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Persian Manuscripts in the Libraries of the McGill University. Brief Union Catalogue. Montreal, McGill University Libraries, 2005, XX + 210 p. (Fontanus Monograph Series XVII)

Karin Rührdanz



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- 1 Following the union catalogue of the Arabic manuscripts at the McGill University Libraries, Gacek now presents its Persian counterpart. It contains short entries arranged alphabetically by title on 334 volumes preserved in four different collections. Since the manuscripts have largely remained unknown, scholars will much appreciate the publication. The book also comprises 10 useful indices, including one listing the texts according to main subjects, and 45 illustrations, 17 of them in colour.
- 2 Apart from 81 detached leaves with miniatures and calligraphs which are not part of the catalogue, the Rare Books and Special Collections Division has 36 manuscripts mainly comprising well-known poetical works. The other smaller collection, that of the Islamic Studies Library, contains 31 volumes of more diverse subject matter, which were brought together mostly during the 1960s-1970s.
- 3 Of the two somewhat larger collections in the Osler Library (68 manuscripts) and in the Blacker-Wood Library (199 manuscripts), the first has a strong focus on medicine. Texts cover pharmacology as well as different areas of medical practice and particular groups of diseases. Like all the Persian manuscripts in the Blacker-Wood Library, these too were mostly purchased by Wladimir Ivanow in north eastern India. Consequently, later Indian copies prevail, and Indian authors on medicine are well represented, including figures like Yūsuf. b. Muḥammad Ḥurāsānī who transferred Timurid scholarship to the Moghul realm. There are also copies of works written by European physicians, the Austrian Polak

and the Dutch Schlimmer, to teach the students at the *Dār al-Funūn*, founded 1851 in Tehran.

- 4 Although diverse, the collection at the Blacker-Wood Library owns a considerable number of manuscripts dealing with areas of natural history. The *Nuzhat-nāma-yi 'Alā'ī* (contained together with a *Farruḡ-nāma-yi Jamālī* and a third text in the composite volume W58) is not only the oldest dated Persian manuscript at McGill, but also the oldest known finely illustrated copy of the text. Concerning patronage and ownership the most interesting volume may be the copy of Qāsim Anvar's *Dīvān* that once belonged to the library of Ulugh Beg.

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Thèmes : 1.1. Bibliographie

AUTEURS

KARIN RÜHRDANZ

Royal Ontario Museum - Toronto