

NOMADIC CIVILIZATION AND MONGOL STUDIES IN JAPAN

D.Galbaatar¹

One of the large contributions made by nomadic nations in the world history is the distinguished nomadic civilization.

In the first period of development for several centuries, the mankind was moving as a whole searching for favorable natural condition, abundance pasture and various natural resources. As scholars noted, Mongols have surely been the distinguished nation, which has kept the great history of this great process from its start until today, and made to be wondering the world by having established the greatest empire.

Mongolians are not the ones who lived in quiet by just being settled and engaged in the nomadic (pastoral) animal husbandry. They created not only the great history of the nomadic civilization but also created the enormous complex of statehood rules, culture and science suitable for this nomadic lifestyle. Warring and journey process by Attila, Modun Shaniyu, Chinggis Khan and their successors had been definitely affecting the destiny, history of the movement and the development of the settled civilization.

In this article, we will not mention about reasons of the warring journey and the present and past movements of the nations from one place to another place. However, the story is about the Mongolians who were the nuclear of the history of the great movement and the nomads, and who have been attracting the attention of the world's scholars and scientists and testing their energies and skills. The Mongolians have been keeping and developing their inherited nomadic traditions along with the modern settled civilization in a right harmony. This defines that what role the nation has been playing and what position the nation has been taking in the history of the mankind. Entirely, this specific position and civilization of the Mongolians became the reason for it to become a subject of research of world history, culture and science two centuries ago.

Studying of the data of nomadic history, culture, peculiar customs and data of traditional expertise of the Mongols who created together with others the history of the world has been attracting the attention of the mankind for many centuries. Today there has been established Mongolism (Mongol studies) in the world scientific field and its subjects of research have been expanding from year to year.

The Russian Federation had led the study of the nation, once which was considered as "a nation becoming extinct." Later, scholars of Germany, Poland, Czech, England and Finland studied well and issued good research materials. US scholars have expanded the study and at present, countries of East Asia and Pacific Region (Japan, China, Taiwan etc.) are intensifying the studies by establishing large research centers. As an example, we would like to introduce briefly about Mongolian studies in Japan.

¹ МУИС-ийн Монгол хэл, соёлын сургууль.

A current Mongolian studies in Japan has been developing with rapidity in comparison with the other countries. This connects with the expansion of frame of mutual interests and deepening of relations of the two countries in all sectors: political, social, cultural and scientific ones. It is considered that the history of Mongolian studies in Japan backed to date from the very early times or the Kublai Khan's period, the Great Mongol Empire. This history started in the mutually unpleasant times in the form of relations of envoy diplomats. Later it also connected with the military operations. It is not deniable that until 1972, the establishment of the official diplomatic relations, the Mongol studies had served basically only for the political and military purposes. The forms of the studies at that time belonged to a high secrecy classification.

Japanese historians consider that the scientific systematical study of Mongolia started in Japan after 1900. Studying the Mongolian language, customs, culture and history and politics started for the scientific purpose with establishment of research centers at the universities and institutes. In 1911, Department of Mongolian studies was opened at the Tokyo University's Foreign Services School, former Tokyo University's Foreign Languages Faculty, and a few years later at the Osaka Foreign Services University respectively. Until the establishment of the diplomatic relations, teachers from Inner Mongolia worked by invitation at the universities. Since the establishment of the diplomatic relationships, lecturers from Mongolia have been working there.

Besides the above-mentioned two departments, Japanese renowned professors of Mongolian studies have been working by establishing centers of literature and cultural researches at large private academic institutions such as Vaceda University, Shinshuu University, Kyoto University and Tohoku University. At present, there is the Japanese Mongolian Studies Association, which has united about 260 researchers. Each year in spring and autumn, the Association organizes research conferences on Mongol studies and discusses the research works of the researchers. The best research works are published in the Information magazine issued once a year. Many other groups of young researchers such as Mongolian Literature Study Society and Mongolian Ethnicity Study Society have been working in Japan as well. There are also many centers working in this subject at vocational schools, research organizations and it can be said that there is a system of supplying their research works with united management from the above-mentioned association.

The subjects such as Mongolian language and literature, history, culture, and ethnicity studies were dominant in the Japanese - Mongolian studies before and after World War II. Study of *the Secret History of Mongols* was developed intensively at the merging of the XIX and XX centuries. Researchers paid attention to study all aspects of the Mongolian primary historical and literary works. Primary historical and literary sources like *the Secret History of Mongols* and *Altan Tovch* were studied for many years as historical and literary values of Mongolia. T. Kobayashi translated *the Secret History of Mongols* into Japanese and published his research works on *the Secret History of Mongols* in 1954. Also M. Murakami conducted the same research work and published it in 1973, preface of which was written by Mongolists Sh. Ivamura and A. Fujieda.

A look at the list of research works done between 1900-1972, shows that the Japanese researchers paid more attention on studying the Mongolian primary historical and literary works. For example, Sh. Hattory conducted research works on Mongolian language and pronunciation in 1942; he published *the Secret History of Mongols* in Latin transcriptions. Also he did a valuable study on the linguistic characteristics of the Mongolian language. In

his works *Mongolian Reading Book* /1939/ and *About Mongolian Scripts Found from Many Temples* /1940/, he published several Mongolian ancient literary works. They serve as sources of studies for many researchers.

In general, *the Secret History of Mongol* is the major subject of study in the Mongolian studies. Haka Mitiyo, a renowned researcher of Japanese - Chinese study /1851-1908/, first translated *the Secret History of Mongols* and published it with extensive interpretations in 1907. Later he published his book named "*Notes about Chinggis Khan*".

Furthermore, the followings are considered to be the significant works which were published by Japanese researchers including "*Mongolian Literature*" by T. Koboyashi /1936/; "*Mourning Speech on the Funeral of Chinggis Khan in Altan Tovch*" by M Ota /1938/; "*Mourning Song about Chinggis Khan*" by K. Oshibuchi /1926/; "*History of Bogd Chinggis Khan*" by M. Yamomota /1935/; "*Some Stories in Altan Tovch and Erdeniin Tovch*" /1953/, and "*Study of Transcription of the Secret History of Mongols*" by Sh. Ozawa /1984-1989, 6 volumes/; "*About Origin of Song of Regret by Togoontomor Khan*" /1968/ and "*About Tsogt Khuntaij*" by historian Kh. Okada /1968/; "*Wooden Print Versions of Geser in Mongolian*" by K. Tanaka /1964/.

Japanese researchers pay a little attention at or evade as possible as much from the studies by European and Russian ones, and aim to use Chinese sources, select news subject, propose new ideas and find new facts.

Starting from the end of the 1980's and beginning of the 1990's, new generation researching cadres entered into the Japanese – Mongolian studies. They published many substantial works on history, law, ethnicity and social code including '*History of Prosper and Decline of the Great Mongol Empire*' by Kh. Okada, which has been published recently. Japanese researchers valued this as an accurate and brief work.

During 1980's plenty works were published including basic study in the agricultural aspects and *Mongolian Modern History* by M. Onuki; *History of the Great Mongol Empire* and work on the historical characters of *the Secret History of Mongols* by Yoshida Junichi (a student of renowned researcher Tatsuda Isau), a professor at Wasida University; work on *History of Ming Dynasty* by T. Morikava, a professor at Kyushu University; work on *Chinggis Khaan history* by Khagivara, a candidate professor Kyoto University; *Chinggis Khaan's Army System* by historians Matsuda and Kh. Takashi; researcher works on historical key issues since 16th century, scripts on birch bark is a cultural value, law documents, and *History on Mongolian People's Party and Comintern* by Kh. Futaki, a professor at the Foreign Studies School, Tokyo University; research works on the history of Buddhism, Mongolian Buddhism of yellow sect, Mongolian customs and culture by Matsakuva from Kyoto University of Otan.

K. Akira, a postgraduate student at the Tokyo University conducted research and published her works on the literary, linguistic and ethnic aspects. The peculiarity of Akira's research works is based on the European theory. Yu. Konagaya, a researcher at the National Ethnographic Museum, plays significant role in the ethnographic research. Konagaya has done many important works such as *Distinguished World of Mongolian Steppe Life* /1996/, *Steppe Civilization* /1998/, which attracted researchers' attentions. Besides, 1999 Research Report of an Expedition of the WACO University was one of the significant research works done in the civilization field.

Before 1980's, research works on Mongolian literature, especially, modern literature were quite a few. There were only some translators in this field. But now there is Mongolian Modern Literature Society, which unified over ten researchers. Yu. Shibayama, a candidate professor at the Seisen Jogakui College, heads the society. He wrote a Mongolian Literature textbook at the end of the 1980's and wrote serial articles on Natsagdorj's life and works. One of the renowned researchers of Mongolian modern literature is K. Okada, a professor of Foreign Studies School at the Tokyo University. He studies deeply the history of literature between 1920-1930. Umino Miko, a postgraduate student of the Tokyo University, studies Mongolian film art, development of Mongolian modern literature and its major representatives and wrote Mongolian Literature Lectures in Japanese language in 1999 together with K Akira. In 2003, they published works consisted of translations and research materials named Mongolian Literature on the Mongolian literature history.

In the field of ancient history research, *Preface of the Historical Study of the Mongol Empire-Major Ethnic Group of Il Khan Dynasty* by Shimo, a professor of Tokyo University /1995/ and several works by Sugiyama Masaaki, a professor at the Kyoto University were published. They are valued as significant works made changes in the historical study. In the field of ethnography, he wrote "*World of the Great Mongol*" /1992/, in the field of ancient history Mongolia "*Which Has Changed the World History*" /2000/, and "*Kublai Khan's Test -Path of Mongolian Ocean Empire*" /1995/.

Recent years, study on natural studies has been intensively developing. For example, 80 percent of the presentations at the 2000 Kyoto Spring Forum, and 2001 Kobe Autumn Forum were on the subjects of natural studies.

Study on technology of Mongolian dairy products is conducted in complex, and experiments of producing them in different conditions are getting successful. But final results of them have not been realized yet.

Mongolian earth structure and usage and landscape study is undergone. But this is mainly in the form of reports of Inner Mongolian expedition of land surface.

At present, Japanese researchers pay attention on the fields such as human study, originality and genetics. For example, they established that the gene of a Japanese person is similar with Mongolian, especially with a Buryat one. In addition some successful studies on geography and migration are conducted, and draw an interesting conclusion that Japanese islands were a part of the continent and its population consists of Asian multi-nationalities.

As well, study of the items remained in the ocean bottom in the time of Kublai khan's attack has been expanded.

Japanese researchers are also interested in the political and social matters. A look at those, there is a tendency on Japanese - Mongolian studies to be expanded with studies on culture, economy, technology and natural studies, besides only humanitarian and social studies.

ТОВЧЛОЛ

Зохиолч эл өгүүлэлд Японы монгол судлалын холбооны үйл ажиллагааны үндсэн чиглэл, хийгдэж буй судалгааны ажлын цар хүрээ, шинэ салбаруудын хөгжлийн өнөөгийн хандлагыг тодорхойлжээ.