
BOOK REVIEWS

***Buddha in the Yurt. Buddhist Art from Mongolia.* Carmen Meinert (ed.) München: Hirmer Publishers, 2011. 2 vols., 840 pp.**

A heavy package came to the MAE RAS (Petersburg) in March of 2012 with my name on it. It contained a remarkable album entitled “Buddha in the Yurt. Buddhist Art from Mongolia” issued by the German publishing house Hirmer Publishers, Munich. I am sincerely grateful for the package. I had heard much about the preparation of the project and had been anxious to see the outcome, and I was deeply satisfied with its grandeur and beauty.

The project — born out of the desire of a German collector to publish the most fascinating works (there turned out to be about 600 pieces) from his great and interesting collection of Buddhist art from Mongolia — was worked on for a number of years by scholars from Russia, Germany and Ukraine. The collection catalogue accompanied by commentaries (2 volumes of 840 pages in length), created as the result of the labours, was published in two versions — with the texts in German language echoed by Mongolian language, and in English echoed by Russian. (I will particularly speak of the impression left on me by the latter of the referred versions of the reviewed work).

The duplicate title contains the name of Carmen Meinert as the editor of the edition in question, her name and the name of Andreï Terent'ev as the authors of the articles, and also the name of photographer Achim Bunz, whose talent is responsible for the superb images contained within the catalogue.

Carmen Meinert is a Sinologist and an expert on Tibet. A. Terent'ev is a resident of St. Petersburg, who is a researcher and translator, publisher of Tibetan Buddhist treatises, founder and editor of the journal “Buddhism in Russia”, famous for his concept of systemati-

zation of iconographic signs, which makes it possible to identify different characters of the immense pantheon of gods of the Northern Buddhism, embodied in “The Buddhist Iconography Identification Guide” (St. Petersburg, 2004)¹, so irreplaceable for researchers. He is the author of the book entitled “The Sandalwood Buddha of the King Udayana”.

A reader, who would like to know who else, besides the “front-row” personnel, furthered the realization of such a substantial endeavour with their expertise and inspiring labour, can satisfy his lawful appetite on page 31 (of the Russian and English editions). This appetite can be satisfied at the end of the foreword written by C. Meinert, where she introduces readers into the spiritual world of Mongol Buddhists, which is reflected in the pages to come, which display the photographs of outstanding works of Mongol artists and craftsmen.

We discover that E. D. Ogneva made a significant contribution (unfortunately, her name is given in somewhat distorted manner). She is a prominent expert on Tibet, who worked in Moscow and now resides in Ukraine. She is the author of in-depth studies of Buddhist art of Tibet, who has experience in working on catalogues of works of Buddhist art of Tibet and Buryatia (in particular she is known as the author of the section “The Soul of Images in Tibetan Tradition, Written Texts of Buddhist Sculptures”, which offers translation and interpretations of Tibetan texts contained in the reliquary of the sculpture images in the catalogue (*Piat' semeï Buddy* (Five Families of Buddha) (Moscow, 2004)).

She made a scientific contribution of *thangkas* of one private Buddhist collection (*Zhivopis' Tibeta. Russkaia chastnaia kollelcia* (Paintings of Tibet. Russian private collection) (Moscow, 2005)). Together with A. A. Terent'ev she was ranked among scientific editors of the album “Iconography of Vajrayāna”. E. D. Ogneva carried out the work in the Tibetica section in the cata-

¹ 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*).