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A Preliminary Note on the Manchu Versions of Qianlong's Poetical Collection *Quanyun shi*

The collection of historical poems entitled *Yuzhi Quanyun shi* 御制全韻詩, is a well-known literary work composed by emperor Qianlong in 1778. It contains 106 poems which are based — as the title itself reveals — on the “complete rhyme-cycle”, i.e. the 106 rhyme-classes of the so-called “Pingshui system” 平水韻.¹ The whole work is subdivided into five volumes. The first two are devoted to the foundation of the Manchu empire and its development till the Yongzheng era, whereas the following three volumes concern Chinese history from the very beginning till the Ming dynasty. Every poem is accompanied by long comments and explanations, mostly taken from the Chinese classics and indispensable for the comprehension and interpretation of the compositions.²

Its Manchu version (*Han-i araha Yongkiyan mudan-i irgebun*), on the contrary, is one of the less-known and studied chapters of Manchu literature, which is probably due to the fact that it was never printed and was circulated in a few handwritten copies only. Actually, 11 manuscripts are known to exist,³ one of them being kept in the Manuscript Department of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts in St. Petersburg under the call number A 60. It has been described by M.P. Volkova as follows: «Стихотворения, написанные императором по всем правилам просодии. В сочинении в стихотворном изложении описываются исторические события, происшедшие в Китае с древних времен до дней императора Цянь-луна. Копия. Автор — император Цянь-лун. Дата переписки — 1822 (т. V, л. 32)».⁴ As Martin Gimm wrote: “Till nowadays no source has been found which informs about the significance or appreciation of the anthology in its Manchu version. There is also missing any indication of the circumstances according to which Qianlong himself was involved in the realisation of the Manchu version.”⁵

In order to shed some light on this chapter, a comparison of all existing copies is therefore needed. The following comparison — limited to the copy kept at the Tôyô Bunko in Tôkyô,⁶ the already mentioned ms. of the IVR, and a brief quotation found in the *Manjusai da sekiyen kimcin bithe* (i.e. the *Manzhou yuanliu kao* 滿洲原流考 [1783]) — should be considered

¹ The “Pingshui system” — named according to a place-name in Shandong — was established in 1223 and classifies 106 rhyme-syllables of Chinese poetry.

² The whole work has been recently analyzed by M. Gimm. *Kaiser Qianlong (1711–1799) als Poet*. Stuttgart, 1993.

³ Gimm M. *Kaiser Qianlong*. P. 83.

⁴ Волкова М.П. Описание маньчжурских рукописей Института народов Азии и Африки АН СССР. М., 1965. С. 71, № 134. The exact date of this copy, however, is 13.VII.1821 (*Doro Eldengge-i sucungga aniya ninggun biyai tofohon de*).

⁵ Original in German in: Gimm M. *Kaiser Qianlong*. P. 86.

⁶ Poppe N., Hurvitz L., Okada H. *Catalogue of the Manchu-Mongol Section of the Toyo Bunko*. Tokyo–Seattle, 1964. P. 299–300, no. 514.

a preliminary step in this direction. Limiting our analysis to the very beginning of the collection of poems, the well-known myth of the dynasty's heavenly origin, we find to our surprise that, in the last mentioned source, the Manchu text is a verse-composition according to the usual Manchu verse-technique based on alliteration (every line of a stanza begins with the same vowel or consonant) and different rhyme-schemes. In the second stanza, the rhyme-scheme follows the structure a-a-b-a, in the following central stanza (exceptionally composed of six instead of the usual four lines) the scheme is a-a-b-a-b-a. The fourth and fifth stanzas are based on the a-b-a-b scheme, and the last again on the a-a-b-a scheme. The first stanza is based on the unusual scheme a-b-c-b.

Both Manchu manuscripts are sometimes free and sometimes word-by-word translations of the Chinese text. See, for example, the last stanza: in the Tōyō Bunko ms. only the Zhou dynasty appears — but in the manuscript at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts we also find emperor “Di U” (= Di Wu 帝武), mentioned in the Chinese text. When speaking of how the first ancestor was brought to the village, the Tōyō Bunko ms. says (like the Chinese text) that he was placed on two mens' joined hands, whereas the manuscript at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts specifies that by “joining hands” a kind of chair was made. Furthermore, the manuscript at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts “transforms” the black bird (*yacin gasha*, in Chinese simply *niao* 鳥) of the Shang dynasty's origin myth into a swallow (*cibin*). Noteworthy is also the different version of the last line in the penultimate stanza, where the text of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts refers *verbatim* to the “first ancestors” (*zhaozong* 肇宗) of the Chinese text, transcribing the term simply as *joozung*. In the Tōyō Bunko text this term is given as *uksun*, i.e. “[imperial] clan”.

As can be seen from this preliminary note, many problems connected with the various Manchu versions of Qianlong's composition still call for answer: in any further research, nonetheless, the text kept at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts should deserve special attention for its elegant style and the way it translates — or explains — specific Chinese terms.

Versified parallel text of the *Manjusai da sekiyen-i kimcin bithe* (1783), I, 8b–12°:

天造皇清	abka amba daicing gurun be badarambufi
發祥大東	ambarame hūteri deribume dergi ergici mukdembuhe.
山曰長白	alin seci golmin šanyan alin inu
江曰混同	amba ulai gebu hūntung ula sehe

*Heaven let the Great Daicing dynasty become prosperous,
great good fortune began rising from the East.
The mountain is the Long White Mountain,
the name of the great river is Hūntung River*

峰極襟帶	cokcohon den bime ešemeliyan-i kûwaraha
福萃靈種	cohome hūteri be imiyabufi ferguwecun banjinaha.
山頂有潭	colgoroko alin-i ninggude juce bi.
闕門名揚	cohotoi gebu tamun juce seme algimbuha.

*On the supreme top [the dynasty started] embracing everything.
Gathering special luck, it [made] wonders grow.
On the excellent mountain there is a pool,
which became particularly famous with the name Tamun Pool.*

三天女者	abkai sargan jui ilan enduri gege.
降而浴躬	abka ci wasinjifi omo de ebišche.
神鵲含果	aifinici enduri saksaha ašuha tubihe be sindafi.

吞以娠中 ainame nunggefi uthai beyede bihe.
 锡之姓名 anggai alame gebu hala bufi.
 母遂凌空 aja uthai abkai baru wesime genehe.

*Three heavenly maiden-goddesses
 came down from Heaven and took a bath.
 When a magpie-god brought a fruit and put it down
 [one maiden] swallowed it and became pregnant.
 After having revealed orally [to her son his] name and clan,
 the mother ascended to Heaven.*

有取水人 emu muke ganara niyalma sabufi.
 見訝異微 ede ferguweme tuwafi geren de alaha.
 交手昇歸 emgi gala be joolame tebume gamafi bederebufi
 推爲主國 ejen obume gurun be salibuha.

*A man taking water saw [the child] and, having
 looked at him in astonishment, told it to the people.
 Joining their hands, they let him sit down and brought him back.
 They proclaimed him lord and entrusted him with [the government of] the country.*

三姓定亂 ilan halai facuhûn be toktobufi
 鄂多城崇 ibedeme odoli gebungge hecen de tenehe
 號建滿洲 ilibuha gurun-i gebu be manju seme tukiyeft
 開基肇宗 icemleme ten be ilibufi fukjin doro neihe.

*He pacified the disarray of the three clans,
 later [his descendants] went to reside in the city called Odoli.
 The [just] founded dynasty was praised with the name Manju.
 Reaching a new height, the way to the [dynasty's] foundation was opened.*

元鳥裔室 tenteke ŝang gurun de yacin gashai umhan-i sabi tucinjihebi.
 帝武周家 tere jeo gurun de inu bethei simhun-i songko-i todolo iletulehebi.
 聖必有啓 ten-i enduringge de ferguwecun bisirengge mujangga.
 異揆同風 terei baita encu bicibe doro emu bihebi:

*In the same way, in the Shang dynasty a propitious omen appeared
 from the egg of a black bird,
 and footprints as a good omen appeared in the Zhou dynasty.
 These are really marvels in the supreme divine [plans].
 Even if the events were different, the way was the same.*

Prose version of the Tôyô Bunko ms.

Prose version of the IOM ms.

abkai hesebuhe daicing gurun
 ten-i dergici fukjin deribuhe
 golmin ŝanyan sere alin
 honton sere ula bifi

abkai daicing gurun banjibufi.
 mukden ci fukjin ilibuha.
 golmin ŝanyan sere alin.
 hüntung sere ula.

*By the Heaven's will, the Daicing dynasty
 originated from the great East.
 There is the Long White Mountain,
 the river called Honton.*

*The Daicing dynasty was created by Heaven,
 the origin was established from [= in]
 There is the Long White Mountain,
 the river called Hüntung.*

den colhoropi ukume hayahai
hûturi isafî ferguwecun imiyaha
alin-i ninggude bisire juce
tamun seme gebu algika

*On the top [the dynasty] embraced everything.
Concentrating fortune, it gathered wonders.
The pool on the mountain
became famous with the name Tamun.*

abkai ilan sargan jui ilan
ebunjifi beye ebišere de
ferguwecuke saksaha ašunjiha tubihe
nunggefi beyede oho
hala gebu šangname bufi
eme abka de wesike

*When three maidens of Heaven
descended and took a bath,
[one of them] swallowed a fruit brought
by a magpie-god and became pregnant.
After having revealed [his] name and clan,
the mother ascended to Heaven.*

muke ganara niyalma sabufi
ferguwecuke galbingga seme ferguwehe
galai hiyaganjame tukiyeme bederefi
gurun-i ejen seme wesihulehe

*A man taking water saw [the child]
and wondered, astonishingly surprised.
[The people] brought him back respectfully
joining their hands
and honoured him as lord of the country.*

ilan halai facuhûn toktobufi
odoli hoton de tehe
manju seme gebu ilibufi
fukjin neime uksun badarambuha

*He pacified the disarray of the three clans,
[his descendants] resided in the city of Odoli.
Having established the name Manju
the Imperial clan prospered laying the
[dynasty's] foundation.*

yacin gasha čang ni todolo
amba songko jeo-i deribun
enduringge urunakû sekiyen bi
tulbin ilgacibe doro emu

den colhon čumin goro.
hûturi isandufi ferguwecun acamjiha
alin ninggude omo banjifi
tamun gebu algišaha.

*On the top [the dynasty] is all-embracing.
Concentrating fortune, it collected wonders.
On the mountain there is a lake
which became famous with the name Tamun.*

abkai sargan jui
enggilenjifi beyebe ebišehe
ferguwecuke saksaha-i ašuha tubihe
nunggefi beye de oho.
hala gebu šangname bufi
eme uthai wesihun wesike.

*Three heavenly maidens
came and took a bath.
[One of them] swallowed a fruit brought
by a magpie-god and became pregnant.
After having revealed [his] name and clan,
the mother ascended upwards.*

muke gaire niyalma isinafi.
ferguwecuke galbingga sabufi ferguwehe
galai den [= ten] obume tukiyeme bederebufi
wesihuleme gurun-i ejen obuha.

*A man taking water came
and wondered, astonishingly surprised.
[The people] brought him back respectfully
making a chair with [their] hands
and respectfully proclaimed him lord
of the country.*

ilan halangga-i facuhûn toktobufi
odoli hoton de tehe.
manju gurun seme gebulefi.
joozung fukjin doro ilibuha.

*He pacified the disarray of the three clans,
[his descendants] resided in the city of Odoli.
Having called [the dynasty] Manju Dynasty,
the first ancestors paved the way to the
[dynasty's] foundation.*

cibin-i ferguwecun čang gurun
di u jeo-i hargačan
enduringge urunakû deribuhangge bi.
tulbin encu bicibe tacin adali.

*A black bird as a good omen for the Shang,
great footprints at the beginning of the Zhou:
The origin is always [found] in divine [plans].
Even if the reasons were different, the way
was one only.*

*The miracle of a swallow of the Shang dynasty,
the court of emperor Wu of the Zhou:
The origin is always [found] in divine [plans].
Even if the reasons were different, [the way]
was like a [constant] practice.*

Стари Джованни

**Несколько слов о маньчжурской версии
собрания стихов Цяньлуна «Цюаньюнь ши»**

В истории китайской литературы император Цяньлун известен как выдающийся поэт, антологии его стихов много раз переиздавались. Однако мало кто знает о стихах Цяньлуна, написанных на маньчжурском языке. В статье публикуется отрывок на тему мифа о возникновении императорского рода из «Собрания рифмованных стихов, составленного по указу императора» (*Yuzhi Quanyun shi*). Этот поэтический текст опубликован в китайско-маньчжурском издании «Собрания», в котором китайский текст состоит из рифмованных по китайской просодии строк по четыре иероглифа, а маньчжурский текст написан по правилам маньчжурского стихосложения. Однако имеются прозаические варианты этого маньчжурского текста, которые никогда не издавались. В статье публикуются соответствующие прозаические отрывки из рукописей, хранящихся в библиотеке Тоё бунко (Токио) и Рукописном отделе Института восточных рукописей РАН. Маньчжурский текст обеих рукописей имеет некоторые различия, поэтому в статье они помещены параллельно и сопровождаются дословным переводом. Эта публикация является первым шагом в изучении различных списков, редакций и вариантов стихотворений Цяньлуна.