

Review

Reviewed Work(s): Ocherki Istorii I Ekonomiki Tuvy: Chast' Pervaya: Dorevolyutsionnaya Tuva (Studies in the History and Economy of Tuva. Part I: Pre-Revolutionary Tuva). by R. Kabo

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regularly, that the "greatness" of great men of the Chingghis kind proceeds from the malleability of the material at their disposal. The surpassing greatness of Chingghis was made possible by the fact that in his time the cycles of dynastic rise and fall coincided in Far East and Near East, so that by gaining ascendancy over the "pure" steppe tribes he could roll up the modified frontier tribes of both China and Persia, and send his riders as far toward Europe as the tribal fringe extended.

We are now at a point where new agencies are operating strongly on the old materials of Central Asian history. For the needs of our time, a book like this by Grenard is of the very greatest value. It unites and clarifies in an admirable manner the best nineteenth century, "pre-war" Central Asian scholarship, and provides firm ground from which to advance to an exploration of the forces with which the twentieth century must deal.

O. L.

OCHERKI ISTORII I EKONOMIKI TUVY. CHAST' PERVAYA: DOREVOLYUTSIONNAYA TUVА (STUDIES IN THE HISTORY AND ECONOMY OF TUVА. PART I: PRE-REVOLUTIONARY TUVА). By R. Kabo. Moscow-Leningrad: State Social-Economic Publishers. 1934. (Issue No. 12 of the Scientific Research Association for the Study of National and Colonial Problems.) pp. 202 and map. 2.75 rubles.

ALTHOUGH he deals primarily with the Republic of Tuva, or Tannu Tuva, the old region of Urianghai, Kabo also discusses general questions bearing on the earlier and later relationship between Mongolia and China, and the processes of Tsarist Russian encroachment before the second Mongol Revolution of 1921. This, the first volume (I do not know if a second has ever appeared), does not go on to discuss the changes brought by revolution, but its treatment of the pre-revolutionary phase is of the first order.

Urianghai, now Tannu Tuva, is an enclave between the Sayan range, dividing it from Siberia on the north, and the Tannu (Tangno) range, dividing it from Mongolia on the south. Its forested mountains, with many lakes and streams, were inhabited by forest-nomads, living partly by reindeer husbandry and partly by hunting. The steppe country that overlapped into it from the south was held by cattle-herding nomads. The steppe groups dominated the forest people, extracting from them an annual tribute of furs; but the small steppe tribes of Urianghai were

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themselves dominated by the stronger tribes of Mongolia, and when the Mongols came under the Manchu empire, the ladder of tribute was made to reach all the way from the forest hunters through various Mongol princes, Living Buddhas and appointed Manchu officials to the Court at Peking. (This part of the study could have been made more valuable by comparison with what is known of the direct "hunting tribute" paid to the Manchus by the Butkha tribes of North Manchuria.) In Urianghai the fur tribute, when it was assessed on an imperial instead of a local scale, distorted the economy even of the pastoral tribes, who were forced to acquire furs by exchange; with the result that the local price of furs was higher than in Siberia, although Siberia was nearer to the world market. Since, moreover, the tribute was collected on political, not on economic terms, even Chinese merchants were debarred from the region, so as to safeguard from economic competition the official and hereditary privileges of those who profited by the tribute system.

Obviously such a system, however artificially sequestered the territory, was not immune from its own internal process of decay. It was emphatically an extractive system, depleting the region year by year and causing an economic and social degeneration which tended to gain in momentum. We know of similar phases in past history, ending in the periods of turmoil in which empires fell and new tribal groupings were formed; but this time a new factor became decisive, beginning in the last 30 years of the last century, in the advance of Russian trade and colonization.

Kabo's elucidation of this complex modern period is admirable. He describes the penetration of the first Russians and the amazing profits they made out of exchanging trash for furs. Then the trading posts began to establish auxiliary agriculture. Through getting the natives into debt, the Russian settlers acquired princely holdings of land and huge herds; the natives degenerated into hunters and herders working for them for a bare living. Then the Manchu empire, by this time essentially a Chinese empire, raised the embargo on Chinese traders, and in many branches of trade the Chinese underbid and supplanted the Russians; until the Russians, forced to develop from the relatively primitive barter exchange to a money economy, set up a buying system that again reduced the importance of the Chinese.

By the eve of the World War, there were about 12,000 Russians in Urianghai. They had shattered the traditional economy of the 56,000 natives, disrupted them politically and pauperized most of them individually. In fact, the main struggle was already between the old Russian trader-settlers, who had done so nicely for themselves in the days of easy

pickings, and the new peasant-settlers who were rapidly reproducing the condition of low agricultural efficiency and permanent social and economic depression characteristic of pre-Revolutionary Russia. Even the most cursory reflection suggests a comparison between the processes I have here so rapidly reviewed and the process that may be expected in the Japanese land of promise in Manchuria. We know that the Koreans have been so pauperized that cheap Korean labor is now a menace in Japan itself. We may expect a double process in Manchukuo—first the impoverishing of the Manchurian Chinese by extractive economic practices which form a twentieth-century parallel to the extractive Manchu fur levy and Russian fur trade in Urianghai, and then a conflict of interests between the first Japanese vested interests in Manchuria and the poorer Japanese late-comers.

This book proves that we have the material enabling us to understand the native revolutions in regions like Tuva and Outer Mongolia which responded to the Russian Revolution, though in cruder forms and on a lower level, and have since oriented themselves in sympathy to the Soviet Union. What we need now is an exposition of the working processes of revolution, making it possible for us to understand why the Soviet influence in Outer Mongolia is not a parallel to the Japanese conquest of Manchuria, but does represent an irreconcilable conflict between the creation of empires by force and the extension of world revolution by a technique of alliance and community of aims.

In the circumstances, there is a special interest in Kabo's approach to the question of the "feudalism" of Tuvan society. The core of his argument is as follows: feudalism can be founded on a pastoral economy as well as on an agricultural economy. That which distinguishes it as a form of society is the non-economic standard of social control. It is the gradation of social rank and privilege which allots to different families their share of tax, tribute and revenue. It seems to me that in taking this position, Kabo unduly neglects the question of the method of production in nomadic societies. As it seems curious that a non-communist should be able to criticize a Marxist writer in such terms, I make the suggestion only tentatively. Nevertheless, it seems to me of great importance in discussing nomadic societies that one should take into account whether they are forest nomads or steppe nomads; and if they are steppe nomads, whether their standard of livestock is determined by sheep, horses, horned cattle or camels. The type of nomadism is responsible for differences in the degree of extensiveness of the economy, which in turn governs the size of the social group. For instance, among some of the

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steppe-pastoral Urianghai there was a certain amount of agriculture; and this, as Kabo duly notes, was responsible for a more concentrated grouping of population. Conversely, nomads of the forest, who live partly by hunting, need an extremely large range of territory, with the result that their social groups are much smaller. The balance between family and "clan" or "tribe" is different as between forest nomads and steppe nomads. A steppe people with access to forests can usually, because its tribal structure is more solid, make a pure forest people tributary, as appears anciently to have been the case in Urianghai. On the other hand, when a forest people has partly made the transition to agriculture, the extra cohesion and economic power given by its agriculture, combined with the degree of "tribalism" retained from its forest derivation, enables it to reach out into the steppe and affiliate pastoral people to its political power, as can be seen from the early relations between the Manchus and the Eastern Mongols.

Furthermore, mixed economies modify the relation of tribe to territory. In the review immediately preceding this one, discussing Grenard's life of Chingghis Khan, I mentioned what I consider to be Koz'min's overemphasis on a rigid association between tribe and territory in Mongol "feudalism." Here I should like further to suggest—again only tentatively, since I am not an expert in the theories of feudalism—that the importance of territory is in fact a gauge of the wavering of Mongol society between a standard that can properly be called feudal and one that I think had better be called tribal. The problem is probably bound up with the question of mixed economies. Is it not true that European feudalism derived partly from the solidity of the provinces left behind by the Roman empire, and partly from the assumption of territorial positions by the chiefs of "forest barbarian" tribes? These tribes had a mixed economy, partly of hunting and partly also of swine-herding (because of the beeches and oaks important in European forests but not in Asiatic forests) and partly of crude agriculture. We know how tenaciously the feudal nobility of Europe held on to their rights of hunting and of herding swine in forests that would otherwise have been cut off. Nevertheless the other elements in their economy made it easy for them to add landed estates to their system.

In Asia the "tribalism" was of the steppe more than of the forest, though the forest peoples also were important at times. The territorial solidity that was required for a true feudalism existed only at intervals, according to the positions held by the tribal chiefs either as vassals or overlords of settled civilizations like that of China. The extreme disparity

between the extensive economy of the steppe and the intensive agriculture of countries like China accounted, however, for a recurrent tendency to revert to tribalism, the equivalent of which did not manifest itself in Europe.

It may be that we have in this a hint of the very great importance of Lamaism in contemporary Mongolia. In European feudalism the monastic church provided continuity in the tenure of land without family heredity; but at the same time it was always linked with the ruling families. It was a mechanism which evened out the otherwise too violent alternation between the concentration of feudal power and its break-up into small unruly units. In Mongolia the introduction of Lamaism resulted primarily in checking the tendency to revert to tribalism, because of combining permanency of land-tenure with non-heredity. In periods of tribal regrouping, mobility was more important than territory. Monastic foundations, however, could not be moved; they therefore checked the periodic dispersal of tribes which was necessary to get rid of decayed hereditary ruling families and clear the way for reconcentration.

They did not, however, prevent the decay itself. For this reason, in the latest phase of Mongol history, the degeneration of the ruling princes has been accompanied by a steady increase in the importance of the Lama Church. The experience of the Outer Mongolian Revolution has proved that the Lama hierarchy retained (and still retains) much more vitality than the princely families. It has also proved that all these problems of tribal structure and feudalism are of much more than academic importance. A few years ago the Outer Mongolian Government, attempting to hasten the rate of change in Mongol society and economy, ran into very serious difficulties. There may have been a similar phase in Tannu Tuva. It seems to me that mistakes in assessing the degree to which Mongol society is feudal and the degree to which it is tribal may have had something to do with the question.

O. L.

YEGHE MONGGOL-ON YUWAN OLOS-ON SODOR (HISTORY OF THE GREAT MONGOL YUAN NATION). By *Fulonggha*. *Kalgan: Chahar Mongol Library of Editions and Translations*. 1936. pp. 248 + 20. Ch. \$2.50.

AMONG the by-products of Japanese penetration into Inner Mongolia, initiating separatist movements never quite completed and