

THE HOROSCOPE CALENDAR
OF **Kh^wĀJA ABŪ AL-ḤAKĪM TIRMIZĪ**
AS AN ETHNOGRAPHIC SOURCE*

Fortunetelling is of great importance for the way of life of traditional societies in Central Asia. In Persian literature these types of rituals gave rise to an independent genre — *fāl-nāma* [1]. By virtue of the transient character of the Central Asian region, religion, and fortunetelling practices that were closely related to it, in many respects were synchronistic in nature, connecting thus the cultural elements of the Far and Near East. Perceptions of these peoples from this vast region have Islamic and pre-Islamic elements, which are largely testified to by the examined materials.

The given article offers the text of a horoscope calendar (سال نامه), put together by certain **Kh^wĀja Abū al-Ḥakīm Tirmizī**. The given horoscope calendar is a part of the three-language manuscript Ms.O.1350 from the collection of the Oriental Department of the Maxim Gorky Scientific Library. Its full description, will be given in a special article in the next issue of *Manuscripta Orientalia*.

The text of the given document, written in the Central Asian *nasta'liq*, takes up eight pages (208b—212a). The beginning of each section signified by the phrase “when [it is] the year of...” (چون سال...) in each case is written in red ink. Following the traditional praise segment, there is the actual text of the document, which in fact tells us the name of the author to be **Abū al-Ḥakīm Tirmizī**, of whom we unfortunately know nothing. This

name is not mentioned in any reference book, known to us, on the subject of the history of Muslim literature.

We considered the idea that the copyist made a mistake in communicating the names and thus maybe we actually have one of the mystical treatises of the famous Central Asian *ṣūfī* of the **Kh^worāsāni** school, **Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Ḥakīm Tirmidhī** (d. ca. 320/932). Nowhere does the text, though, indicate anything that would confirm this assumption. Neither does the second document from the same manuscript (در بیان نوروز (نامه), the author of which is also **Abū al-Ḥakīm**, indicate any such assumption. Thus, we had to reject it. Besides, the text of the document has two obvious indications of Mongolian conquests and hard times for Islam. This would confirm that the given text was either put together in the Mongolian or the post-Mongolian era. This circumstance speaks to the probability that **Muḥammad b. ‘Alī** could not be the author of this treatise.

Judging by the contents of this literary monument, it was put together in the western part of Central Asia, probably in **Mā Wara’ al-Nahr**, since there are frequent uses of such phrases as “from the eastern side”, “from **Turkeṣtān**”, etc.

Since the text of this treatise is, as far as we see it, of great interest as an ethnographic source, we set forth its translation in its fullness below:

Translation

/Fol. 208b/ The horoscope calendar of **Kh^wĀja Abū al-Ḥakīm Tabrizī**, may Allah have mercy on him, says the following: when **The Year of the Mouse** (سال موش) comes, then this year is usually blessed (سال مبرکه), and joy, merriment, carelessness and safety [are expressed]... in that year. And when summer comes and the middle of the month of **Tīr** (the 4th month of the solar Iranian year, 22.06—22.07 — *A. A.*) [arrived], and farming operations were successful, [falling in] the month of **Tīr**... and the fruits were in abundance. A great deal of misfortune and oppression was issued from the *sulṭān*, and pestilence took place in the winter and... great damage was sustained, the roads were blocked. Each child, who is born over the course of this year, is bound to have a wicked temper, commit crimes and cause debauchery. And if one is born in the middle of this year, he is bound to become a troublemaker (فتنه انگیز), a slanderer

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