

No Tapping around Philology. A Festschrift in Honor of Wheeler McIntosh Thackston Jr.'s 70th Birthday, ed. by Alireza Korangy and Daniel J. Sheffield, Harrasowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2014, 449, pp.

No Tapping around Philology is a volume edited in honor of Wheeler M. Thackston Jr. (born 1944), one of the most famous contemporary scholars in the field of Near Eastern studies, especially in literature and culture of Persianate and Arabic world, working at the Harvard University. One can divide this book into two parts. The first consists of *Acknowledgements* (p. XI), *Introduction* by Alireza Korangy (pp. XIII–XVIII), *Tabula Gratulatoria* (pp. XIX–XXI) and *Bibliography of Wheeler M. Thackston, Jr.* (pp. XXIII–XXVI).

In the *Introduction* the Author presents W.M. Thackston's way to philology, enumerating his most important works. He studied Arabic and Persian languages, writing his PhD thesis under the supervision of Annemarie Schimmel. His most important and renowned works include, first of all, Babur's memoirs, *Jāhangirmāma*, *Jāmi' at-Tavārīkh* and *Akbarnāma*. He characterizes the way of translation applied by Thackston and states that "when reading Babur's memoirs in Chagatay or in Persian and comparing the text to Wheeler's translations in English, we feel as though Babur speaks to us in English" (p. XVI). Korangy shows Thackston also as a teacher, describing his method of teaching Oriental languages, as the "hero" of reviewed book is an author of manuals of Koranic and Classical Arabic, Lebanese vernacular, Kurdish, Syriac and Persian (available in print or on-line). His works embraces, consequently, all these cultures and literatures. The scholar doesn't limit himself to strict philology – we found among his studies and articles those concerning history, historiography, art, art history, religion and philosophy. His pupils developed various of Thackston's interests, choosing their own scientific ways, and presented book is an evidence of this fact.

The full bibliography of the works by Wheeler M. Thackston contains all his works, beginning from his Senior Thesis (1967) and ending with unpublished teaching materials available on-line or at the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilisations, Harvard University.

The second part of *No Tapping around Philology* contains a number of articles by renowned orientalists from all over the world, among them friends and pupils of Wheeler M. Thackston. The Editors divided the articles into four thematic fields:

I. Persian Literature: Maria Subtelny (University of Toronto), *An Old Tale with a New Twist: The Elephant and the Blind Men in Rūmī's Maṣnavī and its Precursors* (pp. 1–22); Matthew C. Smith (Harvard University), *Poetic Geography: Landscape, Nature and Nationalism in the Poetry of Malik al-Shu'arā Bahār* (23–52); Franklin Lewis (University of Chicago), *UT PICTURA POESIS: Verbal and Visual Depictions of the Practice of Poetry in the Medieval Period* (53–70); Alireza Korangy (University of Virginia), *Khaqani and the Qaside of Shervan and Arran: A Brief Survey and Study* (pp. 71–110); Michael Hillmann (University of Texas at Austin), *Khāqāni's Twelfth-Century Advice to Twenty-*

First-Century Iranians (pp. 111–125); Olga Davidson (Boston University), *Why is the Bāysonghori Recension a Recension?* (pp. 127–130).

II. Linguistics, Philology, and Religious Studies: Travis Zadeh (Haverford College), *Commanding Demons and Jinn: The Sorcerer in Early Islamic Thought* (pp. 131–160); Daniel J. Sheffield (Princeton University), *The Language of Heaven in Safavid Iran: Speech and Cosmology in the Thought of Āzar Kayvān and His Followers* (pp. 161–183); Gregory Nagy (Harvard University), *Herodotus and the Logioi of the Persians* (pp. 185–191); Christian Lange (Utrecht University), *A Sufi's Paradise and Hell: 'Azīz-i Nasafī's Epistle on the Otherworld* (pp. 193–214); Yaron Klein (Carleton College), *Music, Rapture and Pragmatics: Ghazālī on samā' and wajd* (pp. 215–242); John Huehnergard (University of Texas at Austin), *The Semitic Background of Arabic faqīr 'poor'* (pp. 243–254); Jo Ann Hackett (University of Texas at Austin), *Ancient Israel's Music Man* (pp. 255–262); William Graham (Harvard University), *The Qur'ān as a Discourse of Signs* (pp. 263–275); Richard N. Frye† (Emeritus, Harvard University), *Achaemenid Law, Predecessor of Roman Law?* (pp. 277–280).

III. Middle Eastern, Central Asian, and South Asian History: Mana Kia (Columbia University), *Adab as Ethics of Literary Form and Social Conduct: Reading the Gulistān in Late Mughal India* (pp. 281–308); Supriya Gandhi (Haverford College), *Retelling the Rāma Story in Persian Verse: Masīh Pānīpatī's Maṣnavī-yi Rām va Sītā* (pp. 309–324); David Brophy (University of Sydney), *High Asia and the High Qing: A Selection of Persian Letters from the Beijing Archives* (pp. 325–367).

IV. History of Art and Architecture: Linda Komaroff (Los Angeles County Museum of Art), *A Turkman Prisoner or a Prisoner of Love?* (pp. 369–380); Pedro Moura Carvalho (Asian Art Museum, San Francisco), *Salīm's Role as Patron of Mughal Painting at Allahabad (1600–1604): Four Newly Identified Miniatures from a Dispersed Copy of the Mir'āt al-quds, a Life of Christ, for Emperor Akbar* (pp. 381–394); Jonathan Bloom (Boston College), *Nāṣir Khusraw's Description of Jerusalem* (pp. 395–406); Sheila Blair (Boston College), *Art as Text: The Luster Mihrab in the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art* (pp. 407–435); Milo Cleveland Beach (Sackler and Freer Gallery of Art), *Muraqqa'-i Gulshan: The Inscriptions* (pp. 437–446).

The book ends with an *Epilogue: Philology and the Good Life* by Daniel J. Sheffield (pp. 447–449), a very private text, showing Wheeler M. Thackston as a teacher very deeply involved into relations with his students. This short essay completes the picture of Thackston, supplementing the portrait of scholar from the *Introduction*.

The articles collected in the book concern several problems and ideas in the field of Middle Eastern studies. As most of them are quite extensive, one should say that the volume creates a kind of a monograph in every part the book is divided into. It will be very useful for orientalists and also for everyone interested in Oriental cultures. For researchers of Persian literature and Islam, especially Sufism, the volume *No Tapping around Philology* should be a necessary position in their libraries.