



## 'AJĀ'EB AL-DONYĀ

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'AJĀ'EB AL-DONYĀ or 'AJĀ'EB AL-AŠYĀ' ("Wonders of the world" or "Wonderful things"), title of a Persian geography of the *'ajā'eb al-maklūqāt* type, extant in three MSS, at the Leningrad Oriental Institute (probably 11th/17th cent.), Cambridge University (modern), and the Maġles Library in Tehran (apparently late 10th/16th-early 11th/17th cent.). The spurious brief introduction (see Storey, II, pt. 1, p. 123) found in the Tehran and Cambridge MSS (the Leningrad MS is defective at the beginning) mentions Abu'l-Mo'ayyad Balkī as the author and says that the work was composed for the Samanid amir Abu'l-Qāsem Nūḥ b. Maṣṣūr (r. 365-87/976-97). This led some scholars (e.g., M. T. Bahār, S. Nafīsī, Ḍ. Şafā) to consider this book a later recension of a geography by the 4th/10th century author Abu'l-Mo'ayyad Balkī, a work that is already mentioned in *Tārīk-eSīstān* (pp. 13, 16, 17). But according to the more plausible conclusion of Miklukho-Maklaī ("Geografischeskoe," p. 185), it was written no earlier than 617/1220 by an Azarbaijani who flourished under the Eldigüzid Atabegs of Azarbaijan (r. 531-622/1136-1225) and who had traveled extensively.

The work consists of two parts: The first (complete in the Cambridge MS and fragmentary in the Tehran MS) consists of short anecdotes of the type traditionally popular with the genre. The Leningrad MS contains an alphabetically arranged second part containing short accounts of cities, regions, and lands, some of which are mentioned in the first part.

Much of *'Ajā'eb al-donyā* is compiled from earlier sources, especially *'Ajā'eb al-maklūqāt* of Naġīb Hamadānī (6th/12th cent.), but it also contains valuable



original information, particularly about Azarbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia, which is not found elsewhere (see, e.g., accounts of Aklāt, Abhar, Erzerum, Tabrīz, Naḵjavān). The book also describes events of the early 6th-7th/12th-13th cents. relating to Armenia and Georgia.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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N. D. Miklukho-Maklaï, “Geograficheskoe sochinenie xiii v. na persidskomazykye,” *Uchenye Zapiski Instituta Vostokovedeniya* 9, 1954, pp. 175-210, 214-19, with facsimile excerpts and Russian tr. R. Kiknadze, *Eṭṭelā’āt-ī dar bāra-ye Gorjēstān va Qafqāz az ketāb-e ‘Ajā’eb al-donyā*, Tbilisi, 1978 (a partial ed. with tr. in Georgian).

An edition of the text with Russian translation and notes by L. P. Smirnova is forthcoming.

M. T. Bahār, *Sabk-šenāsī* II, 2nd ed., Tehran, 1337 Š./1958, pp. 18-20.

R. N. Nicholson, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Oriental MSS, Belonging to the Late E. G. Browne*, Cambridge, 1932, pp. 93-94.

N. D. Miklukho-Maklaï, *Opisaniye tadzhikskikh i persidskikh rukopiseï*, Moscow and Leningrad, 1955. Storey, II, pt. 1, pp. 123-24.

Şafā, *Adabiyāt*<sup>2</sup> I, p. 618.

Nafisī, *Naẓm o naṭr* I, p. 28.