

*Drevnij Vostok v antičnoj i rannebristianskoj tradicii (Indija, Kitaj, Jugo-Vostočnaja Azija)*. Podrob tekstov, per. s drevnegreč. i lat., primeč. i annot. ukaz. G.A. Taronjana, vvedenie A.A. Vigasina. Moscow: Naučno-izdatel'skij centr "Ladomir", 2007. 642 pp. ISBN 5-86218-474-0.

In recent times, there has been quite lively interest in Graeco-Indian studies in Russia (see, e.g. G.M. Bongard-Levin & M.D. Buharin & A.A. Vigasin: *Indija i antičnyj mir*. Moscow 2002). This book – Ancient East in Classical and Early Christian Tradition (India, China, South-East Asia) – contains an introduction by A.A. Vigasin (pp. 5–23), then an anthology of translations (pp. 27–319) and a kind of dictionary of the names and terms mentioned in them (pp. 320–638), both prepared by G.A. Taronjan. There are altogether 49 Greek and Latin authors or texts, arranged chronologically from Herodotus to Cosmas Indicopleustes. Regrettably, the editions on which the translations are based are not always indicated. In some cases earlier Russian translations are used (e.g. Arrian and Clemens) and in some cases an author is left out when referring to an existing translation (Philostratus).

There is no bibliography. Some more recent and more reliable textual sources (e.g. on Ctesias and Ptolemy's Book 6) are not used. The selection often includes casual, short mentions, sometimes of little importance, but in this respect, it could have been much extended. To provide just a few examples: Herodotus mentions India or Indians or Indian dogs also in 1, 192; 7, 9 and 187; 8, 113; and 9, 31. For Ctesias, only the summaries of Photius are included, not fragments. Diodorus, Strabo and Aelian contain only a small selection of the numerous passages available. Pliny is covered rather well, but books 20–30 (with at least eight references to India) are missing. Josephus, *Antiquitates* (with five passages mentioning India) and all the works of Philo Alexandrinus (with seven) are omitted. I could add a dozen more for Aristotle (usually already found in Paul Bolchert, *Aristoteles Erdkunde von Asien und Libyen*. Quellen und Forschungen zur alten Geschichte und Geographie 15, Berlin 1908, and in Wilhelm Reese, *Die griechischen Nachrichten über Indien bis zum Feldzuge Alexanders des Grossen*. Leipzig 1914 – this latter is actually mentioned in the introduction by Vigasin). Apparently even such standard works as Bernhard Breloer & Franz Bömer, *Fontes historiae religionum Indicarum*. Fontes historiae religionum ex auctoribus Graecis et latinis collectos 7, Bonn 1939, and Jacques André & Jean Filliozat, *Pline l'Ancien. Histoire Naturelle. Livre VI, 2<sup>e</sup> partie*. Texte établi, traduit et commenté. Collection ... Guillaume Budé, Paris 1980 were not used, as much could have been added from them. A knowledge of my paper on Lucian and India (*Festschrift*

*Arion Roşu* 2004: 693–706) would have added no less than thirty additional passages to the nine given here.

The dictionary part is interesting as it includes all personal names and place names mentioned in the text, but unfortunately no references to the secondary literature are provided. A comparison to the corresponding lemmata in the famous classical encyclopaedias the Pauly-Wissowa, *Der kleine Pauly* and *Der Neue Pauly*, suggests itself easily. I have only checked some lemmata against the most recent of them (NP) in which the relevant articles are usually shorter. Sometimes, old random suggestions are offered as certain etymologies, e.g. *kalatii* (Calatai) from *kāla* as supposedly dark-skinned Dravidians, *kalistii* (Calystrioi) from *kālavastra*, *kaspatir* (Caspatyros/-pyros) from *Kaśyapa-pura*, but in other respects everything seems to be correct.

KLAUS KARTTUNEN

**Almuth Degener**, *Shina-Texte aus Gilgit (Nord-Pakistan). Sprichwörter und Materialien zum Volksglauben, gesammelt von Mohammad Amin Zia*. (Beiträge zur Indologie, 41.) Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2008. xiii + 333 pp. ISBN 978-3-447-05648-9.

This book presents the hitherto largest collection of Shina texts that has appeared outside Pakistan. At the core of the book are 340 proverbs and sayings collected by Mohammad Amin Zia and published in 1978 under the title *Sawéeno moórye* “Words of the wise” in Shina with accompanying free Urdu translation. In addition, there are further proverbs collected by M.A. Zia and many proverbs from D.L.R. Lorimer’s unpublished material.

The book opens with a preface by George Buddruss, who has transcribed and analyzed the texts and even laid the linguistic groundwork for the publication, as duly acknowledged by the author. The preface provides information about when and how the material was collected (in the 1920s and 1970s) and analyzed, and how the phonemic transcription and linguistic analysis evolved.

In the introduction (1–12) the author gives a brief survey of relevant research and discusses matters of classification, definitions, contents, parallels, sources, etc. The author gives good arguments for why she has chosen to organize the material on a thematic basis rather than in terms of formal criteria, such as structure, basic building blocks, etc.

After the introduction there follows a concise grammatical outline (13–65) of the language of the texts, with chapters on phonology (13–15), morphology (15–42), derivation (43–46), and syntax (46–65). Obviously, for reasons of scope, the words in the paradigms are not translated, but all the words and forms are listed and translated or explained in the glossary at the end of the book.

With the help of this book it is actually possible to learn this wonderful language, so archaic and innovative at the same time. To mention just one structural peculiarity, Shina can nominalize any finite verb by adding the indefinite (i.e. singulative) suffix *-k*, and then inflect this nominalized verb form for all its eight noun cases, e.g. *bánei* (FUT 3s) ‘will dress’ : *báneyeket* (DAT) ‘to one who dresses’.

The syntactic terminology and descriptions are a bit confusing at times. In Shina there are verbal nouns formed with the suffix *-oósan*, mentioned on page 38. It is claimed that this form governs both the so-called “Agens” (“agent”) and “direct object” in the direct case (“Casus rectus”). This would be rather strange in an ergative language like Shina, cf. example (470) on page 53, where even the infinitive in *-oóiky* of a transitive verb governs an *ergative* “subject” (i.e. agent). To support the above statement, the author gives the example (492) *turmák neé bašoósan* ‘bis das Gewehr nicht ertönt (= bevor es ertönt)’ [‘until the gun sounds’]. But the verb here is intransitive (in the glossary *baš-* is also given a transitive meaning, ‘to play an instrument’ (250), which, of course, is not the intended meaning here). So the example does not show what would happen if the verb had been transitive (and thus required a real agent). The problem is that the author does not clearly distinguish between the terms “Agens” and “subject”, cf. p. 41, where it is said that the “Agens” of the intransitive verbal action is the “direct object” of causative verbs.

The 584 proverbs are presented and analyzed on pages 66–201. They are grouped and classified according to themes, and each group is introduced with a brief account of its cultural-social context and rationale. The proverbs are numbered consecutively (with some exceptions), documented, and translated as closely as possible. Most proverbs are commented on in the footnotes, which supply variants, linguistic comments, explanations of purport and use, external parallels (Burushaski, Urdu/Hindi, Tibetan, Balti, Kashmiri, Khowar, Wakhi, Pashto, Persian, Waigali, Bengali, English, German, etc.) and other relevant information.

The majority of the proverbs pertain to family life, human relationships and society. Another large category relate to moral and ethics, virtue and honour, and practical wisdom. Furthermore, there are many philosophical proverbs that

contemplate the world and its paradoxes, the problem of good and evil, cause and effect, etc.

The given explanations are essential. Without them many of the proverbs would have been incomprehensible or easily misunderstood, e.g. (47) “The widow will plough in heaven” means that the widow will try everything to change her hopeless condition. (92) “Dog and child are the same, it is said.” The idea is that both will stick to you with love and loyalty, in whatever way you treat them. (Here, as in the following, the English translations are my own.)

Most of the proverbs are quite succinct owing to the compact morpho-syntax of Shina. There are certain recurring stylistic patterns, such as the frequent end formula *theégyen* ‘they have said’, reminiscent of Sanskrit *ābur* (cf. also Burushaski *sénáan* ‘they have said’). On the idiomatic level there are also some interesting items, e.g. “to eat someone’s flesh” means ‘to utilize someone’.

Not a few proverbs have a strong local flavour and humour, which makes them even more abstruse. For example, (69) “The soup is bitter, but the meat is tasty.” (Explanation: One loves a person, but hates his relatives.) (95) “Child and king are the same, it is said.” (Explanation: Both are equally difficult to satisfy.) (73) “The thief has one heart, the owner has a hundred hearts.” (Explanation: The owner has a hundred thoughts about who the thief was.) (341) “Instead of making your hand red with henna, make your face red with work.” (In Shina and the other regional languages “red face” stands for ‘respect, honour’.)

As a final curiosity, let me mention (476) *Hanasaári báin to šal kúne paásei* “As long as Hanasaári exists, it will see hundreds of corpses.” Without the explanation that Hanasaári means the Gilgit river, where so many people have died and battles fought, the Finnish reader might think we are talking about Hånasaari, the conference island outside Helsinki. Of course, the different tonal accents help keep the places apart.

The texts numbered 585–787 on popular belief are presented and analyzed on pages 202–241. It is hardly surprising that omens and superstitions relating to weddings and marriages are particularly profuse, albeit not always easily comprehensible. For example, (585) “If it rains on someone’s wedding day, it is counted as a good (omen)”. (588) “The bride’s party tries to make the bridegroom sit down before the bride, while the bridegroom’s party tries to do the opposite. It is said that if the bridegroom sits down first, the bride’s star will be higher than that of the bridegroom and vice versa. Therefore they are made to sit down at the same time.”

Other favourites are pregnancy and childbirth. Very difficult to grasp is the following: (596) “When a woman has had a difficult delivery (and the baby is in

danger), or when the baby dies soon after birth, you should place the baby under a cat. Then the cat will die and the baby will survive.”

A common Asian theme is the notion of protective names, e.g. (597) “If someone has no male heir, or if his male heir does not survive, the following male offspring will survive if you give him the name ‘Doggy’, ‘Calf’, ‘From the Cowshed’, or ‘Foal of Donkey’.” (Or the son can be breastfed by another woman whose children have survived.) Such protective names occur also in the feminine.

The behaviour of small children, animals and nature are considered ominous. Cf. (608) “It is said that if a child squats on his thighs while placing his hands on his cheeks, his father will get into trouble.” (617) “If you do not immerse a utensil that has been licked by a dog in water for seven days, any man who eats or drinks from it will become mentally deranged.”

Even one’s own behaviour may be worthwhile to study, as shown by, e.g. (664) “When you feel like yawning, know that someone is slandering you. When you feel like sneezing, know that someone is speaking good of you.” (666) “If you have scratched your neck or throat, you must get rid of the evil by blowing on your finger.” (665) “When you bite your tongue, you will get meat.” (Sounds like a truism.)

Certain things are dangerous for men but not for women, cf. (646) “If a man plants a walnut tree, either the man will die or the tree will wither. If a woman plants it, the tree will thrive.”

There are many texts relating to magic and folk medicine, e.g. (642) “If the wind ceases to blow on the threshing floor, it returns when you whistle.” (682) “If you heat a tomato and put it on a pimple, the pimple will burst.” (683) “If a person suffering from eye ache swears, when starting to get pimples and boils, that he shall never eat lungs again, then the ailments will disappear. If, however, he breaks his vow, the ailments will return.” (686) “If you apply dew that has fallen on the leaves of a lily blossoming on a glacier to a person’s eye, his vision will improve and his eyes will not hurt as long as he lives.” (700) “If a person suffering from tuberculosis sits in the cote with goats and sheep for a month, he will be cured.” (709) “In order to protect a child from the evil eye, it is necessary to put a zinc mark on his face or forehead.” (777) “When an earthquake occurs, diseases will spread.”

Predicting the weather is essential everywhere, and portents of rain are especially multifarious, e.g. (720) “When eating grass on the grazing ground, if the goats move towards a slope, it will rain.” (726) “When the cat wipes her face with her paws, it will rain.” (737) “When the *buleěj* bird cries uninterruptedly, it will rain.” (739) “When geese fly in the direction of a glacier, it will rain; when they fly

in the direction of a dry place, the weather will be fine.” (744) “When you dream about deceased people, it will rain.”

There are many astute observations relating to the seasons, e.g. (741) “In spring, man’s colour goes into trees and bushes, and in those days man is too sluggish for work.” (742) “When the horsefly stings a man for the first time in the summer, the ibex gives birth to a kid.”

The nature lore is rich and sometimes staggeringly poetic, e.g. (778) “Once the sun has set, it sinks into the river.”

At the end of the book, there is a complete etymological and morphological glossary (243–315) with cross-references to the texts. The bibliography (317–321) and comprehensive index (323–333) perfect the work.

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