that the "Maadai-Kara" epic is based on the archaic epic, but the new features that reflect the influences of the epoch of its origin predominate in it, and that A. Kalkin being the last author of the epic has added much from his personality and his time to the story (e. g. a fragment when Kara-Kula makes monstrous plans to turn the great rivers into a different direction which, fortunately failed).

"Maadai-Kara" was translated into Russian several times both in prose and in rhyme. It is very challenging and interesting for translators because of its original, colorful imagery, complexity of ideas and forms.
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