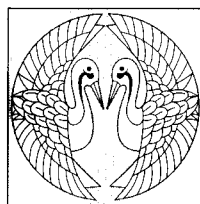


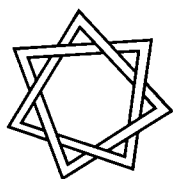
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MANUSCRIPTS AND SOUND RECORDS OF THE MONGOL-OIRAT HEROIC EPIC “JANGAR” IN THE ARCHIVES OF ST. PETERSBURG

The Mongol-Oirat Heroic Epic “Jangar”, one of the outstanding monuments of the world literature, remarkable for the richness of its contents and the perfection of its artistic form, has been studied for more than two hundred years, the sources of this study being connected with St. Petersburg.

From St. Petersburg came those scholars — A. Bobrovnikov, K. Golstunsky, V. Kotvich, A. Pozdneev, and B. Vladimirtsov — who took notice of this epic and inspired interest towards it in Russia and in Europe. Later, when it became studied from the points of view of linguistics, history, and history of literature, there developed a distinct scientific branch — “Jangar” studies.

At present the archives of St. Petersburg have in their holdings manuscripts written in Old Mongol script, in *Zaya-pandita* script and in academic transcription, as well as material in Russian and sound records, representing mainly the initial stages of the study of this epic. The principal centres of Mongolian studies at the beginning of the twentieth century in St. Petersburg were the St. Petersburg University and the Asiatic Museum (later transformed into the Institute of Oriental Studies, at present the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies), therefore most of the material on “Jangar” was concentrated in these institutions.

In the course of the twentieth century Russian scientific institutions were re-organised several times, manuscripts were transferred from one place to another, their call numbers were changed. The result is that the information on these material found in scientific publications does not correspond to the real state of things. The aim of this article is to provide precise information on the present location of the manuscripts of “Jangar”, both those studied or mentioned earlier as well as those so far never considered in scholarly publications.

In St. Petersburg is preserved the first record of the text of “Jangar”, the one brought from Kalmykia by N. I. Mihaylov, fellow and member of the staff of the Russian Geographic Society. In 1855, this version was first translated into Russian and published in *Vestnik Russkogo Geograficheskogo Obshchestva* (the Bulletin of the Russian Geographic Society), on the request of the ethnographic

section of the Society, by A. Bobrovnikov, Master of the Kazan Ecclesiastical Academy. In a critical review, which followed the translation, Bobrovnikov for the first time characterised “Jangar” as “an original, rare and veritably folk piece of literature” praising the idea of nomadic glory and the deeds of heroes, which is not recited but sung, accompanied by musical instruments [1].

Until recently the exact location of the said record remained unknown. In 1979, however, the Kalmyk scholar V. Tserenov discovered in the archives of the Russian Geographic Society the manuscript containing 1,800 versified lines, titled “Songs and Fairy-Tales of the Kalmyk People of the Astrakhan District, the Bagatsokhurov Ulus” [2]. It should be noted that he found there also one more manuscript, close by its contents to the first one.

After the publication of Bobrovnikov's translation scholars' interest towards the manuscript increased. In 1862, professor at the St. Petersburg University K. Golstunsky recorded several chapters from a Torgut *janjarčîn* in the Kalmyk steppes. Manuscripts with his records are preserved now in the manuscript fund of the Oriental faculty of the St. Petersburg University under call numbers Q-544 and F-64. They bear the titles “Jangar, Maloderbet record, 1862, the 9th of August” and “Jangar, 1863” correspondingly. The first one contains three chapters of the epic: (i) Song on the victory over Šar Birman; (ii) Song on the capture of Jangar by the Khan of the Heaven; and (iii) On wrathful Šara Gürgü. The second manuscript contains only two chapters: (i) On wrathful Qara Kines, and (ii) On wrathful Manyas. In 1864, K. Golstunsky produced a lithographic edition, in *Zaya-pandita* script, of the text of the chapters “On wrathful Qara Kines” and “On wrathful Šara Gürgü” [3]. Later these chapters were included by A. Pozdneev into his “Kalmyk Textbook” [4]. In 1911, he supplemented its next edition with the song “On wrathful Manyas”. The “Song on the victory over Šar Birman” and the “Song on the capture of Jangar by the Khan of the Sky”, recorded by K. Golstunsky, were re-discovered only in 1970 by the Kalmyk scholar A. Kichikov who made an abridged translation of these chapters into Russian [5].

A valuable contribution to the task of collecting, publishing and investigating the songs of “Jangar” was made

The image shows a page of a handwritten manuscript in Mongolian script. The text is arranged in ten vertical columns, reading from right to left. The script is a cursive style with many loops and flourishes. The paper appears aged and slightly yellowed. The columns are separated by small gaps, and the overall layout is neat and organized.

Fig. 1

by one of the leading Russian mongolists of the first half of the twentieth century V. Kotvich. In the manuscript collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies there are two manuscripts of "Jangar" (call numbers D-64 and E-82) titled *Zaluu boqdo Byanyar gegči nereni döčün tümen xāni nutuqtu daraqdal ügei dörbön oron-du tuuji bolba* and *Zambutibiyin kıqsin zaluu boqdo Byanyar gegči nereni döčün tümün xāni nutuqtu daraqdal ügei dörbön oron-du tuuji bolba*.

The first manuscript has, on the inner side of its cover, a label inscribed — "Of Georgy Stepanovich Lytkin. The Kalmyk manuscript of "Jangar" acquired around 1927 from the widow of Prof. Pozdneev. Kotvich. 9/VIII-29". This Oirat manuscript presents a copy-book in a European cover. It comprises 147 pages written in black and brown ink on Russian paper. The second one contains only 12 *bothi* pages also written on Russian paper in black and brown ink [6].

In 1908, a pupil of V. Kotvich, N. Ochirov, a student of the St. Petersburg University, made several trips into the Kalmyk steppes and recorded ten songs of "Jangar" in the Russian academic transcription from the renowned storyteller Eliaan Ovla. Later these records were transformed into Zaya-pandita script and published by V. Kotvich in a lithographic edition in 1910. The original record of these songs in transcription with corrections made by Kotvich were initially preserved in the Institute of Oriental Studies in St. Petersburg under call number [J]-330, Nova-2. As a result of the re-arrangement of the Institute's manuscript fund in 1949—1953, when all personal archives of the academicians of the USSR were transferred to the principal Academic Archives, materials belonging to V. Kotvich were transferred, jointly with those brought by I. Yu. Krachkovsky from the Vilnius Karaim Historico-Ethnographic Museum, to fund 761 of the Archives of the Academicians of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Now material belonging to V. Kotvich includes 67 items, those related to "Jangar" have call number Φ . 761, on. 2, No. 8.

Sound records made by N. Ochirov (songs performed by Eliaan Ovla) were also several times transferred from place to place. At present they are stored in the sound-record archives of the Institute of Russian Literature (The Pushkin House). Recently Kalmyk student of music

V. Shivlyanova discovered that two cylinders (No. 3165 and 3166) preserved among the collection of B. Vladimirtsov did not belong to this collection but had come there by chance at the time of the removal of the sound-record archives from the Asiatic Museum first to the folklore section of the Museum of Archaeology, Anthropology and Ethnography, then — to the Pushkin House. These cylinders contain records of the song "The Marriage of Hongyor", it is a continuation of the record of the song made by N. Ochirov on nine cylinders preserved in his private collection. Evidently, these two cylinders also belong to Ochirov's collection [7].

In the following years "Jangar" attracted the attention of several St. Petersburg mongolists, among them A. Burdukov, B. Vladimirtsov, A. Kozin, G. Sanzheev.

In connection with the celebration of the 500th anniversary of "Jangar" in 1940 S. Lipkin made a verse translation into Russian of eleven songs of the epic. The personal archives of Orientalists preserved in the archives of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies contain material related to different stages of the making of this translation. Under call number p. I, on. 3, No. 82 we find several songs sent by S. Lipkin to N. N. Poppe, at that time the chief of the Mongolian Department of the Institute, to be reviewed, also a letter by N. Karimova, the secretary of the Department of the creative work of the peoples of the USSR, estimating the translation. Besides that, there is a typed Kalmyk text of "Jangar" (call number p. II, on. 3, No. 377), titled "B. Basangov, "Jangar", Kalmyk epic, 271 pp.", made by B. Basangov, a famous Kalmyk writer, playwright, and a student of life and customs of his native people.

The manuscripts, transcriptions, and sound records of "Jangar" enumerated here are classical records, from which began the process of collecting and studying of this epic. Later it became a regular practice in Kalmykia and Dzungaria (The Chinese People's Republic), which is testified by many conferences on "Jangar" and *janarčın* held there.

St. Petersburg, however, still remains the cradle of "Jangar" studies as separate branch of Mongolian philology. Its archives are not exhausted, and it is proved by recent discoveries which will attract to this field new generations of scholars.

Notes

1. A. A. Bobrovnikov, "Dzhangar, kalmytskaia narodnaia skazka" ("Jangar, a Kalmyk folk tale"), *Vestnik Russkogo Geograficheskogo Obshchestva*. 1854, 5/12 (1855), pp. 2—30.
2. V. Z. Tserenov, "Zhangaryn eh bichgiin tuhai", *Aman zokhiol sudlal*, XIV/5 (Ulan Bator, 1987), p. 183.
3. *Ubashi khun-taidzhiin tuudzhi, narodnaia kalmytskaia poema Dzhangara i Sidditu kiuriin-tuuli, izdannaia na kalmytskom iazyke K. Golstunskim (Ubasi qun taiji-yin tuyuji, a Folk Kalmyk Poem "Jangar" and Sidditu keguri-yin tūli*, edited in the Kalmyk language by K. Golstunsky) (St. Petersburg, 1864).
4. A. M. Pozdneev, *Kalmytskaia khrestomatiia* (A Kalmyk Textbook) (St. Petersburg, 1892); 2nd ed. 1907; 3rd ed. 1911.
5. A. Sh. Kichikov, "Dzhangarovedenie. Itogi izucheniia" ("Jangar" studies. Results of investigations"), *Problemy altaistiki i mongolovedeniia* (Moscow, 1974).
6. A. G. Sazykin, *Katalog mongol'skikh rukopisei i ksilografov Instituta Vostokovedeniia Akademii Nauk SSSR* (A Catalogue of Mongolian Manuscripts and Block-Prints in the Institute of Oriental Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences) (Moscow, 1988), i, p. 30.
7. V. K. Shivlyanova, "Kolleksiiia valikov B. Ia. Vladimirtsova v Pushkinskom Dome" ("The V. Ya. Vladimirtsov collection of sound records in the Pushkin House"), *Mongolika*, fasc. 3 (St. Petersburg, 1994), p. 88.

Illustrations

Fig. 1. The manuscript Д-64 of "Jangar" acquired by V. Kotvich in 1929 from the widow of A. M. Pozdneev (at present in the manuscript collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies), p. 73, 16.5 × 21.0 cm.