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**Colour plates: “Iskender-nāme” by Aḥmedī (1334/35—1412/13), MS C133 from the collection of St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences (see p. 47—61).**

**Front cover:**

Fol. 58a. Iskender and Gülshah, 10.7 × 10.9 cm.

**Back cover:**

**Plate 1.** Fol. 93b. Iskender Slaying a Dragon, 10.7 × 13.2 cm.

**Plate 2.** Fol. 140b. The Poet Aḥmedī (?), 10.7 × 14.3 cm.

**Plate 3.** Fol. 249b. The Religious Dispute in the Presence of Sultan Orkhan, 10.7 × 14.7 cm.

**Plate 4.** Fol. 254a. The Murder of Sultan Murad I, 10.7 × 14.3 cm.

RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES  
THE INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL STUDIES  
ST. PETERSBURG BRANCH



# **Manuscripta Orientalia**

*International Journal for Oriental Manuscript Research*

Vol. 1 No. 2 October 1995

THESA  
ST. PETERSBURG—HELSINKI

The Norman Ross Publishers (NY, USA) are planning to reprint "The Persian/Tajik Catalogue of MSS" with the English introduction, addenda and corrigenda by Dr. Akimushkin. This welcome and valuable new edition is

probably destined to remain one of the principal reference sources for orientalists and will stimulate further studies for many years to come.

*F. Abdullaeva*

*Izvedat' dorogi i puti pravednykh. Pehleviiskie nazidatel'nye teksty. Vvedenie, transkriptsiia tekstov, per-evod, komentarii, glossarii i ukazateli O. M. Chunakovoĭ (To Know the Ways and Routes of the Righteous. Didactic Texts in Pahlavi. Introduction, Transcription, Translation, Commentaries, Glossary and Indices by O. M. Chunakova). Moscow: Nauka Publishing House, 1991. — 192 pp. (Literary Monument of the Orient, XCIV).*

The book under the intriguing title represents the publication and a translation into Russian of the so called "small" didactic Pahlavi texts. They are included in the manuscript known as MK (the 14th century A.D.) which was published by a Pharsee scholar J. Jamasp-Asana (J. Jamasp-Asana. Pahlavi Texts, 1—2, Bombay, 1897, 1913). About one half of the 40 published stories and fragments belong to didactic literature — Pers. *handarz*. They were composed by priests and mentors — the adepts of the Zoroastrian doctrines, this is why they include a number of religious instructions and aphorisms on ethics, which determine the behavior of their adepts in the material sphere of this world (*getig*) aimed at obtaining eternal happy life in the ideal, non-sensual sphere (*menog*).

As far as we know, nobody in Russia have ever published *handarz* texts. Meanwhile in India (in the new native land of Zoroastrians — Pharsees), Iran and even in Europe more than thirty published translations into European and Eastern (Gujarati, Persian) languages, containing separate stories of this genre, have appeared by now. The period of their active translation began in the second part of the 19th century. The book by Chunakova might be regarded as the first successful experiment in the scholarly research of this genre of Persian literature in Russian science.

The publication follows the international rules generally accepted when publishing Pahlavi texts: transcription and translation of twenty *handarzes* with a detailed introduction, commentaries on the texts, a complete glossary, indices, the list of written sources, bibliography and English summary (for Western readers).

We may say that the book by Chunakova appeared just in time. I mean the present-day rapidly increasing interest

towards the spiritual culture of Eastern peoples. It can be accounted for a big variety of Eastern religious and ethnic systems represented in the Eastern culture. For a common reader, who is interested in learning but has no patience to wade through the original and the scholarly commentaries, the translation of the text and the Introduction can provide some intellectual enjoyment of the Near Eastern "wise literature". As for specialists in Oriental studies (historians of literature, linguists, historians of religion), the transcription of the text, explanatory and critical commentaries, glossary, as well as the exactness of the translation are of particular interest.

Our review would have been incomplete, if we do not mention some author's oversights which we have noticed while reading the book. Some of them seem to be principal, the rest could be explained either by the absence of some important scientific publications in our libraries or by misprints. Thus, the author omitted the history of *handarz* texts' study in Europe and in the East while analyzing their plots in the Introduction. Bibliographical references appear to be insufficient to cover the contribution of different investigators to the study of the didactic literature. It is worthwhile to mention a collection of spiritual *handarz* texts addressed to an advanced Zoroastrian reader. This collection is included in the sixth book of "Denkard" published by Israel scholar Sh. Shaked (The Wisdom of the Sasanian Sages (*Denkard* VI) by Aturpat-i Emetan, Transl. by Shaul Shaked. Boulder, Colorado, 1979, (Persian Heritage Series, ed. by Ehsan Yarshater, 34).

There is no list of errata, which makes it impossible to discover the reason why a whole sentence in the translation of the text of HP1 (*Pad hamag kar ud dadestan rastih ud bowandag-menisnih weh*) is missing. Besides that, *dev Wizaris*, a prominent figure in Zoroastrian demonology, is called *Atzarsem* in the translation (p. 68).

There may be some other remarks on the inadequate translation of some terms. These, however, do not diminish the achievements of Chunakova in the field of studying medieval Persian texts.

*A. Kolesnikov*