
BOOK REVIEW

"*Rasā'il al-Ḥikma*" I—XIV ("Poslaniya mudrosti" I—XIV): Iz druzskikh rukopisej CPbF IV RAN (A 173). Faksimile rukopisi; predisloviye, issledovaniye (gl. II, III), izbranniye perevody s arabskogo, glossariy M. A. Rodionova; gl. I issledovaniya Val. V. Polosina". — SPb.: Tsentr "Peterburgskoe vostokovedenie" 1995. — 272 s.

"*Rasā'il al-Ḥikma*" ("The Epistles of Wisdom"). Publication of the text, selected Russian translations, introduction, commentary and glossary". St. Petersburg, 1995 (272 p.).

The Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (St. Petersburg Branch) in cooperation with the St. Petersburg Centre for Oriental Studies, Publishing House (founded in 1992), have issued recently the book which represents the first publication in a new series "Pamyatniki kul'tury Vostoka. Sankt-Peterburgskaya nauchnaya seriya" ("The monuments of culture of the Orient. St. Petersburg scientific series"), offered by the Institute and based exclusively on materials from its rich collection of oriental manuscripts. The main aim of this series is the publication of unique or rare manuscripts from the Institute's collection.

The book is devoted to the 11th century Druse religious canon formally named *Rasā'il al-Ḥikma*¹ and consists of three chapters: *Ch. I* "Druse manuscripts of the Institute of Oriental Studies" (by Val. V. Polosin); *Ch. II* "A survey of the Druse faith" and *Ch. III* "*Rasā'il al-Ḥikma* as a historical and cultural phenomenon" (both written by M. A. Rodionov.). It also includes a short editor's preface, the Russian translation of four *rasā'il* and a glossary of religious and philosophical terms (about 110 items) — all by M. A. Rodionov, as well as a summary in English. The main part of the book (202 of its 272 pages) is a facsimile of the manuscript A-173 from the Institute's collection.

This publication is valuable from many points of view. It is the first Russian edition of the Druse canon — the ba-

sic source of the Druse faith: the manuscript A-173 includes the first 14 of the 111 *rasā'il* forming the canon². It is supposed that these epistles go back to the Fatimid caliph al-Ḥākim (d. 411/1021) and Hamza b. 'Alī (d. 433/1042), the founders of the Druse religious system. The excellent Russian translation is worth special attention. At the same time, the publication is of great importance to the world orientalia in general. One can find only few publications of selected texts and translations from the canon³. These publications do not include facsimiles, which in some cases are preferable for scholars. The supplement contributed by Val. V. Polosin is the first detailed description of all Druse manuscripts from the collection of the Institute of Oriental Studies (there are 12 manuscripts representing all the canonical texts and a number of medieval writings on the Druse religious system)⁴. In spite of many publications on the history and ideology of the Druses, there is not still serious complex study of their manuscript tradition. The author insists that the creation of a general catalogue of Druse works is one of the most urgent tasks in the field of modern Arabic and Islamic studies. He shows also the possible ways to realize it.

Apart from one unfortunate misprint on page 9 (two lines of preface are repeated), there are some minor remarks. It is not clear, for instance, why *rasā'il* I, II, IV and V were distinguished from the rest and chosen for translation; anyway, the reason for this selection is not explained. The epistles devoted to the basic Druse doctrines and "truths" (*al-haqā'iq*), and to their interpretation (see folios 31a, 37b, 54a, 76b of the facsimile) seem to us much more important and worthy of translation.

The statement that *rasā'il* I—XV represent the "core" of the Druse canon, appears to be rather questionable, even though they are connected with the names of the founders. The cover of the book, contrary to its running title, has no indication that it represents only a part of the whole canon. The title *Rasā'il al-Ḥikma*, given on the cover, does not

¹ None of the manuscripts representing the Druse canon or its various parts, have title, except for the one from München (*Rasā'il al-Ḥikma*, 13—14).

² According to the list by Silvestre de Sacy, who was the first to classify all the *rasā'il* of the canon. See his *Exposé de la religion des Druzes* (Paris, 1838), ii.

³ S. de Sacy, *Chrestomathie arabe*, (Paris, 1826) ii; some translations from the canon are included in his "Exposé de la religion des Druzes". See also: M. G. S. Hodgson, "Duruz", *EI*, 2nd. ed., II, p. 634.

⁴ *Rasā'il al-Ḥikma*, 10—34.

reflect the real contents, which can hinder the publication of other canonical texts in this series¹.

The term "*al-tawhīd*" is used by M. Rodionov as a synonym of the Druse faith (pp. 35, 48, 65—6, 68, etc.). But *'ilm al-tawhīd* is eponymous not only of their faith, but also of Ash'ari's *kalām*. The Druses, like the Isma'ilis, from whom they separated, adopted many points of the doctrine of the God's unity (*tawhīd*) and attributes (*sifāt Allah*) from *kalām*². On the other hand, all the Muslims consider themselves *al-muwahhidūn* and identify themselves, in general terms, with *ahl al-tawhīd*. Following the Druse tradition, the author identifies "*ta'wīl*" with Shi'ism (p. 67), while in reality it is the method of symbolic and allegorical interpretation of the Qur'an (in opposition to

taqlīd "clothing with authority"). It was widely used not only by Shi'a authors, but also by the Ash'aris, Shafi'i and Hanbali Sufis, Isma'ilis and many others. Moreover, not all Shi'is use *ta'wīl* to interpret the Qur'an: for example, the Zaydites, in contrast to the Imamites, do not identify themselves with *ahl al-ta'wīl*. The latter term is close to *ahl al-bātin*, which is a self-definition of the Isma'ilis.

These minor remarks do not concern the essence of the problem considered in the book and therefore can not reduce its significance. We hope that the authors will succeed in publishing all the remaining texts of the Druse canon. This really will be a valuable contribution to Druse studies.

A. Alikberov

Giacomella Orofino. *Sekoddeśa. A Critical Edition of the Tibetan Translations with an Appendix by Raniero Gnoli on the Sanskrit Text.* — "Serie Orientale Roma", LXII, Roma, 1994.

The study of written sources in the languages of India, Central Asia and Far East has the strong and profound tradition in Italy. The school founded by Giuseppe Tucci is successfully maintained by his pupils and followers. The book considered here testifies to the fact convincingly. This book presents the starting point of a big project aimed at the study of the Kālacakra school. It was set in 1991 under the guidance of Prof. Raniero Gnoli. Two forthcoming volumes will contain commentaries on "*Sekoddeśa*": "Critical Edition of the Sanskrit Texts" (part 1) and "Critical Edition of the Tibetan Texts" (part 2). The translation of the Sanskrit text reconstructed by R. Gnoli, along with that of three commentaries will be included in the third volume (see p. 128).

G. Orofino has already acquired the reputation of a good specialist in textology after her paper "Divination with Mirrors. Observations on a Simile found in the Kālacakra Literature" delivered at the 6th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies in Fagernes (Norway), in 1992 (see "Proceedings of the 6th Seminar", vol. 2, Oslo, 1994, pp. 612—28). To evaluate the significance of Orofino's work, few words should be said about the Kālacakra system and some problems connected with its studies in Europe.

Though the Kālacakra system was being examined by scholars from the very beginning of the 19th century, it is still hardly possible to say anything definite about the place and the time of its creation as well as about the interpretation of its philosophy. The Kālacakra school seems to be

conceived not only as "the culmination of medieval Indian Buddhism before its decline", as Orofino truly states (p. 9), but as some specific teaching having its particular aim. In the texts the Vajrayāna was substantiated as a sacred system, that was later evolved in Central Asia and Tibet. Under the threat of being absorbed by other religious systems, especially after Buddhism had been influenced by some dogmas of Mani's teaching, Christianity and Islam, the efforts of Indian Buddhist philosophers was concentrated on creating and codifying the esoteric system addressed to the elite, but not to the common believers of Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna. The development of the new system started beyond the boundaries of India, where the Vajrayāna had appeared about A.D. 1000 (see: D. S. Ruegg, "Problems in the Transmission of Vajrayāna Buddhism in Western Himalaya about the Year 1000", *Acta Indologica* 6, 1984, pp. 369—81). The texts of the Kālacakra system were never consolidated in the Indian literary tradition due to the time shortage, but, judging by a fair amount of quotations from it in many other Buddhist works, the Kālacakra was highly esteemed. Some Sanskrit commentaries on the Kālacakra literature, along with the texts of the Kālacakra system itself, were partly translated into Tibetan and Chinese.

The tasks set before the author of the book were the following: 1) to analyse the generally accepted theories about the place and the time of the creation of the Kālacakra system; 2) to bring together as many as possible Tibetan translations of the "*Sekoddeśa*"; 3) to evaluate these translations as well as the editors' part in the formation of the system; 4) to reveal possible differences from the Sanskrit original — linguistic mistakes and terminological errors. One of the aims of the work is to enable the reconstruction of the Sanskrit text.

¹ The texts of the whole canon are in the collection of the Institute of Oriental Studies in St. Petersburg: Ms A-175 includes 25 texts (XV—XL); Ms A-177 — 15 texts (XLI—LV), etc. (See: Val. V. Polosin, *Druse manuscripts of the Institute of Oriental Studies — Rasā'il al-Ḥikma*, 10—34).

² The specification of the Druse interpretation of this term is based on the assumption that caliph al-Ḥākim himself represented Allah in His unity; that's why Hamza b. 'Alī called this religion *al-tawhīd* and al-Ḥākim himself was called "Our Lord" by his followers (See: B. C. de Vaux, "Druzes", *EI*, I, 1075—7).

Orofino accomplished this difficult task, though in the Introduction she puts it more modestly: "In completing this edition my aim was to present a text confirming with the readings and the meaning of the various commentaries... both in Sanskrit and Tibetan" (p. 38).

Let us now turn to the data adduced by Orofino in her Introduction. "Sekoddeśa" is one of the parts of the basic texts of the Kālacakra school — "Paramādibuddha" or "Mūlakālacakratātra", initially containing about 12 000 stanzas. The Sanskrit text of the "Paramādibuddha" is almost completely lost. It is also not clear whether it was ever translated into Tibetan. In her critical edition Orofino managed to use all the available versions of the Tibetan Kanjur — 7. Apart from the well known block printed texts, she used some rare manuscript copies, which had not been involved into the study of Kālacakra earlier ("Phug brag Manuscript Kanjur", "Stog Palace Manuscript Kanjur", "Them spangs-ma Kanjur" from the Ulan Bator Library, as well as the London and Tokyo copies of the Manuscript Kanjur). She found that two different translations of the "Sekoddeśa" were represented in these Kanjur versions. Their appearance was connected with some political and social events in Tibet in the 11th century. One of these translations — "Text A" ("Bro" after the name of the translator) was made in the second half of the 11th century, whereas the second one — "Text B" ("Rva" by the same reason) was made by the end of the 11th century. There is much difference between the translations. According to Orofino, the second translation, though of a later period, has preserved a number of archaic forms and its language appears to be much more clear. Comparing all the manuscripts and xylogrphs available, Orofino managed to ascertain that the Eastern tradition of translations rendered the Sanskrit original better than the Western one, which goes against the accepted evaluation of the two traditions.

It is worth noting that some considerations of Orofino are of great value. First of all, she seems to have correctly determined the place of "Sekoddeśa" in "Paramādibuddha". It formed a part of its fifth chapter. In the first half of the 11th century, however, "Sekoddeśa" was circulated in North India as an independent text. It allows us to suggest, that the "Sekoddeśa" was included in "Paramādibuddha" much later, at the final period of the codification of the Kālacakra. We can get some information about its structure only from the Tibetan authors of the 14th century (namely from Bu ston). It is quite possible, that the complete text of Kālacakra never reached Tibet, its manuscripts being destroyed in India in the course of the wars which overwhelmed the country after the 10th century. Secondly, Orofino confirms the J. Newman's opinion on the date of the text: its codification took place between 967

and 1026, — "403 years after the Hijra (mlecchendravarṣam)" (pp. 15-6). This dating makes us think that the introduction of the sexagenary cycle in Tibet in A.D. 1027 could be connected with the appearance of the text not long before that time (p. 23). Finally, Orofino supports the J. Newman's hypothesis about the Indian origin of "Sekoddeśa" and the Kālacakra system and rejects H. Hoffmann's assumption about their Central Asiatic provenance. It is known that H. Hoffmann suggested to consider Eastern Turkestan, namely the territory of the Uighur State Khocho, as a place where the Kālacakra system had originated. In support of his view Hoffmann adduces the position of Buddhism which preserved its authority there as late as the 14th century in spite of Islam's invasion into the lands all around the State beginning with the 10th century. Still the question about what part of Northern India was a place where the ideas of Kālacakra had been formed into one system — whether it took place in North-Eastern India (Orissa, Bengal, Bihar, Himalayan parts of Kashmir, Nepal) or in North-Western India, where the Muslim attacks on it were particular violent — is not answered yet. Orofino has proved to be a bold scholar when choosing such a difficult subject of investigation and demonstrated the brilliant knowledge of the whole volume of literature in question. She has managed to pick out full information from the Tibetan sources that conclude it explicitly or implicitly. Her work is a valuable contribution to the study of the Kālacakra literature. It will certainly serve as a fundamental writing for the scholars interested in Kālacakra system formation.

The Sanskrit text containing 174 verses follows the critical Tibetan text. It has been reconstructed by Prof. Raniero Gnoli. The method chosen by him for reconstruction seems to be optimum. In his brief Introduction (pp. 127—8) Prof. R. Gnoli adduces all his arguments for this reconstruction as well as all his methodical principles. He points out a body of written sources involved by him in order to reconstruct the text. We are quite sure that until the original Sanskrit text is not found (if ever), the reconstruction supposed by R. Gnoli will serve as an important and essential base for any investigator of the "Sekoddeśa". Everyone who knows what a difficult task a reconstruction of the lost Sanskrit text is, can't but highly appreciate the work of Prof. R. Gnoli. Incidentally one can recall in this connection the remarkable works on reconstruction the Sanskrit logical texts of the pre-Dignāga period by Giuseppe Tucci. We have also no doubt that the complete realization of the Prof. R. Gnoli's plans will do the field a great service.

*E. Tyomkin,
M. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya*

Istoriia Choidzhid-dagini: Faksimile rukopisi. Transliteratsiia teksta, perevod s mongol'skogo, issledovanie i kommentarii A. G. Sazykina. Moskva: Nauka, 1990 (Bibliotheca Buddhica, XXXVII; Pamiatniki pis'mennosti Vostoka, XC) (*The Story of Coijid-dagini: Facsimile and Transliteration of the Mongolian Text, Translation into Russian, Research and Commentaries* by A. G. Sazykin. Moscow: Nauka Publishing House, 1990. — 253 pp. (Bibliotheca Buddhica, XXXVII; Literary Monuments of the Orient, XC).

This publication presents a Mongolian approach to the problem which inspired all thinkers and poets — the posthumous existence of man and the retribution for the deeds done. Whatever land or nation we take human thought always elaborated the most vivid and impressive images of tortures experienced by sinners in their afterlives. *The Story of Coijid-dagini* is no exception. Its plot is very simple: a woman dies and is taken to hell where she is shown all kinds of punishments imposed on sinners in accordance with their unrighteous deeds in the previous lives. Finally, Erlig qayan — the King of hell, sets her free so that she could narrate her unique personal experience to people thus bringing them on the path of virtue. This *Story* originates from Tibet where similar stories about “those who have returned from the other world” (Tib. 'das-log) were not uncommon both among Buddhists and Bon-pos. The Tibetan original of the *Story* entitled *dMyal ba mi yul gyis sa mtsham shi bson gñis kyi bang chen bka'i 'phrin pa gling sa chos skyid bar do'i gnas su byon nas 'khor 'das*

kyi rgyal po chen po'i dkar nag dbye ba'i 'bras bu'i rnam thar mdor bsdus is preserved in the Tibetan collection of the St. Petersburg branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies (call number Tib. B. 9217). The work forms a part of a rare xylographic edition which presents the collection of eleven stories about posthumous existence of the various celebrated persons.

While preparing his publication, Dr. A. G. Sazykin made a thorough examination of all the manuscripts and wood-block editions of the *Story* available in the collections of St. Petersburg, Ulan Bator, Kyzył, Elista and Ulan Ude. The data obtained from publications about the copies of the *Story* belonging to other collections, are also given. It can be added that there is also a copy of the Buryat wood-block edition of the *Story* in the St. Petersburg University Library (call number Mong. C 261).

Different versions and translations of the *Story* are collated and identified in the introduction. On the basis of his examination, Dr. A. G. Sazykin has chosen for publication a manuscript copy of the *Story* which is a translation from Tibetan by Blo-bzang legs-bshad dar-rgyas. This manuscript belongs to the library of the St. Petersburg branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies (call number C 24). In Dr. A. G. Sazykin's opinion, this version is the oldest one and dates back to the 17th century.

The book in question would be interesting not only to orientalists but to general readers as well. The translation of the text, an important source on the history of religion, makes a good reading.

V. Uspensky

Katalog Peterburgskogo rukopisnogo "Gandzhura". Sostavlenie, vvedenie, transliteratsiia i ukazateli Z. K. Kas'ianenko. Moskva: Nauka, 1993 (Bibliotheca Buddhica, XXXIX; Pamiatniki pis'mennosti Vostoka, CII) (*Catalogue of the St. Petersburg Manuscript of the Mongolian bKa'-gyur. Compilation, introduction, transliteration and indexes* by Z. K. Kasyanenko. Moscow: Nauka Publishing House, 1993. — 382 pp. (Bibliotheca Buddhica, XXXIX; Literary Monuments of the Orient, CII).

Everyone who has ever dealt with the problems related to the Buddhist Canon faced the difficulties arising from its immense volume surpassing that of the Bible or the Qur'an. The catalogue compiled by Prof. Z. K. Kasyanenko is the fruit of her many years painstaking work on the Mongolian *bKa'-gyur* in 113 volumes, *i. e.*, the collection of works ascribed to the Buddha himself.

The Tibetan *bKa'-gyur* was assembled in the 14th century and came down to us in several versions. Its Mongolian translation was made in 1628—9 by the order of Ligdan qayan, the last one in the lineage of the Great Qayans of Mongolia. The manuscript of *bKa'-gyur* dating to that time was discovered in 1892 in Inner Mongolia by the brilliant Russian scholar A. M. Pozdneev. He was later engaged in the matters connected with the acquisition of the

manuscript on behalf of the St. Petersburg University. Though the fact of this acquisition has been mentioned in the Russia's greatest pre-revolutionary Brockhaus and Efron Encyclopaedia, the *bKa'-gyur* became accessible to scholars only a hundred years later with the publication of the catalogue by Prof. Z. K. Kasyanenko.

The general design of the catalogue is modeled after the catalogue of the printed Mongolian *bKa'-gyur* by L. Ligeti (Budapest, 1942—4). But while the printed Mongolian *bKa'-gyur* of 1718—20 which is closely related to Peking editions of its Tibetan original, so the works it contains are easy identifiable, in the case of the St. Petersburg manuscript this task is much more complicated. For example, it contains some works from the *bsTan'-gyur*, such as No. 879, 880: 'Jig rten bzhag pa (Peking edition, No. 5587); No. 881: *rGyu gdags pa* (*ibid.*, No. 5588); No. 882: *Las gdags pa* (*ibid.*, No. 5589).

In brief, the work accomplished by Prof. Z. K. Kasyanenko is a substantial contribution to the studies of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon, of which the Mongolian *bKa'-gyur* is a special case. There is no doubt that this publication will stimulate new studies of the Buddhist literary heritage by making its most valuable texts easily accessible.

V. Uspensky

Me'or 'aiin ("Svetoch glaza"). Karaimskaja grammatika drevneevreiskogo iazyka po rukopisi 1208 g. Faksimile. Izdanie teksta, perevod s drevneevreiskogo iazyka, issledovanie i komentarii M. N. Zislina. Moskva: Nauka, 1990 (Pamiatniki pis'mennosti Vostoka, XCVI) (*Me'or 'ayin* ("The Light of Eye")). Karaite Hebrew Grammar. The Manuscript of 1208. Facsimile, edition of text, Russian translation from Hebrew, research and commentary by M. N. Zislin. Moscow: Nauka Publishing House, 1990. — 215 pp. (Literary monuments of the Orient, XCVI).

The publication contains a philological study and the text of the Hebrew grammar-book "*Me'or 'ayin*" (Light of Eye), which forms a part of one of the unique Hebrew manuscripts from the A. Firkovich collection. At present it is preserved in the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg [Evr. II A 132/1]. The manuscript was written by scribe Jehudah ben-Jacob ben-Jehudah in the town of Gagry (GGR; apparently it can be identified with the town of Gagry on the shore of the Black Sea, Georgia).

The publication consists of the following parts: Introduction; "Light of Eye" (*i. e.*, Russian translation of the text); Commentaries; Supplements (a List of terms and a List of abbreviations); the Text; its Facsimile, and Summary.

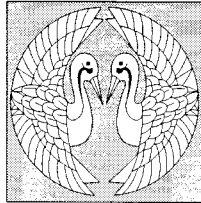
In the introduction M. Zislin presents a brief survey of the standard of Grammar knowledge and the development of Hebrew methodology of studies, a brief paleographic description of the manuscript. Basing on the philological study of the text, M. Zislin is suggesting the date of its composition, its location, and the creed of its author. In M. Zislin's opinion, this grammar-book was composed in the Byzantine Empire in the late 11th century. It was addressed to a reader non familiar with the Arabic language (Arabic was the basic language of the Hebrew grammarians of the 10—12th centuries). The work was composed, in many aspects, under the influence of the grammatical works by Abu al-Faraj Harun ibn al-Faraj (the first half of the 11th century).

The Russian translation of the work is notable for its utmost accuracy. The commentary contains extensive bibliography, takes into account possible variants, explanation of linguistic terms, a detailed argumentation on the variants of translation chosen by the author.

The publication of the text in the modern Hebrew script is an important supplement to the facsimile. It must be interesting to the students of paleography and it will be helpful for the further study of the text.

Sh. Iakerson

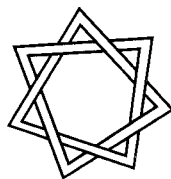
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**Color plates: 'Adjā'ib al-Makhlūqāt by Zakariyā' al-Qazwīnī (d. 682/1283), MS D 370
from the collection of St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies,
Russian Academy of Sciences (see p. 56).**

Front cover:

Fol. 34a. The Archangel 'Izra'il, 160 × 124 mm.

Back cover:

Plate 1. Fol. 13b. The Planet Venus, 225 × 145 mm.

Plate 2. Fol. 35b. The Angels of the Second Heaven, 171 × 94 mm.