REVIEWS


It would probably not be an exaggeration to call the work under review the masterwork of Igor de Rachewiltz as it summarises thirty-five years of his own activities, and the much longer overall studies by his scientific predecessors. The former began in 1971, when de Rachewiltz commenced the task of translating the Secret History of the Mongols into “up-to-date English”, in contrast with Cleaves’ biblical English version, which was completed in 1956, but published only in 1982. De Rachewiltz began to publish his translation in the journal Papers on Far Eastern History in 1971, and finished it in 1985. Additions and corrections were made to this translation in the same journal in 1986. Immediately afterwards, in 1987, de Rachewiltz reopened his work, to publish his revised translation with detailed commentaries, which was completed in 2002.

The importance of the Secret History of the Mongols for the different arts can hardly be overrated. As a treasury on the history, language, literature, ethnography, etc. of the Mongols, it is probably the most investigated piece in the field. Its subject-matter comprises the ancestry, life and deeds of Činggis Qan, and in connection with this the establishment and rise of the Mongol Empire during his own life and that of his successor. The uniqueness of this epic chronicle lies in its genuineness, vividness and linguistic purity, free of the Buddhist influence so peculiar to later texts. Even if it is not always entirely reliable in describing historical events, no other source describes more realistically the tribal and everyday life and the social and military organisation of the Mongols in the 12th and 13th centuries. To quote the words of de Rachewiltz, “it adds both flesh and soul to much that we learn from the Persian and Chinese historians” (p. lxiv).

Its extreme popularity is revealed, among others, by the many translations, into some twenty different languages (including the Modern Mongol translations in Uighur and Cyrillic script) and the mass of literature relating to this text, cf. Bibliography and abbreviations (pp. 1081–1194). These numerous translations reveal that the Secret History has found its way into national literatures. Below, the pertinent
bibliographical data are listed in the alphabetical order of the languages of the different translations. A similar list is to be found on pp. lxxii–lxxiv of de Rachewiltz’s work, but the items there are listed in chronological sequence:

**Bulgarian**


**Chinese**


Za ji si qin (1979): *Meng gu mi shi xin shi bing zhu shi*. Tai bei.


**Czech**


**English**


**French**


German


Hungarian


Italian


Japanese


Kazak


Korean


Mongol

Modern Mongol in Uighur script and Khalkha


Buryat


Oirat and Kalmuck


Polish


Russian


Pozdneev, A. M. [n.d. 1880 or 1887]: Transkripcija paleografičeskogo teksta Yuan’-čao-mi-ši. Sankt Petersburg [text until the middle of paragraph no. 104].


Turkish


The translation of the Mongol text (pp. 1–218) is preceded by several introductory parts: the Preface (pp. xi–xv), Notes on the illustrations (pp. xv–xvii), Abbreviations and conventional signs (pp. xix–xxii) and the Introduction itself (pp. xxv–xxix), discussing such subjects as contents (pp. xxvii–xxviii), place and date of composition (pp. xxix–xxxiv), authorship (pp. xxxiv–xl), textual history (pp. xl–lili), the Secret History text in the Altan tobči (pp. liv–lix), the Secret History as history and literature (pp. lix–lxx), different transcriptions and translations of the text (pp. lxx–lxxvi), modern and contemporary studies on the Secret History (pp. lxxvii–lxxix), and some technical remarks on the publication (pp. lxxix–lxxxii), each supplied with various notes (pp. lxxxiii–ciii). Unfortunately, in many cases these endnotes do not contain supplementary data, but simply refer to the bibliography, given at the end of the second volume. This, together with the high num-
ber of abbreviations used, sometimes makes the work a little difficult to handle. A unified system, with the name of the author and the year of publication, would often be more informative. The publisher should perhaps ponder the possibility of publishing the second edition in one volume (of course, with a different page layout).

The introductory parts are followed, still before the translation of the text, by a summary of the contents of the chapters (pp. cxv–cxxvi). This furnishes the chronological sequence of the different events and episodes, while a chapter and paragraph concordance (p. cxxvii) offers a convenient way to search for them.

Next follow the Translation (pp. 1–218) and the Commentary (pp. 221–1044), which are the main parts of the work. The aim of de Rachewiltz was to achieve an “accurate but at the same time fairly fluent translation into modern English” (p. lxxx), as opposed to Cleaves’ King James Version’s English, with as few footnotes as possible. This makes its reading a pleasant task even for those who have no special scientific goal.

The Commentary “has grown over the years and is now almost twice the size of that of the first edition” (p. lxxxi). The author states that “Although meant to be both historical and philological, the Commentary does not deal with all the linguistic features of the Secret History, but only with those that are relevant to the understanding of the text and are still dubious and/or contentious” (p. lxxxi).

In the Introduction, de Rachewiltz quotes Waley, who considered that it would be possible to furnish this work with endless annotations (Waley 1963, p. 7). As concerns the present work it may be stated that Igor de Rachewiltz has done great work in approaching the endless or infinite, cf. the 823 pages of the commentary as opposed to the 218 pages of the translation.

The Bibliography and abbreviations (pp. 1081–1194) contains such a mass on the topic that it probably deserves independent publication. It is somewhat regrettable that, while the Cyrillic items have been transcribed into Latin script, the Chinese and Japanese items have been left in the original.

The work has seven appendices, from which the most interesting ones are: (1) a chronological summary of events on Činggis Qan’s campaigns in Mongolia, Siberia and Central Asia (1204–1219) (pp. 1045–1050), (2) the Secret History passages in the Altan tobči (pp. 1051–1054), (4) a paragraph-page reference list to A. Mostaert’s Sur quelques passages de l’Histoire Secrète des Mongols (pp. 1056–1059).

Orientation in the two volumes is facilitated by the index, which consists of three parts, enumerating the proper names (pp. 1195–1245), the different subjects (pp. 1246–1314) and the quoted Mongol grammatical and lexical units (pp. 1315–1342).

Mention may be made of some of the cardinal points treated in the Introduction:

Unlike the place of the composition, Dolo­’an Boldaq of Köde’е Aral, the Year of the Rat mentioned in the colophon is a topic long discussed among scholars. The Year of the Rat was suspected to be 1228, 1240, 1252 and even 1264. Igor de Rachewiltz plumps for 1228, rendering it very likely that the colophon of the “Urtex” – that is Činggis qan-u huja’ur – later, after an editorial work was transferred to the end of an edited and enlarged version of the text.

The name of the author or/and compiler still remains a mystery. Attributing the authorship to Tata Tonga, Činqai or Šigi Qutuqu would be mere speculation: the name of the author will probably never be known. However, Šigi Qu­tuqu still seems the best candidate, as he possessed many qualifications for the performance of such a project as the Secret History.

The history of the text is very complicated, and cannot be summarised in two or three sentences. Those who wish to learn about it should check on pp. xl–liii. An interesting point here relates to the title of the chronicle. De Rachewiltz states that “Since Činggis Qan never bore the title of qayun (first assumed by his son and successor Ögödei), but only that of qan, the original opening words must have been Činggis Qan-u ujajur” (p. xli). Some lines earlier, he writes that “our epic chronicle did not require a proper title since it was not written to be published as a book, but was compiled solely for
the members of the imperial clan” (p. xli). These words of de Rachewiltz are true, but it is also possible that the work really did not originally have a title at all, and that the words *Činggis Qayan-u uajan are later interpolations, as suggested by the fact that the word qayan was used. Other evidence could be indirect, cf. the text of the Altan tobci, which does not contain these words.

While discussing the rhymed passages in the Secret History (p. lxvii), as a parallel de Rachewiltz mentions the Book of Dede Qorqut. Here, from Lewis he quotes the term soylama ‘declaration’, which is probably the Turkish söyleme, a deverbal noun from söyle- ‘to say, speak, tell’.

One of the most puzzling questions concerning the Secret History is its Mongolic language (dialect). It is extremely interesting to ponder on how much it reflects the colloquial language at the time of the transcription, and how much the text in Uighur-Mongol script. De Rachewiltz writes that “In the more than 150 years between the time the Secret History was written and the time when it was transcribed phonetically into Chinese, the so-called Middle Mongolian language had undergone and was still undergoing various changes, some of which are attested to in the transcribed text, affecting both vowels and consonants. Among the phonetic changes one should mention the following: i > i, q(i) > k(i), h (init.) ~ zero, a’ ~ å, e’e ~ ê, o’o ~ ë, u’u ~ ù, ü’ü > å, a ~ o and a > u (through assimilation). Moreover, the value of certain consonants (q/γ, k/g and t/d) is still uncertain” (p. lvx).

This view is not entirely acceptable. For the change of i to i and q(i) < k(i) (if there were such changes), we do not have a clear idea when they took place. They might have been occurred much earlier than the Middle Mongol period: cf. the Kitan word sawâ, which corresponds to the Literary Mongol word sabâun and supposes that the -i- after the sound -a- was already palatal, since the sound juncture si never results in ši. “Proof” for the fact that the vowel i existed in Mongolic is found in the pre-classic monuments in the Uighur script, which show Q before i. However, even at the time of the writing of the Secret History, this was probably merely an orthographic rule, taken from the Turkic Uighurs, in whose language such a differentiation was needed. Further, instead of thinking that the values of the consonants mentioned above were uncertain, it is more probable that the reader or/and transcriber was/were uncertain.

“The ancestral wolf, the crossing of a large body of water (lake or river), the migration to a mountain site and even the presence of a deer – all these elements are common to the two traditions, of which the Turkish is historically the earliest and thus, presumably, the original one” (p. 233). Unfortunately, this is merely an assumption. The date of first documentation can never be taken as evidence of origin. This idea, however, is also present among many researchers of Altaic linguistics: words are considered to be Turkic just because the first documented form appears in Turkic sources, the etymology as yet remaining unknown.

One field where there are many possibilities for further research is etymology. Let us consider an example.

While de Rachewiltz quotes several literature items on the concept of being “endowed with destiny”, in the text of the Secret History de’re tenggeri-ečë java’atu, no mention is made of the etymology of the word *jawaga, cf. the Literary Mongol jawar-a(n) ‘fate, destiny, predestination, etc.’. The etymology of this word seems to be quite clear. This is a deverbal noun from *jiga-, cf. the Literary Mongol jiye- ‘to point out, show, demonstrate; to teach, instruct’. The process from *jiga- to *jawaga is very interesting, and reveals that the history of the Mongolic languages does not start in the 13th century. First of all, this word-pair demonstrates the fact that the regressive assimilation (also called the breaking of i) in this case happened at a very early date, which explains the modern forms such as the Khalkha jax, and the Buryat dzaxa, as opposed to the example *mika, cf. the Literary Mongol miq-a(n) ‘meat, flesh, body; real, actual’, the Khalkha max(an), and the Buryat myxan. This second example clearly reveals that the assimilation did not take place at the same time and in the same way in the two languages. The word in the Secret History re-
sulted from the process *fiqa-ga(n) > *fiyaga(n) > jayaga(n) > sh jaya’a(n). As evidence for this etymology, mention may be made of pilgrims’ inscription of 1323 from Tun-huang, where we find Τγρι-κέ jayayitu törögsen (also quoted by de Rachewiltz, but for other reasons, p. 227). In this location jayayitu is a derivative of the verb *fiqa-: *jaga-ri(n) + tU < *fiqa-ri(n) + tU.

Numerous questions remain regarding the etymology of proper names, including the different clan or tribal names.

It is stated on p. 228 that ‘Baikal’ is a Tun-ferent clan or tribal names. The etymology of proper names, including the dif-

In a note to section 7, we read “On qa’ ‘fair, beautiful’ (not to be confused with qa’ ‘fallow’) [...]” (p. 245). In fact qa’ and qa’ must belong together, and the meaning ‘fair, beautiful’ is secondary, since the idea of fallow, pale skin, not burnt by the Sun is beauty for the Mongols, and also other nomad peoples. Its ety-

The name of the offspring of the blue-gray wolf and the fallow doe appears in the Secret History as Bataqiyan. This name has been inter-

In connection with the name Torogolfin Bay-

from torqan ‘silk’ with the suffix -lij. Although Poppe is possibly right in deriving it from the word meaning ‘silk’, it is easy to rec-

A novelty of this work is the reading Tumat (p. 248) instead of Tümed. This name also re-

Among the Additions and corrections (pp. 1343–1347), de Rachewiltz makes mention of the second edition of Ligeti’s Hungarian transla-

Section 194 contains the expression gür-

expression is understood by Haenisch to mean a calf as tall as a wheel (Ha, 80), by Kozin as a calf which is as round as a wheel (Li, 80), by Damdinsüren as a small calf (Da, 144), and by Murakami, Ozawa, Cleaves, Onon, Even and Pop, among others, as a calf tied or tethered to a (cart) wheel near the tent to prevent it from sucking its mother’s milk, since she is milked every day” (p. 701). De Rachewiltz himself prefers this last interpretation, so he gives “a wheel-tied calf”. It should be mentioned that Ligeti’s first translation was not ‘a calf which is as round as a wheel’, but “keréknyire megmut tulok” ‘calf as big as a wheel’, which in the second edition was corrected by Kara to “kerékalja kisborjú” ‘calf below the wheel(s)’ (= below the cart).

Much has been done, and much remains to be done. The merits of this work are many, like the beautiful and intelligible translation of the Mongol text, making available a source for many researchers on a topic which is outstanding even in the world history. The greatest merit is that Igor de Rachewiltz has collected and presented a large number of contradictory views on different questions (or at least has given the pertinent bibliographical data), and this work will therefore surely be a reference handbook in Mongolic studies. Fortunately, it does not eliminate the need for further investigations, but offers many starting-points for researches on different topics. It is also possible to use this work as an encyclopedia on the Mongol culture, after which it may be hoped that the translations of the other (important) Mongol chronicles (such as the Bolor toli, Erdeni-yin erike and Altan toboči) will follow, as urged by Poppe.

**References**


Mangghuer is a language with about 37,000 speakers, who live in Minhe County in the Qinghai Province of China. It is strongly influenced by Chinese, from which vast parts of its lexicon and almost its entire phonology are taken. Officially, Mangghuer is recognised as a dialect of Mongguor, as is Mongghul of Huzhu County. The area borders areas where the following languages are spoken: Turkic Salar in the Northwest, Mongolian in the North and Northeast, local Chinese dialects in the South and East, Amdo Tibetan in the Southwest and South, and Mongolic Santa and Baonan in the South. Through religion, Central Tibetan might have influenced Mangghuer as well.

After referring to the English and Chinese literature available on Mangghuer, Mongguor, Baonan, Santa, and on Mangghuer culture, Slater states that he has written a theory-independent grammar which accounts for the function and the development of Mangghuer. His corpus consists of approximately 1400 sentences from folktales (Chen et al. 2005) and 2050 elicited sentences.
Chapter 2 (pp. 25–81) deals with “the phonology”, which is based on the speech of one young, highly educated male speaker. It begins with a presentation of phonemes with their allophones and an account of where they may appear in a syllable and in a word. Thus, we find the consonant phonemes /p, b, t, d, k, g, s, z, ʃ, x/ and /j/ and /w/ and the vowels /a, o, e, i, u/. Slater then introduces Poppe’s (1955, p. 95, but see page 105) theory that Proto-Mongolic (“Common Mongolian”) had a voiceless/voiced distinction, but even if Svantesson et al. (2005, pp. 118, 124) reconstruct *p, *m, *t h, *t, *s, *n, *l, *h, *t, *q, *qh, *k~*q, *h, *tsh, *s, *n, *l, *t by contemporary Mangghuer words to trace back the evolution of “*d ʃ” and “*tʃ”, without giving a reconstructed or at least Written Mongolian (WM) cognate (as he almost never does). Thus, when he writes “In native Mongolic words, both /zhu/ ([tʃz]) and /jʃ/ ([tʃ]) arose diachronically as reflexes of the Mongolic voiced alveo-palatal affricate *dʒ. Phonologically, the distinction between the two phonemes has to do with which segments follow them: when followed by a front vowel, *dʒ gave rise to the palatal /jʃ/; when followed by anything besides a front vowel, *dʒ became the retroflex /ʃz/.” (p. 46), it is easy to overlook that this indeed only holds synchronically, for in the case of “[ʃuʃʷ‘kaj] zhuer̄gai ‘heart’”, WM is <jirūke(n)>1, which means that *dʒʃ in any case followed by a front vowel in Mongolic and only ceased to be after i-breakings had taken place and *y and *u had merged into Mangghuer /u/. When discussing the development of [c] and [s], he uses the synchronic data of Sun (1990) to speculate about a peculiarity of the source morpheme, without realising that Sun had already cleared the issue with an item in Mongolian Script. He also quotes Poppe’s (1955) Middle Mongolian items as reconstructed, even though Poppe clearly indicates that these are mere transcriptions from a Sino-Mongolian source. The syllable structure is (C1)(C2)V(C3) where C2 may only be a glide, C1 anything but a glide and C3 /ŋ/ or a glide and C3 /ŋ, n, j, w/. Then the alternative approaches of regarding affricates as single consonants or glides as vowels are discussed and convincingly rejected. A section follows in which phonological differences from Mongolic are discussed with examples from Sun (1990) and Poppe (1955): the disappearance of codas, the epenthesis of i behind word-final *s and the loss of secondary vowel length. In cases with different vowels, the loss of *h seems to have had different results: *fʃibo ‘bird’ became [ʃi-paw], but *qala’un ‘hot’ became [q’a’lun]. However, the reconstructions of Svantesson et al. (*sipahu/n, *k̂alahu), any dictionary of Written (Classical) Mongolian, or the Khalkha forms (<šuvuu>, dative <šuvuund> and <xaluun>) would have shown that the disappearance of *n in the former case is completely regular. Mangghuer itself has a few instances of unstable n as well, surfacing in the dative case. Vowel harmony has disappeared, and rounding harmony may never have taken place. Stress generally falls on the last syllable in Mongolic words, while it may be lexical in Chinese loans. When case markers are attached, the stress shifts to the new last syllable, making word boundaries easy to define. There is a large set of enclitics, including all case markers and the reflexive-possessive marker, which behave just like the similar forms called suffixes in other descriptions of Mongolian languages. Yet, case and possessive markers may follow a number marker that follows the head noun, e.g. Mangghuer:

\[
\text{laohen } [\text{агуер san-ge}]=\text{nang berqie}=\text{du sao-gha ge danang},
\]

old:man daughter three-CL-REFLPOSS

pasture=DAT sit-CAUSE do after

After Old Man had his three daughters sit in the pasture, (Slater 2003, p. 106)

\[\text{Acta Orient. Hung. 59, 2006}\]
war enemy Hitler three:ACC come_to_know:
CV3 completely hate:CV1 go:PAST
… [he] “came to know” the war, the enemy and Hitler and went on completely hating them.

In this case, too, the case marker is attached to the word in the final position of the noun phrase, regardless of word class and syntactic function (as also in Erdeni deslegijg ‘lieutenant Erdeni (Acc)’), so that it might be more precise to analyse such an “affix” as an enclitic as well, as Slater suggests (p. 166).

Chapter 3 (pp. 82–111) deals with nouns and noun phrases. The pronominal system of Mangghuer has the Qinghai peculiarity of having the third person pronoun gan that is possibly related to Mongolic *irken ‘people’. There is also a reflexive pronoun jie that always appears with a genitive or reflexive enclitic, so that it morphosyntactically resembles WM <über>. Numerals, which are almost completely Chinese except for ‘one’, always take a classifier; demonstratives do so optionally. Quantifiers are ge for singular indefinite, resembling WM <nige(n)>, and si for plural, resembling the Mongolic plural suffix *-s, but being a phonologically independent word.

Chapter 4 (pp. 112–193) deals with “the clause”. The verb may be derived from a noun, and all such Chinese borrowings irrespective of their former lexical category are derived this way. While most or all finite declarative inflections are historically Mongolic and aspectually/temporally remain in appropriate environments, their old meaning has given way to a Tibetan-type “subjective/objective speaker involvement” system parallel to a perfective/imperfective/future paradigm. Copulas have become obligatory for equational clauses and adjectival predication; they are always imperfective. Causatives still exist and change the valency of their verb by shifting the cause along the chain nominative > accusative > dative. Similarly, some verbs have acquired changing valency, shifting less affected participants to dative if the accusative slot is already occupied.

There are at least ten auxiliaries of identifiable Mongolic origin that rule the bare verb stem. They express inability, high transitivity (highly affected patient), continuity, highly affected experiencer-subject, benefactive and directionality and are treated in notable detail. Some verbal suffixes, combined with a copula, exhibit meanings like processive. Among the particles, Slater considers the hearsay marker gelang an areal feature of Gansu-Qinghai and gives examples from regional Mandarin and Amdo Tibetan, yet a similar (but rarely mentioned) marker based on the same stem ge- ‘to say’ exists in Khalkha as well:

Stiven Sigal (…) Žéjms Kameronyg ažilluulax bololtoj gene.
S.S. J.C. employ:IMPF probably(particle)
HEARSAY(particle)
It is rumoured that Steven Seagal will probably employ James Cameron (…) as an actor in his movie.

Grammatical relations are treated rather straightforwardly by the author: the subject is unmarked, and the direct object may be unmarked, and therefore the indirect object that always has to be marked by an enclitic is only a PP. There are seven case enclitics, most notably the directive =ji, an innovation that Mangghuer only shares with Mongghul. Reflexive possessive =nang and non-reflexive possessive =ni replace the accusative marker and attach to all other cases. Slater supposes that there are a few instances in which they may be placed between the noun and another element as case, e.g. bieri=ni=du banhua guang wife=POSS=DAT method OBJ:NEG:COP ‘His wife had no recourse’ (p. 178). However, there is a genitive-dative with locative or allative meaning in WM, and as genitive and non-reflexive possessive are homophonous in Mangghuer, it is difficult to decide whether Slater is right. The “parallel” construction puzighuo=nang ge deep:fried: dough: stick=REFLPOSS SG:INDEF (p. 177) does not
strengthen this point, as the indefinite marker *ge* is an independent word, while *-du* is not. In addition to case, some “relational nouns” can express relative location. None of these rule the genitive or ablative case as their WM cognates do, and Slater’s two arguments that they indeed “may also behave in any syntactic way that other nouns do” (p. 180) are one instance of an ablative case and – a nominal compound!

Du qì ti khuonuo yanzi=du wuji-la xi.

Now 2:SG that back yard=DAT take:note-PURP go

Now you go look in that backyard.  
(Slater 2003, p. 180)

Here, *khuonuo* obviously does not rule anything and should therefore be regarded as the same gram as the postpositional *khuonuo*, but in another stage of grammaticisation (see Bybee et al. 1994, pp. 17–18, 21–22). In the absence of better evidence, these words should not be considered relational nouns, but postpositions.

A rather detailed account on the placement of locatives within the sentence and marked and unmarked time obliques follows. For example, obliques expressing duration never take dative/locative marking and tend to immediately precede the verb, while phrases expressing the temporal context in which actions occur tend to be realised clause-initially and take dative marking if they do not belong to a class of lexical time obliques that never take any markings.

Chapter 5 (pp. 194–220) deals with the subjective/objective system of Mangghuer, a category for which every non-imperative final predication has to be marked. In an unmarked declarative, a first person pronoun will independently of aspect/tense take “subjective” while second and third person take “objective” marking. In interrogative clauses, the distribution is 2–1,3, and in clauses with predicates of uncontrolled action (e.g. perception) 0–1,2,3. If a first person subject used objective marking, this would indicate that her/his actions were not controlled by her/him, ordered by someone else or must be accepted. Using the subjective marking with second or third person subjects would imply certainty or commitment. This system has similarities to Tibetan systems. Lhasa Tibetan, for example, has a system of mirativity (DeLancey 1997), where new and/or unexpected information is marked differently from familiar information.

Chapter 6 (pp. 221–289) deals with clause combining. Slater finds a conflation in Mangghuer of what has been described as converbal (i.e. adverbal) clause modification on the one hand and clause serialisation on the other hand: both phenomena use the same syntactic devices and “seem simply to be two different pragmatic functions, to which any non-final clause can be put.” (p. 229) Subordination (+dependent, +embedded) is hard to determine because Mangghuer clauses are rarely a constituent of, or surrounded by, a matrix clause. There are a few constructions of non-final verbs that are clearly embedded such as the finalis construction -la or complements of a few verbs like ‘begin’ (taking non-final zero suffix). The remaining non-final verbs are less clear. -Ø (a true innovation!) and -ji are almost devoid of meaning, may not be postponed, have subject continuity as implicature and are hardly ever unambiguously embedded. Other converbs may be postponed2; thus -tala ‘before’ (WM <-tala> ‘until’) and -sa that is claimed to be conditional and concessive-counterfactual, but the concessive examples can easily be interpreted temporally; indeed a rare temporal use is mentioned as well. There are a few converb plus particle syntagms, e.g. -Ø da-nang and -sang *zhi* for temporal succession. Such syntagms are unusual for Mongolian, but Slater presents evidence showing that danang cannot be analysed as a juncture. Next to the Mongolic verbal noun -sang ~ *-ksEn, -ku ~ *-khy has turned into a converb as well. While

2 Postponability as an afterthought does occur in other Mongolian languages as well, e.g. with the Khalkha conditionalis in spoken language (according to my own observations). However, it is never mentioned, which is unfortunate because a semantically weak converb as -ž (like Mangghuer -ji) may (probably) never be postponed.
it can be postponed, its meaning is difficult to define, ranging from imperfective to perfective in a few cases. -ku and -sang retain one of their former functions, in that they constitute complement clauses and relative clauses that immediately precede their heads. Relative clauses may gap subject, direct object and obliques, and the head may be dropped. -ku and -sang may optionally be followed by -ni, which is considered an extension of the genitive marker =ni to function like Chinese nominaliser/genitive de. For relative clauses, this explanation might be correct, but -ni occurs with complement clauses as well. There is no instance where -ni combines with case markers, and, thus, its syntactic behaviour could be typical of another possible cognate, *ini, the genitive of the defective third person singular pronoun *i, which came to express focus after noun phrases and nominalisation after participles.

Chapter 7 (pp. 290 – 326) deals with reported speech and is mainly devoted to the verb ge. Reported speech may be either not integrated at all or preceded by verba dicendi et sentiendi that take finite suffixes or -ji (cf. WM <ögüle-rün> say-CONVERBUM PRAEPARATIVUM or Khalkha khel-ekh-d-ee say-default verbal nominative-REFLEXIVE-POSSESSIVE), so that the matrix clause holds the speech content. Verba sentiendi et dicendi may follow the quotation accompanied by the complementiser geji, or else geji or ge-Ø may function as verbs of quotation themselves. geji also appears sentence-finallv, which may be related to the use of Mongolian -ž in folktales as the main narrative suffix akin to -že. ge-Ø may follow onomatopoetic words and even introduce names:

Gan ghu=ła Madage, Shu’erge ge yaoliang. 3:SG two:COLL Madage Shu’erge QUOTE go-OBJ:PERF
The two of them, called Madage and Shu’erge, left. (Slater 2003, pp. 301, 356)

In combination with demonstratives, forms of ge- may form recapitulation clauses or junc-
tures, especially if ge- has already been dropped as in tingku < ting geku that QUOTE=IMPERF ‘thus’. Finally, the ancient meaning ‘do’ survives in the use of ge- as a full verb, i.e. wei-
lie/diantou/ya ge- work/nod/what do ‘to work, to nod, to do what’.

The last chapter “language contact: summary and implications” (pp. 327 – 342) presents a discussion of the genetic position of Mangghuer in the Mongolic language family based on Binnick (1987). Binnick’s criteria are discussed and, as far as shared innovations as the only reliable criterion are concerned, tentatively lead to a Gansu-Qinghai branch with a sub-branch containing Mangghuer and Mongghul. A folktale of eight pages, endnotes (unfortunate as always), the list of references, an index of those Mangghuer words and suffixes subject to discussion, and an index of subjects complete the book. The synchronic part of the grammar is generally accurate. Some unusual analyses might become an impetus to improve Mongolian studies in general, i.e. the concept of enclitics presented, and the discussion of con-
verbs vs. serial verbs might help to refine that concept in general linguistics. The diachronic
and Mongolian comparative part is rather interesting, too, but contains a number of mistakes and shortcomings that would cause difficulties at least for a general linguist. As the grammar is written clearly and covers the basics of Mang-
ghuer grammar, it can be recommended to a lan-
guage learner as well.

References

Bybee, Joan et al. (1994): The Evolution of Grammar: Tense, Aspect and Modality in the Lan-
DeLancey, Scott (1997): Mirativity: the Gram-
matical Marking of Unexpected Information. Linguistic Typology 1, pp. 33 – 52.


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