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## BOOK REVIEWS

*Catalogue of Arabic Manuscripts in SS Cyril and Methodius National Library, Sofia, Bulgaria. Hadīth Sciences. Compiled by Stoyanka Kenderova. London: al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, 1995, 459 pp., with 8 Plates.*

Since last five years Al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation proved to have been one of the most effective structures in the world doing a lot to support cataloguing, restoration, research and publication of Islamic manuscripts. One can mention the success of the publication of four-volume "World Survey of Islamic Manuscripts" (the final volume of English edition appeared in 1994, the Arabic one will be published in 1996). Following this project the Foundation has initiated a program to bring to light the contents of so far uncatalogued collections of Islamic manuscripts. Al-Furqān has already published handlists of the Library of Makkah al-Mukarramah and several private libraries in Yemen. The Foundation supporting activities in this field were a success in Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal or are near to be successfully terminated by the publication of the catalogues and handlists of several important public and private collections. The expansion of the handlisting work with the financial support of the Foundation is expected to take place in Benin, Chad, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Sudan, Togo, the Republic of South Africa, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Albania, and Pakistan. The full catalogues of the collections in Byelorussia, Lithuania and Tatarstan are being prepared now as well. The work under review has also been done within this important project.

The collection of the Islamic manuscripts (Arabic, Persian and Turkish) of the Oriental Department of the SS Cyril and Methodius National Library in Sofia was formed soon after the Library's foundation in 1878 with the acquisition of 2,485 manuscripts and old printed books from the Library of Mehmed Hüsrev Pasha in Samokov. In 1888 the collection was enriched with another 650 manuscripts and old printed books from the Library of Osman Pazvantoğlu of Vidin. A significant part of manuscripts has been acquired in the following years from the *waqf* libraries in Küstendil and Sofia, from the state and municipal institutions of many towns, as well as from private collections.

At the end of 1993 the total number of Oriental manuscripts was 3,698. The most numerous is the collection of Arabic manuscripts, which numbers more than 3,000 items. The Turkish collection includes about 500 manuscripts, while the Persian one — about 140.

The manuscripts represent a wide scope of Islamic science and literature. These are the copies of the Qur'ān and works on exegesis, *hadīth*, theology, law, and philosophy, works on history, geography, literature and language, etc.

Many scholars contributed to the compiling of the general catalogue of the Islamic manuscripts of SS Cyril and Methodius National Library in Sofia. A Bulgarian scholar Boris Nedkov devoted about twenty years of his life (from 1942 to 1960) to the describing of 450 Turkish manuscripts representing 350 works (unfortunately, his catalogue has remained unpublished). It should be noted that among those who participated in the work on the collection was a Russian scholar A. Shishmanov, a pupil of the famous arabist I. Yu. Krachkovsky. In 1913 he described 37 Arabic and one Persian manuscript of the Pazvantoğlu library collection.

'Adnān Darwīsh from Syria, after his six months' work in the Sofia National Library in 1963, published a two-volume catalogue (the first volume in 1969 and the second — in 1974) containing 1,025 codices (Qur'ān, *tafsīr*, works on geography and literature). Furāt Muḥammad Mahdī al-Jawāhirī from Iraq made, between 1965 and 1967, about 1,830 short card descriptions of nearly 900 codices. Another specialist from Iraq, Yūsuf 'Izz al-Dīn, published in 1967 a catalogue of Arabic manuscripts, which includes 141 codices on history, geography and literature. The catalogue of Arabic manuscripts with a description of 95 copies of the Qur'ān was compiled and published by a Bulgarian scholar G. Petkova-Bozhanova in 1977. A little earlier, in 1973, the catalogue of the Persian manuscripts of the collection was prepared by Jamshīd Sayyār, who described 118 manuscripts representing 75 works.

However, many years had passed till the catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts on *hadīth* sciences was published. Its author, a curator of the Islamic collection of the SS Cyril and Methodius National Library Dr. S. Kenderova, is well known to specialists for her contribution to the studies of the Ottoman (Turkish) archival documentary materials of the same Library. In the Catalogue under review she is meticulously following the traditional practice of describing of Arabic manuscripts.

The Catalogue comprises 243 descriptions representing 124 works which are preserved, either completely or in fragments, in the Library. The material is divided into four parts: 1) *Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth*; 2) *Al-Ṣiḥaḥ al-Sittah* (The Six Greatest Collections); 3) Other collections; 4) *Arba'ūn Ḥadīthan* (Forty *Ḥadīths*) Collections. The author describes

each item in the utmost detailed way. Her standard pattern includes elements providing the exhaustive information on an item, which is arranged in five basic units:

I. Presentation of the work, the author and the particular manuscript as a copy of the work (including obligatory information about the work/copy and author/copyist, short description of the work, copy, its incipit and excipit);

II. Physical description of the manuscript (number of folios/pages, text size, text frames);

III. Palaeographic and codicological characteristics (information on paper and watermarks, ink, script, marginal and interlinear notes, decorations, binding, vocalisation of the text, etc.);

IV. Provenance and previous ownership of the copy, its history (entries, marginal notes, seal impressions, purchase and ownership recordings, *waqf* dedications are mentioned);

V. References.

The Catalogue is rounded off with twelve indices. They include the following:

1. Index of titles (in Latin script).
2. Index of titles (in Arabic script).
3. Index of authors, compilers and commentators.
4. Index of copyists.
5. Index of former owners.
6. Index of *waqf* dedicators.
7. Index of other persons mentioned in manuscripts.
8. Index of geographical names.
9. Index of *waqf* libraries.
10. Concordance between the call numbers of the manuscripts and their description numbers.
11. Table of dates of copying.
12. Index of incipits.

The book is notable by its high level of production. It is also supplemented with 15 colour and 4 black-and-white Plates.

Dr. Stoyanka Kenderova (who prepared her PhD thesis in the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies under the guidance of Prof. Oleg Bolshakov) may be praised for the depth and range of her scholarship which enabled her to produce an excellent work. We are glad to note that the Catalogue under review maintains the high standard of the series of works sponsored and published by al-Furqān.

We are also glad to point out the growing activities of our colleagues from SS Cyril and Methodius National Library in Sofia in presenting their collections' treasures. It is known that they have recently arranged the exhibition of the Qur'āns from the collection (the exhibition catalogue entitled "The Holy Qur'ān Through Centuries" was also sponsored by Al-Furqān). The publication of two CD-ROMs, one containing a richly decorated 13th century Qur'ān and the other — many hundreds of images of Greek, Bulgarian, Serbian, Walachian and Moldavian Tetraevangelia, as well as the 12th—17th centuries Qur'āns, should be mentioned, too.

Finally, we cannot but share the expectations and hopes of Sheikh Aḥmad Zakī Yamānī, the Chairman of the Board of Directors, the International Advisory Council and the Board of Experts of Al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, who, in the preface to Dr. S. Kenderova's Catalogue, noted that all the works to be published in this series would promote a greater awareness of the collections they describe and would be a great step towards the more profound study of this priceless manuscript heritage.

F. Abdullaeva and E. Rezvan

***Manuscripts from the Himalayas and the Indian Subcontinent. Catalogue 17. Sam Fogg Rare Books. Catalogue by Sam Fogg and Bob Miller. Photography by Matt Pia. Typesetting, Page Artwork and Printing by Titus Wilson and Son, Kendal, Cumbria. London: 1996, 161 pp.***

The publication under review is a special type of a catalogue of Oriental manuscripts which came to Europe in the last few years through private collectors. As a rule, people travelling in the East enjoy buying various rarities, Oriental manuscripts among them, from local traders. The attention of non-specialists is attracted first of all by illuminated manuscripts. Illustrations — drawings, schemes, miniatures, are the only thing which allows this kind of collectors to estimate the contents of what they are buying. In our days, when Eastern medicine, philosophy and especially astrology and magic became more popular than the achievements of Western science, collectors' interest in the subjects enumerated above became even stronger. To evaluate from the scientific point of view the manuscripts which come to the European market and to provide the collectors with right recommendations is a very important task. Such recommendations not only allow to estimate the real value of many private collections, they help also to un-

derstand the achievements of Oriental culture accumulated and reflected in the manuscripts.

The Catalogue is definitely helpful to the solution of these problems. Its makers — Sam Fogg and Bob Miller — published a detailed description of manuscripts originating from Tibet, Nepal and India, which may be of some interest to specialists.

179 items are presented in the Catalogue, of these 177 are manuscripts, block-printed books, religious paintings on paper and textiles, miniatures, etc. Two items (No. 13 "Prayer Wheel" and No. 41 "Buddhist inscribed brass vase, record of a religious donation") are objects of material culture. All descriptions are made by professionals. The most prominent experts from Europe and India were invited to describe and classify manuscripts and objects of art, among them Dr. Lore Sander from Berlin, a famous palaeographer, one of the authors of the six-volume *Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts from East Turkestan*; Prof. Nicholas Sims-Williams from London, expert in medieval manuscripts from Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia, as well as in the Middle Iranian languages and scripts; Dr. Ulrich Pagel working on the description of Tibetan manuscripts and xylographs of the British Library; Dr. Jane Singer, specialist in Sino-Tibetan iconography; Dr. Ian Alsop, expert in the

Nepalese manuscript tradition and iconography, and several other scholars. Due to their participation in the making of the Catalogue every manuscript is provided with a strict scientific description of its contents, state of preservation, writing material, script, language and dating. Besides this factual data the descriptions include vast excursions into history and culture, which help to imagine the manuscripts within the general cultural context of the period and the region to which they belong.

The descriptions of the manuscripts are arranged by regions. Within this regional division the manuscripts are described in the chronological order. Sanskrit manuscripts are also classified by their subjects and genres. A special place belongs to fragments written in a special kind of Indian Brāhmī. They most probably originate from the region of Banyan or Gilgit where they were immured in a stupa or in some other Buddhist monument. They can be dated between the 1st and 7th centuries. Among other Sanskrit manuscripts we find traditional ancient and medieval Indian texts — fragments of the Vedas and comments on them, epic, *purāṇas*, Buddhist *sūtras*, *tantras*, treatises on Yoga, fragments from the Jaina and Sikh literary tradition. Books in New Indian languages — Hindi, Urdu, Panjabi, Orya, Telugu, Tamil, Cannada, Malayalam, Singalese — are also present.

Finally, the Catalogue under review includes Islamic manuscripts in Persian and Arabic: 11 in Persian (Nos. 163—165, 167, 168, 170—175) and two in Arabic (Nos. 169, 176).

Estimating the lists of manuscripts from the point of view of their contents, it should be mentioned that they represent well-known works of the ancient and medieval Indian and Tibetan literatures. At the same time every manuscript should be considered as a unique phenomenon of culture. Among the manuscripts described in the Catalogue some are exclusively interesting either from the point of view of their palaeography and early dating, or as samples of illuminated book-art. These are:

No. 1: a Dunhuang copy of the Tibetan *Aparimitāyur-sūtra* of the mid-8th century. Similar copies are present in the libraries of England, France and Russia, all with colophons containing the names of those who were involved in the making of manuscripts. These names, together with the names mentioned in the 8th—9th centuries business documents, expand our knowledge of the prosopography of the region and of its ethnic history (see our review of the book by L. S. Savitsky in *Manuscripta Orientalia*, I, 2 (1995), p. 62).

No. 16: a Nepalese manuscript on paper (the 15th or early 16th century) contains the text of "Procedure to Appease Those Who Seize" (Skr. *Badhagrahaṇa*), with 14 miniatures, depicting a *graha* leaning over and attacking a patient in a sleeping-bag or quilt. These demons are closely connected with deities of the planets and constellations injuring the people.

No. 17: a manuscript on palm-leaf, dated from the 16th century. Sanskrit in Newārī script. It contains the devotional miscellany including the *Devīmahātmya*. MS is interesting because of its 32 coloured miniatures depicting a number of deities and goddesses and because of their floral ornament.

No. 26: a manuscript on paper, dated from the 18th century, the Sanskrit and Newārī languages. It contains the

*Aśvaśāstra* ("A Treatise on the Nature and Illnesses of Horses"). The text is illustrated with 49 fine miniatures. They use deep colours with solid contrasting ground colours, with details added in black ink.

No. 40: a manuscript on palm-leaf, dated by the authors of the Catalogues back to the 11th century ("early Bhujimol calligraphy"). It contains the complete text of the "Praise of the Great Goddess", the *Devīmahātmya*. It is almost the earliest copy of the composition very popular all over India, which gave rise to the huge literature.

As for the Muslim manuscripts of the Catalogue, it should be noted that the series of the Muslim art exhibitions, which have recently taken place in Geneva, Paris, New York, Berlin, Lugano, Sofia, and Salzburg and were dedicated, wholly or partly, to the Muslim calligraphy and miniature art, demonstrate the growing interest towards the art heritage of the Muslim civilisation. This interest contributes considerably to the rise of prices to the corresponding strings of the leading auction houses.

The part of the Catalogue, which presents the Mughal style and many manuscripts from India (Nos. 163—179) written in Persian, is of a special interest. In this connection we would like to draw readers' attention to a miniature from the well-known mid-15th century dispersed manuscript of the *Khamsa* by Amīr Khusraw Dihlawī (other folios can be found in the museums of London, Washington, Montreal, Los Angeles, Seattle, Kansas City, Worcester, and in some private collections) and to a miniature from the 16th century *Bābur-nāma* manuscript (from the collection of H. Kevorkian). Among most interesting manuscripts one can mention the 17th century copy of Zakariya al-Qazwīnī's *Ajā'ib al-Makhlūkāt* from Deccan, which contains 302 miniatures and an interesting world map. The 17th century *Tashrīḥ Mansūri* ("Anatomy of Mansūr") is also notable. Three drawings of it has recently been published in colour in a very interesting and helpful "Oriental Medicine. An Illustrated Guide to the Asian Arts of Healing", edited by J. Van Alphen and A. Aris (London, 1995). The Catalogue comprises a description of two other interesting manuscripts: a) richly decorated poetic miscellany with twelve miniatures by Indian artists (nine 17th century miniatures executed in the Indianised Iṣfahān style, as well as the early 19th century Qājār calligraphy and illumination); b) a very large luxurious Kashmir Qur'ān dated by 1864 and provided with a beautiful lacquer binding (one of the largest so far known) and with a *tafsīr* by Mullā Ḥusayn Wā'iz al-Kāshifī. The Qur'ān also contains marginal notes giving information on a number of verses, words and letters in each *Sūra*, according to five *qirā'at* (!).

It should be noted that many manuscript collections of India, Afghanistan and Iran are rather poorly described, and their treasures are but vaguely known to scholars. Some small collections in provincial centres and villages, which are stored in temples and shrines, have never been studied at all. In this sense the Catalogue under review will definitely serve an additional source of our knowledge on such an extensive field as Oriental manuscripts. Due to the Catalogue a lot of interesting and rare copies, which came to Europe during the last few years, are brought to light.

Finally, it should be added that the polygraph quality of the Catalogue is excellent.

M. Vorobyeva-Desyatovskaya and E. Rezvan

A. H. Aleeva. *Puteshestvie Ismail aga v Indiiu (Issledovanie iazyka tatarskikh putevykh zapisok XVIII v. "Ismail aga seyahetnamese")*. Kazan: 1993, 166 str.

**The Voyage of Ismā'il Aghā to India. A Study of the Language of the 18th Century Tatar Traveller's Records. *Ismā'il Aghā siyāhat-nāmasī*. Kazan: 1993, 166 pp.**

The publication by A. H. Aleeva includes a facsimile reproduction of the Arabographic text of the records written by Ismā'il Bikmuhamedov, a Tatar merchant from Orenburg, its translation into Russian and its study from the point of view of its language and as a cultural phenomenon. This work represents a description of a voyage to India undertaken by the author in the second half of the 18th century. It is written in prose and it belongs to the popular in the Islamic genre of *siyāhat-nāma*. The most noteworthy is that Ismā'il Aghā travelled to India as a member of a caravan specially commissioned by the Russian government.

Unfortunately, the autograph of the records is missing. Its popularity is, however, confirmed by the existence of numerous copies. It stands very close to Muḥammad Amīn's *Siyāhat-nāma*, a Tatar writing created in the last quarter of the 18th century. Both works, which attracted scholars' attention as early as the 19th century, were first published by the typography of the Kazan University in 1862.

A. H. Aleeva emphasises the active part of the Tatars as intermediaries between Russia and the countries of the East. Many dragomans and interpreters of the Moscow Chamber who draw documents in the Turkish language were the Tatars. A whole group of them served in the Embassy Department in Moscow in the 17th—18th centuries. After the foundation of Orenburg in the 1730s the centre of international trade between Russia and the East gradually shifted from Astrakhan to Orenburg. The Tatars from the Kargaline *sloboda* (district near Orenburg) began, besides their main occupation as traders, to serve as interpreters for trade caravans going with them as far as India. Gradually the Tatars from Kazan also became involved in these activities.

In the "Travels" by Ismā'il Aghā he describes his voyage to India in 1751 with the trade caravan of 'Abdullā Khayalin. It is evident from the text that the initial aim of this expedition was trade. Later, however, when the caravan reached Bukhara, an order from the Russian government to reach India and to fulfil a diplomatic mission was received. The author describes in detail his route (Central Asia, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, India, Arabia, Ottoman Turkey), customs of the peoples he encountered on the way and various cultural monuments.

According to Ismā'il Aghā, the caravan stayed in Delhi for nine months. Then the political events in India prevented the author from going back home by the usual route, so finally he reached Istanbul. There, with all his money lost, Ismā'il Aghā spent 25 years of his life before he could come back to Russia. The records are written in the Old Tatar language with much use of colloquial Tatar expressions affecting both its lexicon and its grammar.

Revealing the history of the text, Aleeva notes that when it was first published in Kazan in 1862 (presumably

by G. Sablukov), some unknown copy, now missing, was used. One more (incomplete) publication, which also appeared in 1862, was made by Russian orientalist I. N. Berezin who based upon two copies. Then followed other editions. The last one (before the publication by A. H. Aleeva) was undertaken in 1989 by the same author as an edition for lay readers, made after the version of the text from the Manuscript Department of the Library of the Kazan University (No. 311).

The present publication is basing upon nine surviving manuscripts of the records. Four of them belong to the Library of the Kazan University, two are from the Manuscript Department of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, one — from the Manuscript Department of the Institute of Language and Literature named after G. Ibragimov, of the Academy of Sciences of Tatarstan, one is preserved in the Manuscript Department of the Institute of Language and Literature of the Academy of Sciences of Bashkortostan, and one originates from the private collection of M. I. Ahmetzyanov, a member of the staff of the Institute of Language and Literature named after G. Ibragimov. This last copy was discovered by its present owner in the course of his archaeological research in the city of Kazan. The earliest copy, that of the Library of the Kazan University (No. 311), has been selected by Aleeva to serve the core of her publication.

The textological analysis undertaken by Aleeva shows that considerable changes were often made while copying the text. The collation of the copies demonstrates numerous discrepancies related both to the lexicon and grammar. Aleeva presents the analysis of the phonetic system of the Tatar language, as it is transmitted by the Arabic script, and of the morphological characteristics of the work. Its grammatical structure, according to Aleeva, reveals features inherent in the Kypchak and the Oghuz linguistic groups, with Kypchak elements predominating.

Much attention is given to the lexicon of the composition, its major part being the Turkic-Tatar words. There are, however, also many Arabic and Persian loan-words (27% — Arabic, 11% — Persian). It is noteworthy that there are only three cases of Russian loan-words. These are words for "sergeant", "soldier", and "anchor". At that time, as Aleeva comments, Russian loan-words could be found only in official documents or in letters. Their almost complete absence in the text of the records marks its difference from the Tatar documents of the time of Emelyan Pugachev's rebellion (the end of the 18th century), where the number of Russian loan-words is considerable.

Basing upon her analysis of the Turkic-Tatar lexicon of the records, Aleeva points out that most of these words are still actively used in the modern Tatar literary language, though some of these words appear in the text in the Oghuz phonetic variant.

At the end of her publication A. H. Aleeva enumerates the principal conclusions basing upon her thorough linguistic analysis of the text. These conclusions are of much importance to the study of the Tatar language, in particular to the comparatively little known stage of its development in the second half of the 18th century.

I. Petrosyan

**Khrestomatiia po Islamu. Perevody s arabskogo, vvedeniia i primechaniia. Sostavitel' i otvetstvennyi' redak-tor S. M. Prozorov. Moscow: Nauka, 1994, 238 str.**

**Islam Reader. Translations from Arabic, introductions and commentaries. Compiled and edited by S. M. Prozorov. Moscow: Nauka Publishing House, 1994, 238 pp.**

The first part of the *Islam Reader*<sup>1</sup> was published in 1994 in Moscow by the publishing house "Vostochnaya Literatura" (Oriental Literature). It contains translations (with detailed commentaries and introductory articles) of several original Arabic texts representing different genres of Muslim religious literature<sup>2</sup>. The need for such a collection of texts has long been there, especially since textbooks on Arabic literature and language are scarce, and the demand for young specialists in the field of Islamic studies is growing. The appearance of this book should be viewed therefore as a prominent event in scholarly life. There is practically no experience with creating similar text selections, neither in Russia, nor in Western countries. It should be noted that the idea of publishing a similar selection of texts in English translation is much approved by our colleagues from other countries<sup>3</sup>.

Materials included in *Islam Reader* represent a wide range of problems connected with the study of Islam. All aspects of traditional Islamic studies are present: the origin of Islam (fragments from *Sira rasul Allah* by Ibn Hishām, etc.), Qur'ānic texts and exegesis (98th *Sūra* and commentaries on it made by representatives of different schools and sects), the Sunna of the Prophet (passages from Ibn Baṭṭa al-'Uqbārī), dogmatic literature (chapter from '*Usul al-din fi-l-qalām*', the book by the Shafiite *faqih* and Ash'arite theologian al-Baghdādī; the '*Aqida* or "Creed" by Aḥmad b. Hanbal, the eponymous founder of the Hanbalite school of law and theology), Ṣūfī literature (chapters from the classical *Kitāb al-luma'* by Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj al-Ṭūsī), Muslim law (chapters from one of the earliest works on *fiqh* — *Kitāb al-Kharāj* by Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb). These wide and successfully selected materials not only make it possible to teach students how to work with corresponding sources, but also give some idea of Islam in general and its forms developing in the Muslim world for over a thousand years. In this connection this publication may be interesting not only to students but also to specialists in such fields as history, Oriental studies, and philosophy.

It is noteworthy that not only Arabic printed texts and translations are included, but also fragments of manuscripts. These are pages representing different manuscript traditions and different genres of Islamic religious literature: the Qur'ān, *tafsīr*, collections of *hadīth*, works of Ṣūfīs, etc.). The manuscripts are written in different scripts — from comparatively easy to read Kufic Qur'āns and clear *naskh* to almost illegible cursive writing of marginal notes. The inclusion of these materials not only helps make the student familiar with the Arab manuscript tradi-

tion but also gives him some practice working with manuscript texts. In some sense this last task is quite new, usually textbooks and collections of selected texts were not required to confront it. However, the presence in Russia, first of all in St. Petersburg, of large collections of Arabic manuscripts demands the introduction of this kind of training — at least at the initial stage.

From this point of view most impressive chapter of the book is "The Qur'ān and Its Exegesis" by E. Rezvan. It includes the 98th *Sūra* of the Qur'ān and a representative selection of 12 *tafsīrs* by different authors. The chapter is provided with the following reproductions of manuscript fragments:

1. 2 folios of an early Kufic Qur'ān manuscript dated from the 8th—9th centuries (parts of *Sūras* 96—98);
2. 2 folios from a Qur'ān written in Maghribī script (*Sūra* 98);
3. 2 folios from the *tafsīr* by al-Zamakhsharī (commentary on *Sūra* 98) written in easily legible *naskh*;
4. 2 folios written in middle-size *naskh* from the *tafsīr* by al-Bayḍawī (explanation of *Sūra* 98) containing numerous marginal additions. The copy was made in 698/1299;
5. 2 folios of the same type from the *tafsīr* by al-Jalālayn (explanation of *Sūra* 98), manuscript of 925/1519.

The inclusion of similar materials into textbooks of this kind, preferably in high quality reproductions, should be encouraged.

During a discussion of the book under review in Bergen in the May of 1995 (in which Efim Rezvan, Joseph Bell of the University of Bergen, and Dr. Michael G. Carter of New York University took part) the idea of making a series of similar textbooks devoted to different genres of medieval Arabic literature was considered. However, the suggested series would be different from *Islam Reader* in being not just a collection of texts borrowed from different works, but a series of publications, each of them dedicated to one specific genre or to one author. The whole idea was to some extent inspired by the chapter on the Qur'ān and its exegesis. A separate issue of this chapter (with a slightly expanded foreword) could serve as a pattern for the suggested series. The necessity of producing such a series of textbooks is evident. Textbooks of this kind are few not only in Russia but also in Western countries. We invite all specialists working in the field of the Arabic language and literature to take part in this project or in its discussion<sup>4</sup>. We are ready to undertake all preliminary and editorial work. Only the question of funding remains open. The issues could be printed either in St. Petersburg or elsewhere, original forms would be prepared in St. Petersburg. Our project offers a very flexible forum for making the results of research-work available to students (as well as for a wide range of specialists in other disciplines). Practically every Arabist can compile a textbook of this kind on the basis of

<sup>1</sup> The book had been submitted to printers several years ago, however, its publication was detained by technical and financial problems connected with the reconstruction of the publishing business in Russia.

<sup>2</sup> The second part of the book containing texts in Arabic is forthcoming.

<sup>3</sup> Of the textbooks on Islam most closely resembling the *Islam Reader* there is *Textual Sources for the Study of Islam*, ed. and trans. by A. Rippin and J. Knappert (Manchester, 1986), which gives translations of the corresponding texts into English.

<sup>4</sup> We shall be happy to get any suggestions connected with this project, which is now in its preliminary stage. Our e-mail address is: "orient@ieos.spb.su".

the sources he is studying. The number of issues is unlimited, if we take into account the many genres existing in Arabic literature and the multitude of works written in the Arabic language.

Let us consider now the conditions which textbooks of this kind should meet. Needless to say, a thorough selection of materials is required, as well as a high level of editing and printing.

## I. THE TEXTBOOKS SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING OBLIGATORY ELEMENTS

### 1. Parallel texts

a) Arabic original typed in clear easily legible font, preferably with diacritic marks in all difficult cases which could be interpreted in several different ways (passives which are not evident and the like).

b) Translation into Russian (or/and into English). Translations should be clear, philologically precise and close to the original (almost literal, though the grammatical rules of the language into which the text is translated must be respected). Paraphrases are inappropriate for the purpose of the series. When a translation of a poetic or *adab* work is done, it can be presented in a more "artistic" form, but only after the parallel word-by-word translation of the same text and preferably at the end of the book.

### 2. Manuscript text

It is preferable or, from our point of view, even necessary, to include facsimile reproductions of the Arabic manuscript text. There is no need to reproduce the whole text selected, but at least several pages should be present in the book. This will give the reader some idea of the Arab manuscript tradition and will make him see how the text in question was embodied in material form. It would be useful in this connection to reproduce folios from different manuscripts and to give the first and the last page of one of the manuscripts. Such reproductions will make the book more interesting and will introduce more variety into the process of education. They can help the student feel the pulse of real life.

### 3. Commentaries

Commentaries should be thorough and detailed, giving the student a complete idea of the material he is dealing with. All notions, terms, names and place-names occurring in the text should be commented. Even well-known terms and names which could be left without comment in an ordinary critical edition of a text must be taken into account. On the other hand, the commentaries should be more detailed than usual — to provide the student with positive information on the history, language and cultural environment of the genre he is working on. At the same time commentaries of this kind could be interesting to specialists in related fields, like the history of Medieval Europe, who are not so well acquainted with the realities of the Oriental world. Finally, from the point of view of pure scholarship,

since the number of medieval Arabic treatises translated into European languages is not huge, one cannot overestimate the importance of any new publications introducing new materials

### 4. Introduction

The introduction is expected to contain information on the following aspects:

a) Genre, its characteristics in detail and a short history. Specific genre features of the work in question, etc.

b) The author: his life and work; in what historical and literary environment his works were created (especially the work considered in the textbook).

c) Time: information on the historical period considered in the text in question (this concerns first of all works on history, works of the *adab* genre relating to historical events, and the like). It would be reasonable to give a detailed historical survey of the period considered in works on history.

### 5. Vocabulary

It is preferable, though not obligatory (because the Arabic text is supplemented with a parallel translation), to include a vocabulary. The creation of a complete vocabulary of the text would of course be a complicated and time-consuming work. It is quite possible, however, to make a concise vocabulary in the process of translating and editing the text, including the most important and difficult to understand groups of words:

a) Special terms — philological, historical, philosophical, etc. — with a detailed explanation of their meaning and use.

b) Rare words which the potential reader (not only a student) could not be expected to know. The range of selection is wide enough: one can either include only words missing in standard Arabic dictionaries (for the Russian reader the dictionary by Baranov) and present only in Arabic explanatory dictionaries or in large European dictionaries (Lane), or just all words which do not occur very frequently (or words most probably unknown to students).

c) Well-known words which occur in the text in a specific meaning (if a dozen of meanings for some word are known, but in the text it is present only in one rarely used meaning), words which in this particular context require a very careful selection of European equivalents, and other unusual cases.

## II. SELECTING TEXTS

The principle quality required of the text is its representativeness:

1. The text selected must be a characteristic representative of the genre in question to make the reader (student) familiar with the principal features of the genre as a whole.

2. The author of the text selected should be one of the principal representatives of the genre in question. The same concerns the work itself: it should be an outstanding work within the genre as a whole as well as among the works of the chosen author.

3. When dealing with a work the length of which makes it impossible to give the full text — a chronicle, a work on geography, a collection of *adab* — the section selected for translation should be logically complete. It must be a finished narrative, geographical description, philosophical essay or description of some historical event or period. Even if a series of fragments is given, they must be logically connected, presenting some aesthetically consistent whole, not just a book of quotations.

4. The text itself should contain information of some value, so that the student could not only learn how to read texts of this kind, but also get useful data on the subject matter (historical events, description of lands, cities and peoples, religious dogma, philosophy, linguistic phenomena, etc.). As for literary texts — *adab* and poetry — the texts selected should, on one hand, give some idea of the different sides of the author's creative activities, on the other — of the genre in question.

All the above notwithstanding, a given issue should not necessarily include only texts written by the same author. A different principle may be applied, for example, a collection of texts by different authors presenting a consistent description of a certain phenomenon. Ten *mu'allaqas* by different authors also present a consistent whole (actually, even a smaller number would be enough to illustrate this particular genre).

The chapter by Efim Rezvan in *Islam Reader* meets practically all the requirements listed here. It gives a clear idea of the Qur'an and its place in the Muslim tradition during more than a thousand years — from its interpretation in the 8th century (*tafsir* by Muqātil b. Sulaymān) to the most recent concepts of the Muslim Brothers (*Fī Zilāl al-Qur'an* by Sayyid Qutb). The 98th *Sūra*, which Rezvan uses as an example, is one of the most important and complicated parts of the Qur'an (a fact which was noticed by practically all authors of *tafsirs*). It is important not only theologically but also on practical, political level: the way of interpreting the words of the Qur'an relating to non-Muslims (first of all — “the people of the Book”), has never been just pure theory. Much in the practice of relations with non-Muslim states and with heterodox communities within *dār al-Islām* depended upon the way Qur'anic sentences (especially of the 98th *Sūra*) were interpreted. On the other hand, established practice to some extent influenced the way the *Sūra* was interpreted. This complicated double-sided process was developing at different levels: social practice influenced ideology and ideological innovations modified social practice.

The selection of *tafsirs* is also quite representative. It makes it possible to trace the development both of the notions and concepts commented, as well as of the genre itself, reflecting changes not only in Muslim theology but also in the society and in social consciousness in general. A number of works representing the principal stages of the making of Islamic exegesis and theology are cited (the *tafsir* by Muqātil b. Sulaymān standing at the beginning of this genre; the work by al-Ṭabarī, the most prominent work of this kind, which sums up both the development of Islamic exegesis in general and that of “commentary based on tradition” in particular; the most popular *tafsir* of the later Middle Ages and of modern times, the *Tafsir al-Jalālayn*, which is the peak of the development of the genre, the so-called “Arabic translation of the Qur'an”; and the works of one of the most prominent Arab reformers Muḥammad 'Abduh and the ideologist of the Muslim Brothers Sayyid Qutb). The whole spectrum of trends within Islam is represented: purely Sunnite *Ṣaḥīḥ* by al-Bukhārī and the *tafsir* by the Shafiite *fakih* and commentator al-Bayḏāwī; Shiite *tafsir* by al-Ṭabarsī and the Mu'tazilite commentary by al-Zamakhsharī; the *tafsir* of the prominent Ash'arite al-Rāzī, the Sūfī commentary by al-Tustarī (the earliest composition of this kind containing allegoric explanation of the Qur'anic text) and by Ibn 'Arabī. The technical aspect of the chapter is also perfect: the translation is precise, with detailed commentaries and an introduction containing a survey of the history of the genre and an analysis of the principal problems and notions present in the 98th *Sūra* of the Qur'an. There are also introductory articles dedicated to each of the *tafsirs*. Very important are the reproductions of pages from several manuscripts which give some idea of how the Arab manuscript tradition developed (and at the same time a good introduction for students who wish to learn to read different scripts). All this provides a linguistic and theological basis for future work with the sources of this kind.

A collection of texts from medieval Arab geographers along the same lines is being planned by the present reviewer. It will include passages by different authors describing some part of the caravan route from Khorasan to Baghdad. A series of texts describing the same part of the route can, on one hand, demonstrate the characteristic features of medieval Arab geography and, on the other, show how the principles of selecting and rendering materials were developing from the early works on geography by Ibn Khurdādhbih, Qudāma, Ibn Rusta, and al-Ya'qūbī to the “classical school of Arab geography” represented by such writers as al-Iṣṭakhrī, Ibn Ḥawqal, and al-Muqaddasī. Readers will be provided with the necessary materials for them to attempt their own reconstruction of the trade route (which makes the learning process more entertaining). Taking into account the specific character of the contemplated edition, it must include, besides the texts, translations, commentaries, and facsimile reproductions of pages from different manuscripts, as well as several maps from medieval works and a reliable modern map of the area described<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> It would be best, perhaps, not to use the most recent maps showing the landscape considerably changed, but maps from the beginning of the century with no modern features present. Many of the roads in the Middle-East, for instance, were still following the course of medieval caravan tracks at the beginning of this century.

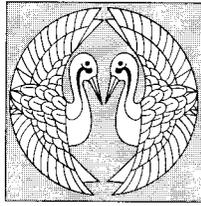
Another example, this time of a text belonging to one author, is a collection I am preparing of passages from *Al-Kāmil fī-l-tārīkh* by Ibn al-Athīr dedicated to the history of Syria, Palestine, al-Jazira and Iraq in the second half of the 11th—beginning of the 12th centuries. The materials selected so as to meet all the requirements listed above. Ibn al-Athīr is a first-rate historian, one of the prominent representatives of Arab historiography (he can be compared only with al-Ṭabarī, if we take into account the range of materials he records and the way he uses them). *Al-Kāmil fī-l-tārīkh*, moreover, is a characteristic and a very good example of an Arab chronicle. It is written in clear language characteristic of this genre. Passages selected for the textbook refer to a limited period — from the acme of the Seljuk Empire (the arrival of Ṭughril Beg in Baghdad in 1055) to its decline and fall and the appearance of the Crusader states. This era, for which the work by Ibn al-Athīr is the

principle source, was one of the crucial periods in the history of the Middle East. The rise of the Seljuk Empire brought many changes in the social, political and economic life of the whole region. It is impossible to underestimate the significance of these changes, no matter how different the views of scholars on their nature (from “gradual evolution” to “revolutionary rupture”) may be. At the same time it was the beginning of the Crusades, a new stage in the history of the Mediterranean region. The appearance of *Islam Reader* is a contribution to the development of Arabic studies in general and to the educational infrastructure required to train new specialists in one of the traditional fields of Oriental studies — Arabic manuscripts — in particular. Moreover, as I have tried to point out, it sets an example for a number of useful projects.

A. Matveev

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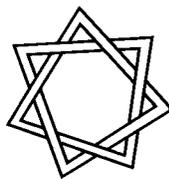
RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES  
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### Colour plates:

#### Front cover:

The inside of the manuscript's front cover (on the left): Čudabandaka (Skt. Cūdāpanthaka; Tib. Lam-phran-bstan), "The Great Yum", MS, vol. 5 (call number K 24), 15.0 × 16.0 cm.

#### Back cover:

**Plate 1.** The inside of the back cover (from left to right): 1. Esru-a (Skt. Brahmā, Tib. Tshangs-pa); 2. Bigar (Skt. Śiva, Tib. ?); 3. Qormusta (Skt. Indra, Tib. brGya-byin), "The Great Yum", MS, vol. 5 (call number K 24), 52.0 × 15.5 cm.

**Plate 2.** The inside of the front cover (on the left): Inggida (Skt. Aṅgaja, Tib. Yan-lag-'byung); (on the right) Bagula (Skt. Bakula, Tib. Ba-ku-la), "The Great Yum", MS, vol. 4 (call number K 24), 53.0 × 15.5 cm.

**Plate 3.** The inside of the back cover (from left to right): 1. Qayanggiru-a (Skt. Lohakhaḍga Hayagrīva, Tib. Rta-mgrin lcags-ral-can); 2. Beiĵi Maq-a-kala (Skt. Aghora Mahākāla, Tib. Beg-tse); 3. Čoytu Ökin tngri (Skt. Ekamātā Shrī Devī, Tib. Ma-cig dpal-ldan lha-mo), "The Great Yum", MS, vol. 4 (call number K 24), 52.0 × 15.5 cm.