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Review of Volker Rybatzki, Alessandra Pozzi, Peter W. Geier and John R. Krueger, *The Early Mongols: Language, Culture and History. Studies in Honor of Igor de Rachewiltz on the Occasion of His 80th Birthday*

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Review of Volker Rybatzki, Alessandra Pozzi, Peter W. Geier and John R. Krueger, *The Early Mongols: Language, Culture and History. Studies in Honor of Igor de Rachewiltz on the Occasion of His 80th Birthday*

**Disciplines**

Arts and Humanities | East Asian Languages and Societies

**Comments**

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political exchanges among parties high and relatively low, facilitating cooperation across the boundaries of class, kinship, and region” (p. 248).

This rhetoric and the “benevolent societies” developed amidst various late Ming social changes (spread of literacy, heightened examinations competition, commerce and changes in labor and market patterns, print, and more) which produced an expansive “literate but marginal social stratum” (p. 285) with an ensuing anxiety over social hierarchy and order. For this social stratum in particular, “highly visible charitable activities” became, *inter alia*, the “means by which one might reach for a higher good and an enhanced self-image” (p. 284).

*The Art of Doing Good* convincingly suggests a nuanced explanation of the “distinctiveness of late Ming charity” (p. 279), and uses a host of sources – diaries, lecture notes, and local gazetteers, to name but a few – in doing so. It thus joins other recently published stimulating works on the history of the Ming and breaks new grounds for research on the history of charity in China. It may also stir a debate (which Smith prefers to leave aside for the moment) over what “charity” means in the Chinese context as well as comparatively.

Princeton University

Ori Sela

Rybatski, Volker, Alessandra Pozzi, Peter W. Geier and John R. Krueger (eds.): *The Early Mongols: Language, Culture and History. Studies in Honor of Igor de Rachewiltz on the Occasion of His 80th Birthday*, Indiana University Uralic and Altaic Series, Volume 173. (Bloomington: Indiana University, Denis Sinor Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 2009), xxxv+ 217pp. \$54.00. ISBN 978-0-933070-57-8

This volume in honor of Igor de Rachewiltz’s lifetime of scholarship reflects the full range of interests of “Prince Igor” as he is affectionately known, from the famous Russian lay (p. xxi). Every essay is tied to the study of the Mongolian-speaking peoples, from the time of the Khitan empire of the eleventh century, to the break up of the Mongol empire in the fifteenth. Although most deal with philology, which is the core of Professor de Rachewiltz’s interests, others cover biography, political, ideological, and institutional history, folklore, transcription and the history of scholarship. Almost every article draws on Professor de Rachewiltz’s extensive scholarship in these fields.

The philological articles together form an impressive set, which could be used to introduce doctoral students to the range of sources and approaches in the field. Ákos Bertalan Apatóczy and Yoshio Saitō treat two vocabularies of Middle Mongolian, the Sino-Mongolian *Beilu yiyu* 北虜譯語, and the Arab-Persian-Chaghatay Turkic-Mongolian *Muqaddimat al-Adab*. György Kara offers some revisions to Professor de Rachewiltz’s reading of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, and Sharav Choimaa examines certain passages of the *Secret History of the Mongols* to demonstrate the importance of collating the text preserved in Chinese transcription with that preserved in the 17th century chronicle *Golden Button*. Dai Matsui argues that a phrase in the Turfan texts, *Dumdadu Mongyol ulus* “Middle Mongolian Empire,” should be the indigenous term for the Chaghatay Khanate, while Volker Rybatski surveys fragmentary new Mongolian documents being discovered from Dunhuang. Together the volumes cover almost all

the major types of Middle Mongolian sources: vocabularies, translation literature (mainly Buddhist), the *Secret History of the Mongols*, and contracts and writs of exemption preserved in original manuscripts. Only a study of epigraphic literature is missing.

Professor de Rachewiltz published many biographical studies of important figures in the Yuan, culminating in the invaluable *In the Service of the Khan*. It is thus fitting that his collaborators in that work, Hok-lam Chan, and Ruby Lam contribute studies of Naqaču, the Mongol commander in Yuan-Ming Manchuria, and Nai-xian, the Yuan-era Sino-Turkic poet. In political and ethnic history Paul Buell considers how the Mongol invasions played their role in building Vietnamese nationalism, while Johannes Reckel examines the extent of Mongol settlement in northeastern Korea under Mongol rule. Studies of ideologies of conquest and resistance include Thomas Allsen's survey of ideas of imperial good fortune, Charles Halperin's critical review of Donald Ostrowski's treatment of Russian views of the Mongols, and Michael Weiers' investigation of how the Persian historian Juvaini's citations from the Koran reflected his understanding of the Mongol conquest. These studies add to the insights on the ideological currents of the Mongol empire already explored by Professor de Rachewiltz's papers on Heaven and imperial terminology among the Mongols. Aspects of institutional history of the Mongol empire are covered by Nobuhiro Uno (marriage exchange in Inner Asian royal families) and István Vásáry (the origin of the Turco-Mongolian title *bökevül* "taster" or "steward").

The *Secret History of the Mongols* as a source for folklore and cultural ideas is the focus of the papers by Alice Sárközi and Käthe Uray-Kóhalmi. Ruth Meserve adds to her extensive research on veterinary and medical sciences among the Inner Asian nomads with a study of cauterization.

Three studies relate to the conventions and development of the field of Mongolian studies. Juha Janhunen offers a new system for transcription of the 'Phags-pa script, which while undoubtedly logical, seems too divergent from current practice to have much chance of adoption. Borjigin Ulaan recalls one of the pioneers of Sino-Mongolian research in introducing Wang Guowei's unpublished notes on the *Secret History of the Mongols*. Finally Daniel Kane tells the story of Father Louis Kervyn, a missionary in Inner Mongolia who in 1922 first introduced Khitan inscriptions to the scholarly public. The circumstances of this discovery and the role of tomb robbers recalls Tjalling Halbertsma's recent book on the parallel excavation and destruction of Önggüd remains in Inner Mongolia.

In the coherence of the topics, their relevance to the life and work of the scholar being fêted, and their uniformly high quality, this is an exemplary representative of the festschrift genre, honoring both the contributors and Professor de Rachewiltz. *Tümen tümen nasulatuyai* indeed!

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Christopher P. Atwood