

David Pingree, *Catalogue of Jyotiṣa Manuscripts in the Wellcome Library. Sanskrit Astral and Mathematical Literature*, Sir Henry Wellcome Asian Series, Vol. 2, Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2004, pp. xix+472. ISBN 90 04 13152 3

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The Wellcome Library was established in 1903 by the British businessman and philanthropist Sir Henry Wellcome (1853–1936) and presently contains one of the largest and most varied Sanskrit collections outside India, which attracts the attention of international academia.

In his foreword to this catalogue published as a second volume in the Sir Henry Wellcome Asian Series, the curator of South Asian collection Dr. Dominik Wujastyk gives a brief description of the early formation of Wellcome’s collections. He explains how, in addition to medical tracts, manuscripts of various works on astrology, astronomy, alchemy, divination, and other sources that are essential for the understanding of pre-modern Indian medical history were also acquired for the Wellcome Library. The principal collectors of manuscripts in South Asia were two Indians, Dr. Paira Mall and Bhajan Lal.

The *Jyotiṣa* collection comprises nearly a thousand separate manuscripts on whose folia are represented more than 500 texts written by at least 250 authors. Many manuscripts are copies of well-known texts, but some of them are rather rare. A good beginning of the survey of the collection was done by Professor V. Raghavan, who late in 1954 prepared a handlist of about 3000 titles. In 1982 D. Wujastyk began to organize the manuscripts in a rational way and undertook to prepare handlists of the texts from many of these manuscripts, and thus two volumes of *A Handlist of Sanskrit and Prakrit Manuscripts* were published by the Wellcome Institute.¹ Prof. Pingree is modest as to his own contribution to have this catalogue published, however, in the preface he clearly expresses his indebtedness to Wujastyk “who transformed the collection into the usable library” (p. xii).

The present catalogue of Professor David Pingree is arranged according to the classification scheme for *Jyotiṣa* manuscripts, which he has earlier employed in other catalogues. The scheme is derived from the old tripartite division of *Jyotiṣa* into *gaṇita* (astronomy and mathematics), *saṃhitā* (divination), and *horā* (astrology), with astronomy subdivided into seven types of text (*siddhāntas*, *karaṇas*, *koṣṭhakas*, eclipses, *pañcāṅgas*,

¹ Dominik Wujastyk, *A Handlist of Sanskrit and Prakrit Manuscripts in the Library of The Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine*, London: The Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, vol. I (1985), vol. II (1998). The first volume has 1003 entries and the second volume numbers 1004 to 2004.

yantras, and miscellaneous), and divination into nine varieties of methods (general, astral omens and annual predictions, *śakuna*, *sāmudrika*, *svapna svarodaya*, *svaraśāstra*, miscellaneous, and *ramala*), genethliology into *jātaka* (Greek-inspired) and *tājika* (Persian inspired) forms, and *muhūrta* into four forms (general, iatromathematics, *yātrā*, and *vivāha*). Separately are described composite manuscripts or manuscripts containing more than one work. Also, chapters on other branches of traditional astrology such as *praśna*, on encyclopedias, *kośas*, magic, and *sūcīpatras* are segregated.

Besides, the catalogue contains thirteen indexes including not only authors, titles and topics, scribes, owners, social and religious organizations, toponyms, horoscopes and languages, but also providing a reader with a systemic information concerning the number of concordances, shelf location concordances and composite locations, which are of immense value for practical research work on those *Jyotiṣa* manuscripts. In his introduction D. Pingree also presents us a list of the rare, unique manuscripts of this collection.

In the immense project called *Census of the Exact Sciences in Sanskrit*, David Pingree provided a preliminary explanation and organization of the vast Sanskrit and Sanskrit-influenced literature devoted to astronomy, mathematics, astrology and divination, together with a brief bibliographical information concerning the treatises and their authors.² The present volume is supplementary to and an integral part of the *Census* offering usable references both, to *Census* and a *Handlist*. In the description of each text and each manuscript the author, date, location, serial number in the catalogue, shelf-mark, number of leaves, scribal foliation, number of lines per page, script if not Nāgarī, unusual format, physical condition, the name of scribe and the date of completion of transcription, former owners, and other significant information are carefully provided.

Professor D. Pingree has worked on these manuscripts over a period of three decades and now has presented to the scholarly audience a unique catalogue that will become invaluable and indispensable not only for all further studies in traditional Indian astral and divinatory sciences, but also for studying creation, distribution and preservation of Sanskrit scientific manuscripts. Without this unique encyclopedia any serious attempt in the field would be rather impossible.

² David Pingree, *Census of the Exact Sciences in Sanskrit*, Series A, vols. I–V, Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1970–1994.