

## BOOK NOTICES

by  
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Lev Rafailovich Kontsevich. *Khronologiia stran Vostochnoi i Tsentral'noi Azii. Addenda / Chronology of Far Eastern and Central Asian Countries. Addenda*. Moskva: Izdatel'skaia firma "Vostochnaia literatura" RAN, 2011. 687 pp. ISBN 978-5-02-036479-0.

The second volume of this valuable reference work, whose first volume was described in *The Silk Road* 9 (2011), pp. 170-71, contains on the first 112 pages selected bibliography, first general, then grouped under the various countries (China, non-Han States, Vietnam, Mongolia, Korea, Japan). The final section of the bibliography is selected electronic resources on history and chronology. Section II (pp. 113-599) is indexes of rulers – in each section listed first by hieroglyphs, with equivalents in standard transcriptions, reign dates and references to their place in the chronological tables of Vol. 1; then reversing the order so that they can be searched by Russian transcription. There is a separate index of reign titles, ordered first by hieroglyphs, then by Russian transcription. Here each entry contains source references. Pp. 600-38 tabulate historic capitals, including their equivalent modern names and locations. On pp. 639-83 are outline historical maps of the several states over the centuries. The book concludes with four pages of corrections to the first volume. While I am not competent to critique Kontsevich's work (I suspect no single individual would be able to do so in any event), my impression is that his accomplishment is unlikely to be superseded soon, if ever. His volumes belong on every reference shelf.

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Aleksandr Vladimirovich Simonenko. *Rimskii import u sarmatov Severnogo Prichernomor'ia* [Roman Imports among the Sarmatians of the Northern Black Sea Littoral]. Sankt-Peterburg: Filologicheskii fakul'tet Sankt-Peterburgskogo gos. un-ta.; Nestor-Istoriia, 2011. 272 pp. + ill. ISBN 978-5-8465-1029-6; 978-5-98187-873-2.

This is a revised Russian version of the author's study and catalogue which was first published as part of *Römische Importe in sarmatischen und maiotischen Gräbern zwischen Unterer Donau und Kuban* (= Archäologie in Eurasien, Bd. 25) in Mainz in 2008. The work is part of a project jointly sponsored by the German Archaeological Institute and the Ukrainian Academy's Institute of Archaeology. Together with the studies by B. A. Raev for the lower Don and Volga regions, and by I. I. Marchenko and N. Iu. Limberis for the Kuban, we will now have systematic data for an important sector of imports excavated in Sarmatian sites between the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE and 4<sup>th</sup> century CE. As a result, the author

has proposed a more refined chronology for Sarmatian burials than has previously been established and correlates it with particular historical events, some of the boundaries established by the appearance of new groups of migrants in the region. For those who would wish to skip the details, this is all summarized in one convenient chronological chart on p. 156, but, of course, one has to read the details to know which artefacts are characteristic for which period.

The analysis is organized by type of object (armaments, fibulae, metal dishes, etc.), in the discussion of which we learn that at least in some instances attributions to the Roman period have sparked quite acrimonious debate with other specialists. The shorter second chapter summarizes the conclusions revising earlier chronologies. A catalogue of finds is organized by location and provides details of the excavations. The book is well illustrated with maps, generally good quality black/white photos and drawings and a set of excellent color plates. There is a four-page summary in English and an extensive bibliography.

How much here is relevant even for a broadly defined concept of the "Silk Road"? Arguably little, unless we can connect some of the material with broader patterns of Roman-period trade. There are some analogies to objects found as far east as Afghanistan; it seems likely that certain objects were made in the Roman East (Syria, Palmyra). Those not already familiar with it might wish to read the author's earlier article "Chinese and East Asian Elements in Sarmatian Culture of the North Pontic Region" (*Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 7 [2001]: 53-72).

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Nikolai Iur'evich Kuz'min. *Pogrebal'nye pamiatniki khunno-sian'biiskogo vremeni v stepiakh srednego Eniseia. Tesinskaia kul'tura / Grabdenkmäler der Xiongnu- und Xianbei-Zeit in den Steppen des mittleren Jenisej. Die Tes'-Kultur*. Sankt-Peterburg: Izd-vo. Aising, 2011. 456 pp. + CD with illustrations and correlation tables. ISBN 978-5-91753-040-6.

This large-format publication of the author's doctoral thesis, defended in 2005 at the Humboldt University in Berlin, deserves close attention. The middle Enisei River area in southern Siberia (the Minusinsk Basin) has long been recognized as one of the most important regions of northern Asia for its archaeological record of cultures going back several thousand years. The author had previously published a major study of the late Tagar culture; this volume represents its chronological continuation based on new excavations. The subject here is the Tes' culture, which emerged as the result of the fusion of local populations (the late Tagar culture)

with migrants from Central Asia (most probably the Altai region). Distinctive features of the regional Tes' culture can be established from study of hundreds of graves and dozens of large tombs which chronologically fall within the Xiongnu period down to the point when the Xianbei drove out the Xiongnu, that is, the third century BCE to the mid-third century CE. The Tes' culture then merged into what is known as the Tashtyk culture. There seems to be no direct evidence of a Xiongnu presence in the middle Enisei region, a Chinese-style palace excavated near Abakan probably in fact having been built for a Chinese mission to the region, not for a Xiongnu governor.

The first part of the book is the analytical studies of what the excavations have revealed, one of the most interesting chapters dealing with burial rituals. There is an extended appendix summarizing individual excavations. The book contains many drawings of tombs, graves and artifacts, and in the accompanying CD Excel spreadsheets of correlation tables and dozens of color photos. There are summaries in German and English.

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Elena Borisovna Barinova. *Vliianie kul'tury Kitaia na protsessy inkul'turatsii Srednei Azii i Iuzhnoi Sibiri v domongol'skoe vremia* [The Influence of the Culture of China on the Processes of Inculturation of Central Asia and Southern Siberia in the pre-Mongol Period]. Moskva: Institut etnologii i antropologii RAN, 2011. 450 pp. ISBN 978-5-4211-0042-3.

While the subject of Barinova's book is obviously of considerable interest, it is unlikely that those who do not read Russian should rush to have someone translate what she has done. Whether in its sinocentric emphasis or in its apparently limited understanding of what might constitute "influence" and how we might determine that, the book seems curiously out of touch with current interpretive stances. It is odd, for example, to see her downplay Chinese influences on the peoples of the North in the Liao period, under the excuse that the Liao blocked the transmission of Chinese cultural values. The nomads seem capable of absorbing culture but lack agency. She does use a fair range of both Russian and non-Russian western literature (including translations of the main Chinese dynastic histories), but her reading seems to have stopped upwards of two decades ago. Thus, for example, she relies on Rudenko for Noyon uul and cites Davydova's preliminary reports on Ivolga, but not the full publication of her results.

Barinova does not pretend to provide an exhaustive catalogue of relevant archaeological finds, whose existence of themselves provides her main evidence to demonstrate "influence." That said, the most useful part of the book will be the tabulation that occupies about half of it, listing finds of Chinese mirrors, money, dishes (both ceramic and lacquered), and various metal objects unearthed in excavations from Uzbekistan to Mongolia (outside of the borders of China itself). The listing of mirrors and mirror fragments is impressive, even lacking the ones found in recent years at

Tsaram, Gol Mod, Tamir, and other locations. She describes each item, indicates where it was found, whether it is published or what its museum inventory number is (a good many of the items are in the Minusinsk Museum). However incomplete, this list may prove to be a useful reference, especially for items found in excavations which either have not been published or on which information is not readily available. Of course what would really be nice to have is a website containing continually updated information on such finds, rather than having to rely on a book such as this which was outdated before it ever appeared in print.

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Jason Neelis. *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks. Mobility and Exchange within and beyond the Northwestern Borderlands of South Asia*. Dynamics in the History of Religion, 2. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011. xviii + 371 pp. ISBN 978-9004-18159-5.

The opportunity to participate in a program at Ruhr University Bochum entitled "Dynamics in the History of Religions between Asia and Europe" helped Jason Neelis transform his excellent but relatively narrowly focussed University of Washington dissertation into a book of broad vision which should be of lasting value to anyone concerned with early routes of communication within Southern Asia and between it and the wider world and more specifically with the process of the early spread of Buddhism. While Neelis's Ph.D. focus was specifically on the northern routes leading to Central Asia through the mountains, concerning which he assembled convincing evidence to document how even what may seem like little traveled paths ("capillary routes") facilitated the spread of Buddhism, here he has expanded his scope to include other areas of South Asia and their inter-relationship with, among other things, the maritime routes. Unlike some historians of the "silk routes," he has a superb grasp of geography and how the use of specific routes cannot be properly understood unless one looks, inter alia, at the physical environment.

Political history and patronage form an important part of this story, though he provides a lot of commonsense caution about accepting at face value traditions which may have attributed to rulers such as Ashoka and Kanishka major roles as patrons of Buddhism above other religions. He addresses the apparent paradox of Buddhists' withdrawal from the world at the same time that there is clear evidence that their economic activity provided the support for the spread of the faith. Institutionalization of the religion required it have a firm base in a productive local economy, at the same time that areas of little promise economically could serve as routes for long-distance transmission. In this Neelis is fruitfully building on ideas of the noted historian of the spread of Buddhism to China, Erik Zürcher, who, unlike earlier scholars who emphasized gradual contact transmission along the major routes of economic exchange, argued that long-distance transmission, in effect leaping over the (as yet) economically and politically insignificant regions, helps to explain the emergence of distinctive regional variations in the adoption of the faith.

The book will be an invaluable guide to the massive literature on early South Asian political history, routes of trade, development of cities, and sites with Buddhist archaeological remains and the seemingly less substantial but crucially important evidence of inscriptions and graffiti. Neelis consciously does not explore doctrinal development and treats early Buddhist art only episodically. As one might expect from a student of Richard Salomon's he is particularly well informed about the recent discoveries of early Buddhist manuscripts and among his strengths is his use of epigraphic material, for which he reads all the relevant Indic languages. At times his book reads a bit like an annotated catalogue, even when only summarizing "well known" material. This is ground where there are many still un-resolved academic controversies, through the minefields of which he moves judiciously to form his own conclusions.

It is too bad that most underpaid academics and their impoverished libraries will not be able to afford Brill's prices.

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Evgeniia Borisovna Smagina. *Manikheistvo po ran-nim istochnikam* [Manichaeism According to the Early Sources]. Moskva: "Vostochnaia literatura" RAN, 2011. 519 pp. ISBN 978-5-02-036474-5.

Judging from the relative paucity of citations to literature in Russian (as opposed to the preponderance of references in other language), Russian readers should welcome this book as a substantial guide to an understanding of the origins and doctrines of Manichaeism, a subject on which the author has been publishing since the 1980s. She acknowledges having benefitted from a Humboldt Fellowship, which enabled her to work in Germany (especially in Münster), and from opportunities to consult Coptic materials in Cairo.

The book opens with extensive comments on the nature of the source base, then reviews what can be reconstructed about Mani's biography and sketches the spread of Manichaeism after his death. There is a chapter sequentially describing the various Manichaean books and the doctrines they contain. Three long chapters then examine systematically and reconstruct the various components of Manichaean belief. A lengthy appendix contains translations of the most important texts regarding the religion, ones emanating from its opponents as well as ones originating within Manichaean communities.

There is a two-page summary in English, from which I quote the most significant part of her conclusions:

In Part II, a reconstruction of the Manichaean teaching (chiefly on the basis of Coptic sources) and an analysis of many basic elements and persons of the Manichaean myth are presented. The investigation shows that they are to be traced mostly to some Biblical texts and expressions. The Manichaean myths show very close parallels with apocryphal stories on the Biblical material and with some Talmudic and Midrashic exegetical legends.

We can conclude that Manichaeism originates in a teaching of the Gnostic type, i.e. an early Christian one enriched with large apocryphal material. Perhaps it was the teaching of the Jewish-Christian sect of "baptists" in Mesopotamia where Mani was raised and educated. The sources show no theoretical controversies among Mani and "baptists": their polemics concern some practices and rituals. Thus the Zoroastrian element in Manichaeism is very important but secondary. It is confirmed by the fact that, in different Iranian sources, there is no unity in the identification of Manichaean deities and demons with the Iranian ones [p. 519].

I assume some of this may be controversial but not necessarily new. Specialists on Manichaeism should, I think, certainly want to read her book. Also, it would be of some interest to compare her work with that of A. L. Khosroev, who, as Smagina acknowledges, published in Russian his "fundamental" *History of Manichaeism: Prolegomena* in 2007 after she had finished her own manuscript. Given the late date at which she had seen his book, she elected not to undertake what she suggests might have to have been some substantial revisions of her own work. Perhaps then a second edition will be in order.

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*Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam*, ed. Venetia Porter. London: The British Museum Press, 2012. 288 pp. ISBN 978-0-7141-1176-6; 978-0-7141-1175-9.

Between January and April of this year, what was once the historic round reading room in the British Museum's courtyard was transformed imaginatively into an exhibit space to accommodate *Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam*. What could have been a somewhat pointless exercise in multi-cultural good feeling as a run-up to the Olympics was in fact a remarkably moving and enlightening experience for Muslims and non-Muslims, from an opening video to a closing section with intriguing modern evocations of the swirl of pilgrims around the Ka'ba and a selection of artefacts a pilgrim might bring back today, having fulfilled one of the five obligations expected of all Muslims, at least once in a lifetime to undertake the pilgrimage to Mecca.

The catalogue, with essays by a number of distinguished scholars, has at its core chapters that treat the history of the Hajj from its beginnings to the present. The introductory chapters explain the place of the Hajj in Islamic belief and practice; the concluding chapters deal with the modern art of Hajj and the textiles of the Muslim holy cities. There are sections devoted to each of several main pilgrim routes converging on Mecca from different directions in Eurasia and Africa. A virtue of the narrative is the extensive quotation of contemporary pilgrim accounts, including ones from the early centuries of the Hajj. I am now inspired to go read the 11<sup>th</sup>-century Nasir-i Khusraw and late 12<sup>th</sup>-century Ibn Jubayr.<sup>1</sup> The book includes shorter essays on subjects such as Sacred Geography, Hajj Forts, Tiles, and Early Photog-

raphers of Hajj. Indeed, one of the most interesting aspects of the exhibiton was the generous selection of early photographs.

There was no pretense here of making this an exhibit of Islamic art in a narrow sense, the point being to provide a broader idea of the religious and cultural experience. So artefacts were very carefully selected, e.g.: a few examples of ceramics including Iznik tiles depicting the sanctuary in Mecca; some manuscripts, among them ones with striking illuminations; historic maps; a couple of *qibla* indicators (to determine the direction of prayer); and a very generous selection of curtains that draped the Ka'ba. I was particularly struck by Ahmed Mater's etchings of his installation created with magnets and iron filings around a black cube that represents the Ka'ba, evoking the swirl of movement of pilgrims circumambulating it.

#### Note

1. Both have been translated into English: *Nasir-i Khusraw's Book of Travels [Safarnama]. A Parallel Persian-English Text*. Ed., tr. and annotated by Wheeler M. Thackston Jr. (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers 2001); *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, tr. and annotated by R. J.C. Broadhurst (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2001; repr. of London 1952 ed.).

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Dan Gibson. *Qur'anic Geography. A Survey and Evaluation of the Geographical References in the Qur'an with Suggested Solutions for Various Problems and Issues*. Saskatoon, Canada: Independent Scholar's Press, 2011. xii + 470 pp. ISBN 978-0-9733642-8-6.

Lest readers think I am making things up, here in his own words (p. 379) is the author's conclusion:

...Islam was founded in northern Arabia in the city of Petra. It was there that the first parts of the Qur'an were revealed before the faithful were forced to flee to Medina. Thus, the prophet Muhammad never visited Mecca, nor did any of the first four rightly guided caliphs. Mecca was never a centre of worship in ancient times, and was not part of the ancient trade routes in Arabia. All down through history the Arabs made pilgrimages to the holy sites in the city of Petra, which had many ancient temples and churches. It was in Petra that 350 idols were retrieved from the rubble after an earthquake and set up in a central courtyard. It was in Petra that Muhammad directed the destruction of all the idols except one, the Black Stone. This stone remained in the Ka'ba in Petra until it was later taken by the followers of Ibn al-Zubayr deep into Arabia to the village of Mecca for safe keeping from the Ummayyad armies. And today it is to this stone that Muslims face, rather than to their holy city and the qibla that Muhammad gave them.

One might well ask, is there anything in this rambling, self-published book that is to be taken seriously? There certainly is plenty to annoy (yea, even offend Muslims, though

I do not believe that such is the author's purpose). Gibson has immersed himself in Nabataean history and over many years acquired an impressive on-the-ground knowledge of the geography related to it. He has a previous self-published book on the Nabataeans and maintains nabataea.net, a very substantial website devoted to his passion. If there is a Nabataean "nationalist" alive today, then surely it is Dan Gibson. From the standpoint of scholarly argument though, the book will invite serious criticism, as there are leaps of faith which leave even a non-specialist reader like myself gasping. A good deal of the effort goes to identifying what vague scriptural references to tribal groupings may mean and where they were in northwestern Arabia. Important parts of the argument exploit the silences of the sources, not the least being the total absence of Petra in early Muslim traditions about the Muhammad. Arguments *ex silentio* are rarely convincing.

That said, there is a lot here which might give us pause. He is certainly not the first to point out the problems in interpreting the relatively few and cryptic references to what we might term "geography" in the Qur'an or the possible contradictions which arise in trying to establish the factual basis for information contained in the hadiths and early Islamic histories, all of which he repeatedly quotes *in extenso*. The geography and pre-Islamic history of Mecca are of themselves puzzling. One of the more intriguing conundrums, which surely begs for explanation, is the fact that the *qibla* (direction of prayer) of the earliest mosques apparently does not point toward Mecca (and may indeed seem to indicate Petra). A more or less consistent orientation toward Mecca indeed seems to come only later. One might well ask how accurate and consistent are Gibson's own data here, which serve as the basis for a convenient chronological chart illustrating the shift. It is an accepted part of Islamic belief that Muhammad changed the direction of prayer. The fact that the key passage in the Quran (2: 143-5) seems to be missing in most of the earliest known copies does not, however, have to suggest (*pace* Gibson) it is a later interpolation. Gibson's own tabulation of early Quran manuscripts (whose dates, in any event, are far from well established) indicates all those lacking the indicated verses are woefully incomplete. Moreover, he is less than convincing in his attempt to persuade us that early Arabs' ability to navigate and determine geographic locations with some precision, even if he is right that one should not merely explain away the oddities of early *qibla* directions as evidence of an inability to determine a bearing. Certainly one should be cautious in extrapolating from the later achievements of Arab science and astronomy to a time for which there is no written documentation.

What if Gibson is right? Established Muslim belief and practice is certainly not going to change. Nor will those for whom the centrality of Mecca is not an object of faith be convinced by the arguments here. At very least though, this volume might inspire readers to take another look at the history of the Nabataeans, the rise and fall of the incense trade, and the sacred precincts of Petra, subjects which will continue to reward exploration.

Richard W. Bulliet. *Cotton, Climate, and Camels in Early Islamic Iran. A Moment in World History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009. xiv + 167 pp. ISBN 978-0-231-14837-5.

Since this publication of Bulliet's provocative Yarshater Lectures at Harvard has been much reviewed,<sup>1</sup> this note will focus on why students of the Silk Roads should add it to their essential reading. Known for many earlier pathbreaking (a.k.a., controversial) studies, Bulliet argues that a relatively brief efflorescence in the development the Iranian plateau and then its rather marked decline may be explained to a considerable degree by the introduction of cotton as a summer crop for export. This contributed to substantial urban development, but then the cotton-based prosperity fell victim to unfavorable climate change beginning in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The impact of that decline had important consequences for politics, economics and culture in the wider Islamic world. There are stimulating observations here regarding changing norms of elite identity, the location of centers of intellectual activity and the development of New Persian literary culture. He makes effective use of evidence from ceramic design to reinforce his arguments about cultural change. Among the significant hypotheses of the book is its reassessment of the emergence of the Seljuqs, connecting this with their importance as camel breeders and less with the political events in the Central Asia from which they came.

While he has been criticized for a too narrow focus on cotton, Bulliet makes important points about the changing significance of the "Silk Road" trade, and certainly his emphasis on cotton is a good antidote to the often too exclusive focus on silk found in the work of other scholars such as Xinru Liu (whom he criticizes but who has not really responded to his point in her review of this book).<sup>2</sup> His effort to tease out of the sources information on the ground-level realities of social and economic history provides an interesting parallel to what Valerie Hansen's new book has done, mining a different source base, with its own unique problems, for Xinjiang (see my review in this journal). Bulliet's argument is a forceful reminder of the need to incorporate meaningfully climate data into any analysis of the broader patterns of Eurasian history. He makes a persuasive case for correlating evidence of climate change in western Mongolia (for which we do have some important time series) with weather patterns affecting the Middle East, even if for the latter much of the evidence so far is that found in narrative texts.

Bulliet's critics have suggested that his presentation of the broader impact of the events in Iran fails to convince (even if he may be right) because he has not fully enough articulated developments in other parts of the Islamic world. His focused emphasis in fact is a salutary reminder that any effort to discuss developments across Eurasia (and in this case adding Islamic North Africa) over many centuries will fail unless the distinctive histories of particular regions have first been carefully examined.

## Notes

1. See especially the reviews by Michael Morony in

*Speculum* 85/4 (2010): 944–45, and by Maya Shatzmiller in *Iranian Studies* 45/2 (2012): 308–11.

2. In *Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient* 54 (2011): 793–96.

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al-Ia'kubi. *Kniga stran (Kitab al-buldan)*. Introd., translation, commentaries and indexes by L. A. Semenova. Moskva: "Vostochnaia literatura," 2011. 365 pp. ISBN 978-5-02-018468-8.

This is the first complete translation of Akhmad b. Abi Ia'kub (a.k.a. al-Ja'kubi)'s *Kitab al-buldan* / Book of Countries into Russian. The standard edition of the Arabic text is that of M. J. de Goeje (in *Bibliotheca geographorum arabicorum*, Vol. VII, 1892); a translation into French was published by Gaston Wiet in 1937. To date only excerpts had appeared in Russian translation.

The text, compiled in its current form probably in 889–91 CE, is of interest for its sometimes unique information on important cities of the Abbassid world and on Arab Indian Ocean trade. The author was interested in physical and human geography, but unlike his contemporary Ibn Khodadbeh, was not trying to describe routes of communication. The opening section on Baghdad and its history is especially detailed. Semenova, whose earlier scholarly work focused on Fatimid Egypt, has provided a helpful introduction, nearly 200 pages of notes (for the 100 pages of the text translation) and indexes of personal and dynastic names, geographical names, terms and ethnic groups.

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Valentina Dmitrievna Goriacheva. *Gorodskaiia kul'tura tiurkskikh kaganatov na Tian'-Shane (seredina VI-nachalo XIII v.)* [Urban Culture of the Turkic Kaganates in the Tian-Shan (mid-6<sup>th</sup>–Beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> Centuries)]. Bishkek: Kyrgyzsko-rossiiskii slavianskii universitet, 2010. 303 pp. ISBN 978-9967-05-620-6.

This volume is a fitting landmark in the author's long career as an archaeologist, her first published work having appeared nearly four decades ago. The nearly 50-page bibliography in large format attests to the scope of the enterprise, in which she pulls together the results of much of the archaeological work which has been done in "urban" sites on the territory of today's Kyrgyzstan and contextualizes it with reference to evidence from adjoining regions. She does engage the work of some western scholars (e.g., Grenet on Zoroastrianism and Klein on Christian remains), but understandably, the greatest part of the material is based on Russian-language scholarship.

While in her introduction she stresses the importance of her "cultural studies" methodology, in practice this seems to mean little beyond her emphasis on how the evidence suggests that the "urban" entities that flourished under various Turkic dynasties were indeed multi-cultural and multi-

confessional. Major sections of the book review the evidence regarding economic life, architecture (one of her special interests), religious life (another of her specialties) and artistic culture. A fair amount of this is purely descriptive – reading like a historical encyclopedia – but that is hardly a bad thing. Indeed, the scope of the coverage would make the book of some value for those who do not read Russian, were it to be translated in something like the BAR International Series. Her few articles in English and French (cited here) introduce some of the more significant aspects of her own work, in the study of Buddhist monuments, on the identification of Burana as Karakhanid Balagasun, and on the evidence from the important necropolis she helped excavate at Krasnorechenskoe.

She makes it clear that many of the topics she discusses are still very much subject to debate, where her conclusions have not necessarily been accepted by other major scholars. In a good many cases, the evidence we have is provisional; much more excavation will be needed. Not the least of the challenges lies in the imperfect preservation and only partial publication of some important excavation reports. There are thorny problems of determining “influence” and the degree to which some component of the local culture can be said to have come from Turkic nomadic traditions (as opposed to, say, Iranian sedentary culture). Expert opinion is still divided on the degree to which Sogdiana (as opposed, say, to East Turkestan) may have been the source for some of what the record of material culture reveals.

Her source base includes standard historical texts – she draws heavily on Xuanzang’s account of his visit with the Turkish kaghan; Yusuf Hass-hajib and Mahmud Kashgari also are important here. One might question, however, whether sources particular to areas outside the region of her focus can reliably illuminate the culture within that region – examples being Sogdian legal documents from Mt. Mug or the philosophical writings of al-Farabi.

The book contains a good many illustrations, the line drawings quite clear (if sometimes a bit small), but some of the photos, given the inexpensive mode of reproduction, so dark as to be worthless. The one-page summary in English here is far too general to be of much value. There is no index.

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Emma Davidovna Zilivinskaia. *Ocherki kul'tovogo i grazhdanskogo zodchestva Zolotoi Ordy. Monografiia* [Essays on the Religious and Civil Architecture of the Golden Horde. A Monograph.]. Astrakhan': Izdatel'skii dom “Astrakhanskii universitet,” 2011. 253 pp. ISBN 978-5-9926-0452-8.

The laudatory purpose of this volume is to analyze all the current data about architecture across the entire territory once occupied by the Golden Horde (Ulus Jöchi), which extended from the steppes of Ukraine well into Central Asia. Trained as an archaeologist (her mentors included G. A. Fedorov-Davydov and V. L. Egorov), the author has published extensively on the subject, some of her work appearing in English in conference volumes of the British Archaeo-

logical Reports series. Her recent work at the important site of Samosdel'skoe on the lower Volga, where there are major remains from the Mongol era, involves controversy over whether or not this may also have been the site of the Khazar capital Itil' in earlier centuries.

As Zilivinskaia indicates, no one previously has attempted an overview of all the architectural remains of the Golden Horde, and in fact histories of Islamic architecture pay no attention to the subject. The more focused work which has been done on particular sites emphasizes the influence of architecture in Iran and especially Seljuk Anatolia, though she cautiously suggests that one may be able to distinguish some unique features of a “Golden Horde” style. Civil architecture in her classification is of two basic types, one deriving from Islamic urban architectural models, the other having evolved from mobile nomadic traditions translated into settled contexts.

The book is organized around functional building types and then within each section discusses what is found at particular sites. There are 120 plates, fortunately mostly drawings and plans, since the few black-and-white photos are poorly reproduced by the inexpensive printing process. There is a substantial bibliography but no indexes.

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Igor' Konstantinovich Fomenko. *Obraz mira na starinykh portolanakh. Prichernomor'e konets XIII–XVII v.* [The Image of the World on Old Portolans. The Black Sea Littoral from the End of the 13<sup>th</sup> – the 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries]. Moskva: “Indrik,” 2011. 424 pp. + ill. ISBN 978-5-91764-145-2.

The emergence of modern scholarly interest in the “Silk Road” has been intertwined with the study and creation of maps and/or their underlying data. Ferdinand von Richthofen and especially Albert Herrmann struggled with trying to match Ptolemaic data with the geographic realities of Eurasia. Explorers such as Sven Hedin, who stumbled across the buried cities of the Taklamakan, advanced the mapping of Inner Asia. Among the multi-faceted contributions of Aurel Stein’s expeditions was the mapping which he and his assistants contributed to the Survey of India. As Igor' Fomenko’s book suggests though, there is still a great deal to be learned from a study of historic maps that encompass various parts of the Eurasian routes.

Fomenko’s book, based on his *kandidat* dissertation, provides a rather general introduction to portolans and, of greater value, a more specific analysis of their data for the Black Sea region. He emphasizes that apart from their function as practical navigation charts, these maps of the late Middle Ages are significant for their data on how their makers viewed the wider world. That is, one can learn a great deal about the knowledge they reflect regarding the changing political and economic map of the regions encompassed by European maritime trade. Given its importance in the history of Eurasian exchange, the Black Sea region makes for a particularly interesting case study.

Fomenko’s comparisons of dozens of the portolans reveal a

remarkable conservatism in the repetition of data, combined with efforts to update information so that the maps in fact would provide practical current guidance on the political landscape. Despite the fact that navigation and cartographic data were, at least on the official level, jealously guarded secrets, in fact underlying most of the portolans is a common body of information, to which individual schools of map-makers might add some distinctive elements. The famous Catalan Atlas of Abraham Cresques (dated 1375) is known, of course, for his having drawn on information in Marco Polo, although the compass of the then known world (as opposed to the region typically covered by portolans – the Mediterranean and Black Sea) makes it unusual. It was, after all, a royal presentation copy. The typical, more narrowly focussed portolans often relatively quickly incorporated new information about economic and political geography. Would we today try to travel using a Baedeker printed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century?

The nomenclature on the maps embodied various chronological strata: toponyms invoked features of physical geography, ethnic, religious, economic and other factors. A perhaps surprisingly large part of the nomenclature is Greek, some of it apparently in place ever since Greek colonies had been established on the Black Sea littoral more than two millennia ago. Fomenko leaves sorting out all the earliest layers for future research. Rather, he focuses on changes that can be documented especially in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, that is, the period for which the earliest portolans have been preserved. By the 16<sup>th</sup> century, even though portolans continued to be copied and used, increasingly they were superseded for practical navigation and came to be of interest as collectors' items. Some of the obvious anachronisms (for example, maps which chose to ignore the reality of the Turkish conquest of Constantinople) seem to reflect a kind of wishful thinking of the mappers regarding a possible reconquista by the Christians.

The book will be of particular value for its tabulations of the variant place names on the Black Sea littoral as represented both in the texts of navigation manuals and on the maps. Where possible, they have been matched with their modern designations and summarized on some elegantly drawn "reconstructed" maps. An interesting aspect of Fomenko's analysis is his focus on the flags drawn on the maps, which indicated to their makers the political affiliation of particular locations. His tables include drawings of all the flags with identifications of their political referents.

Elegantly produced in medium format, with numerous generally good quality black-and-white illustrations and a generous selection of color plates, the book is not without its problems. There is no excuse for the absence of indexes, which would be essential for locating particular data in the discussion of the evidence from specific maps and regarding specific locations on them. All too often the illustrations bear no obvious relationship to the places in the text that refer to them, and the use largely of overall depictions of maps, instead of focusing on details which might be legible, means that many of the pictures end up being merely decorative. The book is impressive for its drawing upon sources in a broad range of languages, although curiously never seems

to use the standard multi-volume history of cartography by J. B. Harley and David Woodward (one volume is merely listed in the bibliography). A proper review of Fomenko will certainly want to compare what he has done with a book I have not seen by A. Iu. Gordeev which appeared two years earlier and, judging from a single laudatory descriptive paragraph here (p. 15), would seem to overlap with Fomenko's work in important ways. That he seems otherwise never to have used it may be explained by his having received it while his own book was already in production.

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Shakh-Makhmud ibn Mirza Fazil Churas. *Khronika. Kriticheskii tekst, perevod, kommentarii, issledovanie i ukazateli* O. F. Akimushkina. 2-e izd. Fontes scripti antiqui. Sankt-Peterburg: Peterburgskoe lingvisticheskoe ob-vo., 2010. 496 pp. ISBN 978-5-4318-0001-6.

This is a second (apparently unchanged) edition of the late Oleg Fedorovich Akimushkin's critical text, translation, and commentary of the Chronicle focusing on the history of East Turkestan compiled by Shah Mahmud ibn Mirza Fazil Churas around 1676–7. The first edition appeared in the series *Pis'mennye pamiatniki Vostoka* (vol. 45) in 1976. The lone manuscript of the work is now in the Russian State Library in Moscow. Akimushkin was a much-published specialist on Persian manuscripts in the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg.

The book contains the second, original part of Churas' Chronicle, which is a continuation of the well-known *Tarih-i Rashidi* of Mirza Muhammad Haidar Duglat. The first part of Churas' work is derivative and thus of little independent historical interest, whereas the second part, covering from the 16<sup>th</sup> century down well into the 17<sup>th</sup> contains much new information, especially regarding the Black Mountain Khojas. Apart from its substantial introduction about the author, the relationship of his text to the sources, the historical value of what it contains, the manuscript, etc., the book has extended commentaries to the text itself and in appendices a tabular summary of the participation of Churas' family members in the political history of Mogulistan and the Persian text of Churas' *Anis at-talibin*, published here from MS Bodleian Ind. Inst. Pers. No. 45. A four-page summary in English describes the historical value of the Chronicle.

This new edition should make the text more readily accessible, given the fact that the first edition is long out of print.

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*Art, Architecture and Religion Along the Silk Roads*, Ed. Ken Parry. Silk Road Studies, XII. Turnout: Brepols; Ancient History Documentary Research Center Macquarie University, NSW Australia, 2008. vi +275 pp. + ill. ISBN 978-2-503-52428-3.

Although this volume has been out for several years and probably is well known, it is worth noting, in no least part

to call attention to the valuable series of "Silk Road Studies" which Brepols has been publishing at somewhat irregular intervals over the years. Most of the volumes are collected essays from conferences; but some, such as Wassilios Klein's on the "Nestorian" monuments in Kyrgyzstan (Vol. III) and Craig Benjamin's on the Yuezhi (Vol. XIV) are substantial monographs. Several of the volumes, including the one under review here publish primarily the work of scholars based in Australia, where Macquarie University has hosted conferences of the Australasian Society for Inner Asian Studies. This volume contains the papers of the fifth such conference, held in 2004, whose appearance in print took a long time, though, as the editors point out, the authors did have the opportunity to update their material in those intervening years. As in the previous cases, the papers of the conference were quite diverse in their topical and chronological coverage, ranging from Bronze Age archaeology in Choresmia to ethno-religious issues in Xinjiang today.

The contributions here which probably will have the most lasting value are those which survey the state of scholarship and publication on an important topic even if they make little pretense to present any kind of forceful argument. I might single out in particular the essay by the distinguished specialist on Manichaeism, Samuel Lieu, "Manichaean Art and Architecture Along the Silk Road" (79-101), which not only offers a good guide to the publications of Manichaean art but includes an appendix with publication details of the main Manichaean texts. Lieu, of course, has been one of the key figures in the project to document Christian and Manichaean remains in Quanzhou, the impressive results of which have just appeared in the volume reviewed elsewhere in this volume of *The Silk Road*. The other essay which stands out for its value in surveying the field is Mark Allon's "Recent Discoveries of Buddhist Manuscripts From Afghanistan and Pakistan and Their Significance" (pp. 153-78). Allon has had a long association with the Early Buddhist Manuscript Project based at the University of Washington, which is analyzing and publishing many of these finds. He has a volume in its text series and, inter alia, has contributed to the study of the manuscripts in the Schøyen and Senior Collections. Apart from describing the various collections and what so far has been done on them, his article here provides a very clear (if preliminary) idea of the considerable importance of this material for our understanding of the early history of Buddhist texts and their transmission.

Of the other essays, all of which cannot be reviewed here, one that struck me as having particular value for posing some widely ranging questions and hypotheses is that by Michelle Negus Cleary, "Walls in the Desert: The Phenomenon of Central Asian Urbanism in Ancient Chorasmia" (pp. 51-79). In it she examines what has been written to date on the major walled enclosures of that region (in the area near the Aral Sea between the Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers), which, despite their extent, seem to show little evidence for what might be characterized as "urban" development. This essay anticipates the doctoral dissertation Cleary was in the process of writing and which shows some promise for raising new questions about the nature of settlement in that region and the relationship between settled and nomadic or semi-nomadic populations.

Other contributions in the book include two essays on specific archaeological sites in Central Asia (one by Alison Betts and V. N. Yagodin; the other by Fiona Kidd), ones which raise, respectively, interesting questions about early Zoroastrianism and about trade connections of Ferghana. I have always found Geoff Watson's contributions to these volumes, on modern travel and descriptive accounts of Central Asia, to be of interest. Here (pp. 127-52) he treats the rather inconsequential British missionary activities, which, at least for Xinjiang, pale in comparison to what the Swedes were doing (the latter's activity is barely mentioned though). Peter Edwell's essay on evidence about Palmyrenes and especially their religions at Dura Europos (pp.232-46) is a somewhat thin introduction to an important subject. For an update by Lucinda Dirven (in part summarizing her monograph on the subject that Edwell cites), one can consult the essay in the recent *Crossroads of Antiquity* volume reviewed elsewhere on these pages. Lastly I would note Jonathan Markley's "What Huo Qubing Did: The Problem of the Feng-Shan Sacrifice" (pp. 247-58) as an installment which might raise anticipation for his monograph on how Sima Qian treated the subject of Han-Xiongnu relations, a book that is shortly to appear in Brepols' *Silk Road Studies*.

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*The "Silk Roads" in Time and Space: Migrations, Motifs, and Materials*. Ed. Victor H. Mair. Sino-Platonic Papers, No. 228, July 2012. 308 pp. ISSN 2157-9679 (print) 2157-9687 (Online at <[http://www.sino-platonic.org/complete/spp228\\_silk\\_roads.pdf](http://www.sino-platonic.org/complete/spp228_silk_roads.pdf)>).

This series, which has made so much stimulating new research readily (now freely) and rapidly available, is a tribute to its founder and energetic editor Victor Mair, who is known for his active encouragement of scholars at all stages of their careers and with quite varied backgrounds. The volume here is a selection of what he considers the best papers turned in by students who took a course he offered in spring 2011 on one of his favorite topics, "The Mummies of the Silk Road." As he notes in his brief introduction one goal of the course and this volume is to encourage re-thinking of traditional, narrow ideas of what the Silk Road was all about, to move us away from any idea that it might have been a single route, primarily for trade and especially in one product, silk. As one might expect, the papers offer a considerable range in originality and depth of research (there are sometimes glaring omissions of "obvious" resources), but all certainly testify to the inspiration Professor Mair must provide for his students and all are worth reading. It is too bad we do not learn anything about the authors beyond their names and the fact they took the course. Many of them read Chinese; where it is relevant, some show an impressive range of knowledge about visual materials. Several of the articles have been provided with illustrations of excellent quality.

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*Bulletin of the Asia Institute*. Vol. 21 (2007/2012). 214 pp. + 16 color plates. ISSN 0890-4464.

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Pratapaditya Pal. *The Elegant Image: Bronzes from the Indian Subcontinent in the Siddharth K. Bhansali Collection*. Marg vol. 62.4 (by Donald M. Stadtner) (206).

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西域文史. *Literature and History of the Western Regions*. Vol. 6 (2012). Ed. 朱玉麒 Zhu Yuqi. 366 pp. + 4 pp. plates. ISBN 978-7-03-030424-7.

All articles are in Chinese, with short summaries in English. The Chinese table of contents may be found at <<http://www.serindia.org.cn/post/221.html>>.

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