

Mandschurische Handschriften und Drucke im Bestand der Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin. Bearbeitet von Hartmut Walravens. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2014. 560 S. ISBN 978-3-515-10756-3.

The catalogue “The Manchu Manuscripts and Blockprints from the Berlin State Library” is a long-awaited accomplishment by Dr. Hartmut Walravens, an outstanding bibliographer and specialist in Chinese and Manchu studies. The catalogue is printed as Part 8 of the project “The Chinese and Manchu Manuscripts and Rare Blockprints” (Chinesische und manjurische Handschriften und seltene Drucke. Teil 8) in the series “Catalogues of Oriental Manuscripts in Germany” (Verzeichnis der orientalistischen Handschriften in Deutschland) edited by the Göttingen Academy of Sciences. This project was started as early as 1966 with the catalogue by Walter Fuchs “Chinesische und manjurische Handschriften und seltene Drucke” (Wiesbaden, 1966), which was followed by a title list of Manchu books (without full description). For more than half a century it was used as an excellent reference tool for the Berlin collection. The catalogue by Walter Fuchs was compiled in the post-war period, when the collection of the Berlin State Library was kept in the Marburg Castle and not all books were found. Especially after the unification of Germany, the transfer of some collections and new acquisitions by the Berlin State Library a new scholarly description of the Manchu collection became an important task, taken on by Hartmut Walravens.

The German holdings of Manchu books and manuscripts have a history going back to the middle of the 17th c. when Frederick William (1620–1688), the Great Elector of Brandenburg, started a collection of books from China. Thus the Berlin collections are among the oldest in Europe and the holdings of the Berlin State Library are larger than the city’s other Manchu collections in the East Asian Seminar Library of the Free University and the Ethnological Museum.

In the preface Walravens presents the history of the collection and the negative consequences of World War II: the collection was split between West and East Berlin, materials stored during the war in that part of Eastern Germany which

became Polish territory were taken to the library of the Jagiellonian University in Krakow and for many years remained inaccessible to specialists. The compiler's task was to assemble all possible information about the former collection, to determine the "losses" and to describe materials acquired or discovered since the war — the collections of Erich Haenisch and Sergei Polevoy, the Polish part of the P.G. von Möllendorff and Müller collections, as well as the Sibe language collections recently bought from Giovanni Stary and Martin Gimm.

The catalogue under review gives a description of 560 entries, including the holdings of the Jagiellonian library and indicates items from the old catalogues that are presently lost. Thus the catalogue provides a documented history of the Manchu collection of the Berlin State Library up to the present. The catalogue begins with short biographies of two famous scholars Paul Georg von Möllendorff (1847–1901) and Sergei Aleksandrovich Polevoy (1891–1939), which are followed by bibliographies of their works (p. 19–46). Here we find a reprint of Möllendorff's "Catalogue of Manchu Library" which is now a bibliographic rarity.

Important and useful information on publications about the Berlin State Library's Oriental collection is given in a bibliographic chapter "Literatur zu den Orientalischen Sammlungen, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin", where one can find literature on the history of the Chinese, Mongolian and Japanese collections, their catalogues and items (p. 47–58).

Historically, the Manchu books in the Berlin State Library were divided between two departments: the Oriental and East Asian Departments. The latter was created only in 1922, thus the old collections of Hirth and Möllendorf are kept in the Oriental Department, while new acquisitions were registered at the East Asian Department. The manuscripts from the Polevoy collection went to the Oriental Department, though, since according to the Library's internal rules all Oriental manuscripts are stored there. The unification of the material scattered in various places, as well as the latest acquisitions prompted Hartmut Walravens to present the material by call numbers and not subject order, as is usual in systematic catalogues. Thus the order of entries reflects the order of a shelf-list, which in turn is arranged by provenance and location. In this way the reader gets full information on the personal collections which have been incorporated into the Berlin State Library.

The catalogue itself is preceded by a list of book call numbers and titles which are described in detail in the catalogue (p. 59–73), and a very useful table giving the dates of the Manchu emperors' reigns and cycle calendar. This reference tool is always helpful for checking dates in Manchu and Chinese.

The author of the Catalogue follows a strict template for each entry: catalogue number, title, size of page and block printed frame, number of volumes and fascicles, information on preface and introductions, author and printing or publishing house, bibliographic references to the catalogues of other Manchu collections around the world, information on studies and translations. In the case of polyglots titles are given in both Manchu and other languages, such as Chinese, Mongolian or Tibetan. All dates are given in the Manchu version (in transliteration)

with reference to their Chinese equivalent and also according to the Gregorian calendar. A full description of the item follows with information on seals and owners' notes, as well as defects of the book.

The descriptive catalogue begins with the old collection of the Oriental Department: Libri sinici (p. 85–109, Nos. 1–30) and Libri sinici new collection (p. 109–183, Nos. 31–102); the Möllendorff collection (p. 187–241, Nos. 103–183); other traditional call numbers (p. 249–351, Nos. 184–310); the Polevoy collection (p. 353–386, Nos. 311–443); the Sibe language books bought from Giovanni Stary (p. 387–308, Nos. 444–542) and Martin Gimm (p. 557–560, Nos. 543–560). The catalogue is richly illustrated by 108 reprints of the first page of the manuscript or blockprint, as well as the covers of the Sibe books (p. 448–556). It is important to note that Hartmut Walravens has managed to find rare photographs of the former owners of the collections — Paul Georg von Möllendorff (p. 19) and Sergei Polevoy (p. 44), and of those who made previous descriptions of the collection and worked in the Library — Hermann Hülle (1870–1940) and Walter Simon (1893–1981). The descriptive catalogue is followed by thorough indices: index of names (p. 411–417), index of Manchu and Sibe titles (p. 418–427), index of Chinese titles (p. 428–438); index of titles in other languages (p. 439–440); index of printing houses (p. 441); subject index (p. 442–443); list of Manchu books in Krakow (p. 445–447).

The references to existing catalogues give information on similar items in other world collections. Here the author uses “Pang, SPb” to refer to the third (of three) catalogue of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, RAS: Tatiana A. Pang. *Descriptive Catalogue of Manchu Manuscripts and Blockprints in the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies*, Russian Academy of Sciences. Issue 2. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2001. Unfortunately, “a slip of the keyboard” occurred in the list of abbreviations on p. 78, where this title is missing. The above work is a continuation of the catalogue by Maiia Petrovna Volkova *Opisanie man'chzhurskikh ksilografov Instituta vostokovedeniia AN SSSR* (Description of Manchu Blockprints from the Institute of Oriental Studies, AS USSR). Issue. 1. Moscow: Glavnaia redaktsiia vostochnoi literatury izdatel'stva “Nauka”, 1988. Walravens makes no reference to the other catalogue in this three-part collection, also compiled by Volkova — *Opisanie man'chzhurskikh rukopisei Instituta narodov Azii AN SSSR* (Description of Manchu Manuscripts kept in the Institute of Peoples of Asia, AS USSR). Moscow: Glavnaia redaktsiia vostochnoi literatury izdatel'stva “Nauka”, 1965. Thus, used by the author of the Catalogue the descriptions of the Manchu blockprints of the IOM, RAS (by Pang and Volkova) are added with the separate catalogue of manuscripts by Volkova. Although published at different times, these three catalogues together reveal the full extent of the holdings of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, RAS. Actually, this unexpected slip by Hartmut Walravens suggests that I, the author of this review, should consider uniting the three catalogues and publishing them under one cover to avoid further misunderstandings by other scholars.

Minor inaccuracies affect only references which do not reflect on the value and importance of the catalogue. It is obvious that such a grand-scale work finally opens up the Manchu treasures of the Berlin State Library and gives international scholars the opportunity to trace the history of the collection, to know the location of the books and compare various copies and items from different libraries. The publication of the catalogue "The Manchu Manuscripts and Blockprints from the Berlin State Library" by Hartmut Walravens is an important step towards a union catalogue of Manchu collections in Germany. Every catalogue is a precious contribution to opening up world depositories to international scholars.

Tatiana A. Pang,
Institute of Oriental Manuscripts,
Russian Academy of Sciences
