Our journal has published two reviews on the work mentioned: by E. Ogneva (Manuscripta Orientalia XI/3, pp. 71—72 and by the author of this one, E. Ivanova (“An Experience of Using the ‘Buddhist Iconography Identification Guide’ While Working on the Catalogue of Buddhist Collections of the MAE RAS (in Place of a Review)”, Manuscripta Orientalia XI/4, pp. 63—65). (Editor’s note).

© E. Ivanova, 2012
logue “Buddha in the Yurt”. An enormous amount of work in the field of preparing the overwhelming majority of collection articles for the publication was carried out by Alla Gomboeva (in accordance with C. Meinert, she did the “backbone” of the Mongolica section). She is an employee of M. N. Khangalov Museum on the History of Buryatia (Ulan-Ude) and is successfully studying the Buryat Buddhist art at home. References to her works can be found at the end of the description texts of some catalogue exhibits. In fact, Alla Gomboeva and Elena Ogneva were the ones, who began and fully carried out all scientific work on the collection under the guidance of A. A. Terent’ev and made its initial Russian version. The next step was the translation of the text into English (which was carried out by Carl Copeland, an American), and further — into German (translated by C. Meinert) and Mongolian. Unfortunately, the name of the translator into Mongolian is not identified, but the foreword mentions Michael Weiers, who made “the translation of Mongolian inscriptions”. In the course of working on the catalogue, a decision was made that it would have to be supplemented with 70 more items from the collection, which were described by A. Terent’ev and C. Meinert. Unfortunately, the information of these 70 items is given only on page 839, and therefore the absence of the names of E. Ogneva and A. Gomboeva, the author of over 500 description texts of the collection items, on the title page raises questions.

The work on the glossary was performed by C. Meinert with the assistance of Iain Sinclair. David Jackson was invited in the role of a consultant in the field of dating of several items in the Tibetica. He is known as a first-rate researcher of Tibetan painting, and the author of the book entitled “The History of the Painting of Tibet” and other works. The translation of the Bon inscription on the thangka No.11 was made by Namgyal Nyima, who works in Bonn.

We can see the impressive appearance and high quality of the team that was drawn in to solve the particularly complicated task of interpreting this large Buddhist collection. Another difficult task of communicating all texts — those that describe the items of the collection along with accompanying commentaries — in Mongolian and three European languages was accomplished. Unfortunately, taking into consideration the Russian text, it is not without some disappointing errors: the title page carries the misprint in the title of the book “Buddha in the Yurt” on page 33 we read about someone “who proofread the Russian texts”; the section of the commentaries, titled “Notes” in English, in Russian reads as the incongruous verbal form “Notes” («Отметки») as in “he observes/notés”), etc. Carmen Meinert became the editor of the four-language edition, and implemented the task of bringing all four catalogue versions to agreement.

The reviewed edition is the publication of a large-scale unique collection, which swings the door open to the reader and into the world of images and ideas, the world, that for over seven centuries has been inhabited by Mongols who embraced Buddhism. This is the world of their gods, whom they worship and from whom they expect help and defence, and is in accordance with their philosophical, ethical and aesthetical notions.

Russia entertains an old tradition of in-depth interest for Buddhism, collection and study of monuments of Buddhist culture and art of peoples inhabiting its territories (the Buryats and the Kalmyks) and the countries of foreign Asia: Mongolia, Tibet, China, etc.

Russian museums have solid collections of articles of Buddhist art. The published part of them does not give a full picture of what exists. Let us refer to the album of “Iconography of Vajrayana” that was published in 2003; it was edited by G. M. Bongardt-Levin. The album is comparable to the reviewed catalogue in relation to the number of included works (600 articles from the museums of Buryatia, primarily thangkas and 156 ikaslis that were released for the first time). The foreword of the album speaks of several thousand thangkas in only one of Buryat museums: M. N. Khangalov Museum on the History of Buryatia. The year 2002 saw the release of the book of George Roerich in Russian language “Tibetan Paintings” (published in 1925 in Paris in English language), where black and white thangkas, which illustrated the first publication of the book, are supplemented by the publication of coloured thangkas from the collection of the International Centre of the Roerichs. In 2010 thangkas from the collection of George Roerich, stored in the Hermitage, were published thanks to Iu. I. Elikhina (Tibetan Paintings (Thangka). From the Collection of Iu. N. Roerich stored in the State Hermitage Museum) (St. Petersburg, 2010). A very insignificant number of thangkas, stored in the MAE RAS (Mongol and Kalmyk icons in particular) were published thanks to D. V. Ivanov in this journal (XI/2, pp. 30—6 and XI/4, pp. 36—62 (2005); XIV/2, pp. 51—62 (2008)).

We have already referred to the album of “Tibetan Paintings”, made on the basis of a Russian private collection, published in 2005 after it had been exhibited in the halls of the State Museum of Oriental Art. The work of a talented Russian artist, who lives in Buryatia and goes by the name of N. Dudko, is a noteworthy phenomenon. He creates beautiful thangkas in classical style (see the album with his works entitled Budditskoe iskusstvo tanka (Buddhist Art of Thangka) (Ulan-Ude, 2011)).

The arrival of the reviewed catalogue “Buddha in the Yurt” is an absolutely gratifying event for Russian science as well. It is the turning of a new page in the history of acquaintance with the Buddhist art of Mongolia that took place with the assistance of our countrymen, which explains why Russian is one of the languages the catalogue is issued in.

According to the data of Carmen Meinert, the private collection published in the catalogue is one of the major collections of Mongol and Buddhist art in Europe. Thangkas make up the majority of its exhibits.

At the beginning of the last century George Roerich wrote of Tibetan thangkas (and yet the words given below speak fairly of their “blood sisters” — Mongol thangkas — and of sculpture):
Those, who collected Tibetan paintings, know how hard it is to obtain good specimens. A Tibetan will never part with a thangka, especially if it was blessed by a high lama and has an imprint of the lama on its back side. The majority of paintings that make up European state and private collections hit the market as a result of recent wars and revolutions in Tibet, which led to the destruction of several monasteries and devastation of rich families, who possessed many religious images in the collection: there are two Temple sculptures. The same observation relates to the pictorial images in the collection: there are two Temple sculptures. The same observation relates to the pictorial images: Nos. 258 Guhyasādhanā Hayagriva and Gungervāsā, both of which depict Buddhas from the 11th century, which depicts Buddha Kālacakra, which, according to the catalogue authors is made off of the same matrix as was the one published in the book “Tibetan Painting”, figure No. 9). In addition there are silken embroidery depictions of Green Tārā (No. 192) and White Tārā (No. 200), icons made with appliqué — as a whole (No. 93) or those where individual elements are applique on an icon (No. 56), as an ornamental motif. There is an icon in the form of a watercolour drawing.

The desire of the owner of the collection to give the catalogue a different title — “Buddha in the Yurt” — is only natural (the desire was seconded by the scholars who were preparing the collection for the publication). Although some of the exhibits of the collection were made for the purpose of being used within monastery walls (and in outdoor rituals), the majority of the exhibits were meant to be used at home altars in the yurts.

The collection includes various works of Buddhist art — statuettes of bronze, wood, papier-mâché, clay and tsa tsa. There are only two statues among them that are comparatively large in size, and in the text of the catalogue they are referred to as “Temple sculptures”. These are No. 258 Guhyasādhanā Hayagriva made of papier-mâché, of 50.0 cm in size (with a note that it resembles a sculpture in the monastery of Erdenezuu), and No. 266 Begtse made of wood and papier-mâché, of 47.0 cm in size, resembling a sculpture in Chojin Lama Temple. The same observation relates to the pictorial images in the collection: there are two Temple thangkas: Nos. 56 and 57, both of which depict Buddhas from the Thirty-Five Buddhas of Confession, of following dimensions: 160.0×195.0 cm, and two thangkas of greater size: No. 1, 160.0×136.0 cm, and No. 156, of 115.5×273.5 cm. Other sacred pictorial images made on the fabric are vertical thangkas that are smaller in size.

When it comes to the quantity, the most impressive part of the collection is made up of miniature icons, which are particularly compatible for the nomadic way of life of Mongols. These icons are painted on Tsakli fabric. (For instance, the smallest Mongolian icon in the catalogue is exhibit No. 51. Buddha Śākyamuni with Śāriputra, Maudgalyāyana and Guhyasādhanā Hayagriva, the size of which is 4.5×4.0 cm.) This is what the authors have to say about these icons:

In the Tibetan context, these miniature paintings for the most part were only used for initiation purposes, but the Mongols often framed them in larger wooden frames, gungervās, or smaller amulet boxes, gaus, so that they could be placed either on the altar in the yurt or even worn (p. 31).

It should be noted that many thangkas were framed in gungervās as well, and in this case the catalogue refers to them as “gungervās with thangka”. Gungervāsa also frame sculpture compositions (see No. 241) and gaus with tsa tsa (see No. 212 Cakrasamvara). There are reasons to believe that it is precisely the great collection of miniature Buddhist icons made on Tsakli that makes the published collection valuable as a whole. There are several species of the images that basically represent coloured xylography on either fabric or paper (such is No. 179 with the image of yidam Kālacakra, which, according to the catalogue authors is made off of the same matrix as was the one published in the book “Tibetan Painting”, figure No. 9). In addition there are silken embroidery depictions of Green Tārā (No. 192) and White Tārā (No. 200), icons made with appliqué — as a whole (No. 93) or those where individual elements are applique on an icon (No. 56), as an ornamental motif. There is an icon in the form of a watercolour drawing.

Special attention in the catalogue is given to the 25 sacred images placed in the first section — “Tibetica”. They are truly a feather in the collector's hat. Their common features are their special historical significance, high artistic virtues and the time they were created: from the 11th to the 18th century in Tibet and Mongolia, whereas the rest of the collection (in the “Mongolica” section) are, with a few exceptions, works of Buddhist art and craft of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Here we find 15 paintings made on fabric, the earliest of which (No. 13) is a Tibetan thangka of the 11th century, which depicts Buddha Śākyamuni surrounded by sixteen arhats and sixteen bodhisattvas. According to (E. D. Ogneva), who described the thangka, it portrays one of the motifs of the mural on the wall of the ancient Central Tibetan Drathang monastery. This fresco can be seen in a photograph of 1949, made by Giuseppe Tucci, a famous explorer of Tibetan painting. The fresco was photographed 10 years prior to the closing of the

---

monastery. The *thangka* of the 13th century (No. 15) depicts Vairocana; No. 10 is an icon with the image of Amoghasiddhi Tathāgata surrounded by bodhisattvas and 282 Buddhas (ca. 1300). A *thangka* from Western Tibet No. 11 (of the 14th or the early 15th century) is particularly noteworthy — it contains the image of the founder of the Bon tradition in Tibet, Tonpa Shenrab, surrounded by 252 Bon deities. Placed first in the catalogue and described in the commentary as “impressive”, *thangka* No. 1 (of the 16th century, of Tibetan origin) is titled “Three Great Abbots of Ngor and Their Lineages”. According to the date of its making, it is followed by the *thangka* with the depiction of “Eight Medicine Buddhas” (Mongolia or Amdo, the 18th century), Nos. 2-9, depicting Buddha Śākyamuni in the capacity of Medicine Buddha Bhaisajyaguru and his seven emanations. (For some reasons, however, *thangka* No. 175 (Buddha Akṣobhya) and No. 342 from the Tibetan Labrang Monastery did not make it into the section, and neither did No. 228 from Amdo and No. 374 from Tibet, of the 18th—19th centuries).

The Mongolian *thangka* No. 14 (the 18th century) shows Zanabazar and his Former Incarnations (1635—1723), one of which was Tibetan scholar Tārānātha (1575—1634). Zanabazar, was declared by the fifth Dalai Lama to be the First Bogd gegeen of Mongolia. He was a talented sculptor, who founded in Mongolia his own school of bronze sculpture. The works of the masters of this famed school are represented in this section with the sculpture depictions of Kālacakra (the 18th century, No. 16); Buddha (the mid 17th century, No. 19); Buddha Amitābha (the mid 17th century, No. 21); Śādakṣāri Avalokiteśvara (the 17—18th centuries, No. 23) and probable works of this school — the image of ferocious goddess Śrīdevī (the 18th century, No. 25) and the Stūpa of Descent from Heaven (the 18th century, No. 17). Strangely, one more work, attributed to the Zanabazar School, is not in the given section — a small statuette of Amitāyus (the 17—18th centuries, No. 172).

This ensemble is supplemented with the gorgeous image of the sitting Maitreya (the 17—18th centuries, No. 24) from the workshop in the Buddhist centre Dolonnor, which emerged in the 17th century in the southern Mongolian lands, as well as with works made in unknown Mongolian workshops — the Portrait of a Lama (the 17th century, No. 20) and with the sculpture of Protective Deity Pehar (the 18th century, No. 22), one of the pre-Buddhist deities, introduced to the Buddhist pantheon by Padmasambhava. The same section features a rather refined wooden portrayal of Amitāyus, coloured and gilded, from Central Tibet and dated the 15th century.

If we take into consideration the way exhibits of this section are commented upon, we can sense the well-considered structure of description of each image — the name of a pictorial or sculptural piece is followed by information of the place and date of its making, materials used and technique employed; all of that is in turn followed by substantial description. The description (when the image consists of many characters) starts with the central figure, with a detailed analysis of its iconographic signs and its place in the pantheon. It then follows with the consideration of figures surrounding it and their place in the pantheon (“hierarchy”), with the remarks concerning peculiarities of the composition of multi-figure image, artistic peculiarities of a piece, and inscription presence on a piece. In many cases reference literature, which served as an information source and basis for hypotheses made, is given at the end of the texts. This principle of describing items that make up the publication is strictly adhered to from the beginning to the very end of the catalogue. In cases of multi-figure compositions (whether pictorial or sculptural) individual fragments (sometimes there are a few of them) are marked by means of a close-up shot, where the reader is allowed not to take the description of miniature characters or small details of the image on trust alone, but is rather given the opportunity to have the pleasure of examining them with his own eyes.

The Mongolica section is divided into chapters in accordance with various groups of the members of the immense pantheon of Northern Buddhism.

The subject matter of *thangkas* (partially repeated on *tsaklis*) are diverse: Life of Buddha, depictions of Buddhas from The Thirty Five Buddhas of Confession, Medicine Buddha Bhaisajyaguru and his seven “companions”, *tathāgatas* and their paraisiac Pure Lands, *arhats*, prominent religious figures of Tibet (Padmasamhava with his various emanations, Tsongkha and others) and of Mongolia (Zanabazar and other seven Bogd gegeens individually, and *thangka* No. 107 depicts all Eight Bogd gegeens together), *mandalas* and the merit field of particular deities, images of *vidams*, bodhisattvas, and images of protective deities. *Thangka* No. 222 “Khecarī the Pure Land of Vajrayogini Naro Khecarī” is of great interest from the perspective of iconography. Apart from the image of the eighth Bogd gegeen, highly venerated by Mongols, the lower register of the picture depicts the complex of esoteric practices associated with Vajrayogini, accompanied by explanatory inscriptions.

Many of images of deities that repeatedly show up on *thangkas* and *tsaklis* are also repeated in the collection (or are present in the three dimensional form only) in the form of works of circular sculpture or in the form of coloured clay *tsa tsas* (the smallest depiction of Buddha Śākyamuni in the *tsa tsas* form is No. 44 and is 3.0 cm high), the most democratic of all forms of Buddhist art. The White Old Man, ranked in the pantheon of the Mongolian Buddhism as the guardian of the animal and plant kingdoms is represented in the collection in various forms. (His depictions in Mongolia and Buryatia, according to A. Gomboeva, became very uncommon — see the comment to No. 378).

Even with this virtually accidental “admission” of items into the collection, this repetition of images testifies to the popularity of those deities among Mongolians, which are depicted by the master of one kind of art or another. In the eyes of Mongols, specific value to these sacred images, framed in the portable altar *gau*, is asserted by additional “secret” enclosures. For instance,
this is present in the gau with tsakli No. 233 with the Twenty-Armed Vajrabhairava and Entourage — a photograph of the young Eight Bogd gegeen is enclosed. In the gau with tsakli No. 237 “Vajrabhairava with his Consort from the Thirteen-Deity Mandala of Vajrabhairava”, along with other enclosures, there is an old photograph of the Eighth Bogd gegeen without a headress. There are images with a seal, which was applied to images presented by the Paanchen Lama) (No. 238 — stamped relief from clay, No. 239 — tsa tsais).

The last chapter is devoted to ritual objects. The catalogue ends with reference aids.

The notes (as was pointed above, awkwardly referred to as “Notes” in Russian in verbal third person) are rather informative and partially do compensate for the forgotten bibliography (pp. 769—782).

The notes are followed by an Appendix, which offers Tibetan inscriptions with translation (into Russian language in our case), which are usually found at the backside of the painting (but there are exceptions); see, for instance, the aforementioned thankga No. 222, where the inscriptions run on the front face of the painting). Inscriptions rarely refer to the name of a depicted deity (No. 125 with the rare form of Mahâkârûnika Avalokiteśvara Who Self-Liberates Suffering); usually there is a mantra, recited in the course of thankga consecration (om âh hâm swâhâ). The glossary concludes the catalogue.

In reference to the great number of sacred images, depicted on the pages of the reviewed catalogue, let us note that among them there are images in forms that are a rare occurrence in the iconography of Vajrayâna Buddhism. Such is the case, for instance, with Hayagriva (of unidentified form) in yab-yum surrounded by others, depicted on Mongolian thankga of the 19th century (No. 262, p. 499). This image is characterized as “an unidentified form of Hayagriva” with reference to the dictionary of L. Chandra3, which identifies 73 forms of this deity, but this form is not present. The same idea applies to tsakli No. 305, which depicts Ganesa, but the given emanation of his is defined as an “unidentified form”.

But these are only two examples of difficulties in interpreting exhibits of the collection that could not be overcome, while there are hundreds of other cases that were successfully identified by the authors. By the way, it needs to be mentioned with much gratitude that the German magazine “Spectrum” (of 24.02.2012, No. 3) published a review of the catalogue. Its author, Olof Czaja, who highly rated the catalogue as a whole, introduced some clarification to the description of its exhibits. Thus, he noticed that eight wrathful deities — the companions of Hayagriva on thankga No. 262 — had been wrongly ascribed the form of yab-yum. The reviewer suggests that a mistake was made in identifying the deity on tsakli No. 152 as Samantabhadra, believing that it in fact was servant Kundhali4. Finally, one of the deities that surround the person of White Mañjughoša was left unnamed in the description of thankga No. 130. The reviewer believes it to be a form of Vasudhârâ, who plays an important role in Mongol art.

For our part there are several unfortunate oversights about the text of the catalogue that need to be noted. Such is the case with, for instance, in referring to the pre-Buddhist deity of Pehar (sculpture No. 22, p. 84) as a “secular deity”. It should rather be referred to as a “worldly” deity, i.e. existing in samsara. Then there is the description of White Târâ of thankga No. 201 (p. 394), where the third eye on the forehead is mistaken for ârghârâ. A great omission for a publication of this grand a catalogue is the lack of the list of figures and bibliography. The footnotes (and Glossary) offer Chinese works in hieroglyphic form, whereas the transcribed form would be preferred.

There are certain mistakes, misprints and absurdities in the Russian text of the catalogue. In a number of cases the rule of describing paintings with multiple characters is violated — to identify their position in relation to the central image and not from the perspective of the reader. The passage, where thankga No. 257 with the image of Guhyasâdhana Hayagrîva in the tradition of Khyergangpa is referred to as “one of the masterpieces of the collection”, is quite baffling. It seems to me that the majority of the works of Mongolian (and Tibetan) artists included in the catalogue could be ranked among “masterpieces”.

The blunders noted by no means overshadow many virtues of the published album “Buddha in the Yurt”.

The main conclusion that one arrives at, on careful examination of the catalogue, boils down to acknowledging the proficiency executed in the large and complex task of identifying and rightly describing a great number of deities of the pantheon of tantric Buddhism. This task was carried out by a well-prepared scientific team of specialists. The identified deities are depicted in their numerous modifications and in different “combinations” with one another in works of painting and sculpture and combined into one private collection. As a result of the work done, unique material is now available in scientific circulation and it sheds light on a deeper strata of Mongol national culture and the high achievements of Mongol Buddhist art which is represented in the catalogue in its various genres.

E. Ivanova

---

3 Cf.: Deities of Tibetan Buddhism: The Zurich Paintings of the Icons Worthwhile to See (Brîs sku mtshon ba don ldan), ed. by M. Willson, M. Brauen (Boston, 2000), No. 339.

4 L. Chandra, Dictionary of Buddhist Iconography (New Delhi, 1995—2005), i—xv.
In 2008 “Logos-A”, a Macedonian publishing house, released a book by A. Hamiti titled “Nezim Frakulla dhe Divani i tij shqip” (Nezim Frakulla and his Albanian Divani). My review of which was published in *Manuscripta Orientalia* XV/2. In 2009 a Tiranan publishing house “Toena” under the auspices of the Centre of Albanologic Research and the Institute of Language and Literature published a critical edition of the Nezim’s diwân, named this time around by a different nisba of Berati (Biçarı), and prepared by Genciana Abazi-Egro. Although the larger parts of both books are taken by the text of the diwân, they differed from each other. If A. Hamiti in his research deals with the biography of the poet, the questions of Near Eastern poetry and its perception in Albanian poems of Nezim, Genciana Abazi-Egro did not concern herself with these issues and focused rather on the issues of textual criticism. The title of her book is a little deceptive. It could have been assumed that the critical edition would be founded on — in the absence of the author's manuscript — some original Arabographic copy, when in reality it is a critical edition of Latin transcriptions, or rather — of the text in modern Albanian spelling. In case when original text is impossible to introduce, its transliteration — and not its transcription — should be used, because it provides insights into the original. Spanish philologists scored a real success with this kind of editions; they worked out a further transliteration for Spanish aljamiado texts, according to which Arabic spelling can be restored with almost hundred-per-cent accuracy. Orthographic system of the Bosnian aljamiado was so detailed and consistent, that its transliteration practically concurs with modern orthography (it applies to later printed texts; earlier manuscripts do not have this consistency). Apparently, incomplete and inconsistent orthography of Arabo-graphic texts of Nezim did not make it possible to work out a readable system of transliteration.

One more source that needed to be taken into account in the critical edition is the Turkish-Persian diwân of Nezîm. In contrast to the hypothetical Arabic diwân, its location is known; however, the issue usually goes no further after it states the fact of its existence. G. Abazi-Egro writes that she used the Turkish-Persian *diwân*; obviously, it was of use to her during the preliminary stage of her work serving the purpose of identifying the structure of the Albanian *diwân*. However, its material is not set forth in any way in the book itself. Comparing two *diwân* could be rather useful, including searching for an answer to the question of whether Nezîm used *‘arîd* in Albanian poems. It would be rather odd if he in his aspiration to elevate Albanian language to a higher literary level used oriental forms and Arabic system of rhyming, but neglected metrics. There are no direct indications of the meter in the text of the *diwân* in contrast to indication of the rhyme in some verses (“ٌلوحة أيضاً يونيةّ”, “مولون”, which can be considered as indirect evidence. The fact that researchers find similarities between the metrics of Nezîm with the Albanian folklore metrics does not contradict the usage of *‘arîd*; of all the diversity of meters he could simply pick those that are closer to his Albanian ear. An example from the practice of translating Arabic poetry into Russian language can be cited here. For any Arabic meter a Russian accentual verse can be selected, and some translators endeavour to preserve Arabic metric structure in translation, acquiring certain additional exoticism in translation. More often than not translators choose meters more familiar to Russian readers. So long as the existence of *‘arîd* in *bejtexhi* poetry is disputed, there are no researches concerning what Albanian version of *‘arîd* could be. Initially the metrics of Arabic *‘arîd* was built on alternating short and long syllables, and an open syllable with a short vowel was implied at short one. In Jewish poetry, which adopted Arabic system but was written in Hebrew, a short syllable implied a syllable with a reduced vowel (*schwa na’* or *batef*). *Schwa* can be completely silent (*schwa nah*). In spite of grammatical norms poets could substitute one type of *schwa* with another for the sake of observing an appropriate meter. There is also a reduced vowel in Albanian language, which can also be completely silent. It does not necessarily follow, though, that the Albanian system *‘arîd* could be similar to the Hebrew one (it is prevented at least by the abundance of non-Albanian vocabulary), but the choice of pronouncing reduced vowel or not pronouncing it gave poets greater mobility in observing the chosen meter. The task of researchers on the other hand is to read the intentions of the author correctly.
The book of G. Abazi-Egro begins with the story of polemics concerning the art of Neẓîm beginning in the late 19th century. In the pre-war period it was preferred to refer to him with the nisha of Berat (which was also chosen by the publisher), in the post-war — Frakulla is preferred. The history of the text publication is examined in detail, beginning with G. von Hahn (1853), who used Greek transcription and yet was the first to mention the Arabographic manuscript in existence; further on there are quotations of the edition of von Hahn in the grammar of D. Camarda (1866); the unpublished work of S. Frashëri in the orthography of “stamboli” with his interference in the original text; the first complete yet also “edited” edition in the modern orthography of A. Ferhati (1938), reprinted in the book of A. Hamiti; several verses in the articles of E. Rossi (1946); another unpublished edition — of O. Myderrizi (1954); citations in several anthologies, and at last the book of A. Hamiti, with which G. Abazi-Egro managed to familiarize herself. Further on the existing divân copies are listed with detailed index of verses in each one of them.

In the section devoted to the principles of critical edition, the author divides non-Albanian vocabulary of the divân into “Turkisms”, which imply vocabulary borrowed from Turkish language in spite of its initial origin (I am not sure, though, that all Persian expressions should be referred to as “Turkisms”), in the given publication they are italicized; and vocabulary adopted by Albanian language. This division in and of itself is important and deeply fair, but one cannot agree with the way the publisher, based on the table of correspondence it follows that it may not necessarily be brought out in writing!

The text is followed by annotations, where “Turkisms” (italized) are translated and various readings are stipulated, where G. Abazi-Egro suggests her own reading of some words at that, and some other words were never read by her predecessors and the publisher therefore suggests their possible reading for the first time.

Further, it provides the dictionary of Turkisms, of those words this time around, the author believes, which are adopted by Albanian language and not italicized. The dictionary abounds in inaccuracies, basically of typographical type. A word is given a translation into modern Albanian and its original Arabographic spelling. When needed, the commentary is provided, but the commentary is only cultural whereas the philological is totally missing; and issues mostly arise particularly about the forms of reproductions. We run across such variations as bhibil and bythyl. The dictionary references one form to another and Turkish spelling “blâk” is provided, which does not bind to any of these two readings. Or let us take such variations as pse and pêxe, does it then imply that in some instances è is brought out and in others it is not? But then again, even if it is not brought out, it does not prevent its reading, since based on the table of correspondence it follows that it may not necessarily be brought out in writing!

The book ends with a small bibliography and an index of toponyms and proper names. Thus, thanks to the thorough work of G. Abazi-Egro we now have a complete notion of how the divân of Neẓîm was read. However, just as the case was before we do not have any comprehensive idea of how it was written. One more effort needs to be made and it needs to be published in its original Arabographic form in one way or another. In this case the discussion of its reading may be continued.

I. Wojewódzki
Issues of death and afterlife occupy the key place in every culture, the attempt to answer these questions considerably determines behaviour of the people, and the distinction comprehension of death in different nations reflects the difference in mentality and traditions. While being a sophomore I studied phraseology of the Chinese language and was greatly impressed by one idiomatic expression hong bai xi shi (“红白喜事”), literally meaning “red and white happy ‘events’”. The “red happy event” means wedding ceremony, because red colour symbolizes the joy and mirth, while “white” means the funeral, because white is the colour of mourning. Europeans cannot grasp the fact that in Chinese tradition there has almost been an equivalence of two events obviously being in different leagues of European culture. Later, during my stay in China, I have seen the funeral procession in the rural areas, and this procession more resembled a kind of parade with appropriate music and without “mourning” mood.

The idea of death in Chinese society is considered to be a taboo, so even sinologists have only vague idea of the great many aspects connected with it. Veil of secrecy can in a certain sense be lifted by the new book “Spirits and Deities of Chinese Inferno”, created jointly by the group of staff members of the Faculty of Oriental and African studies of the Saint-Petersburg State University — of A. G. Storozhuk, T. I. Kornil’eva and E. A. Zavidovskaia (fig. 1). The book opens up a whole series called “Saints and Demons in the Beliefs of the East” and it is a sort of “guidebook” in the afterlife in the Chinese tradition, which has had great impact on the culture of the neighbouring states. The whole series has been conceived by Professor A. G. Storozhuk and goes under his editorship. The book tells about many gods of death, unreposed souls and ghosts; readers also get acquainted with the detailed description of Chinese hells, composition of a soul (or rather “souls” as several souls are identified in the Chinese tradition), as well as with the important sample of folksy religious literature “Yuli baocao” (“玉历宝钞”, “Jade Tables (Records”)!), which details the ordeals of the soul, the afterlife departments Qi shi wu si (七十五司), well-functioning bureaucracy, which coordinates the various aspects of both reality and the other world.

It is necessary to point out that the issues of death, rituals associated with it and the afterlife have always played an important role in the Chinese culture. As early as the Shang dynasty (16th—11th centuries BC) there was a fairly well developed cult of the dead in China. Burial ceremonies showed faith in the potential for reincarnation and at the same time reflected the social inequality that existed at that time in the society. In the magnificent tombs of rulers there were utensils, decorations etc., the wives, concubines, slaves of the rulers were buried with them to provide all the things needed for the eminent deceased in the other world, which ancient Chinese regarded to be the reflection of our world.

Gradually the ceremonies have become more and more complicated, the special priests appeared. For example, according to the ancient ritual text “Zhou li” (“周禮”, “Rites of Zhou”) there were special exorcists in the service of the governor within the military department. One of the texts of the “Rites of Zhou” depicts exorcists fangxiangshi whose duty among others was to take part in the funeral of the noble people, they actively participated in the rites of burial: jumped into the grave frantically waving the pickaxes to drive off the demons from the grave.

Subsequently the idea of the relationship of the world of the living and the dead got further development. The animal or human sacrifice became rare but the tradition to provide the deceased with some material equipment that the dead might need in the afterlife was still popular. James L. Watson in his research points out that still during late imperial period there was a belief...
Прежде всего ЭНЦИКЛОПЕДИЯ ЗАГОРОЙНОЙ ЖИЗНИ
в китайских верованиях, в которой воссоздается картина традиционных представлений об устройстве мира мертвых. Отолоски этих представлений и по сей день являются неотъемлемой частью китайской культуры.

Сведения о покойниках слугиятся загробного мира в течение последних нескольких столетий, но и во времена многочисленных поздних исследований, проведенных в течение последних десяти лет в различных регионах Китая. Во время их были сделаны и все представленные в книге фотографии, многие из которых уникальны.

В книге рассказывается о божествах и демонах, о традициях, о неупокоенных духах и бесцветных призраках, о культуре умерших и ритуалах поминовения усопших.

Вы узнаете о видах душ, о жертвенных душах и тяжелых наказаниях, о китайском мире мертвых, о Загробных департаментах и Реестрах судьбы.

Книга предназначена для самого широкого круга читателей и определяет собой "СВЯТЫЕ И ДЕМОНЫ В БЕРОВАНИЯХ ВОСТОКА".

**Fig. 1**
that the social status of the deceased was largely unaffected after death and the death did not terminate the relationships between the dead and their descendants, thus there was some kind of exchange between the world of the living and the world of the dead, living gave food, drinks and necessities to the dead in the form of sacrifices in exchange for good luck, wealth and other blessings.

Of course, due to the fight against superstitions, held in China under the CCP, the attitude toward the funeral and memorial ceremonies in modern China has changed. Funeral became more and more civil, burial gradually giving way to the cremation, but even now, in the twenty-first century, age of information technology, we can witness the echoes of tradition that was common in ancient China, although it should be noted that there are also new, very interesting trends meeting the mood of the times. For example, now in addition to paper money when offering the sacrifice to the dead, relatives may as well burn ritual paper bank cards or paper cars, as authors vividly narrate in the relevant section of the book “Spirits and Deities of Chinese Inferno” (fig. 2).

Spirits and deities from the very ancient times have not been merely the object of worship, but also popular heroes of literature, and nowadays appear not only in books, but also in the movies, animated films, computer games, etc. Russian and Western sinologists have created a number of works, covering the issues of interaction with the world of the living and world of spirits, e.g. works of I. A. Alimov, J. J. M. de Groot, Judith T. Zeitlin and many others. In the reference book “Spirits and Deities of Chinese Inferno” the gods of death are considered comprehensively from different perspectives, the authors have managed to gather quite extensive material, not only presenting to the reader some well-known literary subjects, but also different aspects of worship, rituals, festivals and much more; text is supplemented with large number of illustrations (fig. 3) that help the demons in question literally to “come alive” before the eyes of readers.

In addition the book describes in detail the interior of the temples and iconographic traditions of the depiction of a deity or afterlife story, so it can be regarded as a peculiar guide to the temple complexes and religious buildings and structures in China. Many of the photographs illustrating the main text are truly unique and all without exception have been made by the authors themselves during field research. In the course of nearly a decade of work, the authors jointly collected photos of sixty-two temples of the twelve provinces of China, often from those parts of the temples, where ordinary visitors are prohibited to enter.

Texts of the entries have multiple cross-references as many aspects of the afterlife and the gods are inextricably linked to each other, all of the names and terms are also given in Chinese characters. Thus the whole body of the book is essentially an interactive text that can be read from any place by following the cross-references to new and new entries.

This book will be very useful for both professional sinologists and students and young researchers of Eastern culture, as the material of entries can be a starting point for further study, the book possesses useful bibliography, which features works in Russian, Chinese, Japanese, and European languages. However fascinating and clear narrative style and large number of colourful illustrations make the book suitable for a wide range of readers interested in the beliefs of China and the East in general. Series is now in the beginning of the formation, so we hope that there will be new books by anthropologists, literary scholars, etc. who specialize in other regions of the East, not only in China, since the series is not limited just to China, but involves a much wider cultural context.

N. Vlasova

**Illustrations**

Fig. 1. Cover of the book A. G. Storozhuk, T. I. Kornil'eva, E. A. Zavidovskaia, *Dukhi i bozhestva kitaïskoi preispodnei* (Spirits and Deities of Chinese Inferno) (St. Petersburg, 2012).

Fig. 2. Bank-note of the Afterlife bank, *ibid.*, p. 287

Fig. 3. Sculpture of Mianran in Tianning temple in Beijing, *ibid.*, p. 200.

---

3 J. L. Watson, *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Berkeley, 1990), p. 8.