The Silk Road

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(continued)

"The Bridge between Eastern and Western Cultures"

Cover: The people of ancient Palmyra: funerary sculptures from the Palmyra tombs, as displayed in the following museums: the Palmyra Museum, the National Museum (Damascus), the Louvre (Paris), the British Museum (London), the Ashmolean Museum (Oxford), the Altes Museum (Berlin), the Glyptoteket (Copenhagen), the Archaeological Museum (Istanbul), and the Archaeological Museum (Gaziantep). Photographs all by Daniel C. Waugh.

Readers are strongly encouraged to view the online version of the journal, since so many of the illustrations are in color and can be best appreciated that way.

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Editor: Daniel C. Waugh
dwaugh@u.washington.edu

All physical mailings concerning the journal (this includes books for review) should be sent to the editor at his postal address: Daniel Waugh, Department of History, Box 353560, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195 USA. It is advisable to send him an e-mail as well, informing him of any postings to that address.

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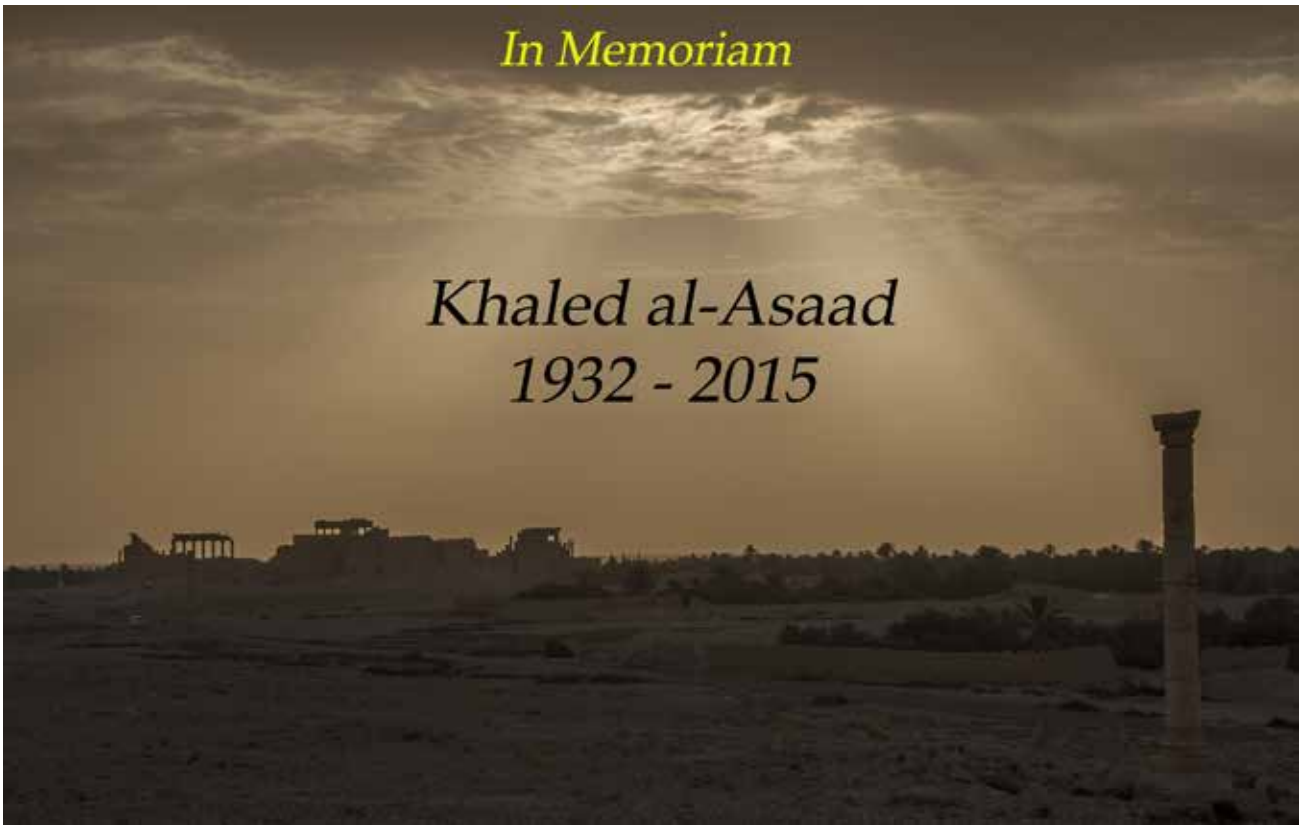


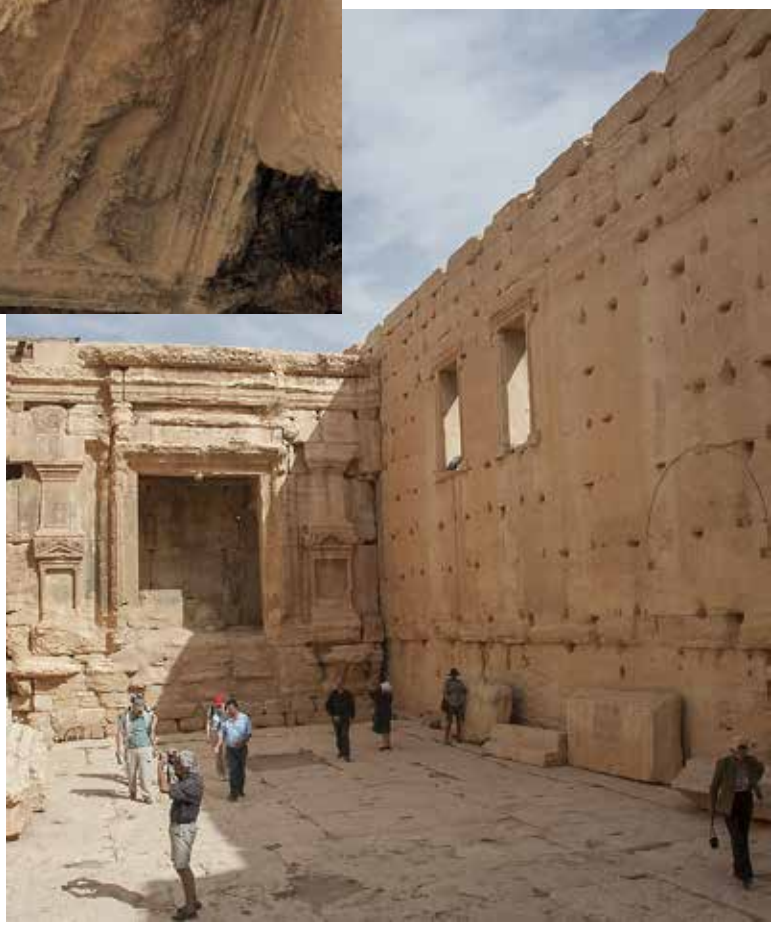
Khaled Mohamad al-Asaad devoted much of his life to studying and protecting the antiquties of Palmyra, the World Heritage site in Syria which UNESCO cited as "a great city that was one of the most important cultural centres of the ancient world." Al-Asaad's dedication and what it symbolized cost him his life, when Daesh beheaded him on 18 August of this year and hung his remains on public display. Those same merchants of death "make their faith a pretext so that they may turn men from the way of Allah. Verily evil is that which they are wont to do" (*Qur'an* 63:2). We mourn their victims, condemn their crimes against humanity, and lament the wanton destruction they have visited on sites such as Khaled al-Asaad's Palmyra. This selection of images is a tribute to his memory.

View toward the Temple of Bel.

The theater.

The triumphal arch, now destroyed.

The Temple of Bel: (above) a model in the Palmyra Museum reconstructing its original appearance, and (below) the central cella, now destroyed.



The Temple of Bel
(from bottom to top):

The central cella, view to north adyton (niche);

East end of north adyton lintel: one of the Palmyrene gods (Aglibol?) and a portion of the heavens; on the left the tip of the wing of an eagle representing Bel;

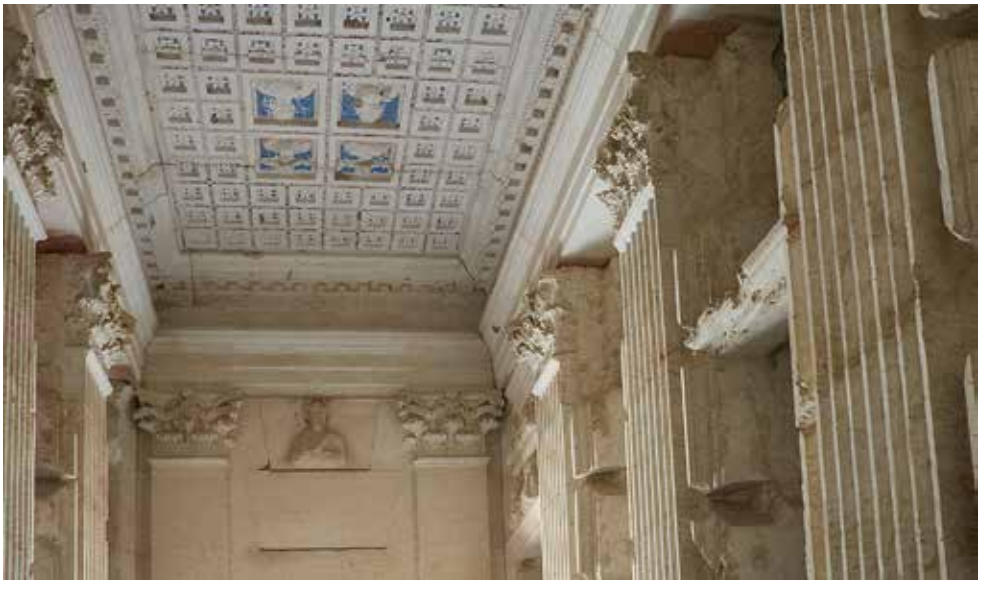
Monolith ceiling of the south adyton.

Two fragments of sculpted pediments, displayed just outside the entrance to the cella of the Temple of Bel. Fate uncertain, but likely destroyed.



Tower tombs, all now destroyed: (above, left to right) Iamliku, Atenatan, Elahbel; (below): No. 71, and Julius Aurelius Bolma.

(above): Tomb of the Three Brothers, fate unknown.
(below): Interior of the destroyed tower tomb of Elahbel.



(above): Temple of Baal-Shamin, now destroyed;
(below): The Qalaat Shirkuh castle and the Temple of Baal-Shamin.

Now destroyed lion statue found at the Temple of Al-lat, displayed outside the Palmyra Museum. A copy is on display outside the National Museum in Damascus.

Note on the photographs: All of the photos on site in Palmyra were taken in October 2010 by Daniel C. Waugh. The photos from museum collections on the next page are also by Daniel C. Waugh, the museums housing the sculptures including: the Palmyra Museum, the National Museum (Damascus), the Louvre (Paris), the British Museum (London), the Ashmolean Museum (Oxford), the Altes Museum (Berlin), the Glyptoteket (Copenhagen), the Archaeological Museum (Istanbul), and the Archaeological Museum (Gaziantep).

The people of ancient Palmyra: funerary sculptures from the Palmyra tombs, now on display in various museums. The fate of those from the Palmyra Museum is uncertain, as there are conflicting reports about whether they were safely evacuated to Damascus.

Safe Journey!
A Very Short History of Shoes from Korean Tombs

Youngsook Pak
SOAS, University of London

In Kim Hun's short story, *Hwajang*, the body of the deceased wife of the narrator was dressed tightly with raw hemp cloth according to Korean funerary ritual. At the feet a pair of pretty female shoes, *kkotsin* 꽃신 were attached before the body entered the cremation chamber (Kim 2004, p. 45).* Placing shoes with the deceased person appears to be a continuous tradition for over a millennium in Korean funerary custom, no matter whether the deceased was buried or cremated. From the 5th century to the modern day, as described plainly in Kim Hun's contemporary short story, footwear seems to be an important funerary item of or for the deceased.

Many years ago in the National Museum of Korea, when I came across the display of a pair of woven sandals excavated from a 16th century tomb of a local gentry in Kyŏngsang province in Korea, I resolved to investigate why models of shoes or shoes that were never actually worn were placed in tombs, and what significant meaning they embody beyond our mortal existence. Shoes as a part of garments or as an individual burial item disclose a significant aspect of Korean culture.[1] I shall discuss in this short essay pottery shoes, gilt bronze shoes from the Three Kingdoms period and one pair of *mit'uri*, hemp-woven sandals from the early Chosŏn period.[2]

Pottery shoes

1. Ankle boot, *hwa* 靴

Taesŏngdong in Kimhae South Kyŏngsang province on the west of Nakdong River is a significant archaeological site as the former graveyard of Kŭmgwan Kaya, one of the Six Kaya 伽耶 (42–562) confederation of states. Kaya states were in the present south Kyŏngsang province and stretched to a large part of Chŏlla province. To their north was the Silla kingdom and on the west Paekche. As evidenced from archaeological excavations, Kaya states had active cultural and trade relations with Yamato, Paekche, Silla, and Han China. In Taesŏngdong Kaya tombs (4th – early 6th century) funerary furnishings in precious materials of bronze, gold, jade, crystal, quantities of pottery vessels and even a Han Chinese bronze mirror (Tomb No. 23) were excavated (*Kaya* 1991, pp. 28-33).

Among the numerous pottery vessels excavated in Taesŏngdong tombs (5th – 6th century) in Kimhae is an unusual pottery short ankle boot with stamped roundel decoration [Fig. 1]. No further details are known

Fig. 1. Pottery ankle boot on top of a pottery sherd of a vessel [?] Kaya 5th century Taesŏngdong, Kimhae, South Kyŏngsang province.

After: *Conversation with Curator*. No. 150. National Museum of Korea, 2009, p. 15.

* Note: Korean transcriptions in English in this essay are in the McCune-Reischauer system which is used by most scholars in the West, while Korean new transcription system is used in Korean publications, e.g., Gongju instead of Kongju (MR). There is a considerable number of studies and publications on the archaeological excavations of Three Kingdoms, Koguryŏ (BCE 37 – CE 668), Paekche (BCE 18 – CE 663), Silla (BCE 57 – CE 935). Hence I will not discuss the structure of tumuli or burial goods from this period other than shoes. After finishing this article, I learned by chance from the web page of Pokch'ŏn Museum in Pusan that in 2010 it had a special exhibition of nearly 90 shoes, "*Kodaein ŭi sin*" [Shoes of Ancient People] excavated from the tombs from the Iron Age (300 BCE – CE 300) to the Three Kingdoms period (1st century BCE – 7th c.). Unfortunately, I have not yet seen the catalogue of this exhibition; it may contain materials comparable to those discussed in this paper. Also a special exhibition on shoes at the Victoria and Albert Museum was mounted in summer 2015. However, the V&A exhibition was focused on the history and development of shoes mainly as luxurious fashion items in western societies.

After: *Chosŏn kobun pyŏkhwa jip*. Tokyo, 1916, Pl. 68

Fig, 2. Man and three women on the north wall of the stone chamber. Sashinch'ong, Tomb of Four Spirits, also known as the Hunting Tomb, Maesanni.

from the publication of the National Museum. The toe of the boot is pointed.

Very similar but longer ankle boots are depicted in tombs of the Koguryŏ kingdom (37 BCE — CE 668) several hundred kilometres north of Kimhae. In the 5th century Suryŏbch'ong 狩獵塚 (Hunting Tomb), Tomb of Four Spirits, also known as the Hunting Tomb, South P'yŏng'an province, mysterious things are going on [Fig. 2]. There are depictions of the Seven Stars of the Great Bear, which guide the soul on the road to the other world, the tortoise entangled with two snakes which is the legendary animal symbol of the north, the deceased man and three women, presumably his wives, seated cross-legged on a dais under a canopy and a groom with a horse.[3] The figures have flame-shaped wings from the chest over the shoulders.[4] In front of the dais, three pairs of boots are neatly placed; a fourth pair has likely disappeared through damage. Boots of a similar type are also depicted in analogous fashion beneath the portrait of the deceased couple in Ssangnyŏngch'ong 雙楹塚 (Tomb of Double Columns), in South P'yŏng'an province, also dated around mid-5th century [Fig. 3].

In Paekche ankle boots appear to be a part of official attire. The Chinese handscroll "Tribute Officials of the Liang Dynasty 梁職貢圖" depicts the foreign envoys who came to the Liang court in 526–536. Among them is the Paekche envoy, depicted with the title "Paekche Kuksa, 百濟國使, Envoy from Paekche Kingdom" [Fig. 4]. Here an elegantly attired and youthful-looking Paekche official wears black boots. The existing handscroll is a later copy (probably Song dynasty), but the representation of figures and the accompanying text are authentic documents for the study of official costume and the historical circumstances.

After: *Koguryŏ kobun pyŏkhwa*. Ed. Koguryŏ Yŏn'guhoe. Seoul: Hagyŏn munhwasa, 1997, p. 22

Fig. 3 (left). Portrait of the deceased couple. Ssangnyŏngch'ong, Tomb of Double Columns. North wall of the coffin chamber. Koguryŏ, 5th century.

After: Muryŏngwang sidae 2014, p. 51

Fig. 4 (right). Paekche envoy in "Tributary Officials to the Liang Court" (526-536). Song copy. Handscroll, ink and colour on silk. The Palace Museum, Beijing.

After: Xu 2006, Pl. 4-1

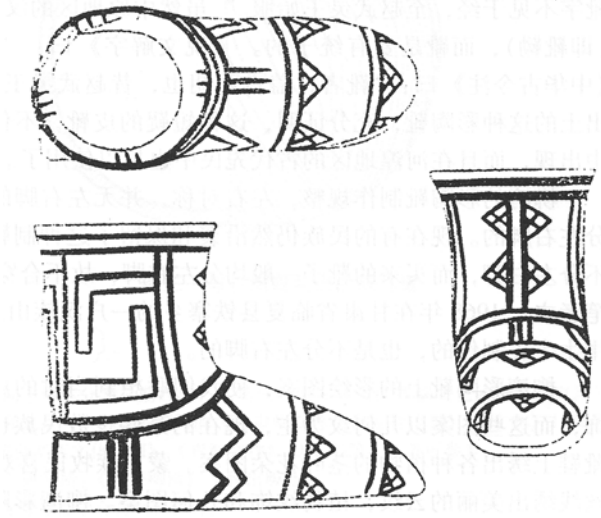


Fig. 5. Painted pottery boot from Qinghai. Xindian Culture, ca 1000 BCE. H. 11.6, L. 14.6, Thickness 0.3 cm.

The ankle boots "hwa" 靴, meaning "leather shoes," have been discovered from tombs over a vast geographical area in the northern hemisphere. The oldest example is a single pottery boot excavated by a Chinese archaeological team in Liuwan, Lede in Qinghai province close to the present Tibetan plateau [Fig. 5] (Xu 2006, pp. 61ff, Pls. 4-1, 4-2). The Liuwan 柳灣 site belongs to the Bronze age Xindian 辛店 culture (1500 – 1000 BCE) in the area of the present Qinghai and Gansu provinces. This surprisingly thinly-potted boot (its thickness is only 0.3 cm), quite low-fired around 600°c, is made of reddish pottery with black painted decoration of geometric and zig-zag patterns. It is an imitation of a boot made of three pieces of leather sewn together: ankle section, uppers and sole. Even the thick sole is realistically rendered in the pottery. The excavators speculate whether actual leather boots were also decorated in this fashion (*Ibid*., p. 62, Fig. 2). In the same excavation was a considerable number of pottery vessels painted with similar geometric designs. A thousand years later, a comparable wealth of pottery vessels was found as provisions for the departed in Korean Silla and Kaya tombs.

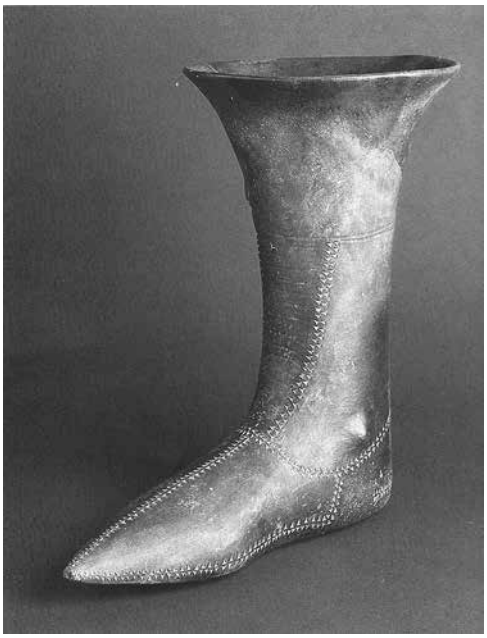
Courtesy of the Agora Museum, Athens

Fig. 6. Terracotta boots. Greece ca. 900 BCE. H. 7, L. 9.5, W. 4.5 cm. Inventory No. P 19249.

Boots have been found in the tombs of ancient Greece too. In female burials ca. 900 BCE, terracotta boots were found at the feet of the deceased (now displayed in the Agora Museum in Athens) [Fig. 6]. According to the museum entry, these terracotta boots have holes on each side of the uppers to be tied with laces and the surface has a black glaze, a faithful copy of black leather boots.

Another terracotta shoe excavated from a grave in Armenia dated 7th century BCE is a calf-length boot on which the seams between several pieces of leather are clearly shown [Fig. 7].[5] But why just one boot? Inter-

Fig. 7. Pottery boot. Excavated at Karmir-blur (Yerevan). 7th century BCE. State History Museum of Armenia.



After: *Tesori* 1987, p. 56, cat. no. 64

estingly, there is an ancient Greek myth about Jason, who lost one sandal in a stream and was identified by his single remaining sandal as the man who would inherit the throne. I do not know whether there is any link between this story and the single footwear from the tomb in the Caucasus, and whether the one pottery boot was found from an undisturbed tomb.

After: S*ecrets of the Silk Road,* Bowers Museum, Santa Ana, California, 2010: Pl. 83, p. 198

Fig. 8. Embroidered Boots. L. 29; W. 16.5 cm. 2nd – 3rd century. Excavated from Tomb No. 5 of Cemetery No. 1, Niya. Xinjiang Uyghur Automous Region Museum.

A pair of short ankle boots were excavated from Kurgan No. 6 (1st century CE) at Noyon uul in Mongolia. They are made of felt and leather and sewn with a silk band to the trousers (Rudenko 1969, Fig. 34, p. 138). Another pair of short ankle boots, embroidered with leather soles, were unearthed from a Niya tomb (2nd – 3rd century) in Xinjiang [Fig. 8]. Under the Liao dynasty, the deceased royal couple, Princess Chenguo 陳國公主 (1000-1018) and her husband, were adorned with sumptuous regal funerary costume including gold masks, and wearing silver gilt boots splendidly decorated with phoenix and cloud motifs [Figs. 9a, b].[6]

These few examples of ankle boots show that boots were not uncommon footwear for nearly two thousand years in ancient Greece, on the Himalayan plateau, and across Eurasia to East Asia. Therefore it is quite likely that this type of ankle boots originated amongst steppe nomads, as many scholars have already noted. Hide was the readily available material of the prehistoric pastoral and hunting society. It was only natural that the ancient people in the northern hemisphere made boots which protected their feet in a cold climate and which were practical for riding horses, and then placed them in the tomb as a significant burial item.

2. Flat shoes, *hye* 鞋

In contrast to *hwa* 靴, ankle boot, *hye* 鞋 is the most common type of flat shoes. The two Chinese characters, *xue* 靴 and *xie* 鞋, have the radical "leather," sig-

After: *Liao* 1998, Pl. 3

Fig. 9a. Burial of Princess Chenguo. Liao 1018. Qinglong Town in Inner Mongolia.

Fig. 9b. The silver gilt boots from Princess Chenguo's tomb.

After: *Zhongguo beifang caoyuan gudai jinyin qi*.Beijing, 2005, Ill.123

After: *Leeum Samsŏng Misulgwan sojangp'um sŏnjip*. Seoul, 2004, p. 297

Fig. 10. Pottery shoes. Kaya 5th century. H. 6.8, 7.2; L. 23.5, 24; W. 7.5, 6.8 cm. Leeum Samsŏng Art Museum.

nifying they were originally made of leather. *Li* 履 denotes all footwear equivalent to the vernacular Korean 신 "*sin*" or 신발 "*sinbal*" as a general term for shoes.

A pair of pottery flat shoes now in Leeum Samsŏng Art Museum illustrates the type *hye* 鞋 flat shoes with uppers [Fig. 10]. The provenance of this pair of pottery shoes is not known, but it is said they are from a Kaya tomb, another pottery imitation of a real *hye*. The toe of the shoes is raised up. The tab at the heel which would help in putting the shoes on is also modelled after that on a real shoe. The small holes around the edges were tied up with shoe laces (Han 1981, p. 229, Pl. 91). This is an unusually realistic representation of shoes with laces. There are two possibilites as to whether such shoes actually existed. The Leeum shoes may represent *chehye* 祭鞋, ceremonial shoes, an integral part of ceremonial accoutrements of funerary rites and ancestral service, so that the shoes are secured with shoe laces and not easily slipped off (on *chehye*, see Kim 1998, p. 336). On the other hand, this pair of pottery shoes may reflect the footwear of 5th- or 6th-century Korea. In the 5th-century Koguryŏ tomb Ssangnyŏngch'ong (Tomb of Double Columns) near Yonggang in South P'yŏng'an province (the same tomb as Fig. 3), young boys following their mother in a funerary procession wear shoes with shoe laces done up in zig-zag fashion [Fig. 11]. We do not know whether there might have been actual shoe laces for these pottery shoes: like all organic materials in Korean tombs, they have not survived in the acid soil.

Whether laced or not, such flat shoes were widely worn. In another Koguryŏ tomb Muyongch'ong (Tomb of Dancers) in Jian, the male dancers wear the same flat shoes with wide front section for the toes [Fig. 12]. The young male dancers are in pantaloons with the polka dot pattern fashionable in Koguryŏ, while the female dancers wear ankle boots under a pleated skirt and long dress. The name of this tomb, Tomb of Dancers, comes from this elegant dance scene.[7] The depiction of dancers in Muyongch'ong as well as young figures in Ssangnyŏngch'ong clearly indicates that such shoes were worn by men in ancient Korea. Furthermore, the ceremonial shoes *chehye* 祭鞋 would have been only for male participants in the ceremony. It makes one think therefore that the unknown tomb occupant of the Kaya pottery shoes in the Leeum Museum was a man and this pair of flat shoes were meant for him.

After: *Chosŏn Misul Pangmulgwan*. P'yŏngyang: Chosŏn Hwabosa, 1980, Pl. 16

Fig. 12. Dancers and spectators in Muyongch'ong. Koguryŏ, late 5th century. Jian, Qilin Province.

After: Kim Ki-ung. *Chōsen hantō no hekiga kofun*. Tokyo, 1980, Pl. 35

Fig. 11. Young boys in a funerary procession. Mural painting in Ssangnyŏngch'ong, near Yonggang in South P'yŏng'an Province. Koguryŏ, mid-5th century.

After: *Wenhua* 1972, Pl. 108

Fig. 13. Brocade silk shoes. H. 8.3, L. 29.7, W. 8.8 cm. Tang, North District Tomb No. 381 Astana, Turfan, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. An almost identical pair was found in Astana Tomb No. 224.

Archaeological finds prove that flat shoes *hye* 鞋 as well as ankle boots *hwa* 靴 were worn by people over a wide geographical area of the northern hemisphere. Shoes adorned in embroidery or brocade silk, or in tapestry-weave were preserved in excellent condition in the dry climate of Central Asia as exemplified in the Astana Tang period tombs [Fig. 13]. Chinese characters woven in the upper of these silk shoes, such as "noble and prosperous," "fit for a prince," "heaven grant longevity" indicate that the deceased, a male, would continuously enjoy high status and longevity in the other world [Fig. 14].

3. Chipsin 짚신 Straw sandals

Nearly a hundred tombs are densely packed on the mountain in Pokch'ŏn-dong, present Pusan in South Kyŏng-sang province. This was the cemetery of rulers of Kŭmgwan Kaya (42 – 562) and the tombs are dated approximately around the 4th to 5th century.[8] Iron horse trappings and armour buried in piled stone wooden pit chamber tombs covered with an earthen mound, *sŏk-sil mogwakbun* 石室木槨墳, confirm that Kaya had rich iron reserves. Gold headgear and jewelleries, jade and bronze artefacts and profuse pottery vessels in diverse and distinctive types and forms were discovered. The archaeological materials from Kaya tombs and comparable burial goods from Japanese tombs of the Yayoi (3rd century) and Kofun (250 – 552) periods manifest the exceptionally close political and cultural ties between the two countries.

Among the excavated materials from Poch'ŏndong Tomb No. 53, a pair of pottery sandals, representing straw-woven sandals, *chipsin* 짚신 or *ch'ori* 草履, stand out. These were unearthed together with a pottery lamp [Figs. 15a, b]. This tomb has two compartments — the larger stone chamber for the main occupant with burial items of iron and bronze weapons and the side wooden chamber for potteries and the sacrificial victim. Pottery vessels and stands all display typical Kaya design with geometric perforations. The sandals and an oil lamp were found in the side chamber. The oil lamp (H. 12.3 cm) consists of four small cups (each cup, H. 8.6 cm, D. 6.2 cm) on the rim above a stand. The pottery sandals (H. 4 cm, W. 6.7 cm, L. 16.4 cm) are also mounted on a stand and further enriched with a slender stem cup.[9] Curiously, only one cup is still attached on one of the sandals, while the other one is missing. This most unusual composition of three sections — stand, sandals, and cup — indicates that this pair of shoes was an important item for the unknown tomb occupant.

After: *Secrets* 2010, p. 100

Fig. 14. Shoes with Embroidered Characters. H 4.5; L. 22.5; W. 8 cm. 4th Century. Excavated from Tomb No. 39, Astana, Turfan. Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region Museum.

Fig. 15a

Fig. 15a, b. Mounted pottery sandals with a stem cup and pottery lamp [next page]. Sandal: H. 11, L. 16.9 cm. Lamp: H. 12, D. 16 cm. Kaya 5th century. From Pokch'ondong Tomb No. 53. Pusan, South Kyŏngsang province.

Sandals have been excavated from other sites, mainly in the southern part of Korea. In the ancient lake site in Kwanbuk-ni and water channel site in Kungnam-ji in Puyŏ, which was the last capital of the Paekche Kingdom (538-660), archaeologists excavated nearly 64 sandals in organic materials dating to the early 6th century. According to the investigation of these sites, some of the sandals in Kungnam-ji might have floated through the drainage from the capital city, while the Kwanbuk-ni sandals were found in a mud field, together with some bare footprints. These circumstances were interpreted to mean that the sandals were abandoned for their wearers to work in bare feet (*Paekche* 2003, pp. 7, 14). However, Roderick Whitfield suggests that they simply got stuck in the mud and the wearers had to walk in bare feet! The scientific analysis of these Puyŏ sandals reveals that they were made not of rice straw but of a special kind of plant *pudŭl* 부들, also known as *hyangp'o* 香蒲, which grows on riverbanks. Unlike straw sandals, *chipsin* or *pudŭl* sandals are quite soft, and more comfortable than tough rice straw sandals, but they had the disadvantage of being easily worn out (*Ibid*., pp. 134ff.).

Kyŏngju National Museum has just one pottery *chipsin*, which like Kaya sandals is mounted on a stand with a sturdier large cup [Fig. 16]. The straps are pleated like those of the real straw sandal. But why was only one shoe found? Was that intentional? There is no explanation or detailed archaeological report about this sandal. However, the following story about the Silla monk Hyesuk (7th century), recorded in *Samguk yusa* 三國遺史, may give some clue:

Not long after this, Hyesuk suddenly died. The villagers put him on a bier and buried him to the east

Fig. 15b

After: *Kaya Bunkaten*. Tokyo National Museum. Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 1992, pp. 88, 89

Photo courtesy of Daniel C. Waugh

Fig. 16. Pottery sandal with a cup. Silla 5th century. H. 12.5 cm. Kyŏngju National Museum.

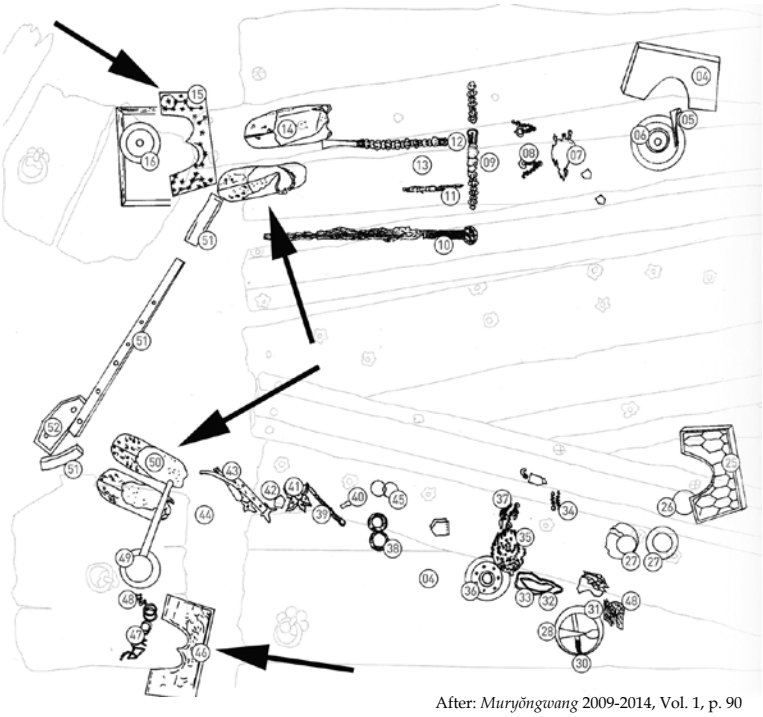
of Ear Pass. … One of the villagers [who was late] came from west of the pass, and met Hyesuk on the way. Asking him where he was going, Hyesuk replied "I have lived here for a long time. Now I want to travel to other places." Facing each other, they bowed and parted. Having walked about half a *ri* [between 200 to 250 m], he stepped on a cloud and disappeared. When the villager arrived to the east of the pass, he saw that the funeral party had not yet dispersed. He told everything about his encounter, and when they opened the tumulus to check, all they found was one straw shoe [唯芒鞋一隻而已]. Today there is a temple north of Angang which is called Hyesuk[sa]. This is where he used to live. There is also a stupa there. [*Samguk yusa* IV 2012, pp. 498ff; my emphasis.]

The motif of one shoe is also found in the fictional story of the Chan 禪 Patriarch Bodhidharma, who arrived from India to China around 520 (*Ibid*., p. 499, n. 102). When he returned to India, he was wearing two shoes, but when people in the Northern Wei excavated his tomb, they found only one straw sandal. This legend is apparently well-known as "with two shoes returning to the west. One straw sandal [found in the tomb] 雙履西歸 一隻革履" and is still told today in the Shaolin temple.[10] One interpretation of this story is that one shoe in the tomb might have the connotation of the symbolic presence of the departed (Ch'oe 1995, p.

437). Iryŏn (1206–1289), the eminent Buddhist monk and the National Preceptor of the Koryŏ kingdom who was the author of *Samguk yusa,* collected largely Buddhist materials to compile the history of the Three Kingdoms. These later accounts of a single shoe or sandal in association with the tomb of a Buddhist monk, or that of the patriarch Bodhidharma himself, can of course have no relevance to the single pottery sandal excavated from a Silla tomb, no more than could the still earlier story of Jason from a different culture, but they are examples of the mystery that was attached whenever only one of a pair of shoes was found.

Gilt bronze shoes from Royal Tombs

Two pair of gilt bronze shoes were discovered from the tomb of King Muryŏng 武寧王 (r. 501–523) of the Paekche kingdom (18 BCE – CE 663) in Songsan-ni in Kongju 公州, the second capital Ungjin, South Ch'ungch'ŏng province [Figs. 17, 18]. The discovery of the Songsan-ni royal tomb is the most significant event in the history of modern Korean archaeology, as it was the first complete tomb to be found undisturbed and with written documents.[11] The epitaph found in the tomb recorded that King Muryŏng died in 523 at the age of 62. After the three year mourning period, according to the Confucian rite, in 525 the King was properly buried. His royal sepulchre in decorated lotus tiles was built and his splendidly furnished black lacquer coffin was accompanied by a great variety of paraphernalia. His queen followed him soon after in 526, and three years later in 529 she was united with her husband in their final resting place. The royal couple reposed with the support of head rests while their feet in gilt bronze shoes were placed on foot rests, as the plan of the tomb shows [Fig. 19].



After: *Muryŏngwang* 2009-2014, Vol. 1, p. 90

Fig. 19. Plan of King Muryŏng's tomb. Reconstructed arrangement of burial findings in the tomb. No. 14 King's gilt bronze shoes, No. 15 King's foot rest, No. 50 Queen's gilt bronze shoes, No. 46 Queen's foot rest.

After: *Gongju National Museum*, 2004, p. 17

Fig. 17. Gilt bronze shoes for the King. L. 35cm. Paekche (523). Excavated from the Tomb of King Muryŏng.

Fig. 18. Gilt bronze shoes for the Queen. L. 35cm. Paekche (526). Excavated from the Tomb of King Muryŏng.

After: *Gongju National Museum*, 2004, p. 30

King Muryŏng's shoes are adorned with open-work hexagonal tortoiseshell design on a silver base, while the Queen's shoes have floral scrolls on a gilt bronze base, symbolic motifs of longevity and prosperity. Both pairs of gilt bronze shoes are further enriched with gold spangles attached with twisted silver wire.[12] The soles have numerous spikes. The practicality of wearing such metal shoes with spikes has been debated among Korean scholars. Such splen-

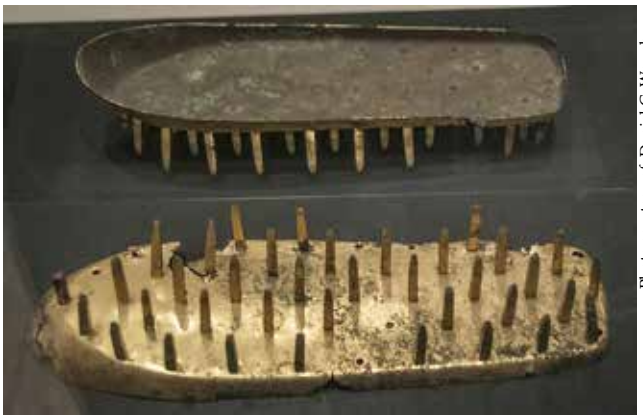


Photo courtesy of Daniel C. Waugh

Fig. 20. Gilt bronze shoe soles with spikes. L 34.8 cm. Koguryŏ 5th-6th century. Reported from Ji'an, Qilin Province. National Museum of Korea.

did metal shoes are certainly ceremonial as a part of a royal funerary outfit. Further evidence is a striking example of gilt bronze shoe soles now in the National Museum of Korea, presumably excavated in Jian, the ancient Koguryŏ territory [Fig. 20]. The spikes are riveted to the sole, the edges of which are turned up and pierced with pairs of holes to fasten the uppers and insole. It is quite possible that the insole was made of thick textile. In fact, the detailed scientific analysis of the Queen's gilt bronze shoes mentions a thick textile remnant, which could have been the textile insole or, as has been suggested, part of Queen's silk shoes or socks (Park and Ro 2011, p. 203).

The spikes might have been actually soldered on the shoe sole in real shoes. The mural paintings in the Samsilch'ong Tomb of Three Chambers [Fig. 21] and in Tunggou Tomb No. 12 show military guards wearing such shoes with vertical short spikes. We do not know what kind of materials were used for shoe soles and for uppers, but it is conceivable that such shoes were made of leather and a thick layer of material to which spikes could be attached. One would have to have very thick socks made of felt or something else. Considering the bitterly cold Manchurian winter, such spiked shoes might have been indispensable items for walking on snow or ice.

From other, mainly undocumented, Silla and Paekche tombs a number of gilt bronze shoes have been discovered. A pair of gilt bronze shoes were a part of regalia. In the 5th century Silla tomb Kŭmgwanch'ong 金冠塚 (Geumgwanchong, Tomb of the Gold Crown) in Kyŏngju, the ancient capital of Silla kingdom, in addition to the magnificent gold crown and gold belt in openwork design with its 17 pendants with symbolic (fish and dragon) or practical (perfume bottle, hexagonal container for tweezer or knife?) finials, a pair of gilt bronze shoes were excavated [Fig. 22 (next page) and Color Plate I]. The undersides of the soles are decorated with florets, unlike the spikes found on the underside of gilt-bronze shoe soles excavated from the Hwangnam Great Tomb [Fig. 23] in the same area in Kyŏngju, or the very similar pair of gilt bronze soles with spikes from Koguryŏ [Fig. 20].

Another sumptuous pair of gilt bronze shoes with fragmentary uppers and perfectly preserved shoe soles are from Singnich'ong 飾履塚 ("Tomb of Decorated Shoes") in Kyŏngju, the Silla capital [Fig. 24].[13] Recent research claims that they were made in Paekche and exported to Silla, in view of the exquisite craftsmanship and the active trade and diplomatic relations between these two kingdoms around the 5th and 6th century (*Paekche* 2014, p. 46). According to the archaeological report, sixteen pairs of gilt bronze shoes (5th – 6th century) have been discovered from tombs all over the Paekche territory. These gilt bronze shoes and gilt bronze head-gear as a set were gifts to regional rulers from the central royal court.[14] Paekche style gilt bronze shoes have also been excavated from Japanese tombs. They are found in tombs of Edafunayama 江田船山 in Kumamoto district, Ichisuka 日須賀 in Osaka, Fujinoki 藤ノ木 in Nara among others, and demonstrate Paekche's extraordinary international relations in

After: *Chosŏn Misul Pangmulgwan*: Pl. 21;
photo of drawing courtesy Daniel C. Waugh

Fig. 21. Military guard. Samsil ch'ong in Tunggou. Koguryŏ 5th century. The drawing is from a display in the National Museum of Korea, Seoul.

Photos all courtesy of Daniel C. Waugh

Fig. 22. Regalia from the Tomb of the Gold Crown. Silla 5th–6th century: a) the crown H. 27.5 cm (National Treasure No. 87); b) detail of the gold belt L. 109.0 cm (NT 88); c) the gilt bronze soles L. 30.5 cm. Kyŏngju National Museum. (See Sillain 1996, Pls. 49, 52; Silla 2001, Pl. 271).

the 5th and 6th century with Yamato Japan; with Liang, one of the southern dynasties in China; with the neighbouring kingdoms of Koguryŏ and Silla; and with the Kaya States (*Muryŏngwang* 2014, pp. 96ff).

Mit'uri 미투리**, *mahye*** 麻鞋

Almost a thousand years later, a pair of sandals, *mit'uri*, woven from hemp and human hair was excavated in the tomb of a Confucian scholar Yi Ŭngt'ae 李應台 (1586) in Andong, North Kyŏngsang province [Fig. 25]. This small pair of *mit'uri* was placed next to his head. A neatly folded letter written in *hangŭl,* the Korean script invented by King Sejong (r. 1418-1450), was tucked inside the wooden coffin [Fig. 26]. The letter was written by the widow of the deceased in the year *pyŏngsul* 丙戌 corresponding to 1586.

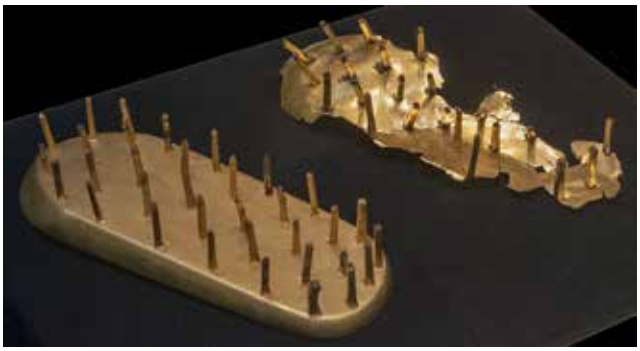


Photo courtesy of Daniel C. Waugh

Fig. 23. Gilt bronze soles with spikes. Silla 5th century. Hwangnam Great Tomb, Kyŏngju. Kyŏngju National Museum.

Yi Ŭngt'ae (1556-1586) died at the relatively young age of 31 and was buried next to his grandmother, Lady Mun from the Ilsŏn clan. Yi Ŭngt'ae's body was placed in a pinewood inner coffin which contained an astonishing number of well-preserved items including his unborn son's jacket, his wife's skirt and numerous clothes, letters and poems written by his father and his elder brother, as well as the letter from his widow.[15]

Unlike all the known tombs from the Three Kingdoms period (4th – 6th centuries), in which almost all organic materials did not survive, Yi Ŭngt'ae's double wooden coffins remained intact. The burial was sealed with the method known as *hoegwakbun* 灰槨墳, lime coffin grave, a method using lime, clay and fine sand mixed with boiled elm bark to fill the entire space around the wooden coffins, thus preventing their decay. This new burial method began to be used from 1476, as seen in King Sejo's tomb Kwangnŭng 光陵, and thereafter from the 16th century was widely used in the burial practice of Neo-Confucian Chosŏn *yangban* 兩班 elite.[16] This scientific burial method preserved perfectly all materials in an astoundingly good condition.

When the content of the letter by Yi Ŭngt'ae's wife [Fig. 26] — her name is not known — became public, modern readers in Korea were amazed and deeply moved. The letter is addressed to the father of her infant son Wŏn, and is expressed with the utmost tenderness:

> You always said to me we shall live together until our hair turns white and that we shall die together. Yet you go ahead? Whom should I and the child [Wŏn] follow and how should we live?…When we lay side by side, I often told you "my love, would other people be affectionate and love each other as we do?"…How should I live without you? ….When

Photo courtesy of Daniel C. Waugh

Fig. 24. Gilt bronze shoe soles with hexagonal design. Koguryŏ 5th – 6th century. Singnich'ong, Kyŏngju, North Kyŏngsang province. National Museum of Korea, Seoul.

Fig. 25. Mit'uri *from Yi Ŭngt'ae's grave, Chosŏn (1586). Human hair and hemp. L. 18 cm. Andong University Museum, North Kyŏngsang Province.*

Fig. 26. Letter in han'gŭl *written on* hanji *[Korean paper] by Yi Ŭngt'ae's wife, dated 1586. 58.5 x 34 cm. Andong University Museum, North Kyŏngsang Province.*

> the child in my body is born, whom should it call "father"? My heart is inconsolable…Please do read my letter and show me your presence in my dreams. I am certain I can see you in my dreams. Do come quietly and show yourself.[17]

This affectionate and heart-rendingly emotional letter written by a grief-stricken wife, believing that her from-this-world-departed husband would read her letter, is an expression of the innermost private feelings that is quite unprecedented, especially in the Neo-Confucian *yangban* elite society of the Chosŏn dynasty where individuals knew their places and cultivated a restrained composure and attitude following social norms and rules. The procedure of Confucian funeral ceremonies was complicated and was undertaken over a long period. The principal mourners (male) and female mourners including the wife of the deceased would live in modest quarters during the mourning period, wearing untreated natural hemp cloth and tying up their hair with straw (Chŏng Sŭngmo 1990, p. 179). This intimate private letter addressed to her departed husband was not meant to be discovered, nor was it to be read during the funeral ceremony.[18]

The pair of sandals, *mit'uri* 미투리, woven in hemp and human hair, was placed on the right side of Yi's head, wrapped in Korean paper. The wrapping paper of the shoes was damaged but a few sentences were legible, among them, "이 신을 신어보지도 못하고 …": "you were not able to wear these shoes in life…" Yi Ŭngt'ae 's wife had cut her long hair (married Korean women had very long hair which was made into a bundle at the back of the head and horizontally secured with a hairpin) and through her sobs lovingly wove this pair of *mit'uri*.[19] Her utmost tender feelings toward her husband are materialized in this pair of shoes through the sacrifice of her treasured black hair, and the placing of the shoes made with it beside her husband's head, as if she were lying beside him in the tomb. In fact, shoes have a connotation in traditional literature as the token of love (Ch'oe 1995, p. 441).

Mit'uri were the shoes worn by *yangban* elite in contrast to *chipsin*, the straw sandal, the footwear of the ordinary people. Plant materials such as flax, hemp, ramie, and silk, occasionally mulberry bark fibre are used to make *mit'uri*. Sandals woven with hemp had been worn by East Asians for a long period. A most perfectly preserved pair of hemp sandals was excavated from a tomb of the Tang dynasty (618–907) in Turfan in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.[20]

Conclusion

Interviews of prominent people in their professions appear every week in the London *Financial Times* weekend magazine. One of the questions is, "Do you believe in afterlife?" Most interviewees answer they are not sure, or definitely not, but only very rarely do they believe in an afterlife. The ancient Koreans, without exception I think, believed like most people in various ancient cultures that there was definitely an afterlife. The ancient Greek terracotta boots, now in the Agora Museum, Athens, have been interpreted as serving for the journey of the deceased to the other world (Thompson 1976, p. 230), although a recent study has suggested that they were a part of "nuptial symbolism," considering that the graves were those of young women (Langdon 2007, p. 185).

To reach that otherworld they made sure to provide provisions (pottery food vessels), proper clothing according to their social ranks, vehicles (a pottery boat found in Silla and Kaya tombs and carriages depicted on wall paintings of the Koguryŏ kingdom) or feathers as a device to fly to the other world, and shoes.[21] In the realm of death as in life shoes are an essential part of garments. Shoes have been found from the ancient Mycenaean graves in Greece to modern times in Korean funerary practice, as seen in Kim Hun's short story at the beginning of this essay. To the wearer, shoes confer dignity and distinction. Beyond their practicality and functionality to protect and adorn one significant part of the body, the feet, a pair of shoes in the grave had further symbolic meaning: to take us safely to the other world. They could be also an expression of personal affection, as the *mit'uri* from Yi Ŭngt'ae's grave demonstrate. In Korean there are terms for the departure to the other world: "hwangch'ŏn ŭro kanda 黃川으로 간다 going to the Yellow Springs"[22] "chŏsŭnggillo kanda 저승길로 간다 going to the other world." Both expressions have the connotation of going. For the long road to the other world what else do we need, other than a good pair of shoes? Are they not a token of a Safe Journey?

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About the author

Youngsook Pak, Professor of Korean Art History, has taught at SOAS, University of London, Yale University (Korea Foundation Distinguished Visiting Professor), the Graduate Center, City University of New York, and other institutions. She has published widely on art and architecture of Three Kingdoms Korea, Koryŏ Buddhist paintings, Koryŏ-Liao relations through Buddhism, and most recently on Confucian *ch'aekkado* bookshelf paintings of the 18th century. She is currently working on an edited conference volume on Esoteric Buddhism and Buddhist Art in China and Korea (forthcoming, Cambria Press) and a publication project, Korean Art.

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Xu Xinguo 許新國. "Ledu Liuwan chutu caituxie kaolu" 樂都柳灣出土彩圖靴考略 [On the painted pottery boot excavated from Liuwan, Ledu (Qinghai province)]. In: *Xichui zhi di yu xifang wenming*. 西陲之地與西方文明 [*Western China and the Eastern and Western Civilizations*]. Beijing: Yanshan chubanshe, 2006: 61–65.

Notes

1. A complete set of quilted skirt, jacket, underclothes, socks, and fabric shoes for the deceased (*sŭmni* 襲履) was found as a set of funerary garments (*suŭi* 壽衣, lit. 'longevity garment') in the coffin from the late 16th-century tomb of a Lady of the Andong Kim (*Han'guk sangjangnye* 1990, Pls. 108–114). A thousand years earlier, a *mingyi* 冥衣 funerary garment in miniature size was discovered on the chest of the deceased from the Yingpan burial ground (4th–5th century) in Xinjiang, China (*Fangzhipin kaogu* 2002, p. 69) [Fig. 27].

Photo courtesy of Daniel C. Waugh

Fig. 27. Detail of burial costume of so-called "Yingpan man." Tomb No. 15. 4th- 5th century. Yingpan, Yuli district, Xinjiang.

2. From Koryŏ tombs no shoes have been found. Koryŏ (918–1392) being a Buddhist country, the preferred funerary method of the deceased was cremation. See the detailed research on the burial custom of this period, Vermeersch 2014 and Horlyck 2014.

3. Maesanni (district) Tomb was renamed as Suryŏbch'ong by Chu Yŏng-hŏn, the late North Korean archaeologist. Most recent publications on Koguryŏ tombs use Suryŏbch'ong. A considerable number of studies on Koguryŏ tombs have been published by North and South Korean scholars (especially by Jeon Ho-tae). See two small concise and informative studies on Koguryŏ tombs by the late distinguished scholars, Kim Yong-jun (1958) and Kim Won-yong (1983). On Koguryŏ in western languages, see *Kunst* 2005.

4. Kang Woo-bang interprets such scrolling motifs found in Koguryŏ wall paintings as '*yŏnggi* 靈氣', 'energy of soul' in his numerous articles. See his most recent Korean article in *Muryŏngwang* 2011.

5. The catalogue (*Tesori* 1987, Pl. 64) catalogues this pottery boot as a goblet! There is another example (reported to me by Daniel Waugh), a pottery boot dated to the 1st millennium BCE now displayed in the Tehran Reza Abbasi Museum (Acc. No. 20707), where the caption indicates it is a drinking vessel (rhyton). Why should a boot function as a goblet? There is no further explanation about this.

6. The royal tomb is located "on the hillside of northern Shugetu village at Qinglong town at Naiman Banner of Zhelimu League in Inner Mongolia." The Princess of Chen State was the niece of the Liao Emperor Sheng Zong (r. 983–1031) (*Liao* 1998, p. 188).

7. Hardly any written documents or burial objects have survived in Koguryŏ tombs as they were all looted. Tombs are therefore named after the distinctive features found in tombs (Tomb of Dancers) or after the topographical names (Maesanni or Anak tombs), or simply after the tomb construction (Samsilch'ong 三室塚, Three-Chamber Tomb).

8. *Kayasa non* 1993, pp. 17ff. A comprehensive archaeological report on Pokch'ŏndong tombs is *Pusan* 1993.

9. I have just published a short article on this pair of pottery sandals (Pak 2015).

10. The story appears in the Wikipedia entry for Bodhidharma, but without a textual reference. See <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Bodhidharma&oldid=695080795> (accessed 17 December 2015).

11. The Paekche King Muryŏng (Muryeong) 武寧 can also be read Munyŏng in Korean. Since the first archaeological report (1973) on King Muryŏng's Tomb by Munhwajae Kwalliguk (Institute of Korean Cultural Heritage), a number of important new studies and thorough investigation of this tomb have been published in recent years. The most comprehensive and detailed documentations are *Muryŏngwang* 2009-2014. Two more volumes of research will be published in the near future. For a short introduction of this tomb in English, see *Treasures* 1984. pp. 61-64. On Paekche (Baekje) metal work from King Muryŏng's tomb and Silla metal work, see Bush 1984 and Lee 2014.

12. Bush 1984, pp. 68ff. The flattering effect of silver or gold spangles is the key decorative device in metal work of the Three Kingdoms period (see Pak 1988).

13. Susan Bush (1984, pp. 66ff) discussed the hexagonal motifs of these shoes.

14. *Paekche* 2014, p. 44. One such set of a gilt bronze hat and shoes was excavated in Ibjŏm-ni Tomb No. 86-1 (*Chŏnbuk* 2009, pp. 50–53, Pls. 45, 47). Very similar gilt bronze shoes with open-work design have been excavated from Silla territory [Fig. 28, next page]

15. A detailed excavation report has been published (*Andong* 2000). See also in English on this tomb and its excavated material Lee et al. 2009

16. Chŏng Chongsu 1990, pp. 136ff. For a recent study on this burial type, see Kim 2015. On Chosŏn burial practice, see Hejtmanek, 2014.

Fig. 28. Gilt bronze shoes with T-shaped openwork design. Silla 5th–6th century. From the collection of Dr. Lee Yangseon. Kyŏngju National Museum.

Photos courtesy of Daniel C. Waugh

Fig. 29. Hemp sandals. H. 8, L. 26.3, W. 8.2 cm. Tang. Excavated from Astana Tomb No. 340 (?106) in Turfan.

17. My translation is based on the modern Korean version by Professor Im Se-kwŏn, Department of History in Andong University. Compare the translation of the whole letter in Lee et al. 2009, pp. 151ff, and Kim 2009, pp. 395ff. 'Wŏn' in the letter was interpreted as the name of the unborn child (Lee et al. 2009, p. 153).

18. Kim (2009, p. 395) suggested that the letter was "a type of elegy and was probably read aloud before being placed on top of the chest of the deceased," but this interpretation seems most unlikely.

19. It has been suggested that this pair of *mit'uri* were made by Yi's wife in the hope of her husband's speedy recovery from illness (see Lee et al. 2009, p. 154).

20. Hemp sandals. H. 5.3, L. 26.5, W. 7.8 cm. Tang. Excavated from Astana Tomb No. 106 in Turfan (*Wenhua* 1972, p. 109) [cf. Fig. 29].

21. On the meaning of feathers in headgear, see Pak 1988, n. 25.

22. There is another common expression in Korean meaning to go to the other world, "going to Pungmang Mountain 北邙山으로 간다'." Mt. Beimang is located in the north of Luoyang in Henan Province. Since the Han dynasty this mountain was the burial site of emperors and famous people in China. It is not clear when this phrase began to be used in Korea for the place after death. Wu Hung (2010, p. 7) defines the Yellow Springs as "the imagined location of innumerable tombs." There is no evidence in Korean ancient belief as precise as this rather vague notion about the realm of the other world. Yellow Springs appear in the passage in *Zuo's Commentary* to the *Chunqiu* (Spring and Autumn Annals) 春秋左傳, Book 1, 1 (*Ibid*). After Duke Zhuang had expulsed his scheming mother, he swore: "Until I have reached the Yellow Springs, I will not see you again 不 及黃川,無相見也." For the original text and commentary see Legge 1960, vol. 5, p. 6.

The Emergence of Light: A Re-interpretation of the Painting of Mani's Birth in a Japanese Collection

Wang Yuanyuan 王媛媛
Sun Yat-sen University 中山大學, *Guangzhou, China*

In 2012, the 124th issue of *Journal of the Yamato Bunkakan* published two papers (respectively authored by Prof. Yoshida Yutaka and Prof. Furukawa Setsuichi) on an ancient Chinese painting discovered in Japan [Fig. below] (Furukawa 2012; Yoshida 2012). The authors included a plate of the painting and its brief introduction: "Painting of Mani's birth, dated to the Late Yuan Dynasty (1271–1368), one painting, pigment for Chinese silk painting, L. 35.6 cm and W. 57.0 cm, personal collection. Mounting: paper/ brocade with patterns of red lattice and stringed beads (Shujiang 蜀江 brocade)." Since the painting is in a private collection, it was not available for me to examine. Judging from the garments and headdresses of the figures in the painting, it should undoubtedly be dated later than the Song Dynasty (960–1279). The title, "Painting of Mani's Birth," was given by the researchers. This silk painting depicts such a scene with many figures. Obviously, it's not a religious icon for worshipping, but would have been used for exhibition and appreciation or hanging at some ritual occasion.

By way of introduction here, as a matter of convenience, the scene of the painting will be divided into two fields: "the World" and "the Heaven". The former part has a green background, while the background of the latter changes from blue to white as it moves down from the top. Let us look first at

the scene of "the World," the designations "left" and "right" referring to the vantage point of the viewer. On the left is a traditional Chinese hall in which nine women stand. The woman standing in the middle appears a bit larger, suggesting she is the dominant figure. A red cloud emerges out of her left ribs, on which is a naked baby whose left hand points to the sky and right hand seems to droop and point to the ground. On the ground under the cloud are six golden lotus flowers. At the middle of the ground in front of the great hall is a trapezoid-shaped object, which Yoshida believed is a bookcase containing religious classics. Four persons, who might be minstrels, flank the object and stand in front of it. The one wearing a brown gown on the left seems to be dancing, while the one wearing a red gown seems to be holding a musical instrument. At some distance on the right side of the object stand four men. Among them, one holds a canopy while the other three put their palms together devoutly facing the object. In a symmetrical position, at some distance on the left side of the object are two women putting their palms together, with one of them leaning to one side to face the object, while the other seems to face outward from the painting. A red halo hangs in the air above the object, Judging from what remains here of the original image, it seems that a possibly naked figure sits in the halo with legs crossed. Under the halo is a lotus throne, flanked by two women holding trays. It's noteworthy that a mass of dark clouds is painted in the air on the right side of the halo, in which are three half-naked monsters facing the halo and the unidentified object. "The Heaven" mainly consists of three groups of deities. In the cloud cluster right above the red halo stand ten women with haloes on their heads, probably musical deities. On their left and right sides are respectively a mass of red and white clouds, in which stand four men dressed like warriors. They are riding clouds; so they must be deities too.

On the left of the scene, the naked baby born riding a cloud from the left ribs of the woman clearly indicates that this is a birth scene of some saint. Yoshida and Furukawa have expounded and proved the Manichaean nature of this painting from historical and artistic perspectives and argued that the painting depicts Mani's birth. I agree that this painting is related to the birth legend of Mani. However, a comparison between the painting and some historical documents on Mani's birth reveals it is difficult to correlate the visual material with the written records. That is to say, the textual basis for this painting may not be the Manichaean classics, but might be some other documents.

I. Written Materials about the Birth of Mani

Though the birth of Mani was touched upon by the earlier religious text, the *Kephalaia*, it does not contain any specific depiction of the birth scene. When the disciples posted questions regarding his mission and birth, Mani only explained by means of a comparison: All the apostles who are on occasion sent to the world resemble farmers. They established churches again and again, just as in sowing and harvesting (Gardner 1995, p. 16). A specific account regarding Mani's birth was recorded in the *Kitāb al-Fihrist* by Ibn al-Nadim. When Mani's mother got pregnant, his father had joined the Elchasaite community. "Once she [Mani's mother — WY] gave birth (to him) [Mani — WY], they claimed that she had had lovely dreams about him. And (once) she gained consciousness she had a vision of him being taken up into air by a force which then returned him, after perhaps a day or two (aloft). And then, having returned, his father came forth and took him to his place of residence to raise him and care for his community" (Gardner and Lieu 2004, p. 47). The *Kitāb al-Fihrist* was compiled around the end of the 10th century; its information originated from the work of Abū 'Isā al-Warraq around the 9th century. The latter had consulted the true Manichaean classics. Therefore, at least until the 9th century, what was spread extensively in West Asia regarding Mani's birth was the above mythology.

However, after Manichaeism was officially introduced into China, another version of the birth legend was recorded in the *Compendium of the Teaching of Mani the Buddha of Light* 摩尼光佛教法儀略 (hereafter referred to as the *Compendium*) compiled by a Manichaean bishop in 731:

> The (date of) birth (as recorded) in the P'o(sa?)-p'i calendar is equivalent to the 8th day of the 2nd month of the 13th year of the period Chien-an of emperor Hsien of the (Later) Han dynasty [12 March 208], (the two systems of time-reckoning) wholly (?) corresponding. That, the natural endowments and the heavenly omina (being appropriate), (His mother) conceived; and that, keeping the rules of abstinence and strictly purifying (herself, she) became pregnant; (that) was because of His own pureness. That, having entered existence from (His mother's) chest, He surpassed His age and excelled everyone; and that He evidenced the spiritual verifications ninefold and answered to the super-natural auspices five-fold; (that) was because His birth was beyond the ordinary. 婆毗長曆，當漢獻帝建安十三年二月八日而生，泯然懸合矣。至若資稟天符而受胎，齋戒嚴潔而懷孕者，本清淨也；自胸前化誕，卓世殊倫，神驗九徵，靈瑞五應者，生非凡也。[1]

To facilitate its spread to the East, Manichaeism borrowed a lot of Buddhist elements (Klimkeit 1998). "The birth from the chest" is apparently a copy from the story of Buddha's birth.[2] The *Compendium* was composed under an imperial edict by a bishop at the Jixian Academy 集賢院. Therefore, this birth story should embody Manichaean orthodoxy in China during the Tang Dynasty (618–907). Besides, this version continued to be spread in Mingjiao 明教[3] in southeast China after the Tang Dynasty. The *Minshu* (閩書, *The Historical Annals of Fujian*) by He Qiaoyuan 何喬遠 (1558–1631) preserved a precious record of Mingjiao in the region of present Fujian province, which included the birth story of Mani:

> It is said that more than 500 years after Lao Tsu entered the West, in the Wu-zi year of the Jian'an era of the Emperor Xiandi of the Han dynasty [i.e., 208 CE], he was transformed into a Nai-yun. The wife of King Ba-di ate it and got pregnant. The time came and the child emerged from her breast. Nai-yun is a pomegranate of the imperial garden. 云老子西入流沙五百餘歲，當漢獻帝建安之戊子，寄形梫暈，國王拔帝之后食而甘之，遂有孕。及期，擘胸而出。梫暈者，禁苑石榴也。[He 1994, 171.]

We can see from a comparison with the *Compendium* of the Tang Dynasty that the two stories are essentially consistent in plot. For example, Mani was born in the royal palace of Su-lin 蘇鄰 (i.e. Northern Syria) and he was born from the chest of his mother. The single difference is that the way for his mother to get pregnant was changed into eating a pomegranate. In Mingjiao in southeast China during the Song, Yuan and Ming dynasties, this new version replaced the old one and spread widely. In recent years, a ritual manuscript titled "Mani the Buddha of Light" has been discovered in Xiapu 霞浦 of Fujian,[4] wherein the description of Mani's birth is consistent with that in the *Minshu*:

> The immortal Amrita-raja came to Ba-di's Kingdom of Su-lin in the West from the Region of Truth, when nine auspicious signs appeared. He was born from the chest of Mo-yan and had no equal in the world. He was enlightened at 13 years old and began to preach. He then enlightened all living beings and was called King of the Law. 長生甘露王，從真實境，下西方跋帝蘇鄰國，九種現靈祥；末豔氏，胸前誕，世無雙。十三登正覺，成道大闡揚，化諸群品稱法王。[lines 224–27 on p. 28 of the manuscript.]

A more detailed description can be found in the same manuscript:

> Mani the Buddha was born in the Su-lin Kingdom. There was a pomegranate tree in the imperial garden. The palace servants picked the pomegranate and presented it to the queen Mo-yan, who found it tasteful. Ten months later, Mani was born from the chest of Mo-yan. At that moment, golden lotus flowers emerged out of the earth, dew fell from the sky, all deities were happy, while the devils were worried and annoyed. The image of Mani found no equal in the world. The imperial concubines admired him and all came to welcome their prince back to the palace. 下生贊 摩尼佛下生時，托蔭於蘇鄰，石榴樹枝呈瑞園。官詣丹墀，表奏希奇，阿師健氏命宮官摘捧盤，殷勤奉獻。末豔氏喜食，花顏喜歡，神人誡責別宮安。十月滿，將花誕出，詣嬌培湧化胸間。地湧金蓮，捧天灑甘露。十方諸佛盡歡忻，三毒魔王悲煩惱。巍巍寶相，凡間難比。嬪妃仰止，咸迎太子歸宮裏。[lines 294–303, pp. 37–38 in the same manuscript.]

Though the exact meaning of this Chinese text is not very clear and there might be some characters left out, we can still see that its plot is consistent with what is recorded in the *Minshu*: namely, Mani was born in the royal family of Su-lin; His mother, after eating a pomegranate, gave birth to him from her chest. According to the textual research conducted by Prof. Lin Wushu 林悟殊, the earlier or original version of this ritual manuscript, "Mani the Buddha of Light," was from Xiapu and was created no earlier than the Ming Dynasty (Lin 2014, p. 489). This indicates that the birth story of Mani accepted by most of the believers of Mingjiao in the Song-Yuan period should be the one recorded in the *Minshu*.

As mentioned above, the main difference between the version of the *Compendium* and the version of the *Minshu* lies in the additional plot of eating a pomegranate. Paul Pelliot believed this plot was not completely fabricated in China, since, according to *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, Mani's mother was an undetermined plant or tree.[5] The pomegranate was native to the cradle of Manichaeism — Persia. For the people of West Asia, this fruit would have been known to all households, but they still called it "an undetermined plant," which is enough to prove that the pregnancy story of eating pomegranate was not created in West Asia. I believe that the plot of getting pregnant after eating a pomegranate must have originated in China after the Tang Dynasty when the *Compendium* spread. Though mention of the pomegranate appeared earlier in works written after the Han Dynasty (202 BCE–220 CE), after the fruit was introduced into China, it soon became familiar to the Chinese people. By the Song Dynasty, the pomegranate could be found everywhere (Laufer 1919, pp. 279–80). A good many myths concerning birth had been spread since ancient China, such as getting pregnant after eating something by mistake or following the deities' footprints. So it also makes sense that Chinese Manichaeans adapted such myths in their texts concerning Mani. It is also

possible, as He Qiaoyuan indicated, that the account about Mani was inspired by the story of Lao Tsu's mother climbing a plum tree before giving birth to Lao Tsu. The pomegranate originated from Persia, which happens to be the birthplace of Mingjiao. After the queen of Su-lin ate a pomegranate — the specialty of Su-lin — she became pregnant. This story is obviously more vivid and more consistent with the way Chinese might have thought about such matters than the vague pregnancy legend recorded in the *Compendium*.

Having examined the evolution of myths regarding Mani's birth since the Tang Dynasty, let us now look again at the silk painting. The painting has been identified as an artwork dating to the late Yuan Dynasty. Considering that in the Song Dynasty prior to the Yuan period, Mingjiao was prevalent in the coastal regions of southeast China, the most likely textual basis for this painting should be the birth story spread among the believers of Mingjiao in southeast China, namely, the one recorded in the *Minshu* (as Prof. Yoshida suggested in his paper) or the above-mentioned ritual manuscript from Xiapu. The latter in particular, when compared with the silk painting, reveals similarities. For instance, the women holding a tray in the painting might be viewed as "the palace officials holding a tray and presenting it with all respect 宮官擿捧盤，殷勤奉獻"; right under the naked baby is a "golden lotus emerging from the earth 地湧金蓮"; the ten music deities in the air correspond closely with "Buddhas from ten directions were all happy 十方諸佛盡歡忻"; the three monsters in the dark clouds might be interpreted as "the devils were sad and worried 三毒魔王悲煩惱". From all these parallels, I suspect this painting is an artwork related with Mingjiao. But it is noteworthy that some important details in the painting do not correspond completely to the records in the *Compendium* or *Minshu*. Therefore, this painting is probably inspired by other documents.

II. The Taoist *Scripture of the Conversion of Barbarians* 老子化胡經 and the Silk Painting

As mentioned above, Mani was born in the royal palace of Su-lin. After his mother ate a pomegranate, he was born from her chest. This should be the main plot acknowledged by the believers in China. However, two important elements, birth from the chest and the pomegranate were not reflected in this painting. The naked baby flew from the left ribs of the woman instead of her chest. The maids standing in front of the hall held a tray containing unidentified objects, but the objects seem to be flat, not shaped like a pomegranate. Perhaps some people might argue that not all details would be reflected in the painting. However, the pomegranate has important symbolic significance for the believers of Mingjiao in southeast China right until the present. In recent years, a Jingzhu Palace Temple (境主宮, i.e. a temple for local patron) at Sunei Village 蘇內村 in Jinjiang 晉江 of Fujian has been studied by scholars. Five deities are painted on its front wall. The deity at the middle is Mani whose image is as same as the statue of Mani in neighboring Cao'an Temple. Local villagers devote particular care to the offerings. It's said that all deities enshrined in the temple were "vegetarian Buddha"; so the offerings on the altar should be vegetables, fruits and sweetmeats. But the fruit guava[6] (called Nai-ba 柰拔 by the villagers) was believed to be the reincarnation of Mani the Buddha of Light; so it cannot be offered up as a sacrifice (Nian 2004, pp. 24-26). Today, the villagers of Sunei already cannot explain the origin of Mani, but they still consider the pomegranate to be taboo, which then suggests that the pomegranate has an extraordinary and far-reaching significance to Mingjiao in southeast China dating back to the Song and Yuan dynasties. Such being the case, is it not strange that pomegranate is absent from the birth scene of Mani?

What is more perplexing is that after the naked baby was born, his left hand points to the sky, while his right hand droops towards the earth. This gesture cannot be found in any versions of Mani's birth legend. Actually, it should be a portrayal of Sakyamuni who, after being born, "walked seven steps, pointing his hands and saying, in the heaven and the earth, I am supreme over all." (*Cārya-nidāna*, *Taishō Tripiṭaka* (3), 463). Moreover, Taoism imitated the Buddhist legend, indicating that Lao Tsu also made the same gesture and said the same words after being born:

> The holy mother of Lao Tsu climbed a plum tree and gave birth to Lao Tsu from her left ribs... After Lao Tsu was born, he walked nine steps, with a lotus flower coming out at each step. He was illuminated by the sun and moon and guarded by all living things...Walking nine steps, his left hand pointed to the heaven and right hand pointed to the earth, saying, in the heaven and earth, I am supreme over all. [*Yongcheng Jixianlu* 墉城集仙錄 (Biography of the Female Immortals), Vol. 1, *Taoist Canon* 道藏 (18), 165.]

Lao Tsu's words, "I am supreme over all," possibly reflects the struggle and conflict between Buddhism and Taoism, showing the resolution of Taoists to compete against the Buddhists.

The Buddhists and the Taoists could make their founders say such brave words, but the Manichaeans could not and dared not. First of all, we note that the birth legends of saints might be similar, but generally would not be completely identical. Even if the birth legend of Lao Tsu imitated that of Sakyamuni, they still had small differences: Sakyamuni was born

from his mother's right ribs, while Lao Tsu was born from his mother's left ribs; Sakyamuni walked seven steps, while Lao Tsu walked nine. Therefore, the Manichaeans in China would not borrow all the elements of Buddhist and Taoist tales in creating Mani's story, but would surely make some innovation. The plot of Mani's birth from the chest could be taken as a modification. Secondly, Mani called himself a prophet coming to the world for salvation following Sakyamuni, Zoroaster and Jesus Christ,[7] and never dared to claim himself as supreme over all. Moreover, considering the religious tension the Manichaeans faced in China during the Tang and Song dynasties, they would surely not have been so bold as to brag like this. Starting in the Tang Dynasty, Manichaeism was illegal most of the time; so how could it contend with Buddhism and Taoism? Besides, emperors of the Tang Dynasty had worshipped Lao Tsu as their ancestor; so how dare the Manichaean preachers coming to China put their founder above Lao Tsu? In the Song Dynasty though, some formal monasteries of Mingjiao in southeast China were accepted by the government, such official recognition mainly due to their attaching themselves to Taoism. What is more important, the believers of Mingjiao in the Song Dynasty called Mani "the fifth Buddha" (Lin 2012, p. 386). As the *Fozu tongji* (佛祖統紀, *Chronicle of the Buddha and the Patriarchs*), quoted in the *Yi jian zhi* (夷堅志, *Record of the Listener: Selections of Chinese Supernatural Stories*), says:

> The "vegetarian demon worshippers" are numerous in San Shan [i.e., present-day Fujian]. The headman wears a purple hat and a loose garment, while women wear a black hat and a white garment. They call themselves Mingjiao. The Buddha whom they worship is in white, and they quote from scripture: "The Buddha in white [is] also called Shi Zun [i.e., the Lord]." They cite from the Diamond Sutra, "the first Buddha, the second Buddha, the third, the fourth and the fifth Buddha," regarding their Buddha as the fifth Buddha. 吃菜事魔，三山尤熾。為首者紫帽寬衫，婦人黑冠白服。稱為明教會。所事佛衣白，引經中所謂"白佛，言世尊"。取《金剛經》一佛，二佛，三、四、五佛，以為第五佛。[*Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀 (Chronicle of the Buddha and the Patriarchs), Vol. 48, *Taishō Tripiṭaka* (49), 431.]

In the Song Dynasty, believers of Mingjiao regarded their founder as the "fifth Buddha". In the *Compendium* and *Minshu*, also, there is no description of Mani pointing to the heaven and earth and claiming to be the Supreme one. In conclusion, no textual evidence can be found in Manichaean documents during the Tang-Song period to support the image of the naked baby in this silk painting. Then, if the painting is a Manichaean work of the Yuan Dynasty and the naked baby is Mani himself, we should search for another reference for this image. Considering its close relation with Mingjiao, the present author believes the clue may be found in Taoist scriptures, especially the *Scripture of the Conversion of Barbarians*, which was directly related to Manichaeism.

Wang Fu 王浮 of the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317–420) wrote a volume of the *Scripture of the Conversion of Barbarians*, on the basis of which the Taoists of later generations succesively enlarged. The original scripture was destroyed in the Yuan Dynasty. Luckily, some volumes of it were found in Dunhuang in the early 20th century. It recorded that Lao Tsu was grey-haired when he was born in the place of Bo 亳. He could walk at once, with lotus flowers growing from every step. He pointed his left hand to the heaven, and right hand to the earth, saying: "In heaven and on earth, I am supreme over all." After 450 years, He rode on the vapor of the Tao of spontaneous light flying into the Su-lin kingdom of the precious realm of Xina. He descended into the royal family and be born as the prince. He would then leave the family and enter the religion and be called as Mār Mani.[8]

Manichaeans of the Tang Dynasty were familiar with this Taoist scripture. In the Song Dynasty, Taoism and Manichaeism were more closely related. As is evident from the *Scripture of the Conversion of Barbarians*, the birth story of Lao Tsu is consistent with what is depicted on the silk painting.

Note though that the naked baby is on the left of the scene rather than the center of the whole painting. Instead, the musicians in the cloud, the red halo in the air and the trapezoid-like object on the ground are painted on the central axis; so they are the objects highlighted by the painter. As to the figure in the red halo, Yoshida believed it reflected the passage in the *Compendium* that when Mani "was about to be born, the two radiant-ones sent their own spiritual power to lighten each part of the trikāya. 當欲出世，二耀降靈，分光三體" (Chinese text: Lin 2011, p. 429; English tr.: Haloun and Henning 1952, p. 189). Even if the damaged image of the figure in the halo is Mani, it is still difficult to explain how a single halo can symbolize "trikāya" (i.e., three bodies). According to the *Scripture of the Conversion of Barbarians*, Lao Tsu "rode on the vapor of the Tao of spontaneous light and flew into the Su-lin kingdom of the precious realm of Xina." In the Taoist context, "the vapor of the Tao" is colorless and intangible, as is recorded in the *Lao Tsu Xiang'er Zhu* (老子想爾注, *Commentary on Tao Te Ching*): "The vapor of the Tao is subtle and invisible." However, the Supernatural being "travelled around the universe with the vapor of the Tao, now called as Yuanshi Tianzun 元始天尊, or called as Laojun 老

君, or Taishang Laojun 太上老君, or the mentor for the world, all of which being his unmanifested body [Dharmakāya in the Buddhist context]" (*Daojiao Yishu* 道教義樞 [Religious Doctrine of Taoism]," Fashen Yi [Doctrine of the unmanifested body], part II, 法身義第二,"*Dao Zang* 道藏 (24), 805). That is, the Supreme one achieved the Dharmakāya with the vapor of the Tao. Alternatively, we may perhaps interpret the halo and the light beam shining from the sky in the painting as concretized "vapor of the Tao."

Besides the halo, on the central axis of this painting on the ground is a trapezoid-like object. Since the painting is damaged, it's indeed difficult to identify what the object is. Yoshida guessed it is a case containing religious classics. However, judging from its appearance, it is not a case. The lower part of the object is painted with a white circular pattern on a red background. Such a pattern is also to be seen on the garment of the second musician on the right of the object and the lower hem of the robes worn by the four deities in the cloud on the left and right sides. Perhaps what the painter wanted to express is that the lower part of the object is covered by some kind of red cloth. A patch is missing at the middle of the red cloth, and it seems that there's something white in the middle of the unidentified object, resembling a person sitting with legs crossed. It is easy to associate the object with the "throne" of Taoism. As required by Taoism, wherever the Supernatural being is enshrined and worshipped, a throne must be set. According to the rites, there are eight kinds of thrones for the Supernatural being of Taoism, which are all ornamented with various kinds of jewels, jade and brocade. Followers were required to set a throne for the Supernatural being as the way to accumulate merits (*Daoxuan lingbao sandong fengdao kejie yingshi* 洞玄靈寶三洞奉道科戒營始 [Regulations and Rites of Taoism], vol.3, *Dao Zang* (24), 752–53).

If the figure sitting with legs crossed were Mani, the incarnation of Lao Tsu, then the unidentified object covered by the red cloth might be his throne. The *Scripture of the Conversion of Barbarians* also depicts a scene Lao Tsu sittting on a throne in Khotan and meeting with all deities: Lao Tsu travelled westward via the desert and reached the Kingdom of Khotan. He held his wand and called together his followers; so deities gathered around him from all corners. At that time, Lao Tsu was sitting on a throne in a jade tabernacle, with incense being burned, flowers being scattered, music being played, while all deities were surrounding him (Dunhuang Manuscripts 1990, (3), p. 164). In this painting, we can also see several figures playing music and dancing and putting their palms together devoutly around the throne. Given the damage to the painting and thus the blurring of the image, of course my suggestion is rather speculative.

In a word, other than the *Compendium* and *Minshu* which recorded the birth legend of Mani, the *Scripture of the Conversion of Barbarians* is more likely to have been an important textual basis for this painting. And what is shown on the painting might be the scene of Lao Tsu's incarnation as Mani.

III. The Prototype of the Silk Painting

While the painting has been designated a work of the Yuan Dynasty, it presumably is not the earliest or original depiction of the scene. Prior to the Yuan period, both the theory and the painting of Lao Tsu's incarnation as Mani had already appeared; so this silk painting might have an earlier prototype.

Taoist artworks with the theme of "Lao Tsu's conversion of barbarians" certainly existed no later than the Early Tang Dynasty. Such murals were often found in Taoist monasteries at that time. They were so popular that Emperor Zhongzong (656–710) once ordered that they be destroyed (Song 1987, 415). By the end of the Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279), there were eighty-one paintings based on "the conversion of Barbarians". According to the *Bianwei Lu* 辨偽錄, Taoists imitated Buddhist practice to create the stories of eighty-one reincarnations of Lao Tsu, and such stories were made into paintings which were quite common (*Bianwei lu* 辨偽錄 [Records about the Debate between Buddhism and Taoism on the authenticity of Sutras in the Zhiyuan Era (1264–1294) of the Yuan Dynasty], Vol. 1, *Taishō Tripiṭaka* (52), 752). Among the paintings of eighty-one reincarnations, the 42nd one was the painting of Lao Tsu's reincarnation into Mani: "Lao Tsu visited the Kingdom of Maga, showing a rare laksana to enlighten the king. He founded the religion of Buddha and was named the Buddha of Tranquility, called Mār Mani" (*Bianwei lu*, Vol. 2, *Taishō Tripiṭaka* (52), 761). In *Tao Te Ching* collected by Ofuchi Ninji, there are also eighty-one reincarnation paintings of Lao Tsu, wherein the 42nd one is the reincarnation as Mani, with an annotation: "In the 42nd reincarnation story, Lao Tsu visited the Kingdom of Maga, showing a rare laksana with a calabash in hand to enlighten the king. He founded the religion of Buddha and was named the Buddha of Tranquility, called Mār Mani, which was worshipped by Kshatriya and Brahman there" (Noritada 1961, pp. 365–66). Therefore, as a part of the "conversion of Barbarians" series, the painting of Lao Tsu's reincarnation into Mani should have appeared in the Song Dynasty at the latest.

As a matter of fact, such paintings were created and were common during the Song Dynasty, which is consistent with the spread history of Manichaeism. The *Scripture of the Conversion of Barbarians* was accepted as legal by an imperial order, and the

theory of "Lao Tsu's reincarnation as Mani" was viewed as orthodoxy in the Song Dynasty. What is more, Mingjiao was considered to be a branch of Taoism, while Manichaean scriptures were collected into the *Taoist Canon*. In the above-mentioned ritual manuscript "Mani the Buddha of Light" from Xiapu, the name of "Immortal Amrita-raja" of Mani had appeared in the Song Dynasty. According to the records of Xie Shouhao 謝守灝, quoting the *Scripture of the Conversion of Barbarians*: "By the fourth year of Emperor Mu, Lao Tsu descended and travelled to the East Sea. He reached the regions of Fu Sang [i.e. present-day Japan] and met with the emperor. He called together the immortals and ranked them. He then visited the Su-lin Kingdom in the West Sea, with a name of Immortal Amrita-raja Supreme Healing King Light Messenger, converting humans, deities and ghosts. Wherever there was no Taoism, Lao Tsu would go there to preach and then flew into the heaven" (*Hunyuan shengji* 混元聖紀 [Biography of Lao Tsu], Vol.5, *Dao Zang* (17), 827). "Immortal Amrita-raja" was a name given by Taoism to Mani, while the "Supreme Healing King Light Messenger" was what the Manichaeans called their religion's founder since the Tang and Song dynasties, because this title had been recorded in the *Compendium* as "insurpassable, bright, and all-wise Healing King 光明大慧無上醫王" (Chinese text: Lin 2011, p. 429; English tr.: Haloun and Henning 1952, p. 189). This indicates that during the Song Dynasty, the story of Lao Tsu's reincarnation into Mani, or Mani's name, identity and status were acknowledged by Taoism, Manichaeism, and even the government. Judging from the rites manuscript of Xiapu, this consensus extended into later generations. The compilers of the rites manuscript of Xiapu might have been referring to the theory of the conversion of barbarians and even the original version of the *Scripture of the Conversion of Barbarians*.

Though the most likely period for the creation and spread of "the painting of Lao Tsu's reincarnation into Mani" was in the Song Dynasty, there is still no evidence to prove the silk painting discussed in this paper is "the painting of Lao Tsu's reincarnation into Mani." Since the *Scripture of the Conversion of Barbarians* and the eighty-one paintings were destroyed, no comparison can be made at present. In the 18th year of the Yuan Dynasty (1281), Khubilai issued an injunction that other than *Tao Teh King*, all scriptures and printing blocks of Taoism must be burned. The eighty-one reincarnation paintings painted or engraved in Taoist monasteries must be all destroyed. If the officials do not make their best efforts to carry out this decree, they will be punished and the collectors found guilty (*Fozu lidai tongzai* 佛祖歷代通載 [Annalistic History of Buddhism], vol.21, *Taishō Tripiṭaka* (49), 707).

The harsh tone of the edict indicated a firm resolution of the rulers to ban the Taoist scriptures except for *Tao Teh King*. This order must have been strictly carried out at that time, for which the evidence is that today no complete version of the *Scripture of the Conversion of Barbarians* can be found. The original version was destroyed, while other works relating to the theme were not banned. Even so, people at that time spoke and acted cautiously once this theory was touched upon. According to Zhao Daoyi 趙道一, a Taoist priest in the Yuan period, Lao Tsu, under the name of Master Gu 古, went to some kingdoms in the Western Regions to convert kings and people there. Then he descended to the West Sea for preaching in Su-lin Kingdom, and then flew into the heaven.[9] Zhao's book can be dated to around 1294 CE, its contents derived from the *Scripture of the Conversion of Barbarians*. But its wording is simple and vague. Compared with the above-quoted paragraph in Xie's *Hunyuan Shengji*, the sentence "he descended to the West Sea" is obviously a condensed version. Lao Tsu was called "Master Gu", the character "Gu古" (lit. "ancient") might be the left half of the character "Hu 胡" (lit. "barbarian"). We can understand Zhao's taking pains in order not to violate the ban. A manuscript titled *Leshantang Shenji* 樂山堂神記 from Xiapu (Chen and Wu 2009; Ma 2015; Chen and Lin 2010; Yang 2011; Huang 2013) honors two patriarchs of the so-called "religion of Lingyuan 靈源教", Hu Tianzun 胡天尊 and Hu Guyue 胡古月.[10] I guess these two names might be related to the title "Master Gu" (or "Master Hu") in the story of converting the barbarians.

While the painting of Lao Tsu's reincarnation into Mani had already appeared, given that the theory of "conversion of Barbarians" had become a sensitive topic in the Yuan Dynasty, people probably would not have risked creating a painting themed on "conversion of Barbarians." Yet it would be unreasonable to assume that complete eradication of the earlier works would have been possible, despite the effort at rigorous enforcement. Someone must have secretly concealed the banned books, making possible the partial preservation of the *Scripture of the Conversion of Barbarians*; so we cannot eliminate the possibility that the eighty-one conversion paintings might also have been passed down secretly. And when later followers painted the same type of work, the surviving paintings might have become a basis or reference for them. Both the background of the painting of Lao Tsu's reincarnation into Mani and the religious situation in the Yuan Dynasty, would suggest that the painting under discussion was not the original version. It might have incorporated some changes on the basis of a prototype from the Song Dynasty. This painting includes complex cultural elements, referring

to different religious scriptures, which indicates it borrowed the elements of a multitude of religions.

In fact, the theory of Lao Tsu's reincarnation into Mani itself had almost become a consensus among the Taoists and Manicheans during the Tang and Song dynasties. This painting can be regarded as an artwork of Taoism or Manichaeism, and even in the eyes of Buddhists, it might also have been regarded as but a slightly-changed depiction of Buddha's birth. Untangling the complex threads of all these religions is a challenge, especially in the case of Manichaeism, which could survive in China after the Huichang Persecution (840–845) only by attaching itself to Buddhism and Taoism and thus being strongly influenced by those religions. Mingjiao in the southeast coastal regions during the Song Dynasty was not what Manichaeism of the Tang Dynasty was like, and in fact embodied significant differences. Therefore, it will be rather difficult to identify clearly the elements of each religion in this silk painting and determine the exact sources in the texts. Rather than identifying its exact religious attribute, it's better to view it as a folk painting integrating elements of a multitude of religions such as Taoism, Mingjiao and local beliefs during the Song and Yuan dynasties.

About the author

Wang Yuanyuan is an Associate Professor in the History Department of Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, China. Her research is mainly on foreign religions in ancient China, especially Manichaeism and Nestorianism. E-mail: <hy10_@126.com>.

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Notes

1. For the latest collated Chinese text of the *Compendium* see Lin 2011, pp. 429–30; for the English translation, see Haloun and Henning 1952, pp. 190–91.

2. The name of Mani's mother is Mays or Awtāhīm or Mar Maryam in Arabic. "滿艷 (Man Yan)" is the Chinese transliteration of Maryam. However, it sounds similar to "Māyā", the mother of Buddha.

3. Mingjiao originated from Manichaeism in the Tang period. It was a highly-sinicized variant of Manichaeism, which prevailed mainly in the coastal regions of southeast China after the Tang Dynasty.

4. I am deeply grateful to Mr. Lin Yun 林鋆 for providing me a photograph of it.

5. See Pelliot 1923. Gustav Flügel (1862, p. 117) had earlier pointed out that the name of Mani's mother was a relic of myth, or related to the lotus flower or wild pepper.

6. The Chinese name of guava is "番石榴" which literally means foreign pomegranate. The coincidence makes me suspect that 番石榴, i.e., foreign pomegranate, is just a misrepresentation of pomegranate 石榴 after being passed from mouth to mouth for generations in China.

7. Jonas 1963, p. 207; see Sogdian manuscripts T III T 601 (Ch/U 6914), T III 2015 (So. 15000(5)) and T II D 2 (Ch5554) (Sundermann 1985, pp. 19-36).

8. The Chinese text:

是時，太上老君以殷王湯甲庚申之歲、建午之月，從常道境，駕三氣雲。乘於日精，垂於九耀。入於玉女玄妙口中，寄胎為人，庚辰年二月十五日誕生於亳。九龍吐水，灌洗其形，化為九井。爾時老君，鬚髮皓白，登即能行，步生蓮花，乃至於九。左手指天，右手指地，而告人曰：天上天下，唯我獨尊。我當開揚無上道法，普度一切動植眾生，周遍十方及幽牢地獄，應度未度，咸悉度之。……天神空裏，贊十號名。所言十者，太上老君、圓神智無上尊、帝王師、大丈夫、大仙尊、天人父、無為上人、大悲仁者、元始天尊。……後經四百五十餘年，我乘自然光明道氣，從真寂境飛入西那玉界蘇鄰國中。降誕王室，示為太子。舍家入道，號末摩尼。轉大法輪，說經誡律定慧等法，乃至三際及二宗門。教化天人，令知本際。上至明界，下及幽塗。所有眾生，皆由此度。[*Laozi huahu jing* 老子化胡經 (The Scripture of the Conversion of Barbarians), Vol. 1, *Taishō Tripiṭaka* (54), 1266-67.]

For Manuscript S.1857, see Dunhuang Manuscripts 1990, (3), pp. 164-66; for Manuscript P.2007, see Dunhuang-Turfan Manuscripts 1995, (1), pp. 68–72.

9. The Chinese text:

初，老君去周，嘗西化大秦、安息、月氏、烏弋、竺乾等國，號"古先生"，其國王及臣民皆奉教戒，乃還中國。復與無上真人尹喜至罽賓國行化，次及條支、于闐等國行化，且降伏九十五種外道焉。至穆王四年甲申，老君降遊東海，至榑桑會大帝，校集諸仙名位高下。復分身降於西海，至蘇鄰國行化，俄復升天。[*Lishi zhenxian tidao tongjian* 曆世真仙體道通鑒 [The Taoist Immortal Biography], Vol. 8, *Dao Zang* (5), 155.]

10. There is still no scholarly consensus as to whether the two really existed or whether the two were one or two persons.

When Herakles Followed the Buddha: Power, Protection, and Patronage in Gandharan Art

Jonathan Homrighausen
Jesuit School of Theology, Berkeley

Long before the twenty-first century adage that "the world is flat," ancient empires and trade routes enabled cultural globalization of a kind quite familiar to us today. Modern buzzwords like 'syncretism' and 'alterity/otherness' apply to these ancient cultures as much as they do to modern ones. The art of Gandhara in the 1st to 5th century Indian subcontinent offers many examples: coins, sculpture, and architecture depicting scenes from Indic mythologies, but sharing an iconographic vocabulary with Graeco-Roman and Iranian Zoroastrian arts and religions. This article examines Herakles' iconographic journey to India and his transformation into Vajrapani, the bodyguard of the Buddha. In Gandharan sculptural reliefs depicting events from the life of the Buddha, the Heraklean Vajrapani serves as a sacred icon embodying the Buddhist community's aspirations to royal patronage under the Kushan dynasty.

Royal power and luxury: the image of Herakles in Gandhara

The most striking fact about Gandharan art, both Buddhist and courtly, is its inclusion of Graeco-Roman and Iranian mythological figures and artistic styles. Gandharan Buddhist art also incorporates Hindu deities such as Shiva (Quagliotti 2011). The fusion of such varied elements makes the study of Gandharan art a vibrant field involving many cultures, but also can make it difficult to determine the provenance of particular iconographic motifs.

Graeco-Roman artistic culture first spread into Gandhara through the conquests of Alexander the Great (335–323 BCE) and the settlers he left behind in Bactria. The Hellenistic successor states declined, to be replaced in Bactria and Gandhara (territories encompassing northeastern Afghanistan and northern Pakistan and India) by the Kushan empire [Fig. 1]. In the Kushan period, Classical artistic influence continued (Nehru, pp. 27–28). Beginning in the 1st century BCE under Augustus, elite Romans developed a taste for Eastern luxuries—perfumes, spices and silks. Roman consumption of aromatics and spices became widespread; the volume of Rome's eastern trade was substantial (McLaughlin 2010, pp. 59–60; Thapar 2002, pp. 242–43; Begley 1991, pp. 3–7; Liu 1994, pp. 7–11). This trade has been documented by abundant archaeological evidence—e.g., Roman coin hoards and amphorae found in India—and from the *Periplus Maris Eurythraei*, a 1st-century trading manual for Greek-speaking merchants traveling the route from the Red Sea to northwestern India along the Indian Ocean littoral. The *Periplus* mentions Gandhara and, fleetingly, the trade connections to China (Casson 1989, p. 47). Legends of Romans who travelled to India, such as the apostle Thomas and Apollonius of Tyana, as well as donative inscriptions in Buddhist monasteries crediting *Yavanas* (Greeks) and *Raumakas* (Romans) indicate that the exchange be-

Source:<http://sites.asiasociety.org/gandhara/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Map-1.jpg>. Reproduced with permission of The Asia Society.

Fig. 1. Map of Kushan Empire. Map designed by Dirk Fabian, ingraphis.de, Kassel, © Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bonn.

Photos courtesy Daniel C. Waugh.

Fig. 2. Heads of Herakles (left) and Antiochus I of Commagne (rt.) (r. 70 – 38 BCE) at the west temple on Nemrut Dağı (Turkey), the tomb complex of Antiochus. The detached heads are from statues of the seated ruler and divinities, who also included Fortuna, Zeus and Apollo.

Fig. 3. Relief sculpture showing Antiochus I and Herakles, at Arsameia, the summer Commagne capital, Turkey.

tween Rome and India may have been cultural as well as mercantile (McLaughlin, 2010, p. 40).

Herakles' most important attribute for the Classical world was his strength, which enabled him to slay many of the monsters who threatened human civilization. Naturally, Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman rulers adopted his imagery as part of their propaganda of power (Vollkommer 1988, pp. 87–93). A striking, if perhaps extreme, example is Antiochus I of Commagene (r. 70 BCE – 38 BCE), who placed himself in a pantheon that included Herakles at his burial site on Nemrut dağı in Anatolia [Fig. 2] and at nearby Arsameia erected a large relief showing him shaking hands with Herakles [Fig. 3]. The coins of Bactrian and Kushan kings show that this visual lexicon of power spread into the South Asian world.

Heraklean iconography first made its way into Gandhara by way of Alexander the Great's coinage.[1] Alexander styled himself as both the descendent and brother of Herakles. In his campaign through Greece, Egypt, and Persia, he even re-enacted many of the deeds of Herakles (Amitay, 2010). Fittingly, the obverse of his coinage depicts Herakles with lion skin on his head, an image one must assume was to be understood as Alexander himself [Fig. 4]. Coins from Alexander's successors in Bactria also depict Herakles. One coin of Euthydemus I (230–200 BCE) portrays Herakles reclining on his lion skin, while another issued by Bactrian king Agathocles (190–180 BCE) depicts Herakles standing in *contrapposto* with his club in the air [Figures 5, 6, next page].

In addition to these coins, we also have several small bronze figurines from Bactria depicting Herakles, perhaps used as votives

Source: <http://www.britishmuseum.org/collectionimages/AN00654/AN00654709_001_l.jpg>. © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig. 4. Silver coin of Alexander III the Great. Obverse: Head of young Herakles; reverse: seated Zeus. Minted in Miletus (now Turkey). British Museum, London. Museum No. 1982,0513.11.

Source: (above) <http://www.britishmuseum.org/collectionimages/AN01344/AN01344584_001_l.jpg>, <http://www.britishmuseum.org/collectionimages/AN01344/AN01344585_001_l.jpg>; (below) <http://www.britishmuseum.org/collectionimages/AN00031/AN00031399_001_l.jpg> © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig. 5. Gold coin of Euthydemus I, ca. 230–200 BCE. Obverse: head of Euthydemus; reverse: seated Herakles with club and lion skin. Minted in Bactria. British Museum, London. Museum No. 1888,1208.72.

Fig. 6. Silver tetradrachm of Agathocles (190–180 BCE). Obverse: bust of ruler wearing elephant-scalp headdress; reverse: standing Herakles, crowning self with wreath and holding club and lion skin. Minted in Bactria. British Museum, London. Museum No.1923,1107.1.

or decorative statues (Allchin et al. 1992, pp. 99-103). As Cribb and Bopearachchi write (Ibid., p. 50):

> The gods chosen by the Greek kings of the Crossroads of Asia tended to be those who could also be used as symbols of royal power. So Zeus, king of the gods; Heracles, the mortal hero who achieved divinity; and a martial representation of Athena, daughter of Zeus, were the ones most frequently portrayed on these coins.

These portrayals of powerful Greek gods made their way into Kushan coinage and other royal symbols. While most Kushan coins depicted Iranian deities, some coins of the early Kushan kings Kujula Kadphises (r. 30 – ? CE) and Huvishka (r. ca. 150 – ca. 190 CE) depict Herakles on the reverse [Fig. 7], identifiable by his characteristic club.

These coins represent the earliest and most easily tracked movement of Heraklean iconography into the Gandharan region. They convey Herakles' embodiment of power, and his iconography of the club and lion skin. Another image of Herakles in royal iconography is on a Kushan seal depicting him wrestling with one of the human-eating horses of Diomedes (Rosenfield 1967, pp. 78, 102). Herakles killed these horses as part of his labors protecting human civilization from dangerous monsters. So it is not hard to see why a king would choose this iconography to represent his power. This seal suggests that Kushan artisans had a greater knowledge of Greek myths about Herakles than could be derived from the coinage of Alexander and Bactrian kings alone.

Kushan royal art uses the imagery of Herakles, as well as that of several other Greek gods and goddesses, in art depicting the luxurious activities of the court. Marco Galli argues that the wealth coming into Gandhara from Silk Road trade funded the famous art of Gandhara, creating a visual lexicon of "Hellenistic court imagery." For Galli, the courtly art of Gandhara embodies luxury, leisure, and wealth. He cites Phi-

Source: <http://www.britishmuseum.org/collectionimages/AN01099/AN01099287_001_l.jpg>. © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig. 7. Copper coin of Kujula Kaphises, ca. 40–90 CE. Obverse: bust of ruler; reverse: standing Herakles. British Museum, London. Museum No. 1922,0424.3003.

Source: <http://images.metmuseum.org/CRDImages/as/original/DP123342.jpg>. © The Metropolitan Museum.

Fig. 8. Wrestler's weight with Herakles holding a lion skin and being approached by a lion. Schist. 26 x 34.9 cm. Ca. 1st century CE. Gandhara. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Accession No. 1994.112

lostratus' account of Apollonius' journey to Taxila, which describes the activities of the Indian court: javelin and discus contests, beautiful maidens dancing, and massive quantities of alcohol (Galli, 2011, pp. 290-91). Correspondingly, courtly Gandharan art depicts athletic competitions, drinking parties, and sensual displays of palace dancers. The cosmopolitan imagery of this courtly art enhanced its appeal for the elite.

Herakles was a role model for the athletic competitions in the Gandharan court. This choice was natural, since Herakles in Greek and Roman cultures served as a patron deity for athletics and sporting-games (Vollkommer, 1988, p. 86). A 3-meter statue of Herakles served to inspire athletes using the Baths of Caracalla (212–216 CE) (Vermeule, 1975). In Gandhara, we see the athletic associations of Herakles on a wrestling weight [Fig. 8]. On its front, he stands with a lion skin next to a lion in a tame posture. If this was meant to portray Herakles with the Nemean lion, then the scene is puzzling, since such depictions usually show the two in combat. There are several possible explanations for the unusual imagery: a sculptural play with temporality, a fragmentary knowledge of the Nemean lion episode, or a local Gandharan legend. Galli hypothesizes (2011, p. 296) that that the docile lion is a symbol of royalty. Herakles wears the diadem of a Hellenistic ruler, further alluding to the theme of kingship. On the reverse, the weight has grips for lifting and a scene of a wrestling competition. If the wrestler was lifting this weight off the ground using the carved grips, he would be staring at Herakles and the lion, an apt motivator for a gym session. Wrestling competitions appear elsewhere in Gandharan art, as part of what Galli terms the "Hellenistic court imagery" taken up by Gandharan art (2011, pp. 292–96). Herakles' heroic strength and athletic prowess, so popular in the Greek world, seem also to have been exported to the Gandharan court along with the courtly games themselves.

In Graeco-Roman literature and art, Herakles was not only a figure of power and strength. There was also a comedic Herakles, a libidinous figure whose gluttony, drunkenness and sexual prowess were humorously exaggerated (Stafford 2010, pp. 105–17). In Aristophanes' *Frogs*, Dionysus dressed as Herakles is accosted by a landlady who asks for payment for sixteen loaves of bread, twenty portions of meat, and generous portions of garlic, fish, cheese, and sausages — all evidence of Herakles' enormous gluttony (Stafford 2012, p. 108). Herakles' gargantuan appetite extended not only to food, but to sex. Apollodorus records one legend that Herakles slept with all fifty daughters of King Thespios in the course of fifty nights, in the king's hopes that the hero would impregnate all of them (Apollodorus 1997, 2.4.10).

In Gandharan art, Herakles is similarly shown as a libidinous figure, someone often overpowered by his urges for women and drink. He is one of several figures from Greek myth—among them Apollo and Daphne, Aphrodite and Eros, and various other mythical beings such as marine monsters—who appear on shallow dishes used in Gandharan courts. Behrendt (2007, pp. 9–11) argues that these dishes "may have been used for ritual offerings of wine, perhaps to ensure a blissful afterlife for the dead" in Dionysiac rituals adopted by Gandharans. Galli (2011, p. 300) speculates that another possible use was to hold toiletries for wealthy women. One dish portrays Herakles accompanied by both alcohol and women [Fig. 9]. Here Her-

Fig. 9. Dish with the drunken Herakles supported by two women with lion. Schist. Ca. 1st century CE. D. 12.4 cm. Gandhara. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Accession No. 1987.142.105.

Source: <http://images.metmuseum.org/CRDImages/as/original/DP160861.jpg>. © The Metropolitan Museum.

akles leans in close and embraces the two women next to him. A tame lion, as on the wrestling weight, sits to the side. This dish portrays a comedic, light-hearted Herakles, enjoying wine and women — the luxuries of the courtly life — as he does in Greek myth. Whether these dishes belong in the womens' sphere of bathing or the transgressive femininity of Dionysiac cult, they connote the intimacy, privacy, and eroticism of the women's sphere. In a woman's private space of her own bath, she could admire (and perhaps be titillated by) the images of seduction and eroticism on these toilet-trays (Galli 2011, pp. 296–300).

How can we best understand Gandharan depictions of the drunken Herakles? Brancaccio and Liu (2009) argue for a Dionysian strand in Gandharan courtly culture. Not only was viticulture introduced into India at this time, but Dionysian art forms, such as Sanskrit drama and theatrical masks, developed under the Kushans as well. That Greek drama was popular earlier in Bactria can be seen at Ai Khanoum, which had a full Greek theater. Dionysian themes of drink and drama were one aspect of Bactrian cosmopolitan style, but also appear in Buddhist art, such as on a stair risers leading up to the entrance of a stupa. Brancaccio and Liu (2011, p. 230) surmise that the bacchanalian scenes of drunken revelry on these stair risers represent the life before embracing the dharma. Herakles, associated with drink in the Graeco-Roman world, was likely a part of the culture of wine in the Gandharan world. Herakles connects the powerful image of kingship with the drinking and revelry that can take place because of the peace won with Heraklean strength and protection.

Vajrapani's enigmatic iconography

The depictions of Vajrapani analyzed here come from narrative reliefs on the sides of stupas depicting scenes from the life of the Buddha (Brown 1997; Behrendt 2009; Stoye 2011). According to Kurt Behrendt (2007, p. 32), this type of relief dates mainly to the 2nd century CE. The production of these reliefs was part of a broader cultural renaissance of Buddhism in the Gandharan region, which took place under the Kushan dynasty from roughly the 1st to 5th centuries CE (Neelis 2014). Kushan Gandhara prospered and urbanized thanks to the cross-Asian trade, which also provided the means to fund major Buddhist architectural and sculptural monuments. In return for large donations, wealthy lay donors earned positive karma in a sacred economy of money for merit (Schopen 2004; Liu 1994, pp. 103–23). The Buddhist community also benefited from donations by pilgrims, who came to worship at stupas believed to contain relics of the Buddha. The *sangha's* new wealth brought it social respectability and pushed it to expand roles for lay practitioners (Thapar 2002, p. 271).[2] The royal coinage and Buddhist art of Gandhara displays a syncretism of iconography from Hindu gods, Iranian deities, and indigenous folk cults centered around chthonic deities (spirits of the underworld) such as *yakshas* and *nagas*.

Vajrapani, the bodyguard of the Buddha, appears in the earliest Pali literature as a manifestation of Sakra/Indra, but in the early Common Era becomes an important and independent figure in post-Pali Buddhist literature, such as the *Mahavastu*, *Lalitavistara*, the *Mulasarvastivada Vinaya*, and the *avadanas* (Lamotte 2003, pp. 7–9). He accompanies the Buddha and acts as an intimidating figure when the Buddha encounters anyone who is opposed to his mission. In Buddhist literature he is described as a yaksha, a chthonic deity tamed by the Buddha and his *dharma* (DeCaroli 2004, pp. 9-54; Lamotte 2003). Vajrapani wields his weapon, the *vajra*, to threaten those who attack the Buddha, or just those who refuse to hear his message. His vajra (Sanskrit: "diamond" or "thunderbolt"), originally an implement of the Vedic storm god Indra/Sakra, is made of the densest matter possible, and is imbued with the power to shoot thunderbolts at enemies (Doniger 1975, pp. 75, 85; Zin 2009, pp. 81–84; Giuliano 2008). In the *Ambattha Sutta*, Vajrapani uses a "huge iron club" to threaten a student of a rival teacher who is trying to refute the Buddha's teachings. Vajrapani's intimidation makes Ambattha take refuge in the Buddha (Walshe 1995, p. 116; Lamotte 2003, p. 5). Vajrapani plays a similar role in opposing the heretics who try to stop Mendhaka from receiving the Buddha's teachings in the first-century CE "Chapter on the Great Fortune of the Householder Mendhaka" (Rotman, 2008, p. 233).

Vajrapani also aids the Buddha in converting harmful chthonic deities. Many of these spirits are yakshas, tree-spirits, like Vajrapani, and others are nagas, spirits associated with rivers. Vajrapani used his strength and his vajra to intimidate and subdue these creatures. For example, the naga Apalala flooded a nearby town, prompting the Buddha to come rescue the townspeople from their distress. Using his vajra, Vajrapani frightened Apalala into converting to the dharma and discontinuing his malevolent flooding (Lamotte 2003, p. 21–22) [Fig. 10, next page]. In the center of this image is a relatively large Buddha; close by him on his right is Vajrapani, always wielding his weapon with a tight fist, ready for attack. Apalala kneels in front of Shakyamuni Buddha in submission. This image typifies the pattern of how the Buddha subdued malevolent spirits not by killing them, but rather by converting them so that they would act virtuously and no longer harm humans. These myths reinforced a social practice whereby the sangha acted as a broker between humans and the spirit world, subduing spir-

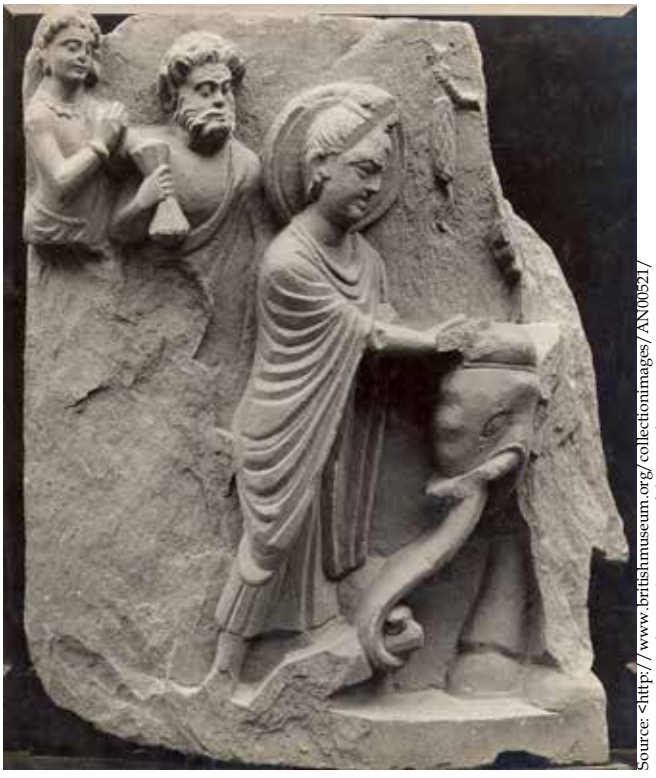
Source: A. Foucher, L'art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhara, I (Paris, 1901): p. 551, Fig. 274.

Fig. 10. Submission of the Naga Apalala. Gandhara. From Sanghao. H. 7.12 in. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, Mumbai.

its to protect humans from their harm (DeCaroli 2004, p. 38-53). In performing this social function, Vajrapani's force complements the persuasive power of the Buddha's dharma.

Vajrapani appears rarely in extant literature from the 1st to 5th centuries CE, but frequently in Gandharan art depicting scenes from the life of the Buddha (Zin

Fig. 11. Devadatta attempts to murder the Buddha. Schist. 28 x 43.5 x 7.2 cm. 2nd-3rd centuries. Gandhara. British Museum, London. Museum No. 1913,1108.22.



Source: <http://www.britishmuseum.org/collectionimages/AN00521/AN00521576_001_l.jpg>. © Trustees of the British Museum.

2009, p. 81). Chronologically, he first appears in the Buddha's life in reliefs of the Great Departure from Kapilavastu, and frequently is present in the scene of Shakyamuni's *mahaparinibbana*. In addition to reliefs such as that depicting the conversion of Apalala, he appears in depictions of the Dipankara Jataka, and Devadatta and Srigupta's assassination attempts on Shakyamuni Buddha. Devadatta was a cousin of the Buddha who became his disciple. Jealous of the popularity and fame of his teacher, he tried to kill the Buddha several times in different ways (Zwalf 1996, v. 2, p. 192). Only in the Gandharan-era *Mulasarvastivada Vinaya* does Vajrapani appear in the Devadatta stories (Lamotte 2003, pp. 16–18). Fig. 11 depicts the first assassination attempt, in which Devadatta sent assassins to push a wall onto the Buddha. On the left, the assassins push against the wall, and on the right the Buddha pushes back. A bearded and curly-haired Vajrapani stands next to the Buddha, helping keep the wall standing. In the third assassination attempt, Devadatta sends a wild elephant to trample the Buddha. Shakyamuni Buddha does not use force to defend himself against the giant attacker, but calms the elephant with his tranquility and power over nature [Fig. 12]. Vajrapani again appears over the Buddha's shoulder. What his action is supposed to be in this

Fig. 12. Buddha subdues the Nalagiri Elephant. Schist. Probably 2nd century. Gandhara. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Museum No. IS.3302-1883.

Source: <http://media.vam.ac.uk/media/thira/collection_images/2014HG/2014HG4299_jpg_l.jpg> © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

relief is unclear, but his mere presence is a powerful indicator of his protective power.

Scholars of Gandharan art have long known of the connection between Herakles and Vajrapani. The connection is based on a strong similarity between the bearded, muscular images of Vajrapani and similar images of Herakles conveyed into India numismatically, such as the Lysippan Weary Herakles. In the transformation of Herakles into Vajrapani, Herakles' club becomes Vajrapani's vajra. One image clearly

connecting the two is a relief found in the British Museum [Fig. 13]. The figure in the lower left is Vajrapani, holding his diamond-shaped vajra *and* wearing a lion skin. We do not know the original context of this piece, though Zwalf speculates (1996, v. 2, pp. 230-31) that it is part of a larger relief depicting a scene from the life of the Buddha. The lion skin, ubiquitous in Graeco-Roman iconography of Herakles and coins of Alexander, substantiates the connection between Herakles and Vajrapani. The lion skin was also favored in the iconography of rulers who adopted Herakles as ancestor or patron deity, including Antiochus I of Commagene, Commodus, and Caracalla (Hekster 2001; Hekster 2005; Vermeule 1975; Marvin 1983). This unique relief reminds us that where we cannot correlate text with image, it sometimes is difficult to know what Vajrapani is doing in these contexts, or more generally what his importance is in Gandharan Buddhist art.

Several scholars have analyzed the use of Heraklean iconography for Vajrapani in terms of parallels between these two figures. This research on the Herakles-Vajrapani connection has focused mainly on their shared roles as protectors and bodyguards (Zin 2009; Schwab 1998; Flood 1989; Tanabe 2005). Filigenzi (2006, p. 275) has noted that Herakles, like Vajrapani, is a "suffering hero who through his labors transfigures himself, taming his own nature and thus elevating and civilizing the entire sphere of human nature." Just as Herakles redeems his homicide of his wife and children through his great labors protecting Greek civilization, so Vajrapani reforms his capricious, amoral *yaksha* nature through following the Dharma and redeems himself by serving Shakyamuni Buddha so closely. Tanabe (2005, pp. 372–79) notes a further parallel in the roles of Herakles and Vajrapani: Herakles as a guide for the souls of the dead and guide to and from the underworld for figures like Alcestis, and Vajrapani as mythological guide of the Buddha throughout his travels. However, these scholars overlook one crucial connection: the implications of Vajrapani, and his Heraklean iconography, for the construction of royalty and royal patronage in Gandhara.

Even though the Buddha renounces his kingship, depictions of him often emphasize it (Liu 1994, p. 92–102). Kings and other nobles have bodyguards and attendants; for the Buddha, Vajrapani is one of these. The iconography of Vajrapani adds another dimension: the display of wealth. Vajrapani's implement, the vajra, with the dual meaning in Sanskrit of "diamond" and "thunderbolt," might be used as a thunderbolt but would also connote wealth and luxury (Zin 2009, p. 83–84). This association with royalty is underscored by the fact that Indra, the Vedic god who

Source: <http://www.britishmuseum.org/collectionimages/AN00521/AN00521554_001_l.jpg> © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig. 13. Fragmentary relief: Vajrapani, prince, and monks. Schist. 2nd–3rd century. 54 x 25 x 7.5 cm. Gandhara school. British Museum, London. Museum No. 1970,0718.1.

first carried a vajra, was king of the Vedic gods (Doniger 1975, p. 71).

The legend of the Buddhist Kanishka: propaganda for patronage of the sangha

At first glance, one might think that the artistic interchange between the courtly and religious spheres of Gandharan visual cultures indicates that the Kushan kings were fervent patrons of the sangha. Certainly by the time of Xuanzang, long after the Kushan empire had fallen, Buddhists in Gandhara made this claim. Yet this claim appears to be more an invention of Buddhist legend than documentable fact.

Xuanzang, a 7th-century Chinese Buddhist monk, went on a pilgrimage to India to gather Buddhist texts. His travelogue, composed after his return, contains several anecdotes about Kanishka (r. ca. 127–?149 CE), the Kushan king who conquered the Gandharan region. These stories, told to Xuanzang by the Buddhist communities he encountered, depict Kanishka as another Ashoka (r. ca. 269–232 BCE), the Mauryan ruler renowned for his role in spreading Buddhism. The Buddha himself prophesies Kanishka as a great Buddhist king, who will erect a stupa that contains that

remains of Shakyamuni Buddha himself (Xuanzang 1996, p. 71). A similar story is told in the *Mulasarvastivadin Vinaya*, in which the Buddha also adds that "after my Parinirvana, he will do Buddha deeds" (Lamotte 2003, pp. 26-27). Xuanzang reports that Kanishka sponsored the compilation of Buddhist scriptures and convened the Fourth Buddhist Council (Xuanzang 1996, pp. 102–04; Thapar 2002, pp. 222–73). Like the Buddha, Kanishka used the power of the dharma to win malevolent spirits over to Buddhism, protecting his people from the effects of capricious yakshas and nagas (*Xuanzang* 1996, pp. 44, 82; DeCaroli 2004, p. 61).

Even though such claims that Kanishka was a Buddhist king were recorded long after the end of the Kushan era, it is plausible that that they originated in Kushan times, when Vajrapani was part of the visual lexicon of royalty and wealth. By adopting the royal iconography of Herakles into Buddhist iconography, the sculptors of the sangha asserted that their religion was a religion of royalty. Just as Vajrapani protects the Buddha, so the Kushan kings protect the Buddha's sangha, and endow it with great wealth for stupas, monasteries, and the art carved into their walls. Indeed, Kushan patronage is attested in inscriptions on reliquaries.

For a religion dependent on patronage, projecting an image of being sponsored by the king would have been advantageous. However, questions remain as to whether Buddhism occupied as important a place for the Kushan rulers as the later narratives suggest. The Buddha seldom appears on Kushan coins, apart from some issued by Kanishka. In contrast, there are numerous images of Iranian deities (Jongeward 2003, pp. 24–26). If they were projecting an image of themselves as a dynasty of Buddhist kings à la Ashoka, would they not have put the Buddha on their coins more frequently? Even if the Kushana kings were donating money to the Buddhist sangha, their coins suggest that they may not have favored the Buddhist community over any other, wanting to ensure support from the several religious communities which they ruled.

Conclusion

We have traced how the image of Herakles traveled east thanks to cultural contact between the Classical world and ancient India. His image conveyed not just strength and protection, but also the wealth and luxury of the royal court. The Kushans, invading nomads, included Herakles in the cosmopolitan imagery they developed as they incorporated urban centers into their empire. The Buddhist sangha responded to this royal usage of Herakles by inserting him into their artistic lexicon, both as a figure of protection for the Buddha and as a subtle claim of royal patronage of the sangha. The Herakles-Vajrapani connection, then, tells a tale not only of interchange between East and West, but of a dialogue in art between sacred and secular cultural realms. As with many other aspects of Silk Road exchange, the example of Gandharan art demonstrates the human capacity creatively to reinterpret others' symbols and myths in the process of shaping one's own identity.

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About the author

Jonathan Homrighausen graduated from Santa Clara University with a double major in Religious Studies and Classics. He is now pursuing Biblical Studies as an MA student at the Jesuit School of Theology, Berkeley. His article, "Spiritually Bilingual: Buddhist-Christians and the Process of Dual Religious Belonging," is forthcoming in *Buddhist-Christian Studies*. E-mail: <jdhomrighausen@gmail.com>.

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Notes

1. For examples of Herakles on coins of Alexander, Bactrian and Kushan kings, see Allchin et al. 1992, pp. 79–82.

2. For a more in-depth survey of historical background, see Thapar 2002, pp. 213–79; Liu 1994, pp. 25–41, 78–85.

Ancient Iranian Decorative Textiles: New Evidence from Archaeological Investigations and Private Collections

Matteo Compareti
University of California, Berkeley

In the last few years, very interesting textiles have appeared on the Internet. Since they all come from the antiquities market, they are accompanied only by short descriptions, without any information about provenance and chronology. Authenticity is the main problem with all these textiles, and fake artifacts represent a very big problem for buyers and dealers. However, just on the basis of iconographic analysis, some suggestions can be advanced.

Among the most interesting textiles that appeared on the Internet, two are particularly intriguing because of their typically Iranian decoration [Figs. 1, 2; Color Plate II].[1] So-called "pearl roundels" with a fantastic animal inside constitute the main patterns. This fantastic animal is a winged composite creature normally called *simurgh* in Farsi (Pahlavi *senmurv*, Avestan *saena maregha*). In the present paper, I would like to focus on this type of iconography, leaving technical issues to experts in this very specialist field.

Before discussing possible origins and chronology for those textiles, a short description of the two specimens and the composite creature called *simurgh* is necessary. The first specimen is a silk fragment measuring 42 x 76 cm that was probably part of a saddle. A couple of pearl roundels containing one single

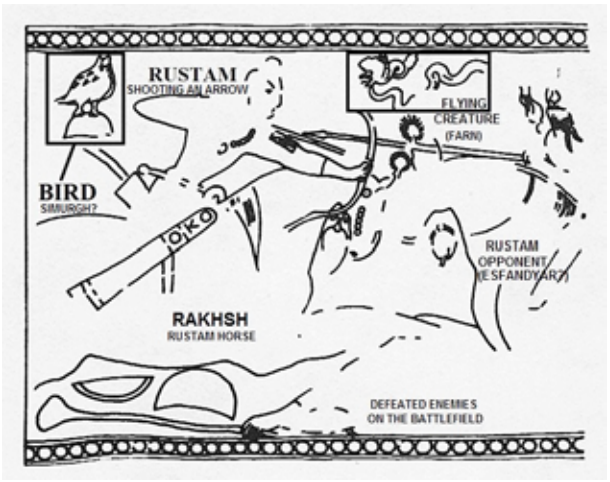
Fig. 1 (below). Silk textile.

Fig. 2 (right). Cotton shirt with silk lining.

Photos courtesy of Carlo Cristi.

composite creature embellishes the central part of the textile while in the upper and lower parts is a row of birds with a vegetal element in the beak alternating with galloping rams [Fig. 1]. According to information that I was able to obtain from the dealer, ^{14}C testing dates the specimen to the 9th–10th century. The second specimen constitutes only a portion of an extremely well-preserved shirt and is embellished with pearl roundels containing pairs of composite creatures facing each other on a vegetal pedestal [Fig. 2]. According to ^{14}C testing, this second textile should be dated to the beginning of the 8th–end of the 9th century. Several elements on the bodies of the animals but also the ribbons attached to the neck of the bird in the first textile fragment and the vegetal pedestal in both of them call to mind typical Iranian decorative elements that have been considered in the past to be specifically Sasanian. However, these same elements were adopted also by Sogdian and Byzantine artists and during the Islamic period. For example, the vegetal pedestal seems to be a development of the spread wings motif to be found on one single Sasanian textile (possibly part of a tapestry) and on late Sasanian coinage. In fact, late Sasanian sovereigns can be observed on their coins wearing a crown embellished with spread wings used as a pedestal for astronomical themes.[2] These same wings were later transformed into vegetal decorations, and, for this reason, those textiles should be dated to the Islamic era. Also the image of two fantastic creatures confronting one another points to the Islamic period, since in Sasanian and Sogdian arts animals are usually represented individually inside pearl roundels or other geometric (or vegetal) frames.[3]

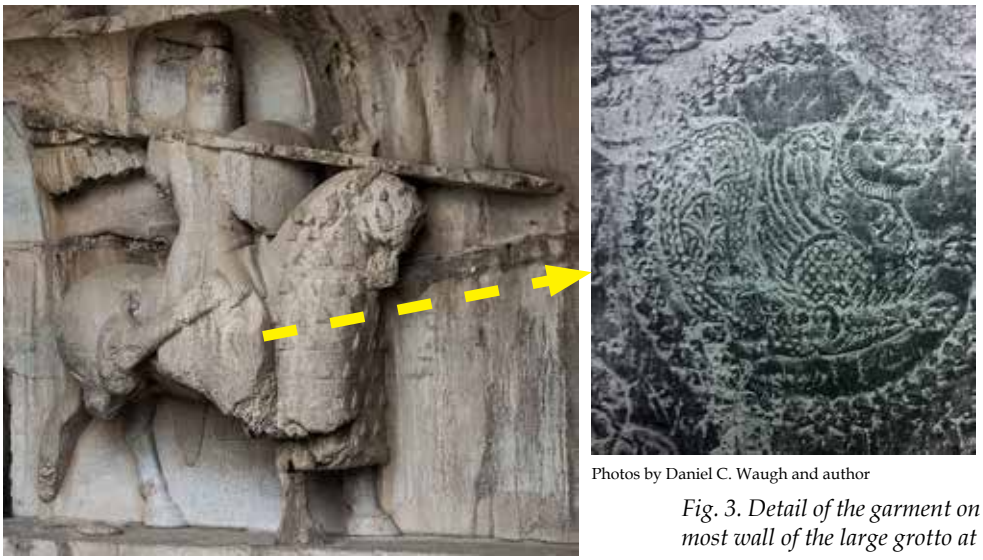
Contrary to what many scholars insist on repeating, the composite creature with a dog's face, wings, and a peacock's tail does not appear in Sasanian art except at the very problematic site of Taq-e Bustan [Fig. 3]. The most recent publications on Taq-e



After: Marshak 2002, Fig. 16 (slightly modified).

Fig. 4. The so-called "Rustam painted program," Panjikent ca. 740 (Room 41, Sector VI).

Bustan consider that it is a late Sasanian monument and may even have been executed on the cusp between the pre-Islamic and the Islamic periods (Mode 2006; Cristoforetti and Scarcia 2013, pp. 344-46). The identification of the fantastic winged creature as the *simurgh* of Iranian mythology, proposed more than sixty years ago by Kamilla Trever[4] and since then never seriously challenged, recently has been reconsidered in the light of Iranian figurative arts and literary texts. In the *Shahnama* (11th century) and its illustrations from the Islamic period, the *simurgh* is a giant magical bird that protects the family of Rustam. As is well known, Rustam and his father Zal were eastern Iranian heroes who originated from Zabulistan. However, the *simurgh* in literary texts and Islamic book illustrations is always a bird. Also, in one early 8th-century Sogdian painting from Panjikent (Room 41, Sector VI), the only representation of the *simurgh* can be identified as a bird — precisely an owl — reproduced behind a person wearing a leopard skin and, for this reason, identified as Rustam [Fig. 4].[5] In the same Sogdian painting there is also a flying composite creature in front of Rustam that could be associated with the "pseudo-*simurgh*" at Taq-e Bustan. A very similar winged composite creature is represented in a 6th-century Sogdian painting from the eastern wall of the northern chapel of Temple II at Panjikent. Its protome is part of the support for the throne of



Photos by Daniel C. Waugh and author

Fig. 3. Detail of the garment on the equestrian statue on the innermost wall of the large grotto at Taq-e Bustan, Kermanshah (Iran).

Photos by author

Fig. 5. Painting on the eastern wall of the northern chapel of Temple II, Panjikent (early 6th century).

an unidentified goddess [Fig. 5] (Belenitski and Marshak 1981, pp. 70–73). The lower part of the winged creature was not preserved in that painting; so it is not possible to state if it was exactly the same creature. However, a little horn can be observed on his head and a flower embellishes its cheek.[6] The exact same winged creature (but this time complete) appears in another Sogdian painting from Afrasiab (pre-Mongol Samarkand) dated c. 660 on the western wall of the so-called "Hall of the Ambassadors" [Fig. 6] (Compareti 2009b, pp. 75–76). Every detail, such as the dog's face (even with its dangling tongue), is reproduced on the caftan of a foreign envoy from Bactria-Tokharistan resembling very much the same motif at Taq-e Bustan with very small differences. The two composite creatures look very similar and they are almost contemporary. However, the identification of that kind of composite creature as the *simurgh* of Iranian mythology is incorrect. In Sogdiana it was a symbolic representation used to exalt the importance of nobles or rich people mainly represented in 8th-century mural paintings at Panjikent (Azarpay 1975).

If the *simurgh* in Iranian arts was always a fantastic bird, how should we identify the flying composite creature under examination? Very problematic literary sources suggest that the creature should be identified with the Iranian concept of *farr* (Pahlavi *xwarrah*, Avestan *khwarenah*), that is "glory" or "charisma."[7] Moreover, on some 7th-century Sogdian coins imitating Sasanian emissions of Hormizd IV (579–590) are countermarks in the shape of that flying composite creature together with the inscription "*farn*," that is, the Sogdian word for "glory" (Farsi *farr*) (Nikitin and Roth 1995). Despite the great importance of the concept of *farr* in late Sasanian Persia, its representation as a composite creature comes from Eastern Iranian lands (Central Asia), as do the first images of the *simurgh*. Furthermore it is worth observing that Biruni called a fantastic animal resembling a flying fox "*Khorasan khorra*" ("Glory of the East"). In doing this, that Muslim author implicitly pointed out the eastern (Iranian) origins of a kind of dragon probably to be associated with the flying dog-faced creature (Cristoforetti and Scarcia 2013, pp. 341–42). The *simurgh* was a fantastic and magical bird that had some connections with the concept of "glory" or "charisma." For this reason, it was difficult correctly to separate and identify the two iconographies that Kamilla Trever had confused in her studies.[8] Therefore, the identification of this composite creature as the *simurgh* of Iranian mythology is not justified. Many scholars insist on calling it *simurgh*, but the term "pseudo-*simurgh*" should be preferred.

Fig. 6. Painting on the western wall of the "Hall of the Ambassadors," Afrasiab (ca. 660).

From a purely iconographic point of view that winged creature with a dog's face is rooted in Graeco-Etruscan art. It was exported to the East and especially to Bactria and northwestern India during

Photo by author

Fig.7. Ketos, dolphins, and hippocamp on a decorative frieze from the "Casa del Tramezzo di Legno," Herculaneum (Naples), 1st century CE.

the Macedonian conquest of the Persian Empire. That monster is usually called *ketos* in Greek and had definite funerary connections in Classical art, being a very appropriate psychopomp, that is, a creature accompanying the soul of the dead to the underworld. In fact, it combines the characteristics of the dog, which is the animal of Hades, and aquatic ones to cross the underworld rivers and sea. Creatures like this appear not just in funerary arts,[9] as can be observed in a decorative frieze from Herculaneum (1st century CE). In this latter painting, the composite creature with a dog's face also has a pair of wings, despite the aquatic landscape where it is swimming together with a winged horse (*hippocamp*) and a couple of dolphins [Fig. 7]. Actually, the *ketos* appeared in many myths and as a negative monster as well (for example, in the story of Perseus and Medusa) whose iconography had great success in the Mediterranean basin during the pre-Christian and the Christian periods. Despite the presence of a dog's face and wings, it was considered a chthonian creature to be found very often as the vehicle for Nereids. Its association with water is rendered perfectly in the Biblical story of Jonah where the Classical iconography of the *ketos* was transferred to the *leviathan*.[10] For some reason, the *ketos* (and many other Classical subjects) became very popular in typical Gandharan objects, the so-called "toilet-trays," and, according to some scholars, its iconography was used in India to render a local monster with very strong aquatic connections, the *makara* (Francfort 1979, p. 89; Stančo 2012, pp. 160–76). The re-appropriation of that creature by eastern Iranian people possibly followed the path of Buddhism (and Hinduism) in Central Asia, and, in fact, the Indian component in Sogdian art should not be underestimated.

In Sogdian Buddhist literature, the Indian mythical bird that was also the vehicle (Sanskrit *vahana*) of Vishnu, *Garuda*, was superimposed on the *simurgh*, specifically in an unpublished version of the *Mahaparinirvana Sutra* (Yoshida 2013, p. 206). It is not clear if something similar could have happened also in figurative arts, although one of the most ancient images of *Garuda* as a royal insignia (called *Garuda-dhvaja*) at Bharhut, in central India (ca. 1st century BCE), has been considered by experts to be an unspecified "Western Asian" borrowing (Guy 2007, p. 18). The problem of Indo-Iranian interactions from an iconographic point of view cannot be studied in detail because the Iranian aspect is not well known or investigated. Sogdians and Bactrians had very close relations with India, but not much is known about Sasanian Persia. As Guitty Azarpay (1995) observed, Classical and Indian motifs seem to converge in a silver-gilt dish considered to be late Sasanian but most probably produced in Bactria or in the Indo-Iranian border zone [Fig. 8]. In another early 8th-century fragmentary painting from Panjikent (Room 23, Sector I), a bird with something in its beak resembling a snake — and, so, very close to the Indian iconography for *Garuda* — can be observed. Even if from an iconographic point of view that image is definitely rooted in Indian art, some scholars have pro-

Fig. 8. A Bactrian(?) silver-gilt plate 7th century(?). State Hermitage Museum, Inv. No. S-217

Photo courtesy of Daniel C. Waugh

Photo courtesy of Daniel C. Waugh

Fig. 9. Detail of Bishapur II rock relief showing triumph of Shapur I.

posed to identify it with various Iranian fantastic birds of Zoroastrian literature (Marshak 1990, pp. 308–09). Other birds with something in the beak (such as a ring or a necklace) appear very often in Sogdian painting as a symbol of exaltation for the people around them. Moreover, Zoroastrian literature (*Zamyad Yasht* 19, 34) explicitly reports that *xwarenah* left Yima in the shape of a falcon and dove into the Worukasha Sea where the god Apam Napat found it (Malandra 1983, pp. 91–93).

From this long digression, some points should be underlined. The idea of *farr* was expressed according to a wide plethora of iconographies in 8th-century Sogdian paintings (a composite fantastic creature, a bird, a putto, etc.)[11] and a couple of times as a flying putto (or Nike) in Sasanian rock reliefs (precisely at Bishapur II and Bishapur III) [Fig. 9] (Hermann 1998). On the contrary, the *simurgh* was always a bird in pre-Islamic Sogdian paintings and in Islamic book illustrations, exactly as it is described in written sources. From the point of view of iconography, the bird in Islamic book illustrations was definitely rooted in Chinese art, and it is very possible that its introduction into Persia was due to the Mongols. Only in a small group of book illustrations of the *Shahnama* probably from early 14th-century Mesopotamia or Fars, the *simurgh* was not following Chinese models, and, in fact, it could call to mind the bird in the Rustam paintings at Panjikent (Swietochowski and Carboni 1994, pp. 32, 46, 71–72, 82, 112–13).

Let us now consider the two textiles from the private collection advertised on the Internet. Several stylistic elements of these two specimens clearly correspond to a type of textiles usually referred to as *zandaniji*. Many specimens belonging to this group of textiles are at present part of European museum collections because they had been imported in great numbers in the Middle Ages as wrappings of precious holy relics. Approximately fifty years ago, some scholars found an inscription on a piece of silk preserved at Huy Cathedral in Belgium that belongs to this same group. According to W. B. Henning, the inscription was in 7th-century Sogdian language and mentioned the term "*zandanichi*." This specific term was immediately associated with those textiles celebrated in Islamic written sources as *zandaniji*, that is to say, produced in the village of Zandan, not far from Bukhara.[12] All the evidence seemed to point to the identification of this little understood type of textiles until a close analysis of the Huy Cathedral fragment permitted the determination once and for all that the inscription is not in Sogdian but in medieval Arabic (probably 9th-10th century judging from the epigraphiy) (Sims-Williams and Khan 2008). Furthermore, it is worth observing that Boris Marshak (2006) always insisted that *zandaniji* were textiles in cotton and not in silk as is reported in Islamic sources. This does not exclude the possibility that weavers used to work with cotton could have not attempted to produce similarly embellished textiles in silk as well. In any case, the evidence in the sources should not be neglected. Despite Marshak's uncertainties and the incorrect identification of the *zandaniji* group, it appears very clearly that the textiles of this kind all share very similar peculiarities not only in terms of technique but, above all, in their iconographic decorative elements.

What were the origins of this group of textiles and which chronology could be proposed? The presence of animals such as stags or rams with outwardly spreading horns and geometrical elements on their bodies would suggest an Iranian milieu as do the pearl roundel frames. However, many of these patterns had been accepted in Byzantine art and employed specifically to embellish precious textiles (Muthesius 1997, pp. 94–98). Nothing like this can be observed in pre-Islamic Iranian arts from Persia and Central Asia nor on very rare textile fragments found during excavations or in reproductions in mural paintings. The preference accorded to confronted animal subjects usually inside circular frames would point to the Islamic period. In Sasanian and Sogdian art only single animals can be seen inside roundel frames that usually are not vegetal but geometric. Only the "pseudo-*simurgh*" points to an eastern Iranian, that is to say Central Asian, origin for these textiles. However, the composite flying creature was soon accepted in Byzantine repertoires and especially in luxury textile production. Even the Persian origin itself for some of the best known textiles embellished with this creature inside roundels such as the Victoria and Albert Museum fragment [Fig. 10, next page] (Volbach 1966, Fig. 21) or the so-called Moshchevaia Balka caftan [Fig. 11; Color Plate II] (Ierusalimskaia 2012, Fig. 143) have begun to be seriously questioned.[13] There is still great uncertain-

After: Volbach 1966, Fig. 21

Fig. 10. Silk textile fragment, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

ty about attribution, although it is now evident that these textiles cannot be attributed to Sasanian manufactures. In fact, they are too late to be Sasanian and, in any case, the "pseudo-*simurgh*" appears in Persian arts only during the Islamic period with the only exception Taq-e Bustan, where garments and accessories too seem to be external borrowings. These textiles cannot be considered pre-Islamic Sogdian either, because, on stylistic analysis, they do not have precise parallels in Panjikent paintings.

It is not possible to imagine eastern Central Asia or the Far East as a place of origin for these textiles. In fact, the pseudo-*simurgh* is not attested in the Tarim Basin despite the great number of Sogdian immigrants who lived there and the recovery of many funerary textiles embellished with Iranian motifs in the region of Turfan (the so-called *fumian*). Indeed, in Chinese art and especially in Sui-early Tang funerary paintings (6th–8th centuries), there is no evidence for the use at court of Iranian motifs on textiles (Compareti 2006c, p. 163). However, Chinese written sources clearly state that in the late Sui period (early 7th century) the person responsible for the production of textiles embellished with "Persian motifs" and other exotic goods was a Sogdian called He Chou (Compareti 2011). Why produce these textiles then if they were not going to be used by the Chinese? Most likely they were produced to be exported or presented as gifts to "barbarian" courts that had diplomatic relations with China. A great number of textiles embellished with pearl roundels containing typical Iranian motifs such as the boar's head, the winged horse, or a bird with a necklace in its beak have been found in abundance outside of China proper. These sites are mainly cemeteries such as Turfan, Jargalant in Mongolia, Dulan (Qinghai or Amdo, that is to say, Eastern Tibet), and even Japan (Compareti 2006c, pp. 155–58).

Fig. 11. Decoration of a silk caftan from Moshchevaia Balka, Russia. State Hermitage Museum, Inv. No. Kz 658

Photo by author

If Iranians who lived in China and the Tarim Basin were involved in the production and exportation of this kind of textiles, why is there not even one single example of the pseudo-*simurgh* in these territories? Unfortunately, it is not possible to answer this question. For some reason, the composite creature that we call pseudo-*simurgh* did not have great success among the people who inhabited the Tarim Basin. On the other hand, it is possible that the pseudo-*simurgh* was not favored in a Buddhist milieu. Not only in the Tarim Basin but also in other regions of Central Asia where Buddhism was the main religion such as in Bactria-Tokharistan and the kingdom of Bamian, this motif was completely unknown.

Until the publication of those textiles on the Internet, the pseudo-*simurgh* was completely foreign to the decorations of this group of textiles. It is also very difficult to determine their authenticity, although every detail seems to point to genuine ancient specimens. It should be admitted that the composite creature under examination could be expected to appear among those textile decorations, although it would have been much better to find it during controlled excavations.

That same composite creature was also a favorite subject on Islamic textiles and decorative arts during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods. Christians too appreciated it very much, and it is in the paintings of an early 13th-century Armenian church at Ani that we can find the last occurrence of the pseudo-*simurgh*, possibly just imitating precious textiles (Compareti 1997–1999, p. 92). For some unclear reason, that composite creature was much appreciated in every cultural milieu in contact with the Iranian world for a very long

period, the only exception being those regions where Buddhism was the main religion.

In conclusion, the most probable place of origin for those textiles seems to be Sogdiana after Islamization. In my opinion, the best fit is the Samanid emirates during the 9th–10th centuries.

About the author

Matteo Compareti is the Guitty Azarpay Distinguished Visiting Professor in the History of the Arts of Iran and Central Asia at the University of California, Berkeley. Since completing his Ph.D. at the University of Naples in 2005, Dr. Compareti has published extensively on the themes of economic, artistic, and cultural exchange in pre- Islamic and early Islamic Eurasia. His publications include books on Iranian merchants in the Indian Ocean (2005), Buddhist art in Sogdiana (2008), and the famous Afrasyab fresco cycle at Samarkand (2009). E-mail: <compareti@hotmail.com>

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Notes

1. After a preliminary observation of those textiles that I found on the Internet completely by chance (on the web page: <http://www.asianart.com/carlocristi/d10961.html>, I was able to contact the dealer who put them online. Carlo Cristi (a member of Asian Art in Brussels) is an Italian dealer who kindly supplied me with additional information about those textiles that he considers to be 8th–10th-century Sogdian. A third fragment of a silk textile embellished with two similar flying creature confronting each other inside pearl roundels is at present kept in the China National Silk Museum in Hangzhou. My colleague and friend Mariachiara Gasparini recently presented this fragment together with many other from that museum collection on the occasion of a mini-symposium held at the University of California, Berkeley on 4 December 2015. Cf. Spuhler 2014, Cat. 2.8.

2. Compareti 2010; Compareti 2014. The same pedestal embellishes a unique Sasanian tapestry fragment bought in Egypt and at present kept in the Benaki Museum (Athens) (Compareti 2005, pp. 155–57; Compareti 2009a).

3. For the problem of Sasanian textiles in general, see Compareti 2009a; Bier 2012. For the problem of the attribution of textiles embellished with the pearl roundels pattern to Sasanian or Sogdian manufactures, see Compareti 2004.

4. Kamilla Vasil'evna Trever (1892–1974) was a Russian orientalist who wrote extensively on many subjects about ancient Caucasus, Iran and Central Asia. She published a study on the identification of the *simurgh* in 1938 and continued to propose her conclusions on many other occasions. Her ideas have been widely accepted, although scholars such as Alessandro Bausani and Boris Marshak were never convinced and openly criticized her (Compareti 2006a). The original study in Russian (*Senmurv-Paskudzh, sobaka-ptitsa*, Leningrad, 1938) has recently been presented in English as well (Trever 2005).

5. Compareti 2013, pp. 25–27. I presented these new ideas about the "real" *simurgh* in the paintings of the so-called "Blue Room" at Panjikent (Room 41, Sector VI) on the occasion of the conference in honor of B. I. Marshak and V. G. Shkoda: "Pre-Islamic Past of Middle Asia and Eastern Iran", St.Petersburg (Russia), October 23rd-25th 2013. The article is going to be published in the proceedings of that conference as: "*Simurgh* or *Farr*? On the Representation of Fantastic Creatures in the Sogdian 'Rustam Cycle' at Penjikent," *Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology*, forthcoming volume 8.

6. The small horn and the dangling tongue present a clear parallel with the figure of another fantastic creature, the *mušhuššu* that in much earlier Mesopotamian art usually accompanies the main Babylonian god Marduk (Black and Green 1992, pp. 166, 177–78).

7. Compareti 2006a; Cristoforetti and Scarcia 2013, pp. 339–43; Shenkar 2014, pp. 131–33. The concept of *farr* was very important in ancient Iranian cultures and especially under the late Sasanians, because without his "glory" or "charisma" a king could not reign. Similar concepts are attested in many ancient cultures. It is very probable that the Iranian idea of *farr* had some connections with the concept of Sumerian *melam* (Akkadian *melammu*) that was expressed as a kind of halo around the gods. In some Assyrian sealings, the goddess Ishtar is represented as a crowned woman standing on a lion and surrounded by stars (Watanabe 1992). See also Shenkar 2014, Fig. 165. In ancient Mesopotamian art, no fantastic creature used as a symbol to represent the *melammu* is attested, although, as already observed in note 6 of this study, some characteristics of the pseudo-*simurgh* can possibly be considered borrowings of the monster-hypostasis of Marduk, the *mušhuššu*.

8. Trever 2005. The problem is now discussed in Compareti 2006a. Once more from eastern Iran, and specifically from Bactria, there comes a unique iconographical personification of the concept of *farr*, in Bactrian *pharro*. It is reproduced on inscribed Kushan gold coins as a male god sometimes resembling Hermes or a haloed man wearing a caftan with a spear in one hand and fire (or an undistinguished object) in the other (Gnoli 1996).

9. The *ketos* (sometimes even repeated two times) represents one of the most favored motifs to be found on Etruscan and later Roman sarcophagi (Shepard 1940, pp. 79–84).

10. Boardman 1987; Uehlinger 1999. Among the early 10th-century exterior reliefs of the Armenian church of Aght'amar (today in eastern Turkey) where many Biblical scenes can be observed, in the place of the *leviathan* there is a winged composite creature resembling both the *ketos* and the pseudo-*simugh* (Compareti 1997–1999, p. 91; Compareti 2014, pp. 17–19). The Armenians just reproduced an iconography that was already attested in early Christian art for that specific sea monster.

11. Even if not expressly associated with the idea of *farr,* these motifs have already been collected in Azarpay 1975.

12. Shepherd and Henning 1959; Compareti 2006b. For recent ^{14}C analysis on textiles of this type, see Verhecken-Lammens et al. 2006.

13. A third specimen very similar to the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Moshchevaia Balka textiles is the so-called "Saint Helen shroud," at present kept in the Musée de la Mode et du Textile, Paris (Inv. 16364). According to a recent study, it should be dated to the 9th-century "Eastern Mediterranean or Iran (?)" (Demange 2006).

Nomads and Oasis Cities: Central Asia from the 9th to the 13th Century

Xinru Liu
The College of New Jersey

During the three to four centuries after the decline and demise of the Tang Dynasty (618–907) in the early 9th century, the steppe nomads launched a series of imperial ventures. Several Turkish groups, having adopted Buddhism or Islam in Central Asia, invaded India and the Byzantine Empire. At the eastern fringe of Eurasia, the Khitans, Tanguts, and Jurchen — mentioned in Chinese historiography respectively as Liao Dynasty (907–1125), Xixia Dynasty (ca. 1032–1227), and Jin Dynasty (1115–1234) — succeeded in building regional kingdoms and even empires. Then, during the 13th century, the Mongols, the supreme empire builders, conquered much of the Eurasian land mass. All the rulers from the steppe, forests, and borderlands between the ecological zones came from a cultural tradition shaped by mobile life and the worship of their god from the heavens by performing animal sacrifices. In the process of occupying the lands of settled empires and territories of other nomads, they invariably patronised the cultures and especially religious practices of the conquered peoples and became followers of world religions. The rulers from the steppe had to merge their spiritual universe based on nomadic and/or pastoral life with those of their subjects who were agriculturalists. In this process, both sides helped to create a Tantric form of Buddhism compromising vegetarianism of early Buddhism with the blood-letting rituals of pastoral societies. They also transformed aspects of Islamic practice and artistic expression in ways that incorporated Central Asia traditions.

Most often, these transitions took place in the oasis settlements, the principal zones of contact between the communities migrating between mountainous terrain, forests, and steppe and the settled sown. East of the Pamir Plateau, this was one of the historical periods when cities and tribes there were independent of the authority of any of the neighboring cultures and acted according to their local interests following the shifting political alignments. The dynamics of the encounters between nomadic and sedentary political structures and cultures brought a new life to the oases, regions peripheral to the Chinese empires and people such as the Tanguts who migrated between forests, farm land and pastures to look for their fortunes.[1]

Political re-alignment and changing cultural landscape

Unlike some of their steppe predecessors such as Xiongnu who built their empires on the steppe lands, nomads beginning with the Turks endeavored to conquer and rule directly over agricultural lands. Encouraged and enriched by their military support and commercial ties with the late Tang Empire, among the Turkic-speaking nomads the Uyghurs expanded their territory on the steppe to the oases along northern rim of the Tarim Basin and thus set out to build their own regimes in agricultural lands in Central Asia.[2] The Tanguts (Tib. *Mi nyag*, Chin. *Dangxiang Qiang* 党项羌), pastoralists and hunter-gatherers, were resettled by the Tang authority during the 7th century on the Ordos where the Yellow River bends. They helped the Tang to suppress the rebellion of Huang Chao (875–883, 黃巢) and thus were rewarded with titles to the territory already under their control which developed into the Tangut "Great State of the White and the High." To the south of Central Asia, Tibetans took advantage of the decline of Tang imperial influence and took over the eastern part of the trade routes around the Tarim Basin. They gradually lost political control of the region, partially due to collapse of their central polity on Tibetan Plateau in mid 9th century.[3] However, their cultural legacy remained with fragments of Tibetan regimes in the region and was revived by the new rulers, including the Tanguts and Khitans and eventually the Mongols.

The centuries between the demise of the Tang Empire and the rise of the Mongols also saw the islamization of Central Asia. This was a gradual process that went through several stages and can be observed as early as the 9th century in the lands of Tokharistan (present northern Afghanistan) and Transoxiana (Khorezm and Sogdiana, present Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan). Muslim mystics, the sufis, rose to prominence in the multi-lingual and culturally diverse environment west of the Pamirs, inheriting many traits from Bud-

dhist, Zoroastrian, and Manichaean communities of the Sogdian and Tokharian oasis city-states.[4] As Arab military conquest stopped at the Talas River, islamization in the region east of the Pamir Plateau took a longer and different path. Unfortunately for historians, Islamic scholars recorded less detailed information about the transition there than they did in the regions directly conquered by Arabs. Nevertheless, the process was almost completed when the Mongols arrived there in the early 13th century. By and large, the process of islamization there was initiated by sufis from Sogdiana and Tokharistan who practiced a form of Islam already imbued with many practices unique to Central Asian religions and cultures. However, even this Central Asian oasis type of Islam, needed the support of the nomadic rulers, in this case the Karakhanid kaghanate (999–1211), to penetrate the oases of the Tarim Basin, where it encountered a new form of Buddhism, also patronised by rulers from the steppe.

Earlier, in the time of Tang suzerainty, Manichaean and Buddhist institutions in the oases around the rim of Tarim Basin sought patronage from rulers of the northern steppes and in the process converted them. The Uyghurs were adherents of Manichaeism when they acted as the power brokers for the Tang court in Central Asia, largely due to the influence of their Manichaean Sogdian clients, many of whom were merchants.[5] The Uyghur empire collapsed during the mid-9th century, along with the decline of the Tang. Several clans of the Uyghurs migrated eastwards to the Tang border (the later so-called Ganzhou Uyghurs) and eventually settled in China. Others retreated into the steppe but regrouped into kaghanates back in Central Asia. The kaghanate around the Turfan Basin emerged as the Kocho Uyghurs in the Turfan region. Their kings gave up title of *kaghan*, a title reserved for nomadic regimes, to adopt the title *idikut*, more fitting for a ruler of agricultural society no longer claiming authority in the steppe.

Another Turkish confederation, the Karakhanids, followed the steps of earlier nomads, moved westward and conquered both oasis and pastoral lands up to the territories of the Seljuks, the Turkish nomads who had preceded them in the westward migration. The Karakhanid kaghanate, which ruled a vast region across the Pamir Plateau, initiated significant transformations of Central Asian culture. The Turkish rulers before them, the Western Turk, mentioned in Chinese sources as *Xi Tujue* (西突厥), also nomads in origin with the sky deity *tangri* as the central god, had followed Buddhism and controlled Central Asia from around 583 to 659 (Sinor 1990). Consequently, they learned the courtly style of their settled subjects who spoke various dialects of Indo-European languages. After they embraced Islam in the 8th and 9th centuries they also learned Persian and adopted the Persian language and cultural features as the high culture fit for their imperial endeavors. The Karakhanids were different. After they took over the lands of Sogdiana and Ferghana during early 11th century, they became fervent Muslims, thanks to sufi fakirs in the newly conquered land, but they insisted using their own Turkic language and adopted Arabic script for their language. Therefore, the Karakhanids were not only responsible for changing the language landscape of Central Asia on both sides of the Pamir Plateau from Indo-European to Turkic but also for bringing Islam to the Tarim Basin.

After the Karakhanids divided into west and east regimes around the year 1140, the eastern Karakhanids extended their territory to include a large portion of the Tarim Basin, from Kashgar to Kucha, and the pastoral land of the Lake Balkhash basin (Biran 2015). This nomadic cum sedentary regime changed the region into effectively a Turkic language Islamic domain, with the help of sufis who knew the ways of Central Asia and did not mind living and preaching along with other religious communities (Golden 1990, pp. 353–54; Yu 1996, pp. 272–73). Meanwhile, the Karakhanids had to confront the counter-expansion of the Buddhist Uyghur state based in Turfan. In the early 11th century, the Karakhanids took from the Kocho Uyghurs Kucha, an oasis settlement that had a long history as a hub of cultural and economic transactions between the nomads from the north and south, and traders from both east and west. Buddhist Uyghurs in the Kashgar-Kucha region gradually became Muslims, joining the Karakhanid bureaucracy and cultural elite (Yu 1996, pp. 284–94). The region thus became the scene of the initial transition from Buddhism to Islam in the Tarim Basin.

While the Turfan Uyghurs and Karakhanids vied with each other for political and cultural hegemony in the Tarim Basin, nomads appeared on the horizon from the northeast again. The Khitans, who established the Liao Dynasty in north China, were pushed out by another people from the northeast forests, the Jurchens. The defeated Khitans migrated westward to the lush riverine lands in the Balkhash basin, at the expense of the eastern Karakhanids. The Kara Khitai, or *Xi Liao* (西辽, ca. 1124–1216) in Chinese sources, adopted Buddhism when they ruled north China and continued their adherence to that faith in Central Asia, although they employed many Muslims there to run their bureaucracy and collect taxes from their settled subjects.[6] The geo-political space between the Kara Khitai and the Jurchen Jin Dynasty was filled by the Tangut empire (ca.1032–1227). In possession of the Hexi Corridor, the main trade artery in Eastern Central Asia, the Tanguts were content to remain the rul-

ers of a society engaging in both sedentary agriculture and nomadic pastoralism. They were ardent supporters of Buddhism and created a script for their own language. Together with the Kocho Uyghurs, these rulers of nomadic origin had long immersed themselves in oasis agricultural life and revitalised Buddhist culture from Turfan to the Hexi Corridor. During the 12th and 13th centuries, an age when Eurasian long distance trade was shifting to the ocean lanes, the nomads transformed these oases into an integrated commercial and cultural domain.

The revival of Buddhism from Kocho to Dunhuang eventually faded after the Mongol conquest. Certainly the Mongols, starting from Chinggis Khan, did not intend to destroy Buddhism in Central Asia; on the contrary, as will be elaborated later in this paper, they used the Buddhist cultural resources of the region to fashion a Buddhist state religion in Yuan China. Nor was Central Asian Buddhism destroyed by an Islamic jihad. Rather, the Karakhanids reconnected the commercial and cultural ties between the oases to the west of the Pamir Plateau and those of to the east. As argued by Peter Golden (1990, p. 353):

> The lure of Islam as a civilization was strong, just as Rome had appealed to the Germanic tribes. As the full partaking of the benefits of Muslim society was predicated upon membership in the community of believers, social and economic rather than military pressure gained conversions. This pressure was reinforced by the activities of Muslim mystics, the *ṣūfīs* who journeyed to the steppe tribes to preach and propagate the new faith.

The very form of Islam they patronised, that of the sufis, inherited many cultural traits deeply rooted in Central Asia. Once sufis had assimilated those traditions, they became an effective vehicle to carry Islamic religious teachings to the eastern part of Central Asia where similar cultural practices and patterns were found in the same kind of mixed religious environment. In an important sense, music, dance, poetry, and wine drinking associated with highly developed viniculture were the traits that transcended all religious differences and gave all the religions that flourished in the area a Central Asian tone.

Festivities in the centers of Buddhist culture

Nomadic groups, fresh from the steppe, most speaking Turkic dialects, moved in the land between the Tian Shan and Altai mountains starting in the 6th century. In spite of cultural differences and constant military conflicts among the various groups, they all practiced animal sacrifice to their sky god. They nevertheless entered the universe of Buddhism of karma and rebirth by assuming that the rulers themselves and even their ancestors on the steppe were incarnations of Buddhas and bodhisattvas. There is, however, an irreconcilable conflict when the universe of animal sacrifice merged with a universe where all living creatures form a continuing cycle of rebirth. That is, killing an animal could be killing a life who was related to the killer in its former lives, even could have been a loved one. For the conquered Buddhist agriculturalists in the oases, converting the horse riding new rulers was a way to tame their obsession of hunting. For some rulers coming from the steppe such as the Tuoba clan of the Xianbei, assuming the status of Buddhist deities was a means of gaining legitimacy for their regime. The Northern Wei rulers of Tuoba lineage had gigantic Buddhas carved in the caves of Yungang indicating their ancestors were incarnation of the Buddha.[7] However, giving up animal sacrifice rituals, the very ceremony for legitimacy in the steppe polities, was inconceivable for the rulers fresh from the grassland, at least for the first couple of generations. The Uyghurs, Tanguts, and Mongols nevertheless chose Buddhism instead of other religions practiced by some communities of their subjects.[8] In turn, their legitimacy was endorsed by Buddhist institutions in the Turfan and Hexi region during the three or four centuries under study. Though the intrinsic conflict between the nature of nomadic regimes and Buddhist core doctrine never disappeared, certain Buddhist doctrines and practices did ameliorate such conflicts.

The most important factor in mitigating conflict was the inclusive nature or pluralism of Buddhist doctrine and practices, beginning with the development of the faith in India. During the more than thousand years' propagation of the religion over a vast area of Asia and interactions with other cultural traditions, the universe of Buddhism became even larger, more diverse and colorful. Mahayana schools and especially the Tantric sects which prevailed in Central Asia had been enriched by many religious ideas and rituals from other religions. The numerous Brahmanical celestial beings such as devas, devatas, gandharvans and apsaras residing and moving between the many heavens and Buddha lands could readily accommodate the new rulers. The nomads thus imposed themselves on their Buddhist subjects not only as tax collectors but also as the major patrons of the religion or even incarnations of Buddhist deities, as the example of the Northern Wei shows. Unlike their nomadic predecessors who adopted languages of their sedentary subjects when they embraced their religions, the Uyghur rulers instead imposed their own language with newly invented scripts. When they acted as patrons of Buddhist institutions along the Central Asian trade routes, they followed examples of previous rulers such as Zhang Yichao (張義潮, local ruler over Dunhuang since 848),

Courtesy of the American Institute of Indian Studies, photo archive in the library of the University of Pennsylvania

Fig. 1. Relief on the central beam of the entrance arch of Sanci stupa.

had their own portraits depicted on the murals, and furthermore, had Buddhist literature translated into Uyghur. While the efforts to make their subjects understand and accept the new language took time, the artistic expression of their religious devotion made a more immediate impact. This can be seen especially in their sponsorship and participation in festivals on Buddhist holidays. Music and dance processions had a long tradition among Buddhist communities along the Central Asian trade routes, and the tradition surely continued under the Uyghur and Tangut regimes. Here I will trace such festivals, one of the major forms of Buddhist rituals, to their Indian roots and show how they were integrated into the public life of Buddhist cultural centers in Central Asia.

Buddhism started as a religion with open arms to people who defected from or were rejected by the orthodox Brahmanical society and to those who were outside the mainstream of the society. During the lifetime of Shakyamuni, the 6th to the 5th centuries BCE, many people from Brahman families and royal princes and princesses joined the sangha; so did hunters and fishermen living in forests and marshland, bandits who harassed travellers along the trade routes and outcasts who lived on the outskirts of cities and villages pursuing the most menial and demeaning jobs. Those who joined the sangha brought their original deities into the Buddhist universe and their rituals into Buddhist practices. Thus processes of appropriation are discernible which included the gradual transformation of deities from one pantheon to the next (see DeCaroli 2004). For example, the earliest Buddhist monuments, the stupas of Sanci and Bharhut, depict the Naga tribes, who worshipped cobras, as both the worshippers of the Buddha and practitioners of their own cults. A relief on the central beam of the entrance arch of the Sanci stupa shows a Naga king wearing a crown of five cobras worshipping the stupa along with a majestic king, presumably Ashoka (268–231 [?] BCE) [Fig. 1]. Vedic deities, headed by Indra, were incorporated into the Buddhist pantheon, even if their worship required animal sacrifice and many of their followers killed animals for a living.

During the first centuries after the passing of the Buddha, the conversion stories of those characters were woven into the narrative of the Buddhist universe and recorded in Pali canons and Jataka stories. In those stories, Indra gained a Buddhist name Sakka or Sakra, and became a supporter of the Buddha's cause. Wild *yaksha* tribal chiefs such as Angulimala (garland made of fingers) and Shuciloma (needle hair) gained the status of demigods.[9] This universe is displayed on the stone railing of Bharhut stupa in India (2nd to 1st century BCE). The focus of worship was the bare dome, symbolising the nirvana of the Buddha, instead of an idol of the Buddha as a god. On the more than dozen major balusters, life-sized human figures, both male and female, face the stupa dome in postures showing piety. At one time probably all of them had inscriptions, many still legible, indicating the name of the figure and that of the donor. From those inscriptions, one recognises in one sculptured figure Shuciloma, the fierce looking yaksha who challenged Shakyamuni, as recorded in a Pali text. In this sculpture Shuciloma appears merely as a civilised, pious man [Fig. 2].[10] There were also pictures carved on beams and balusters depict-

Courtesy of the American Institute of Indian Studies, photo archive in the library of the University of Pennsylvania

Fig. 2. Shuciloma, literally "needle hair," a fierce looking and brutal yaksha chief, appears on the Bharhut stupa, Satna District, India, as a polished and pious man paying respect to the Buddha. Calcutta, Indian Museum No. 144.

Courtesy of the American Institute of Indian Studies, photo archive in the library of the University of Pennsylvania

Fig. 3. On the altar of the assembly hall of Vedic gods rests a lock of Shakyamuni's hair. Gods celebrate the symbol of his leaving mundane life by watching dancing and music performance. Calcutta, Indian Museum No. 182.

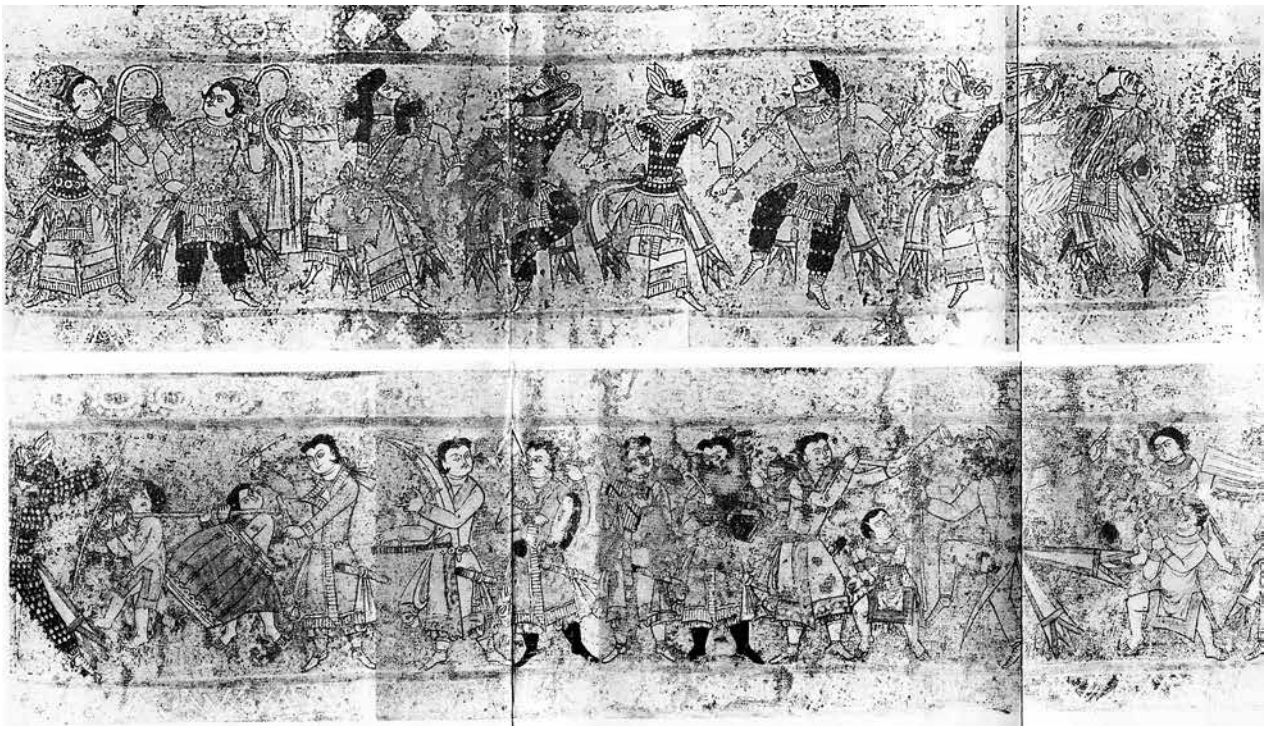
ing plots of jataka stories, where Indra/Sakka often plays a major role. Scenes depicting the major events of Shakyamuni's life, such as his enlightenment, show how all creatures, be they heavenly beings, barbarians and animals, join the festivity of dance with music [Fig. 3].

According to one of the earliest texts in the Pali canon, the Buddha forbade followers to participate in many kinds of festivals with sacrificial rituals, music and dance (Davids 1977, pp. 5–9). Even though animal sacrifice has always been off limit for Buddhist rituals, the Bharhut sculptures demonstrate that dance and music existed in the early Buddhist community and became a means to embrace peoples of other cultures. Some donors had Yakha (Pali for yaksha) Naga as their names; some had their images of dancers and musicians carved on the railings of Bharhut.

A couple of centuries later, Mahayana Buddhism flourished in the northwest Indian subcontinent. There, in Bactria and Gandhara, where Hellenistic culture and patronage of nomadic rulers exerted influence on Buddhist theology and institutions, Dionysian culture, including wine drinking and dramatic performance were common in Buddhist art (Brancaccio and Liu 2009). By this time, music and dance had become an integral component of Buddhist ritual. From Gandhara and Bactria, Buddhism spread to Central Asia and China, carrying not only spiritual messages translated into many different languages but also rituals including performance in music and dance. Unlike the translated religious texts, whose language might often be difficult to comprehend, artistic works and performances could reach a broad audience. We find ample evidence of this in painting and sculpture, along with depictions of patrons from among the peoples of both steppe and oasis.[11]

In comparing the depictions of musical ensembles in the art of northwest India, Sogdiana and the oases north of the Taklamakan, one observes that musicians at Kucha, the important oasis on the northern rim of Tarim Basin, seem to have had the largest repertoire of musical instruments. Gandharan musicians played lira, drum, and xylophone and a simple kind of trumpet (Brancaccio and Liu 2009, p. 230, Fig. 5). The vina, a string instrument originating from India, appeared on a statue of a musician in a Buddhist monastery at Airtam (near Termez) on the Amu Darya (Nehru 1989, p. 55). Sogdians also played the vina (Marshak 2002, p. 142, Fig. 93). In Kucha, there were several types of lira and even a harp, in addition to vina and different types of wind instruments including the *bili* (觱篥). Studies have suggested that the latter came from Kucha, probably inspired by horns used in herding horses. Because of its deep and loud sound, the bili was widely used on battlefields (Wang 2011, pp. 60-74).

Mask dancing, depicted on a Buddhist reliquary dating to the 7th century, was among the many dramatic types of dance in Kucha [Fig. 4, next page].[12] Following the rhythm of the drum, lira, trumpet and other instruments, dancers wear masks symbolizing a warrior, an eagle, a monkey and other human and animal forms. The scene obviously conveys some kind of story, the exact theme of which is a hard to identify, but it might be from Hindu epics or Buddhist jataka stories in which the lives of humans and animals are often joined and deeply entangled through the cycle of karma and rebirth. A ritual dance, called in Chinese *poluozhe* (婆罗遮), performed in Kucha, was noted by a Tang writer Duan Chengshi (段成式, d. 863). According to him, at the beginning of the year, the people in Qiuci or Kucha staged fights between cattle, horses, and camels for seven days to predict the fertility of their herds. They danced in the style of *poluozhe* in which performers wore masks representing a monkey and dog, day and night.[13] *Poluozhe* thus was a dance associated with pastoral life of the Tian Shan foothills. Here the environment of oasis life, with farming, herding, and hunting, provides a landscape compatible with the Buddhist universe where deities, humans, and animals formed a continuous circle of rebirth. This festival thus was a Buddhist ritual essen-



After: Huo 1994, p. 241, Fig. 22

Fig. 4. Mask dancing with musicians, depicted on the 7th-century reliquary casket excavated at Subax.

Photo courtesy of Daniel C. Waugh

tial to the Kuchans. From the 9th century, Kucha was in the territory of the Kocho Uyghur empire. Uyghur patrons of Buddhism brought in a new style of art in terms of color scheme and facial feature of the Buddha and the patrons. The Uyghur patrons depicted on the murals dress in Chinese style and look eastern Asian [Fig. 5; Color Plate III]. Red and black replaced lapis lazuli blue as the dominant colors of painting (Wu 1993). However, scenes of music and dance performance remain prolific themes in the paintings. In other words, the Uyghur patrons of Buddhism continued the Buddhist tradition of music and dance.

In the Turfan area, the center of the Uyghur empire, Buddhist traditions of festivity continued after the retreat of Tang control. According to the "History of the Song Dynasty" (Chin., *Songshi* 宋史), music, dance, horse riding and archery were all popular there. During the spring festivals, residents of Turfan gathered in the vicinity of the numerous monasteries, bringing their vina, lira, and other musical instruments to play. Though Buddhist institutions dominated the Turfan region, Manichaean and Zoroastrian monasteries practiced their own religions, with no conflicts with Buddhists — at least according to official Chinese records. The Chinese histories also noted that the Uyghur kingdom covered a large territory

Fig. 5. Uighur princes, probably depictions of deceased family members. Fragment of mural from Bezeklik Temple No. 9, 9th century CE. Collection of the Museum of Asian Art (Berlin), III 6876a.

with many different ethnic groups, including several Turkish tribes, and all enjoyed prosperity and harmony (Tuo et al. 1985, 490/14111-14112). This is certainly a generalization made by an observer from afar, but it tells that there was as yet no forced conversion to Islam.

The Tanguts built an empire to the east of the Tarim Basin after the demise of the Tang Dynasty in the 9th century. It was a state that covered modern Ningxia, Gansu, and parts of Tibet, Shaanxi and Mongolia — in other words, the Hexi Corridor and the adjacent plateau to the south and desert and grasslands to the north. The Tanguts were nomadic and hunting groups who had regrouped from time to time when steppe regimes collapsed and the impacts rippled to surrounding areas (Dunnell 1994, 1996; for artistic remains, *Lost Empire* 1993). Once settled to build a multi-ethnic state taxing both agricultural and pastoral resources, the Tangut rulers became enthusiastic patrons of Buddhism. Like all the nomads from the steppe who came before or after them, the Tanguts were worshippers of the sky-deity (Liu 1975, 198/5291). As they were frontier people par excellence and still practiced animal sacrifice (Ouyang and Qi 1975, 221/6214), when converting to Buddhism they faced an even greater challenge of embracing a new faith. Though the Tangut rulers had a new script invented, they kept some cultural residue of a semi-nomadic and semi-agricultural society. Households were counted by the number of tents; one of every two men over 15 in a tent became a soldier, and other males also joined the supplementary force. When making strategic decisions, they performed several shamanistic rituals including sacrificing sheep for oracles predicting the outcomes of warfare (Tuo et al. 1985, 486/14028-14029). Yet, this regime which still observed steppe blood-offering rituals found a comfortable position in the Buddhist universe. As was the case of the Uyghur kingdom, the landscape of pastoral and agricultural life of the Tanguts created an environment where people constantly dealt with animals. People raised domestic animals — sheep, horses, cattle, camels — and defended their livestock from predators such as wolves, lions etc. with their dogs. As hunters, they killed wild animals such as deer, boars and bears. This world where animals and humans frequently encountered one another and interacted was quite similar to the Buddhist universe of humans and animals filling various spaces. As a matter of fact, the nomads had more intimate relationship with animals and had more acute knowledge of animals and their behaviour than did farmers. A painted banner recovered from Kara-Khoto, an outpost on the northern frontier of the Tangut empire, shows four Tangut men, in front of a looming image of the bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, playing harp, flute, and dancing on the shore of a lake, while their horses leisurely graze the nearby grass [Fig. 6]. This Buddhist universe was quite a departure from a scene of hunting exercises before a military campaign: "Whenever a catch was made, everyone dismounted and gathered around a campfire to drink and eat, cutting off fresh meat, [at] which time [the ruler] queried each as to his views and selected the most astute [of them]." Yet, there are the same humans and animals, under the same moon in the sky and on the same landscape of pasture and waters.

Fig. 6. Detail of silk banner depicting the "Water Moon Guanyin," 12th century, from Kara-Khoto. Collection of the Hermitage Museum X-2439.

After: Gao et al. 2009, pp. 35 (Fig. 1-27), 282 (VII-20)

Mural painting in numerous Buddhist cave temples in the Tangut kingdom continued to flourish. The artistic style of human figures and clothing more resembled that of Turfan and the Hexi Corridor than that of Kucha. The murals display comprehensive music groups with all the instruments used in Kucha for Buddhist ceremonies [Fig. 7, next page]. Funeral rites of the Tangut rulers reveal their faith in Buddhism as the guardian of their state. Tangut kings built grand tombs, which were guarded by stone statues of court retinue and religious creatures, including a human-faced bird [Fig. 8] (Gao et al. 2009, p. 152 [Fig. 4-10]; p. 167 [Pl. IV, Figs. 42–44]). The human-faced bird is called *kinnara* in Pali, meaning "some kind of man" (Pali, *kim-nara*). In Buddhist literature kinnara could be a human-faced bird, lion, horse, or any other animal. The motifs of half-human creatures are ubiquitous in Buddhist art from India to Central Asia, China, and Tibet. While traditional animal sacrificial ceremonies informed decisions about military actions, the expectations of Tangut kings for future lives lay in the universe of Buddhism.

The literary texts and artworks of the Tangut kingdom document that at least from the 1130s onward the

After Gao et al. 2009, p. 267 (Figs. 7-1, 7-6)

Fig. 7. Mural depicting the future Buddha Maitreya with detail of the musicians; in a grotto at Wenshu Shan, Gansu.

Tangut rulers were patrons of Tibetan Buddhist literature and art (Shen 2011). It was the time when Tibet had entered an age of Buddhist renaissance after the demise of the great Tibetan kingdom in the 9th century a consequent decline of Buddhist institutions. With the rise of Tantric Buddhism in central Tibet from the 10th to the 12th centuries, many Tanguts, sponsored by royal patrons, traveled there to learn Buddhist dharma and Tantric meditation techniques.[14] Though the Tangut kingdom was conquered by Chinggis Khan in 1227, Tangut Buddhist tradition, including music and dance performance, was one of the channels through which the Mongol Yuan rulers learned the rituals of Buddhism. When the Yuan empire was established in China, it patronised Tibetan Buddhism. Khubilai, the first Yuan emperor, had a seat for a Tibetan spiritual teacher at his court. In the year 1270, the first Tibetan imperial preceptor, Phags-pa, instructed the Yuan emperor to establish a Buddhist altar in front of the major audience hall, the Hall of Great Brilliance (Chin., *Daming dian* 大明殿), to perform rituals protecting the state. According to the "History of the Yuan Dynasty" (Chin., *Yuanshi* 元史), subsequently a large-scale parade was held annually. Hundreds of Buddhist monks, musicians, dancers and soldiers surrounded and followed carriages with statues of the Buddha and other deities through the major streets of the capital. The procession extended more than 30 li, roughly 15 km. A 324-member orchestra of musicians was recruited from three groups — Chinese, Huihui (Muslims from Central Asia), and musicians from Hexi (from the former Tangut state). Each of the three groups was further divided into three groups to provide music for 300 dancers who performed a variety of programs. The performances lasted into the next day and attracted numerous spectators to the capital. In the sixth month of the year, the same parade was also performed in Shangdu (Xanadu), the northern summer capital of the Yuan. A ministry of Hexi musicians was established in the Yuan bureaucracy in 1280 and a ministry for Muslim musicians in 1312 (Song 1976, 85/2139, 77/1926; Chen 2010, pp. 213–25). Another ritual, the "Dance of Sixteen Heavenly Demons" (Chin., *shiliu tianmo wu* 十六天魔舞), was performed at the birthdays of the emperors from the early days of the dynasty. Dancers wearing "Buddha crowns" held special ritual vessels made of human skulls decorated with jewels (Chen 2010, p. 254). The characteristic Tibetan Buddhist ritual vessels made of human skulls were introduced into the Yuan court along with the music from Central Asia. The Tibetan Buddhist impe-

Photo courtesy of Daniel C. Waugh

Fig. 8. Sculpture of kinnara, excavated from XiXia imperial tomb No. 3 in 2001. Collection of the Yinchuan museum located at the site.

rial preceptor Phags-pa had initiated the program to help legitimise the Mongol regime in China. So that the festival would more closely replicate a Central Asian Buddhist festival, Phags-pa incorporated into the performance Central Asian musicians and those from the former Tangut empire, which had maintained the best ritual music among the states built by the nomads (Tuo et al. 1976, 134/2877). The very institution of imperial preceptor (Chin., *dishi* 帝師) had been started by the Tangut rulers (Dunnell 1996, pp. 46–47; 1999), this possibly the inspiration for the Yuan rulers to establish a state preceptor (Chin., *guoshi* 國師) at their own court.

The cultural heritage of Central Asia

Even though the political and religious landscape had changed during these centuries, older Central Asian cultural traits continued under new religions and new rulers. Practices such as idol worship lingered in the lands of Sogdiana and Ferghana for many centuries during and after islamization. Statues of the Buddha and bodhisattvas were sold in Bukhara. A fire temple there had been transformed into a mosque but twice a year hosted a fair for selling idols. It is not clear whether they were Buddhist or Zoroastrian images or both (Narshakhi 2007, pp. 25–26). While pre-Islamic traditions in sculpture and mural painting were in principle off limits for Islamic religious architecture, their imagery found a different avenue for expression, one inherited from Central Asian cultures: miniature paintings for illustrating books, both religious and courtly. Buddhist communities in Central Asia had long illustrated texts with drawings on paper and probably were the first to use block-printing to propagate their religious messages. Paper-making, which spread from China to Central Asia, facilitated an exchange of knowledge that greatly influenced literature, art, science and technology not only in Central Asia but also in the entire Islamic world. If in the western part of the Islamic world paper was used in the first instance to copy the Quran and other religious books, in Iran, especially in Khurasan, the eastern region of Persian culture including part of Central Asia, Islamic book culture embraced much of the Persian heritage of literature and art. Firdausi (ca. 934–1020) submitted his long poem *Shahnama* to Mahmud of Ghazna, the Muslim ruler of Afghanistan. The *Shahnama* was a landmark literary work using a modernized Persian language to popularize the pre-Islamic epic history of Iran. Copies of the long poem circulated on paper; illustrations are mentioned in the literature of Central Asia, even though none of the earliest manuscripts have survived (Sims et al. 2002, pp. 31–32). When the Mongol Ilkhanate (1256–1353) commissioned the Great Mongol *Shahnama*, a volume of illustrations of Firdausi's poem [Fig. 9], miniature painting on paper was already well established in West and Central Asia. Characteristically, in Central Asia, Dionysian traditions of wine drinking and music performance accompanied by dramatic dance as they had developed under the Uyghurs, Tibetans and Mongols, also came to be depicted in miniature paintings.

These cultural developments transcended political and religious boundaries, because the oases to the west of the Pamir Plateau and those to its east had long shared the same traits thanks to commercial exchange across geographical boundaries. Mural paintings reveal that city-states in Sogdiana and in oases around the Tarim Basin, Kuchā for instance, shared the same fashion in clothing. Before the Arab conquest in the

Source: <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUAM:71190_dynmc?width=3000&height=3000>

Fig. 9. Bahram Gur hunts with Azada, illustrated folio from the Great Ilkhanid Shahnama *(Book of Kings), ca. 1330-1340, Tabriz. Collection of the Harvard University Art Museums <www.harvardartmuseums.org>.*

(left) after: Marshak, p. 73 (Pl. 5);
(right) courtesy of Daniel C. Waugh

Fig. 10. Detail from mural depicting one of the last episodes of the Rustam cycle, Panjikent, Room 41/VI.

Fig. 11 (right). Group of donors, mural from the Cave of the Sixteen Sword Bearers, Kizil. 600–650 CE. Collection of the Museum of Asian Art (Berlin), III 8426a,b,c.

late 7th and early 8th century, the dominant religion in Sogdiana was some form of Zoroastrianism. At the same time, the art of Kucha, which was predominantly Buddhist, assimilated Zoroastrian (or Manichaean) features such as figures wearing white-robes symbolising purity (Zhu 1993, p. 9). The exquisitely tailored robes made of rich patterned silk textiles worn by aristocrats in Sogdian Panjikent and Afrasiab, and those of the elite patrons of Buddhism in Kucha are similar [Figs. 10, 11]. Kucha musical performances shared the spotlight with the whirling dance of Samarkand and the jumping dance of Bukhara Liu 1975, 29/1071; Liu 2011, p. 60). By the 10th century, when the Karakhanids took Kucha away from the Uyghur *idikut* based in Kocho, Buddhist cave temples in that region, including Qumtura which had been patronised by the Uyghurs, were abandoned. Islamization of the Tarim Basin thus began in its western parts, including Kucha.

Fig. 12. Kucha music band, in a Daoist ritual, Song Dynasty, ca. 10th–11th century.

After Huo 1994, plate following p. 251

Whether Buddhists or Muslims, Kuchans never abandoned their tradition of dancing and playing music. Even before the first miniature paintings depicting practices deviating from orthodox Islamic religious norms, we know that Kuchan music was performed at the Song court (960–1279) and in Buddhist and Daoist institutions [Fig. 12]. Throughout the Song period, Confucian scholars made great efforts to reestablish Confucian ritual orthodoxy including court music. Kuchan music somehow survived in the ensembles playing "Dharma music" (Chin., *fayue* 法樂), the term for Buddhist religious music. Instruments used by these musicians include lira, bili, and the others common to Kucha (Tuo et al., 1985, 142/3348-49; Huo 1994, p. 252). Presumably, some musicians were recruited from Kucha. The musicians played for dances in the styles of a "Brahman" (Chin., *poluomen* 婆罗門), or "drunken jumping dance" (Chin., *zuihuteng* 醉胡騰), "dance of a Uyghur shooting eagles" (Chin., *shediao Huigu* 射雕回鶻) and other exotic foreign performing arts (Tuo et al. 1985, 142/3350). Some of the dancers could have been recruited from Turfan, Kucha, Bukhara, or even India.

The ritual dancers were often intoxicated by alcohol. Grape wine was one of the stimulants used in these performances. Since the Kushan era, both viticulture and Dionysian traditions had flourished in Bud-

dhist communities from Gandhara to Samarkand. According to recent studies, wine making and drinking are extensively recorded in Chinese literature, local inscriptions and verified by archaeological findings in the territory extending from Kucha to Turfan and the long period from the Han to the Tang Dynasties (He 1994, pp. 153–64). Viniculture flourished along with Buddhism and continued into the Islamic period. With the Mongol conquest in the 13th century, the Uyghur state of Kocho was the crossroad of cultural exchanges between the Mongols and the Tibetan and Islamic communities of Central Asia. In spite of the hostility between the Mongol Yuan Dynasty in China and the Mongol Chagatay Kaghanate in the eastern part of Central Asia, trade continued, especially that in wine. Kocho, or the Turfan region, was known as a supplier of wine to the Yuan court, including a kind of distilled liquor for ritual purposes (Wang 2011, pp. 228–29).

Even though Central Asian Muslims consider themselves to be observant believers, they created a new religious milieu that absorbed concepts and practices from religions previously prevalent in the region. Ritual drinking and dancing deviated from the strict disciplinary rules of Islam. The concept of rebirth with karma and the cosmology and eschatology of Buddhism shaping their relationship with animals can be discerned in the religious practices of some Muslim communities. Images of human and animals in artworks were more readily tolerated in Central Asia than in the western part of Islamic world.[15] Wine drinking when singing and dancing was routine practice in the sufi traditions.

The Mongol conquests caused a flight of talented Central Asians into the Iranian plateau, Asia Minor, South Asia and China that encouraged a revolution of textiles — in clothing and upholstery, silk, wool tapestry and rugs — even in regions of Eurasia beyond the reach of the Mongols. These displaced artisans spread the technology of cotton textiles to China and the spinning wheel and the water-lifting "Persian wheel" to India. Sufi teachers from Central Asia following in their steps established shrines in these countries and became effective missionaries for Islam. Jalal Ad-din Muhammad Din ar-Rumi (1207–1273), the first famous whirling dancer among the sufis, fled as a child from Balkh in present-day Afghanistan to Konia in Seljuk Anatolia. Wherever sufi teachers went, they performed *sama*, the whirling dance under influence of wine, drugs and music, their unique method of experiencing union with the divine [Fig. 13].[16] Idyllic pictures of sufis with wine, drugs, music and dancing within a landscape of mountains, waters, and roaming animals reveal the special Central Asian Islamic religious tradition, which was unimaginable in more orthodox circles [Fig. 14].[17]

While the Karakhanids embraced sufi Islamic practices, they also used their own Turkic language with Arabic script to practice the religion. In contrast to the Sejluks in the west who still upheld Persian traditions as a symbol of high culture, the Karakhanids were the first to use Turkic for both the court and religion. Turkic languages, including Uyghur, which had a rich oral tradition, now were cultivated in written

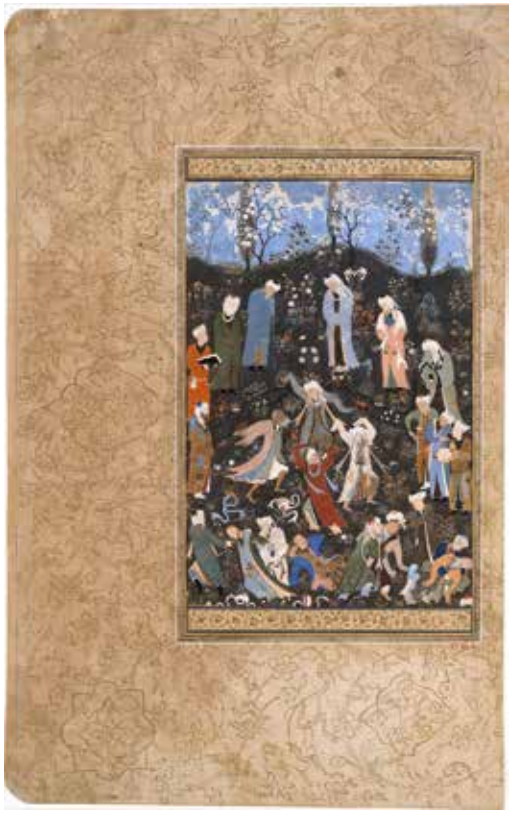


Fig. 13 (left). Ecstatic Dance of Dervishes, illustrated folio 149v from a manuscript of a Divan of Hafiz, ca 1540–1550, Safavid Iran. Collection of Harvard Art Museums/Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Gift of John Goelet, 1958.23.149.

Fig. 14 (right). Dancing Dervishes, folio from a Divan of Hafiz, painting attributed to Bihzad (ca. 1450–1535/36), ca. 1480, Herat. Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art/Rogers fund, 1917, Accession No. 17.81.4.

Sources: (left) <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUAM:DDC102600_dynmc?width=3000&height=3000>; (right) <http://images.metmuseum.org/CRDImages/is/original/DT4798.jpg>

literary texts. Yusuf Khass Hajib from Balasagun (ca. 1019-1085), a Karakhanid poet, wrote a didactic long poem, the "Wisdom of Royal Glory" (*Kutadghu bilig*), in Kashgar in 1069 (Yu 1996, pp. 284-290; Dankoff n.d.; for the text in translation, Yusuf 1983). This was a poem of ethics and moral standards not only for the princes, but for everyone else, Muslim or not. It includes old Uyghur traditions from their days on the steppe, and Islamic, Buddhist and Confucian concepts of morality.

The first comparative dictionary of Turkic languages (compiled most probably between 1072 and 1077), illustrated with abundant examples from Turkic folk literature, was the work of Mahmud al-Kashghari (ca. 1028/38 – ca. last quarter 11th century), who was likely related to the eastern branch of the Karakhanid Dynasty (Yu 1996, pp. 290–92; Dankoff n.d.; Golden 2015; text and tr., Kāshgarī 1982–85). Since he wrote in Baghdad and dedicated the work to the Arab caliph, his explanatory text is in the standard academic language of the time, Arabic. In this pioneering work though, he argued for the richness of Turkic as a literary language, and one manuscript of the work contains a unique map placing his Turkic homeland at the center of the world (for the map, see Golden 2015, pp. 522–23). Islam in this Turkic-language environment and imbued with Central Asian cultural traditions provided not only legitimacy but also strong indigenous roots for the Karakhanids.

In the 13th–14th centuries, the sufi Naqshbandi order under leaders called khojas gained influence and wealth in the western part of Central Asia. These Turkic-speaking khojas propagated Islam to the entire Tarim Basin in subsequent centuries in the face of efforts by Mongol rulers to strengthen the position of Tibetan Buddhism (Green 2012, pp. 80–101; Togan 1991; Fletcher 1995, XI/4–12). It appears ironic that while the Mongol Yuan Dynasty in China imported musicians and dancers from Islamic Central Asia to perform in Buddhist rituals, the Tarim Basin and the conquered land of the Tanguts, despite the Mongols' patronage of Buddhism, became an Islamic land. Actually the religious transition of the region was quite natural if one considers that Central Asian culture has always evolved through the interactions of nomads and agricultural communities, enriched by different religious traditions coming from all directions. The settling of nomads in the oases injected new life in their religious establishments and thus made them hubs of cultural activities during the centuries when agricultural empires were abandoning the land routes across Central Asia and turning their interests in trade to the maritime routes. Even as Central Asia was being deprived of much of the profit from long-distance trade, regional economies might still flourish, as did the cultural achievements which creatively combined the talents of nomadic and sedentary peoples of different languages and beliefs.

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About the author

Xinru Liu (Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania) teaches histories of South Asia and Central Asia, and World History at the College of New Jersey in Ewing and is associated with the Institute of History and the Institute of World History, Chinese Academy of Sciences. In addition to her books listed below, her many publications include: *Connections Across Eurasia: Transportation, Communications, and Cultural Exchange on the Silk Roads,* with Lynda Norene Shaffer (McGraw-Hill 2007); *The Silk Road in World History* (Oxford 2010); and *The Silk Roads, a Brief History with Documents* (Bedford/St. Martin's 2012).

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Notes

1. The encounters of nomads on Central Asian steppe and oases have been the subject of much scholarly discussion and research. See, e.g., Khazanov et al. 2001; Golden 2003.

2. A major rebellion broke out in 756 in the Tang Empire. The Uyghur kaghanate (roughly 744–840), established on the steppe north of the Tarim Basin, sent an army to help the Tang suppress the rebellion. After that, the Uyghur kaghan-

ate maintained a steady trade selling horses to the Tang till the late 9th century when the Tang was at the brink of collapse.

3. For the history of the Tibetan empire, see Beckwith 1987; see also on the political changes in this period Dunnell 1994.

4. On the transition to Islam in the western part of Central Asia see Liu 2011.

5. On the Sogdian conversion of the Uyghurs to Manichaenism, see Liu 1996, pp. 182ff., and the important article by Clark 2000.

6. Why the Kara Khitai deliberately employed Muslims instead of Buddhists to run their bureaucracy is discussed in Elverskog 2010, p. 129; Biran 2005b. The standard history of the Kara Khitai is Biran 2005a.

7. For the Tuoba ruler's motives in carving the Yungang Buddhas, see Liu 1988, pp. 150–52.

8. Manichaeism, practiced by some Uyghurs before their conversion to Buddhism, was also an anti-sacrificial, vegetarian religion.

9. See Horner 1975, pp. 284–96; for a discussion of the story of Angulimala as depicted in Buddhist art, Brancaccio 1999.

10. Davids, pp. 264–66. The encounter between Shuciloma and the Buddha is depicted at the beginning of DiCaroli 2004.

11. The idea that music was to be heard in the heavens and the Buddhist paradises can be vividly seen in the murals at the important Mogao grottoes in Dunhuang. For a very useful collection of line drawings of all such depictions of musical performance there, see Shi and Jin 2007.

12. For vivid color renditions of how the paintings on the reliquary box might have looked when fresh, see Huo and Qi 2006, pp. 170–71, and Li 1995, pp. 134–37.

13. Duan, Chengshi 段成式, *Youyang zazu* 酉阳杂俎 [Anecdotes from Youyang] (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1981), p. 46, quoted in Zhu 1993, pp. 19–20.

14. The Tibetan sources for Tangut Buddhist practices have been discussed in Davidson 2005, pp. 332–35. His section on "Kagyupa Missionary Activity and the Tanguts" provides specific information on Tangut students in Tibet.

15. Theological mingling between Buddhism and Islam in Central Asia has been fully discussed in Elverskog 2010.

16. Liu 2012, pp. 37–40. *Sama* has been a controversial practice in the Islamic world. For a brief introduction to the topic see Green 2012, pp. 8–10.

17. In addition to the image reproduced here, see especially one from the Collection of the St. Petersburg Institute of Oriental Studies, reproduced in Sims et al. 2002, p. 260 (Pl. 176). As explained by Green (2012, p. 106): "While it later became standard practice for Sufi commentators to explain that the 'true' meaning of such early Persian poetry was inward and spiritual — drunkenness meant absorption in God and not wine, the beautiful youth was a metaphor for divine perfection, and so on — there seems little point in doubting that many (perhaps even most) of the medieval audiences of these songs enjoyed them for what they appeared to be: celebrations of wine, sex and songs."

A shorter version of this article is to appear soon in Chinese as: "Zhong Ya Zongjiao Wenhua he Shehui de Zhongda Zhuanzhe (9 zhi 13 shiji)" 中亚宗教文化和社会的重大转折－9至13世纪 [Major transitions in Central Asia, from the 9th to the 13th centuries]. *Shijie zongjiao yanjiu* 世界宗教研究 [Religious Studies] no. [?] 2015[?]: 13-26.

Maes Titianus, Ptolemy and the "Stone Tower" on the Great Silk Road

Igor' Vasil'evich P'iankov
Novgorod State University

The "Stone Tower" (Λίθινος πύργος) is mentioned as the most important landmark on the Great Silk Road in the famous "Geographical Guide" of Claudius Ptolemy. Ptolemy knew about the "Stone Tower" from two sources: first of all, via his predecessor Marinus of Tyre from the itinerary of Maes Titianus. This itinerary contained the only complete description from Classical Antiquity of the land route of the Great Silk Road from Roman Syria to the capital of China. Secondly, Ptolemy drew his information from sailors, his contemporaries, when the land route had already been connected through India with the maritime route. Both of these sources indicated that the "Stone Tower" divided the Great Silk Road at its midpoint. Ptolemy's information about this is both in the narrative part of his work and in his description of his maps.

Some observations on methodology[1]

Interpretations by historians using the written sources from Classical Antiquity frequently make the mistake of assuming those texts are original, primary sources, whereas in fact they tend to be complex compilations. Before one can use them, it is necessary to carry out specific textual analysis with reference to the sources they may have used and which can reasonably be documented. In the process, it is important to understand how the ancient geographers went about compiling their descriptive texts and maps.

A recent example of what this author considers to be a flawed approach to analyzing Ptolemy's mapping of Central Asia is an article by the distinguished French scholar Claude Rapin (1998/2001). Rapin argued that Ptolemy's mapping of Central Asia derived in the first instance from some kind of a Seleucid map compiled from graphic documents which had been created for administrative purposes. This process of creating a collage from the sources involved various "rotations" and repositioning with resulting distortions of geographic data. In Rapin's view, Ptolemy then supplemented the Seleucid map with new material contributed by Marinus of Tyre and by Ptolemy himself. Among the new sources was the itinerary of Maes Titianus.

Such an interpretation belongs to the category of hypotheses which are impossible to prove or disprove. The various "rotations" are pure supposition with the help of which one can explain anything one wishes. But in general the method presupposed by this hypothesis — the creation of a global map by means of a diligent combination of many regional document maps —is not characteristic for ancient science. Broad generalizations in both ancient Greek geography and ancient Greek historiography always were developed on the basis of and within the framework of literary tradition. New information could change only specific details in traditional schema, and old schema usually were not discarded but rather were adjusted to co-exist with the new. If documentary material was used, it did little to change the already established interpretive framework. In ancient Greek cartography such documentary material was itineraries, which were simply overlaid on traditional cartographic concepts.

If we examine Ptolemy's data against the broad background of the traditions of Classical geography (which Rapin did not attempt to do), then we find ample evidence of this. Of course even with this different approach the conclusions will be hypothetical, but nonetheless testable and based on concrete factual material obtained from comparison with the data of other Classical authors. This approach informs the analysis in a number of my earlier publications, to which the reader is referred and which by and large have escaped the attention of scholars outside of Russia. My conclusion is that in the first instance, Ptolemy derived his framework from data he extracted from Eratosthenes, Hipparchus and Poseidonius. The data from Maes Titianus, transmitted via Marinus of Tyre, was layered on top of that scheme, and then supplemented by reports of Ptolemy's contemporaries.

Maes Titianus and his itinerary[2]

The itinerary of Maes Titianus is a unique example of its genre in ancient Graeco-Roman literature. It alone describes the entire overland route of the Great Silk Road from the Syrian city of Hierapolis and the Roman border on the Euphrates to the capital of Serika (China).

We know about Maes Titianus and his itinerary only from the information provided by Claudius Ptolemy in his "Geography" (ca. 150–160 CE). And Ptolemy himself knew about this author only through his main source, the work of Marinus of Tyre (ca. 107–114 CE).[3] Various opinions have been expressed about the nature of the contacts between Marinus and Maes. Some scholars have even suggested that they were personally acquainted (Hennig 1961, p. 402). But it is more persuasive to speak only of literary contact, a view supported by an analysis of Ptolemy's text (Kubitschek 1935, p. 235). Judging from Marinus' comments, he had little faith in the accuracy of the data in Maes' itinerary (Ptol., *Geogr*. I.11.6-7).[4]

The author of our itinerary, Maes (Μάης), nicknamed "Titianos" (Τιτιανός), was in all likelihood a Syrian of Macedonian origin, a "Macedonian" in social status, a hereditary wholesale merchant who carried out long-distance trading operations with the help of his commercial agents. One can but hypothesize with regard to the place where he lived and composed his itinerary.[5] Most likely that was the ancient Phoenician city of Tyre in Syria, the main center for the manufacture of purple silk textiles (Cary 1956, p. 130; Hennig 1961, p. 402). The need to import to Tyre Chinese raw silk, it appears, would have been the catalyst for the trading activity of the family of Maes Titianus. It is also no accident that the itinerary of Maes came down to us only thanks to the mediation of Marinus of Tyre, a presumed fellow-countryman of Maes. Apparently, this itinerary was known only in a narrow circle of the merchant houses of Tyre. Less probable is the idea that Maes Titianus was from Alexandria in Egypt or some other city of Hellenistic Egypt (Kubitschek 1935, p. 235). And it is very unlikely that he was an Iranian, born in Central Asia (Altheim and Stiehl 1970, p. 707).

Even less easily established are the dates of Maes Titianus' life. Should we be able to determine his dates, then we could establish the date of the journey of his commercial agents and the composition of the itinerary.[6] Unfortunately, the sources contain no direct indication at all concerning the date of these travels, leaving us with but indirect evidence about the historical circumstances. Thus it is no surprise that opinions range over a broad period approximately from the beginning of the Common Era to the beginning of the 2nd century CE. The majority of scholars are inclined to a late date: the end of the 1st to beginning of the 2nd century CE. Thus, Albert Herrmann, one of the most prominent historians of the Great Silk Road, dates the itinerary of Maes to 97 CE, or, in any event, prior to 100 CE.[7] The attracton for scholars of a late dating is entirely understandable, since it was precisely at that time that the struggle between the Romans and Parthians for the monopoly over the Great Silk Road reached its apogee, and the Parthian expedition of Trajan (113–117 CE), so it seems, tilted the scales in the favor of Rome.

Let us look at the possibilities of dating according to the historical circumstances on the overland route of the Great Silk Road within the chronological boundaries where the *terminus post quem* is 64 BCE, when Syria became a Roman province, and the *terminus ante quem* is 114 CE, when Marinus completed his collection of materials for his work (Honigmann 1930, col. 1768; Lasserre 1969, col. 1027). In contrast to the usual approach by scholars, we will begin with the situation on the western end of the Great Silk Road, on the Roman-Parthian border, not on its eastern end in China.[8]

In the west at the beginning of the indicated period two routes competed, the overland one through Seleucia on the Tigris and the maritime route. The Romans controlled the maritime route, but evidenced an interest as well in the overland one. The silk of the Seres begins to be mentioned frequently in Roman literature approximately from 30 BCE. Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus, 65 BCE – 8 CE) names the Seres both together with the Indians (Horace 1959, *Carm*. 1.12. 53-57), which indicates the maritime route, and in connection with the Bactrians, Tanais and the Persians (*Carm*. 3.29.25-28; 4.15.21-24), which is evidence of his acquaintance with the overland route. It is precisely in the period of Augustus that Roman agents for the first time made their way overland into the heart of Parthian territory (Debevoise 1938, p. 139; 2008, pp. 176–82).

Following their serious conflict with Rome (the battle at Carrhae, 53 BCE), the Parthians, who had at first protected the overland routes, recognized the threat they posed to Arsacid rule and attempted to block them. The overland route across the Iranian plateau along its entire distance was controlled by Greek colonies which had been founded earlier in the Hellenistic period. These Greek cities were longstanding opponents of the Arsacids and adherents of the Romans. Along this route the Romans could easily penetrate the most significant and flourishing centers of the Parthian kingdom. It is no accident that Crassus, having occupied Greek cities on the Euphrates at the far western end of the Great Silk Road, threatened the Parthians that he will explain to them the reason for his actions in Seleucia (Plut., *Crass* 18; Cassio Dio 40.16).[9]

But most importantly, the Parthians assiduously protected their monopoly of the trade in silk with the Roman state and could not allow direct contacts of the Romans with the Chinese. So long as the route was in the hands of Greek colonies, to preserve the monopoly was very difficult. A Chinese source speaks openly about this monopoly: the Parthians, wanting to be the only ones to supply the Romans with silk, would not allow Romans to pass through their territories to China (1st–2nd centuries CE), nor would they permit the Chinese to reach Rome. The history of Gan Ying (97 CE) attests eloquently to this: traveling via the overland route, apparently he reached the Euphrates, but thanks to the machinations of the Parthians at the border of the Roman Empire, he could not cross into it (Bichurin 1950, pp. 225–27; Hill 2015, Vol. 1, pp. 23, 25, 27). Only in the 3rd century CE did the Chinese learn about the route to Rome overland through Iran (Sherkova 1991, p. 27).

There is reason to think that the continual rebellion of the Greek cities under Seleucia against the power of the Arsacids and the support for them by the Roman protégés on the Parthian throne was evidence of the struggle by the Greeks to retain the benefits from their position on the Great Silk Road. The final event of this struggle was the enthusiastic reception by Seleucia and by the other Greek cities of the next Roman protégé, Tiridates III (36 CE) (Tacit. *Ann*. 5.41-42). Characteristic is the list of cities which supported Tiridates III immediately following Seleucia: Nicephorion and Anthemousias (Batnai), Hala and Artemita. The first two were cities on the Euphrates, on the western end of the Great Silk Road, and the last two in the valley of the Diyala, on the approach to Seleucia from the east. One must think that this was an act of desperation, immediately after which began the Great Rebellion (35–42 CE) when Seleucia refused to recognize the rule of the Parthian emperor. After the suppression of the rebellion, as archaeology shows, Seleucia lost a significant part of its Greek heritage. One can think that the overland route in its capacity as an international Roman-Parthian road ceased to function at that point.

Now the rivalry turned to the struggle for control of the sea route: in the given instance for control of the eastern branch of the Palmyra route leading to the Persian Gulf. The Romans asserted their power in Palmyra; the Parthians built the city of Vologaesias (77 CE), which controlled the lower Euphrates section of the route. Seleucia soon (from 24 CE) was excluded from the Palmyra trade. The events of the Parthian campaign of the Roman emperor Trajan (113–117 CE) show that the Romans at that time had entirely lost interest in Seleucia and that all their attention had shifted to the port cities of the Persian Gulf in the lower reaches of the Tigris and Euphrates. In Seleucia, now no longer a Greek city, there was even an uprising of the Jewish population against the Romans, and Trajan burned the city. At the mouths of the Tigris and Euphrates, the emperor established customs houses, which is but one more indication of the effort of the Romans to control the maritime route. They sent off to the coastal city of Spasinou-Charax and sailed through the Persian Gulf.[10]

Given these circumstances, it seems anachronistic to date the itinerary of Maes Titianos the end of the 1st to beginning of the 2nd century CE. More probable is an earlier date, the end of the 1st century BCE to beginning of the 1st century CE. At that time the overland route still had not lost its relevance, and the relations of Rome with Parthia were the most friendly for the entire period we have examined. Thus the hypothesis of Max Cary acquires special significance, according to which the patron of Maes Titianus was Titius, the Roman viceregent of Syria (in 20–17 and 13/12 CE). This Titius was a close confidant of the Parthian emperor Phraates IV, judging from his participation in events that were unprecedented in the history of Roman-Parthian relations. The emperor sent to Augustus in Rome his sons and grandsons as hostages, and it was Titius who was the mediator in the negotiations with the emperor (12–10 CE) (Strab. 16.1.28). At that time Maes might have received permission from the Parthian ruler for his traders to penetrate the heart of Parthian territory. Max Cary proposes that the journey far to the east was thought up already by Agrippa, the closest collaborator of Augustus, but was put into effect by Titius with the help of Maes Titianus in the period between 20 and 1 BCE (Cary 1956, pp. 132–33). This was an exceptional case (although not necessarily unique). The penetration of Roman traders through the Euphrates to Mesopotamia was not a great rarity (Raschke 1978, p. 642), but farther east the road had been closed to them. There are no Roman coins on the territory of the Arsacids east of Mesopotamia.

The "Stone Tower" on the Continental Route.[11]

The itinerary of Maes Titianus provides the basic information about the continental route. The immediate context for the data about the "Stone Tower" there is found in the description of the section of the route from Bactra to the halting place of the merchants. This description is both in the discussion of the itinerary (the section of the route from Bactra to the "Stone Tower": Ptol. *Geogr*. I.12.7-8), and in the description of the maps (Bactriana, Sogdiana, The Land of the Sakai: Ptol. *Geogr*. VI.11-13; for his map, my Appendix, p. 74).

For Ptolemy, the information about the itinerary was an entirely new description of places about which nothing had been written in earlier sources. This re-

quired even the insertion of changes into the traditional cartographic schemes which Ptolemy employed (P'iankov 1997, pp. 77, 270–72; 2010, pp. 318–24). In explaining Marinus, Ptolemy divided the route from Bactra to the "Stone Tower" into three parts.

The first part of the route is Bactra and the road from Bactra. "The road to Bactra extends to the east" (from Antiocheia Margiana). According to Ptolemy, this road, like Bactra itself, is on the parallel of the Hellespont (41°) (*Geogr*. I.12.7). The map also provides these coordinates for Bactra: 116°/41°. "The road thence [from Bactra] to the ascent to the Mountain Country of the Komedes (Κωμηδῶν) ([*the map adds*:] from Sogdiana) goes north" (*Geogr*. I.12. 7).

The second part of the route is the road through the Mountain Country of the Komedes. "The road through the Mountain Country itself up to the Gorge ([*the map adds*:] of the Komedes) which traverses a plain, goes south; it is oriented from the north-western parts of the Mountain Country, where the ascent is found, to the south-eastern parts." Marinus locates the north-western parts on the parallel of Byzantium (43°), and the south-western parts on the parallel of the Hellespont (41°) (Ptol. *Geogr*. I.12.7). On Ptolemy's map, the ascent in the north-west of the Mountain Country of the Komedes is indicated as 125°/43°, and the Gorge in the south-west of the Mountain Country as 130°/39°. Apparently this marked bending of the mountain road to the south had been noted already by Marinus, who considered (on the basis of the data in the itinerary of Maes Titianus?), that "this road, while it extends almost straight eastwards, bends to the south" (Ptol. *Geogr*. I.12.7).

The third section of the route is the road through the Gorge of the Komedes. "The road thence [from the exit from the Mountain Country of the Komedes at its south-western end along the Gorge of the Komedes?] in fifty *schoinoi* up to the 'Stone Tower' bends to the north, and indeed after the ascent the Gorge gives way to the 'Stone Tower,' to whose east, the mountains, opening out, adjoin the Imaon," which ascends from Palimbothra to the north (Ptol. *Geogr*. I.12.8). The coordinates of the "Stone Tower" on Ptolemy's map are 135°/43°. Regarding Ptolemy's words concerning the Imaon, "which ascends from Palimbothra to the north," they seem to be based on more recent sources (end of the 1st–beginning of the 2nd century CE) with which Ptolemy supplemented the information of Marinus. They concern the route through Bactra and the "Stone Tower" in the context of the maritime route with its overland branches through India, among them one through Palimbothra (*Geogr*. I.17.4).

As we can see, the description is not distinguished by its clarity. Scholars have suggested many interpretations of it, which form three basic groups: some trace the road from Balkh along the Karategin and Alai valley; others, from Balkh through Samarkand and Ferghana; and the third from Balkh through the Pamirs.[12] However, none of these variants explains completely all of Ptolemy's data.[13] In our view, these data cannot be explained merely by locating them on a modern map. What is necessary first is to analyze Ptolemy's text.

In Ptolemy's indications, both the narrative and cartographic, what strikes us first of all is the differences in the way he characterizes the "ascent" (ἀνάβασις – in the given instance, a pass) into the Mountain Country of the Komedes. On the one hand, the road there goes directly north from Bactra; on the other, those traveling from the Sogdians go there, and it is located most probably to the east rather than to the north of Bactra (the coordinates of Bactra are 116°/41°, and of the ascent, 125°/43°). On the one hand, after the ascent, one immediately enters the Gorge, which extends to the "Stone Tower" and then enters the plain, while on the other, the ascent leads into the Mountain Country. Apparently Ptolemy himself did not note that the description deals with two different ascents. This observation is the key to deciphering all of Ptolemy's data on the section of the route from Bactra to the "Stone Tower." Of itself, this interpretation is not new,[14] but further conclusions have not been drawn from it, and for the analysis of Ptolemy's text, as far as we know, it has not been used.

We can describe approximately in this way the history of the information about the section of the route from Bactra to the "Stone Tower." For that section of the route, the itinerary of Maes Titianus describes not one but rather two branches of the route. One led from Bactra directly to the country of the Saka people, the Komedes, and, after the ascent to that country, ran through the Gorge, past the "Stone Tower," and then along a broader mountain valley. The other led to the Komedes through Sogdiana and, after the ascent, went through the Mountain Country. Marinus adhered to the geographical scheme which was widespread in his time, according to which Bactriana, Sogdiana and the Country of the Sakai were located along a single latitude from west to east, the first two separated by the Oxus, and the second and third by the Jaxartes. This scheme, borrowed by Ptolemy from Marinus was inscribed on the latter's maps (for details, see P'iankov 1997, pp. 243–46, 270–71; 2010, pp. 318–20). Understandably, such a scheme entirely excluded the possibility that the Bactrians were direct neighbors of the Sakai. Marinus apparently considered erroneous the indication of such proximity in the description of one of the branches of the road, but did not completely discard this description, instead attempting, follow-

ing a rather common practice, to unite both branches into a single route.

In order to reconstruct and explain the original description of two branches of the road in the itinerary of Maes Titianus, we will focus on the main landmarks of this section of the route, including Bactra and the "Stone Tower" — the beginning and end points of the given section in the itinerary — the ascent to the Land of the Komedes, the Gorge of the Komedes, and, finally the Komedes people themselves. We will also examine the route from the "Stone Tower" to the halting place of the merchants, about which we have only the information on the map.

1. Bactra and the road from Bactra, its two branches.

The starting and most important point on this segment of the route was Bactra (Βάκτρα). Ptolemy names this city both in the description of the itinerary and on the map (*Geogr*. VI.11.9; VIII.23.9). Judging from the map, the city was located on the river Dargoid (Δάργοιδος) (*Geogr*. VI.11.2). This information of Ptolemy is based on the data of the itinerary of Maes Titianus, but Ptolemy also knew about the same city and river from other sources, which duplicated them under the respective names of Zariaspa and Zariasp (*Geogr*. VI.11.2.7). The city and river which Ptolemy knew under two names and which he separated are the city of Balkh and the River Balkhab. We see no reason to seek alternative identifications for them as some have tended to do (e.g., Humbach, pp. 73–75).

The crossing of the Oxus. Bactra was the starting point for two branches of the route. In order to continue the route further in the northern direction, merchants had to cross the Oxus (Amu Darya). There is nothing in the itinerary about this crossing, but it is evident from the map that the crossing was in any event necessary, whichever branch of the route was followed. Much later the direct route from Balkh to the north led to a crossing of the Amu Darya in the region of Termez, and there one branch went further north, along the valley of the Surkhan Darya to the Hisar valley and Karategin, and the other over the low mountain range of Baysuntau to Samarkand.

After crossing the Amu Darya, the route of the merchants divided, and each of its two branches led to its own "ascent" of the mountains.

2. The road through the Gorge of the Komedes and the "Stone Tower"

One ascent was located directly north from Bactra, and from it began the Gorge (φάραγς) of the Komedes. If we consider the beginning of this Gorge to be Obigarm (Marquart 1938, pp. 63–64), then the ascent to the Gorge would have to be located somewhere on the approaches to the latter at the eastern end of the Hisar valley. It is of interest that located there is a place now called Kharangon. The Greek root **pharang-* with slight phonetic changes in its reconfiguring in Persian might well give the form *harang-on* (where *–on* is the plural suffix). The preservation of Greek names in the later toponymics of Central Asia is not exceptional (Rtveladze 1977, pp. 182–87).

A road 50 *schoinoi* long goes through the Gorge and has a north-eastern direction and respective coordinates of the beginning and end of 130°/39° (41° according to Marinus) and 135°/43°. The information about this Gorge has also been interpreted in various ways, depending on how the given segment of the route according to Ptolemy's map is superimposed on a modern map [Fig. 1, next page; Color Plate IV]. But if one examines the information about the Gorge of the Komedes independently of one or another preconception, then the most natural and convincing conclusion would unequivocably be to identify it with the Karategin.[15]

The "Stone Tower" was located at the exit from the Gorge. Ptolemy's indications of its location are contradictory: in one case it is located at 135°/43° (*Geogr*. VI.13.2), in another at a distance of 26,280 or 24,000 stadia from the crossing of the Euphrates (*Geogr*. I.11.3; 12.3.9), that is respectively on the meridians 137°30′ or 132°. J. Oliver Thomson (1953, p. 428) believed that no one has explained this discrepancy, a contradiction which had led some to think that the name "Stone Tower" did not designate a specific geographical location (Kubitschek 1935, p. 233). But that discrepancy in fact was explained by Albert Herrmann (1938, p. 94): the second indication was based on the data of the itinerary of Maes, accompanied by Ptolemy's correction, and the first on the cartographic calculations of Marinus, according to which the oecumene was 90,000 stadia in circumference (cf. *Geogr*. I.11.1). The "Stone Tower" was also mentioned in the more recent sources used by Ptolemy to supplement the information of Marinus, specifically in the previously mentioned descriptions of the maritime route to the Seres through India and Bactria (*Geogr*. I.17.4). Since the Komedes of the Alai in the Chinese sources correspond to the Saka tribe of the Xiuxun (P'iankov 1994, p. 41), the mention of the "Stone Tower" on its territory and in the Chinese sources is to be expected.[16]

As most analysts now agree, the "Stone Tower," which apparently represents a settlement that arose around some kind of stone structure, should be located in the region of Daraut-Kurghan in the Alai valley. The very Perso-Turkic name "Daraut-Kurghan" supports such a conclusion: in the root of the first word is unquestionably the common Iranian **dara-*, "gorge," and as a whole the name apparently denoted roughly a "tower at the gorge." Archaeological data confirm

After: USSR General Staff 1:500000 maps quadrants J-42-B (Ordzhonikidzeabad) (1987=88 ed.), and J-43-A (Murgab) (1977 ed.).

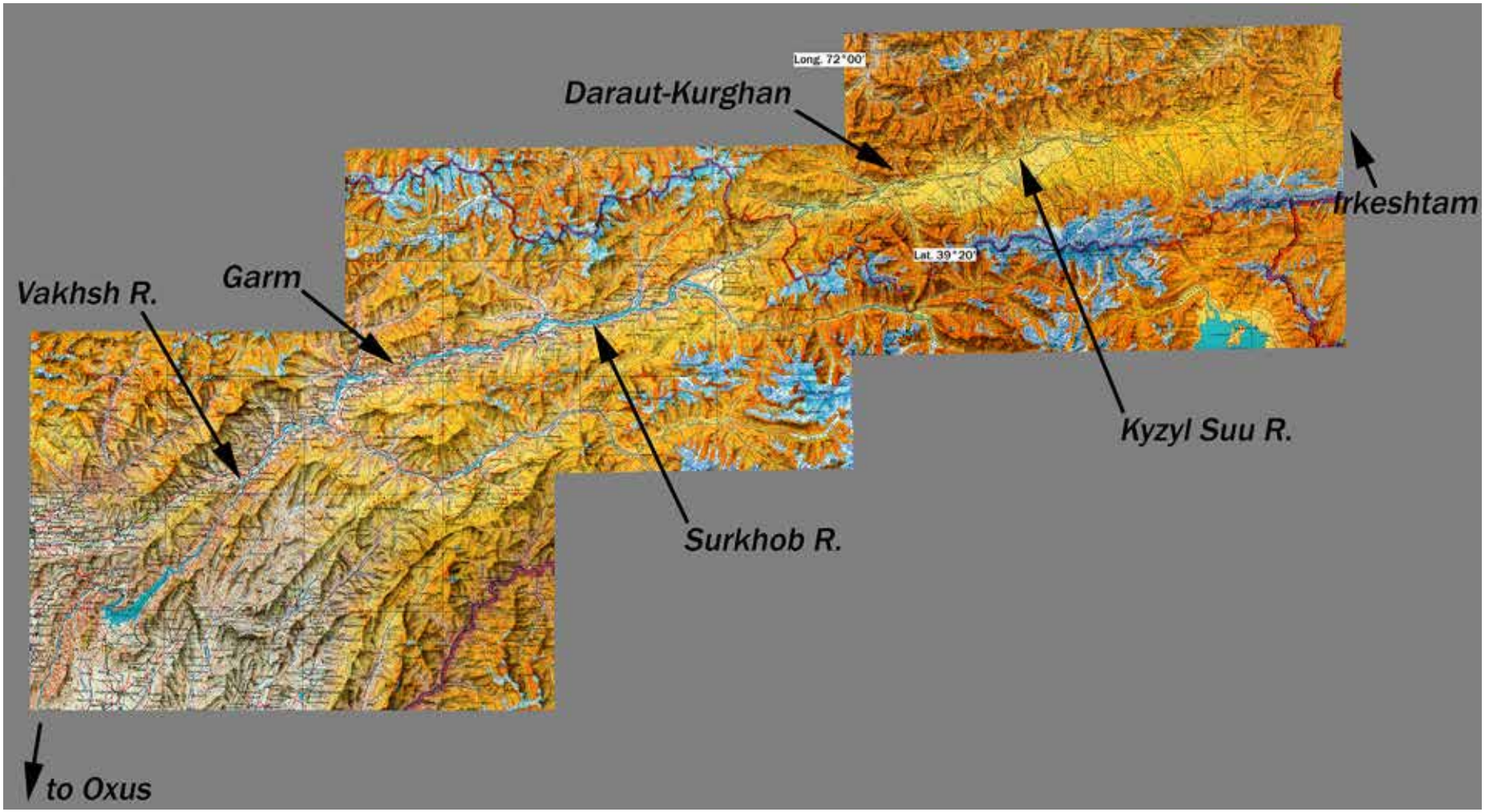

Fig. 1. Modern topographic map showing route starting north of the Oxus along the Vakhsh and Surkhob rivers in Tajikistan, passing Daraut-Kurghan and following the Kyzyl Suu River in Kyrgyzstan to the Chinese border. Just west of Daraut-Kurghan, the valley floor is at an altitude of 2415 m; the valley is flanked on the south by peaks rising to over 7000 m. Composite image.

such a localization: in the vicinity of Daraut-Kurghan have been found remains of a settlement with the stone foundations of large structures which existed in the Kushan and earlier times (from the 2nd half of the 1st century BCE) (Bernshtam 1952, pp. 205–07; Zadneprovskii 1962, p. 186). Another widely believed localization of the "Stone Tower" in the region of Tashkurghan in Sarikol has been supported only by the closeness in the meaning of these two names (the Turkic "stone tower"). However the toponym Tashkurghan is not all that rare and, moreover, is of rather late origin.[17]

The further route from the "Stone Tower" to the east, is already "along the plain (τὰ πεδία), where the hills open out (χωροῦντα) and come up" to the meridial "branch of the Imaon" (Ἴμαον) (*Geogr*. I.12.7-8), from 135°/43° to 140°/43°, to the halting place of the merchants near that same Imai range: this is the route through the Alai/Kyzyl Suu valley from Daraut-Kurghan to Irkeshtam.

Our interpretation of Ptolemy's information about the "ascent" as describing two different ascents makes it unnecessary to search in the specific section of the route for bends first to the south-east and then to the north-east, obtained by Ptolemy as a result of his artificial combining of information about two different roads. In fact, the route here ran only to the north-east. Thus, the route proposed by Albert Herrmann (1938, p. 104) is entirely improbable for trading caravans — from Garm through the Peter the First Range into the Obikhingou valley, then to the Muksu gorge and through the Tersagar pass to Daraut-Kurghan — imagined by him only in order to explain these bends.

Fig. 2 (below). The broad Alai/Kyzyl Suu valley extending east from Daraut-Kurghan, whose location is indicated by the arrow.

Fig. 3 (right). Aerial view of Alai/Kyzyl Suu valley, taken approaching village of Sary Tash and looking east in the direction of the border with China. Sary Tash is approximately 40 km east of the point at the right edge of the map in Fig. 2.

Fig 2 after: Kyrgyzstan State Agency for Geodesy and Cartography 1:200000 map "Pik Lenina" (1992 ed.); Fig. 3 courtesy of Daniel Waugh.

In 1979 the author was able to travel in an expedition vehicle the entire route of the specific section examined here. The area of the expedition was the Pamir plateau, and from there the route ran through the Pamir tract along the eastern edge of the plateau first to the north up to the city of Osh. Thus the author himself saw the Gorge of the Komedes — a narrow (not wider than 2 km) valley of the Karategin with steep cliff walls — as well as the "Stone Tower" — Daraut-Kurghan with an impressive structure resembling a tower along the road, a border fort of the Khan of Kokand in the 19th century. (Apparently there was a centuries-old tradition of building fortified towers in that location). Beyond to the east we traversed the "plain" where the hills "open out" [Figs. 2, 3] — the broad (up to 40 km wide) Alai valley with a flat bottom, coming up to "Imai", the massive peaks of the Sarikol range bordering the Pamir from the east, and of other mountains extending this range to the north.[18]

3. The road through Sogdiana

The other ascent, "from the side of the Sogdians" (ἀπὸ τῶν Σογδιανῶν), was located at 125°/43° (Ptol. *Geogr*. VI.13.2); those same coordinates were given for the source of the Jaxartes (Ἰαξάρτης) (Ptol. *Geogr*. VI. 12. 1). This coincidence was not accidental and was based not on some kind of general considerations as often is supposed (e.g., Gorbunova 1976, p. 27). It is evidence of the fact that the place where the ancient merchants ascended to the Mountain Country of the Komedes in fact was located not far from the source of the river considered to be the beginning of the Jaxartes. Ptolemy's map shows the Jaxartes in its upper reaches

flowing from the ascent into the Mountain Country of the Komedes directly north along the 125° meridian (Ptolemy 1971, Tab. 2). This new information even obliged Ptolemy to introduce some corrections into his usual cartographic scheme, where the sources of the Jaxartes were shown somewhat differently, in order to bring them into closer correspondence with the data of the itinerary of Maes Titianus (P'iankov 1997, pp. 269, 271; 2010, p. 321).

The mention of the ascent "from the Sogdians" presupposes as well the existence of another branch of the route from Bactra: a route through Sogdiana. Unfortunately, the Land of the Sogdians (Σογδιανοί) on Ptolemy's map is depicted in an entirely fragmentary way, divorced from reality (P'iankov 2010, pp. 318–24). To separate out here the data deriving from the itinerary of Maes Titianus is difficult and controversial (P'iankov 1985, pp. 133–34). Nonetheless, it is possible that the coordinates of the "metropole" of Sogdiana, that is, Maracanda, through some misunderstanding termed by Ptolemy Drepsa (Δρέψα), 120°/45° (*Geogr*. VI.12.6), were provided from the indications in the itinerary of Maes.[19]

This branch of the route should have gone through Samarkand and Ferghana. The ancient road from Sogdiana, on arriving at the river Kurshab, one of the tributaries of the Syr Darya (Jaxartes), ran north along that river in the same longitudinal direction as shown on Ptolemy's map for the upper course of the Jaxartes, and then turned to the Terek-Davan pass and came out in the valley of the River Kok Suu and went on to Irkeshtam. Apparently the given pass was also the second ascent into the Country of the Komedes, and Kurshab was considered the upper end of the Jaxartes (Mandel'shtam 1957, pp. 37, 38, 65; cf. Humbach, 1975, p. 73).

If this road in antiquity also came into the Kurshab in the region of Gulcha, then it is precisely here that one should look for Cyreschata (Κυρέσχατα), located by Ptolemy (*Geogr*. VI. 12.5) on the meridian of the source of the Jaxartes, that is, of the Kurshab. Cyreschata of Ptolemy, of course, has nothing in common with the Cyreschata of the time of Alexander of Macedon. It is possible that Marinus inserted the name Κυρέσχατα in place of some other, phonetically similar name found in the itinerary of Maes and preserved to this day in the name of the River Kursh-ab.

In general, this northern, Sogdian branch of the route, apparently, was better represented in the itinerary where it connected to the second "ascent." In essence, this was the route through Ferghana, through the region of the upper reaches of the Syr Darya–Kara Darya. Ptolemy (*Geogr*. VI.12.4) places along the upper, meridional course of the Jaxartes depicted according to the data of the itinerary a people called the Aristei (Ἀριστεῖς), whose name is preserved in the name of the city of Urest (Osh) and the village Rishtan on the route from Osh westwards. Here as well, to the west of the upper (meridional) Jaxartes, Ptolemy knows two tributaries this river, the Dym (Δύμος) and Baskatis (Βασκάτις). These two tributaries of the Syr Darya, west of the Kurshab, were later known as the rivers of the cities of Urest (Akbur) and Kuba (Bartol'd 1965, p. 212).

The last segment of the route connected with the ascent "from the Sogdians" is the route through the Mountain Country (ὀρεινή) of the Komedes from the ascent itself (125°/43°) to the Gorge of the Komedes (130°/39° or 41° according to Marinus). In reality, this is the short section of the road which goes in the south-eastern direction from Kurshab and the Terek-Davan pass to its intersection with the southern branch at Irkeshtam, which went thence from the Gorge of the Komedes, i. e., the Karategin. Apparently Marinus, who had no precise information about the extent of this road but knew that the Komedes occupy all of the Mountain Country of the Saka (Ptol. *Geogr*. VI.13.3), correspondingly traced it to the south-east almost all the way through the Country of the Saka. And then, he combined it mechanically with the southern branch, heading north-east, beginning from the other ascent — the ascent to the Gorge of the Komedes. Hence he equated both ascents to a single one.

But the very concept of the "Mountain Country" of the Saka or Komedes was much broader. The merchants of Maes borrowed it undoubtedly from local geographic representations. The equivalent term here "Kohistan" later and down to the present is the name for the mountain region between the upper courses of the Amu Darya–Panj and Syr Darya, including as well the valley of the Surkhob–Kyzyl Suu.

4. The conflation of the two roads in the itinerary. The Komedes.

In consequence of the conflation of two ascents to the Country of the Komedes was obtained a line, clearly visible on the reconstruction of Ptolemy's map (Ptolemy 1971, Tab. 2). It is precisely this line which Ptolemy has in mind when, right after the description of the road through the Mountain Country of the Komedes he continues: "Thus he [Marinus] says that this road, although it runs almost directly to the east, bends to the south" (*Geogr*. I.12.7). This sentence has elicited many different interpretations (e.g., Herrmann 1938, p. 103), but it is clear that at its core lies the understanding by Marinus about the road from the ascent to the Mountain Country of the Komedes to the "Stone Tower": although both of these points have been placed by him on a single longitude (43°),

the road which connects them first heads south-east, indeed significantly bending here to the south, to longitude 41° or even 39° (from the ascent "from the side of the Sogdians" to the Gorge), and then heads north-east (from the Gorge to the "Stone Tower").

That Marinus did not have any real data about the distances between the main points along his single route reconstructed out of its two separate branches is evident from the coordinates of these points: the Sogdian metropole, 120°/45°; Cyreschata on the Jaxartes, 125°/46°20′; the ascent to the Country of the Komedai at the source of the Jaxartes, 125°/43°; the Gorge of the Komedes, 130°/39° (41° according to Marinus); the "Stone Tower", 135°/43°; the halting place of the merchants, 140°/43°. It is clear that in indicating the distances between points, Marinus simply added to each of them 5° of longitude and specifies their latitude as falling between definite limits — the parallels of the Hellespont (41°) and Byzantion (43°).

The same thing is indicated by the distances in stadia. All of those who support the Karategin–Alai interpretation of Ptolemy's data note that the distance determined by Marinus and Ptolemy substantially exceeds the actual extent of the route through Karategin and the Alai valley. Thus, Albert Herrmann (Ibid., pp. 106, 133) established the distance from Bactra to the "Stone Tower" as 8600 stadia or 1800 km, where the actual distance from Balkh to Daraut-Kurghan is 650 km. And this despite Ptolemy's attempts to shorten the distances! Such a discrepancy demands explanation. Herrmann's hypothesis (Ibid., pp. 107, 111) that this is a mistake incurred in the calculation of the Chinese *li* equivalent to the stadia is unlikely. More probably Marinus knew approximately the extent of the route along each of the two branches, but having combined them into a single route, combined their distances as well. The extent of the route from Balkh to Daraut-Kurghan through Karategin plus the distance of the route from Balkh to Irkeshtam through Samarkand and Ferghana in fact is approximately equal to the distinance from Bactra to the "Stone Tower" as calculated by Herrmann.

Such is my explanation of the information of the itinerary about the "ascents" to the Country of the Komedes and the branches of the route connected with them. Other explanations of this information — for example, the interpretation by Josef Marquart (1938, pp. 61–62), according to whom the single ascent to the Country of the Komedes was in Karatag, where the mountain path from the Zeravshan valley, that is "from the Sogdians", connected with the main road — neither agree with the data of Ptolemy nor with reality. It is unlikely that this path could have served at one time as a caravan road: even today the road, no longer a path, through Anzob is considered one of the most difficult mountain roads of Central Asia.

The most important place on this segment of the route, on the other side of the two "ascents," in the interpreation of Maes Titianus, is occupied by the Saka people, the Komedes (Κομῆδαι). The name of the Komedes appears at that time as well in another Classical written tradition independently of Maes, but in a more archaic form, *Caumedae. Later the Chinese sources speak of the Komedes, as Xiumito, Xiumi, and as also do the medieval Islamic sources: Kumed, Kumiji. But in the Chinese sources contemporary with Maes they are known as the Saka tribe of the Xiuxun. At that time the Komedes occupied a very large territory: the whole Mountain Country of the Saka, the Gorge of the Komedes, the region of the "ascent from the Sogdians" and the region of the sources of the Jaxartes and its two upper left tributaries (Ptol. *Geogr*. VI.12.3). From this it follows that the Komedes at that time had settled the Alai valley and the mountains of the Alai range, Karategin, and in the south, apparently, Darvaz and the regions beyond up along the Panj, possibly even all the way to the Hindu Kush.[20] But this situation lasted only to the beginning of the Common Era, from which time into these parts from the north-east, from the Tian Shan, moved the Huns. Already in the 1st–2nd centuries CE they occupied the Alai, judging from their cemeteries in the region of Daraut-Kurghan (Bernshtam 1952, pp. 193, 204, 207). The itinerary of Maes does not know of Huns in these locations. This is yet one more argument in favor of the dating of the itinerary to a time no later than the beginning of the Common Era.

5. The route to the halting place of the merchants

The region east of the "Stone Tower" in Ptolemy's description corresponds completely with the localization of the "Stone Tower" in the region of Daraut-Kurghan. But beyond, the route led to the Imai ranges and the border between two parts of the oecumene: on the one and on the other side of the Imai.

Here, first of all, it is necessary to note a certain imprecision in the indications of the itinerary about the boundaries between the two parts of the oecumene. On the one hand, in the recounting of the itinerary by Ptolemy, the "Stone Tower" is several times mentioned as the main boundary between the western and eastern parts of the route. To the east of the "Stone Tower" the route extends all the way to the Seres. On the othern hand, on Ptolemy's map, which is also based on the itinerary, is evident that the actual boundary along Imaon was the halting place of the merchants, located directly on the meridial branch of the Imai (Ptolemy 1971, Tab. 2). Such a duality is to be explained by the division of the route on the section described above from Bactra to the halting place

of the merchants with its two branches and mountain "ascents": the road from the Land of the Sogdians and the road along the Gorge of the Komedes. The merchants of Maes Titianus went along the latter, southern branch of the route and passed the "Stone Tower," which for some reason was for them the most important landmark. From it they also estimated the distance to the Seres. But both branches farther east come together at the halting place of the merchants. The road from the "Stone Tower" to the halting place of the merchants was the road from Daraut-Kurghan to Irkeshtam, which ran along the broad Alai valley, where "the mountains open out and come up to the Imaon" (Ptol., *Geogr*. I.12.8), in the given instance to the mountain ranges of Kashgaria.

In actual fact then the beginning of the route through the oecumene beyond the Imai was the halting place of the merchants (Ὁρμητήριον), who carried out trade with Seres (Ptol. *Geogr*. VI.13.1). The very fact of the determination of that place is evidence that the information about it derives from the itinerary of Maes Titianus. Apparently here was the collecting point for all the merchants who traveled through Central Asia specifically for trade with China. It was located immediately east of the "Stone Tower" (its coordinates, 140°/43°), directly on the meridial branch of the Imai, that is on the watershed. The one and the other correspond to Irkeshtam, to the west of which flows the Central Asian Kyzyl Suu, and to the east, the Kashgar.[21]

Thus, analysis of the data of the itinerary of Maes Titianus about the route from Bactra to the "Stone Tower" leads us to the following conclusion. One cannot agree with a single one of the three interpretations indicated above about these data. But it seems that the first variant is the one closest of all to the source. In all probability, the merchants of Maes themselves followed the road through Karategin and the Alai, past the "Stone Tower" to the halting place of the merchants, but they also knew about the route through Samarkand and Ferghana, at the same time that they were ignorant of the route through the Pamirs. However, this does not mean that such a route did not exist at the time.[22] With regards to the period when these routes operated, all data are in agreement that we are talking about the end of the 1st century BCE to the beginning of the Common Era, not later.

One should note that for the 1st–2nd centuries CE there is considerable evidence about intensive contacts of Central Asia with Rome and Roman merchants. This includes finds of Roman coins of the 1st–2nd centuries CE. And it includes information about the visits by Bactrians (usually accompanied by Indians) — at that time undoubtedly already subjects of the Kushans — to the Roman possessions, judging from the indications in the sources, through Egypt and Egyptian Alexandria. But this evidence already concerns a completely different route, the maritime route which circumvented Parthian territories.

The "Stone Tower" on the continental-maritime route

Information about the "Stone Tower" is to be found also in a second source, in the communications by seamen who sailed along the shores of Arabia and India. These are the chronologically most recent sources for Ptolemy, unknown even to Marinus, and consequently much later than the itineraries of Maes. Inserting corrections to some assertions of Marinus, Ptolemy refers to "tales [of his] contemporaries" (τὰ νῦν ἱστορούμενα). These are the indications by people who often sailed along the shores of Arabia and India and knew well the lands all the way to Golden Chersones and to port cities of the Sin of Cattigara (*Geogr*. I.17.1-4).

> They say that above the Sin is a country and the metropole of the Seres, and to the east [sic!] of them is an unknown land where there are swampy lakes in which is a tall reed, sufficiently thick that one can cross the lake on it, and that from there the road goes not only to Bactriana through the "Stone Tower" but also to India through Palimbothra. [*Geogr*. I.17.14.]

Fragments from this new version of the description of the Great Silk Road are contained in other parts of Ptolemy's work. One fragment is the words of Ptolemy in the previously cited exposition of the itinerary of Maes Titianus about "Imai, which ascends from Palimbothra to the north," to the "Stone Tower," the Komedes mountains and Gorge (*Geogr*. I.12.8). In another fragment Ptolemy speaks of the "Mountain Country of the Lambatai at the sources of the Koas, which extends to the Mountain Country of the Komedes" (*Geogr*. VII.1.42). This last entry in its turn is part of the description of Western India (*Geogr*. VII.1.42-63), very close in time to Ptolemy, judging from the fact that it mentions Tiastan (Chashtana) with his capital at Ozen *(Geogr*. VII.1.63), who lived at the end of the 1st – beginning of the 2nd century CE. All this information is even younger than the "Periplus of the Erythraean Sea", which knows the predecessors of Tiastan (Manbana to Nakhapan) but does not know Tiastan himself.[23]

This anonymous "Periplus of the Erythraean Sea" (ca. 70–90 CE) provides the closest analogy for the new version of the description of the Great Silk Road by Ptolemy. The indicted periplus is precisely a route description by one of those merchants who "sailed along the shores of Arabia and India" all the way to the Golden isles. It includes a mention of the

"huge city of Tina" (which corresponds to Sera as the metropole of the Seres), from which merchants go overland through Bactra (to India down along the Indus and then) to Barygaza, the port city at the mouth of the Narbada, or along the Ganges (and then along the eastern shore of India?) to Limyrika in south-western India (Periplus Maris Erythraei, 64).[24] As we see, here is the road from Tina to Bactra, corresponding to the road described in the second part of the itinerary of Maes, which was mentioned in the context of the maritime route.

The "Stone Tower" in the new source of Ptolemy is mentioned in the context of the description of routes oriented to the sea. According to this description, the route from the "metropole" of the Seres, that is the "huge city of Tina" ran first to the "swampy lakes" (λίμναι ἑλώδεις). But it led, of course, not to the east but to the west. It is possible, in this geographical misunderstanding somehow the "continental" viewpoint of Ptolemy is to blame, where he confused the shoreline of East Asia on his map. When we read about strange lakes on the routes leading from the metropole of the Seres, through which one crossed directly on thick and high reeds (*Geogr*. I.17.4), it becomes clear that we are dealing here with the pheonomenon of the periodically shallowing and disappearing "wandering" swamp-lake Lop Nor. This means that the contemporaries of Ptolemy now led their caravans through those parts of Kroraina (Loulan) which were located directly at Lop Nor. The merchants of Maes Titianus passed south of Lop Nor. There, at the shores of Lop Nor, began the road for the caravans which, dividing after a certain time, opened before the travelers two routes — to the valley of the Indus and to the valley of the Ganges:

1. The route to the Indus valley went through the places already known to Maes Titianus — the "Stone Tower" and Bactria, but then turned south, circumventing Parthia, which was closed for the silk merchants connected with the Roman Empire, and went on to the sea along the Indus valley. Here the merchants brought their wares to the cities of the lower Indus and the Narbada valley, among them Ozen (Udjain). There they dealt with seamen who sailed "along the shores of Arabia", the merchants who enabled them to contact the countries of the Ancient world.

2. The route along the Ganges valley followed along the Imai (here the Himalaya), which "rises from Palimbothra [Pataliputra] to the north," coming out in the plain located east of the "Stone Tower." Apparently to the description of this route which crossed the Imai crest (here the Hindu Kush) are related the mentions that the Mountain Country of the Komedai is adjacent (in the given instance, the valley of the Upper Pianj on the northern slopes of the Hindukush) and the Mountain Country of the Lambatai (the valley of Kabul Darya on the southern slopes of the Hindukush) "at the sources of the Koas" (Kunar). Here the merchants should have dealt with seamen who sailed all the way to the Golden Chersones (the Malacca peninsula) and Cattigara (most likely Canton) in the country of the Sin (of those Chinese who were also the Seres but known to the sailors via the sea approaches).

Thus the settlement called the "Stone Tower" which was located not far from the present Daraut-Kurghan, was the most important landmark on the Great Silk Road in the period, at least, from the 1st century BCE through the 2nd century CE. On the territory of Central Asia the overland trans-asiatic route divided into three branches. The "Stone Tower" was on the middle branch, which is evidence, it seems, of the fact that the given branch was the main artery of travel in the indicated period. When the overland route in Central Asia changed its direction and turned southwards, along the Indus and Ganges to the sea, the "Stone Tower" retained its significance.

About the author

Professor **Igor' Vasil'evich P'iankov** has taught since 1994 in the Department of World History at the Novgorod State University named for Iaroslav the Wise. He studied under the eminent Byzantinist M. I. Siuzumov and received his graduate degrees from the Institute of History of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow and the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies. He teaches on the Middle East in Antiquity and is a leading specialist on the Greek and Roman sources concerning Central Asia. E-mail: <Pyankov_iv@mail.ru>.

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Notes

1. This section has been translated from P'iankov 2004, esp. pp. 97–98 — *Ed.*

2. This section translates and adapts P'iankov 2015, esp. pp. 16–20 — *Ed*.

3. Kubitschek 1935, p. 235. On the date of Marinus of Tyre, see Honigmann 1930, 1767–68 (between 107 and 114 CE); Berggren and Jones 2000, pp. 23–24 (no later than 110 CE).

4. My quotations from Ptolemy are based on the editions and translations listed in the first section under "References" above. I have provided my critical edition of the relevant Greek texts and their Russian translation in P'iankov 2015, pp. 4–14, followed by extensive commentary.

5. For a survey of the various opinions regarding the name Μάης and Maes himself, see Alemany 2002, pp. 106–13. Cf. Bernard 2005, pp. 930–39, where he concludes that Maes may have been a native of Hierapolis and, further, dates his itinerary to ca. 100 CE.

6. For a review of the various opinions on this question, see P'iankov 1997, p. 73; Lerner 1998, p. 23 n. 40; Alemany 2002, pp. 113–18.

7. Herrmann 1938, pp. 91, 93. The more recent work on this subject has proposed dates of 73–128 CE (Lerner 1998, p. 24) and 91–113 CE (Alemany 2002, pp. 113–18).

8. For a recent treatment of the Great Silk Road in a broad historical context, see Frye 1996, pp. 151–57.

9. The Classical texts cited here may all be found in the original and in translation in the editions of the Loeb Classical Library.

10. On Trajan's Parthian campaign, see Bokshchanin 1966, pp. 232–52; Debevoise 1938, pp. 238–39; 2008, pp. 183–202.

11. This section of the article to the end translates P'iankov 2014 — *Ed.*

12. On the history of the question, see Mandel'shtam 1957, pp. 39–43, and Zelinskii 1964, pp. 104–08.

13. Lerner (1998, p. 19), author of one of the more recent discussions of this matter, reaches the same conclusion.

14. That Ptolemy describes two different ascents was noted long ago by V. V. Grigorev, in Ritter 1873, p. 63.

15. Concerning this see, e.g., Marquart 1938, p. 63; Thomson, 1953, p. 428; Mandel'shtam 1957, p. 43. The actual length of the "*stadion* of the itineraries" has been checked and confirmed by a calculation of the distance of the Gorge from Obigarm to Daraut-Kurghan. The correspondence of *schonoi* to *stadia* as adopted by Marinus and Ptolemy is precisely known: 1 *schoinos* = 30 *stadia* (Ptol. *Geogr*. I, 11.3). In another itinerary close in time to Maes, the "Parthian Stations" of Isidore, a *schoinos* is likewise adopted which equals three Roman miles (Tomaschek 1883, p. 149), that is, approximately 4.5 km (more precisely 4.440 km = 1480 x 3). It is possible to confirm that this was also the *schoinos* of Maes thanks to the indication that the Gorge of the Komedes was 50 *schoinoi* long (Ptol. *Geogr*. I.12.8). If we take the length of the Karategin (from Obigarm to Daraut-Kurghan) to be 220 km (Marquart, p. 64), then the *schoinos* of Maes equals 4.4 km (220 ÷ 50). As one might expect, the length of a *schoinos*, which was the basic measure of distance for a group of itineraries contemporary with that of Maes, would be about the same for all of them. This was the *schoinos* which was devised from the "decimally divided *stadion*" (in relationship to the Roman mile) (Lehmann-Haupt 1929, col. 1961–62), what is otherwise known as the itinerary *stadion*.

16. Lerner, p. 18, n. 31. Of course it is one and the same Stone Tower.

17. For a summary of the various opinions as to what exactly the Stone Tower was and where it was located, see Lerner 1998, pp. 18–19. I have not yet analyzed the arguments of Tupikova et al. 2014, based on elaborate calculations of Ptolemy's data that the authors claim point to Tashkurghan as the location of the "Stone Tower." However, they admit that their data do not preclude its identification with Daraut-Kurghan. See Hill 2015, Vol. 2, p. 22.

18. Among the most recent commentators on Maes' route, Bernard 2005, pp. 953–57, accepts the arguments for this route and specifically rejects Rapin's support for the Ferghana route through Osh. Citing Stein, both Berggren and Jones, in Ptolemy 2000, p. 51, and Hill 2015, Vol. 2, pp. 21–23, also favor this view. Stein (1932, pp. 22–24) traveled it: crossing the Amu Darya near Termez, the Surkhan Darya valley, the region of Dushanbe, the gorge of the Surkhab–Kyzyl Suu (Karategin), Daraut-Kurghan, Irkeshtam. The present author proposed its reconstruction in P'iankov 1985, pp. 130–36.

19. On the reason for this misunderstanding and the history of the question, see P'iankov 1972, pp. 54–56.

20. For a summary of information about the Komedes, see P'iankov 1994, pp. 41–42.

21. For a review of various opinions concerning the location of the halting place of the merchants, see Lerner 1998, p. 19.

22. I reached this conclusion earlier in P'iankov 1985, pp. 130–36. There I published the reconstruction reproduced here for the two branches of the route. Of the works which have devoted particular attention to this problem, I would single out two which responded to my ideas: Sherkova 1991, p. 23, and Lubo-Lesnichenko 1994, pp. 235–36. In comparing my scheme with that of Lubo-Lesnichenko, T. A. Sherkova asserted that "the reconstruction proposed by I. V. P'iankov is rather convincing." She further supports that reconstruction with archaeological data. On the other hand, E. I. Lubo-Lesnichenko agrees only partially with our view, while he admits that "the proposed scheme allows one to understand an extremely confused text of the 'Geographic Guide' and resolve the lack of correspondence in distanc-

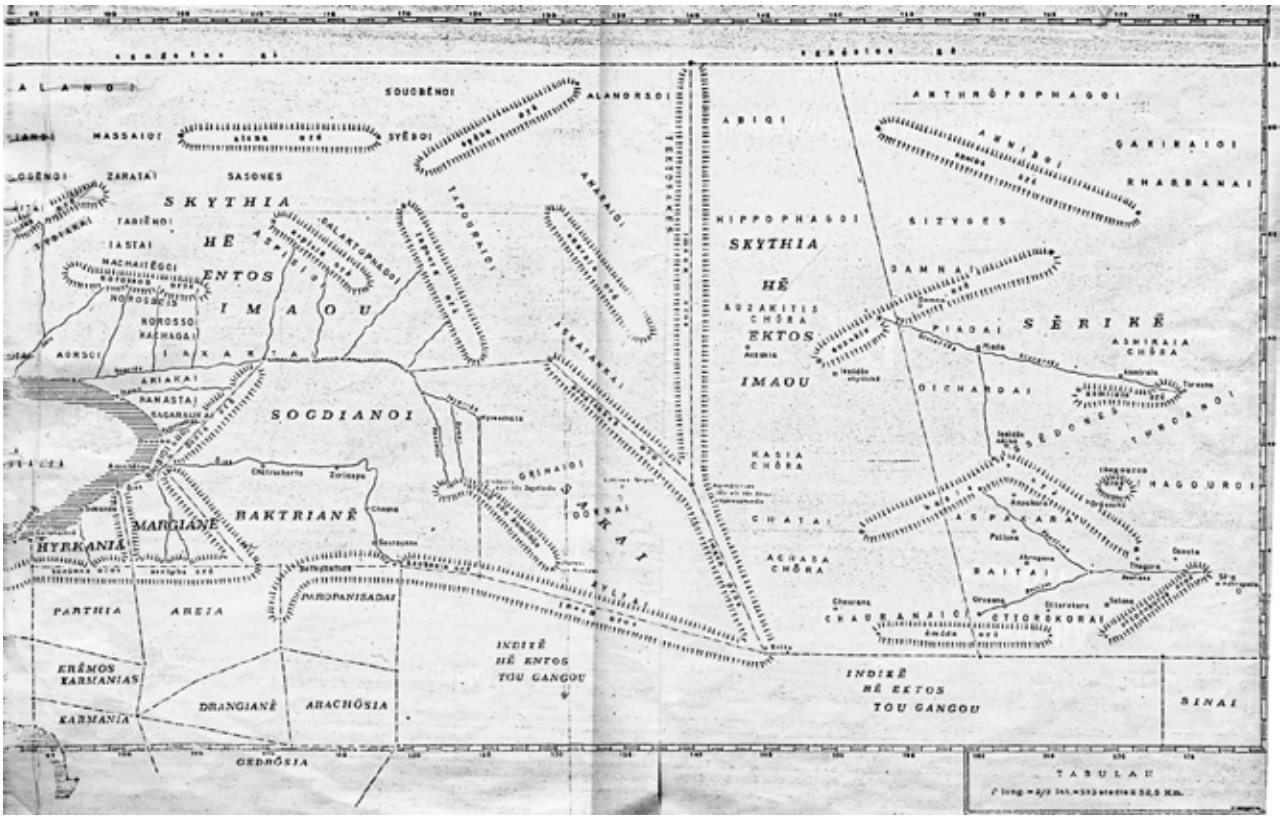
es and coordinates supplied by Marinus and Ptolemy. This explanation can be considered the most successful attempt to resolve the scholarly controversy which has lasted almost two centuries." He agrees with the reconstruction of the northern route through Samarkand and Ferghana, but prefers instead of the Karategin variant that of the Pamir through Wakhan and Tashkurghan, referring to the Japanese scholar Shiratori Kurakiti. But Lubo-Lesnichenko failed to take into account one review of Shiratori's work (Mandel'shtam 1997, p. 234), where in very convincing and substantiated fashion, one after another of that scholar's arguments concerning the Pamir route are rejected. Compare one of the most recent reconstructions of that section of the Silk Route: Lerner 1998, p. 22.

23. For a recent study of this source, see Bukharin 2007. For the dating of the life of Tiastan (Chashtany), who initiates the Saka period in 78 CE, see pp. 141, 161–68, 210. The standard English translation and study of the "Periplus" is that by Casson 1989.

24. On the routes from Serika to Bactria and India, see P'iankov 1986, pp. 21–22.

– *translated and edited by Daniel C. Waugh*

Appendix: A Reconstruction of Ptolemy's Map



This ancient map, reproduced here from Ptolemy 1971, is a reconstruction based on the *Geographia*, in which Ptolemy indicates the coordinates of specific places, rivers and mountains. Shown here is the easternmost part of the oecumene as Ptolemy knew it, as represented in his maps of "Scythia beyond the Imai" and "Serica". To a considerable degree, the information on the maps derives from very complex data about the Great Silk Road contained in the descriptions derived from Maes Titianus.

The Location of Ptolemy's Stone Tower: the Case for Sulaiman-Too in Osh

Riaz Dean
Wellington, New Zealand

In his famous *Geographia* Claudius Ptolemy (c. 90–168 CE) wrote about a location called the "Stone Tower" (*Lithinos Pyrgos* in Greek, *Turris Lapidea* in Latin), which was considered the mid-point on the overland trade route taken by caravans between Europe and Asia. Since the late 19th century this "road" has been conveniently labeled "The Silk Road". However, it is now well established that this name is somewhat misleading, as in fact the reality was a complex network of major and minor trade routes spanning a very large region. It also carried many goods other than silk and was the conduit for an exchange of ideas, religious beliefs, and cultures. The Stone Tower was a major landmark where, one must assume, travelers and caravans broke their often long and arduous journeys to rest, take on provisions, and trade goods before continuing on their next stage. Given the lack of precise information in Ptolemy's work, various theories have been advanced as to its actual location. This article offers a new perspective on the problem, by introducing a set of criteria that this location would have needed to satisfy for the landmark to have become so prominent. Judging by these criteria, the most likely location of Ptolemy's Stone Tower was the "Takt-e-Suleiman" mountain, also known locally as "Sulaiman-Too", which dominates the city of Osh in Kyrgyzstan.

Ptolemy locates the Stone Tower in the *Geographia* on his gradation system at 135°/43°, though in a preliminary discussion in Book I he also places it at longitude 132°, a discrepancy neither he nor anyone else has explained (Thomson 1948, p. 309) [1]. Thus, at best, he has provided but an approximation of the location, despite the apparent precision of the indication in his text. The oldest reconstructions of his maps, whose originals have not been preserved, include the 1490 Rome edition. Its seventh map of Asia [Fig. 1] labels the tower at 135°/43° as *Turris Lapidea Mons* (translated as: "Stone Tower Mountain"); and a little further east at 140° along the same latitude, places an *Oppidum sive praesidium eorum qui apud Seras proficiscutur* (translated as: "A guard post for those who travel among the Chinese").

Ptolemy's lack of precision can be explained by (i) the very basic methods of route surveying and map making employed during his era; and (ii) the manner in which he gathered his information. The first of these reasons requires little further elaboration. Ptolemy (Book I, Chapter 2) himself is explicit about the need for (but his lack of) the proper instruments for accurate mapping. Certainly in his time there could have been no use of a compass or sextant, and the ability accurately to determine longitude would have to await the 18th century. His information was ultimately derived from reports by travelers, where distances could be estimated only from elapsed travel times and then adjusted as necessary. Ptolemy in fact is specific about his "corrections" and thus confirms the inherent uncer-

After: Nordenskiold 1889, unpaginated map section at end.

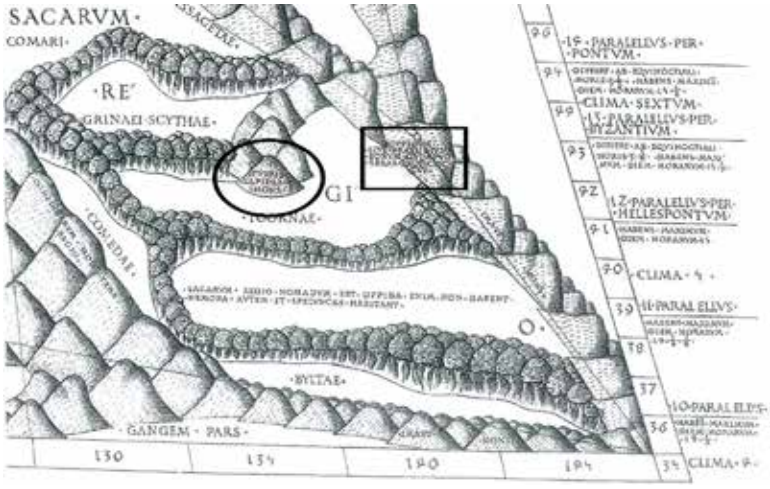


Fig. 1. The bottom right hand portion from Map XXII Ptolemaeus Romae 1490. Within the oval is the inscription "Turris Lapidea Mons"; within the rectangle: "Oppidum sive praesidium eorum qui apud Seras proficiscutur."

tainty in the caravan distances:

> However, we reduce according to the appropriate correction both the distance from that crossing of the Euphrates to the Stone Tower, which amounts (according to him) to 876 schoinoi or 26,280 stades, and that from the Stone Tower to Sera, the metropolis of Seres, a journey of seven months, or [according to Marinos] 36,200 stades reckoned on the same parallel [through Rhodes]. For in the case of both journeys, [Marinos] has clearly not subtracted the excess resulting from diversions…

Ptolemy then makes this reduction, but by an amount less than what it should have been, for the sake of simplicity:

> …[I]t would appear sensible here too, to diminish the number of stades added up from the seven months' itinerary, namely 36,200, to less than half. Let it, however, be reduced just to half, for this rough determination. [Berggren and Jones 2000, pp. 71–72.][2]

As we learn further from Ptolemy about his sources, we can see additional reasons for the uncertainty of his information. Ptolemy wrote the *Geographia* around 140 CE, basing his work on the writings of Marinus of Tyre (c. 70–130 CE) who was active around 100 CE. In fact, Ptolemy acknowledges that most of his geographical data comes from the work of Marinus, written down by Ptolemy some time after Marinus had produced the last version of his own geography (Berggren & Jones 2000, pp. 23–24). However, as Ptolemy tells us, Marinus learned of the route to the Stone Tower from a merchant, Maes Titianos, who in turn had received reports from his own envoys and their itineraries:

> Marinos says that one Maes, also known as Titianus, a Macedonian and a merchant by family profession, recorded the distance measurements, though he did not traverse it himself but sent certain [others] to the Seres. [Berggren and Jones 2000, p. 72.]

Most traders rarely travelled more than a few stages of the route before selling their goods to other merchants, a practice that allowed them to stay within their own local areas (Hansen 2012, p. 139). Therefore, it is also likely that much of this information may have been passed on from one trader to another, the process involving some loss in factual accuracy. In describing information gained from such individuals, Marinus laments that they

> do not concern themselves with finding out the truth, being occupied with commerce; rather, they often exaggerate the distances out of boastfulness. But here also the circumstance that nothing else in the seven months' journey was deemed worthy of any record or report by the travelers reveals that the length of time is a fiction. [Berggren & Jones 2000, p. 72.]

To summarize, Ptolemy learned of the Stone Tower third-hand at best, decades after the actual journeys took place, and its location was estimated using very rudimentary "survey" methods. It is hardly surprising then that locating the Stone Tower precisely, using only his coordinates and writings, has always proved very problematic!

A literal translation of *Turris Lapidea* or *Lithinos Pyrgos* as "stone tower" (though also translated as "stone castle" or "stone fortress" by others) is not much help either. Although the name "Tashkurgan" means "stone tower", there is more than one town in Central Asia with this name. The name is one reason Tashkent ("Stone Castle") has been cited by some as the location of Ptolemy's tower. Another frequent identification has been Tashkurgan in Xinjiang, situated clearly along one of the historic East-West routes. However, it is not clear whether the lowest layers of the fortress one now sees there antedate the Tang Dynasty (its upper part was restored in the late 19th century when used by the Qing) (Bonavia 1988, p. 178) [Fig. 2]. The recent study by Tupikova et al (2014) attempts to resolve distances and locations in the *Geographia* through "the application of spherical trigonometry for the recalculation of Ptolemy's coordinates," and concludes that locating the Stone Tower in Tashkurgan makes the most sense of Ptolemy's data.

The most widely accepted identification for the location of the Stone Tower is in the vicinity of Daraut-Kurghan, on the Kyzyl Suu River in the Alai region of what is now southern Kyrgyzstan. Aurel Stein provided one of the most coherent arguments for this identification based on the careful observations he made of the terrain he passed through, following

Photo 1995 courtesy of Daniel Waugh

Fig. 2. View looking through the remains of the Tashkurgan Fort toward Mt. Mustagh-Ata, Xinjiang.

which he then analyzed the data from Ptolemy. He credited Sir Henry Yule as being one of the first to suggest that Ptolemy was describing a route up through what is now Tajikistan from the Amu Darya (Oxus River) along the Karategin Gorge (up the Wakhsh/Surkhab valley) to where it meets the Kyzyl Suu, not far from the location of Daraut-Kurghan. Stein argued that the valleys this route followed were among the lowest in the high mountains of this region and presented few obstacles to travel. Furthermore, the local conditions just short of Daraut-Kurghan were suitable for a reasonably productive agriculture that could have supported an early settlement there and the needs of passing travelers. While he noted some possible evidence of ancient remains (recent archaeology has confirmed they exist), he had no concrete data. In his time, the fortification at Daraut-Kurghan was of recent date. Once at Daraut-Kurghan, the most direct route to China ran up the Kyzyl Suu Valley to a pass just west of Irkeshtam, then descended past Irkeshtam into Eastern Turkestan. In Stein's opinion, this route was the one most consistent with the trade route of Maes or his informants, which passed through Baktra before ascending northeast to go on, eventually, to China (Stein 1928, Vol. 2, pp. 847–51). Bernard's recent study (2005), illustrated with detailed maps, in which he carefully tried to trace the route taken by the caravan of Maes Titianos, likewise locates the Stone Tower near Daraut-Kurghan. P'iankov (2014)[3] agrees with this identification, basing his work on a detailed analysis of Ptolemy's data and personal observations, having traveled along much of the route himself. Both he and Bernard reject the fourth alternative, argued recently by Claude Rapin (2001) — namely that the Stone Tower is the Takt-e-Suleiman mountain in Osh. Like so many other scholars, Rapin based his conclusion in the first instance on his analysis of Ptolemy's text.

Keeping in mind just how sketchy Ptolemy's information really is and the circumstances which would force us to conclude it cannot be very accurate, one has to wonder whether any amount of re-calculation of his coordinates, however sophisticated (such as in the work of Tupikova et al.), can produce a persuasive argument about where exactly his "Stone Tower" was located. Suppose then, we were to put Ptolemy aside and frame our inquiry in different terms. My premise is that we should start from three essential requirements such a prominent meeting place as the Stone Tower would have needed to satisfy. These requirements are: (i) it must have been on a major caravan trading route, close to the crossover point between the Pamirs and China; (ii) it was a clearly identifiable and permanent landmark; and, (iii) it was capable of supporting the needs of significant amounts of caravan traffic in terms of water and pasturage for the animals, food and shelter for the accompanying travelers, and as a trading settlement for the merchandise.

The remainder of this article will show how the Takt-e-Suleiman mountain in Osh, Kyrgyzstan may most closely match these three requirements. This mountain is known popularly in the West as "Solomon's Throne" but locally as Sulaiman-Too ("Too" means "mountain" in Kyrgyz), the designation to be used going forward. In focusing on Sulaiman-Too, I will note where I feel the other three proposed locations (Tashkent, Tashkurgan and Daraut-Kurghan) do not seem to satisfy these requirements, although it is not my intention, given limited space, to compare all four sites in detail.

While it is obvious that to have been so prominent the Stone Tower must have been located on a major trading route, we need to consider how well such a route or routes in the region have been documented over time. Most maps constructed by modern scholars in discussing the "silk routes" include a branch going through the Ferghana valley (at whose head Osh lies) (e.g., Whitfield 2004, pp. 10-11) [cf. Fig. 3],[4] but clearly there were other options for travel, which might have been preferred depending on weather or political and economic considerations. To a considerable degree the modern maps of the silk roads reflect, it seems, what Wilkinson (2014) has criticized as "route inertia." That is, there has been an assumption that routes remain more or less stable over long periods of time and thus can be "documented" by extrapolation even when there are no hard data to support their earlier existence. In analogous fashion, Whitfield (2007, p. 207) has, criticized the idea that routes be defined in the first instance geographically while neglecting key evidence around the economics which underpinned them.

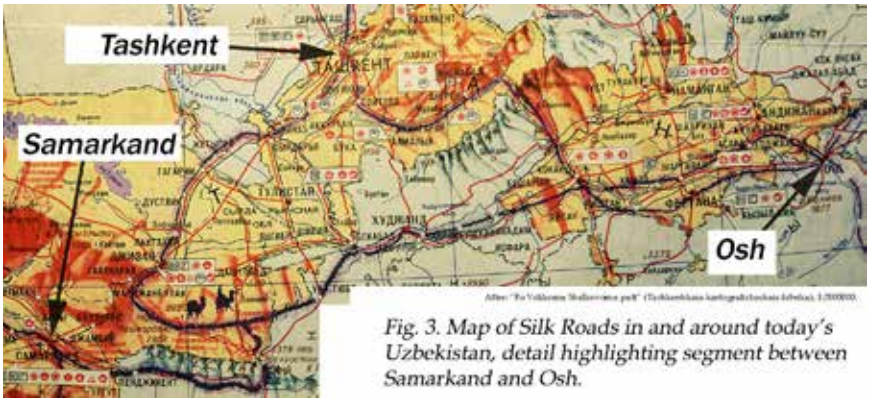


Fig. 3. Map of Silk Roads in and around today's Uzbekistan, detail highlighting segment between Samarkand and Osh.

Source: <http://www.grid.unep.ch/products/4_Maps/ferghana_3db.gif>

Fig. 4. Three-dimensional image of the Ferghana Valley Region (UNEP map, 2004) which offers an excellent view of the regional topography and provides a sense of how open the valley is to those coming from the west.

The fertile Ferghana Valley, the pasturelands within its encircling mountains and the routes through it were historically important [Fig. 4]. This has in fact been documented, in part in connection with the activity of the Sogdians, whose home territory in the vicinity of today's Samarkand lay on an easy and direct route to the west. The Han Emperor Wu Di (r. 141–87 BCE) sent his emissary Zhang Qian to the West and eventually received a report about the "blood-sweating" horses which he then sought to obtain for the Chinese army. The homeland of those horses was, it seems, the Ferghana Valley. Sogdian traders started becoming active from the 2nd century BCE onwards, though initially in a limited and regional way (Vaissière 2005, p. 333). The *Han shu*, the official history of the Former Han dynasty (completed in 121 CE, covering the period from 202 BCE to 23 CE), records that in 29 and 11 BCE ambassadors from Kangju, a state which included Sogdiana, had presented themselves at the Chinese court. It describes the Sogdians as expert traders who would haggle over a fraction of a cent (Hulsewe 1979, pp. 128, 136). In subsequent centuries at least up to the 7th century CE, the Sogdians were arguably the main foreign merchants in Gansu and the principal long-distance merchants in Central Asia. Sogdians settled in China and often occupied positions of prominence in Chinese society. (Vaissière 2005; Hansen 2012, pp. 113–39). While the peak of the Sogdian activity would seem significantly to post-date what Ptolemy reports about the Stone Tower, there is no reason to think that to argue the early importance of the route through Ferghana is an anachronistic application of "route inertia." In Wilkinson's terms, where he argues (2014, p. 114) that "routes" should be understood in broad terms and determined by an estimate of the "cost of passage" along them, going from Samarkand (historically important as Maracanda even back in the 4th century BCE when Alexander the Great conquered it) through the Ferghana Valley must have been one of the lowest cost ways of moving eastward toward China. Whether getting from Osh through the mountains further east was equally low cost is another matter.

It certainly was possible to get from Karategin to Osh. As Stein reported from his interactions with the Russian officials he met after entering the upper reaches of the Kyzyl Suu, there were at least two standard routes which enabled one to travel from that valley to Osh: a rather difficult one over the Terek Pass that came out not far from Irkeshtam, and another direct and much-frequented route that ran north from near Daraut-Kurghan, coming out at Marghilan in the Ferghana Valley. At least theoretically it would have been possible, if Maes' merchants had come up from the Oxus through Karategin to the Kyzyl Suu (as Stein, Bernard and P'iankov believe), for them to have gone by way of Marghilan on to Osh and then traveled further into China. The lure of the fertile area near Osh might well have served as an incentive to make what would have been a relatively short detour (perhaps ten days' travel) to rest and trade before tackling the difficult crossing of the mountains to the east.

After: USSR General Staff quadrant K-43-122-B (Osh), 1:50000 (1982 ed.); (insert): adapted from UNESCO Nomination 2005, Map N4.

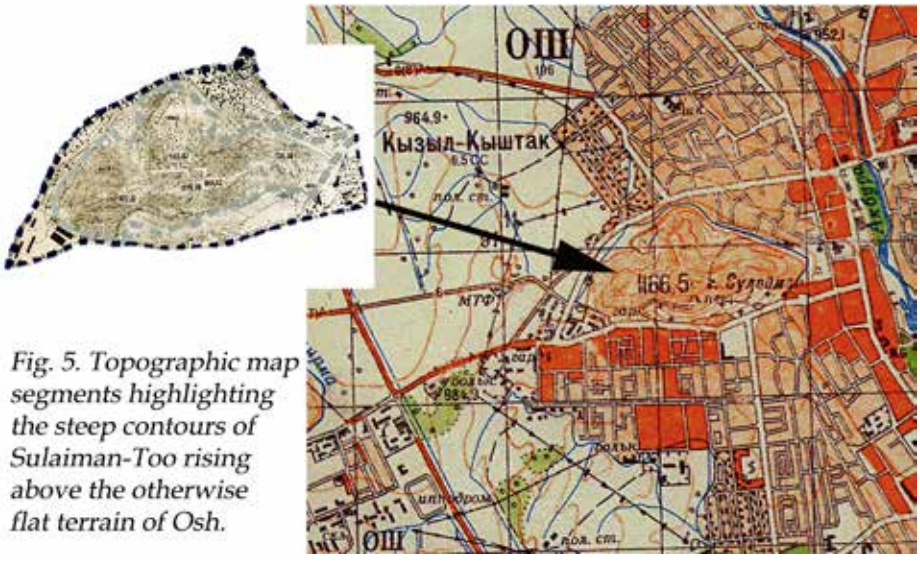


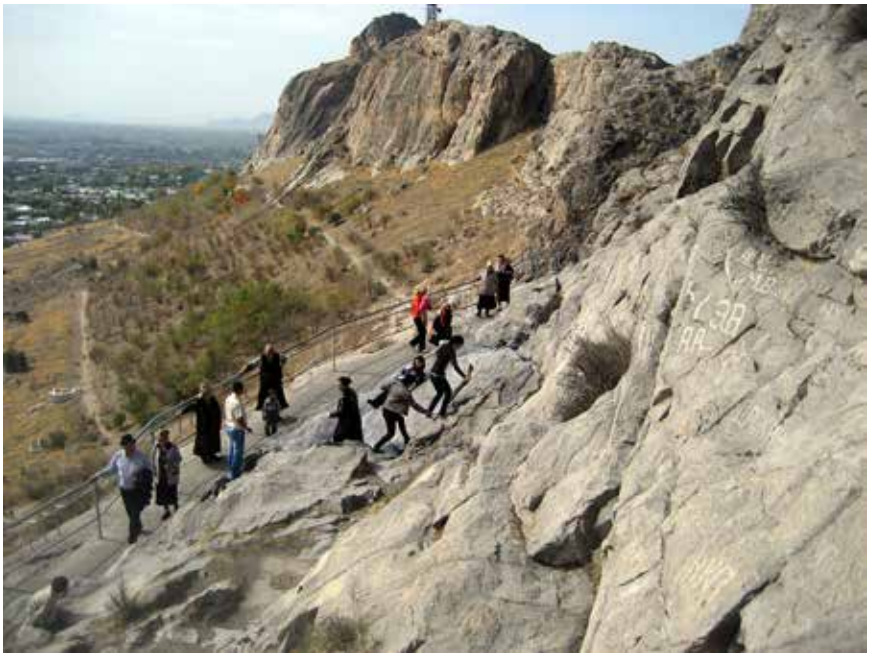
Fig. 5. Topographic map segments highlighting the steep contours of Sulaiman-Too rising above the otherwise flat terrain of Osh.

Fig. 6. Two views of Sulaiman-Too that highlight the dramatic elevation of the peak.

Photos on this page courtesy of Jennifer Webster

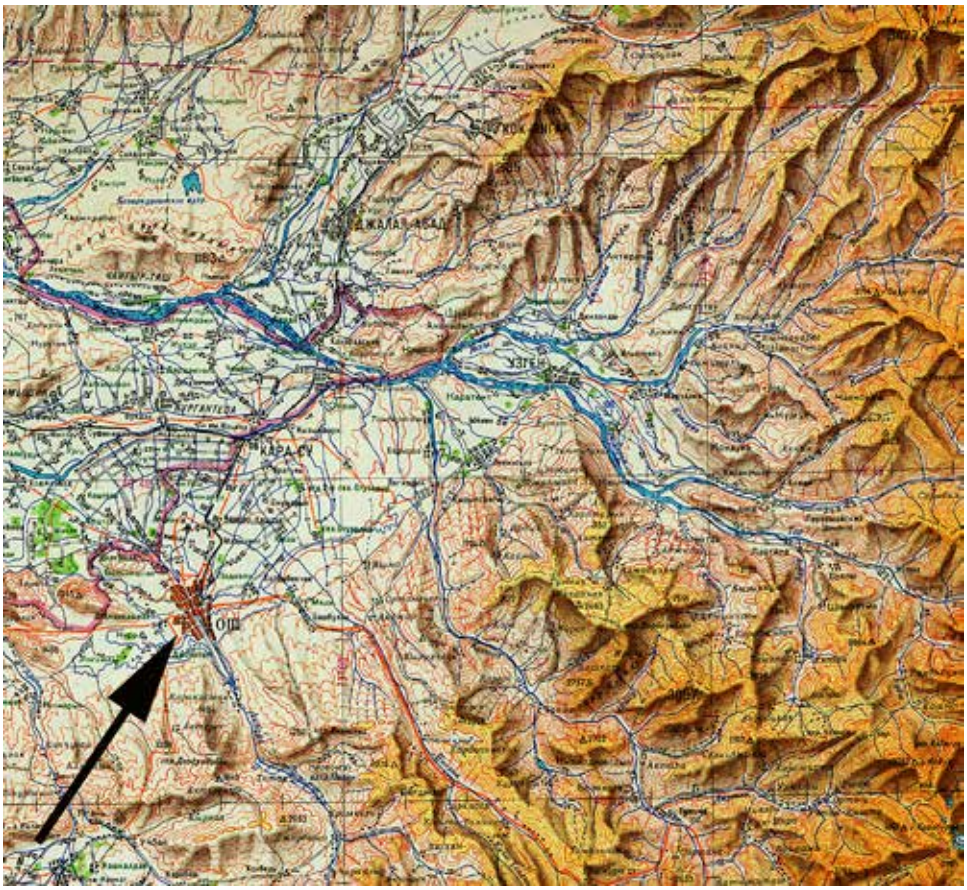
A stronger case might be made for Osh and Sulaiman-Too if we consider our second criterion, that the Stone Tower must have been a clearly identifiable and permanent landmark. Dominating as it does a flat landscape and separated from the hills that rise to the east and south, its size is impressive [Fig. 5]. Travelers arriving from the west would have seen it from a distance even if in absolute terms, this "mountain" is really a large cluster of rocky limestone hills consisting of five peaks [Figs. 6, 7]. The highest peak is 628 feet [191 m] above the surrounding ground level (and 3,855 feet [1,175 m] above sea level). The entire mountain covers a land area of around 277 acres [112 hectares]. It certainly could not be mistaken for any other mountain or hill.

While some would have it that the Stone Tower must have referred to a manmade structure, likely a fort, it could have referred to a mountain instead, or one that might have had some fortification on its summit. For what it is worth, the Rome version of Ptolemy's map published in 1490 specifically labels the tower as *Turris Lapidea Mons* (Stone Tower Mountain) (see Nordenskiold 1889, p. 4 and Map XXII). No such feature dominates the skyline around Tashkent. There is apparently insufficient evidence about the historic remains at Daraut-Kurghan to be sure that a prominent manmade tower was located there. The remains of the fort at Tashkurgan are impressive, if not dramatically prominent when approaching the city, but, as in the case with Daraut-Kurghan, there is as yet insufficient evidence to prove what was there during Maes' era some 2,000 years ago.



Our third criterion is that the area near the Stone Tower be capable of supporting the needs of significant amounts of caravan traffic in terms of water and pasturage for the animals, food and shelter for the accompanying travelers, and as a trading settlement for the merchandise. Caravans crossing Central Asia were often quite large, might include hundreds of animals and a

Fig. 7. View from high on Sulaiman-Too looking across the peak and down toward the city.



Source: USSR General Staff quadrant K-43_V, 1:500000 (1965 ed.)

Fig. 8. Osh (indicated by the arrow) and its region on a modern topographic map, highlighting its location next to the mountains and the abundant water resources.

multitude of people: merchants, camel drivers, servants, a solid armed escort, sometimes private individuals, small merchants, monks and artists (Boulnois 2004, p. 201).

One indicator of the resources and overall ability of a site to host such large caravans might be the size and development of the surrounding settlement. Tupikova et al (2014, Tab. 1, pp. 27–28) have summarized population from the data in the *Han Shu* (with some question marks about whether the identifications are correct): Tashkurgan? – 5,000; Alai valley [= Daraut-Kurghan]? – 1,030; Ferghana region – 300,000; and Samarkand region – 600,000. By this measure, Ferghana had the resources to support a much larger population than did Daraut-Kurghan or Tashkurgan. Even today Osh is a major population center (the second largest city in Kyrgyzstan), and the Ferghana valley (most of which now lies within Uzbekistan) is one of the most populous regions in Central Asia.

In the year 2000, Osh celebrated its 3,000th anniversary of permanent settlement, even if one cannot be certain it is *exactly* that old. In fact, Zadneprovskij (2000) has documented that history back to the Bronze Age, citing many archaeological finds recovered on and around Sulaiman-Too, as well as numerous petroglyphs on the rock surfaces of the mountain. So we can at least be certain that the area was settled during the era when Ptolemy wrote of the Stone Tower. The varied rock art on the mountain has been dated to between the 15th century BCE and the 7th century CE (Clottes 2011, p. 61).

Osh lies at the head of the fertile Ferghana Valley, which has always been a veritable 'food basket' for the whole region ("Osh" means "pilaf" in modern Uzbek) [Figs. 8, 9]. The valley owes its fertility to two rivers, the Naryn and the Kara Darya, which unite in the valley to form the Syr Darya. Numerous other tributaries run through this luxuriant valley, including the Ak-Buura River which flows just 0.3 miles [0.5 km] from Sulaiman-Too, and which would have offered immediate access to water for passing caravans. The excellent pasturage in these valleys has been well documented in history [Fig. 10]. It is here that the best alfalfa grass grew, which was essential for rearing Ferghana's famed "heavenly horses of Davan." As already mentioned above, these were the hardy and fleet-footed horses reputed to "sweat

Fig. 9. Aerial view taken near Osh, showing how the flat fields of Ferghana (here awaiting planting) come up to the encircling hills.

Photo 1991 courtesy of Daniel Waugh

blood" that the Han dynasty sought to obtain in the 2nd century BCE in an effort to bolster their cavalry breeding stock. One might assume then, that Ferghana not only offered ample grazing for the caravan animals, but also would have provided opportunities to trade in these most famous and sought-after Ferghana horses, exchange their tired mounts for fresh ones, and replace those that had died on route. While the route past Daraut-Kurghan was certainly not lacking in grazing opportunities and water, its resources probably were much more limited. Stein suggests as much when he comments on the places where some agriculture was practiced that did not seem to form a contiguous stretch of fertile land.

Photo 1991 courtesy of Daniel Waugh

Fig. 11. Small mosque atop Sulaiman-Too, allegedly built by Babur in the late 15th century; rebuilt several times since. A destination today for the pilgrims who climb the mountain.

While ignored by other scholars, one additional fact may help make the case for Sulaiman-Too — the strong religious and cultural significance this mountain has always held for the people of this region. This was the primary reason for its being listed as a "World Heritage Site" by UNESCO in 2009, as mentioned in its citation: "The site is believed to represent the most complete example of a sacred mountain anywhere in Central Asia, worshipped over several millennia." (UNESCO Sulaiman-Too). A detailed discussion of the religious nature of this site is beyond the scope of this article, but it is important at least to mention a few of its key attributes: It is thought to be the only such sacred mountain in this region, and its cult sites have been long sought out for their supposed powers to heal various ailments, improve fertility and give one the blessing of longevity. Possibly the earliest cult practiced here may have been Mithraism. Its rites included libation of *haoma*, their sacred beverage, which ties in with the ground gutters and cup hollows found in and around the many caves and grottoes on Sulaiman-Too. These stone hollows, up to 6 inches [20 cm] in diameter, are the most numerous special features found on this mountain and, together with the polished inclined floor gutters, measuring from 3.8 up to 4.8 yards [3.5 to 4.5 m], may have been used in rituals to imitate the myth of Mithra's birth from rock in a cave. There is even some textual evidence in the early Chinese annals — the *Shiji* (2nd century BCE) and the *Han shu* (1st century CE) — suggesting the religious importance of Sulaiman-Too prior to the era of Ptolemy. They mention that one of the main towns of *Davan* (Ferghana), situated in the Osh area, was *Guishan (Guishan-Chen)*, which translates to "a town near a highly respected/sacred mountain" (UNESCO Nomination 2005, pp. 1–6, and Supplementary Information 2008: Management Plan, Part 1, unpaginated; Amanbaeva 2001, pp. 177–79). With the coming of Islam, the mountain became an important pilgrimage site and remains so to this day (see Zarcone 2013) [Fig. 11]. Given this history, it is certainly logical to assume that the mountain was a much sought-after location for travelers seeking blessing and good fortune on their difficult and dangerous enterprises, thus further enhancing its position as an important landmark.

Fig. 10. View of herder camp in mountain pasture area along the road leading south from Osh.

Photo 1991 courtesy of Daniel Waugh

To conclude, Ptolemy's Stone Tower cannot be located today with certainty, based on the information he and other geographers and historians of his era left behind, or at least not until further evidence, such as new archaeological discoveries, comes to light. However, by using a new set of criteria proposed by this author to assist in solving this age-old problem, there is a strong case to be made that the Sulaiman-Too mountain, which dominates the city of Osh, could well be this famous landmark of antiquity on the Silk Road.

About the author

Riaz Dean is an independent scholar and an engineer, who also holds an MBA degree. He has travelled extensively through many of the countries and routes on the Silk Road, including the Pamirs and spent time in Osh by the Sulaiman-Too. He lives in Wellington, New Zealand, and his email address is: <riaz_dean@yahoo.com>.

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Notes

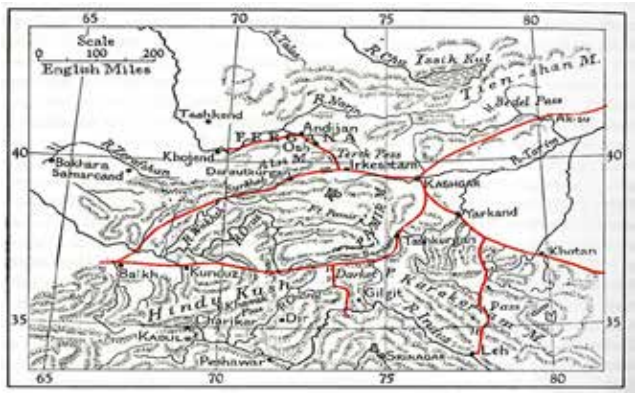
1. This discrepancy is not entirely obvious, but can be deduced from Ptolemy's coordinates in Book I Chapter 12, as shown in the table prepared by Nordenskiold (1889, p. 4): The sum of longitude from Insulae Fortunatae (Ptolemy's prime meridian at 0°, the Canary Islands) to Sera (capital of China, probably Luoyang) totals 177 ¼°; subtracting the distance given for Turris lapidea to Sera of 45 ¼° gives the value of 132°.

2. The translation by Berggren and Jones from the Greek text by Nobbe is to be preferred compared to the much-criticized Stevenson translation, based on the Renaissance Latin text of the *Geographia*, although in fact there is no major discrepancy between the two in this particular passage. Stevenson's text here reads (1932, p. 33):

> The distance from the Euphrates at Hieropolis to the Stone Tower, Marinus gives as eight hundred and seventy-six schena, or 26,280 stadia. The distance from the Stone Tower to Sera, the capital of Seres, which is a journey of seven months, he computes at 36,200 stadia. Since these two distances are measured on the same parallel, we shall shorten both by making a necessary correction, as it is clear that Marinus made no reduction for deviations in either journey…it seems to us proper that the number of stadia, viz., 36,200, which was computed from a journey of seven months, should be cut down to not less than one-half; and for easier understanding to only one-half; so that the distance in stadia may be computed as 18,100, or forty-five and one-fourth degrees.

3. I should emphasize at the outset here that my article has not been written as a specific response to the work of Igor' Vasil'evich P'iankov, since I do not read Russian. I know his article (2014), translated elsewhere in this volume of *The Silk Road*, only from its previously published short English summary and have not read his monograph on the Classical sources about Central Asia.

4. Among the modern maps depicting the various branches of the Silk Roads in the center of Asia, Thomson's is distinctive in that it shows all of the locations which have been suggested for the "Stone Tower":



After: Thomson 1948, p. 308, Fig. 56

The Test Excavation of the Nanhai No. 1 Shipwreck in 2011: a Detail Leading to the Whole

Xu Yongjie 许永杰
Collaborative Innovation Center of South China Sea Studies
Archaeological Research Center of South China Sea, Sun Yat-Sen University
Guangzhou, China

In 2008 we reported on the pages of this journal about the retrieval of a remarkably well-preserved Song-era ship, the Nanhai 南海 (South China Sea) No. 1, through an innovative project which lifted it from the seabed in a caisson and transported it, still covered by water, to the Yanjiang Maritime Silk Road Museum 阳江海上丝绸之路博物馆 on Hailing Island 海陵岛, Guangdong Province 广东省. The ship was over 90 m long and contained a large cargo of ceramics. Its intact salvage opened a new chapter in the history of underwater archaeology in China, making possible then the kind of precise documentation through the methods of field archaeology which is impossible when a shipwreck remains on the ocean floor. The present article reports on the first results of the ongoing, detailed excavation.

Kuiyiban er zhiquanbao 窥一斑而知全豹, a Chinese idiom, means peering at one spot and knowing everything. This is an appropriate metaphor for the test excavation of Nanhai No. 1 in 2011. Though lasting only for 46 days (March 6th to May 10th), the technical accomplishments of this work showed that Chinese underwater archaeology already is at the forefront of maritime archaeology worldwide. Moreover, the rich and multiple relics retrieved from only six 1 x 1 m test pits offered a tantalizing taste of the fruitful harvest which can be expected as the excavation proceeds.

The project in 2011 was defined as "field excavation with a lowered water level," that is, to apply the methods of field archaeology after lowering the water level in the caisson. Even though the caisson was isolated from the natural water environment and thus had no current, the mud covering the shipwreck seriously reduced underwater visibility and even interfered with basic work like photography and cartography. To use mud pumps, as is commonly done in underwater archaeology, was considered inadequate for collecting the relics and other information that remained buried. Therefore, the decision was made to employ the advanced techniques of field archaeology and documentation of the excavation as the most scientific way to secure the relics from the shipwreck.

After first lowering the water level by two meters (that is, 0.5 m below the surface of the mud and remains of the ship), six 1 x 1 m square test pits were dug in the south and north sectors of the wreck. The total station (Sokkia Set530R3) was used as the major instrument of surveying and mapping to record data throughout the excavation. The data collected from the total station then was transmitted into the computer with AutoCAD to create a virtual, three-dimensional test pit [Fig. 1]. The actual excavations in the test pits employed in addition to necessary mechanical tools the regular instruments of archaeological field work, such as trowel, drill, soft brush, bamboo knife etc. [Fig. 2, next page]. The excavation carefully uncovered strata from top down in the mud; that is, it preserved the temporal sequence as the artifacts were collected, numbered and recorded. The surrounding mud was analyzed and filtered thoroughly. In the process, seeds and other organic specimens were found.

The test probes in 2011 also employed new excavation techniques and instruments. To facilitate the ar-

Fig. 1. Total station in the excavation site.

Fig. 2. Uncovering the porcelains from one of the test pits, protected by its aluminum walls.

Fig. 4. An archaeologist using a steel probe.

chaeologists' work, long steel ladders and a platform surrounded with FRP glass were erected [Fig. 3]. The sides of the test pits were supported with an aluminum framework to protect the integrity of the excavation. Steel probes 2 m long were used to determine where porcelains or other solid objects were in the mud [Fig. 4]. Glass tubes were used to probe into the mud around the test pit, while a water pump specially designed for this excavation and sponges were used to draw away the additional water in the mud. The total station was used as the instrument for surveying and mapping along with digital still and video photography to record the whole process of excavation. Each stage of the excavation was photographed directly from above and the results used to draw plans by AutoCAD. The artifacts then were removed by hand.

The test excavation of the Nanhai No.1 shipwreck accomplished several important goals:

1) It provided a good model for future work. The project was planned taking into account that the shipwreck had already been placed in the caisson and transferred to the museum, thus being separated from the original environment. The newly tested excavation methods provide experience as to how best to salvage and exhibit shipwrecks in the future.

Fig. 3. The steel ladder connecting the work site and the platform.

2) It has raised the standard of underwater excavation in China. How to proceed in the salvage and excavation of a shipwreck raised in a caisson is still an open subject. Although underwater archaeology in China has substantial experience in original site work, there had been little guidance as to how to proceed once the shipwreck had been contained in the caisson. The test excavation, with its high quality and advanced scientific technology, indicates the progress of underwater archaeology in China.

3) It provides good training for new underwater archaeologists. The team members in this excavation come from the Guangdong Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology 广东省文物考古研究所 and the Yangjiang Maritime Silk Road Museum. These outstanding archaeologists and their team now can share their work experience and train new staff in excavation techniques.

The artifacts

The six test pits were distributed in the south and north sections of the cassion and had no connection with one another. The test excavation unearthed 120 objects, including porcelain (108), bronze coins (9), stoneware (1), ironware (1), animal bone (1), and seeds (2).

The porcelains are from kilns in Dehua 德化, Cizao 磁灶, and Minqing 闽清 in Fujian Province, Jingdezhen 景德镇 in Jiangxi Province, and Longquan 龙泉 in Zhejiang Province. Most of them are white-glazed Dehua wares [Fig. 5, next page], including a relief-decorated jar with four handles, a relief-decorated two-handled jar, a pitcher with a melon pattern, a vase with a flared neck, a porcelain box, a plate with a flower pattern, a bowl with an inward-curving rim and flower pattern, and a bowl with a flower pattern. The wares from the Yiyao Kilns 义窑, Minqing, include a green and white bowl with an incised pattern and sunflower

Fig. 5. Porcelains from the Dehua kilns:

5-1. White glazed pitcher with a handle and melon pattern.

5-2. White-glazed porcelain box.

5-3. White-glazed vase with a flared neck.

5-4. White-glazed jar with two handles.

5-5. White glazed jar with four handles.

5-6. White-glazed plate with pattern and inward-curving rim.

rim, a green-glazed bowl with a flower pattern (Figs. 6-3, 6-4), while the Cizao wares are a brown-glazed flask ("pilgrim bottle") and a green-glazed bottle with a calabash shape [Fig. 6-6]. The Jingdezhen porcelains are a green and white plate with a sunflower rim and a green and white bowl with a sunflower rim [Figs. 6-1, 6-2]; Longqian wares include a green-glazed bowl with flower pattern, etc. [Fig. 6-5]. The stone object is too fragmentary to identify its function, while the iron object is a nail with square cross section. So far it is impossible to determine the origins of the animal bone. The plant remains included olive and lichi pits.

These relics suggest the following conclusions:

1) Since porcelains are 90 percent of the 120 artifacts, Nanhai No. 1 most probably was a merchant ship transporting mainly porcelains. The six test pits are all located in the lower part of the shipwreck. However, it is surprising to see the richness of the unearthed relics. In the estimate by the excavators, the cargo of porcelain in this ship will number only somewhat less than 100,000 pieces.

2) Different sections in the ship may contain different cargoes. Test pit TN23E8 near the stern of the ship has mostly green-glazed bowls from northern Fujian province, while TN4E7 and TN7E9 have more white-glazed porcelain from the Dehua kilns. TN4E7 and adjacent areas show a cargo of ironware.

3) Since the porcelains in this ship are mostly from kilns in Fujian Province, with but a few from Jiangxi Province and Zhejiang Province, it seems likely that the ship embarked from the coastal area of Fujian.

4) The bronze coins from this excavation [Fig. 7, next page] are *Huangsong tongbao* 皇宋通宝, *Zhenghe tongbao* 政和通宝, *Yuanfeng tongbao* 元丰通宝, and *Xiangfu yuanbao* 祥符元宝, which were all cast in the Northern Song period. However, since these coins accompany the *Shaoxing yuanbao* 绍兴元宝 (Southern Song period) coins unearthed in the initial excavation, the shipwreck most likely dates from Southern Song period.

The excavation also uncovered hull planks and parts of the keel and wood from the cabin, all indicating that both the bow and stern of the ship had been preserved.At the end of 2014, the author had the opportunity

Fig. 6. Porcelains from Jingdezhen, Longquan, Minqing and Cizao kilns.

6-1. Jingdezhen green and white plate with sunflower rim.

6-2. Jingdezhen green and white bowl with sunflower rim.

6-3. Qingyi geen-glazed bowl with sunflower rim.

6-4. Qingyi bowl with flower pattern.

6-5. Longquan bowl with flower pattern.

6-6. Cizao green-glazed bottle with a calabash shape

Fig. 7. Bronze coins.
7-1. Zhenghe tongbao
7-2. Yuangfeng tongbao
7-3. Xiangfu yuanbao
7-4. Huangsong tongbao.

to visit the excavation site in the Yangjang Maritime Silk Road Museum guided by Pu Gong 卜工, emeritus director of the Guangdong Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology and advisor for the 2011 test excavation. Sun Jiang 孙键, the leader of the team, showed us the beautiful relics just uncovered from the water, including fine flasks decorated with the characters 福 and 寿 from the Dehua kilns, a gold necklace of great interest for its western-style elements, as well as some lacquerware plates with yellow, red and black colors.

We can confidently predict that as the excavation proceeds, the shipwreck will provide much more new evidence to help us appreciate the past prosperity of the maritime silk road.

About the author

Between 1994 and 2004, Professor **Xu Yongjie** 许永杰 was Deputy Director of the Heilongjiang Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology. Since 1994 he has taught Chinese Archaeology in the Department of Anthropology of Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou. He is also Visiting Professor at the Research Center for Frontier Archaeology in Jilin University and Visiting Researcher at the Research Center of Ancient Civilization in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He has directed a number of major excavations and has published more than 70 articles and several important books. He can be contacted at <Yongjie1957@aliyun.com>.

Reference note

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– *translated by Lin Ying* 林英

The Archaeological Assessment of Pajadagh Fortress (Qal'a-e Tashvir), Tashvir Village, Tarom County, Zanjan Province

Ali Nourallahi
Ph. D. in Archaeology, independent researcher

This article reports the results of an archaeological survey undertaken in 2010 at Pajadagh Fortress (Qal'a-e Pajadagh; Qal'a-e Tashvir), in Tarom County, Zanjan Province, Iran [Fig. 1]. The site merits excavation, but since none has yet been undertaken, we will limit ourselves to a general description of the geographical and historical context and preliminary observations about the fortress's architecture and ceramic sherds obtained from surface scatters.

Given its strategic location on a major east-west route and some important natural resources, what is today Zanjan Province played an important role starting well back in the pre-Islamic period. Zanjan was a provincial administrative capital under the Achaemenids, and undoubtedly retained its importance under the subsequent rule of the Parthians (Arsacids) and the Sasanians (Sābuti 1991). Among the best-known discoveries of historic remains in Iran in recent times is the mummified bodies found west of Zanjan in the salt mines at Chehrabad. Three of the bodies date apparently to the late period of the Persian Achaemenid Empire (405–380 BCE) and the other two to the Sasanian period (224-651 CE) [Fig. 2] (Pollard et al 2008; Chehrabad n.d.). Recent study of the bodies suggests that the individuals might have traveled to those mines from another region. The rock salt obtained in those mines has continued to be an important commodity down to the present.

Fig. 1. Map showing location of Qal'a-e Pajadagh.
With the exceptions noted, all illustrations are by the author.

Photo 2010 courtesy of Daniel Waugh

Fig. 2. The body of "Saltman No. 4" on display in the Archaeological Museum of Zanjan.

The region has historically supported significant agriculture in some areas, and the surrounding mountains have been important for hunting and animal husbandry. In the small Davah Dashy ("camel stone") valley southeast of the Pajadagh fortress, our archaeological survey discovered petroglyphs of indeterminate date that probably were left by early inhabitants, depicting antelopes, camels, and a circle divided into four parts [Figs. 3, 4, next page]. The importance of the mountain pastures can be appreciated from the fact that much later, under the Mongol Ilkhanid Dynasty, Sultaniyya, east of Zanjan, was for a time used as a summer capital. Its great, domed mausoleum, built in the early 14th century for Khan Öljeytu, is perhaps the best known historical monument in the region and is considered one of the masterpieces of Islamic architecture [Fig. 5].

Tarom township is in the north of Zanjan Province, bordering Ardabil Province in the north and Qazvin and Gilan in the east and northeast. The sizeable

Fig. 3 (above). Location of rock art as seen looking toward the Pajadagh fortress.

Fig. 4 (right). Examples of the rock art found southeast of the Pajadagh fortress.

Ghezel-Ozan River along its northern border lies in a deep valley whose eastern end is less than 400 meters above sea level, but some of the surrounding mountains rise as much as 2800 m above sea level. Tashvir village is at 590 m above sea level on the Gilvan to Sorkhe Dizaj road. While the village is located in the Youhari Chay valley, its river is dry much of the year; it is impossible to tap the water of the Ghezel-Ozan. Thus, although the population is mainly engaged in agriculture, its possibilities are limited: there are olive trees; some grain, mainly wheat and barley, is grown; and garden crops include garlic and potatoes. In fact most of the farm families live in the surrounding highlands where they can take advantage of the pasturelands for animal husbandry. The local population speaks primarily Azerbaijani Turkic. The challenging natural conditions include cold winters and hot, dry summers. The area is prone to earthquakes. In 1991 one devastated the village, whose houses were mainly built of mud brick and clay.

Fig. 5. Mausoleum of Khan Öljeytu at Sultaniyya.

Photo 2010 courtesy of Daniel Waugh

Compared to other regions in northwestern Iran, Tashvir has attracted little attention from archaeologists. The first excavations there were by Ashā Khākpur in 1973, during which he mapped a construction which he later determined was a fire temple (Khākpur 1975, p. 44). More recently, excavations have been carried out by Arzollāh Nājafi (2007) and Abulfazl Aāli (2008). This archaeological work, and the survey in 2010 have been undertaken with the cooperation of the Cultural Heritage Organization of Zanjan and the Administration of Road Construction, since work on the Gilvan to Sorkhe Dizaj road posed a threat to the ancient remains.

This fortress is located at the geographical coordinates of UTM39s321762 and 4073960 and is 698 m above sea level. Situated where it provides a perfect view of the Tarom area, Pajadagh means literally "the lookout mountain," because the people of this area believe that it was used for as a military observation post. The architects and the builders clearly chose the location because of the favorable topography (Nourollahi 2010, p. 73). It is on a hill northwest of Tashvir, some 85 m above the village, and south of the Gilvan road [Figs. 6, 7 (next page)]. A steep path north of the village provides access to the site [Fig. 8]. From a distance one can see the impressive remains of the towers and walls built of stone and cemented with coarse

Fig. 6. View of Qal'a-e Pajadagh from the west.

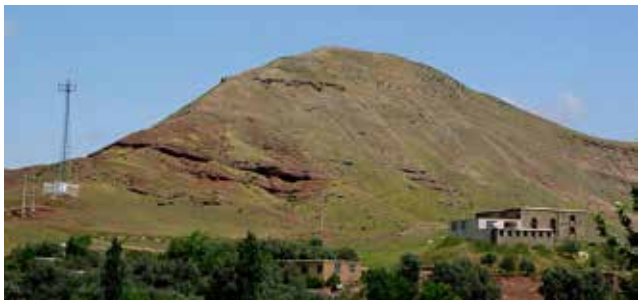
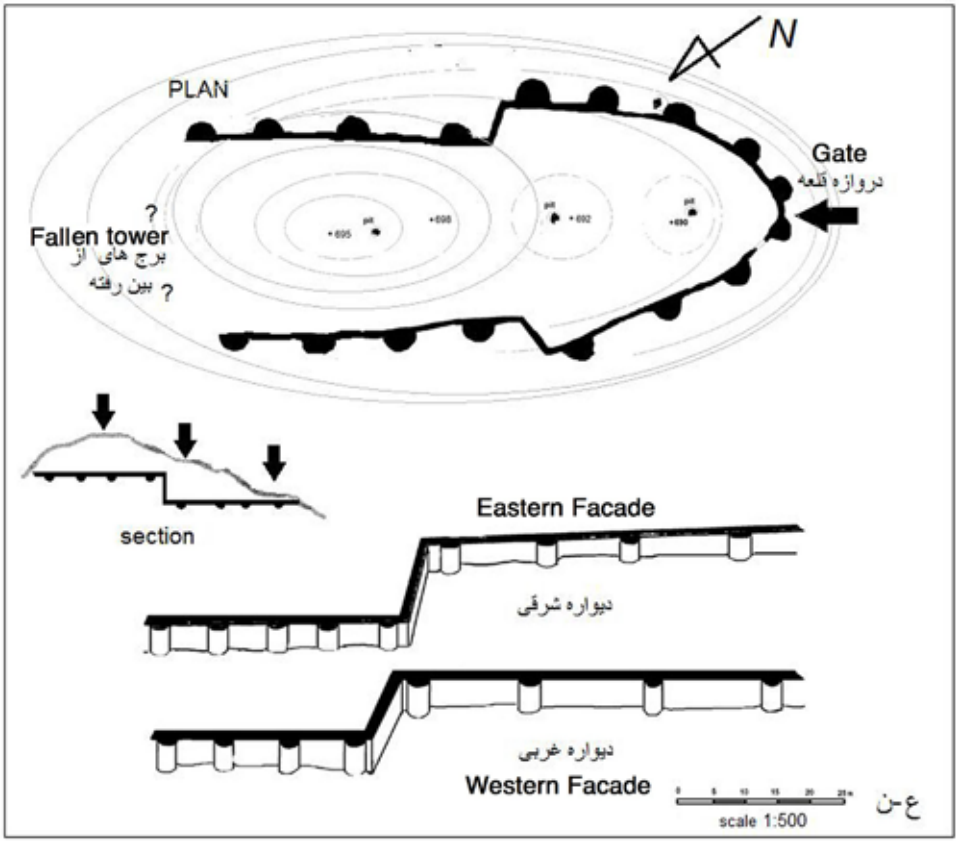


Fig. 7. View of Qal'a-e Pajadagh from the east.

Fig. 8. South façade and path leading up Qal'a-e Pajadagh.

Fig. 9. Topography, plan, and profile of Pajadagh fortress.



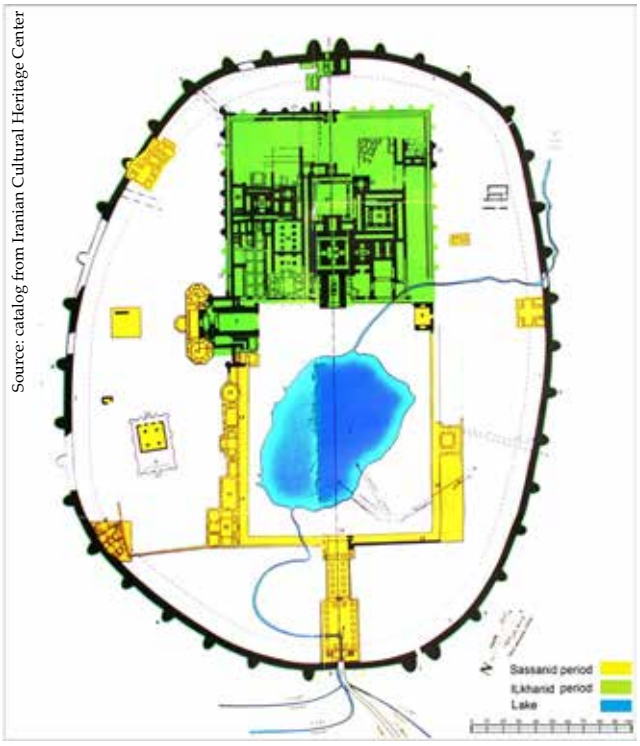


Fig. 10. Plan of Takht-i Suleiman.

gypsum. Huge blocks of stone were used in the foundations.

Architecture

Pajadagh seems to have been structured in three levels surrounded by the walls with semicircular towers [Fig. 9]. This method of fortress construction, using towers to protect the enclosed area, is also observable in Takht-i Suleiman [Figs. 10, 11 (next page)]. The first level on the south side of the fortress was probably the entrance. In this area a break can be seen in the wall which dates from the time of the destruction of the castle. Here it seems there are the remains of architectural elements which were destroyed during an earthquake in 1369 but left traces in the form of circular depressions [Fig. 12]. The second level has similar depressions indicating the locations of architectural

Photo 2010 courtesy of Daniel Waugh

Fig. 11. South wall and gate of Takht-i Suleiman, showing large Sasanian-era stone blocks and reconstructed tower.

Fig. 12. Depression in the southern part of the architectural remains.

Fig. 13. View of interior area of fortress.

Fig. 14. Masonry of the fortress walls.

elements which are no longer extant [Fig. 13]. The third and highest level likewise shows evidence of destruction. Above the stone foundations, the fortress seems to have been built using bricks and gypsum as the cement [Fig. 14], a technique that can be seen in Qal'a-e Dokhtar, in Fars Province [Fig. 15], and other castles of the late Arsacid and early Sasanian periods (Girshman 1991, p. 386).

Seventeen extant semicircular towers can be observed along the walls of Pajadagh. On the south side are the foundations of 8 solid towers built with small atones and coarse gypsum (as if the stones have been soaked in the cement). Four of the foundations are up to two meters high. The rest have been covered by the soil and project only slightly above the current surface. The architects were forced to build filled-in or solid towers to ensure that the walls were level and prevent settling of the walls. In the eastern part of the fortress are the remains of nine towers, five of which are intact up to 2.5 m. The walls and towers of this part of the fortress are better preserved than those in the other parts. Unfortunately, the foundations of some of the towers (for example, the second tower of the eastern wall) have been destroyed by unauthorized excavation [Fig. 16], possibly simply for quarrying of the building materials for modern uses.

Photo 2010 courtesy of Daniel Waugh

Fig. 15. A section of the remains of Qal'a-e Dokhtar.

Fig. 16. Pit from illegal excavation.

Fig. 17. A brick on the east side of fortress.

Fig. 18. A grinding stone found in the eastern sector.

The distance between the towers varies from 6.5 to 7.5 meters and the width of the walls of the towers is 2.70 to 3 meters. Where parts of the brick-faced walls have been preserved, they are from 1.5 to 2 m thick, filled with stone rubble. An exception is on the southern slope where the eastern and western walls of the fortress join and there are two towers only 2 m apart, which seem to mark the entrance to the fortress.

In the northern part (third level) which is the highest point of the fortress facing south, the distance between the towers on the southeast and northwest is about 20 m due to the steep incline. Here, to compensate for the steep south-facing slope and to create a logical relationship between the different parts of the structure, the architect of the fortress, has built a vertical wall. Overall, the fortress is symmetrical.

In general, we observe the use of large and small stones in the foundations and large bricks (measuring 49 x 26 x 12 cm) cemented by coarse gypsum for the upper part of the walls [Fig. 17]. The same is observable in Takht-i-Suleiman (Henning von der Osten and Naumann 2003, p. 75). The technique of facing walls with brick and filling the space in between with stone rubble is an old one that can be documented, for example, from the Arsarcid period (Colledge 2001, Fig. 41). Also this method was used in the palaces and the structures of the Al-Hazar Assyrian palace, in which narrow and wide stones have been used alternately (*Ibid*, pp. 121–24). Both plan and construction technique at Pajadagh seem to correlate most closely with Arsacid building and suggest that the founding of the fortress probably dates to that period, even though it was in continuous use through the Sasanian period and probably later as well.

Fig. 19. The potsherds.

Surface finds

On the eastern slope of this site are scattered ceramics, broken bricks, and a grinding stone [Fig. 18]. The ceramics [Table 1] include ones with buff temper, and others that are both glazed and unglazed [Figs. 19, 20 (next page)]. The wares include jugs, jugs with handles, buckets, and bowls having green, light blue and turquoise color glazes with raised and rope-form applique decorations. The buff-colored ceramics are wheel-thrown: on them can be seen ridges left by the wheels. Their exteriors have been smoothed with a knife or other metal object, although in some cases probably by a wet hand. In particular, the

Fig. 20. Schematic drawings of the potsherds.

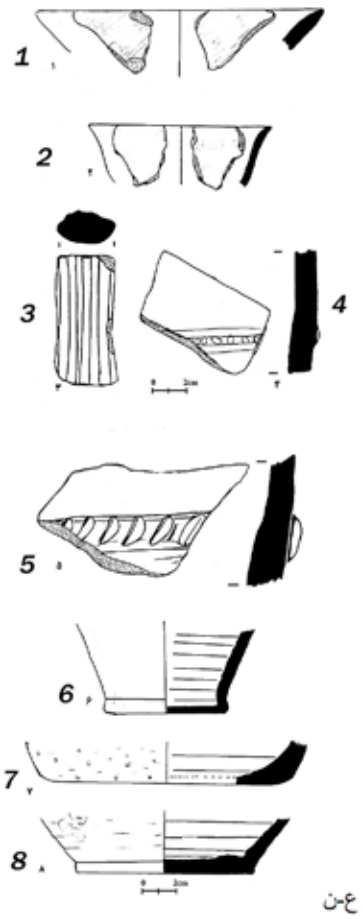


Table 1. Description of potsherds

Number	Description	Reference	Period
1	Rim of vessel. Glazed, Cream yellowish. Fine quality. Medium temperature. Decorated with green glaze inside and outside. Wheel made. Fine sand and straw temper.	Haerinck 1997, Fig. 17, design 1	late Arsacid; Sasanian
2	Rim of vessel. Glazed. Cream. Elegant quality. Medium temperature. Decorated with turquoise blue glaze inside and out. Wheel made. Sand temper.		late Arsacid; Sasanian
3	Handle of vessel. Buff. Rough quality. High temperature. Fine sand and straw temper.	Haerinck 1997, Fig. 8, design 8	Arsacid and Sasanian
4	Body of vessel. Buff. Rough quality. Low temperature. Decorated with embossed rope. Glaze: thick brown. Burnished. Wheel made. Fine sand and straw temper.		Arsacid and Sasanian
5	Body of vessel. Buff. Rough quality. Medium temperature. Rope decorated. Wheel made. Sand temper.	Kāmbakhsh'fard 2001, Fig. 16; Khosrozādeh and Aāli 2004, Fig. 12, design 8	Arsacids and Sasanian
6	Pan with a flat base. Buff. Medium quality. Medium temperature. Outside smoothed with a palette knife. Wheel made. Fine sand and straw temper.	Alizādeh 2003, Figs. 70, 71	
7	Flat pan. Buff. Medium quality. Low temperature. Wheel made. Sand temper.	Alizādeh 2003, Figs. 67, 69; Rāhbar 2003, p. 153, design 7	
8	Pan with flat base. Buff. Medium quality. Medium temperature. Wheel made. Tempered with coarse sand containing mica particles.	Rāhbar 2003, p. 152, design 33	

buff-colored wares are the large containers (buckets) and legs of some vessels.

Although the technique of glazing dates even earlier, during the Achaemenid and Arsacid periods glazed wares were very important, and there developed a wide range of colors: green, grey, white, azure and silver-white. The glazed wares collected at Pajadagh were mostly bowls with flat or outwardly curved edges and legged dishes glazed both inside and outside. In some cases only the inner surfaces of vessels were glazed. The color of the glaze of these vessels includes turquoise, pale blue and green, with some evidence of crackling. My analysis of these dishes suggests that uneven temperature during the firing produced both green and turquoise color on the same vessel: these parts which were exposed to higher temperature are turquoise and the parts exposed to lower temperature are green.

The ceramics collected from the site are comparable to those found at the Oltan fortress site in Ardabil (Alizādeh 2007, Figs. 67, 69, 70, 71), Madi fortress (Dej Madi) in Bistun (Alizādeh 2003, pp. 92–93), Qal'a-e Yazdigird (Keall and Keall 1981, Fig. 22) and the Khorhe Mahalat site (Rāhbar 2003, pp. 151–53), all of which belong to the Arsacid and Sasanian periods.

Conclusion

Constructed on the highlands of Pajadagh, the Tashvir fortress has a perfect view of the surrounding roads and landscape. Its location on the Zanjan-Khan Cha'e route made it an important observation point for connections to Gilan Province and the Sefid Rud (river). It served to protect buildings located in Tashvir village, among them a fire temple and other recently-discovered structures along the main road. One can at least hypothesize that the fortress was a key center for the administrator of this region beginning in the late Arsacid period and continuing into Islamic times, when the route through the area was part of the historic "silk road."

Our knowledge at present is limited to its plan and what is observable on the surface. While the designers must have planned structures for fodder storage and water reservoirs to enable the fortress to survive a siege, so far we have no evidence about such installations. Their documentation must await serious scholarly study of the site, whose cultural and strategic importance merit such an examination.

Acknowledgments

I am particularly grateful to Mr. Karim Nourollahi for valuable guidance and to Mrs. Aliloo for sketching the potsherds.

About the author

Ali Nourallahi received his undergraduate and graduate training at Tehran University and a PhD in the archaeology of the historical period from the University of Science and Research, Tehran. He has directed several seasons of survey and excavation in Ilam, Ardebil, Hamedan, and Zanjan provinces and participated in a number of other excavations. His fields of interest include ethno-archaeology and the period from the third millennium BCE to early Islamic times. E-mail: <alinorallahy@yahoo.com>.

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KHERMEN DENZH TOWN IN MONGOLIA

Nikolay N. Kradin, *Vladivostok*
Aleksandr L. Ivliev, *Vladivostok*
Ayudai Ochir, *Ulaanbaatar*
Lkhagvasuren Erdenebold, *Ulaanbaatar*
Sergei Vasiutin, *Kemerovo*
Svetlana Satantseva, *Vladivostok*
Evgenii V. Kovychev, *Chita*

The present article describes the results of field work undertaken at the Khitan town of Khermen Denzh in Mongolia in 2010–2012. This continues a series of publications about the excavations of Khitan sites (Kradin et al. 2005; Ochir et al. 2005; Kradin and Ivliev 2008, Kradin et al. 2011, 2014). The results which have been obtained are important for the study of urbanization amongst the nomads on the territory of Mongolia (Kiselev 1957, Perlee 1961, Danilov 2004, Rogers et al. 2005, Kradin 2008, Tkachev 2009, Waugh 2010 etc.).

The settlement site of Khermen Denzh is located on the shore of the Tuul River in Zaamar somon of Töv [Central] aimag in Mongolia [Fig. 1]. The site is the most striking of the Khitan fortified constructions in Mongolia; the walls, towers and moats of the town as well as its precisely chosen location make a vivid impression [Figs. 2 (below), 3-4 (next page)]. The town has been successfully positioned in the natural relief. On its western and eastern sides, ravines defend it; on the south it faces onto the right bank of the Tuul. It has an irregular trapezoidal shape where the longer sides that widen to the south are oriented SSW–NNE. Like many Khitan towns, the site is divided into northern and southern sectors, here with an interior wall separating them. The northern part is precisely laid out and is the highest part of the town. A variety of objects and two streets can be distinguished on its territory. The main street extends southward from the northern wall through an interior gate into the southern sector and up to an exit gate; the eastern street extends from the approximate center of the northern sector to the east [Fig. 5]. The length of the western wall is 534 m, the eastern 538 m, the northern 328 m and the interior wall 419 m. Little remains of the southern wall, which has been destroyed by the river. The northern, interior and, judging from its remaining parts, the southern walls are parallel and oriented precisely along the direction of latitude. The distance between the southwestern

Fig. 1 (upper left). Khermen Denzh – Google Earth picture.

Fig. 2. Khermen Denzh. View from the north.
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Fig. 3 (above). The main eastern wall, the ditch, the exterior wall and the eastern bastion. View from the north.

Fig. 4 (right). The main western wall. View from the south.

and southeastern extremities of the town is about 450 m. Approximately in the center of the southern wall is a gate which is flanked by towers. In that location on the wall is a Π-shaped projection into the town. Moreover, access to the gate was defended as well by the fact that attackers from the south could be fired upon from all sides. The entire perimeter of the wall measures 1926 m and encloses an area of about 20 hectares. The height of the wall varies from 4 to 10 m, its width is 2–6 m at the top and 25–30 m at the base. Along the exterior is a ditch. The wall was constructed by the tamped earth method (*hangtu* 夯土) in 15–20 cm layers, which can readily be discerned [Fig. 6]. In all probability, during the construction of the wall a wooden crib was erected which was filled with solidly compressed layers of earth. This then explains the good state of the wall's preservation. In some places on the northern and southern walls are charred bits of wood.

Fig. 5 (below). Map of Khermen Denzh, with the location of the excavation pits marked and numbered

Fig. 6 (right). The northern wall showing the rammed-earth construction. View from the west.

The town has seven towers which, like bastions, markedly project outward by 15 to 20 m and one small tower. Since the northern side is the more vulnerable, the largest number of towers is there—two at the corners and two in the center, in addition to the small tower [Fig. 2]. Approximately in the center of the wall between the towers is a break which was not evident in aerial photos made in the 1960s. According to the local inhabitants, the northern wall was broken through in the 1970s. On the western and eastern walls the towers are placed approximately where the wall that divides the town into its northern and southern sectors is located. In addition, there is a tower on the eastern wall located approximately in the middle of the wall's northern half. There is

no such tower on the west. It is possible that the explanation lies in the fact that a walled suburb was located adjacent to the town on that side. The length of the northern wall of the suburb is 790 m, its western side 560 m, and its southern 560– 640 m (part has not been preserved). There was also a suburb on the east which was not fortified. On the surface there are knolls and small parcels enclosed by walls (residences?) as well as a lot of ceramics.

In the vicinity of the town are also six sites which to a greater or lesser degree were connected with the main settlement. Five of them have Khitan ceramics and a sixth only ceramics from the Uighur period.

Fig. 8. Finds from Pit No. 5 at the passage on the north wall..

Description of the excavations

In 2005 the site was studied by a joint Mongolian-Dutch expedition (Pit No. 1). It uncovered remains of houses with *kang* (炕)-type heating ducts. The results of this excavation have not yet been published. In 2010–2012 the joint Russian-Mongolian expedition undertook excavations both within the town and in the adjoining area. During the first two years, Pit No. 2 was opened in the northern sector of the town along the main street. A trench was dug across the street to study the stratigraphy (Pit No. 2A). A third, small pit was opened in the southern part of the town along the edge of a walled square (presumably of a building that had been roofed with tiles) in order to study the stratigraphy and obtain tile remains (Pit No. 3). Yet another pit was opened outside the town to the east, that site named Khermen Denzh 2. That excavation uncovered a wall of baked brick and large scatters of Uighur-type ceramics.

Fig. 7. House in the southern sector of the town with the kang *heating system. View from the northeast.*

In 2012 we undertook a new excavation, Pit No. 4, and opened a trench in the southern sector of the town along the main street where on the surface could be seen the stones from residence kangs. The main street extends from north to south. West of it was excavated a residence with an L-shaped kang [Fig. 7]. The kang was made of stones, oriented first along a NS axis before it bends to the east. Its construction materials included pieces of tile and bricks. The kang was about 5 m long, exactly 1 m wide on the northern end, 80 cm in the middle and 70–75 cm at the south. Beyond where it bends to the east, it was sheathed with vertically placed flat stones. In addition, bricks and fragments of tiles were used for support. It is possible that the kang initially was П-shaped but then was re-built. On the exterior (southern) side of the house are vertical slabs which form the walls of the kang. From the south, the wall of the kang was srengthened with pieces of tile.

At the location of the break in the northern wall (the so-called "passage") a cut was made across the wall (Pit No. 5) measuring 12 x 1 m. In the lower horizons here were found traces of a wooden crib, which strengthened the city wall that was made using the Chinese tamped earth technique. In the compressed layers of the wall were Khitan ceramics, the fragment of a disk-shaped tile roofing end-cap, an arrow head, a hook, and animal bones [Fig. 8]. This material suggests that the wall was built in the Khitan period.

We preserved a large piece of wood for dendrochronological and radiocarbon analysis. The results of the latter presented us with a quandry, since the wood dated not to the Khitan but to the Uighur period. The

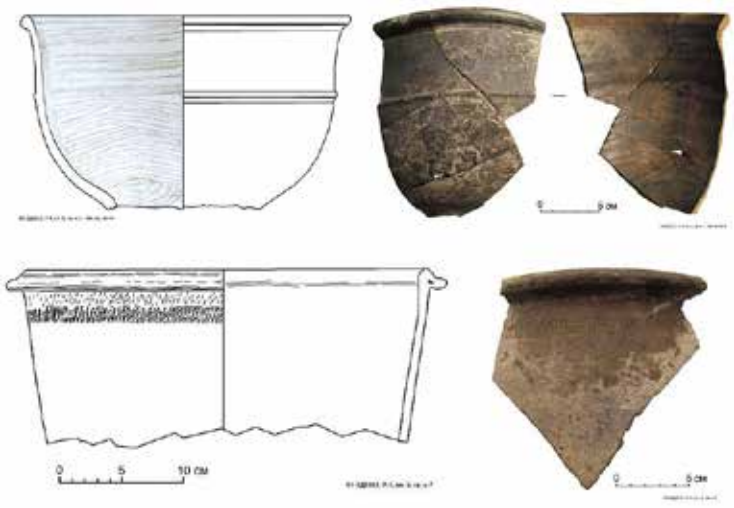

Fig. 9. Ceramics from Khermen Denzh.

data are as follows: Sampled ugams 17008: 1160±25, 68.2% probably 780 CE; 68.2%, 820 CE; 95.4% probably 765 CE; 94.5%, 840 AD; Agreement 106.3%. Thus the wood comes from the time of the Uighur kaghanate. It is possible that at some later point, due to the limited availability of wood in the steppe and the good preservation of this piece, the Khitans re-used it in building the new wall.

Material culture

The study of the site yielded a large quantity of artefacts, which can be grouped into several categories: ceramics, porcelain and glazed vessels, bricks, tiles, and wares made of stone, iron bronze and bone.

Ceramics constituted by far the largest part of the finds [Figs. 9–10]. All the vessels were wheel-thrown. Due to their poor preservation only some of the shapes can be determined, and then only partially. Among them are a vase, cauldrons, *Khitan* cooking pots, basins with ornament on the interior surface, a tub, cups, a spherical-shaped vessel, and dish-like vessels on six legs.

Fragments of clay cauldrons were found which copied metal spherical cauldrons, each with three legs. The neck is vertical; the widest part is a horizontal ring plate. Various fragments (rims, legs etc.) of more than ten cauldrons were found in Pit No. 4. The cauldrons were made of coarse clay tempered with sand and tiny bits of stone. The surface often is charred. The thickness of the walls is 0.7–1.4 cm, the diameter of the mouth 41–42 cm.

Two intact and some fragments of Khitan cooking pots were found in Pit No. 2. Their height is from 15.3 up to 21 cm. The pots were made of coarse clay tempered with sand. As a rule, the rims of such vessels are wide and thick with incised grooves on the lower part. Both on the rims and on the lower walls often is ornament in the form of triangles and the wedge-shaped impressions made by a wheel stamp. The diameter of the rims of these vessels is 23–30 cm.

In Pit No. 4 were two large fragments of basins whose body widens at the top. The rim is smoothly bent outward and polished. The diameter of the rims of these basins is 29 and 49 cm. A third basin from this same excavation is represented only by its lower part. On its exterior is a net-like design created with polishing. The diameter of its base is about 22 cm. In addition, Pit No. 4 yielded a tub, a cup and other types of ceramics. One notes in particular that in this pit (square F-7, level 6) was a fragment of a vessel with a horizontal handle, typical for Bohai ceramics (on this see Kradin and Ivliev 2008).

In Pit No. 5 a vase-shaped vessel was found at a depth of more than 100 cm from the surface. The vessel was in the compacted layers of earth of the town wall. Its color is light gray, with small bits of white stone. Its rim resembles half of a tube, curved outward [Fig. 8]. The neck is cylindrical but widens at the top. There is a stamp in the form of vertical wedges. The diameter of the rim is 22.8 cm and thickness of the walls 0.6–0.7 cm.

Of some interest is a spherical vessel, whose upper part has been preserved from the top down to the narrowing of the waist below the middle. The clay is black with small bits of white stone; the exterior surface is almost black. The thickness of the walls is 0.7–1.1 cm. The vessel has the shape of a sphere flattened from

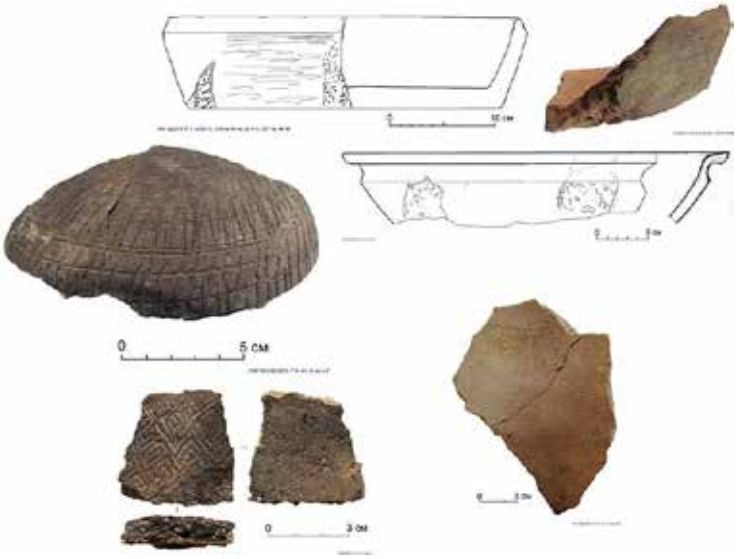

Fig. 10. Ceramics from Khermen Denzh.

Fig. 11. Uighur ceramics.

the top. The top of the sphere has been formed from flattened lump of clay. From the top of the vessel and extending downward on the surface are inscribed horizontal grooves, which if viewed in a plane form a spiral. Crossing the grooves are numerous slightly angled vertical lines impressed with a comb. The preserved part of the vessel is 7 cm high, its diameter 15.6 cm, and the thickness of its walls 0.7–1.1 cm. To a degree the decoration of this vessel has analogies in pre-Khitan ceramics found both within the town and in its environs. Also of interest is a vessel in the shape of a bowl on six legs. It has a flat bottom (the diameter about 30 cm) and sides that slope slightly outward. The legs have been attached to the walls, extending to their full height. There are traces of where the feet were connected. The internal color is brown, the external gray. The clay is tempered with small bits of white stone. The height of the vessel is about 8.5 cm. but the feet have not been preserved. The same kind of vesel, but with seven legs, was found in Pit No. 2.

All of these ceramics, except for the spherical vessel and vessels with feet, have direct analogies in the materials excavated at the town of Chingtolgoi Balgas and unquestionably date to the time of the Liao Empire (Kradin et al. 2011).

Uighur ceramics. This kind of ceramics includes fragments with specific traces of stamping which produced rounded protuberances 2–2.5 mm in diameter on the interior surface [Fig. 11]. In Pit No. 4 (square B-6, level 7) were found many fragments which we then glued together into a vessel. This was a basin with slightly inclined sides and a horizontal rim. The exterior is nearly black, the interior light gray. On the interior surface are small rounded protuberances. They can also be seen under a thin black layer of clay on the exterior. The height of the vessel is 16.5 cm, the diameter of the rim about 38 cm, the diameter of the base 22 cm. Also in Pit No. 4 on level 1 was a fragment of a vessel with rhomboid Uighur ornament. Such ceramics tell us that the Uighur population lived here up to the time of the appearance of the Khitans. However, we did not find in the large pits (Nos. 2 and 4) any separate undisturbed pre-Liao stratum. Most likely, those layers were completely destroyed by the Khitan construction.

Finds of *porcelain and glazed vessels* included the rim of a white porcelain cup about 20 cm in diameter, a fragment covered with green glaze and the fragment of a bottle covered with dark olive glaze.

Construction materials. Pieces of *bricks* were found. The width of the bricks was 15–17.5 cm and their thickness 5.5–7.5 cm. They differ from the bricks found at Chintolgoi Balgas. The local bricks were of two types, distinguished by their process of manufacture. The first type is characterized by the fact that on one of the wide sides has rectangular imprints filled with parallel grooves – impressions of a rope. On the other type is a crescent-shaped impression of a rope. Probably the bricks of this type were pressed by a roller bound with rope.

Both flat and convex *tiles* were found. The flat tile of Khermen Denzh has an even, oblique cut on the end. The clay is very dense, gray and uniform with no stones (interestingly the tile from Chintolgoi Balgas is tempered with large stones). The thickness of the tile is 2.0–2.7 cm. On the line of the cut along the sides are two pairs of holes. They are located 2.57 cm from the end. This is a typical technical feature for 10th-13th century tiles of East Asia. The convex tiles include a fragment with a "tail"— a step-shaped joint for connection with next tile on the roof. In cross-section, the shape of the tile is semi-circular. The diameter of the rounded section of the tile is 11.4 cm, the thickness of the walls 1.8 cm. On the inner side is the impression of fabric.

A fragment of a decoration for the ridge end of a roof (*chiwei* 鴟尾) was unearthed in Pit No. 4A. One side with a vertical shaft has been preserved. The clay is gray and uniform, but there is one stone 1 cm in diameter. The fragment measures 14.5 x 12 cm. Four fragments of roof end-disks were found, three of them in Pit No. 4 and one in No. 5. They are all decorated with a stylized lotus blossom. In the center is a large protruding round knob. The variation in the measurement of the details of the decoration are evidence that several different molds were used to create the design. The diameter of each disk is about

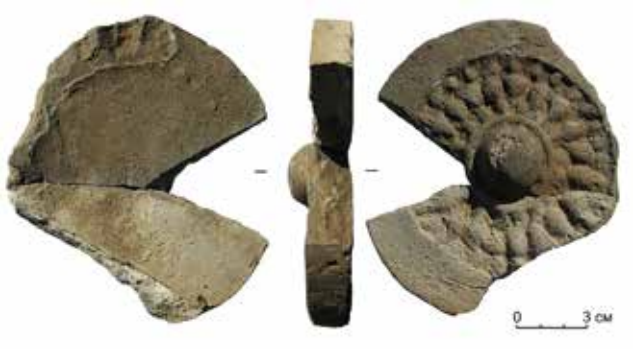

Fig. 12. A ceramic roof-end disk.

12 cm, the thickness 1.5–1.7 cm [Fig. 12]. Such disks are more characteristic for the period of the Tang Dynasty (7th–9th centuries); they are an anachronism for the Liao epoch. In Mongolia findings of such disks were reported in sites of Turkic period, particularly in Ungetu graveyard (Borovka 1927, p. 78; Voitov 1981).

Stone objects include fragments of a grinding mill, whose upper part is 30.5 cm. in diameter. Only part of a lower millstone has been preserved [Fig. 13]. It has parallel grooves on the working surface. Another stone artefact is a fragment of a weight made of light gray granite. There are several sharpening stones and also an obsidian bead [Fig. 15, next page].

Iron objects include a plowshare [Fig. 14], fragments of the walls and legs of iron kettles, nails and arrowheads [Figs. 13, 15]. Due to poor preservation, identifying many objects was impossible. The majority of the eight nails are four-sided forged ones whose head was formed by flattening and bending to the side of one of the ends.

Fig. 14. A ploughshare.

The length of such nails is 4–7 cm. The eighth nail, which has a square section, has a round flat cap and is 2.9 cm long. There are two arrowheads [Fig. 15]. One is chisel-shaped with a rectangular section, 5.5 cm long, 1.4 cm wide and 1.35 cm thick. The other has a rhomboid section and likewise has been broken. The length (when flattened out) is 6.3 cm, the width 1 cm, and thickness 0.6–0.7 cm.

The only *bronze object* is the inner core for a strap appliqué (Pit No. 4, square C-4, level 4) [Fig. 13]. This is a thin rectangular plate with four holes at the corners for securing it and with a rectangular slit in the lower

Fig. 13. Miscellaneous artefacts including a bone awl, a bronze strap applique, iron nails, a fragment of a grinding stone and bone cheek pieces.

part. It is 2.7 cm long, 2.4 cm wide and 0.1 cm thick. The slit measures 1.7 x 0.8 cm, and the diameter of the holes 1.5 mm. In addition to this, two Tang Dynasty *Kaiyuan tongbao* (開元通寶) coins (621 CE–early 10th century) and one Northern Song *Tianxi tongbao* (天禧通寶) coin (1017–1021 CE) were found.

Bone objects in Pit No. 4 included three fragments of chopsticks, two decorated astragali game pieces, the makings of cheek-pieces from horn, and a well polished bone awl [Fig. 13]. On the two astragali, the ornament resembles a net; an iron fastener has been attached; holes have been drilled in both of them. Undoubtedly they were used for games. Also for games were "chips," some 30 of them found [Fig. 15]. These are circular with diameters of 2.8–7.7 cm, made of sherds from the walls of vessels or from tiles. One of them has been made from the wall of a vessel with Uighur rhomboid ornament. A spindle weight shaped from a tile was found in Pit No. 4, its edge and surface carefully finished [Fig. 15]. Its diameter is 4.5 cm, thickness 1.7 cm and the diameter of the

Fig. 14. Miscellaneous artefacts including a bronze coin, an obsidian bead, arrowheads, an axle bushing, game chips and spindle weights.

hole 0.7–1 cm. Another spindle weight was made out of the epiphysis of a large tubular bone. Other finds worth noting include pieces of slag and fagments of birchbark.

Of particular interest was the find of a bone "tooth brush" in Pit No. 2. It has a handle with an oval cross-section and a somewhat wider functional head, whose surface is smooth. Along the head is a line of seven pairs of vertically drilled holes for bristles. The entire brush was carefully polished. On the end face of the head a deep hole has been drilled, which connects the lower ends of the vertical holes. The handle was broken, the length of what remains measuring 12.8 cm. Such brushes frequently were encountered in the excavations at Chintolgoi Balgas.

Discussion and Conclusion

The majority of the artefacts correspond entirely to those from other towns of the Liao Empire in Mongolia. Part of the ceramics can be dated to the Uighur period. Our excavations found such ceramics in both the northern and southern sectors of the town. It is possible that this is evidence indicating that the extent of the earlier Uighur site did not significantly differ from that of the later Khitan town. Moreover, next to the main town is located a site, Khermen Denzh 2 which we studied in 2010, where the ceramics are from the Uighur period. We were also surprised by the roof end-cap disks, which resemble those typical for the earlier Turkic or Uighur period in Mongolia.

Archaeological data now testify to a good many towns of the Uighur kaghanate on the territory of Mongolia (Danilov 2004, pp. 56–66). Two and a half km northeast of the town of Khermen Denzh is an elite burial, dating from the 7th century, the period between the first and second Turk kaghanates. It is the tomb of I Yao Yue, the vicegerent of the Pugu region. In the tomb is a stele with an inscription in Chinese indicating that I Yao Yue died at age 44 in 677 CE. He had the Chinese title *dudu* (都督 commander-in-chief) of the Jin Hui Zhou district, the commander of the Lin Zhun region (Ochir, Danilov et al., 2013, pp. 103–26).

We note as well that the fortification of Khermen Denzh town is not entirely the same as that of other Khitan towns in Mongolia. In a number of the features of the construction (the technology of the building of the rammed earth walls, the height of the walls, the shape of the frontal and corner towers) Khremen Denzh is very similar to Karabalgasun and other Uighur towns. This then leads us to think that at the moment of the appearance here of the Khitans, walls, towers and other fortified structures of an earlir Uighur town had been preserved. The Khitans might only have renewed them, and, having strengthened the walls, erected buildings in the style of Khitan-Liao architecture. This seems all the more likely since, according to Turkic runic inscriptions, on the River Tuul was located a Uighur town, Togu (Kradin, Ivliev, Vasiutin 2013).

In order to confirm this hypothesis, in 2012 we decided to excavate a trench across the wall. In the northern part is a place where the wall was destroyed in the 1970s. This was a suitable spot for excavation, since here it was not necessary to destroy the wall at the same time that it was possible to study the underlying strata. The trench was 12 m long and 1 m wide. We were greatly disappointed in the finds from this 12 x 1 m trench, which yielded only Khitan period artefacts — part of a pottery vase with Khitan ornament, an iron hook, etc. [Fig. 14]. The wall was constructed at the same time and on a location where already for same time the Khitans had lived, since in the wall were found Khitan ceramics and other artefacts.

However we were even more confused when we received the results of the radiocarbon analysis. The wood from the wooden crib within the wall dated to the early Uighur period. The wall itself had been built on the location of an earlier wall 1 m high and 1.7 m wide. However, we do not know what part of the earlier wall the Khitans destroyed and what part they left in place. But why did the Khitans repeat the fortifications of the earlier Uighur period? So far there is no answer to that question.

According to the *Liao shi*, in 994 the Liao army

undertook a campaign into Mongolia against the Zubu. The annals relate that a Khitan town was erected on the site of the Uighur town of Kedun. We believe that the town of Kedun was located where Khremen Denzh now is, not at Chintolgoi Balgas. In 1004, 20,000 Khitan horsemen were sent to this territory for military service; 700 families of Bohai, Jurchen and Chinese were assigned to supply them with food (*Liao Shi* 1958: 37: 13b, 14a). It was precisely then that the Zenzhou district of the Liao Empire was created (Kradin et al. 2011, p. 163). Our more detailed examination of the evidence regarding the identification of Kedun with Khermen Denzh will have to be the subject of another article.

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About the authors

Dr. **Nikolai N. Kradin** is a Professor at the Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnology of the Far Eastern Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and Head of the Department of World History, Archaeology, and Anthropology of the Far Eastern Federal University, Vladivostok. E-mail: <kradin@mail.ru>.

Dr. **Aleksandr L. Ivliev** is a Senior Research Fellow of the Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnology of the Far Eastern Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, E-mail: <ivliev@mail.primorye.ru>.

Dr. **Ayudai Ochir** is a Professor at the International Institute for the Study of Monadic Civilizations, Ulaanbaatar. E-mail: <nomciv@magicnet.mn>.

Dr. **Lkhagvasuren Erdenebold** is Associate Professor of the Mongolian Technical University. E-mail: <erdene_ethnology@yahoo.com>.

Dr. **Sergei Vasiutin** is a Professor and Head of the Department of Medieval History at the Kemerovo State University. E-mail: <vasutin2012@list.ru>.

Dr. **Svetlana Satantseva** is a Research Fellow of the Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnology of the Far Eastern Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences. E-mail: <sarantceva@mail.ru>.

Dr. **Evgenii V. Kovychev** is a Professor at the Transbaikal State University, Chita. E-mail: <kovychevevgenyi@mail.ru>.

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--Translated by Daniel C. Waugh

The Chinese Inscription on the Lacquerware Unearthed from Tomb 20, Gol Mod I Site, Mongolia

Chimiddorj Yeruul-Erdene
Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
Ikue Otani
Nara, Japan

The Mongolian-French joint archaeological expedition carried out excavation at the Gol Mod I site in Central Mongolia (Khairkhan sum, Arkhangai aimag) from 2000 to 2010. The Gol mod I site is a mortuary complex of the Xiongnu elite located in a valley on the northern side of the mountains. The site was discovered by Mongolian archaeologist Ts. Dorzhsüren who excavated 26 small circular (satellite) burials in 1956–1957 (Dorzhsüren 1958). Between 2000 and 2010, the Mongolian-French joint archaeological expedition excavated three elite tombs and fifteen satellite burials. Since 2014, a Mongolian-Monaco joint expedition has started to work at the Gol Mod I site. The topographic study of this site registered 483 Xiongnu tombs; 214 (44.3%) of these were aristocratic tombs with entrance passage and the other 269 were satellite and circle shaped burials [Yeruul-Erdene 2014]. Burial 20 is one of the largest and was completely excavated between 2001 and 2004-2005 [Yeruul-Erdene and Gantulga 2008]. The excavation uncovered a good many artefacts and provided new knowledge of burial structure. This article reports on a Chinese inscription carved on lacquerware found in the tomb.[1]

Fig. 1. Plan of Tomb No. 20 at Gol Mod I, showing location of finds, the arrow indicating the remains of the lacquerware and its rim.

The lacquerware was found in the space between the outer structure and coffin, near the short side of the coffin [Fig. 1]. The ware was

Fig. 2. The lacquerware fragments. On the left is most of Piece 1 (the first character not shown); on the right all of Piece 2. Note that the two pieces as shown here are not in the same scale.

broken into many pieces, only two of which (here referred to as Piece 1 and Piece 2) have a Chinese inscription [Fig. 2]. The Chinese character inscription was carved on the undersurface of the rim. The inscription is not conserved completely; the beginning of the sentence and some characters between Piece 1 and 2 are lost. Fig. 3 (next page) shows the individual characters and our identifications. In the analysis which follows, we identify each character as "Piece No._-Character No._"; the symbol □ marks where there is an indecipherable character; and square brackets [ ] mark a most probable character.

In our reading then, the inscription is:

Piece 1: ［紵］黄釦尺五寸旋永始元年 ［供］ 工二［武］造護臣［敬］□□

Piece 2: 掾臣［昌］主右丞臣□守令臣並省

From 1-1 to 1-7: This part of the sentence specifies the technical characteristics of this ware.

紵 *zhu*: *Zhu* is a cloth of hemp. In this case, it is supposed that lost upper character of *zhu* will be 夾 *jia*. *Zhujia* means pasting cloth on the wooden core of the ware. *Zhujia* is a technique to enhance its strength.

黄 *huang* 釦 *kou*: *Huang* is yellow, and *kou* means cover. *Huangkou* indicates that the rim of the ware was encased in gold (in fact, the metal is a gilded bronze). The bronze object found near the lacquerware has to be its rim [Fig. 1].

尺 *chi* 五 *wu* 寸 *cun*: This sentence expresses the size of the ware. *Chi* and *cun* are oriental linear mesuring units (on a decimal scale), and a character before the unit is the number. The character

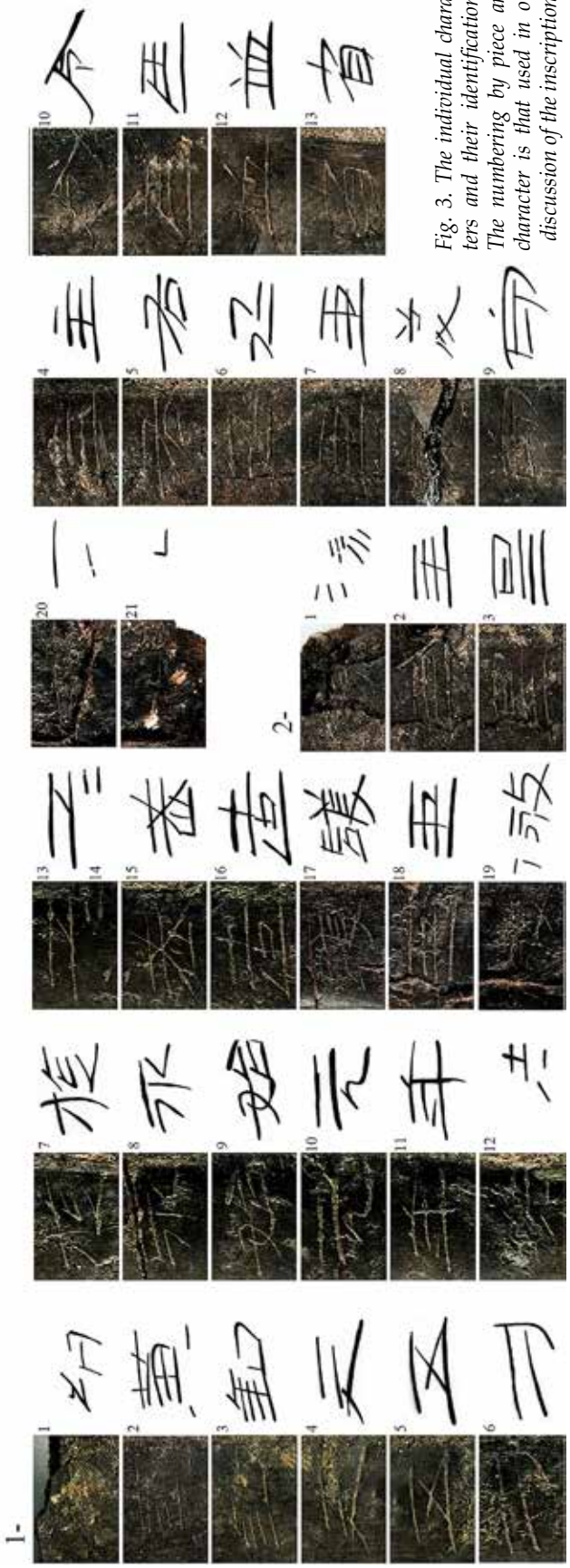


Fig. 3. The individual characters and their identifications. The numbering by piece and character is that used in our discussion of the inscription.

one has been omitted, but *wu* is five. We know the size (diameter) of this ware is 15 *cun*, i.e., 34.5 cm (1 *chi* is equal to 23 cm in the Western Han era).

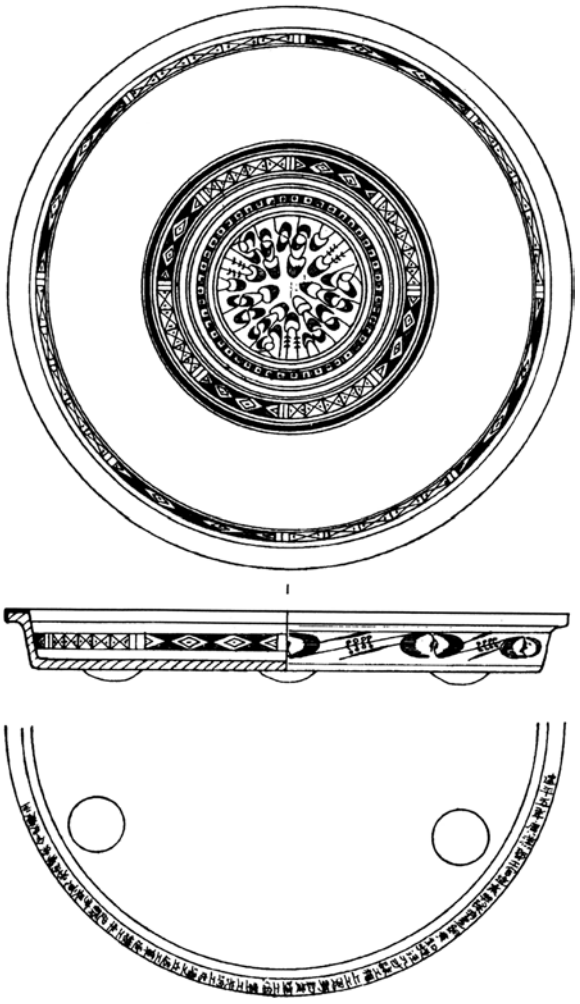
旋 *xuan*: *Xuan* is a kind of ware. There are two such known objects identified by their inscriptions as *xuan*, a round tray with feet. One of them was unearthed from Yaoziling Tomb No. 2, made at the West factory of *Shu* in 2 BCE. Yaoziling's ware resembles that of Gol Mod in its pattern painted in red [Fig. 4].

From 1-8 to 1-11: This part indicates the date of manufacture.

永 *yong* 始 *shi* 元 *yuan* 年 *nian*: The Western Han, the first year of the *yongshi* era is 16 BCE.

From 1-12 to 1-16: This part identifies the production factory and artisan.

Fig. 4. Xuan unearthed in Yaoziling Tomb No. 2 with inscription dated 2 BCE.



After: Hunan ICA and Yongzhou ZOPA 2001

供 *gong* 工 *gong*: *Gonggong*, the Imperial Workshop, is the name of a factory belonging to the central government which made many kinds of articles for the central government and royal court. This workshop was located in the palace of the Han dynasty at Chang'an (Xi'an), Shanxi province, China.

=武 *wu* 造 *zao*: =is a repetition mark referring to the previous character; so this is also *gong*, and it means "artisan". *Zao* is a verb meaning "produced." Inscriptions on products of central factories do not identify all the artisans involved in making an object; so this artisan *Wu* will be a representative craftsman.

From 1-17 to 2-13: This part records those responsible for quality control. Products of central factories were checked by officials, recorded in ascending order from the lowest to the highest in rank, those positions or functions being:

for the lower, production management stage: 護 *hu* (inspector) → 佐 *zuo* (assistant clerk) → 嗇夫 *sefu* (workshop overseer) → 令史 *lingshi* (head secretary) → 掾 *yuan* (executive officer)

for the upper, final inspection stage: 右丞 *youcheng* (deputy director of the right) → 令 *ling* (director)

Each person is recorded by this formula: "(his function) + (臣 *chen* ["your servant"]) + (name)". Following the last name in the list for each stage is a verb, either 主 *zhu* (supervised/managed) for the lower stage officials directly managing the production or 省 *xing* (inspected) for the upper stage officials responsible for inspection of the finished product. If the character 守 *shou* is added before the position title, it means the post is a temporary one which the given officer fills in addition to his regular duty.

So this sentence can read:

The Inspector your servant *Jing* 敬, … the Assistant Clerk your servant *Chang* 昌 supervised. The Deputy Director of the Right your servant [name] and Provisional Director your servant *Bing* 並 inspected.

This inscription has a gap in middle, but we can suppose that the missing part identified a lower stage official in a position between *zuo* and *lingshi*.

Conclusion

Through the reading of inscription, we knew this *xuan* tray was made in the *Gonggong* imperial workshop in 16 BCE. This is important as it is only the fifth absolutely dated object excavated from Xiongnu elite tombs in Mongolia and Transbaikalia.[2] Of course the date can be only a *terminus post quem* for the tomb but we can at least hypothesize regarding the circumstances in which the lacquered tray arrived in Mongolia. In 53 BCE the Xiongnu had agreed to a new kind of relationship with the Han Dynasty, at least in formal terms accepting the status of tributaries, in return for which the Han then frequently sent "gifts" to the Xiongnu ruler *Chanyu* 单于, often of substantial value. The date of 16 BCE falls in the Xiongnu reign of *Souxie* 搜諧若鞮单于 (20–12 BCE), who was succeeded by *Cheya* 車牙若鞮单于 (12–8 BCE). Since the lacquer *xuan* tray was made in the imperial workshop and thus was not an item that would normally have been available through simple commercial transactions, we might assume it formed part of the "tribute" gifts sent by the Han to Mongolia in one of the indicated reigns.

About the authors

Chimiddorj Yeruul-Erdene (Chimiddorzh Eröөl-Erdene) is a researcher of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, Institute of History and Archaeology. The excavations at Gol Mod I occupy an important place in the field work he has done over the years, and he has published extensively on Xiongnu archaeology. E-mail: <cheruulerd@yahoo.com>.

Ikue Otani, an associate fellow at Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties (Japan), has a particular interest in archaeological metalwork from the Han to the Tang era. E-mail: <ikueoht@nabunken.go.jp>. Bibliography with links to abstracts: <http://researchmap.jp/iotani/?lang=english>.

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Notes

1. The first report was written by Mönkhbayar and Yeruul-Erdene [2011]. Here we correct the preliminary reading.

2. Other lacquerware found in Xiongnu tombs include cups from Noyon Uul (The Hermitage Museum, Inv. № MR-2301 and National Museum of Mongolian History, Inv. № A-242), analyzed by Louis 2006-2007 and Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 2009; from Noyon Uul Tomb № 20, analyzed by Chistiakova 2009 and Polos'mak et al. 2011; Tsaram № 7 (Transbaikalia), analyzed by Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 2007. The reading of the inscription from Noyon Uul Tomb № 20 offered by Chistiakova 2009 and Polos'mak et al. 2001 is not entirely accurate. This ware was made in the Kaogong central factory; so the order of inspectors must be same as Gonggong central factory. Following the listing of the lower-level inspectors should be the verb *zhu* 主 (supervised/ managed). The inscription reads:

乘輿, 髹 洧畫木黃耳一升十六籥棓, 元延四年, 考工二通繕, 洧工憲, 守佐臣文, 嗇夫臣勳, 掾臣文主, 右丞臣光, 令臣譚省.

For more information about the Han dynasty's lacquer production, see Wang 1982 and Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 1982.

The Ancient Tamga-Signs of Southeast Kazakhstan and Their Owners: The Route from East to West in the 2nd Century BCE – 2nd Century CE

Alexei E. Rogozhinskii
Kazakh Research Institute of Culture, Astana
Sergey A. Yatsenko
Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow

In November 2014 one of the authors of this article, Alexei Rogozhinskii, discovered in the Chu-Ili Mountains in the Jetysu (Semirech'e) Region of southeastern Kazakhstan approximately 250 km west of Almaty a new series of unusual petroglyphs. The following May, co-author Sergey Yatsenko also was able to examine them.

The petroglyphs of this series consist of depictions of local wild animals, the targets of hunting by archers depicted with dogs or various predators.[1] Sometimes these are fantastic creatures; in the scenes where we see them or ungulates, the animals stand quietly. This is a masculine world where we see the hunters or warriors and associated male animals. Such scenes often are accompanied by depictions of tamga (nishan) clan signs. Both the animals and the signs in each composition have been made with the same instrument and are equally covered by a patina ("a desert tan"). Moreover, the tamga-signs clearly were an original part of the composition, well integrated into it. These petroglyphs have been created in a distinct style which has been noticed recently in the Jetysu region (Rogozhinskii et al. 2004, pp. 56, 73–74, 83) but never been described in detail by students of rock art in Kazakhstan and which might provisionally be called the "post-Saka style," since the animals are similar to earlier ones of nomads of the late Saka-Scythian period of the 5th–3rd centuries BCE.[2] But this style has many differences from that of the Jetysu Sakas of this time. Even though the list of subjects remains as before, the petroglyphs of this type include a series of unique motifs and images. Petroglyphs of this style can be tentatively dated to the period after the mid-2nd century BCE, when the local Sakas had lost their independence and new and stronger nomadic tribes from the east had appeared in that region. Moreover, the Sakas had not used tamga-signs.

In what follows, we will analyze for the first time this previously unknown complex of impressive depictions in an, as yet, little-known style in the context of a very interesting series of heraldic and property signs. These observations enable one to identify the ethno-political affiliation of the owners of such tamga-signs as evidenced in the written sources. The analogies to these newly discovered signs — both synchronic in the 2nd–1st centuries BCE and later, in the 1st–3rd centuries CE — take us farther west, which indicates the direction of the later migration of their owners to western Kazakhstan and eventually to the European steppes (southern Russia and Ukraine).

The natural conditions and traditional economy of the inhabitants of the Chu-Ili Mountains.

The petroglyphs examined here were found in the central part of the Chu-Ili Mountains, which form the western boundary of the region termed the Jetysu in Kazakh and Semirech'e (= "Seven Rivers") in Russian, a distinct natural and historical zone in southeastern Kazakhstan [Fig. 1, next page]. Current ideas about the extent of this territory formed in the second half of the 19th century: it is situated between Lakes Balkhash, Sarykol and Alakol and the Jungarian Alatau Mountains on the east and the Chu-Ili Mountains on the west. This is the territory of the modern Almaty Region (*oblast'*) and part of the Zhambyl Region. The largest river of Semirech'e is the Ili, which flows from Xinjiang and divides the entire region into western and eastern parts. The Chu-Ili Mountains extend about 200 km in a SE–NW direction and are part of the northern Tian Shan Mountain system. These are low mountains (the highest of them, Anyrakai is 1183 m), which form the boundary between the Ili and Chu River valleys (Erofeeva 2011, pp. 13–14).

This is a semi-desert zone with a harsh continental climate: the air temperature fluctuates over a range of 79° C, and precipitation averages some 200 mm a year.

Fig. 1. The locations named in this article: 1 – Karakabak Gorge (Mangystau Montains); 2 – Bayte III temple (Ustiurt Plateau); 3 – Bironsai Gorge (Nurata Mountains); 4 – Sidak sanctuary; 5 – Kemer Range (Karatau Mountains); 6 – Sholakzhideli Gorge (Khantau Mountains); 7 – Akkol Valley; 8 – Tamgaly Gorge; 9 – Issyk barrow; 10 – Eshkiolmes Range (Dzhungar Mountains); 11 – Tokrau Valley (Zheltau Mountains); 12 – Tomar Valley (Tarbagatai Mountains); 13 – Berel; 14 – Pazyryk; 15 – Shiv-et-Khairkhan; 16 – Tsagaan Salaa and Baga Oigor.

Deserts abut upon these mountains. Nonetheless, the list of plants and animals to be found there is quite varied. Several of the rivers of the Chu-Ili Mountains (the Kopa, Kopaly, Aschisu, Zhyngyldy, Chokpar and Sarybulak) continue to flow through the summer months. The lesser rivers frequently dry up by the beginning of the summer, when it is necessary to use wells and rivers in which the water has higher salinity. The river valleys are V-shaped where they cut through the line of the hills, with steep protrusions of cliffs, and often form canyons extending over a long distance (Erofeeva et al. 2008, pp. 44-47).

In the central part of the Chu-Ili Mountains the river valleys are oriented to the north and have wide upper reaches; the river channels have many branching streams which invite extended habitation, the establishment of nomad settlements and creation next to them of numerous petroglyphs. The valley floors are flat, with tall grasses and are suitable for animal husbandry. The low hills between river valleys during the winter are covered with only a thin blanket of snow and were good winter pastures for large herds of horses and sheep. In summer the pastures and camping sites were 50–100 km south of the slopes of the high Zailiiskii (Trans-Ili) Alatau Mountains. This territory of nomadic pastoralism traditionally was the location of seasonal (usually winter) camps of the herders. (Today, when traditional nomadism has disappeared, it is a sparsely populated region with a population density of less than one person per square km.) The landscape and geographic position of the Chu-Ili Mountains made them since the late Bronze Age a zone of "pure" nomadism and specialized herding, and the neighboring zones along the foot of the high mountains of the Zailiiskii Alatau and Jungarian Alatau and the valleys of the major Chu and Ili Rivers were usually areas of settlement and later of developed urban culture.

This region was of great significance in the system of commercial communications of Inner Asia. In various historical periods here, on the edge of the impenetrable deserts, there were routes leading from Transoxiana to the upper reaches of the Ili River (in northwestern Xinjiang) and to China and also along Lake Balkhash to sources of metals in the Altai Mountains and beyond to southern Siberia and Mongolia. In the 8th and 9th centuries their control over this region enabled the Turgesh and Karluk Turks to acquire economic and military-political dominance over the neighboring nomads. Here in the 17th and 18th centuries ran the Great Kalmyk Road from Tibet and from the residence of the Jungar khans to the Kalmyks of the lower Volga River.

The petroglyphs of the Chu-Ili Mountains constitute a unique "chronicle" of the history of the migrations and cultural connections of various groups of nomads in Inner Asia.

Petroglyph groups in the center of the Chu-Ili Mountains

The archaeological investigation of the western Jetysu began already in the late 19th century. In the 20th century many petroglyph sites were discovered and in varying degrees studied, the best known of which being the Tamgaly complex (listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site since 2004) (Rogozhinskii 2011). However until recently, studies have focused along the boundaries of the Chu-Ili Mountains, and their central region has remained completely unknown. Alexei Rogozhinskii began systematic archaeological surveys here starting in 2007 as part of several projects

Fig. 2. The map of archaeological sites in the central part of the Chu-Ili Mountains: A – the main river valley; B-C – upper (tributary) valleys; S 1-3 – the necropolises; I-III the main assemblages of petroglyphs.

supported by the Kazakh Institute on Nomad Cultural Heritage Problems in Almaty.

The petroglyph complex with tamga-signs of interest to us here was found in the upper reaches of one of the major rivers of the Chu-Ili Mountains. This region is of difficult access, since it is located far from main auto roads and for more than two decades for various reasons has seen little habitation. During these years the ecological niche once occupied by pastoral herding has again been taken over by a growing population of wild animals, among them deer, goats, sheep, wolves, foxes and hares, which attracts hunters to the area. The administration of the Almaty Region so far has not undertaken measures to protect this unique natural and archaeological landscape. Therefore, in the interest of preserving this heritage, the authors of this article have deliberately not indicated the precise location of this discovery (it is absent in Fig. 1), so as not to facilitate unwittingly its destruction by hunters and picknickers. The provisional designation for the geographic objects is A for the valley of the main river and B and C for its tributaries [Fig. 2].

The two parallel valleys of the small rivers B and C are about 3 km long and, where they join at the foot of a tectonic uplift form valley A, which further down has the appearance of a shallow canyon and cuts through a mountain massif with many twists and turns over its entire length of more than 15 km. At the point where tributaries B and C meet, valley C bends 45° and broadens to 70–100 m. Here its left edge is low but the right steep (45–60°) and high (25–40 m), with a great many projecting cliffs. The main massif is composed of shales and above them of Devonian sandstones. The large flat surfaces of the cliffs are covered with a patina. The petroglyphs usually were created on them, but less commonly the images are to be found on the surfaces of the shales which lack the patina.

Besides the petroglyphs, there are other kinds of features here which relate to various historical periods from the Late Bronze Age up to the 20th century. So far there have been no excavations here, only surveys, but many of the seasonal camps have yielded fragments of pottery and other artifacts which allow one provisionally to date the sites (at many of the multi-layer settlements, at least to establish the most recent period of their existence). The detailed mapping of the monuments of all types allows one to establish the characteristics of the archaeological landscape. In the canyons of valleys B and C over a distance of 15 and 10 km respectively are many ruins of nomad winter camps from all periods (in valley B more than 20 have been located). The high concentration of similar sites delimits the main zone of extended habitation.

Next to each camp is a small concentration of petroglyphs from various periods (ranging from a few images up to 100–200), among them inscriptions and more than 40 tamgas (including Early Turkic, Mongolian/Jungarian of the 17th–18th centuries and Kazakh of the 19th and early 20th centuries). A distinct group of petroglyphs consists of images of different ages and quality of execution on the lower parts of the cliffs alongside the paths used by horsemen which run along the floor of the canyons and connect the settlement sites, and also on the shore at locations for the watering of herds.

In canyon A, there are many smooth surfaces of the cliffs suited for the inscribing of petroglyphs. Yet they are but rarely found here — only along the paths used by horsemen. Likewise, there are very few settlement sites and necropolises. In contrast, in the small elevations at the mouths of tributaries B and C are concentrations of cemeteries of various periods and large settlements, and on the right bank are several assemblages of petroglyphs. Located here are two large cemeteries of the Early Iron Age, in each of which are about 20 barrows. In one of them (S-3) are as well several Bronze Age graves, and at a certain distance to the southwest one finds Early Turkic ritual rectangular stone fences. Small cemeteries containing 3–5 barrows are located close to the places where there is a concentration of petroglyphs.

The three main assemblages of petroglyphs, sites I-III, are located each about 500 m from the other. To the right side of valley A are few petroglyphs, though it is precisely there that where one finds are a great many broad smooth surfaces on the cliffs suitable for inscribing images. (In this zone the drawings are connected with the important locations of traditional communications — on the bends, descents and ascents of the paths for horsemen and the driving of cattle; a small series of engravings of various periods are to

Fig. 3. Petroglyphs assemblage II with the paper silhouettes of the main animal images in "Post-Saka style", summer 2015.

be found at the summit of hills in places where cattle were pastured.)

In general, the system of the siting of these petroglyphs and other features which we have described in this landscape is one common for the Chu-Ili Mountains and has been thoroughly studied for other parts of the Jetysu Region and connected with the traditional system of land use and rhythm of nomadic life (Rogozhinskii et al. 2004, pp. 45–94; Erofeeva 2011, p. 171–78). But one series of the engravings of the Early Iron Age has distinctive features and is concentrated in the landscape in a fundamentally different fashion.

The scenes with "post-Saka style" petroglyphs and tamga-signs

The petroglyphs of interest to us are concentrated in assemblages I-III. The overall number of the petroglyphs of the given series (including the tamgas) is more than 130, of which 80% are concentrated in the main assemblages (in I—35 images; in II—27; in III—33) and nearby (10 images). Outside of them is one incomplete depiction of a wild animal in the hill zone, two scenes near the path between assemblages II and III (where tributary B enters the canyon of A) and one composition in valley A not far from assemblage III. Within the boundaries of the zone of habitation of the camps, in valleys B and C, such carvings are to be found only at 4–5 locations, and altogether some 10–20 drawings in each valley.

The distinguishing feature of the petroglyphs of the series under discussion is the very large dimensions of the figures: for example, in assemblage II, the size of the figures is in the range of 28-35, 45-60 and 77-85 cm, and the largest of them measures 105 cm. The petroglyphs of assemblages I and III have similar parameters.

Assemblage II. The unique feature of this series of petroglyphs is the predominance in assemblage II of large individual figures, which are positioned on various levels of the cliffs. This is so distinctive, that in each assemblage isolated figures or small groups of drawings have been placed on surfaces which are oriented so that at some distance from the cliffs they create a focal point for optimal visibility, a zone where all the petroglyphs can be seen simultaneously. Alexei Rogozhinskii had previously detected a similar principle of the distribution of a synchronic series of petroglyphs of the Bronze Age at the Tamgaly site (Rogozhinskii 2011).

In the summer of 2015 in assemblage II in the Chu-Ili Mountains he organized an experiment with paper copies of the depictions of the figures. These white paper silhouettes which stood out against the cliffs were attached to them over the actual images by wetting the paper [Fig. 3]. They helped reconstruct the visual effect which would have been seen in early times before the images darkened and became indistinguishable from the surrounding cliffs. The paper silhouettes were selectively attached to the largest and smallest figures on the main surfaces. The visual effect was observed from various viewpoints in the given location. The optimal vantage point (where simultaneously all of the petroglyphs were within the field of vision and could easily be made out) was, as it turns out, on the same right bank of the valley, 30–50 m from the base of the cliffs.

This experiment made it possible to determine the principle underlying the distribution of the petroglyphs: when viewed from a specific point, the separate images, located at some distance from one another, were visually united into a meaningful group and together formed a single composition against the background of the hill (from the vantage point, this hill has a shape resembling that of a pyramid). We see three levels of depictions. The lowest level is a row of predators (tiger, panther, wolf and bear [?]),

Fig. 4. Assemblage I with the petroglyphs of "Post-Saka style."

arranged from bottom up and from right to left. The middle level is a horizontal row of images of the wild mountain goat (Capricorn) and sheep surrounded by wolves. The highest level has the isolated and largest figure of a wild goat. The experiment showed that the large size of the petroglyphs of this series and their positioning in assemblage II were essential in order to create an image row constructed according to a single concept. In all probability, this same principle in the display of the rock art underlay the creation of the image row of the two other petroglyph assemblages I and III, among which were also tamga-signs of Late Antiquity.

Assemblage I is distinguished from the other two by having the largest concentration of petroglyphs of different periods, which occupy almost all of the convenient surfaces of the cliffs with varying kinds of display. The inscribed images of the given series are distributed on vertical and sloping surfaces in the middle part of the massif, with a single orientation, facing frontally toward the valley [Fig. 4]. Many images have been incised over older ones, and then in turn at some later time were subjected to restoration or the addition of new details. To a degree this helps to establish the relative age of the whole series of engravings at the same time that it creates some problems.

The central section that we would propose embodies the meaning of the assemblage is composed of three parts, analogous to a triptych created on contiguous surfaces of a large projection of the cliff. The widest vertical surface is almost entirely occupied by large images of alternating wild animals: from bottom to top: two goats (male and female) and a camel, facing left; confronted goats; and two standing male goats facing left. Above the upper one is the complex Tamga-sign No. 1, 10 x 25 cm in size [Fig. 5.1-2]. The figure of a wild animal (43 cm) is shown pierced by two feathered arrows. Both lower animals also have been pierced in the spine by arrows. The petroglyphs of this series cover earlier drawings made in a different style and with different parameters (analogous images are known from Tamgaly and have been dated to the Late Bronze Age) (Ibid., pp. 192–94, Fig. 155.1-3, 6). The uppermost image of a goat has been inscribed over the silhouette of a feline predator. All the figures, including the tamga, seem to have been carefully "restored" by abrading in the Middle Ages, judging from the color of the patina.

3–after Samashev et al. 2007

Tamga-sign No. 1 is very unusual, in that it comprises three different signs connected at their ends. The central sign is S-shaped; the two side ones resemble one another (presumably indicating related clans). Most likely such an unusual combined sign symbolizes kinship or military union of the three clans. An identical sign is on a cliff in Karakabak Canyon in the Mangystau Mountains of western Kazakhstan, where even the slope of the signs from left to right on that image has the same angle [Fig. 5.3]. While the flanking signs have no precise analogues,[3] the central sign

Fig. 5. The semantic center of assemblage I: 1-2 – male goat image and Tamga-sign No. 1; 3 – the sign's analogy (Karakabak Canyon, Mangystau Mountains).

Fig. 6. The upper focal point of the "Post-Saka style" petroglyphs in assemblage I: the incomplete male goat with tamga-sign No. 2.

(apparently the most prestigious among the three) is widely known. At the turn of the era it was depicted on the coins of Chorasmia [Fig. 7.1, No. 6]; in the 1st century CE it was the sign of an aristocratic clan of the Alans from the lower Don River, and its owners were among the most politically active in Sarmatia (Yatsenko 2001a, pp. 85–87, Figs. 1.1, 5.44, 8, 10, 19.6).

The inclined second surface of the "triptych" depicts on its upper part two male goats, turned toward the right. The lower figure probably is unfinished. The drawing partially covers a small figure of a male goat from the early Saka period (the 7th–5th centuries BCE).

The third inclined surface rises above the others and, in general, above the remaining surfaces with petroglyphs of the given series which have been preserved in assemblage I. The surface is split by a deep crack, which opened after the petroglyphs had been inscribed. The bottom and middle register of the cliff is occupied by images of wild animals of the Late Bronze and Early Saka times which are superimposed over one another. Here is an unfinished image of a male goat analogous to the drawings of the series on the lower slabs. In the upper part of the composition is a large (40 cm) image of a male goat on the background of whose unfinished silhouette is the very precisely imprinted Tamga No. 2 (15 x 16 cm) [Fig. 6.1-2]. The back legs of the animal cover a small depiction of a male goat drawn in the Early Saka style.

The spread of Sign No. 2 in the Iranian nomadic world graphically reflects the migration of a number of ethnic groups westwards. At the same time, in the 2nd–1st centuries BCE, an identical sign is found on coins of the Chorasmian kings [Fig. 7.1], and in the Early and Middle Sarmatian graffiti on the walls of the temple at Bayte III (Ustiurt Plateau in western Kazakhstan) (see, first of all: Olkhovskii and Yatsenko 2000; Yatsenko 2005) [Fig. 7.2].[4] In the 1st–2nd centuries CE we see it on the famous stone lion sculpture No. 2 from a barrow near Olbia (Drachuk 1975, Pl. VII, No. 503; Yatsenko 2001a, p. 67). A related sign, very close in shape (the lower arc slopes to the left, not the right) is in the Sarmatian cave sanctuary Ak-Kaia I on the sacred rock Ak-Kaia in the eastern Crimea where the signs date to the 1st–early 2nd centuries CE (Solomonik 1959, pp. 113–17, No. 57; Yatsenko 2001a, p. 69) [Fig. 6.3]. It is important to stress that in all cases where such signs in Kazakhstan or Ukraine are placed within a group (which is the result of combined action of several clans: Yatsenko 2001a, pp. 64–65, 80–81), they occupy the position of honor in the center of the composition [Fig. 6.2-3].

Among the other petroglyphs of the given series which are located on the same level of the massif to the right of the

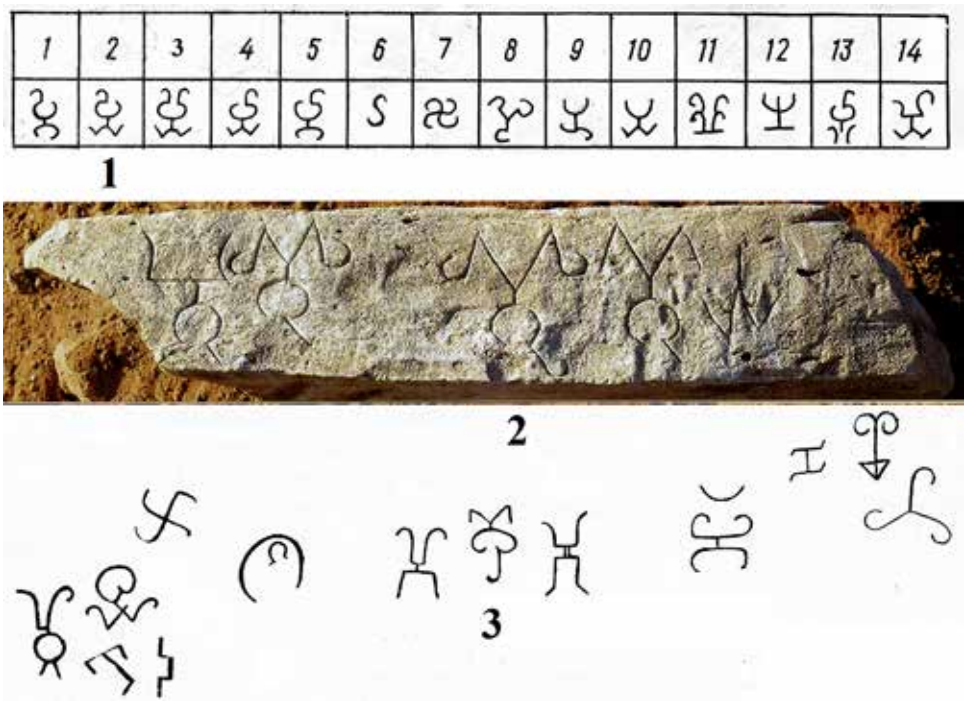


Fig. 7. The analogies for Sign No. 2 on Fig. 6: 1 – the kings' signs of Chorasmia / Kwarezm on coins, ca. 2nd century BCE – 1st century CE (after Vainberg 1977); 2 – the stone slab from Bayte III temple walls (the NW Ustiurt Plateau), the signs of later visitors, ca. 2nd century BCE – 1st century CE; 3 – Ak-Kaia I cave Sarmatian sanctuary in Ak-Kaia sacred mountain, Eastern Crimea, mid-1st – mid-2nd centuries. CE (after Solomonik 1959, No. 57).

Fig. 8. The scene from assemblage I: male goats, the medieval images of camel and goat (on the left) and Tamga No 3 in the upper part.

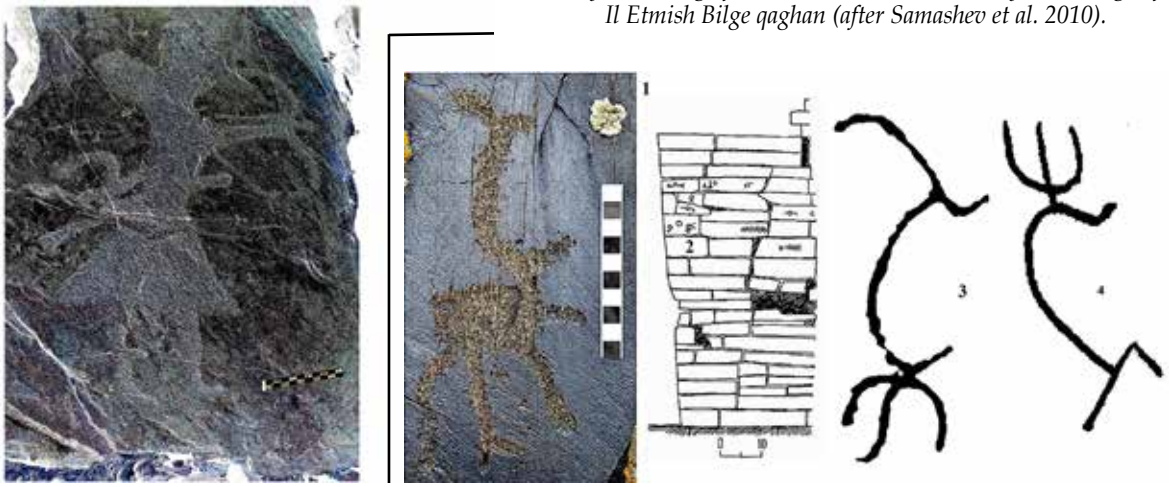
"triptych" is the important scene of an attack by a wolf on a male goat and separate images of ungulates, which in their details correspond with the incised images in assemblage II. The severely damaged lower level of the massif retains several surfaces with drawings in this series. On one of them, apart from a medieval camel and goat, again depictions of male goats repeat, between which is Tamga No. 3 in the shape of a comb with four short teeth on the bottom and a vertical line at the top (between the second and third "teeth"), from which extend symmetrically to the sides arc-shaped branches. From the left element extending upwards is yet one more short bent line. Probably the right part of the sign had the same shape, but that area had some later "restoration" [Fig. 8]. Tamga No. 3 is probably one of the most important in our collection. We know only one identical sign in the Eurasia of that time, on coins of the early Kushan Empire (Ibid., Fig. 28.101). It is connected with the Yuezhi elite. Of interest in connection with this is the fact that the series of petroglyphs of the "post-Saka type" in the Chu-Ili Mountains include a composition with a typical archer in Yezhi/Kushan costume (Yatsenko 2001b; 2006, pp. 170–87, Figs. 110–134) [Fig. 9].

Fig. 9. The archer with costume of Yuezhi-Kushan type in a petroglyph composition of "Post-Saka style," Chu-Ili Mountains.

On the nearby surfaces is a series of other tamga-type images: in the shape of the print of a horse's hoof, another with two concentric circles, and a short line with a bent end. Unfortunately these signs exist in isolation from the petroglyphs of the series under review here; hence their identification remains problematic.

Assemblage III has yet another group of surfaces with very large (70–80 cm) images of wild animals (bulls, male goats and wolves) and anthropomorphic figures. They form several panneaux oriented to the south and can be made out from the opposite side of valley A. Here is Tamga No. 4 (22 x 10 cm), which has a complex shape [Fig. 10.1], but it is inscribed on a slab

Fig. 10. Tamga-sign No. 4 from assemblage III and its incorrect analogies: 1 – Tamga-sign No. 5; 2 – Bayte III temple; 3 – the Early Turkic sign from Akkol Lake; 4 – the Early Turkic sign of Il Etmish Bilge qaghan (after Samashev et al. 2010).



of the cliff oriented westward, in the direction of the canyon. It is unique and has only distant analogues [Fig. 10.2-4].

The neighboring surface is oriented similarly, on which at the top is a scene with wolves and male goats in the style of the series being studied, and below, an Early Turkic figure of a mounted standard bearer. None of these petrogryphs can be seen from the valley.

Outside of this system of compositions are two isolated surfaces with drawings in the same style, which are located next to the path between assemblages II and III. One of them is a palimpsest, in which outline drawings of two male goats have been superimposed on drawings from the Bronze Age. Lines crossing the trunk of one of them create a complicated design. On the second surface, oriented southeast, are two isolated groups of individuals. On the left sits a front-facing anthropomorphic figure in a distinct pose with legs widely spread apart. Pointing down between the legs is a triangular projection (a phallus?). In the hands of the person is a bow, from which he shoots at the male goat. On the left above the figure of the bowman is a rounded spot and below it an indeterminate wild animal. The right part of the picture depicts from top down a horseman, a tiger and a bull with horns shaped like a lyre. From several parameters (the small dimension of the figures and their orientation) these carvings do not enter into the overall system of what the petroglyphs depict but add to the list of motifs and broaden the range of possible analogues for the identification of the entire series.

Of particular value is the composition found in the habitation zone of the middle part of valley B. On its surfaces is depicted an important group of individuals: the center is occupied by a large image of a fantastic animal with the trunk of a horse, the tail of a feline predator, the head of a wolf with open jaws and from whose head extend backwards two long horns with curved ends. Its body is decorated by intersecting lines; on the shoulder is the imprint of a horse's hoof. In front of the animal lies a prostrate man, next to whose arms is a bow. Below the beast is a man on bended knee with arms extended to the sides. To the right further down is a tall figure of a man, who is having intercourse with a (she-)wolf from behind. Above the syncretic beast is the image of a male goat. It is possible that the composition has not been preserved in its entirety: the lower part of the stone is chipped from some recent damage.

Assemblages of petroglyphs close to ours in style and in part in subject matter have been found earlier at Sholakzhideli Gorge in the Khantau Mountains (the northern part of the Chu-Ili Mountains). In one scene with running animals (male goats and deer), near one male goat is the unique Tamga-sign No. 5 [Fig. 11.1]. Such compositions also include an image of a winged deer, known for the ancient Iranians [Fig. 11.2].

All tamga-signs of this series in the Jetysu region can be connected with the depiction in profile of a standing (in one case, running) male goat and appear either above or below it [Figs. 5-6, 8, 11]. This underscores the special role of these sacral "pure" animals, which is typical for lhe mountain regions of Central Asia up to the 20th century.

A complex of visual images

The specificity of this style was determined by the combination of animal style of more eastern origin (similar to that of the Northern Altai "Pazyrykians" and unknown for Jetysu Sakas of the 7th–3rd centuries BCE), unusual compositions with anthropomorphic personages (a problem which will be analyzed separately in a future article) and tamga-signs. The latter were unknown for Sakas of Jetysu and other regions of Kazakhstan and represented types unknown for Pazyryk culture and other, more eastern cultures of the Saka-Scythian era.

One can draw a series of important conclusions about the role of the petroglyphs of the given series in the structure of the archaeological landscape. Two functionally different zones can be reconstructed: the zone of habitations or camps of valleys B and C and, most probably, a sacred zone, the region where the tributaries meet in canyon A. At the latter, apart from the burying of the dead, an important role would have been played by certain ceremonies probably enacted at the optimal

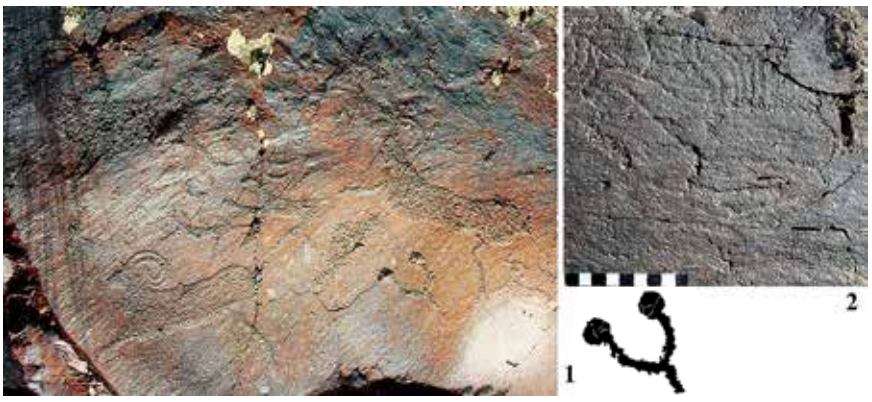


Fig. 11. Khantau (the northwestern part of the Chu-Ili Mountains), the petroglyphs in "Post-Saka style": 1 – hunting male goats with two dogs and Tamga-sign No. 5; 2 – a winged deer.

vantage point for viewing these petroglyphs. In all sections where there is a concentration of the rock art (assemblages I–III) there is a common principle underlying the organization of the row of images, but the specific content in each case differs fundamentally from that of the others, among other things on account of the inclusion into the system of clan signs of various types.

This feature sharply distinguishes our series of petroglyphs when viewed against the background of rock art of earlier periods and in many cases openly stands in opposition to it. For example, deliberately ignored is the principle of accumulation characteristic for rock art of various periods, in accordance with which the earlier drawings were in part renewed, re-worked, supplemented by one's own carvings and thus included in a new composition. Especially indicative are the multilayer compositions, where the depictions of the Early Saka type (the 7th–6th centuries BCE) have been crudely covered over. The distinct repertoire and artistic refinement of the petroglyphs of the post-Saka style also point to the absence of continuity with local traditions of rock art. The post-Saka style images appear to be of a different kind, although they do include many stylistic features from the cultural traditions established earlier in the Saka era [Fig. 12].

The homogeneous nature of the given series of petroglyphs is evident in the similarity of the technique of their execution and in the stylistic specificity of the figures, which can be termed the "application style." The contours of the silhouetted figures are not burdened with details, and the smooth lines convey only the characteristic elements which help identify the typological features and the incomplete action, which can only be guessed at in the static profiles of the individuals. The delicate elements — almond-shaped eyes, solar signs (volutes) or a complex interweaving of lines on the bodies, jaws with bared teeth or paws of a beast with talons — accent the most important semantic qualities of the individuals. All this sets the given series of carvings off from the archaic traditions of rock art both of the most ancient periods and of later ones, but shows an affinity with the Early Saka animal style art with its aristocratic spirit which is everywhere represented in Central Asia by analogous images and subjects both in petroglyphs and in small artifacts.

The list of animals of the Chu-Ili Mountans almost entirely matches those on the artifacts of Scytho-Siberian art of the 5th–3rd centuries BCE. The closest coincidence in iconography is on some artifacts of the Saka-Scythian era in the late stage of Pazyryk culture of the neighboring northern Altai Mountains (in wood, felt and metal found at Pazyryk, Berel and other sites) [Figs. 12.3,4,6,9,15,18,20] and partially in Tuva and the Minusinsk Basin (Khakassia). For the same territory of Jetysu in earlier times (whose necropolises have been only partially studied) our petroglyphs provide a small number of analogues in the Issyk barrow and on sacred bronze wares from special funeral treasures (cauldrons and tables) which usually are found by accident. Many stylistic analogies are provided also by more distant artifacts from the Ordos region and neighboring parts of Inner Mongolia [Fig. 12.14,17] "with clear elements of Pazyryk influence" (Kovalev 1999, p. 81, Fig. 2).

The petroglyphs of our series have as well important specific features. For example, the image

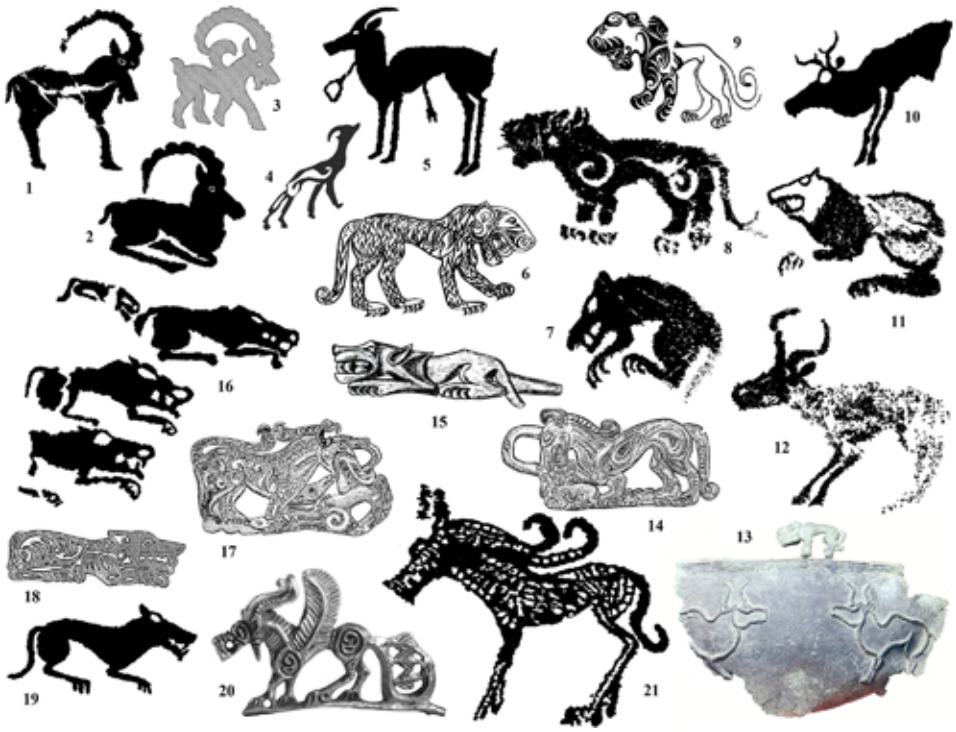


Fig. 12. The main animal images of "Post-Saka style" and some of their early analogies in Pazyryk culture (3-4, 6, 9, 15, 18, 20), in Mongolia and Inner Mongolia (14, 17) and Jetysu (13).

Fig. 13. Some compositions with anthropomorphic personages from Valley A (1) and Valley B (2).

of a fantastic animal in the composition from valley B has no analogue in Pazyryk art (Barkova 1987; Chekryzhova 2004, pp. 13–16), but is almost an exact copy of a unique golden figurine of a monster from the "Siberian Collection" of Peter the Great which is of unknown origin [Fig. 12.20]. The complete coincidence of the iconography (the synthesis of elements of wolf, tiger, horse or other ungulates) is supplemented by stylistic analogies in small details (the shape of the eye, which extends over the muzzle; the decorative "chevron" on the shoulder; the axial line on the trunk, which crosses the tiger skin background). The iconographic parallel to this mythological character can be seen in a series of depictions on the belt plaques from northern China, which are often accidental finds (Bunker 1997, pp. 44–45, Figs. A32, A44; Bunker 2002, pp. 96–97, 122–23, Nos. 63, 94; Bogdanov 2006, Pls. XXXVII.2-4, LIX).[5] The syncretic image of a wolf-shaped monster here also includes elements of a feline predator (the curved tip of the tail), of ungulates (the S-shaped horn, lying back along the spine) and has complex decoration on the body. The fantastic figure is often shown in scenes where it is devouring its prey, in a static pose bent over its victim — a fallow deer or other ungulate.

An important characteristic of the petroglyphs of this series is the presence in it of a rich and complete set of anthropomorphic images and of complex motifs, among them ones in which the mysterious monster participates, bent over the prone figure of the archer [Fig. 13.2]. The correlation of iconography with Ordos compositions is evident, but there the victim is an wild animal instead of a human. Apparently, the presence in the given context of a scene showing coitus of a human with a wolf can be considered the visual version of a motif from local mythic genealogy. It is significant that this motif is repeated twice on a composition in valley A. We see also coitus with cows [Fig. 13.1].

Beyond the borders of our study's locale, this scene appears twice in the eastern part of Jetysu, in the Eshkiolmes Mountains (Gorge 10). That most significant zone of petroglyphs in Kazakhstan contains many sets of depictions which can confidently be connected with the pictorial complex of the area between the Chu and Ili Rivers. In addition to the coincidence of subject matter and style between the two series of petroglyphs, they have in common the stratigraphic position in the palimpsests: everywhere they have been crudely superimposed over the carvings in the Early Saka animal style. The distinctive feature of the Eshkiolmes carvings consists as well in the abundance of depictions of realia (of objects and weapons), which has enabled the entire series to be dated to the 5th–3rd centuries BCE (Rogozhinskii et al. 2004, pp. 83–84, Fig. 8).

Northeast of Jetysu/Semirech'e, which is the main territory of the distribution of our series of petroglyphs, a large assemblage of similar carvings has been documented in the locations of Tsagaan Salaa, Baga Oigor and Shivet Khairkhan, which were nominated in 2011 by UNESCO as the "Petroglyph Complexes of the Mongoian Altai" (Kubarev et al., 2005, pp. 94–106, Nos. 40-42, 1055-1059 etc.; Jacobson et al. 2001, Nos. 38, 40-41, 956-960 etc.; Kubarev 2009, Nos. 310, 311, 907-909 etc.).

Moreover, in the Zeravshan River valley, at Bironsai Gorge (on the southern slopes of the Nurata Mountains), Uzbekistan, is an expressive series of petroglyphs, including large figures of wolves shown crouching on the ground, ungulates (male goats, deer, wild boar) and also anthropomorphic figures which in many elements are similar to the carvings from Jetysu (Khuzhanazarov et al. 2002, pp. 179–87) [Fig. 14]. All the carvings here

Fig. 14. Petroglyphs similar to Jetysu "post-Saka style" in Bironsai Gorge (Nurata Mountains, Uzbekistan).

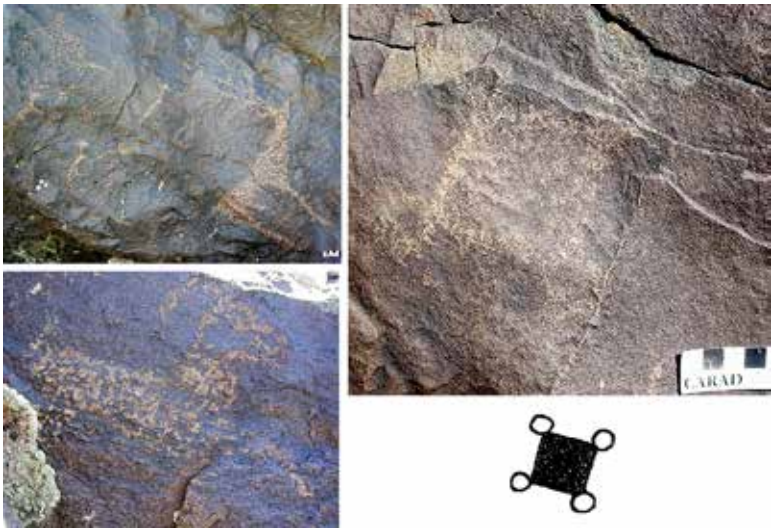


Fig. 15 (above). An animal and Tamga-sign No. 6 from the Tomar valley (Tarbagatai Mountains).

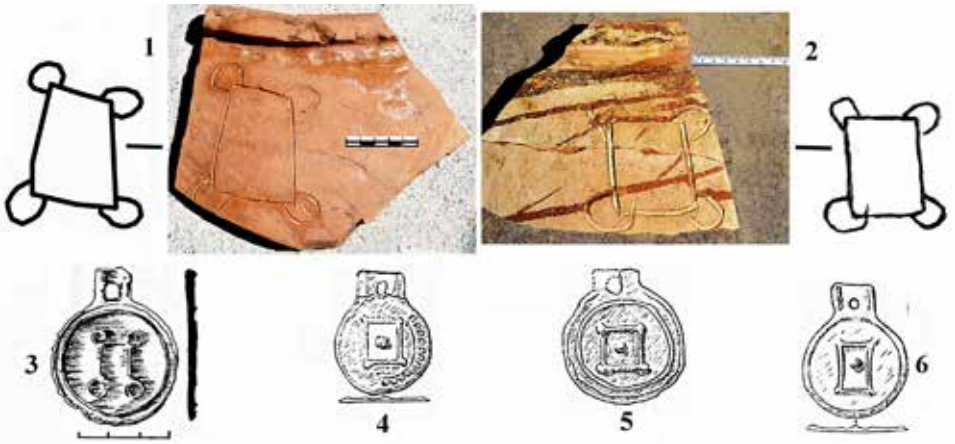


Fig. 16 (right). Analogies to tamga-sign No. 7: 1-2 - the Middle Syradarya Basin, Kang-kü/Kangju empire ("khum" big jars from Turkestan/Yassy citadel, after Erbulat A. Smagulov); 3 – Bitak necropolis (near Scythian Neapolis, the Central Crimea), Grave 56 (after Alexandr E. Puzdrovskii); 4-6 – Kobiakovo necropolis (Don estuary region), Graves 65/1957, 23/1962 and 25/1962 (after Victoria M. Kosianenko).

also crudely cover over earlier ancient petroglyphs which made up a panneau on two wide surfaces of the cliff. Among the monuments of rock art known to us, this one is located the farthest to the southwest in the area of distribution of petroglyphs of this series which we have found in the Jetysu region and is connected with a very significant group of early nomad clan signs.

In addition to the region of study (Jetysu/Semirech'e), we publish here a series of tamga-signs of the same period found in the territories adjoining it.

Compositions near the northern shore of Lake Balkhash and in the Zaisan Depression

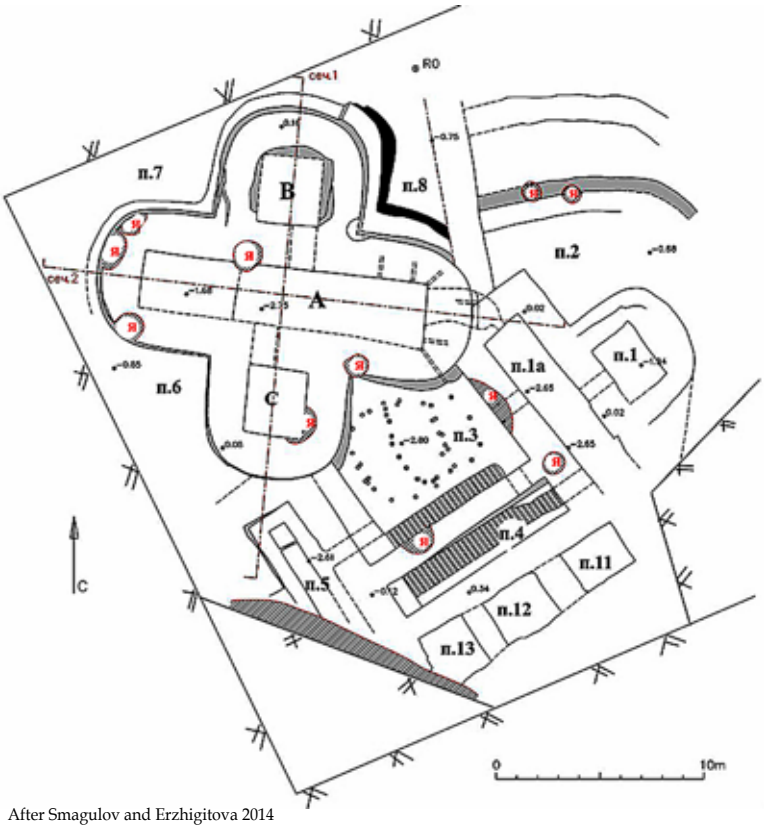
Several important compositions with tamga-signs have been found on the northern boundaries of Jetysu.

1. *Tarbagatai Mountains.*

In 2008 in the Tomar valley of the southwestern slopes of the Tarbagatai Mountains (the Saur-Tabagatai mountain system, separated from the Altai Mountains by the Zaisan Depression) A.E. Rogozhinskii found a composition in the same style with several male goats and Tamga-sign No. 6 on the valley floor [Fig. 15]. This sign is one of the most interesting and important in our collection.

Identical signs starting in the 2nd–1st centuries BCE are known on the territory of the western neighbor of the Wusun, the Kangju (Kang-kü) "nomadic empire." The expedition of Erbulat Smagulov unearthed them in the oldest citadel of Turkestan (Iassy), on large "khum" jars (Smagulov and Yatsenko 2014b, Fig. 6.1) [Fig. 16.1-2]. They were found in a cross-shaped building measuring 18 x 18 m (in 2011, the stratum of the 2nd–1st century BCE: Smagulov and Erzhigitova 2013, p. 88) and in Section No. 13 of the southeastern building (in 2015, the stratum of the 2nd–3rd century CE) [Fig. 17, next page]. This indicates that a noble clan with such a sign lived in Turkestan for no less than three centuries.

A series of signs analogous to those found at Tomar is known farther west in the European steppe zone. There they are always found on artifacts of one or another type — on miniature bronze mirror-pendants, which likely were among the gifts to young women who were getting married (such mirrors often were inscribed with the sign of her clan). These Sarmatian/Alanian nomadic girls married husbands from the local agricultural tribes, "late Scythians" of the Central Crimea or Maeots of the Don River estuary. All such mirrors date to the mid-2nd to mid-3rd centuries CE (the early stage of Late Sarmatian culture). In the Crimea, a mirror with an identical sign was found in Grave 56 of the Bitak necropolis (the border of Scythian Neapolis) (Puzdrovskii 2007, Fig. 129.7; Smagulov and Yatsenko 2014b, Fig. 7.2) [Fig. 16.3].[6] At the other end of the Sea of Azov near Don River mouth in the necropolis of the Kobiakovo fortified settlement three such mirrors



After Smagulov and Erzhigitova 2014

Fig. 17. The locations (designated by Cyrillic "Я") of "khum" big jar finds with Tamga-sign No. 7 in the earliest citadel of Turkestan / Yassy in 2011 (a cross-shaped building) and in 2015 (room 13).

were found in Graves 65/1957, 23/1962, and 25/1962 (Smagulov and Yatsenko 2014b, Fig. 7.3-5). The signs from Kobiakovo belonged to a related clan, whose emblem differed only in having an additional dot in the center [Fig. 16.4-6].

Around 150 CE near the mouth of the Don settled a group of "Late Sarmatians" — the new wave of nomads which migrated (according to the most important modern specialist on the Sarmatians and Early Alans, Vladimir Iur'evich Malashev) from the center of northern Kazakhstan across the southern Urals region. This group was probably closely connected with the Kangju "nomadic empire" (i.e., with the center of the mid-Syr Darya River region). One can now connect its migration with information in the *Hou Han Shu* / the Book of the Later Han (後漢書) (118) on the renaming of Yancai to Alanliao, as related in the report of Ban Yong dated between 94 CE and 125 CE. Prior to that time, no fresh information about the Western Regions had made its way to China for about a century. Probably this group, like some earlier ones, were called Alans (Yatsenko 2011, pp. 200–02). Modern anthropologists consider the "Late Sarmatians" to be most closely related to part of the population of the mixed Jety-Asar Culture of the ancient Syr Darya estuary, established, according to new data, in the 3rd century CE by some neighboring groups on the northern periphery of the Kangju "nomadic empire" (Chikisheva 2011, p. 353, Fig. 2; Kitov and Khozhailov 2012, p. 455; Khozhailov 2013, pp. 478, 481). Another component part of that culture seems to have originated farther east and has been connected with the late Tagar Culture of the Saian Mountains (Balabanova 2012, pp. 87–88).

2. The northern shore of Lake Balkhash

The horizontally placed variant of the S-shaped Tamga sign [Fig. 18] has been found among the petroglyphs in the "post-Saka style" north of Lake Balkhash near the small Tokrau River. Such marks in the period from the 2nd century BCE to the 2nd century CE were known both in Central Asia and in Sarmatia (Yatsenko 2001a, Figs. 5.44, 28.150-151).

Kangju "nomadic empire" tamga-signs in the Kemer Mountains (middle Syr Darya region)

In the Kemer Mountains on the northern slopes of the low Karatau Mountains, Alexei Rogozhinskii found in 2009 three signs of partly similar design from related clans on adjacent horizontal surfaces of small cliffs, at the foot of which was an ancient nomad site. They are not accompanied by other images. One of them has been covered over by modern images [Fig. 19, next page]. These signs have no precise analogues in the steppe and desert zones of that period. This is one of

Fig. 18. (1) two dogs (?) and Tamga-sign No. 7, Tokrau River, north of Lake Balkhash and (2) analogy, Bayte III temple wall, Ustiurt Plateau (after Samashev et al. 2007).

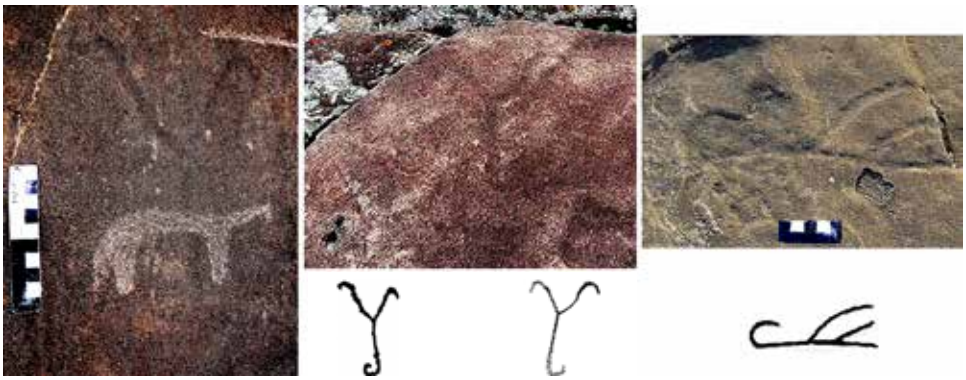


Fig. 19. The types of tamga-signs from the Kemer Mountains (Karatau mountain system, the Middle Syr Darya Basin)

few situations where signs of the Karatau Mountains can be dated prior to the early Middle Ages.[7]

Ethnic identification of "post-Saka style" petroglyphs and tamga-signs

The graphic features of the "post-Saka style,"in conjunction with the depiction of previously unknown property tamga signs, allows one to date such petroglyphs to the mid-2nd to 1st centuries BCE, the time of the appearance there of the Wusun from eastern Xinjiang and of part of the Yuezhi from Gansu.

It is important to take into account that starting in the 1st century BCE the region of the Chu-Ili Mountains was a border zone of the Wusun and Kangju "nomadic empires." According to the *Han Shu* 漢書 (95), in the western part the Wusun left in place the previous Saka inhabitants of the region. Judging by the petroglyphs in the series of interest here, the Sakas in the early period of the rule by the Wusun retained in part the traditions of their art. It is problematic to attribute the signs which accompanied the images of the wild animals to the Wusun themselves, since neither in their homeland in eastern Xinjiang nor in their later political center in northwest Xinjiang does one find such identity marks or series. They may have belonged to other immigrants and subjects of the Wusun, the Yuezhi, part of whom, according to the information in the same annals, were detained by the Wusun in their new possessions. It is as yet difficult to provide a definitive answer to the question about the interpretation of "post-Saka style" and "non-Saka signs." Either such property signs for some reason could have been used by neighbors of the Yuezhi-Sakas, or (which is more likely), the Yuezhi borrowed the images and style of Saka rock art.

From the Chinese annals we know about the migration of nomadic groups from the Wusun into Kangju territory (the mid-Syr Darya region), for example, the horde of the rebellious Pi Kong Ji prince in 11 BCE with 80,000 followers. He was killed by the Chinese in 3 BCE.

Contemporary anthropologists have determined that the homeland of the tribes of the Middle Sarmatian Culture of the late 1st century BCE to mid-2nd century CE (the Don Alans, Perierbides, Sarmatian Horse-Eaters, Asees, etc.), with whom we associate Signs Nos. 1 and 2, was the Saka territories of eastern and northern Xinjiang, such as Alagou, the Nilka necropolises, etc. (Chikisheva 2011, Fig. 4). A similar conclusion was reached by one of the authors of this article as a result of the analysis of Central Asian innovations of various origin in the region south of the Altai (Yatsenko 1993, p. 67). Evidence of this also is to be seen in the fact that the language of the direct descendents of the "Middle Sarmatians", the modern Ossetians of the Caucasus, is closest to Khotanese Saka (Bailey 1977, p. 43). Undoubtedly the route of such migration was across the Jetysu region.

Other migrations of tamga sign groups; western analogies to the Xiongnu signs

The existing literature has already examined the question about the migrations of the owners of some clan tamga-signs from Central Asia to the European steppes (Vainberg and Novgorodova 1976; Yatsenko 1992; 1993, Fig. 1; 2006b).

Recently Sergei Voroniatov proposed that the Mongolian Xiongnu elite played a significant role in the traditions of use and in the actual shapes of the Sarmatian tamgas of the 1st–3rd centuries CE (Voroniatov 2014) [Fig. 20, next page]. Unfortunately, his view is open to criticism, in part because a "specific" way of placement of signs on animal bodies and some artifacts in both cultures in fact is widely documented by examples from the steppe and semi-desert region right down until recent times. Only about 20 types of the simplest Xiongnu signs (really popular in many other societies) have close analogies for some non-powerful clans in Sarmatia. To attribute some of the Mongolian petroglyphs with tamgas to the Xiongnu and then use this dating in arguing the case can also be problematic, since they may in fact come from the earlier Saka-Schythian period (cf. Yatsenko 2001a; Marsadolov and Yatsenko 2004; Torbat et al., eds. 2012). One might also question whether the defeated and dispersed Xiongnu would have retained sufficient prestige so that their clan signs be emulated in the west, One can at best only cautiously suppose that such analogies in the signs *might* have arisen in the late 1st century BCE and in the first century CE in the

Fig. 20. Examples of Xiongnu tamga-signs.

border lands of the Kangju, where the Sarmato-Alans, who had not yet found their European home, and small groups of the Xiongnu arriving there between 36 BCE and 91 CE would have come into contact.

Clearly there is a great deal more to be learned as the petroglyphs in remote regions of Central Asia become known and can then be compared across the broad expanses traversed by the migrations of early nomads who interacted with other nomadic groups and with the populations of sedentary centers. The evidence of tamga-signs is hugely important for establishing the location and possible identity of kin groups at the same time that its interpretation will continue to be controversial. We hope that our publication of the newly discovered material here will contribute significantly to that discussion.

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About the authors

Dr. Alexei Rogozhinskii, a senior scholar in the Kazakh Research Institute of Culture (Astana), is a specialist on the petroglyphs of the northern Tian-Shan Mountain region (southeastern and southern Kazakstan), on medieval and late nomadic sites and landscape archaeology, and on tamga-signs of the medieval Turkic nomads, Jungar Mongols and Kazakhs. His important books on the rock art of the Eshkiolmes Mountains (jointly authored with Alexei Mariashev) and on the petroglyphs of Tamgaly are cited below. In addition, he has published a textbook history of Kazakhstan and dozens of articles on Kazakhstan rock art from the Bronze Age up to the Middle Ages and on inscriptions and tamga-signs in petroglyphs. Beginning in 1982, he has participated in numerous archaeological expeditions in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. He is one of the coordinators of UNESCO projects for "Management, conservation and presentation of the Tamgaly petroglyph site, Almaty region, Kazakhstan," the "Central Asian petroglyphs regional network project, Central Asian Rock Art Database," and for "Serial nomination on rock art sites in Central Asia." E-mail: <alexeyro@hotmail.com>.

Sergey Yatsenko, a specialist on the culture of the ancient Iranian and Turkic peoples, is a Professor in the Department of Socio-Cultural Studies at the Russian State University for the Humanities in Moscow. He is author of four books and more than 200 articles, including previous contributions to *The Silk Road*. E-mail: <sergey_yatsenko@mail.ru>.

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Notes

1. The creators of the petroglyphs usually did not depict directly scenes of the killing of the wild animals which were the object of hunting but rather implied it. For example, the image of a hunter usually was replaced by one or two dogs or arrows in the body of wounded animals; predators chased ungulates but had not yet caught them.

2. According to Achaemenid texts, Jetysu Sakas were known as Saka Haumavarga (for their images, see Yatsenko 2011b).

3. A mirror-image variant of the lower sign is known on an unpublished whetstone of the 2nd century CE from Tanais at the mouth of the Don River. For the criteria for establishing similarity and difference of signs accepted in the current literature and for the means by which new types were created among the ancient Iranian-speaking peoples and their sources, the mechanisms of borrowing signs, see Yatsenko 2001a, pp. 15–17, 19–23, 25–27, Figs. 2–3. For the classification of signs (based on the Early Turkic signs of Kazakhstan), see Rogozhinskii 2014. Cf. on the problems of the identification and description of Early Turkic signs, Yatsenko 2013.

4. In the round two-story Bayte III temple on the walls of the small cross-shaped courtyard, the worshippers left three large assemblages of tamga-signs. Each of them bears traces of several actions by representatives of several clans, where the signs were a substitute for a contemporary signature at the conclusion of agreements accompanied by oaths. Sometimes in a single horizontal row were from 3 to 11 or more signs (Yatsenko 2005).

5. Note, however, Kost 2014, which systematizes a great deal of what is known about the belt plaques which have been found in documented archaeological contexts.

6. It is significant that a second most ancient sign from the Turkestan citadel is identical only with one found in the Bitak necropolis in the Crimea (!) (Yatsenko and Smagulov 2014a, Fig. 6.1), but it dates from the earlier Middle Sarmatian Culture, the early 2nd century CE (Puzdrovskii 2011, p. 378, Fig. 2.1).

7. On Kangju signs from oasis settlements see, first of all, Smagulov and Yatsenko 2008, 2010 and 2014a. Especially important is the largest collection of signs in pre-Islamic Transoxiana, 103 types found in the Sidak sanctuary from 2001-2012 (Smagulov and Yatsenko 2014b, Figs. 1-2). Although the sanctuary was founded in the early Kangju period, only the latest layers, of the 5th–early 8th centuries, have as yet been studied. Many signs were not only the marks of local believers but also the marks of pilgrims from various parts of Transoxiana (Bukhara, Samarkand, Chach, Otrar). The signs were engraved on votive pottery and also on special large "khum" jars that contained the bones of the dead (Smagulov and Yatsenko 2014a).

— *translated by Daniel C. Waugh*

Assyrian-style Seals of the Silk Road and Their Relationship to Ties between Iran and Mesopotamia

Amir Saed Mucheshi
Payame Noor University
Tehran, Iran

This essay first describes seals from Qazvin, Kermanshah and Zanjan and compares them with some similar examples. That specific evidence poses interesting questions, treated in part two, about the relationship of these seals to historical developments during Iron Age III (ca. 800–600 BCE) in Iran, among them patterns of trade and issues in historical geography. Apart from some slight differences in the depictions on these seals from what we would expect in Assyrian art, the combination of elements from local arts in Luristan and some attributes of the Elamite style of seal making lead us to conclude that the seals described here are local products. However, they were influenced by the Neo-Assyrian style as a result of substantial trading and political-military relations between Iran and Mesopotamia.

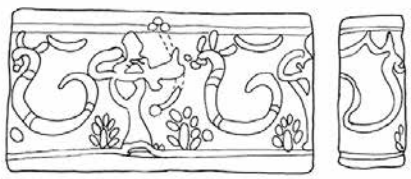
Introduction

The Department of Numismatic Collections in the National Museum of Iran (Iran Bastan Museum) has a group of seals catalogued as "purchased from Qazvin" and assigned the register number 2666, with subdivisions such as 2666.5. This paper examines only some of the seals in this collection; those whose traits do not classify them as belong to Iron Age III are discussed in another article. The seals from Qazvin were bought by the National Museum of Iran in 1964. Another seal in the museum, from Kermanshah and given to the museum on 7 October 1961, with the registry number 1674 (introduced as Seal No.1 in the present paper), has some traits analogous to those on the seals from Qazvin. All these seals were studied in the author's M.A. thesis entitled "The Seals of the Northern Central Plateau of Iran." In addition to the seals discussed in the thesis, another seal from Zanjan, discovered at the Gelabar Dam, is included in the present analysis. Because the thesis study investigated the seals' contexts (settlement areas and cemeteries) without identifying them by name, we have emphasized the seals as individual cases. Even when the site names were known, comparative studies could not be trusted due to a lack of management during excavations.

Description and comparison of the seals

Seal No.1, depicting a scene of fighting with a dragon. On this seal, an archer is targeting a horned dragon. Bodies of the dragon and archer have been carved in the linear style along with several curved indentations in different sizes. The archer is wearing a long robe coming down to the knees. He has a thin waist similar to that depicted on the seals from Qazvin (Nos. 2 and 3), Chogha Zanbil (Porada 1970, Nos. 22, 27, 28 and 29), and Surkh Dum-i-Luri (van Loon 1989, Pl. 233:44). There is a tall shrub between the dragon and the archer. The bow has been drawn, and the archer's arm has been depicted in an exaggerated way. Between the head and the arm drawing the bowstring at the man's back are two bulges, possibly suggesting some part of the archer's hair. The dragon is coiled and has a noticeably large head and muzzle. Three dots have been inscribed under the upper horizontal line. The partially preserved Seal No. 39 from Khurvin has a somewhat parallel design (Saed Mucheshi unpub.).

1



A similar scene on a seal in the Ashmolean Museum's Neo-Assyria collection portrays a simpler design of a bowman who is targeting a standing dragon with an upward-curving tail (Buchanan 1966, Fig. 624). In another example which belongs to the Neo-Assyrian era, there is a similar representation of the bow and the arms (featured in Ibid, Fig. 625). During the excavations carried out at the Dam of Chelleh Village in Gilan Gharb Township, led by Hassan Rezvani in 2004, an Assyrian seal was found which attests to the influence of Assyrian culture on western Iran and the route through which the Assyrians could enter the Iranian Plateau (personal interview with Rezvani).

Another similar scene has been observed on an Urartian seal where there is an archer who is shooting an arrow at a dragon in the same position as that of the dragon on the seal from Qazvin (Piotrovsky 1969, Fig. 43). The depiction of the dragon — its physique, tail, head, mouth and the body's subdivision into smaller pieces using tiny lines — is similar to that on a seal from Tell-ol-Rimeh which has been classified as Neo-Assyrian (Parker 1977, Fig. 54). The seal which bears the closest resemblance to that in the Museum is one found in Nimrud, which also depicts an archer shooting a dragon. The dragon's body, particularly its back, has been decorated by several bands, as is the case on the seal from Qazvin. Another similarity between these two seals is the existence of the lines which form a triangle on the archer's back with the neck and foot as the other two points (Parker 1962, Fig. 6029). A more abstract example is on another seal (Ibid., Fig. 6023).

This motif of the shooting archer is one of the most common ones throughout the 7th century BCE but could date back to the 9th and 8th centuries. This design has been observed on many other seals from Nimrud discovered during managed excavations (Parker 1955, Figs. 1007, 1009).

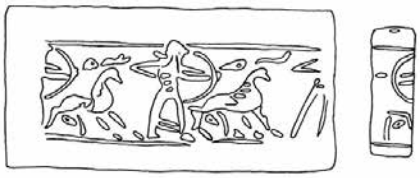
Seal No. 2, a scene of fighting with a dragon. In this scene, an archer is targeting a dragon. The dragon is opening its mouth, and its tail curves up and forward, in a position similar to that of a scorpion. In this design the string of the bow is not clearly articulated, and the two lines perpendicular to the bow delineate the arm and the arrow. The archer has a long beard covering his chest and is wearing a long garment which reaches his ankle. There is a shrub or some other kind of vegetation in the distance between the archer and the dragon. Two vertical lines fill the background above the dragon. On the right and behind the dragon stands a person who appears to be a servant, holding in his hands what are probably offerings or booty. Two objects hang from the horizontal line above the figure.

2

A quite similar scene is on a seal from Bakhtar (Badakhshan) in Afghanistan, which Sarianidi (2000, Fig. 1) has categorized as Neo-Assyrian. He believes its motif was adapted from Assyria, but, owing to the fact that many analogous seals were unearthed from the same area, they must have been made locally. Among the seals in the Ashmolean Museum, some Neo-Assyrian seals have an identical design (Buchanan 1966, Plate 41, Nos. 624, 625). Another design, depicting an archer shooting a single-horned deer, can also be found on the seals from Hasanlu. In those, the archer's hair is puffed behind his head, and the decoration on his garment around the middle of the skirt is slightly different. This type of clothing differs from that depicted on the seals from Sialk; in fact, the specimens from Sialk display people in simple robes coming down to the knees. Thus, it can be concluded that the clothing style is not local. The hair styles as well as the bow resemble those on a middle-Elamite seal in the Ashmolean Museum (Ibid., Fig. 572).

Seal No. 3, a presumably mythical scene of fighting with animals. In this scene an archer is shooting an arrow at a horned animal from a curved bow. The two lines perpendicular to the bow delineate the arm and arrow. A division is observed on the standing man's robe below the knee, through a horizontal, curved line that marks off the lower part of the picture. The archer's hair reaches his shoulders. The knees and hooves of the beast are clearly illustrated. Two horizontal lines form a border.

3



The archer's bow is comparable to that of the archers on the seals from Chogha Zanbil (Porada 1970, Figs. 27, 33, 34, 35 and 38), but his garment, in contrast to that on Seal No. 4, is not decorated. There are similarities in some regards, such as the horizontal line under the knee and the waist on the robe. The animal

on the seal has horns bifurcated at the back and front. The only seal which has a roughly analogous design on it — i.e., the same distinctive kind of horn — is one discovered in the excavation conducted at Hasanlu by Rad and Hakemi. The animal in that design is also targeted by a hunter – just like case 3 – but in neither case does the beast express fear or seem to be trying to escape (Hakemi and Rad 1950, p. 97, No. 3). The lower part of this person's gown is similar to that found in Hasanlu except for areas at the waist and above the knees. On a seal in the Ashmolean Museum, there is a beast with a horn at front of its head like that on Seal No. 3 (Buchanan 1966, Pl. 39, Nos. 587, 589). These seals all belong to the Neo-Assyrian era. There are several similar cases among seals from Sialk as well (Ghirshman 1939, Pl. XCVII, S.1577). However, none of them bear as close a resemblance as do images on the Cemetery of Sialk B potteries. Some seals from Sialk are bifurcated at the back and front. In addition, there is a clay seal impression on which is the image of an animal's head with a bifurcated horn, like that on Seal No. 3. This impression is in fact similar to the examples from Sialk B. The thin waists of the people are an Elamite seal trait (such as on Seal Nos. 3 and 4). This style of depicting waists is seen on some seals of Haft Tepe as well (Negahban 1994, Fig. 308).

Given the similarities between the design of the animal inscribed on this seal and the design on the goblet of Marlik, we can conclude that the figure is very probably a bull. An image of a winged bull is an ancient decoration in the Middle and Near East (Negahban 1999, p. 221). If John Curtis is correct in suggesting (1995, p. 41) that the designs on the goblet of Marlik originate in Babylon, the figure of the single-horned beast on this seal implies interrelations with Babylon.

The design of a single-horned beast accompanying a standing archer can also been seen on seals from Neo-Assyrian Tell-ol-Rimeh. This scene is repeated as well on the ivories of Hasanlu IVB (800 BCE) (Muscarella 1980, p. 215; Marcus 1990, p. 132). In a general sense, the design is the same in both periods of time (Neo-Assyrian and Hasanlu IVB); even so, there is neither a wing for the single-horned animal nor an eight-petal flower above the scene on the Hasanlu seal. Furthermore, the diameter of the Tell-ol-Rimeh seal is larger, and the operative lines for the designs are thinner (Parker 1975, Fig. 51). The standard Assyrian stars have eight points (Marcus 1990, p. 136). There is another analogue among the seals of Tell-ol-Rimeh which Parker classified as Assyrian (1961, Pl. XL17), and one unearthed in Ziwieh in 2000 (Lakpour 2001, kept in the Museum of Sanandaj, Registry No. 716).


4

Seal No. 4, a scene of hunting a bird. This seal depicts a standing archer shooting a running ostrich. It seems that there is a flat hat on the man's head. Two vertical lines at the front and back of the person's head represent his beard and hair, respectively. He is wearing a very long garment which extends to his ankles and has a decorative fringe on the lower part. Some kind of decoration along the back of the skirt (feathers?) extends up to the waist, which is very thin, represented by two vertical, parallel lines. Unlike in the similar designs of this group, the bowstring is clearly indicated. The bird's feathers are clearly shown around its wing as well as its head and neck. There is a shrub between the archer and the ostrich. Two lines, one on the top and the other at the bottom, frame the scene.

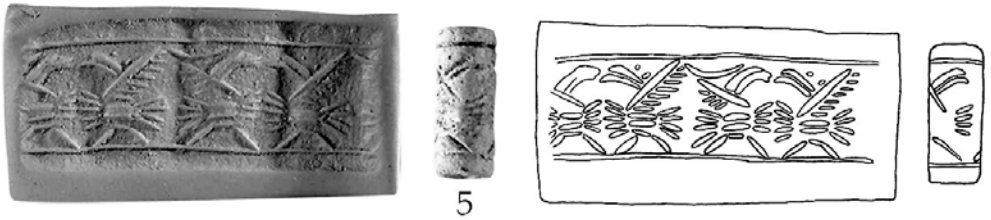
A seal from Sarm Tepe portrays an ostrich with widespread wings standing opposite a tree (Pourbakhshandeh 2003, p. 70). They have approximately the same style, although on the seal from Sarm, the bird's body has been drawn more delicately and naturally than what we see on Seal No. 4. There was a dramatic increase in the number of seals illustrating the figure of an ostrich in Anatolia and Mesopotamia during Neo-Assyrian and Urartian eras. Examples are seals from Nipour (Parker 1962, Fig.1) and ones from Mousasir, all of which date back to the 8th century (Collon 1990, Pls. 4.1.1, 4.1.3). The figure of an ostrich is also to be found on several seals in the former Colville collection, on one seal in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale), one in London (British Museum), and two seals in the Hardy collection. Most of these seals belong to The Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian eras (Collon 1998).

The archer's clothes resemble those of the Elamites. For example, the clothes are similar to those of individuals inscribed on the seals from Chogha Zanbil (Porada 1970, Nos.28, 29, 32, 46, 84 and 87). One of the fascinating elements in this design is the depiction of the bow which has no equivalent in the Northern Central Plateau during the Iron Age. According to Zutterman's research on bows from the middle of the second millennium to the late Achaemenid Empire, curved bows are not to be found across this region. The existing bows are exclusively a triangular shape. Zuterman's research is based on the seals from Hasanlu and Marlik in the first millennium (Zutterman 2003, p. 137). He subscribes to the view that convex bows with a curved end were unknown in Iran, and adds

that whether the triangular bows were imported from Northwestern Iran to Assyria or the other way round is still obscure. With regard to the size of the different bows from various areas during the indicated period, the bow in the archer's hand is, at most, one meter long, whereas the convex bows or the ones with an Elamite curved end are 140 cm and the Assyrian ones are 120 cm in length, all of them different from the example on Seal No. 4. Thus, that bow is more similar to the ones from Luristan, which are 80 cm long (Ibid., p. 165), and hence the best equivalent for our example could be a seal from Surkh Dum-i-Luri (van Loon 1989, Pl. 233:43). While many aspects of what Zutterman covers, from the regions represented in his sample, are relevant here, we would note that many seals from Chogha Zanbil correspond closely to what Seal No. 4 from Qazvin suggests concerning the dimension of the bow (Porada 1970, Nos. 27, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, etc.). Hence, Seal No. 4 has many attributes in common with Elamite culture. The depiction of the bow on Seals Nos. 2, 3 and 4 from the Central Plateau is significant, since such bows are not native to the Iranian Plateau but rather must have appeared there due to interactions with neighboring lands. The suggestions of decoration on the archer's garment resemble closely such depictions on seals found in Hasanlu, which Marcus has classified as influential, local Assyrian ones (1991, Figs. 3, 4). On those two seals, the form of the beard and hair style differ from what we see on our Seal No. 4, in that the man's hair on the Hasanlu examples is positioned in a right-angled direction from his shoulder. As Zutterman emphasizes, the seals from Hasanlu have three sides, while those from Khurvin are semi-circular (Hakemi and Rad 1950, Fig. 3). However, the engraving style and general motifs are similar in both cases.

Among the seals from Mesopotamia, in the collection of Hutchinson, is one formed in the Elamite style, characterized by its particularly large heads drawn using some simple geometric lines. The servant's head on the one Dalley discusses (1972, p. 36), is akin to what we see on Seal No. 4.

Seal No. 5, a linear style seal. The seal depicts two pairs of birds, inscribed so that their feathers touch. In each pair, one bird faces left and has a distinct tail consisting of four feathers somewhat angled to one another. The second bird in the pair seems to be facing front, with outstretched wings, but with its head turned to the left. Each bird's legs are formed by lines angled down from the body. Horizontal lines form a frame at the top and the bottom of the figure. Because the stone of the seal is porous, the engraved design is not very well-defined.



5

Among the seals classified by Dr. Negahban is one group he terms the linear style seal, which he describes as follows: "This group of Haft Tepe seal impressions introduces a particular style in which each body part and object have been represented as individual units adjoining each other. This is the common style in Haft Tepe with slight variations: they are differentiated in that they are not very symmetrical (Negahban 1994, Design 97). There is also a similar seal from Surkh Dum-i-Luri (van Loon 1989, Pl. 233:51).

The designs of Seals Nos. 5, 6, 7 and 8 are similar, and all have repeated the same figure with trivial differences. The design conveys a somewhat abstract sense of birds' parts, with outspread wings. There are six such seals registered under the number 2666 in the collection of the National Museum. One of the unusual features among the designs is the depiction of a small circle at the top, which is seen on some other seals from Sialk as well.

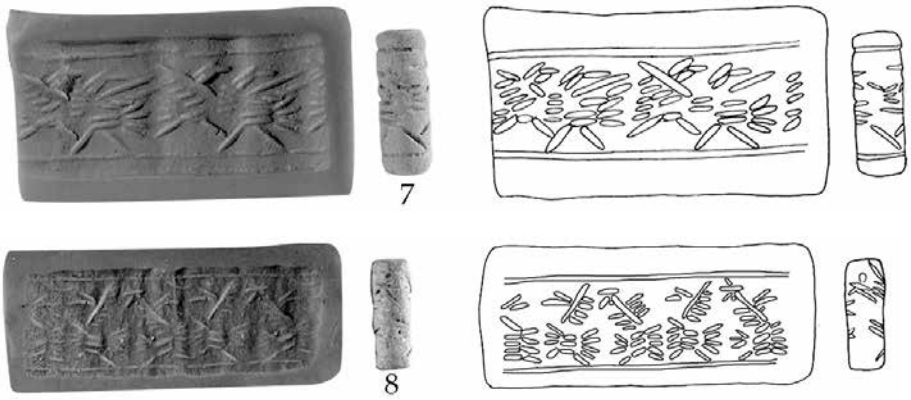
The linear style seals were formed using particular augers responsible for a new style in the Neo- Assyrian period (Dalley 1972, Fig. 29). Dots were used to fill the backgrounds of the seal designs. The drilling of holes on seals can be seen from the Jamdat Nasr era onwards. Such designs persist into the period of Iron Age III, as well as the Elamite period (Haft Tepe) (Negahban 1994, p. 210).

Seal No. 6, a linear style seal depicting two running birds.

6

Seal No. 7 (next page), a linear style seal similar to Nos. 5, 6 and 8.

Seal No. 8, a linear style seal. This style, which was also common in Assyria, sometimes shows extra tails for the compound animals and even the humans (Parker 1962, Fig. 7835). There are a few cases of seals unearthed by Parker at Nimrud (1949-1953) which are very similar to those from Qazvin, but for which



Seal No. 9, with the design of a sphinx. In this scene a sphinx faces a bird with widely opened wings. The wing of the bird on the right is very simple and appears like a thick line, and its chest is the continuation of the wings. The sphinx on the right has a bird-like body, a human head, long hair and something suspended from its neck. In fact this might also be a depiction of some sort of bird. It has a tail with four feathers and spread legs as is common for the style in Qazvin. In contrast, the other bird has more clearly articulated wings and feathers on its chest, similar to the other seals of Qazvin. Just as with the other birds of this style the legs and wings are spread wide. A shape similar to an ear of wheat is between the neck and wings. One of the striking features on this seal is its depiction of a pendant dangling from the horizontal line above it. Clearly this pendant is tied to that line.

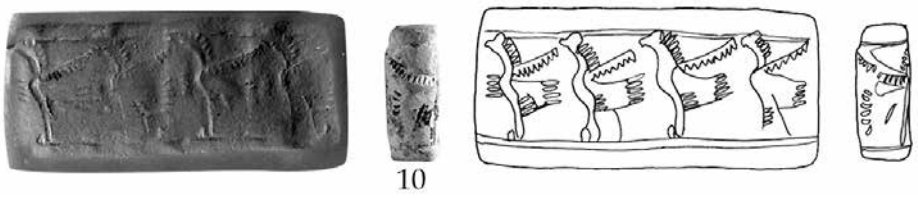
no analogous example has been reported from any other site (Parker 1955, Fig. 1686).

This seal was made of terracotta, just like some of the other Qazvin seals, which in their designs depict some big birds with feathers on their chests. Parker believes this figure indicates a monster or perhaps a huge bird. This design was quite common throughout the 9th and 8th centuries, particularly during the reign of Shalmansar III. In Palestine, a similar seal was discovered which is the oldest amongst those belonging to the Assyrian period (Ibid., p. 104). Some other seals of this style are also among the collection of Ashmolean Museum where they have been classified as Neo-Assyrian (Buchanan 1966, Figs. 623 and 616).

A seal found during Hakemi and Rad's excavation in 1950 depicts a sphinx, asterisk and moon (1950, Fig. 4). The upper part of the sphinx's body, which bears close resemblance to images on seals of Khurvin, has been made in this style. This style is also observed in western Afghanistan: some similarities can be observed with a seal showing a man standing opposite a compound animal, which has a lion's body, eagle's wings and a human head, and which has been classified in the Assyrian style group by Sarianidi (2000, Fig. 4, No. 2). On this seal the man's waist has been depicted using three horizontal lines under which is a fringed decoration. One of his legs is naked up to the knee as in the Assyrian seal figures, which indicates a continuation in the use of this design into the Neo-Assyrian period. This design is seen on some Elamite seals as well (Malek Zadeh Bayani 1996, Fig. 13).

The engraved sphinxes on the Iron Age seals, except for one which has not yet been dated, have no analogues. That example, from Hamedan, is registered as No. 1636 in the National Museum of Iran. On it is the figure of a bird-man. The suspended crescent is engraved on seals from Sialk and Qazvin that are of the same date. The style in which the birds are illustrated, using curved lines, dots and feathers, can be observed on Seals Nos. 4, 9 and 10.

Animal figures engraved with human heads also exist among the Hasanlu specimens. Such a figure is on a seal classified under the Assyrian group depicting a compound creature with a lion's body, eagles' wings and a bearded head of a person (Marcus 1989, Fig. 17). Some seals with quite similar designs have been discovered at Tell-ol-Rimeh and classified by Parker as Neo-Assyrian (1975, Fig. 54).



Seal No. 10, a row of opened-winged birds. These designs comprise several eagles of similar appearance. They spread their wings while turning

11

to the left. The eagles have feathers on their heads, necks, wings and tails. As on all the other seals with bird figures, some feathers are attached to the front part of the bird's body as well. The wide open wings and the spread legs are also common features. Two horizontal lines, at the top and the bottom, enclose the scene. Such a design is found as well among the seals of Hasanlu (Marcus 1989, Fig. 15). The linear style of Seal No. 10 resembles that on Assyrian examples.

Seal No. 11, depicting a battle with a sphinx. This seal was unearthed during a rescue excavation in an area 35 km from Gelabar Dam, located to the southwest of Zanjan. The seal was found in grave I, trench A2, mound A. This mound is situated on the western Sereh Ji hills overlooking the plain and located 850 m from Ye'een village and 1400 m from Soha village (A'ali 2008, p. 269). Grave I is of a simple shaft form, 70 x 120 cm in size and containing a burial in the fetal position oriented NE to SW. In addition to the cylinder seal, the grave contained gray, red and buff potsherds and a piece of iron wire (Ibid., p. 274).

This seal depicts an archer shooting an arrow at a winged sphinx. However, he is shooting from behind, not in front of the beast. In general, it appears that the described scene is largely symbolic and makes little effort to portray the event realistically. In depicting the archer, the designer has dispensed with all but some some simple lines, the exception being his head. He has a thin waist demarcated by three horizontal lines. The extra line adjacent to the man's leg might suggest the existence of a garment like a skirt but could also be an adaptation from the hanging shawls in Assyrian designs. There are lines on the chest of the sphinx similar to those of the linear style on Seals Nos. 5-10 described in this paper. An archery scene with roughly the same style is on Seals Nos. 1–4 described above as well as on a seal from the collection of Bakhtar in Afghanistan (Sarianidi 2000, Fig. 4), cylinder seals of Nimrud (ND. 1009, ND. 2153, ND. 1007), and a number of other seals from this period.

Discussion and conclusion

The described features of these seals and the comparative examples suggest that it is appropriate to date them to Iron Age III, when we find specific local attributes spread over different areas in Iran, Elam and Neo-Assyrian territories. There are distinct changes in style which can be observed between the seals of this period and those of the early Iron Age (I, II), which are more localized and coarse as well as simpler in design and details of the figures (Saed Mucheshi unpublished). One of the chief changes in seal making compared to the early Iron Age is the increase in the number of seals made of terracotta. Moreover, the Elamite people had no influence on the production of seals during the first years of the Iron Age (Maras 2004, p. 144). This could be related to the ambiguous position of the North Central Plateau in the Assyrian and Elamite inscriptions. Moreover, from an archaeological perspective, the cultural material from the Iranian Plateau's neighboring lands such as Elam and Mesopotamia is not as abundant for the earlier period as that found later in the Iron Age (Calmeyer 1995; Negahban 1977; Mehrkian 2003). During the Neo-Assyrian period, Assyrian military expeditions toward the eastern borders increased in number, and subsequently, several attacks on Iran occurred during the reign of Shalmansar III (858–824 BCE) (Abdi 1994, p. 20). As a result, the influence of the Assyrian style became more prominent (Barnett 1977, p. 3000). The Assyrians had many other ties with Iran, and their relations were not limited to belligerence and wars. That Assyrian artifacts or artifacts of this style crossed a vast area in Western Iran (from Azerbaijan to Khuzestan) is evidence of this. Assyrian-style seals have been discovered from many archaeological sites such as Hasanlu (Marcus 1989), Noushijan (Maras 2005), the cemetery of Changbar in Ziwieh (Motamedi 1994, p. 82), Chelleh in Gilan, Gharb in Kermanshah (Rezvani 2003) and numerous others. Assyrian influence on the seals are even observed among those from Sialk B (Ghirshman, 1939), Zanjan (A'ali 2008) and southern Bakhtar (Badakhshan in Afghanistan). The seals of Bakhtar in Afghanistan were produced under the influence of Assyrian art, and the fact that they are very numerous has led to the conclusion that they had been made there (in Bakhtar) and were not imported (Sarianidi 2000, p. 26).

The northern parts of the Central Plateau are one of the most important prehistoric areas in Iran: its advantageous geographical location made it throughout history a crossroads on routes connecting Mesopotamia to western Iran, then eastern Iran, Afghanistan and eventually China. This route maintained its importance during the Islamic era too as the essential commercial route in Iran, when we come to term it the Silk Road or the Great Road of Khorasan (Majidzadeh 1987, p. 3). This road passes the desert and enters Ray in the Central Plateau of Iran; then it branches in var-

ious directions to the south and west. From the west onwards, after passing Qazvin plain, it subdivides into two important parts, one of which goes to Azerbaijan and the other to the southwest where it finally reaches Baghdad (Malek Shahmirzadi 1994, p. 66; Roaf 1995, Map 22).

The trade in lapis lazuli had existed on the "Silk" Road since ancient times, this semi-precious stone found on sites located in areas such as western Iran and Mesopotamia. Georgina Herrmann believes that lapis lazuli merchants travelled the Great Road of Khorasan initially from the north and then the south of Mesopotamia to Badakhshan (Afghanistan) during the late Ubid and Uruk periods in northern Mesopotamia and during the Jamdat Nasr and Early Dynastic and Akkad periods in southern Mesopotamia (Majidzadeh 1987, p. 4). It seems that this route maintained its functions as well as its importance over the next periods as well, which meant that it was vital for the monarchs and governors not to lose their control over it. The Babylonians would traverse the Great Road of Khorasan to trade grains, luxuries, copper or iron (Calmeyer 1995, p. 40). During the Neo-Assyrian era, because of the frequent conflicts between Assyrians, Elamites and Babylonians (Potts 1999), special attention was given to the Great Road of Khorasan owing to the fact that during this period one of the most important tributes exacted from people, particularly the Medians, was lapis lazuli. The Medians had pledged to support the successor of Assarhaddun (Curtis 1995, p. 23) and as a mark of respect gave horses and lapis lazuli as tributes to Senakhrib (704–681 BCE) and his son, Assarhaddun (669–680 BCE) (Roaf 1995, p. 61). Successive military expeditions to this area show its importance for the Assyrians: they had been attacking Western Iran, Luristan (Vanden Berghe and Tourovets 1995, p. 53), and the Medians (Roaf 1995, p. 59). According to imperial documents, Assyrians attacked and climbed Bikni Mount in 737 BCE, and Tiglet Pilesar III (744–727 BCE) defeated the city of Zakirto and exacted tribute from the Median councilors. Some researchers think that Bikni is modern day Mt. Damavand, while others, like Levine, believe that it is Alvand in Hamedan (Roaf 1995, p. 59). Some evidence favors the identification of Damavand with Bikni: this mountain has been described as huge and wonderful in Assyrian historical texts, adjectives that are appropriate only for Damavand. Furthermore, Bikni Mount was described as "lapis lazuli mount," which evokes Damavand's snow-covered summit and was situated on the route to the lapis lazuli mines. However, Louis Levine views these arguments as inconclusive; he offers other reasons for concluding that Alvand is the mountain identified as Bikni. Firstly, he argues, Damavand's fame has cast a shadow on the other mountains in Iran and impeded our judgment. Secondly, the view that Damavand was on the route to lapis lazuli mines cannot be correct as it is not located there. Finally, if the phrase "azure mount" is a symbolic word for a snow-covered mountain; there are many other snowy ones situated between the Karind mountains and Afghanistan that fit the description (Levine 1974, p. 119). Levine also subscribes to the view that while Sargon had the most power and influence on the East, he had not succeeded in gaining ascendency over the lands beyond Nadjaf Abad. He adds that Tiglet Pilesar III and Assarhaddun had never had permanent control over this area (this means the Zagros), and there is nothing to support those rulers' claims.

The discovery of completely Assyrian-style seals in Badakhshan (published by Sarianidi in 2000) and other Assyrian seals of Qazvin and Kermanshah, raises the following important question: Did the Assyrian style of seal making, those seals essential in the commerce of the time, embrace such a vast geographical area? An essential point to take into account is that Badakhshan — the source of lapis lazuli — Qazvin and Kermanshah are all located on the Great Road of Khorarsan, where the Medians and the Iron Age tribes would carry their imposed tribute, one part of which in the eastern Zagros was probably under Assyrian control. The wide-ranging trade of the Assyrians and their profound effect on seal making mean that we should not assume that they would have been ignorant of Bikni Mount at a time when they had long-term interactions and bonds with the Iranian Plateau. In general, as this paper emphasizes, the Great Road of Khorasan was important in the Neo-Assyrian period, and there is much evidence of similar seals both in Iran and Mesopotamia.

Because of the increasing conflicts between Iranian residents and Assyrians or the people of Urartu, during Iron Age III the inhabitants of Iran built many fortifications to guard against their enemies. Based on the conducted surveys, among the sites which have been surveyed, those such as Hasanlu (Dyson 1989) and Ziwieh (Motamedi 1995 and 1997) are situated the farthest to the west, and thus their people were the most likely to face enemies. There are many other examples of these kinds of sites, but without their having been excavated, they cannot be mentioned in this paper. I am thus left with a question: if the Assyrians had dominated this area, does it have any architectural structures similar to those in western Iran? If Sialk is considered a fort (Malek Zadeh 2004), is it likely that it was constructed for protection against enemy attacks (particularly from the Assyrians)?

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About the author

Dr. Amir Saed Mucheshi is an academic member (Assistant Professor) of Payame Noor University in Iran. He received his Ph.D. in Prehistoric Archaeology of Iran from the University of Tehran, the subject which he now teaches. His published articles deal with the historic and prehistoric periods. He has conducted excavations in many parts of Iran. E-mail: <saedmucheshi@gmail.com>.

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"I was born a dervish and a Flying Dutchman."
Sven Hedin and Ferdinand von Richthofen: Introduction and Presentation of Unpublished Letters

Felix de Montety
University of Nottingham

Studying the life of Sven Hedin (1865-1952) in detail proves a fascinating entry-point not only into the European invention of the "Silk Road," but also more generally into the intellectual history of a substantial period of time, ranging from the late 19th century to the end of the Second World War. An energetic explorer with curiosity for a vast array of subjects and who cultivated an impressive list of professional and social connections, he published countless books and articles and left behind a huge archive of notes and letters.[1] There is now an extensive literature which helps to reconstruct the context of a European culture of exploration in Central Asia (Gorshenina 2014) in which to situate Sven Hedin's life, follow his pathway within the geographical and archaeological traditions at the turn of the century (Wahlquist 2008), understand the scientific controversies he had been involved in (Forêt 2004) and sketch the evasive personality of an explorer whose worldview bore the contradictions of a seemingly endless appetite for discovery and celebration of Asian otherness and European power.

Yet the complexities of this figure of modern exploration are still far from exhausted. Initially unable to grasp an enormous quantity of documents published in many languages, biographers of Hedin, both non-academic writers and academics have only gradually abandoned the temptation of a hagiographical perspective (exemplified by Wennerholm 1978, A. Hedin 1925 and Essén 1959) and the official story told by his books (for which, see Kish 1984; Brennecke 1986) to delve into his lesser known writings and archives, so as better to understand his adventures in relation to his personality (Odelberg 2008) and critically engage his political career and notorious endorsement of National-Socialism (Danielsson 2012).

Hedin's sympathies with the German Reich in World War I and then his support for the Nazi dictatorship cost him many admirers and have considerably complicated any effort to assess his career objectively. His own justification for his support of the Nazis was based on the strong germanophilia on which he projected his own identity. In the concluding paragraphs of his *Fünfzig Jahre Deutschland* (1938), a book on the famous Germans he had met over half a century, Hedin highlighted the supposedly consubstantial proximity and subsequent shared Germanic identity of the Swedes and the Germans: "geographically our neighbours, racially our kindreds, in the imperial times our brothers in arms" (Hedin 1938, p. 251; my translation).[2] He asserted that with other threats looming, the Hitler regime was the best option available for Germany and a neutral but friendly Sweden, "even though some aspects of the National Socialist worldview provoke our disapproval" and concluded: "The liberation from the yoke of slavery without the personal sacrifice of the individual is impossible"(*Ibid*.). It is clear that his full support of Hitler, concerning whose actions he was well informed, was not a simple matter of political blindness.

Rather than engage in further analysis of Hedin's links with Hitler and National Socialist ideology, my focus on Hedin's early life concerns his admiration for Germany in general and more specifically for the German scholars who had influenced, taught or supported him during his youth. Specifically, I argue that too little attention has been given to Hedin's special relationship with Ferdinand von Richthofen, the man he most explicitly and constantly admired from his youth into his later years. The focus on Richthofen and Hedin's German training and influences helps us to understand Hedin's early work and the trajectory of his career. Richthofen's importance in Germany's brief colonial past has rarely been studied, but can help to understand this phase as well as to reconstruct the intellectual environment in which Hedin built his worldview.[3] While making use of the aforementioned secondary literature, I am relying most heavily on books published by Hedin, on the as yet too rare transcriptions of parts of his immense correspondence, and on archival documents.[4] My aim is to collect and connect new elements that could help to explain how

the early "Silk Road studies" of Richthofen and Hedin were mutually constitutive and, eventually, to show the significance of their contributions to the geographical and historical imagination of Central Asia.

Sven Hedin's academic role model: Ferdinand von Richthofen

In a letter sent in 1899 to his publisher Albert Brockhaus, Sven Hedin wrote about his professor, to whom he wanted to dedicate his last book (Brockhaus 1942, p. 18; my translation):

> He became my teacher and brought to my attention the questions that are dealt with in books, and besides that, still nowadays, he knows Asia better than anyone and he is without comparison the most famous geographer alive. I don't know yet if he would accept such a dedication but I hope so. I will wait until I receive your reply anyway before I write to him about this. It would be really important to me.

Sven Hedin not only expressed his respect for Richthofen privately, but also devoted many pages to the German geographer, notably in an English-language article (Hedin 1933), a book on the German figures who inspired him (Hedin 1938), and more specifically, in *Meister und Schüler*, the book edited by Ernst Tiessen (alt. sp. Thiessen) in which Hedin reproduced and commented the letters he had received from Richthofen (Tiessen 1933).[5]

Born in 1833 in Carlsruhe, in Prussian Silesia (now Pokój in Poland), Ferdinand von Richthofen [Fig. 1], to whom Hedin referred as his *Meister*, is most often remembered as the creator of the phrase "Seidenstrasse" (Silk Road), a term which Sven Hedin more than anyone else popularized during the first part of the 20th century.[6] Richthofen studied geology and geography in Berlin, notably under Gustav Rose and Carl Ritter, and graduated in 1856 with a Latin-language dissertation on melaphyr (Bibliographie 2010). He then embarked on more than a decade of long journeys that would take him from Austria to South East Asia, California and China.[7] Because of the Taipei rebellion he could not visit China at all during the travels from 1859 and 1862 that led him to Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, Sulawesi, Java, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Maulmain and India. When he returned to Asia in 1871 after a few years in California, the unrest had ceased in most of China, and he was able to travel extensively in the eastern half of the country, but not in the western regions, including Turkestan where the Muslim revolt prevented him from visiting this region that interested him so much.[8]

In a letter sent in 1872 to the American geologist Josiah Whitney,[9] with whom he had worked in California, Richthofen lamented:

> I am here at the very gates of Central Asia, and if those confused Mahomedans had not got it into their heads, ten years ago, to revolt against the Chinese rule and to make themselves to a great extent independent of it, I would now hire a wagon and some ponies, and travel with them clean to the Russian frontier on the Ili, with side-excursions to the Kunlun and Tian Shan mountains. I find to my astonishment that this journey could be made fortnightly with great ease and with no serious discomfort whatsoever. It is only eighty days (2200 miles) from here to Ghulja. (…….) As matters stand now, the enterprise of such a trip would be an absurdity. I must even give up the exploration of Kansu. This would not be a daring undertaking, but, the country being in a state of rebellion and warfare, it would require much time and be troublesome in the extreme. [Richthofen to Whitney 8 January 1872, SB, Kasten 4.]

Interestingly, he continued, before a long explanation on the importance of loess in Central Asia, with a judgment of the prospects of geography in China:

> I will therefore quite modestly turn my steps to-

After Hedin 1938, p. 16

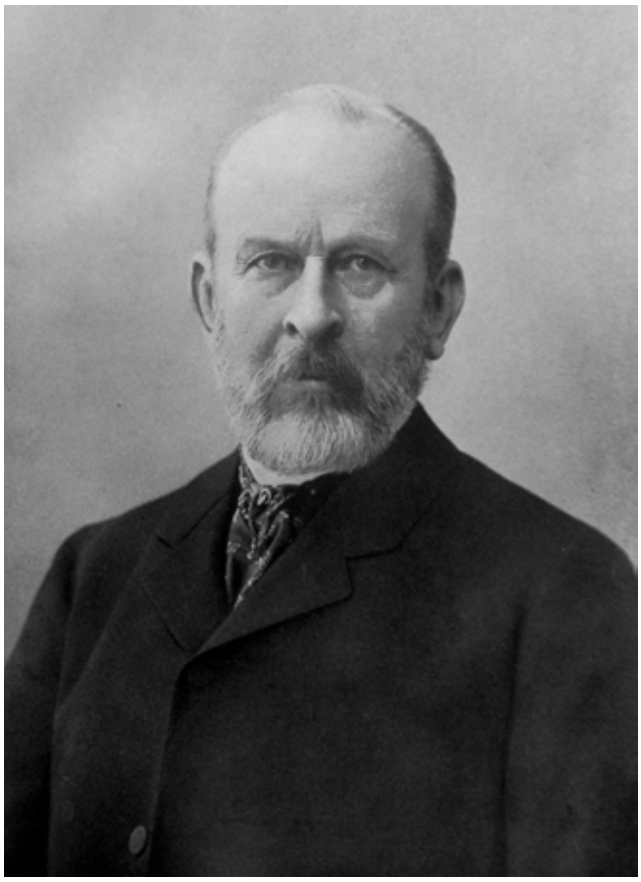


Fig. 1. Ferdinand Freiherr von Richthofen

wards Sichuan, the great province of the west, and as yet unexplored. I will not find anything new or startling. China is not the country for brilliant discoveries.

Yet later in his life, Richthofen's view had changed diametrically (RGS 2011, p. 259):

> We agreed that China is… the least known of countries and also in the highest degree is worth an investigation… here was a task of gigantic proportions.

It seems certain that Ferdinand von Richthofen changed his views after the end of the revolt in Western China and when he prepared his own historical work conducted from 1872 to the publication of the largely historical first volume of *China* in 1877. He was surely also influenced by modern travel writings on China, notably those of Hungarian explorer count Béla Széchenyi, who was accompanied by Lajos Lóczy (a.k.a. Ludwig von Loczy), a Hungarian geologist and geographer with whom Richthofen extensively corresponded and whose work on the geology of China he rated very highly (Lóczy to Richthofen, SB, Kasten 6, Folder 18).

Richthofen's interest in Central Asia is noticeable in the first volume of *China*, and is a recurring topic of his correspondence throughout his life, from his early exchanges with Whitney to his long discussions with Lóczy and, last but not least, with Hedin. However, it is worth noting that, even though he would later have other occasions to fulfil his ambition to travel to Central Asia himself from the Russian empire, he could or would never seize them. Perhaps he felt that he had become too old to travel so far from Germany, and preferred to travel there through the accounts of others.

"Life is too short."

It is not diffiult to imagine to imagine the interest that Richthofen could have had for a talented young student not only interested in Central Asia, but also with outstanding linguistic abilities, energy, as well as *Unternehmungsgeist* ("spirit of enterprise") and *Idealismus*, as Richthofen confessed to Hedin in one of the last letter he sent him, on 3 April 1904.[10] Those last two characteristics help explain why Hedin went off to Central Asia earlier than Richthofen would have wished him to go. The German geographer, who had been thoroughly trained in geology in Berlin and on the field in Austria, asked his Swedish student to undergo the same rigorous program of study. However, Hedin, who by then had already lived in Azerbaijan, travelled to Persia and Mesopotamia and published a book about this experience (Hedin 1887), chose to follow the footsteps of his adventurous role-models Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld and Ármin Vámbéry rather than the scientifically ambitious academic path traced by his Meister.

Whatever the nature and extent of Richthofen's disapproval towards Hedin's impatience might have been, it does not seem like it created a real rift between them. In a letter sent in 1890, Richthofen already seemed, reluctantly, to accept Hedin's decision:

> I regret that, before doing everything that you are doing now, you should have come back to the study of Alpine geology …. Now you will have to go ahead and experience what we call mountain studies (*Gebirgsstudien*) with good preparatory studies for sure, but still as a sort of autodidact. However, your good, clear view will help you to do this, since in this field what matters most is the natural ability to understand things. [Richthofen to Hedin, 2 September 1890; Tiessen 1933, pp. 74-75.]

In 1933, Hedin expressed polite regrets about having ignored his esteemed professor's advice, but this was probably just rhetoric, not any indication he had second thoughts about setting off to the centre of Asia at such an early age:

> How I regretted too, that I never had the opportunity to study the geology of the Alps under the in-struction of the best German, Austrian and specialists, as Richthofen wished. I have missed such a training later during all my travels in Asia, particularly in Tibet. Life is too short. {Tiessen 1933, p. 76.]

Ferdinand von Richthofen, then president of Germany's main geographical society, was an extremely influential man in European geography, and he helped Sven Hedin gain the audience and the scientific recognition he had sought ever since his childhood inspiration from reading about the achievements and witnessing the extraordinary popular success of Nordenskiöld. By opening to Hedin the pages of the *Verhandlungen der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin* (here abbreviated VGEB) and the *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin* (abbreviated ZGEB), Richthofen gave him a formidable platform to spread his writings to Europe's geographers and convince future publishers and backers of the exceptional character of his endeavours and personality. He also introduced him to many of his colleagues and friends with high positions in German scholarly or political institutions, often let him be the centre of attention of the society's conferences and honours (see, e.g., VGEB 24 [1899], p. 459) and wrote him letters of recommendation, notably to Albert Brockhaus, who would remain Hedin's German publisher for the next five decades (Brockhaus 1942, p. 8). As Hedin recognized, thanks to Richthofen he was "particularly treasured by the geographic circles of Berlin" (Tiessen 1902, p. 159).

The "lost letters" and the Berlin Geographical Society archive

Albert Brockhaus was probably Hedin's main correspondent, at least until 1920, followed -by a distance- by Richthofen.[11] While the two-decades-long exchange between Hedin and Brockhaus had been carefully recorded in the two men's archives and published by Suse Brokhaus in 1942, the exchange between Hedin and Richthofen, as published by Ernst Tiessen with a long introduction and extensive comments by Hedin in 1933 under the title *Meister und Schüler*, is lacunary (Thiessen 1933). Hedin stated more than once that he treasured the letters he had received from illustrious contemporaries (Brockhaus 1942, p. 292), but he also made it clear that the most important pieces of his collection were the letters he had received from Richthofen (Hedin 1938, p. 43). In characteristic fashion, reasserting his respect for Richthofen was also an occasion to lament the loss of other items of great value: his own letters to Richthofen, whose content he remembered particularly well decades later when he referred to them in *Meister und Schüler*.

Yet, contrary to Hedin's own assertion, it turns out that almost all of those letters, published and unpublished, can be retrieved now. A handful of them had been published as dispatches from his early expeditions in the 1890s. Since Richthofen was heading the Berlin Geographical Society, it was not difficult for him to have Georg Kollm, editor of the society's publications, include in them materials he believed to be of interest for geographical research. Hedin's letters were published primarily in the VGEB, the proceedings of the society, but later on some of them were published in the ZGEB, the main journal of the society. Publishing letters as travel-narratives was something Hedin was already used to in the middle of the 1890s. In June 1890, he had published 26 letters as a diary of his travels in Persia in Scandinavian newspapers, something he mentioned to Richthofen in his 19 July 1890 letter from Tehran. In Sweden, his diary was published by *Aftonbladet* and in Norway by *Aftonposten* (Odelberg 2008, p. 78). Granted, *Meister und Schüler* and the Stockholm archives show that Richthofen sent many letters to his student, whereas the letters from Hedin published by the Berlin Geographical Society were few. Hedin might have decided that to republish his own letters which had already appeared made no sense, and thus there was no point in even mentioning them.

Quite early into Hedin's career, he and his sister Alma began to keep a very detailed record of both correspondence and publications. It is therefore surprising to read Hedin's assertion about the loss of the letters. Ernst Tiessen, the editor of *Meister und Schüler*, was certainly familiar with the society's publication and with Richthofen's life and work, but quite possibly neither he nor Hedin knew where to look for the letters.[12] Alternatively, might it be that Hedin's lament at the loss was a pose? If so, to what purpose? To deny the scientific or personal importance of those documents, that shed light on the early development of his reputation and career, or simply because he wished to honour Richthofen by publishing only his letters? This question remains open.

The letters which Hedin said were lost can be found in the Archive of the Berlin Geographical Society. The Society still exists, but its archive is not as extensive as might be expected given the Society's standing as one of the oldest academic geographical institutions in Europe. Now stored in the *Handschriftenabteilung* (Manuscripts Department) of the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin under the *Signatur* "Nachlass 339," the archive consists of an informal catalogue made of two thin folders, containing only rough lists of documents, and a few boxes with correspondence, notes and documents of various interest, which do not correspond exactly to the aforementioned lists. Among those are documents of great value for the history of geography such as pieces of correspondence between Alexander von Humboldt and Aymé Bonpland, as well as attendance lists and proceedings from the early days of the Berlin Geographical Society, many of them in Carl Ritter's own hand. Part of Ferdinand von Richthofen's correspondence is here too, but not including the archive of his work on *China*, which had been kept by his publisher Dietrich Reimer and disappeared when the company's building was destroyed by airstrikes during the Second World War (Zögner 2003, pp. 37-38).

Hedin's letters are not separated from the other documents of the "Kasten 4," but they are all signed by Hedin on their last page and signalled on their first page by the name "Hedin" written with a red pencil.[13] They were sent from various locations in Persia, the Russian Empire, India and China as well as Stockholm and Berlin between 1890 and 1905 and constitute the most sizeable exchange of letters found in Richthofen's correspondence archived in Berlin -- 14 letters accounting for a total of about 140 pages. The originals of the letters published as *Briefliche Mitteilungen* (epistolary communications) in the VGEB and the ZGEB following their reception by Richthofen, as well as the letter sent in 1890 by Hedin from Constantinople at the beginning of his journey to Iran, cannot be found here.[14]

I have reconstructed an overview of the exchange from 1889 to 1905 using all the materials in my possession. More letters are probably missing as well as telegrams and short messages exchanged between the

two men when both were in Berlin, but I have chosen to mention only messages whose existence is proven. I also chose to include the *Reiseberichte* (travel dispatches) published in the VGEB and the ZGEB even though it was not always clearly indicated that they were originally letters or part of letters sent to Richthofen, as was explicitly mentioned in the case of the aforementioned *Briefliche Mitteilungen*. Even though the VGEB published news of Hedin received from the Swedish explorer Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld, I have not include correspondence involving Nordenskiöld, who used the letters he received from Hedin to inform Richthofen and the Berlin Society of Hedin's progress during his long journeys.[15]

When juxtaposed to the letters sent to Hedin by Richthofen and published in *Meister und Schüler*, the letters found in the Society's archive complement the few letters previously published in the VGEB and the ZGEB and thus help us get a better understanding of this long epistolary exchange.The correspondence helps demonstrate how the interaction between Richthofen and Hedin had a deep influence on the modern history of European exploration in Central Asia.

Overview of the reconstructed exchange

The letters are arranged by date in ascending chronological order, with the place of writing and the publication and/or archival location where they are to be found (abbreviations listed below in bibliography). R to H = Richthofen to Hedin; H to R = Hedin to Richthoften. The newly discovered letters in the Berlin archive have been highlighted in bold face.

R to H, Berlin, 27 November 1889. Tiessen 1933; RA
R to H, Berlin, 21 December 1889. Tiessen 1933; RA
R to H, Berlin, 17 April 1890. Tiessen 1933; RA
H to R, Constantinople, [?..] 1890. *Missing*
H to R, Tehran, 19 July 1890. SB
R to H, Niederdorf, 02/09/90 R to H. Tiessen 1933; RA
H to R, Samarkand, 4 November 1890. SB
H to R, Stockholm, 16 May 1891. SB
R to H, Berlin, 02 August 1891. Tiessen 1933; RA
R to H, Berlin, 10 April 1892. Tiessen 1933; RA
R to H, Berlin, 01 July 1892. Tiessen 1933; RA
H to R, Berlin, 8 July 1892. SB
R to H, Berlin, 03 January 1893. Tiessen 1933; RA
R to H, Berlin, 10 May 1893. Tiessen 1933; RA
H to R, Stockholm, 12 August 1893. SB
R to H, Berlin, 17 December 1893. Tiessen 1933; RA
H to R, Margelan, 14 February 1894. VGEB 21 (1894): 218-20, accompanied by report "Beobachtungen über die Wassermenge des Sir Darya im Winter 1893-1894," published in VGEB 21 (1894): 150-65.
H to R, Kashgar, 18 June 1894. ZGEB 29 (1894): 289-348, including itinerary table, meteorological report, and toponymic table.
R to H, Berlin, 21 July 1894. Tiessen 1933; RA
H to R, Kashgar, 26 October 1894. VGEB. 21 (1894): 584-85
H to R, Kashgar, [..] November 1894. ZGEB 30 (1895): 94-134
H to R, Buksem am Khotan-darya, 17 May 1895 (+Kashgar, 29 June 1895). VGEB 22 (1895): 539-57
H to R, Kashgar, 30 November 1895. ZGEB 31 (1896): 346-61
H to R, Khotan, 1 June 1896 (+ Nachschrift 9 June 1896). ZGEB 31 (1896): 295-345.
R to H, Berlin, 01 January 1897. Tiessen 1933; RA
R to H, Berlin, 14 May 1897. Tiessen 1933; RA
H to R, Stockholm, 31 May 1897. SB
R to H, Berlin, 05 June 1897. Tiessen 1933; RA
R to H, Berlin, 13 October 1897. Tiessen 1933; RA
H to R, Stockholm, 24 July 1898 H to R. SB
R to H, Berlin, 12 December 1898. Tiessen 1933; RA m
R to H, Berlin, 07 April 1899. Tiessen 1933; RA
R to H, Berlin, 14 May 1899. Tiessen 1933; RA
H to R, Jangi-köll, 25 February 1900. VGEB 28 (1901): 77-81
H to R, Termilik, 28 October 1900. VGEB 28 (1901): 81-86
H to R, Tjarkhlih, 28 April 1901. SB
H to R, Leh, 28 March 1902. SB
R to H, Berlin, 26 April 1902. Tiessen 1933; RA
R to H, Berlin, 23 October 1902. Tiessen 1933; RA
H to R, Stockholm, 26 October 1902. SB
R to H, Berlin, 18 January 1903. Tiessen 1933; RA
R to H, Berlin, 24 January 1903. Tiessen 1933; RA
R to H, Berlin, 30 January 1903. Tiessen 1933; RA
R to H, Berlin, 07 February 1903. Tiessen 1933; RA
H to R, Stockholm, 17 September 1903. SB
R to H, Berlin, 03 April 1904. Tiessen 1933; RA
H to R, Stockholm, 06 April 1904. SB
R to H, Berlin, 07 August 1904. Tiessen 1933; RA
H to R, Stockholm, 20 May 1905. SB

Annotated summary of the "Berlin letters"

For each letter, I indicate the location and date written by Hedin on the first page. I use Hedin's own German spelling. Sometimes, when he was in Central Asia, he could actually send his letters only weeks after he had finished writing them. All the letters are in Staatsbibliothek, Handschriftenabteilung, Archiv der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin, Nachl. 339, Kasten 4.

***

Tehran, 19 July 1890

This letter contains a detailed account of Hedin's travels in Persia with the court of the Shah, as well

as Hedin's ascent of Mt. Damavand, plans of a trip to Russian Turkestan and an account of his adventurous theft of skulls in a Zoroastrian cemetery with Dr. Hybennet. Most of the content of the letter in itself is therefore nothing new to people familiar with Hedin's work and commentary on his travels in Iran (Wahlquist 2007). It describes events narrated in several publications, including an 1892 article in VGEB, his dissertation on Damavand, his book on the Swedish mission to Persia (Hedin 1891) as well as two chapters of *My Life as an Explorer* (1925, pp. 64-76). In my opinion, it is mainly (if not only) interesting for its context and for the evolution of the relationship between Hedin and Richthofen. It also contains Hedin's claims to have "brought back heaps of notices and drawings" and mentions his plan to publish a "genuine description of the whole trip" in Sweden when he returns. In two successive sentences, he asks Richthofen to help him publicise his exploit ("I would be truly grateful if a provisional news on the ascent could be published somewhere.") and gives a rather unconvincing explanation for his decision not to undertake geological studies in Persia ("We were completely stuck in the camp.") which sheds light on Richthofen's subsequent regrets at his student's lack of interest in geological training.

This letter seems to have had an important effect on Richthofen, who realised that Hedin would never get a proper training in geology but also that he was going to be able actually to undertake important travels in Central Asia. At this time Richthofen wanted to finish his masterpiece *China*, on which he was working since the early 1870's. He was then writing the 3rd volume of *China*, the only one that would eventually never be completed by himself but by Ernst Tiessen. Richthofen's work in the 1890's was dealing more generally with geography as a science, in the wake of his *Aufgaben und Methoden der heutigen Geographie* (1883) and *Führer für Forschungsreisende* (1886) and departed from his original specialty on the geography of Asia with which he had earned his reputation. He probably felt that he had found in Tiessen a talented but somehow unimaginative follower who would have the rigour to continue his scientific work without surpassing it. In Hedin he recognized a spirited explorer and travel writer who could succeed where he had failed. Richthofen believed that even though Hedin did not want to take the time to acquire rigorous academic skills, he could counterbalance his impatience with his already obvious abilities as an explorer and thus bring to fruition Richthofen's original intent of undertaking geographical and historical exploration of Asia.

***

Samarkand, 4 November 1890

In this letter, Hedin briefly relates his travel from Tehran through the east of Persia, notably the Dasht-e Kavir salt desert, where he conducted experiments and observations. Most of the events he refers to are present in the published accounts of his 1890 travels (Hedin 1892). He mentions a fever that made him stay in Asterabad during 10 days, where he experienced a small earthquake, and a village where 120 people had died, 100 of them women who were in the baths. He also recalls that his bread stocks were stolen by jackals while he was camping in the mountains.

Hedin indicates that he was using "Napier's map." Captain George C. Napier from the Bengal Staff Corps, who in 1874 had travelled to the northeast of Persia, was an intelligence officer "on special duty" to survey the area bordering with the territories of the Turkmens, which the British staff feared would quickly be subdued by the Russian army. He wrote reports for the Foreign Office (Napier 1876a; Herslet 1877) and published an article in the *Journal* of the Royal Geographical Society (1876b). Both the volume of reports and the RGS article were accompanied by maps, the former being more detailed (Napier 1876c) and the latter a reduced and simplified version for printing in the journal. It was probably the one used by Hedin, who in Berlin had access to the journals of the RGS but is less likely to have had access to Napier's *Collection of journals and reports* then (it is not in his library in Stockholm either). There is no reference to this map in the catalogue of Hedin's collection made by Philippe Forêt (1999).

Hedin also mentions his travels on the Western section of the Transcaspian railway, and his meeting with the Russian explorer and military officer General Kuropatkin in Ashkhabad. Once in Samarkand, he wondered at the mosques and mederses but already had began to set his eyes elsewhere. A key passage shows how Hedin started to envision the way he would claim Richthofen's legacy of travels in China and researches around the Lop-Nor question and benefit from his direct influence while making a name of his own:

> Now I have pushed the goal of my travels further East and I will next go to Kashgar. Through Tashkent, Khujand, Kokand, Margelan, I will take a troika to Osh and I will go from there via Ghulja and Irkeshtam through Terek Davan. General Kuropatkin does not consider those travels impossible: I will only probably already find a lot of snow, I have already seen snow, but in Tashkent I will get hold of furs, tents, weapons and provisions for 10 days. When I arrive in Kashgar, I do not know what I will do. But I will never take the same path twice. If it

is possible I will go to Lob-nor to find the Chinese lake. It will probably be difficult at this time of the year. Thank you very much for your kindness that you wish to include a report in the *Verhandlungen*; unfortunately I do not have enough time for it at the moment.[16]

The last three pages of the letter are devoted to personal considerations about his plans for Christmas, his wish to come back to Berlin soon, and his satisfaction with the 445 pages of notices he wrote and 150 sketches he drew on the way from Tehran to Samarkand.

***

Stockholm, 16 May 1891

This shorter letter shows a more and more confident Hedin depicting his various occupations to Richthofen: he had just finished working on his translation of Nikolai Przhevalskii's travels, and was working on his book on the Swedish mission to Persia before preparing the account of his own travels. Hedin gives Richthofen a dense summary of his trip back from Kashgar, interesting details about his encounters with imperial figures of Central Asian exploration, diplomacy and espionage such as Bronislav Grombchevskii, Pavel Lessar, Francis Younghusband, Nikolai Petrovskii and Father Hendricks and reveals his hopes for the future, before concluding commentaries on the exploration of the polar regions by Nordenskiöld, Nansen and Drygalsky. Most important is Hedin's appraisal of this first expedition as his apprenticeship in exploration: "With this journey, I have at least learned generally how to travel in Central Asia and what is necessary to get there. And this is why this journey is of prime importance for me personally."[17]

***

Berlin, 8 July 1892

This short letter (2 pp.) is of more limited interest, even though it shows a less triumphant and more vulnerable side of Hedin's personality. Apart from his grateful words to Richthofen for the recommendation written to introduce him to Albert Brockhaus, it consists mainly in a discussion of Hedin's eye disease. At 27, he was already suffering from a crisis of iritis similar to the one that would stop him in the middle of his third attempt at climbing Mustagh Ata in August 1894.

***

Berlin, 15 August 1892

In this letter, Sven Hedin, recalls how, relieved from his eye problems, he travelled to Halle (13 July 1892) to submit his doctoral dissertation on Damavand (Hedin 1892). During a few weeks, while the dissertation was successively read by the professors, he prepared for the exam. On the 28th, he was invited to sit the exam, with which Hedin was satisfied: "Everything went very well, quite remarkably philosophy too."

He was examined in philosophy by Rudolf Haym (1821-1901), a philosopher who had written about German unity, Hegel, Schopenhauer, the Romantic school and Herder. It had been planned that he would be examined on Schwegler's *Geschichte der Philosophie* (1848), but he also had to choose to study the work of one particular philosopher. Hedin chose to study "Cartesianus" (Descartes, who had finished his life in Sweden) and "worked day and night with his writings." Last but not least, Haym also asked him about his interest in oriental philosophies:

> When, the day before the exam, I had to give Prof. Haym the list of what I had read, it impressed him terribly that I had also read the religious philosophy of Zoroaster and the moral philosophy of the Persian poet Saadi. He stopped short and said laughing, while examining me with his eye (like Prof. Kirchhoff, he has only one eye): "*I* do not know that. So you are going to instruct me. We are also going to discuss Zoroaster during the exam."

The geography and geology exams with professors von Fritsch and Kirchhoff were not a problem either, even though he confessed that

> Prof. Fritsch gave me only a few questions about historical geology that I could not answer. He was satisfied with the exam. Professor Kirchhoff was naturally kindness personified. He not only helped me during the whole time I spent in Halle by word and deed but also led me around the neighborhoods of the city when he found that I was spending too much time preparing philosophy. The two weeks of exams in Halle have left genuinely pleasant and unforgettable memories.[18]

***

Stockholm, 12 August 1893

Hedin explains that he has had to undergo an iridectomy on the 28 April 1893 but that four days later, he started to feel intense pain in the other (right) eye. He had to spend two months in dark rooms to ease the pain of the iritis; hence his publication plans as well as the preparation of his next trip had been delayed. However, by then he had obtained almost all of his instruments, as well as an extraordinary amount of financial support:

> The economic question is happily solved. The King has given 5000 Kr., the Nobel brothers 8000; I have obtained the remainder in sums of 1000 and 2000 or less from various private people in Stockholm and

Göteborg, so that the overall total now amounts to 22700 Crowns or 25000 DM. I had counted on 30000 Kr. and the King has in fact said that he will procure what is lacking during the next year. In any case, I have much more than Potanin or Roborovskii and Kozlov.

Hedin is also satisfied with the official passes and promises of help that he received from Russian and Chinese authorities and says he is now waiting for his health to improve: "During the sickness, my constitution has indeed been ruined by morphine, atropine, cocaine, salicylic acid, natron, etc."

Last but not least, Hedin explains his position on the practice of travel in disguise, something attributed to him in *Petermanns Mitteilungen* (Heft VII):

> [It] says, that I wanted to travel disguised as a Persian merchant. It is of course completely erroneous. In my statement in Stockholm I said that I wanted to try to enter Lhassa dressed as a Kashgarian. This would naturally be attempted only in very favorable circumstances and only if I could seize the opportunity to walk the last days of the journey with a caravan of merchants from Leh. It is indeed a minor consideration and I cannot take any risk with the record of my expedition.[19]

***

Stockholm, 31 May 1897

Hedin expresses his gratefulness for Richthofen's "great and friendly interest with which you have followed me before, during and after my journey." He shares Richthofen's view that his travels through the Pamir took more time than they should have and could have turned him away from his actual goal, Tibet, but he is happy with the results of his explorations and subsequent journey, which he describes over five pages, and already thinks about the next expedition, in which he wants to bring a "physicist" and a "naturalist."

Richthofen was particularly interested in this letter, which he annotated with geographical coordinates and to which he replied from Berlin as soon as 5 June 1897, asking for detailed information and stating his belief that Hedin will have a good travelogue to publish:

> You will have many details to give us, as you have already done with your letters full of information, and I rejoice at the idea of reading the account of your journey. You combine the interest for the people and for all the branches of geography with a good scientific understanding. Beyond that you possess the humour that is so important to make an exciting story.

Richthofen also advises Hedin not to wait to to write his travelogue:

> A travelogue must be written energetically immediately after the return journey. Then the impressions are still fresh and the view is not distorted by many books. The best is to write "from the guts" without being preoccupied with what others have already said or how others have interpreted this thing. [Tiessen 1933, pp. 113-14.]

***

Stockholm, 24 July 1898

This letter provides glimpses of Hedin's greater and more explicit ambitions, both on a scientific and a personal level. He asks Richthofen for his support in his opposition to Kozlov on the topic of Lake Lop-Nor. Richthofen had contradicted Nikolai Przhevalskii twenty years earlier when the Russian explorer claimed to have found the location of the lake. Hedin's travel observations confirming Richthofen's theory, which had eventually been accepted by Przhevalskii in 1885, were now being contradicted by Petr Kozlov. Hedin, who knew the work of Przhevalskii very well for having translated it into Swedish and had travelled to the same places as Kozlov, hoped for Richthofen's support, but the latter was busy preparing his book on Shantung as well as the international geographical congress of 1899 and did not mention the topic in the letter he sent Hedin five months later. Was Richthofen too busy to reply? Was he reluctant to get involved in this controversy again? Did Hedin overestimate the importance of the controversy? Later events tell us that Hedin did not give up on the matter, as his discovery of Loulan in 1900, a city that Chinese records located on the banks of a big salty lake, definitely confirmed Richthofen's explanation and helped Hedin formulate his "wandering lake" theory (Hedin 1940).

The rest of the letter consists mainly in Hedin's observations about his economic success ("Now I get for the book [as a minimum and for the first edition only] about 80.000 RM."), along with some recognition of the downside of exploration stardom: "It is not a pleasure to travel to America, but who knows when again I could have the opportunity to make 25000 dollars in five months!"

Despite its respectful tone, the letter comes across as a manifesto defending his way of life and refusal to follow the traditional academic path that Richthofen had wanted him to follow. To his master's insistence that "unfortunately the earth is small: there is nothing left to be discovered" (Tiessen 1933, p. 119), Hedin was defiantly asserting that while he would not cope with the burden of academic life, he could have a successful career in exploration. With a wonderful

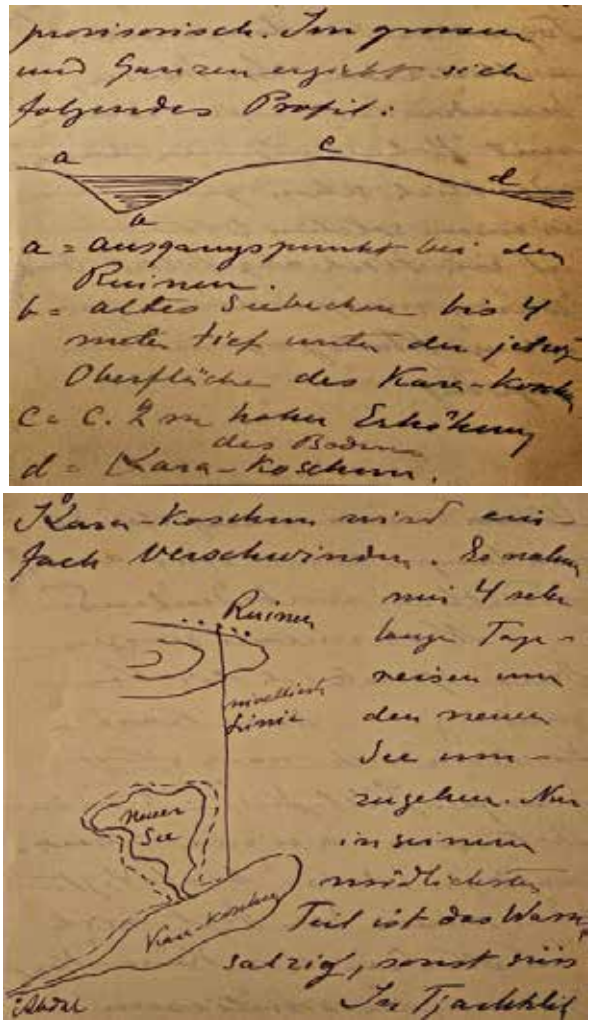
phrase that referred to the opera by Richard Wagner that spread the fame of the 'Fliegende Holländer' in Europe, as well as to Ármin Vámbéry, one of Hedin's role models, who had travelled to Central Asia disguised as a dervish, Hedin summarised his rejection of academic life and his ambition to remain an independent explorer: "I was born a dervish and a Flying Dutchman and love absolute freedom" (Ich bin zu Derwisch und Fliegende Holländer geboren und liebe eine absolut Freiheit.) [p. (5)].

***

Tjarkhlih [Charklik], 28 April 1901

This letter is a rich account of Hedin's travels in the Lop-Nor region with details of his view on the Lop-Nor enigma. Aware that he is not only continuing Richthofen's theory but also starting to offer a new explanation of the puzzle about the lake's location, he describes his "excursions" in the area and provides two sketch-maps showing the relationship between the old lake, the new lake and the Kara-Koschun [Fig. 2; pp.[8-9]]. Hedin bases his theory not only on observations of the physical features but, more importantly, on his surveying of human settlement. He found the remains of four different villages on the shore of the old lake as well as manuscripts and inscriptions on wood tablets which were identified as Tibetan and Chinese. "A Chinese who looked at them here in Tjakhlikh says that they are all dated: name of the Emperor, year of the reign, month and day! He says that they are 800 years old (?!) These manuscripts will surely reveal many valuable secrets."[20] As often with Hedin, archaeological and philological observations combine with physical geography to construct a cohesive scientific narrative, a stage on which to project his own character too. The intertwined relevance of physical geography and philology is something that he quickly appreciated and stressed in his accounts of this discovery, including a letter to Aurel Stein sent a few months later.[21] The letter to Richthofen thus anticipates Hedin's later work on the "wandering lake" and offers insights into his methods in the field. It concludes with personal remarks as well as a characteristically ambitious and optimistic presentation of his next projects of journeys to Tibet and India.

Fig. 3. Hedin's sketches of a profile and map illustrating his observations about Lake Lop Nor.



Leh, 28 March 1902

Hedin has arrived in India, "back to civilisation," and can write to Richthofen again to express his satisfaction about his last expedition:

> I have often thought about how much you would have liked to take part to my last travels. I believe that I have achieved great results and unveiled broad expanses of the mysterious regions of Central Asia. How it would please you to see my great map, 1076 sheets, almost 300 meters long, all painfully enough drawn. The big question is only how such a travel map can be published.[22]

He then narrates his route from Central Asia to India and the pleasure he had to meet Curzon, "a well travelled and capable man who knows Asia so incredibly well," before laying out his plan for the return journey through the Russian Empire.

***

Stockholm, 26 October 1902

Having travelled back to Europe and experienced the pleasure of recognition and fame, it is a triumphant Hedin who took up his pen to write to Richthofen in 1902. After devoting much of this long letter to describing his efforts to publish the several volumes of the scientific results of his expedition and his atlas — enlisting the help of scholars to analyze data and trying to obtain the financial support for the expensive

project — he then elaborates on how his renown had spread:

> In winter, I'll go on a "tournée," à la Sarah Bernhardt. On 7 November I begin here, on the 10th here too, on the 14th in Petersburg, then a couple of cities in Sweden, then Copenhagen, then London, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, Glasgow, Newcastle, before Christmas. For Christiania, the date is not sure yet. (...) At the end of January, the tournée in Germany begins with Berlin, Hamburg, Danzig, Leipzig, Dresden, Frankfurt, Munich, Stuttgart [*added note:* Many other German cities have invited me but time is lacking. Only today, I have received two new invitations that I cannot accept.] — and then Basel, Vienna and Budapest (through Lóczy). Probably Paris will come later but it's not sure.

Clearly the respect he earned from royals inflated his ego:

> I have explained the whole question of Lob Nor to the Tsar, at his own request. He is very friendly to me. For instance he telegraphed to the King: "Dr. Hedin is a fearless and important explorer. He has many friends in Russia. I will provide him with every possible help during future travels." Nicholas.[23]

***

Stockholm, 17 September 1903

Contrasting with the previous letters, this one is almost obsequious. Hedin apologises for not writing earlier, congratulates Richthofen on his new honorific functions and marvels at his "energy and ability to work at the age of 70" which is "much harder than to cross Tibet." The core of the letter is a description of upcoming publications, and a new implicit call to Richthofen to resume his work on the Lop-Nor question with Hedin.

***

Stockholm, 6 April 1904

In the first lines of this long and rich letter encompassing a vast array of personal and scholarly questions, Hedin appears again as a respectful and humble student expressing his gratitude to his professor for the letters he received from him. The first paragraphs also confirm that the key figures of his epistolary network in Berlin were his friends from the Richthofen seminar: Eduard Hahn, Otto Baschin, and Ernst Tiessen.

A long discussion of his last publication then leads to interesting remarks about some contemporary explorers of Central Asia and Tibet which begin with his first written mention of Count Otani Kozui: "Just before the outbreak of the war, a certain Count Otani from Tokyo wrote and asked me about my conditions for a Japanese edition." Otani had already led an expedition to the Taklamakan desert two years before, but had had to leave the group himself. In 1904, he was busy with his duties in Japan but also tried to gather information about the researches of the likes of Sven Hedin before setting up another expedition that would reach Central Asia only in 1908. Otani was a genuine admirer of Hedin as well as Aurel Stein, with whom he corresponded from 1906.

In another paragraph, Hedin criticises the British and Russian policies in the area, notably Francis Younghusband, with whom he got along well and who would provide him with essential authorisations and contacts when he would travel to Tibet a few months later with the extraordinary caravan leader Mohamed Isa, who had previously travelled with Francis Younghusband and Jules-Léon Dutreuil de Rhins (Allen 1982, p. 235). Hedin writes:

> The expedition of my old friend Younghusband does not have my sympathy. Undoubtedly it may become easier to penetrate Tibet, but since I have always lived with the Tibetans in friendship and hospitality, it is painful for me to see this injustice. It is unbelievable cowardice to fire with a repeating rifle at these harmless people who cannot defend themselves.

The methods used by the Russians do not have his sympathy either: "The advance of Kozlov was unwise too. In the long term, bloodshed and violence will not benefit those wild peoples." Last but not least, he expressed his fears that this could only lead to reprisals, and that European travellers like Tafel, Futterer and Holderer could be the victims of such vengeance. But he probably thought about his own projects too, for according to Hedin, Younghusband's violence was not only a moral problem, but a practical obstacle to the later discoveries he was aiming at: "Now it is impossible to travel in Eastern Tibet without the shield of a strong escort. The Tanguts are little more than robbers, but if there is a question of blood revenge too, things can only get worse."[24]

Hedin's criticism can also be explained by his opposition to aspects of a culture of exploration that in many circumstances was still accepting extreme racism and violence towards local populations. Moreover, he believed that British civil servants and officers did not understand Asians, something he would often repeat, notably ten years later when, in a book in which his germanophilia and scientific disagreements with some British geographers had led him to a form of anglophobia (Forêt 2004, p. 194; Heffernan 2000), he criticised the use of Indian soldiers on the Western front: "It is an act of cruelty to them to force them over to the white man's country — to die all to

no purpose" (Hedin 1915, p. 353). Given Hedin's later support of nazism, as well as our current rejection of some "colonial" attitudes that he showed in his actions and writings, it would be wrong to conclude that he was an anti-racist, culturally sensitive traveller, but such statements by Hedin, as well as his permanent support of the use of local names instead of imperial toponyms (such as "Everest") show that appraising his attitude towards native populations is a complex endeavour. It must take into account the context of his time and milieu, of his own political biases and ethnocentric *Weltanschauung* in which Europe, Christendom and Germano-Scandinavian nations benefited from an assumed scientific and moral superiority, but also of the genuine respect that he had for most of the people he met, for their welfare and their culture.

Indeed, Hedin would say how highly he rated Aurel Stein as a researcher and as a person, an opinion he had first acquired by reading Stein's *Preliminary Report* (1901), in which he perceived the author's human qualities and understanding of Asian cultures that many other explorers lacked (Hedin to Stein, 4 March 1902, LHAS, Stein 5/78-95). Hedin's admiration for Stein as a scholar has been noted, but the personal level on which this admiration was expressed has not been stressed (Morin 2012, p. 4). However, the letters sent by Hedin to Stein and a partially published commentary Hedin submitted to the RGS in 1909[25] show that Hedin, despite his strong character and tendency to seek honours for himself, totally revered Stein, and made no mystery of it, both publicly and privately. In 1904, the two had not yet met, and Hedin was therefore exaggerating slightly when telling Richthofen of his — then only epistolary -- relations with Stein: "I know Dr M.A. Stein very well. He is a splendid man" (Dr M. A. Stein kenne ich sehr gut. Er ist ein prächtiger Mensch.) (pp. [5-6]).

Describing the work he had been undertaking in Stockholm in the year since his return, notably the preparation of his *Scientific Results*, Hedin detailed the list of his collaborators, notably "the good old Himly." Karl George Friedrich Julius Himly (1836–1904), a German philologist who had translated Chinese materials for Richthofen during the preparation of *China*, had joined Hedin's team a few months before to be in charge of the decipherment of Chinese manuscripts and the descriptions of Chinese maps (Cordier 1904, p. 624). Hedin noted: "He will be busy with that for one year and a half, but he complains very often about his health." Himly never finished this project, because he died only a few weeks after this letter, but his work, resumed later by August Conrady (Conrady and Himly 1920), was also a strong element of continuity between the researches of Ferdinand von Richthofen and those of Sven Hedin. Here we see similarities to the way Aurel Stein assembled a team of experts (Sims-Williams 2009; Aurel Stein 2012): Hedin and Stein, the two leading explorers of Central Asia in the early 20th century, both developed tight networks of philologists and scientists around them and each envisaged his own position no longer as that of a polymath covering very diverse scientific fields on his own but as that of a project manager with scientific initiative and a strong leadership building a framework to combine the expertise of others.

Even though Hedin had thus learned to work with collaborators, he was still highly critical of the work of others and did not seem to tolerate approximation, particularly in cartographical surveys. He did not think highly of the work of Russian surveyors, felt the superficial explorations of Dutreuil de Rhins and Grenard were of no great interest, and told Richthofen that the cartographical work of Bower and Littledale was useless. "Where those gentlemen have travelled must still be considered *terra incognita*."[26]

Hedin's own cartographical work was anticipating his major achievement in this field, as he wrote to Richthofen, in reference to the ambitious project of construction of a map of the world at the millionth scale spearheaded by the German geographer Albrecht Penck (Pearson and Heffernan 2015):

> Now there is also a question which has occupied us in recent days. It was our intention to add to the *Atlas* a general map of my entire journey on the 1:2.000.000 scale. Now it has occurred to me: would it not be very desirable to show this map of my region at 1:1.000.000? -- in the sense of Penck. When it is convenient, I would be pleased to hear your experienced opinion.[27]

This foreshadowed a project that would be formally prepared only decades later, begun in 1938 and resoundingly announced in Germany three years later as a *Central Asia Atlas* at this scale (Hedin 1941; Haack 1941). The ambitious project was then dubbed by French geographer Emmanuel de Margerie (1941, p. 196), "the most considerable non-official cartographic enterprise of this century." Germany's defeat in the war led to the abandonment of the project, which was taken up and published in preliminary form in 1950 by the American Army Map Service and actually completed and published in Sweden in its final form more than a decade after Hedin's death (Hedin and Ambolt 1966).

On a trivial note, Hedin laughs off Richthofen's request to see him travel to the South Pole, a very fashionable destination for ambitious explorers in those years, and says that he works so much he does not have the time to find a partner.

***

Stockholm, 20 May 1905

The final letter sent by Hedin to Richthofen is of limited interest beyond the particularly friendly tone that had become the norm between them. Hedin, who was about to set on a long journey to Asia, was not expecting the death of his master, who was supposedly not in bad health. However, the letter conveys quite strongly the idea that Hedin, while relishing the idea of being Richthofen's successor in Asia, and letting his pride show, was no longer trying to please him by copying his style. Having told him about his work in Stockholm and his plans for what was to become his most famous and controversial expedition, Hedin indulged in lyricism to conclude his letter: "And then my destiny leads me out again to the last white spots in Asia" (und dann führt mich mein Schicksal wieder hinaus zu den letzten weissen Flecken in Asien) (p. [8]). Those were the last words he wrote to Richthofen.

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Conclusion

Some of the letters found in the archive of the Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin offer interesting insight into the relationship between Sven Hedin and his "Meister" Ferdinand von Richthofen, from 1890 to 1905. They do not shed a new light on the nature of Sven Hedin's travels, research and life, as most events mentioned had already been described in texts published in various languages and under various formats during Sven Hedin's own life. Nor do they change the way we could look at the "filial" relationship between Richthofen and Hedin, something known through the letters published in the relatively unknown but fascinating *Meister und Schüler* and Hedin's subsequent commentary in that volume as well as in his other autobiographical writings and in more recent biographical literature published in German, Swedish and English. However, the 14 letters found in Berlin help refine our view of Hedin as an ambitious young geographer, a rising explorer with an intense desire to earn the respect of a man who seemed to value scientific accuracy more than adventure. It seems that Hedin not only wanted to obtain Richthofen's approval, but also did his best to gain the German geographer's respect and to make him proud of him. Richthofen was not a man of many words, not one people could befriend easily. What is known of his personality through biographical accounts and his own publications and unpublished letters tends to indicate that very few men received more praise from him than did Hedin. The widespread view that Richthofen had been disappointed by Hedin can largely be counterbalanced by the fact that his initial disapproval did not last long and that his friendship with Hedin grew stronger when the young Swede made his own reputation as an explorer without forgetting his professor and his scientific ambitions and legacy.

Nothing testifies to that better than a review of Hedin's *Scientific results of a journey in Central Asia*, published in the *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin* in 1905. In this 5-page article that has never been translated or commented on, despite the fact that it was probably the last text written by Richthofen before his death in October 1905, one of the great geographers of the 19th century offers a scientific appraisal of his student's scientific work with words that betray more than the esteem in which he held his work, and further consecrate Hedin as his heir. In this encomium, Richthofen, whom Hedin called "the man who, more than anyone else was my guide in the deserts of Asia" (Tiessen 1933, p. 145), wrote:

> The time of the first filling in of the white spots, which for forty years occupied a great expanse on the maps of the interior of the continents, is now over. But what still matters is to continue the work of discovery, to build the knowledge in detail, and simultaneously to deepen it scientifically with the current means of research. There is no field more rewarding for such an activity in the next decade than the central region of Asia, where Przhevalskii had paved the way and where others followed him, but only after the first isolated efforts, the general outlines had been laid out. …. Sven Hedin, who seems to have been born with the desire for audacious and fresh travel, who, at an early age, practiced in the Middle East the art of fruitful journeys, and who has laboured through the requisite degree of scientific, technical, and linguistic education in order to undertake larger endeavours, has followed his powerful inner desire (*Drang*), setting himself the task of casting more light on Central Asia.[28]

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About the author

Felix de Montety (School of Geography, University of Nottingham) is writing a doctoral dissertation on the role of languages in European geographies of Central Asia in the 19th century. His scholarly interests include the modern history of geography, cartography and linguistics as well as the historical geography of Iranian and Turkic languages. E-mail: <felixmontety@hotmail.com>.

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LHAS Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Stein Collection 5/78-95

RA Riksarkivet (Stockholm). Sven Hedins Arkiv, Korrespondens, Tyskland, Richthofen, 490.

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Notes

1. A systematic bibliography that introduces the most important of his books and some of the studies about Hedin is Waugh 2001, which is now available in a slightly updated electronic version. An earlier comprehensive bibliography is Hess 1962.

2. See also Sven Hedin's post-war account of his Nazi connections and unapologetic justifications of his support to Hitler (Hedin 1951); in addition to the aforementioned biographies and publications by Hedin himself, see Mehmel 2000.

3. On Imperial Germany's colonial rise and Richthofen's actions in particular, see Osterhammel 1987, Steinmetz 2007; also, Marchand 2009, pp. 153-56.

4. For recent publications from his correspondence, see *Lessing* 2000 and *Unkrig* 2003. On the archival sources, see, e.g., Weber 2012.

5. This book must be considered in the context of Richthofen's 100th birthday in 1933 and the publication of tributes by former students and colleagues including Defant, Krebs, and Penck. See Richthofen 1933, Drygalski 1933, and an earlier appraisal of Richthofen as a teacher by Philippson 1920.

6. On the history of the term, see Waugh 2007; Chin 2013; Rezakhani 2010; and de Montety 2016.

7. For more on Richthofen's life and legacy, with additional bibliographic references, see Kolb 1983; Stäblein 1983; Broggiato 2012; and Wardenga 2007.

8. On the Muslim revolt, see Kim 2004. Richthofen's own account can be read in a letter sent on 12 January 1872 from Shansi province to Walter Pearson, Secretary of Committee of the General Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai (Richthofen 1903, pp. 103-08).

9. Richthofen met Josiah Dwight Whitney (1819–1896) in California and worked with him for several months. They developed a long, friendly relationship and exchanged dozens of letters. Richthofen addressed Whitney in his letters as his "dear professor."

10. Richtofen to Hedin, 3 April 1904; Tiessen 1933, p. 138. Even though the letters Hedin received from Richthofen which were published by Tiessen are now in RA (Stockholm), I have not examined the originals and quote from Tiessen's edition here and subsequently. The translations of the letters (all in German) are mine.

11. Brockhaus 1942 p. 292: "Von niemand habe ich so viele Briefe wie von FAB. Sie müssen auch eine ganze Menge von mir haben. Von mehreren Berühmtheiten habe ich Briefe: Kaiser Wilhelm, Hindenburg, Kitchener, Stanley, Reclus, Alfred Nobel, Nordenskiöld, eine ganze Masse von Richthofen."

12. I have not yet been able to look at the letters exchanged between Tiessen and Hedin in the Swedish archives (RA, Sven Hedins Arkiv, Korrespondens, Tyskland, Thiessen, 499), but they might shed some light on the roles they played respectively in the publication of *Meister und Schüler*.

13. Since the only letters with names annotated in red in those boxes are letters received by Richthofen and because parts of Hedin's text that can be identified as important to Richthofen (notably sentences about the Lop-Nor question) have been underlined with the same pencil, it is possible that the annotations could be in Richthofen's own hand.

14. Richthofen mentioned the last of these in a letter to Hedin a few months later (Richthofen to Hedin, 2 September 1890 (RA, Sven Hedins Arkiv, Korrespondens, Tyskland, Richthofen, 490).

15. See, e.g., a letter sent by Hedin from Schah-yar to Stockholm on 24 February 1896 that is quoted in VGEB 23 (1896).

16. The translations here and from the other letters are all mine. In the notes which follow, I transcribe all the unpublished letters from Hedin's original text in German. While Hedin was completely proficient in this language, his letters, particularly those sent when he was away from Europe, contain some irregular grammatical forms and orthographies. While I have chosen to maintain the outdated but at the time correct orthographies as they are in the MSS, I have corrected the obvious errors and careless mistakes to make the text more readable. I have not modified the orthography of the Turkic, Iranian or Chinese place names mentioned by Hedin in the German text, which often differ from modern German transcriptions of those names. The English translation of those excerpts tries to use the transcriptions of those names most commonly used now and does not attempt to retrieve the orthography of Central Asian place names in use in geographical literature in the early 20th century.

The German original (pp. [7-8]):

Jetzt habe ich das Ziel meiner Reise weiter gegen Osten vorgeschoben und werde zunächst nach Kaschgar gehen. Über Taschkent, Chodschent, Kokand, Margelan fahre ich mit Troika bis nach Osch und gehe von dort über Gultscha und Irkestam durch Terek Dawan. General Kuropatkin hielt diese Reise gar nicht für unmöglich[:] ich würde nur schon ziemlich viel Schnee finden. Schnee habe ich doch früh gesehen, werde mich aber in Taschkent mit Pelzen, Zelten, Waffen und Proviant für 10 Tage ausrüsten. Als ich in Kaschgar glücklich angelangt bin, weiss ich nicht was ich unternehme. Denselben Weg gehe ich aber nie zwei Male. Finde ich es möglich werde ich nach Lob-nor gehen um den chinesischen See zu finden. Wahrscheinlich wird es doch schwer während dieser Jahreszeit. Herzlich danke ich Ihnen für die Güte einen Bericht in den Verhandlungen einnehmen zu wollen; ich habe leider jetzt nicht Zeit dazu.

17. The German original:

Durch diese Reise habe ich wenigstens gelernt wie man überhaupt in Centralasien reist und was dort für die Ausrüstung zu kriegen ist. Und deshalb ist die Reise für mich persönlich von grösster Bedeutung.

18. The German original [pp. (2-3)]:

Als ich am Tage bevor dem Examen dem Prof. Haym aufgeben sollte was ich gelesen hatte, imponierte es ihm riesig dass ich auch die Religionsphilosophie Zoroasters und die Moralphilosophie des persischen Dichters Saadi getrieben hatte. Er stutze und sagte lächelnd, indem er mich mit seinem Auge (er hat wie Prof. Kirchhoff nur ein Auge) betrachtete: "Das kenne aber ich nicht. Da werden Sie mich belehren. Wir werden uns doch auch über Zoroaster im Examen unterhalten."

Die Geographie und die Geologie machte mir keine grossen Schwierigkeiten, nur Prof. von Fritsch gab mir einige Fragen aus der geschichtlichen Geologie die ich nicht beantworten konnte. Er war doch mit dem Examen zufrieden. Professor Kirchhoff war natürlicher Weise die Liebenswürdigkeit selber. Er half mir nicht nur während der ganzen Zeit in Halle mit Rath und That, sondern führte mich umher in den Umgebungen der Stadt, wenn

er fand dass ich mich zu viel mit der Philosophie beschäftigte. Die beiden Examenwochen in Halle haben also lauter angenehme und unvergessliche Erinnerungen geliefert.

19. The German original (pp. [6-7, 10-11]):

Die ekonomische Frage ist glücklich gelöst. Der König hat 5000 Kr. gegeben, die Brüder Nobel 8000, das übrige habe ich in Summen von 1000 und 2000 oder weniger von verschiedenen Privatleuten in Stockholm und Gothenburg bekommen, so dass die ganze Summe sich jetzt auf 22,700 Kronen oder 25,000 RM beläuft. Ich hatte 30,000 Kr. berechnet und der König hat in den That gesagt er will das Fehlende im nächsten Jahre verschaffen. Ich habe jeden-falls viel mehr als Potanin oder Roborovskij & Kosloff…

In Petermanns Mitteilungen (Heft VII) steht es, ich wollte als persischen Händler verkleidet reisen. Dies ist natürlich völlig irrig. In meinem Vortrage in Stockholm habe ich gesagt ich wollte versuchen als Kaschgaroate verkleidet in Lassa hineinzukommen. Dies sollte natürlich nur unter sehr günstigen Verhältnissen unternommen werden und nur wenn ich Gelegenheit kriegen könnte die letzten Tagesmärschen mit einer Handelskarawane aus Leh mitzumachen. Es ist ja dies nur Nebensache und ich kann nicht für das Record meiner Expedition grossen Gefahren aussetzen.

20. The German original (p. [6]):

Ein Chinese, der sie hier in Tjarhklih gesehen hat, sagt, dass sie alle datiert sind, Namen des Kaisers, Regierung, Jahr, Monat und Tag! Er sagt dass sie 800 Jahre alt sind (?!). Gewiss werden diese Manuskripte viele wertvolle Geheimnisse verraten.

21. Hedin to Stein, 2 January 1902; HAS Stein 5/78-95:

The ancient sites I reached now to the N. from Kara-Koshun belong to a quite different period than Kara-dung, and the MS are Chinese, but they give the key to the Lop-or question and are extremely interesting.

22. The German original (pp. [2-3]):

…[Ich] habe oft daran gedacht wie es Sie freuen wird an meinen Reisen Anteil zu nehmen. Ich habe, glaube ich, grosse Resultate gewonnen und weite Strecken von den geheimnissvollen Gegenden von Centralasien entschleiert. Wie es Sie freuen würde meine grosse Karte zu sehen, 1076 Blätter, fast 300 Meter lang, alles peinlich genau gezeichnet; die grosse Frage ist nur, wie wird so eine Reisen-Karte publiciert werden.

23. The original, with the quotation from the Tsar's letter in French (pp. [13-15, 18-19)]:

Im Winter habe ich "die Tournée" à la Sarah Bernhard. Es ist kein Vergnügen, aber ich muss doch, um meine alten Freunde wieder zu treffen. Am 7 Nov. beginne ich hier, am 10 auch hier, am 14 in Petersburg, dann ein Paar Städte in Schweden, danach Kopenhagen, London, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, Glasgow, Newcastle bevor Wein-achten. Für Kristiania ist die Zeit nicht bestimmt …

Ende Januar beginnt die Tournée in Deutschland mit Berlin, Hamburg, Danzig, Leipzig, Dresden, Frankfurt a/M, München, Stuttgart—und dann Basel, Wien und Buda-Pest (durch Lóczy). Wahrscheinlich kommt auch Paris mit, doch noch nicht bestimmt….

Im Peterhof (25 Juni '02) habe ich die ganze Frage Lopnor dem Kaiser erklärt, auf seine eigene Aufforderung. Er ist gegen mich sehr freundlich. Er telegraphierte z. B. dem König: …"le Docteur Hedin est un explorateur intrépide et éminent. Il a beaucoup d'amis en Russie. Je continuerai de lui donner tous les soins possibles dans ses prochains voyages" Nicolas.

24. The German original (pp. [4-5]):

Die Expedition von meinem alten Freund Younghusband ist mir unsympathisch. Freilich ist es vielleicht jetzt leichter in Tibet einzudringen, aber da ich selbst immer mit den Tibetern in Freundschaft und Gastfreiheit gelebt habe, wirkt es auf mich peinlich diese Ungerechtigkeit zu sehen, es ist mir unglaubliche Feigheit auf diese harmlose Menschen, die sich nicht verteidigen können mit Repetiergewehren loszugehen…

Ebenso unklug war das Vordringen Kozloffs; mit Blutvergiessen und Gewalt geht es an der Länge nicht dies wilden Völker zu gewinnen … [M]an jetzt im östlichen Tibet ohne starke Escorte überhaupt nicht reisen kann; die Tanguten sind ja sowieso Räuber, und kommt noch Blutsache hinzu, wird es noch schlimmer.

25. Hedin's comments were included in a set of responses to a paper Stein had delivered to the RGS, a meeting at which Hedin could not be present ("Explorations" 1909, pp. 269–71). An unexpurged version of Hedin's remarks, containing more praise for Stein as well as criticism of the lack of financial support given to Stein by British authorities, can be found in the Stein archive in Budapest (LHAS Stein 5/78-95).

26. "Die Karten von Bower und Littledale sind unter jeder Kritik; wo diese beide Herren gereist sind, ist das Land noch terra incognita" (p. [14]).

27. "Nun ist es aber eine Frage, die uns eben in den letzten Tagen beschäftiget hat. Es war die Absicht dem Atlas eine Übersichtskarte in 1:2,000,000 über meine ganze Reise hinzuzufügen. Und eben bin ich auf die Idée gekommen: wäre es nicht sehr wünschenswert diese Übersichtskarte meines Gebietes in 1,000,000 zu zeichnen? – im Sinne von Penck. Bei Gelegenheit würde es mich sehr freuen Ihre erfahrene Meinung zu hören" (p. [12]).

28. Richthofen 1905, p. 308):

Die Zeit der ersten Entschleierung der weissen Flecke, welche noch vor vierzig Jahren auf der Landkarte grosse Gebiete im Inneren der Festländer einnahmen, ist vorüber. Aber noch gilt es das Entdeckungswerk fortzusetzen, die Kenntnis im einzelnen auszubauen, gleichzeitig aber auch mit den heutigen Mitteln der Forschung wissenschaftlich zu vertiefen.

Kein dankbareres Feld für solche Tätigkeit gab es noch vor einem Jahrzehnt, als die Zentralgebiete Asiens, wo Przewalski die Bahn gebrochen hatte und andere ihm gefolgt waren, aber doch erst nach einzelnen Richtungen

die allgemeinen Grundlinien festgelegt hatten. …. Sven Hedin, dem die Lust am frischen und kühnen Wandern angeboren zu sein scheint, der die Kunst nutzbringenden Reisens früh in Vorder-Asien geübt und sich dann das erforder-liche Mass wissenschaftlicher, technischer und sprachlicher Ausbildung für grössere Unternehmungen zu ver-schaffen bemüht hatte, folgte mächtigem innerem Drang, indem er sich die Aufgabe stellte, über Zentral-Asien weiteres Licht zu verbreiten.

Berlin's "Turfan Collection" Moves to the Center

Lilla Russell-Smith
Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin

The permanent galleries showing South, Southeast and Central Asian art in the Asian Art Museum in Berlin (Museum für Asiatische Kunst) closed on 10th January 2016 [Fig. 1]. Large parts of the material will not be available to view until 2019, when a new exhibition will open in the Humboldt Forum, in the reconstructed Hohenzollern Palace (also known as the Berlin Palace) in the middle of the city next to the Museum Island, which is to serve as an innovative center for the arts.[1] The Asian galleries of the Asian Art Museum and the Ethnological Museum (both National Museums of Berlin /Staatliche Museen zu Berlin) will be located on the third floor of the Humboldt Forum.[2] Neil MacGregor, who has just retired as the Director of the British Museum, is going to spend about ten days every month in Berlin for the next few years as the leader of the "Gründungintendanz" of the Humboldt Forum. The other two members of this group of intendants are Hermann Parzinger, archaeologist and President of the Prussian Cultural Foundation (Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, which includes the National Museums of Berlin) and art historian Horst Bredekamp (Professor at the Humboldt University, also a partner in the Humboldt Forum).

Central Asia is presently at the heart of the exhibition in Dahlem, with the "Cave of the Ringbearing Doves" (Kizil Cave 123, ca. 7th century) [Fig. 2, next page; Color Plate V] forming the very center. This unique reconstruction of an entire cave temple is the main reason why this gallery in Dahlem has to close almost four years before the opening of the Humboldt Forum. The cave has to be taken apart very carefully, fragment by fragment, prior to further conservation and reassembly in the Humboldt Forum. Luckily the same team of excellent conservators who performed the reconstruction and restored the paintings in 1998–2000 are going to do this work again.[3] The dome of this cave is supported by a steel frame, and this cannot be taken apart again. This large part will have to be transported and be moved into position in the new gallery before the façade of the building can be closed.

Fig. 1. View of the Central Asia Gallery in Dahlem in January 2016

The decision to reconstruct the "Berlin Palace" as the Humboldt Forum was passed by the Bundestag in 2002.[4] When I came to the Asian Art Museum as Curator of Central Asian Art in December 2007, planning was already in full swing. In 2008 we visited all relevant collections in the Asian Art Museum and in the Ethnological Museum as a large team of curators, conservators and specialists, and discussion on how

Fig. 2. Cave of the Ringbearing Doves (Kizil Cave 123) as reconstructed in Dahlem.

to present the collections differently in the Humboldt Forum followed.[5] The Asian Art Museum was both praised and criticized for the beautiful galleries in Dahlem, which opened in 2000 (then still as the Museum of Indian Art, designed under the leadership of then Director, Marianne Yaldiz) after a two-year closure. Emphasis has been on the beauty of the objects, and without the catalogue or an audio guide the average visitor might find it difficult to understand the background to the complexities of languages and religions of the vast areas of the world represented in these rooms. On a personal note however, I shall miss the possibility to look into neighboring displays from the Central Asian gallery, for example on the origins of the Buddha figure in Gandhara [Fig. 3]. In the galleries in Dahlem, emphasis has been on the opening of space — causing anticipation — in contrast to corridors and separated rooms

Fig. 3. View from the Central Asia Gallery towards Buddhas from Gandhara.

with dark walls and spots highlighting the wall paintings and objects until 1998. That display (originally planned under Director Herbert Härtel before 1971) had an element of the unexpected, which made a deep impression on me in 1987, when I visited as an undergraduate student of European art history. This might have been the first step on my personal journey to Central Asian art (which strengthened of course after transferring to SOAS and getting to know the Stein Collection in the British Museum after 1989.)

In the Humboldt Forum we shall also strive to evoke the idea of travelling on the Silk Road. The partial reconstruction of Kizil Cave 8 (known as the "Cave of the Sword Bearers") will form the focus of the permanent display of the objects from the northern Silk Road in a room situated directly under the dome of the Berlin Palace, thereby allowing a greater height than in the surrounding galleries [Fig. 4].[6] Due to its central location, this room will also form the link between the Asian Art Museum's East Asian and South and South-

Fig. 4. Rendering of the future Central Asia Gallery in the Humboldt Forum.

Fig. 5. Stupa, found in Kocho (Gaochang), stone, 5th century CE, III 6838

Fig. 6. Sculptures from Central Asian sites as exhibited in Dahlem

east Asian galleries. Visitors can imagine that they are on an imaginary journey from India to China or the other way round: there will be two entrances to the exhibitions. Coming from the South Asian galleries visitors will be able to learn much about the origins of Buddhism and Buddhist iconography. Key themes such as the stupa will be familiar to them by the time they arrive in this room, where the famous stone stupa found in Kocho will be a key object [Fig. 5]. Coming from the other direction visitors will be perhaps surprised to find Chinese manuscripts and recognize the influence of Tang Dynasty Chinese art in remote areas, such as Kumtura in the Kucha region. The visitors will also have just seen Buddhist sculptures from East Asia in the adjoining gallery. Uygur art -- wall paintings from the Turfan area and paintings on silk and paper as well as embroideries -- will be shown in the two corners closest to the East Asian galleries, with a special section devoted to the unique Manichaean collection. In the corners closer to the South Asian galleries wall paintings from Kizil, demonstrating Indian influence, will be shown, thus continuing the idea of a journey on the Silk Road.

On the two large side walls important unbaked clay sculptures from Shorchuk on one side, and a group of about 50 heads from Kucha and Turfan on the other side will be shown — most of these are currently not on display [Fig. 6]. These faces will also represent the main topic of the gallery: "Begegnungen" = "Encounters" — a fitting subject for perhaps the most central room in this new establishment, the Humboldt Forum, which aims to demonstrate the vibrant coexistence of many religions, languages and cultures from the distant past to the present day. The Silk Road with its network of unique oasis cultures combining the local and the global can be a good model for this. A frequently changing selection of manuscripts, illustrating the variety of languages and scripts will be in the center of the room. As the Turfan Collection is a closed, archaeological collection, this exhibition will concentrate on the early medieval times (ca. 5th–12th centuries with just a few later objects). The Islamic period of Xinjiang will be shown in a gallery in a similar position on the same floor on the other side of the building, occupied by the exhibitions of the Ethnological Museum.

It is interesting to note here that the German expeditions were also collecting ethnographical material. Especially Albert von Le Coq was interested in observing and documenting life in Xinjiang, brought back objects including embroideries and pottery, and

recorded folk songs on wax cylinder. Most important however, are the historical photos that they took not only of the sites, but also of the people. Although these photos have been available on the IDP website for some time, they have been largely unknown until now. Caren Dreyer, who has worked in the archives of the museum for fifteen years, has just published a new book about the Turfan Expeditions, illustrating it with a large number of hitherto unpublished photos.[7] The book is in German, but we are currently exploring ways to translate it into English.

The Turfan Expeditions and the conservation and research aspects will be presented in a new facility in the Humboldt Forum, in an open storage room situated next to the South Asia galleries. The centerpiece will be the reconstructed Kizil Cave 123, which will have to be completed by 2018 for an opening in 2019. Around the cave, which will be housed in a steel structure, in large display cases far more objects will be shown than hitherto possible, including sculptures, wooden artefacts and archaeological objects. Changing "Windows" focusing on specific topics, such as the technology of sculpture making, or the regional arts of Khotan, are also being planned. On the walls further wall paintings from Kizil will be presented.

Using media stations, the visitors will be able to explore aspects of research and conservation work, as well as the history of the Turfan expeditions, the history of the collection in Berlin, including the large-scale damage suffered during the Second World War, the geography of the area and the large historical photo collection. Our official collaboration with China will form an important part of this documentation. Zhao Li, Deputy Director of the Kucha Research Academy spent eighteen months researching in our museum, and this year we shall be hosting Cao Hongyong, Deputy Director of the Turfan Research Academy, and Chen Aifeng, a researcher of the Turfan Research Academy. Chen Aifeng will spend three months doing research in our collections, supported by the "Connecting Art Histories in the Museum" program, our collaboration with the Kunsthistorisches Institut, Florence. The research of Satomi Hiyama, a doctoral fellow in the same program and now postdoctoral fellow in Florence, will be shown on one wall of this room: Grünwedel's drawings will be shown at full scale with the original fragments set into the right areas — thus reconstructing a wall of the "Painters' Cave" (Kizil Cave 207, Fig. 7; Color Plate VI).[8] This is

Fig. 7. Detail of a preaching scene from the Painter's Cave (Kizil Cave 207, ca. 6th century CE), III 9148 b.

just one example of how current research will directly influence the display. Another example is our project on "Medieval wooden architecture from Kocho" supported by the Gerda Henkel Foundation, which is just coming to an end. A publication and a small display in the special exhibition rooms of the East Asian galleries in Dahlem is being planned for July-December 2016. In December 2016 the East Asian galleries will also close, and then we shall devote all our energies to reopen on time in the center of Berlin in 2019. Good bye Dahlem! [Fig. 8].

Fig. 8. Final section of the Central Asia Gallery in Dahlem with view towards the Southeast Asian gallery in January 2016.

About the author

Dr. **Lilla Russell-Smith** is Curator of the Central Asian Collections, Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz. Her publications include *Uygur Patronage in Dunhuang: Regional Art Centres on the Northern Silk Road in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries* (Brill, 2005). E-Mail: <l.russell-smith@smb.spk-berlin.de>.

Notes

1. The part-closure was officially announced at a press conference on 1 December 2015. During the closure we aim to grant access to specialists by appointment only whenever this is possible, especially for the study of smaller objects and manuscripts. Large parts of the wall painting collection will be in conservation and therefore not available for viewing. If you need an appointment please contact me at least four to six months in advance.

2. A large exhibition of the Silk Road objects was first shown in the center of Berlin in 1926–1938. The extent of the tragic loss of material in the Second World War is still being researched today. After the partitioning of Berlin, suburban Dahlem became the home of the West Berlin museums; a new exhibition of the Museum of Indian Art, which had been founded by Herbert Härtel in 1963, opened there in 1971. For the history of the collection up to the reopening in 2000 see Marianne Yaldiz, "The History of the Turfan Collection in the Museum of Indian Art," *Orientations*, November 2000, pp. 75–82. The Museum of Indian Art and the Museum of East Asian Art became the Asian Art Museum in 2006. Information on the Humboldt-Forum may be found at <http://www.smb.museum/en/museums-and-institutions/humboldt-forum/home.html>.

3. For the documentation of the conservation and reconstruction work 1998-2000 see Barbara Hausmann et al., "The Conservation and Reconstruction of the Cave with the Ring-bearing Doves," *Orientations*, November 2000, pp. 83–88; Ulf Palitza and Barbara Hausmann, "Restaurierung und Rekonstruktion 'Höhle mit den Ringtragenden Tauben'," in Toralf Gabsch, ed., *Auf Grünwedels Spuren – Restaurierung und Forschung an Zentralasiatischen Wandmalereien (*Berlin: Koehler & Amelang, 2012), pp. 56–73.

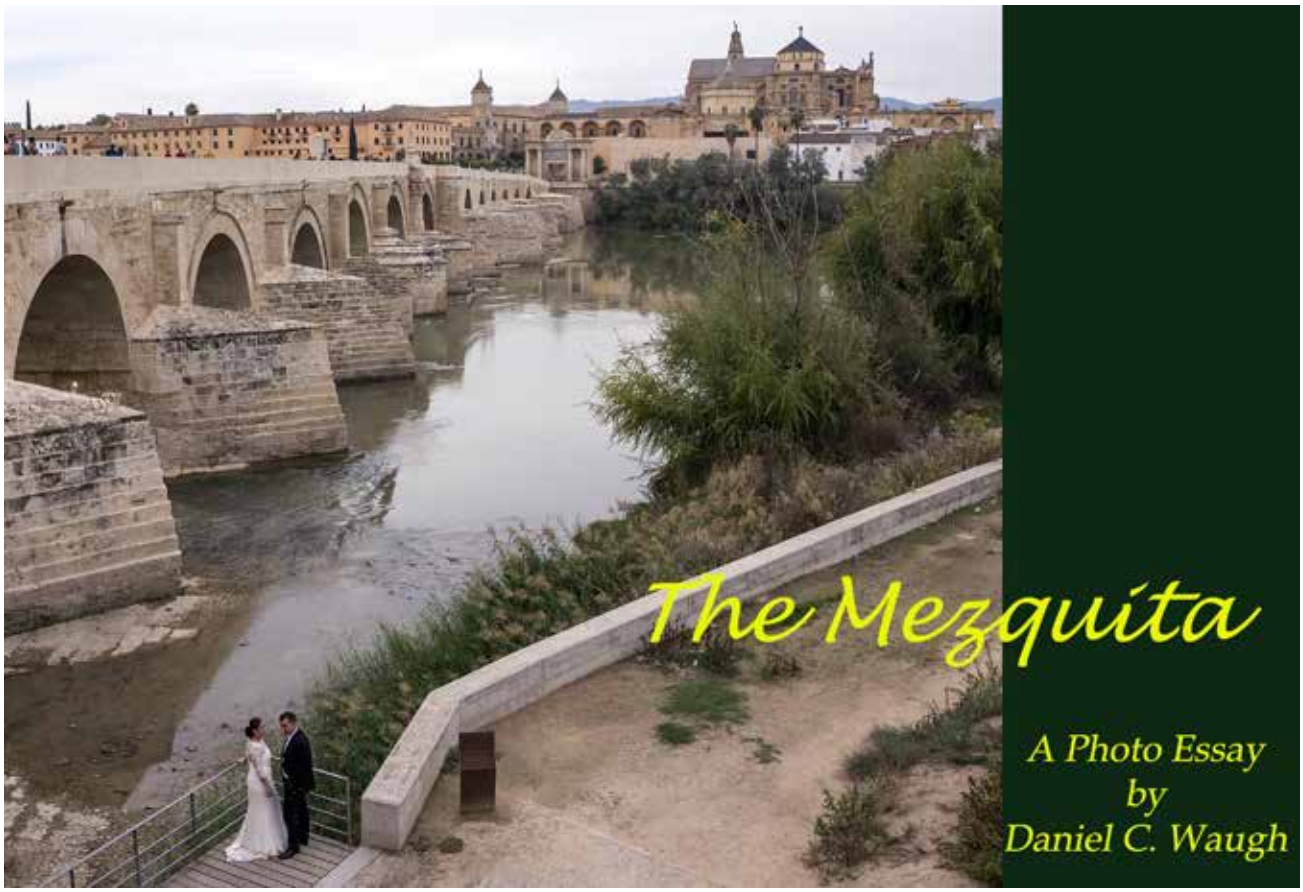
4. For the history of this project see <http://www.preussischer-kulturbesitz.de/en/humboldt-forum/history.html>.

5. Subsequently experimental projects were made possible within the framework of the Humboldt Lab (2011–2015), a completely new initiative to encourage experimentation including exploring ways how to exhibit sacred artifacts and how to show ritual in the galleries. Central Asia was present in one very interesting project organized by Martina Stoye, Curator of South and Southeast Asian Art. Waseem Ahmed, a contemporary miniature artist from Lahore, became artist-in-residence and chose to paint contemporary interpretations of three wall paintings: one from Kocho and two from Kizil. See an article by Martina Stoye <http://www.humboldt-forum.de/en/humboldt-lab-dahlem/project-archive/probebuehne-5/waseem-ahmed-dahlem-karkhana/project-description/#c4420> and documentation including a film <http://www.humboldt-forum.de/en/humboldt-lab-dahlem/project-archive/probebuehne-5/waseem-ahmed-dahlem-karkhana/pictures/#c4626>.

6. A four-year project (2008–2012) has investigated the cave and also resulted in developing a new method of conservation with the help of print technology. (See Toralf Gabsch and Ulf Palitza, "Forschung und Restaurierung an Wandgemälden im Rahmen des KUR-programms," in Gabsch 2012, pp. 56–73). The advantage of this method is the adding of the lost color with the help of a roller resulting in hundreds of small dots: this way the specialist can see exactly which parts are later reconstruction, whilst viewing from a distance, the museum visitor can enjoy the original beauty of the painting (Cf. Fig. 7 in this article). Only wall paintings copied in detail by Albert Grünwedel or documented by photographs taken by the German expeditions can be restored with this method.

7. Caren Dreyer, *Abenteuer Seidenstraße – Die Berliner Turfan Expeditionen 1902-1914,* Berlin: SMB – E A Seemann, 2015.

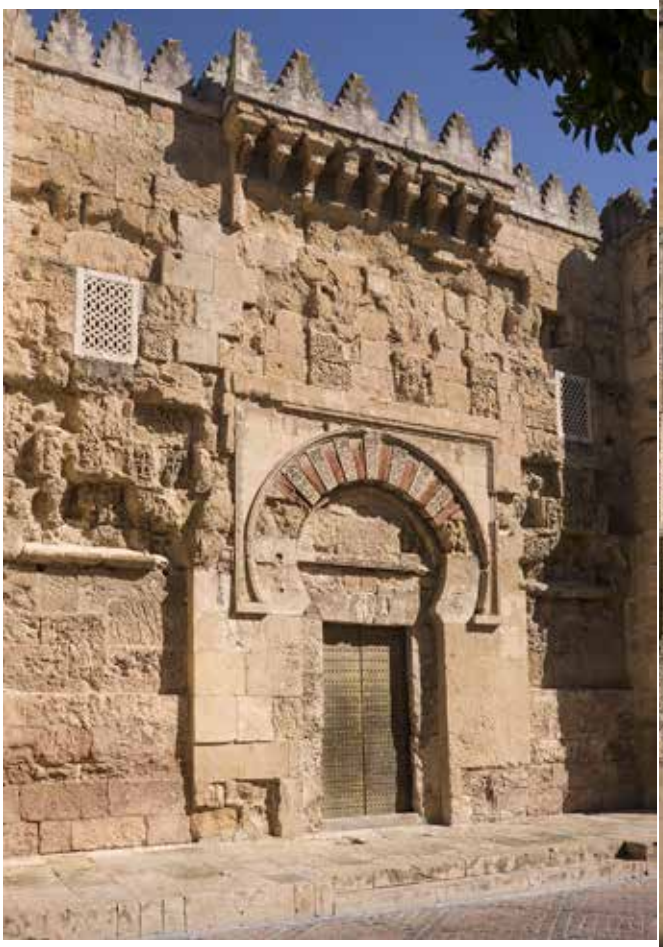
8. See Satomi Hiyama, "The Wall Paintings of the 'Painters' Cave' (Kizil Cave 207)," unpublished dissertation, Freie Universität Berlin, 2014; Jana Bulir and Satomi Hiyama, "Zum Leben erwacht: Die Wandmalereien der Malerhöhle," in Gabsch 2012, pp. 142–51.



To understand the long history of the material remains from what we call the Silk Roads involves a kind of archaeological excavation through the accumulated strata of centuries. Important centers of political and/or religious significance were built and re-built, often leaving little from the earliest structures, but equally often incorporating parts of what had been there before. One thinks, for example, of the great Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, one of the most important early Islamic monuments, built on a site once occupied by a Roman temple and later a Christian Church. When the Umayyads were driven out of the Middle East, they eventually established a new center in Spain under Abd ar-Rahman I, who sponsored in 784-786 construction of the earliest mosque whose reamains can still be found in what is popularly known as the Mezquita (mosque). It was built on a site formerly occupied by a 6th-century Christian church, itself undoubtedly having replaced a Roman structure.The view across the Guadalquivir River toward the Mezquita encompasses a historic bridge with its substantial Roman underpinnings. As was the case with so many of the early Islamic buildings, Abd ar-Rahman liberally borrowed construction materials from various sites, evidenced in many of the surviving columns and capitals. Indeed, in the Mezquita are layers upon layers: several different stages of mosque expansion, the preserved mihrab and its skylight domes dating from the 10th-century reign of Al-Hakam II, and the final expansion on the eastern side completed in 987 under Al-Mansur. With the Christian *Reconquista* in the 13th century, the building became (and today remains) the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption. Christian transformation of parts of the building into a cathedral incorporated one of Al-Hakim II's domes into a Gothic chapel, and the massive expansion of the nave and sanctuary in the 16th century altered the profile of the building forever. Some of the decorative features of the building are in the so-called Mudéjar style, combining Christian and Islamic elements. To the non-expert eye, distinguishing such features from the earlier Islamic ones can be difficult. The current bell tower was erected on the remains of the minaret. The photographs here, taken in October 2015, are intended to evoke a sense of the complexity and richness of this remarkable building, whose size, elegance and architectural innovations make it one of the most important monuments of Islamic architecture and remind us of the significance of Islamic Spain in the cultural history of the Silk Roads. Among its distinctive features are the double-tiered arches, making possible a higher roof than single arches resting on the re-purposed columns would have allowed. The polylobed arches in the area around the mihrab are visually striking, as are the domes with their distinctive rib construction.


20

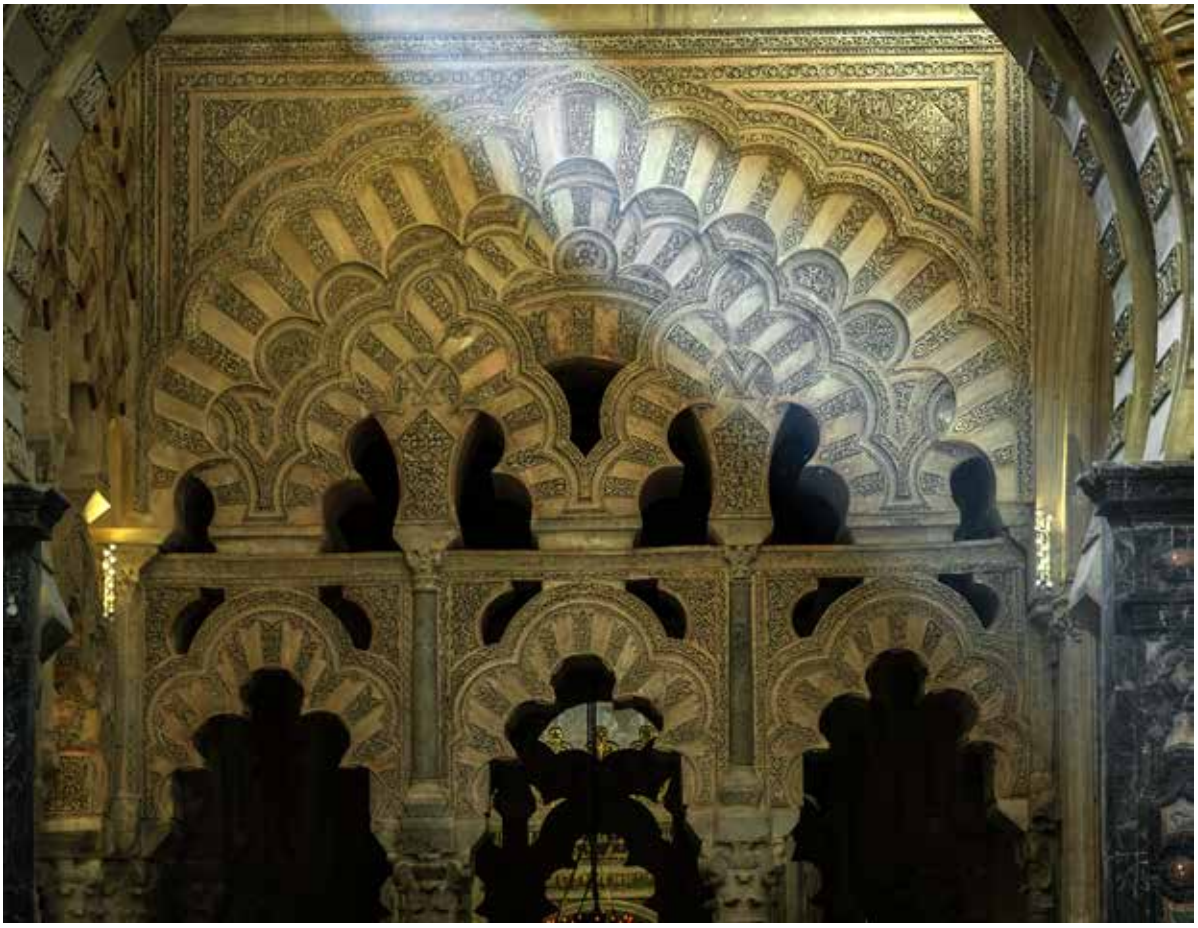
The Puerta de San Estebán, with an inscription dated 855.

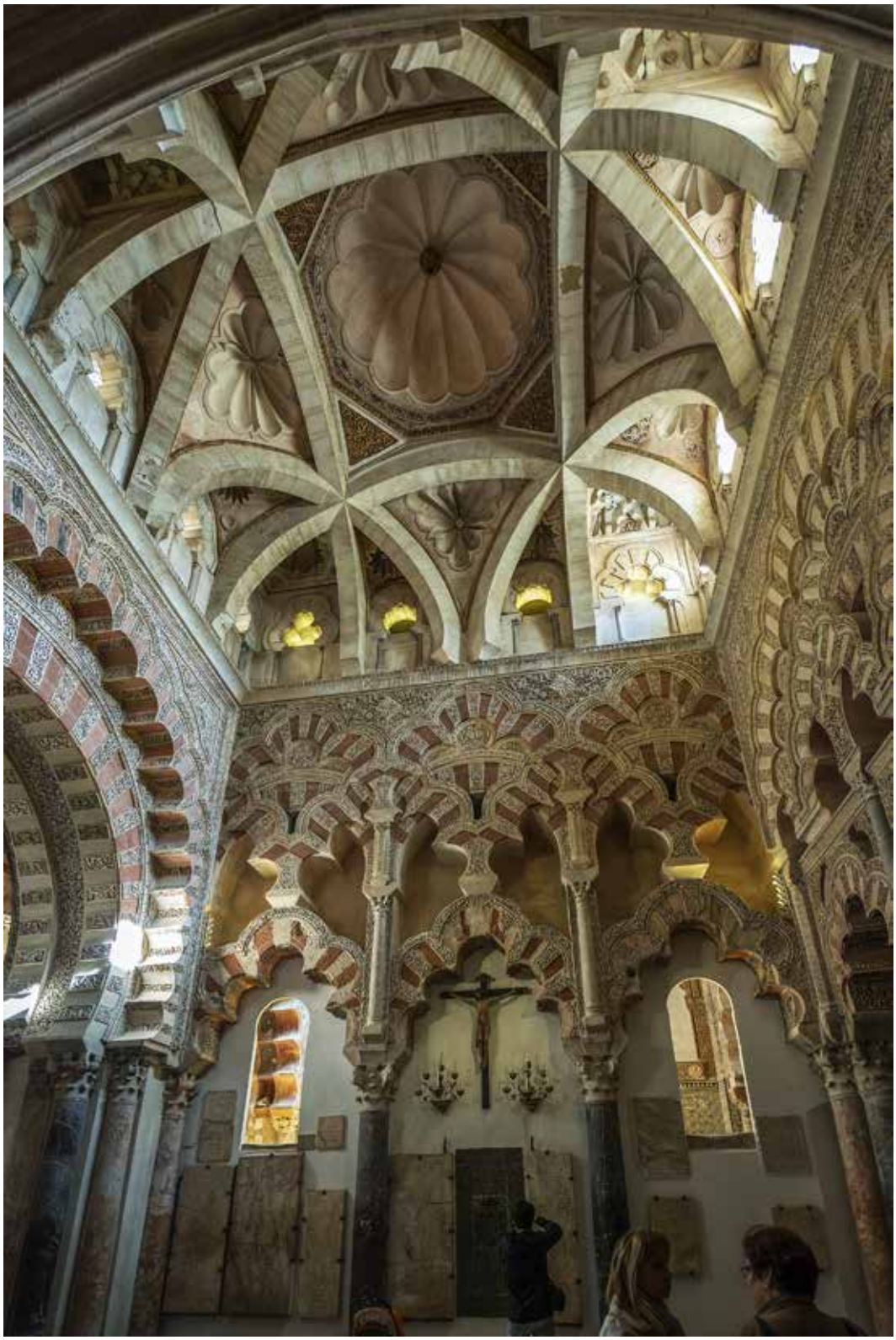


The Puerta de San José.

Mosaic (from the previous 6th-century cathedral?) under the floor of the mosque

A surviving panel of the earlier painted ceiling.





John Vincent Bellezza. *The Dawn of Tibet: The Ancient Civilization on the Roof of the World.* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014. xi + 347 pp.

John Vincent Bellezza's lifelong project to explore and document the religion and culture of Tibet's earliest, pre-Buddhist civilization, is uniquely ambitious. In a series of publications he has used the techniques of archaeology, anthropology and textual scholarship to shed light on this world, obscured as it is by the passage of time and the dominance of Buddhism in Tibetan culture for the last thousand years. Bellezza is particularly interested in the civilization known to Tibetan tradition as Zhang Zhung, which was based in western Tibet, also known as Upper Tibet.

The kingdom of Zhang Zhung appears in Tibet's traditional histories as the enemies of the Tibetan Pugyal kingdom, which expanded its reach under the emperor Songtsen Gampo to include the whole of the Tibetan plateau, as well as swathes of minor Himalayan and Central Asian kingdoms. The *Old Tibetan Chronicle*, a bardic song cycle describing the victory of the Pugyal emperors over their enemies, tells the story of a princess from the Pugyal house who was married to the king of Zhang Zhung; deeply unhappy with her marriage, she began working as a spy, and informed Songtsen Gampo when the king of Zhang Zhung was away from his castle. Songtsen Gampo's successful attack on the castle is said to have brought all of Upper Tibet under his sway. And while the *Chronicle* is no sober historical document, there is little doubt that the kingdoms of Upper Tibet were indeed conquered by the Tibetan empire.

Tibet's Bonpo religion emerged in the 11th century as a reaction to the runaway success of Buddhism in Tibet, incorporating the old rituals of pre-Buddhist Tibet with much Buddhist doctrine and practice, with a few alterations in symbolism and language. For the Bonpos, Zhang Zhung became a mythical lost home, the source of their teachings, which were said to have been translated from the lost Zhang Zhung language (though the original source is located in a region called Tazig, sometimes identified with Iran). Bonpo histories told similar stories to the Buddhist ones, but inverted them, making the Pugyal emperors the villains and the kings of Zhang Zhung the heroes. Thus in Tibet, Zhang Zhung is at the centre of an alternative history, as an Atlantean lost civilization from which came the best of Tibet's religion and culture.

Bellezza's *modus operandi* is not archeological excavation. He travels widely, finding sites that have not been previously explored, and documents them. Thus his publications are surveys of large numbers of sites, which, along with his work on textual sources, form the basis for his theories about the ancient culture of Upper Tibet. Such an approach, similar to that of late 19th century explorers such as Sven Hedin, might be considered outdated or amateurish, but offers much of value in the little known areas which Bellezza has chosen to explore.

Bellezza's travels in Tibet began in the 1980s, but his organized expeditions date from the late '90s onwards. His first major study based on these expeditions was *Divine Dyads: Ancient Civilization in Tibet*, published in 1997 by the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in India. Further accounts of his finds appeared in two volumes simultaneously published in 2002, *Antiquities of Northern Tibet* and *Antiquities of Upper Tibet*, again by an Indian publisher. Bellezza's move into mainstream academic discourse and publishing was marked by the appearance of his book *Calling Down the Gods*, published by E.J. Brill and bringing new textual and anthropological research to his already extensive archaeological work.

The most significant of Bellezza's publications is *Zhang Zhung: Foundations of Civilization in Tibet*, which was published in 2008 by the Austrian Academy of Sciences. This monumental work is in three parts, the first detailing the author's explorations of ruins, caves and other sites in Upper Tibet, with photographs of key features, especially ancient cave paintings and graffiti, and discussion of artefacts found at these sites. In the second and third parts Bellezza links these discoveries with the textual tradition, based on early manuscript sources and the literature of the Bonpo tradition; part two deals with the Zhang Zhung royal cults, and part three with funerary traditions.[1]

The Dawn of Tibet is essentially a synthesis of Bellezza's previous work, particularly his *Zhang Zhung*, into a form intended to be accessible to the general reader. The book begins with an introduction to Bellezza's personal history of exploration in Tibet. He mentions briefly the work of others, including Chinese archaeological expeditions, and the work of American archaeologist John Aldenderfer, but it would have been good to have more information here on how Bellezza's work fits in with that of these archaeologists, es-

pecially the Chinese teams who have been involved in significant digs in Western Tibet in recent years. In any case, Bellezza's work in Upper Tibet has been extensive, and the documentation of his finds has become increasingly systematic. As he states, he has documented around seven hundred sites containing monuments, rock art, or both, and this work forms the basis for the theories about the history and culture of Zhang Zhung that he relates later in the book.

Before that point, the second and third chapters are an introduction to the geography and people of Upper Tibet, with particular focus on the *drokpa*, the tent-dwelling people who live by herding yaks, sheep and goats. Bellezza briefly summarizes his anthropological observations from his time spent among the *drokpa*. Their shamanic practices, performed by ritual specialists known as *lhapa*, have some interesting similarities with the ancient practices found in Upper Tibet. In the fourth chapter Bellezza introduces a historical account of the Zhang Zhung kingdom, based on the literature of the Bonpo school, mythological stories of culture heroes that are dubious sources for the modern historian; nevertheless, Bellezza links these stories in interesting ways with the peoples and sites of Upper Tibet.

In the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters Bellezza summarises his work on the ruined castles and temples of Upper Tibet, burial grounds, and the rock paintings and artefacts that he has documented at these sites. These chapters are, by neccessity, densely packed, bringing together the several hundreds of pages of Bellezza's previous reports. The amount of information gathered and systematized here is admirable, and will no doubt inform future work in this area. Yet these chapters also highlight how little we know about the practices of which these monuments and artefacts were once a part, as Bellezza acknowledges.

In the eighth and ninth chapters, Bellezza turns to the texts in earnest, bringing together the literature of the Bonpos with texts for funerals and other rituals preserved in the Dunhuang manuscripts. These texts do describe practices, which can tentatively be connected with ancient sites and artefacts, and the practices of spirit possession in particular seem to have survived to some extent, or at least to be connected with similar practices among the contemporary *drokpa* of Upper Tibet. In the tenth chapter, Bellezza attempts to draw together the threads of past and present.

There are certainly dangers in this ambitious project, and one finds in Bellezza's text a number of leaps of faith, statements such as the following, on a narrative from a Dunhuang manuscript: "Unmistakeably, this Pt 1136 origin tale alludes to a prehistoric phase in the culture of Upper Tibet" (p. 235). But the fact that the text in this manuscript refers to the practices of ancient times is no guarantee that it is a reliable witness to them. Texts such as these were not written to help the modern historian or archaeologist reconstruct the prehistorical past. Nevertheless, *The Dawn of Tibet* offers much to ponder, and if Bellezza sometimes makes assertions where he should leave questions open, he is always asking interesting questions, and providing materials for possible answers.[2]

Another criticism that has been levelled against Bellezza is that he sometimes fits his source material to his theories, that the Zhang Zhung kingdom is an *idée fixe*, an overarching concept that holds together Bellezza's disparate material. Similarly, he has been criticised for imposing the concept of a monolithic *Bon* religion upon the early ritual material. If there was justification for these criticisms in Bellezza's previous work, in *The Dawn of Tibet* he is careful to distinguish earlier and later uses of the term *bon*, and offers a very good summary of how we should understand the shifting meanings of the term (pp. 7-8):

> In Old Tibetan literature, written circa 700-1000 CE, *bon* denotes specific mythological and ritual traditions, and *bonpo* are the practitioners of those traditions. In this older historical context, *bon* was not the name of a monolithic religion, nor was it a blanket referent for every one of early Tibet's myriad cultural traditions. This sense of the word only came about after the archaic religious and cultural traditions were bundled up into one conceptual framework by Lamaism retrospectively.

There are still considerable obstacles to understanding the early civilizations of Upper Tibet. Early manuscripts sources for ritual practices, such as those from the Dunhuang cave, post-date the assimilation of these cultures into the Tibetan Buddhist imperium. The much more detailed and elaborate ritual and historical literature of the Bonpo school is even later, and is written to present the Zhang Zhung kingdom as a mythological golden age. However, there certainly are many correspondences to be found between the manuscripts, the later Bonpo literature, and the archaeological record, and Bellezza is the only scholar to have attempted to map them in a sustained way. *The Dawn of Tibet* is the best introduction to his work so far.

—Sam van Schaik
The British Library

About the author

Sam van Schaik is based at the British Library, as Research Project Manager for the International Dunhuang Project. His research includes Buddhism in Tibet and Central Asia, the history and study of manuscripts.He is currently a Principal Investigator in the research project, "Beyond Boundaries: Religion, Region, Language and the State" (European

Research Council, 2014-20). Recent publications include *Tibet: A History* (Yale U.P., 2012) and *Tibetan Zen* (Snow Lion, 2015).

Notes

1. Bellezza has also published a detailed online resource, *Antiquities of Zhang Zhung* detailing his explorations and finds which are available online via the website of the Tibetan and Himalayan Digital Library <http://www.thlib.org/bellezza>. Since 2006, Bellezza has established a website <http://www.tibetarchaeology.com>, of which the main feature is a monthly newsletter, *Flight of the Khyung*, containing articles by the author.

2. For a criticisms of Bellezza's methods, based on his work before *The Dawn of Tibet*, see Henk Blezer, "sTon pa gShen rab: Six Marriages and Many More Funerals," *Revue d'Études Tibétaines* 15 (2008), 421–79.

[*All of the following reviews are by Daniel C. Waugh*]

Morris Rossabi, ed. and introd. *From Yuan to Modern China and Mongolia: The Writings of Morris Rossabi*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2014. vii + 701 pp. ISBN 978-90-04-28126-4 (hardback); 978-90-04-28529-3 (e-book).

There are many reasons to admire Morris Rossabi and this collection of his essays, even though, as I shall suggest in conclusion, one might wonder about the rationale for the publication of such a large and expensive collection of previously published material. Starting back with his dissertation project and the string of important articles that began to appear building on it more than four decades ago, as any major scholar should do, he raised serious questions about the then accepted master narratives about Chinese relations with and attitudes toward the outside world. As he explains in his introduction to this self-selected collection of his writings, he then went on to other important (some of them related) topics, including the study of the history of religious minorities in China (specifically Muslims and Jews), the history of the Mongols and in particular that of the Yuan under Khubilai Khan, and then the modern history and current affairs of Mongolia itself. It is rare to find a scholar with this chronogical and thematic breadth of interests with the impressive command of languages and such a well developed analytical acuity in the treatment of his sources. Some might wonder how or why a scholar whose initial specialty had been what we might loosely term "medieval history" would or should end up writing about current affairs. I guess I would argue that choice only strengthens the overall quality and perceptiveness of his work in general. Importantly, his knowledge of the earlier history provides a depth to his analysis of recent events that most commentators on them cannot begin to match.

Not the least of the reasons for admiring his work is his skill in writing not just for stuffy academics but in a way that is accessible and in part deliberately aimed at a general audience. My sense is that, over the years, specialists on the subjects he knows so well have somewhat marginalized his work, because he deliberately avoids indulging in abstract theoretical constructs and thus comes across as somewhat "old-fashioned" in his approach. Analysis and judgment there are, but always clothed in good narrative prose. Of particular value in this regard is his appreciateion of how biography can reveal some of the important historical developments he discusses. He cares about his people and tries to help us understand them. Hence his excurses on Mongol women, on Ming specialists in foreign affairs, his biography of Khubilai, and his evocative sketches of the lives and thoughts of modern Mongols based in the first instance on interviews and memoirs.

Finally, amongst the reasons I so value Morris Rossabi is his commitment to public education. He is one of the most generous of colleagues in this regard, a real *mensch*. He has contributed to many museum exhibits, to educational websites, and to the creation of teaching and learning resources for schools. Scholars should be concerned about sharing with more than the handful of other scholars who work in their fields, but how many display the kind of commitment Morris has shown, which goes beyond the college classroom?

The volume under review contains a number of those seminal essays which require us to re-think older ideas about a lack of interest in China in foreign trade and far-off places. The chronological focus here is the Ming, where it has been all too easy for earlier scholarship to note the brief outward-looking enterprises such as the Zheng He expeditions into the Indian Ocean but then highlight the friction with Timur (Tamerlane) and, as the 15th century wore on, the closing of minds and borders as the Ming allegedly turned inward. Connected with such views is another of the broader misconceptions in historical and popular literature about the Silk Roads: the idea that the opening of the European sea routes to the East at the end of the 15th century led to the rapid and fatal decline of the overland trade. Rossabi's approach to dealing with these issues in the first instance was to mine the Ming sources for evidence about diplomatic and commercial exchanges of the Ming with their northern and western neighbors in the first century or so after the dynasty took power. This evidence then suggests a different conclusion: that the Ming were very concerned about overland contacts in Asia, that there were a lot of diplomatic and commercial exchanges,

and that even as we move into the 16th century, at least the shorter-distance caravan routes in Inner Asia remained active.

To appreciate these arguments, the reader might wish to start here with the more recent overviews Rossabi has written (essays 1 and 6) before going back to the more detailed earlier ones (essays 2-5). Essay 7 is one I always assigned to my students over the years, on the alleged "decline" of the Central Asian caravan trade, since it presents so clearly the argument that internal politics of Inner Asia and the rising protection costs for keeping caravans safe, rather than European maritime ventures, were the real cause for the diminution of the long-distance trade.[1] Those who still glibly place an end to the Silk Road at the end of the 15th century would do well to read this article, first published a quarter century ago.

Having so praised it though, I would offer a few words of warning. As Rossabi himself admits, we have precious little hard data to document the rise and fall of economic undertakings along the trade routes. In the first instance, his arguments here seem to hinge on what is generally known about political disruption and the indications in the Chinese souces that fewer and fewer diplomatic missions were being undertaken. Rossabi also is emphasizing what he sees as a decline in long-distance trade, even though he admits that shorter-distance exchange seems long to have prospered. We might ask (as has, for example, Valerie Hansen in her controversial book on the earlier history of the Silk Roads) how really important (ever) was long-distance trade in an environment that might always have favored shorter-distance exchanges linked into something larger. So I guess I come away from Rossabi's essay wondering whether we might not want to take a fresh look at the subject, examining more closely the evidence we have for the 17th century and beyond about overland routes and products (the ones through southern Siberia and across the northern steppe routes get short shrift here, for example). Moreover, it is essential that we learn more about the interrelationship between the overland and maritime routes. While Rossabi notes that there continued to be strong demand in the Middle East and eventually in Europe for Chinese porcelain, at times he at least seems to imply that the overland routes were perhaps the primary ones involved in its transport. It would be easy to correct that mis-perception. Possibly my concern over such matters and this particular article reflects the fact that I am currently deluged with questions from middle-school students writing on the Silk Roads for History Day. Among those questions is inevitably the one of when the Silk Road ended. I tell them the answer (as I think Morris Rossabi so clearly has helped us to appreciate) is far from a simple one.

Another section of Rossabi's collection that I find of particular interest includes his work on the Yuan and more generally the Mongol Empire.[2] Here his essay on the women in Khubilai's family is a classic, one surely not superseded by a recent commercial book on Mongol women. Rossabi's work on Rabban Sauma's mission to the West is likewise significant, since too often the focus of attention on Mongol-era travelers has been on those who went East, and, moreover, the importance of the Church of the East (a.k.a. "Nestorians") has been under-appreciated.

Of course here, as in the case of the Chinese missions to the Timurids, one would dearly love to have readily available for teaching and learning not just Rossabi's analysis but also at least good excerpts from the texts themselves. Only some of the essential "primary source" texts are currently available on line amd few in the best recent translations; one important one we lack in that form is Ch'en Ch'eng's description of his mission to the Timurid court at the beginning of the 15th century, from which Rossabi translated the key part, a translation available only in print form or at a price.[3]

While I had read through Rossabi's recent substantial book on modern Mongolia,[4] in some ways the most compelling parts of his collection here are the essays based on the research and interviewing he and his wife Mary did there with some of the very interesting figures who bridged the pre-Communist, Communist and now post-Communist periods. The interpretive thrust of Rossabi's work on modern Mongolia has been to criticize severely the impact of "shock therapy" approaches imposed by outside institutions in the post-Communist period. What these life stories reveal is a rather complex mix of the good and bad in ordinary lives in all of the modern era, where one has to be inspired by how people adapted and survived, even flourished despite all the obstacles there were to overcome.

The final section of the book has some short "pedagogical essays" which are useful as a reminder of how all this interesting history might productively become part of our school curricula in an era when it can be very difficult to get students to look beyond their friends on Facebook. These essays though are but a thin reflection of the substantial effort Rossabi has devoted to public education.

So the book is worth having and reading, no question. But who in fact is the audience, and can we expect it will ever be much used? I think a collection like this has to raise serious questions as to the rationale for such books in an era when there is such rapid change in communications that are affecting how people access information, the role and budgets of librar-

ies, and the tranditional economic models that have prevailed in the publishing industry. Brill, which has a distinguished record of being a leading publisher of new scholarship and essential reference works in often "exotic" fields of "non-Western" history, continues to publish some of the most important scholarship for anyone interested in the Silk Roads. By pricing its books at a high level, presumably it can cover costs of small editions bought by few; we can be thankful for this, in an era when university presses seem increasingly to let the bottom line dictate what they will or will not even consider tackling, unless they receive large subsidies. The crunch here comes when even major libraries, their budgets shrinking, often feel they cannot afford the pricey volumes; certainly most individuals cannot. While Brill does offer discounts for subscription, including subscription to e-book versions of many of its publications, the list price for the e-books is the same as for the hard copy ones (in the case of Rossabi's essays a princely $295.00). Yes, one can order electronic reprints of individual chapters at something like $30.00 a pop, but that still is not necessarily going to attract many takers. So, where do we turn? Authors often circulate privately electronic versions of their chapters or essays, which may be the only easy way to obtain them unless one is connected with an academic library that may have a mechanism for obtaining such copies.

Where a book such as this one contains only reprints then, the question arises, are there other ways of obtaining the original articles? In fact, libraries with a wide range of electronic subscriptions (but restricted in access), such as my university library, enable me to obtain on-line nine of the 27 essays. All four of the pedagogical ones are freely available on-line from the sponsoring institutions. And, of course, most (granted, not all) of the rest can be found on the shelves here in Seattle. I suppose for many not near a major library, interlibrary loan is an option, but it comes at a cost. Among the essays in the Rossabi collection, the modern Mongol biographies may be among the most difficult to get, but I suspect that for all but a few readers, Rossabi's good book on modern Mongolia and its tribulations will suffice. So, should I recommend this book to our library? In good conscience, probably not, unless it can be obtained at a steep discount (eventually, I can donate my review copy). That the book has Rossabi's autobiorgraphical essay and a bibliography of his publications is hardly enough enticement. The articles have been newly typeset with continuous pagination, which is nice, but there is no indication of any significant changes from their original content, and the few, largely non-essential photographs in the pedagogical essays are so poorly reproduced as to be of little interest. Having the index here though is a real plus.

At very least, the book clearly cannot serve to make Morris Rossabi's work more readily accessible or better known to most who might wish to read it. Which is too bad, since his still vigorous scholarly and pedagogical contributions are so deserving of our attention. Ultimately, I think open source publishing is the only way scholars may be able to hope in the future that their work really be available to a wide audience, if in fact they care at all about its being so.

– *DCW*

Notes

1. "The 'Decline' of the Central Asian Caravan Trade," in: James Tracy, ed., *The Rise of Merchant Empires* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Pr., 1990): 351-70.

2. It is impressive that his *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times* (Berkeley, etc.: Univ. of California Pr., 1988) has been translated into seven other languages, is available in Braille and has been reprinted several times.

3. "Ch'en Ch'eng's *His-yu fan-kuo chih*: A Translation," *Ming Studies* 1983: 49-60.

4. *Modern Mongolia: From Khans to Commissars to Capitalists* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Pr., 2005).

Hermann Kreutzmann. *Pamirian Crossroads: Kirghiz and Wakhi of High Asia*. Wiesbaden: Harassowitz Verlag, 2015. 559 pp. ISBN 978-3-447-10449-4.

This magnificent volume deserves the attention of anyone interested in the mountain knot of Central Asia that we call the Pamirs. The book brings together the author's work of nearly four decades in the area that encompasses what is now northern Pakistan, northeastern Afghanistan, eastern Tajikistan and southwestern Xinjiang.[1] While it is hard to know these days whether disciplinary labels are very meaningful, Kretutzmann holds a distinguished position as a geographer at the Free University of Berlin. His approach to "geography" combines study of the natural environment, cartography, history, ethnography, political economy, and more. Most importantly, the book distills what he has learned on the ground — the map of his travels in the region between 1977 and 2015 (p. 13) makes one think that no one previously has ever so thoroughly explored the difficult terrain, where he has not just passed through but also spent signficant time living with the Wakhi and Kirghiz in order to learn about their lives.

The historian, and especially one interested in the early history of the region in the era of the so-called Silk Roads, might well ask what here demands attention. The author does invoke Xuanzang and Faxian, but there is little on the (granted, still limited) archaeology in the region. He obviously knows the extensive

work on the rock art and inscriptions that have helped to document the "capillary" routes through the mountains connecting south and Inner Asia.[2] But that is not his subject, although much of what he does provides a comparative perspective which may help us to understand aspects of the early history and interactions across these landscapes.

He provides here what is probably to date the most thorough mining of the record of early (and more modern) European exploration and description, much of it based on archival research.[3] The bibliography contains several pages of citations to the files in London. I had the experience years ago of writing a short essay that drew on some of the British files to paint a picture of trade through this region in the early 20th century, only to discover Kreutzmann had done it all much more thoroughly than I ever could have imagined (in an article I had not seen).[4] Curiously his bibliography here has no explicit listing of text files in most of the other archives he indicates he has consulted. Even though he credits personal information from Russian colleagues, a good deal of Russian material was being translated by the British a century ago, and there are a good many published Russian exploration accounts, I have to imagine there is a lot of interest still to be had from the Russian archives, some of it still locked away from scholarly scrutiny.

In relying on this kind of evidence, he is very explicit about the fact that the Europeans depended heavily on local informants and guides. Wherever possible, he emphasizes the observations and viewpoints they provided. He certainly is aware of the post-colonial criticism of Eurocentric treatments of such material, but then, sensibly, he does not flog that issue and instead takes a practical approach of mining the sources for every last bit of information they contain that cannot be found elsewhere. Readers should be warned though that his approach is to quote in extenso and provide multiple variants from different observers in sequence, even if, arguably, some of what is quoted might well merely have been summarized. A few of the quotations are in German or French, usually with some explanatory summary but no translation. The result is almost overwhelming, but then it hugely enhances the value of the book as a lasting reference source.

His excavations in the archives have brought together a fascinating array of early photographs and sketches and, thanks to Markus Hauser's Pamir Archive Collection,[5] what has to be the most complete collection anywhere of historic maps of the region. Supplementing the historic photos are his own and those of professional photographers who have recently visited in the region. Unlike in many books where captioning to illustrations is limited, here the captions, often long, enhance the value of the images, pointing out particular details that merit attention. This is especially useful with the maps, where for most readers, their significance may not be immediately obvious and where on some, the internal captioning is not in English.

Indeed, one of the pleasures of the book is its design, all Kreutzmann's doing, though his wife, Sabine Felmy, who has also done important scholarship on the region and accompanied him in much of the travel, is indicated as co-editor and well deserves the book's dedication. Such close attention to visual presentation and integration of images both to enhance the general appeal and make the material meaningful for the reader is something other authors and publishers might well emulate. Maps (usually their absence) are a prime example of this. Apart from the historic maps that are reproduced in color and usually occupy full, large-format pages or a two-page spread, Kreutzmann has created numerous maps and diagrams to illustrate specific points. Even though some are small, they are all very clear.

As a geographer (if one thinks of that designation in a now dated and narrow sense of the term), Kreutzmann is certainly interested in the physical environment of the region, where he emphasizes that the ecology of the often widely separated areas which the Kirghiz and Wakhi have occupied in many respects is quite similar. However, what emerges from his study is in fact a nuanced picture of differences. Some of his elegantly designed maps include graphics illustrating regional variations in temperature or precipitation, which may explain the different local economies. He makes it clear though (see his explicit criticism of Ellsworth Huntington's geographic determinism, p. 345) that ecology is less important than "politico-societal developments" in explaining the different trajectories in the histories of the local Kirghiz and Wakhi. The patterns of settlement and interaction that existed before the establishment of modern state boundaries and the imposition of state-sponsored projects of modernization were very different from what then has emerged in modern times. The response to this interruption of traditional patterns has most often been migration; in their new homes, to which Kreutzmann has followed them, the lives of the Kirghiz and Wakhi have fundamentally changed. The livelihoods and to a noted degree, the spatial distribution of those who remained behind also have changed.

Much of the history here then is that of the impact of Great Game rivalries, the settlement of state boundaries, and the quite different emphases of state policies (Afghanistan and Pakistan representing one extreme,

Russia/USSR and China another). He is familiar with various analytical models for understanding the impact of the modern state, but as with the matter of post-colonial criticism, he does not belabor the reader with details of what those involve. Of course some of his material is hardly new (he gives appropriate and ample credit, for example, to M. Nazif Shahrani's pioneering study of the Kirghiz), but then Kreutzmann has updated and extended all the earlier work in part by personal observation and extended interviewing. If one wishes, it is easy enough to skip over the exposition of the often misguided modernization projects such as collectivization, and learn instead from the personal histories and descriptions of daily life here what the result of those projects was.

As a curious traveler on the Silk Roads, where I always have felt experiencing the terrain and the people, even through the distorting lens of modernity, is essential to my appreciation of the earlier history, I have been privileged, however briefly, back in the 1990s, to visit some of the areas that are the focus of Kreutzmann's book (see the photos appended below). I am still in his debt for an introduction he provided that got me into the Baltit fort in Hunza when it was under restoration. I just wish now I could turn the clock back, having absorbed this volume (weighing in at nearly 2.8 kilos, it is far too bulky to stick in a backpack or carry on a mountain bike), since it would have opened my eyes to a great deal that I missed as I visited the Kirghiz in the mountains south of Kashgar, went through Tashkurghan and Dafdar and down through Hunza. Much has already changed just in the last couple of decades, but to his great credit, we now have a solid foundation for any future study of the Pamirs and some of the people who live there.

– *DCW*

Notes

1. His publications, listed in the bibliography, include many articles in journals such as *Die Erde* and *Geographical Journal*, in various edited collections and a substantial monograph, *Ethnizität im Entwicklungsprozess. Die Wakhi in Hochasien* (Berlin, 1996).

2. For example, his valuable edited volume, *Karakoram in transition. Culture, development and ecology in the Hunza Valley* (Oxford etc., 2006) includes an essay by Jason Neelis, who has studied that evidence. I first learned about such studies from papers at a conference in Islamabad which Kreutzmann had brought to my attention in 1995.

3. For those who want a concise overview of explorations in the heart of Asia, I recommend Kreutzmann's "Der weisse Fleck auf der Landkarte—geographische Forshungsreisen entlang der chinesischen Seidenstrasse im Umfeld des 'Great Game'," in: *Reise zur Verbotenen Stadt. Europäer unterwegs nach Chna. Eine Aussstellung der Universitätsbibliothek 16. November-12. Dezember 2004. Katalog*, ed. Rainer Plappert. Erlangen: Universitätsbibliothek, 2004: 75–94.

4. See his "The Chitral Triangle: Rise and decline of trans-montane Central Asian trade, 1895–1935," *Asien-Afrika-Lateinamerika* 26/3 (1998): 289–327.

5. On the Pamir Archive, see Markus Hauser, "Aufbau einter Pamir-Datenbank" linked at his website <http://www.pamir-adventure.com/pamirarchive/hmc2000.pdf>, and his "Das Pamir-Archiv und Karten projeckte im Pamir," in: *Wakhan: Talschaft zwischen Pamir und Hindukusch*, Ed. Robert Kostka (Verlag der Technischen Universität Graz, 2011): 57–65.

Glimpses of the Pamirian Crossroads

The Pamir Kirghiz, here at Subashi near L. Kara Köl, Xinjiang

Photos 1996 by Daniel C. Waugh

Returning to Subashi from the summer herding camp.

Lake Kara Köl near Subashi.

Photos 1996 by Daniel C. Waugh

Kirghiz hospitality, upper Karatash Valley.

Families at Dafdar in the Sarikol region (Taghdumbash Pamir), Xinjiang. A break during the winnowing. Dafdar was founded as a Wakhi settlement in 1894, though today it has a mixed population including Tajiks and Kirghiz. See Kreutzmann, esp. pp. 392–96.

Photos 1995 by Daniel C. Waugh

Looking toward the eastern end of the Wakhan Corridor from Sarikol, south of Dafdar.

The northeastern approaches to the Khunjerab pass.

The challenges of life and travel in the Pamirs: (above) looking toward Gulmit in the Hunza Valley, Pakistan, in 1995, before the landslide of 2010 which continues to block the river, resulting in flooding of the lower town and cutting of the Karakoram Highway.

The approach to Karimabad in the Hunza Valley.

Photos 1995 by Daniel C. Waugh

*The challenges of life and travel in the Pamirs: (left) decaying remains of an old suspension footbridge over the river at Gulmit in 1995; (above) snaking across the upper part of the photo, the perilous footpath (*rafik*) clinging to the cliffs high above the Hunza River not far from Karimabad.*

Akademicheskaia arkheologiia na beregakh Nevy (ot RAIMK do IIMK RAN, 1919-2014 gg.). [Otvetstvennyi redaktor-sostavitel" E. N. Nosov]. S.-Peterburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 2013. ISBN 978-5-86007-764-5. 416 pp. + 88 photo plates.

This large-format official chronicle of the Institute for the History of Material Culture of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IIMK RAN) is the continuation of a two-volume publication issued in 2009 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Imperial Archaeological Commission. The chapters in the current volume, which takes Russian archaeology (at least as practiced by the members of the Institute in St. Petersburg) through the Soviet period and up to the present are at least nominally authored for the most part by the division heads within the Institute. There are surveys of the major regional or thematic divisions (Central Asia and Caucasus, Slavonic and Finnish, Classical Culture…) and surveys of the work of the special laboratories and the archive. Much here is documented by citation of the Institute's archive.

While I have found some parts of this valuable tome even a decent substitute for my usual bedtime fare of detective fiction, readers should be warned that a great deal (notably in the section on Central Asia and the Caucasus) is little more than an annotated listing of what expedition under whom went where and when, usually with some summary statement about its major discovery. For details, one obviously would have to go to published reports, if they exist. What redeems the prose are the many biographical sketches and the unvarnished comments on the tragedies of the period of the Purges and the impact of shock therapy on the budgets after 1991. I have always felt that for us to appreciate fully the monographs and collective studies we read, we really should know as much as possible about their authors. Of course the biographies here are short — about what one would expect in an encyclopedic dictionary — but they are nonetheless revealing about the routes many of the famous (and also many lesser-known) archaeologists in St. Petersburg took to arrive at a prominent place in their profession.

Comments about individuals can be surprisingly frank, witness the treatment of Mikhail Konstantinovich Karger (1903–1978), one-time head of the Institute, who is known for his big volumes on the excavations in Kiev and his work on Novgorod. The judgment seems to be that he was and still is respected for his scholarship, at the same time that he was a pluperfect SOB in his dealings with colleagues and especially the underlings whom he exploited and did not credit when he incorporated their work into his own. An example of the latter is Marianna Vladimirovna Malevskaia-Malevich (née Dement'eva) (1918–2011), daughter of a *sibiriak* and a French woman, who first studied in the ballet school in Leningrad, and while she never became a ballerina, "her uncommon grace never left her even in her old age" [redkostnoe iziashchestvo ne izmenialo ei dazhe v glubokoi starosti]. She completed the work for a *kandidat* degree in the history of architecture but never defended the dissertation, not for its lack of quality. In fact, Karger in essence preempted the defense by incorporating a lot of it in his volumes on Kiev, never even mentioning her in those books. She was not the only one of his "assistants" whom he never would let off the leash to publish their own work. After the appearance of his first volume, she finally quit his tutelage and then managed to carve out a career working with other noted scholars and independently, leaving her mark on the study of the architecture of the 13th and 14th centuries.

Of course in the Stalin years, most promising careers were derailed, all too often ending tragically. Among those arrested in the 1930s were S. I. Rudenko, M. P. Griaznov and S. A. Teploukhov. The first two survived (Rudenko because his knowledge of hydrology was put to use when he was sent off to work on the infamous White Sea Canal) and went on to produce extremely important work in the archaeology of Central Asia and southern Siberia. Teploukhov, who had done significant excavation in, e.g., Mongolia, committed suicide while under interrogation in 1934. In 1936, Karger, who had been working with G. F. Korzukhina in Novgorod, was with her accused by Novgorod colleagues of destroying artefacts, although it appears to have been a trumped-up case mainly so that the Novogorodians could get rid of the obnoxious Mikhail Konstantinovich. N. N. Voronin (later known for his work on Vladimir-Suzdal' architecture and at the time Korzukhina's husband) intervened on behalf of the accused, but what seems to have saved them, as Karger later would recall probably with some glee, was the arrest of their accuser. Thus Karger finally received his *kandidat* degree (which the affair had postponed). He served as a volunteer during the War in the *politotdel* of the 8th Army outside Leningrad; perhaps it is significant that one of the photos in the book shows him in his military uniform.

There is much more here to be learned about the Institute and its history (I have but skimmed parts of the book). Readers should be warned though that it is in a sense a very narrowly focused volume. Important as the Institute was and is, it has been only one of many organizations in the Soviet and post-Soviet period doing archaeology in that former imperial space. So, for example, we learn about the beginnings of the excavations in Sogdian Panjikent (Tajikistan) inaugurated by

IIMK archaeologists, one of whom, Valentina Raspopova, continued to work there when the direction of the excavation was turned over to her husband, Boris Marshak, based in the Hermitage. What Marshak accomplished is left for the Hermitage to tell. There are only occasional hints here about the sometimes strained relations with the equivalent Academy of Sciences Institute of Archaeology in Moscow. The book laments the breakup of the Soviet Union, which then meant that archaeology in Central Asia came under the purview of the academic institutions in the newly independent states. V. A. Alëkshin, writing about the work of his department covering that region, has no qualms about stating that, apart from the value of exchanging scholarly expertise, the contacts between the Russian and non-Russian scholars "will assist in preserving the areal of the Russian language and in the final analyhsis will facilitate the preservation of the cultural and political influence of Russia in that region" [pomogut sokhranit' prostranstvo russkogo iazyka i v konechnom schete budut sodeistvovat' sokhraneniiu kul'turnogo i politicheskogo viliianiia Rossii v etom regione]. Surely a statement to warm the heart of the current Russian head of state. Thus there is little here to reveal what such administrative and political changes meant in terms of accomplishment at the sites whose excavation extended through these decades. Similarly, while various international initiatives are touted — including a growing number of working conferences — we never learn who the foreign archaeologists were or what their Russian colleagues might have learned from them.

In some ways, the most delightful part of the book is the archival photos. A great many are formal portraits of unsmiling academics. There are occasional photos of work at excavations and formal group pictures. Over time though, one sees some of the stiffness soften — hints of a smile or even a broad grin (such as that on T. S. Dorofeeva in 2003, where she is wearing a crown of wildflowers). In 2007, E. V. Bobrovskaia posed with a bunch of vegetation in one hand and the other around the neck of the camel she is hugging. That archaeologists did and do have fun while on a dig, for all of the hard work it involves, is not surprising. And to emphasize the importance of the social interactions and informal gatherings by members of the Institute, the concluding essay is N. V. Khvoshchinskaia's "Ne naukoi edinoi" [Not by scholarship alone] which recalls the many "kapustniki" [student/staff parties] and publishes some of the verses that would be declaimed at such gatherings. The economic pressures following the collapse of the Soviet Union in fact undermined a lot of the collegiality and interaction, only some of which now has been revived, as the insitute members had to scramble to find outside work to supplement their meager salaries.

I for one wish I could have made the personal acquaintance of many of the archaeologists highlighted in this book. Except maybe Karger.

[*Copy of review first posted to H-EarlySlavic 9 October 2015*]

—*DCW*

The Silk Road: Interwoven History. Vol. I. *Long-distance Trade, Culture, and Society*. Ed. Mariko Namba Walter and James P. Ito-Adler. Cambridge Institutes Press; ACANSRS: Association for Centntral Asian Civilizations & the Silk Road Studies, 2015. xxvi + 374 pp. ISBN 978-0-9910428-0-7.

This is a very promising beginning for a new venture, where three subsequent volumes are promised, dealing respectively with Buddhism, Islamic societies, and languages in Central Asia. As an editor, I can appreciate why it took some four years to get the first volume in print, given the obvious attention to detail and, as is hinted, a fair amount of editorial re-writing. The time-line for the subsequent volumes to appear is some six years. I must leave it to others to provide a detailed review, but here are some brief, preliminary observations.

The opening essay ("Mapping the Silk Roads"), by geographer Tim Williams, ostensibly is to introduce the Silk Road mapping project which he has supervised for UNESCO and the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), whose full report is now available on line. His essay here so clearly encapsulates many of the larger questions that anyone interested in the silk roads should ponder, it merits being readily available on-line, assigned to students in the burgeoning number of courses on the Silk Road, and read by those who blythely invoke "Silk Road" for any and all purposes that have nothing to do with whatever it was in history.

Most of the other contributions to the volume do an excellent job of surveying important topics which too often have been slighted in studies of the Silk Roads. While he insists he has limited goals (given an increasingly extensive literature on the Parthians), Leonardo Gregoratti's "The Parthian Empire: Romans, Jews, Greeks, Nomads, and Chinese on the Silk Road" will open new doors in particular because of what it tells us about the Jews. The important and too often neglected Jewish presence on the routes across Asia is the subject of Ulrike-Christiane Lintz's "Judaeo-Persian Tombstone Inscriptions from Djām, Central Afghanistan," which makes available a nice sampling of the actual inscriptions, after contextualizing and

summarizing the body of them currently known. While much has been written on Palmyra and its trade (notably by Michal Gawlikowski, who is generously drawn upon here), Eivind Heldaas Seland ("Palmyrene Long-distance Trade: Land, River and Maritime Routes in the First Three Centuries CE.") not only provides a good overview but contextualizes the subject with reference to ecology and offers new perspectives on the relationship between maritime and overland routes. While her essay is one of the more narrowly focused ones in the book, Rachel Mairs' "Heroes and Philosophers? Greek Peersonal Names and their Bearers in Hellenistic Bactria" serves as a good reminder of how important linguistic analysis and learning about naming practices are if we are ever to hope to fill in some of the lacunae in the more accessible kinds of sources often tapped in Silk Road studies. In particular, she is interested in how these data might enable one to determine the ethnic composition of local populations, but then the cautionary note here is that the choice of personal names may reveal nothing about ethnicity and instead tell us about some other aspect of local culture.

How one might periodize the so-called Silk Road and its history is a matter that calls for serious re-examination. This comes out in Bin Yang's "Cowry Shells and the Emergent World Trade System (1500 BCE-1700 CE)," a somewhat revised reprint of an article first published in the *Journal of World History*. Clearly both in chronological and geographical scope, the use of cowries in exchange and with important ritual purposes as prestige objects was very extensive. Since so much of his discussion concerns their use as money, it would have been helpful to have had at the outset a clear indication of how one might proceed to determine monetarization. One of the loose ends the author admits is so far difficult to tie off with hard evidence concerns how cowries came to be so abundant in Shang China, if the source of them was the Indian Ocean. At most here, he can suggest some vague notion of their being traded over Inner Asian routes.

Michael Laver's "Silver and Silk in Japan's Trade with Asia in the 16th and 17th Centuries" should prod readers to re-consider when and whether the Silk Road came to an end on the cusp of the early modern era and also to recognize that integrating Japan into histories of the Silk Road is a necessity (something that, of course, Japanese scholars have not ignored, even if too often others have).

How one can most effectively introduce ethnographic research into Silk Road history is a good question. Gerald Roche's "The Mangghuer Nadun: Village Ritual and Frontier History on the Northeast Tibetan Plateau" is a model of nuanced interpretation about cultural complexity, clearly informed by theoretical perspectives and an understanding of how to use historical data. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for Djamilya Kurbanova's "The Musical Culture of Turkmenistan: From Ancient Merv to Modern Times" and Borbala Obrusanszky's "Nestorian Christianity in the Ordos in Inner-Mongolia."

One can appreciate the careful editing here, resulting in very readable text and proper bibliographic citation, even if one has to wonder occasionally about omissions of important literature. As an editor, I know that critiquing one's own writing often is a challenge. Mariko Namba Walter, who deserves accolades for the project, might have done better with her own introductory essay. The decision to include a good many illustrations, embedded within the essays, not grouped as an insert, certainly is laudable, though, given the smallish (normal book) format, it would have been better for clarity to have run many of them full page. Also, to reproduce Internet-quality images is not always going to meet the standards of resolution needed for sharp printing.

May the promised next volumes in this series appear without undue delay and prove to be as stimulating as is this first one.

– *DCW*

Susan Whitfield. *Life along the Silk Road*. 2nd ed. [Oakland, CA:] University of California Press, 2015. xx +288 pp. ISBN-13: 978-0-520-28059-5.

Susan Whitfield, the overworked and ever prolific head of the International Dunhuang Project (IDP) at the British Library, was writing the first edition of this book at the time when, late in my career, I was first "discovering" the Silk Road. In the intervening years, where my void in knowledge has gradually been filling, even if one might judge the glass is still largely empty, her perspective on the subject has also been evolving significantly. Not the least of the virtues of her engagement with the subject is the fact that she tries to visit so many of the locations that were important in that long history; in the last 15 years, the scope of her travel has been truly impressive. A personal acquaintance with the geographical and cultural contexts (even if in their modern configurations) contributes a great deal to one's ability to contextualize meaningfully the earlier history. Unlike many who write on the Silk Roads, she also brings to the task an informed sensitivity about how to employ evidence from the arts and objects of material culture.

The distinctive feature of this book is her attempt to create for the general reader a sense of life in earlier times through a series of lightly fictionalized syncretic portraits of individuals who might have then existed. These are "types"—a merchant, an official, a soldier, a nun…-- whose experiences as related here involve encounters with the history and cultures we can actually document from the surviving evidence. So, most of what we have here is fact, carefully researched and massaged to create a narrative. Whereas the first edition (and its paperback reprint) lacked notes, one of the main differences in the second edition is that we now have nearly forty pages of them, providing leads for further reading and demonstrating just how assiduously Whitfield has done her homework. The notes include references to work more recent than the original 1999 edition, reflecting the fact that in the last decade and a half, "Silk Road studies" have proliferated, and the new research is forcing us to re-think some of what we thought we knew two decades ago. Some re-writing in the original chapters incorporates this new knowledge.

The expanding world of Whitfield's Silk Road has also resulted in new chapters here, moving the story beyond her initial East and East Central Asia focus, even though the bulk of the book retains that earlier emphasis. So we open with an Axum merchant involved in the maritime trade through the Indian Ocean, and later we encounter a learned Arab looking at his world from Isfahan, a world that has in fact been documented in some of the important geographical works of the late first millennium. The brief, new epilogue is very different from that in the original edition, pointing the reader ahead into the later centuries of the Silk Road, even though by conscious choice, Whitfield has not altered the focus of the book on the last two and a half centuries of the first millennium. As with the earlier edition, the narrative is enhanced by a good number of well-chosen illustrations, many line drawings by the author depicting original artefacts, others photos, some in color, where the selection now is rather different from that in the original edition. Now, for example, there are several Islamic book illustrations.

In a brief review I wrote of the original edition, I expressed some qualms about its fictionalization, which struck me as somewhat awkward and artificial. In taking a fresh look, I am less bothered by that issue. However, if anything, in the new sections, general readers may be more challenged. While feeling it important to provide the historical documentation in the notes, the author seems also to have fallen into wanting to put a little too much detailed historical narrative into the text. The result is to move away from trying to create compelling personal case histories to more of a textbookish attempt to be sure there are enough definite historical reference points to cover the bases. Of course as a historian, I should applaud this, but I think this runs the danger of undercutting the appeal of the book, which by all accounts achieved her goal, if its adoption in courses on the Silk Road is any indication. Few attempts to distill the Silk Road (whatever exactly that is) for a general audience have been very successful, Whitfield's book being one of those rare exceptions.

In a world where interest in the distant past seems to diminish under the more pressing political and economic concerns of the present (which perversely result in diminishing support for meaningful education in the humanities), we need ever more and more imaginative such attempts to catalyze inquisitiveness about earlier and for most, culturally very different times. Teaching and learning about the Silk Roads thus offers a challenge and a wonderful opportunity.

— *DCW*

Book notices

Written/compiled by
Daniel C. Waugh

Gideon Shelach-Lavi. *The Archaeology of Early China: From Pre-History to the Han Dynasty*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015. xviii + 373 pp. ISBN 978-0-521-19689-5 (hardback); 978-0-521-14525-1 (Pb).

There is a real danger that when a non-expert reviews a book by a distinguished specialist, the reviewer gets it wrong. I trust that in the case of Professor Shelach-Lavi's book, my enthusiasm is not misplaced. The holder of an endowed chair at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, he has published widely on archaeology in China, where he has participated in significant excavations over some two decades. Here he has taken on the daunting task of compressing in a readable way a vast amount of material, recognizing that the pace of new discoveries might force some revision even before the book, which is quite up to date in its references, could reach the market. As he notes, the pioneering and once standard such survey by K. C. Chang (its most recent edition 1986) has been eclipsed by the abundant new scholarship and shifts in interpretation. Shelach-Lavi's book is not the only recent one surveying a large chunk of the archaeology devoted to early China, but one can imagine its merits may make it an essential first stop for anyone wishing an introduction not just to the archaeology, but more generally to the history that antedates the Han Dynasty.

The attraction of the book lies in part in the clarity of its organization and writing, where each chapter forcuses first on largely descriptive sections for specific sites before the author then transitions to often far-reaching analytical generalization. This is history told through material culture and its artefacts, which is, of course, how even non-archaeologists have to approach the subject for the period covered. But, unlike in the work of many trained primarily in history, here we get the archaeologist's perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence for drawing from the material record a picture of social, economic, political and cultural developments. At every step, the author is careful to provide chronologies, maps, and explanations of terms and method. He readily admits that some of his emphases and interpretations are at odds with the views of many others, but he does a good job of justifying his own views.

The guiding threads here are an emphasis on regional and local developments along with an emphasis on wider interconnections and exchange. This then leads him to question assertions that have been common especially in Chinese scholarship concerning the chronology and features of the emergence of any kind of unified "China." On the contrary, Shelach-Lavi asserts, regional variation and complexity are what the archaeological record often document, and the processes by which some kind of uniformity and unity emerge tended to be quite gradual. Not the least of the problems in traditional approaches has been an inclination to read back anachronistically from the later historical records (which often transmitted as "history" what is arguably unverifiable myth). Conventional designations of particular pre-historic "cultures" also come under scrutiny, since, as it turns out, their boundaries are less clearly to be delineated than often is believed. We are continually alerted to the fact that there are significant gaps in the archaeological record, some areas or "cultures" being much more extensively explored than others.

Among the many interesting subjects here is the evidence regarding the development of agriculture, where conventional wisdom about the boundaries between the "steppe and the sown" now clearly need to be re-considered, and certain of the cultures which supposedly had become largely the domain of domesticated agriculture turn out in fact still to have relied very heavily on hunting and gathering. The archaeological record tells us a great deal about the development of stratification and social complexity, even if it may be impossible (or unwise, as it turns out), to try to associate changes with a particular ethnic group or polity. For those not familiar with China's early history, the dramatic evidence about the size of settlements and tombs, the emergence of writing, and the sophisticated and specialized crafts in the Shang period (roughly 1600–1050 BCE) will be of particular interest. The author provides compact introductions to such subjects as the oracle bone inscriptions (which have the earliest Chinese writing) and the techniques of bronze casting.

This is a story which could not be told without lots of images, 234 numbered figures, to be exact. Apart from the maps, there are numerous site plans, line drawings of artefacts, and gray-scale photos. The decision to rely very heavily on line drawings is a good one, since that makes it easy to see relevant detail, whereas, even if the original photos must have been of good quality, their reproduction here occasionally muddies the detail. The images have been carefully chosen to illustrate points in the text, although one drawback, where a good number of artefacts may be in a single drawing, is that their exact meaning or function may not be clear. A general reader will see, say, a lot of different metal objects, but not necessarily take away from the image anything more than a kind of general sense that yes, there were lots of those things in that particular grave and that then tells us something about bronze or iron manufacture. For a work of this scope, there may have been no reasonable alternative, other than long captioning or a lot of notes. Ideally, there might have been at least a few color plates. Smallish b/w photos of some of the terracotta soldiers of the Qin emperor's buried army, chosen to illustrate how in a few instances, they preserve their original bright paint, certainly fail in

that goal, as do b/w images intended to illustrate the effects produced by the extensive use of inlays on bronze objects.

In sum, I came away from reading this book with a much enhanced sense of the history of very early "China" in the era before much of it was really Chinese. And, most importantly, even though I came into this with some acquaintance with archaeological method, I now have a much better idea of what a lot of the key issues are in trying to write that early history. I hope that other general readers of this volume will experience the same and will be inspired to move from this introduction into some of the very rich literature which is listed in the bibliography.

E[l'ga] B[orisovna] Vadetskaia, A[ndrei] V[ladimirovich] Poliakov, N[adezhda] F[edorovna] Stepanova. *Svod pamiatnikov Afanas'evskoi kul'tury. Monografiia.* [A compendium of the monuments of the Afans'evo Culture. A monograph]. Barnaul: AZBUKA, 2014. 380 pp. ISBN 978-5-93957-752-6.

The archaeological discovery of what came to be called the Afanas'evo Culture (after a key site in the Enisei River basin) was one of the defining moments for the study of the Eneolithic and early Bronze Age in Eurasia and continues to provide an important reference point for ongoing research. While there had been some earlier work on what came to be understood as Afanas'evo sites, the first serious determination of the features and chronology was in the work of S. A. Teploukhov published in 1929, only a few years before he was arrested and committed suicide while under interrogation during Stalin's purges. Over the century since Teploukhov's work, there has been a huge amount of new scholarship on Afanas'evo sites, though, as with all too much archaeology, it has not all been published or at least published well. The authors of this book have been among the leading contributors to the field, not only in their own excavations but in publishing parts of that earlier legacy from the archives. The current volume is aimed at bringing together a summary of what has been done at the major sites, thus providing a basis for future work.

After a brief introduction on the history of the study of the Afans'evo Culture, the book contains several chapters organized by region: The Mountain Altai, The Enisei Valley and especially the Minusinsk Basin, the periphery of the Minusinsk Basin, and then the Upper Enisei, Mongolia, China and Central Asia. For each archaeological site there is an essay (some a short paragraph, others extending over several pages) describing what has been done and the main conclusions from the finds and providing bibliographic references. The book is richly illustrated with line drawings: maps, stratigraphy, burials, and their artefacts. The fifth chapter (by Vadetskaia) is devoted to burial rituals in the Enisei region, and the sixth chapter (by Stepanova) to those in the Mountain Altai. Three appendices, by other authors, focus on a particularly important cemetery, Letnik VI in southern Khakassia, on Afanas'evo-type monuments in Eastern Kazakhstan, and on evidence of traumas in the remains from burials found in the Mountain Altai. There is an index list of all the sites covered in the book. A short English summary paragraph is on the reverse of the title page.

The sponsoring institutions—Altai State University, the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the Academy's Institute of the History of Material Culture—are to be commended for endorsing the publication of this valuable volume.

N[ikolai] N[ikolaevich] Seregin and E[lena] V[ladimirovna] Shelepova. *Tiurkskie ritual'nye kompleksy Altaia (2-ia polovina I tys. n.e.): sistematizatsiia, analiz, interpretatsiia. Monografiia* [Turkic ritual complexes of the Altai (2nd half of the first millennium CE): systematization, analysis, interpretation. A monograph]. Barnaul: AZBUKA, 2015. 168 pp. ISBN 978-5-93957-777-9.

Another of the welcome compendia of information on an important group of archaeological monuments in Eurasia, this volume should, as the authors hope, contribute to the further study of sites that may eventually tell us a lot more about the early Turks. The subject here is ritual complexes generally considered to have been created for commemorative purposes but not containing burials, which are to be found in many places in northern Central Eurasia. The Altai Republic, which is the specific region encompassed in this volume (see the map on p. 139), has what is arguably the largest concentration of them The authors indicate that to date more than 300 have been identified; the focus of this volume is on 62 sites that have actually been excavated.

The sites involve enclosures (*ogradki*) marked by lines of stones, which in many cases now have been covered by a "pavement" over the entire surface and the immediately surrounding area. Many of these sites are isolated, but others are found in groups and/or adjacent to other features that may include burials. The enclosures may contain some artefacts (some in small "boxes" inside). Some have indications that probably a stele or post had been erected in the center. Among the most interesting are ones where, generally alongside the enclosure, there is an anthropomorphic carving on a slab (*izvaianie*), with in many cases a straight line of small vertically erected stones (*balabaly*) extending outward.

The book reviews the history of the discovery and study of these sites, then explains with the help of many clear diagrams the classification system adopted for them (following one devised by S. S. Matrenin and D. E. Sarafanov). Subsequent chapters then discuss the various interpretations of what exactly the sites represent, where there is diversity of opinion and the authors have some arguments of their own. It is still difficult to determine what rituals may have been performed at the sites and the degree to which such observances continued over an extended period of time. There is some reason to think that these sites may be analogous to structures that were erected as cenotaphs but which likewise contain no human burials.

The discussion posits a chronology of the development of particular features, starting in the so-called Kizil-Tash era

(2nd half of the 5th and first half of the 6th centuries). What is somewhat unclear to this reader is how that chronology has been established, other than by analogy and proximity with other sites that may be datable from their remains. Hence, one may be left to wonder whether features such as shape, presence or absence of *izvaianiia* and *balabaly*, etc. then are sufficient basis for chronological groupings.

The alphabetically organized descriptive catalog of the excavated sites contains for each a brief description of the history of its exavation and what was found and a bibliograpical reference to published reports. Suggested datings (where they exist) are cited, though in some instances the authors indicate their own, alternative datings.

D[enis] V[aler'evich] Zhuravlev, E[lena] Iu[r'evna] Novikova, M[arina] S[ergeevna] Shemakhanskaia. *Iuvelirnye izdeliia iz kurgana Kul'-Oba v sobranii Istoricheskogo Muzeia. Istoriko-tekhnologicheskoe issledovanie* [Objects of the jeweler's art from the Kul-Oba Barrow in the collection of the Historical Museum: A historical and technological study]. Pri uchastii Evraziiskogo otdela Germanskogo arkheologicheskogo instituta. Trudy Gosudarstvennogo Istoricheskogo muzeia, Vyp. 200. Moskva: Istoricheskii muzei, 2014. 352 pp. ISBN 978-589076-236-8.

The discovery and opening in September 1830 of a Scythian barrow at Kul-Oba on the Kerch peninsula in the Crimea had momentous consequences for archaeology in Russia and more broadly for studies of the ancient world. The royal burials yielded striking artefacts, notable among them a vase whose depiction of what we assume are the Scythians has shaped subsequent perceptions about them.[1] Fortunately, that and a good many of the other treasures were safely removed (the most striking pieces now in the Hermitage Museum), even though the excavation of the barrow by Paul Dubrux hardly would meet any modern standard of archaeology. Unfortunately, as soon as the news spread, the still incompletely excavated burials were robbed, a great many other remarkable objects destroyed (presumably melted down), and some of the lesser finds such as appliqués dispersed on the antiquities market. As a result, the material from Kul-Oba is scattered in a good many museums (some perhaps still in private hands?), among them the Historical Museum in Moscow.[2] On one level, the magnificent volume under review here is intended as a catalyst for the long-needed detailed study and publication of all the Kul-Oba material. Frustrated, it seems, by their inability to prod the Hermitage to work on the larger project, the authors here have gone ahead and produced an exemplary study of the Historical Museum's collection.

The book opens with a brief essay on the history of the Kul-Oba discovery and the dispersal of what the barrow contained. The article is illustrated both with reproductions of some of the 19th-century album plates and with computerized recent topographic models of the remains of the barrow. As the authors make clear, the exact provenance of some of the pieces in the Historical Museum cannot always be determined, even if they were catalogued as coming from Kul-Oba. For each and every piece, they then provide a careful, richly illustrated description and analysis. There is a separate essay on the results of the technical metallurgical analysis, another essay on the techniques employed by the craftsmen (here, in part, experiments to replicate those processes inform the analysis), and then a formal descriptive catalog, illustrated with photos and drawings. Some 50 pages of plates include microphotography of the objects. Lastly, there is an extensive bibliography and a long summary in German, appropriate for a book whose publication was facilitated by the Eurasian Division of the German Archaeological Institute. The photography here is stunning, all in color, and including both the obverse and reverse of all the appliqués, which were created from sheet gold.

One can hope that this book will inspire a series of volumes that will move us beyond the frequent exhibit catalogs and coffee-table presentations of Scythian treasures.

Notes:

1. For an English-language overview of the Kul-Oba barrow, see *Greeks on the Black Sea: Ancient Art from the Hermitage*, ed. Anna F. Trofimova (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2007), pp. 236–49, with excellent color photography of the famous vase and a number of the other striking objects. For more, detailed photographs of the vase, see A. Iu. Alekseev. *Zoloto skifskikh tsarei v sobranii Ermitzha* (Sankt-Peterburg: Izd-vo. Gos. Ermitazha, 2012), pp. 190–93.

2. Some of the Historical Museum's objects were displayed in the German exhibition of Scythian artefacts in 2007–2008. See *Im Zeichen des goldenen Greifen: Königsgraber der Skythen* (München etc.: Prestel, 2007), esp. pp. 282–83, in an essay by Kirill Firsov and Denis Zhuravlev.

R[afael'] S[ergeevich] Minasian / Rafael Minasyan. *Metalloobrabotka v drevnosti i srednevekov'e / Metalworking in Ancient Times and the Middle Ages*. Sankt-Peterburg: Izdatel'stvo Gosudarstvennogo Ermitazha, 2014. 472 pp. ISBN 978-5-93752-578-5.

The author's publications on archaeology and, primarily, on the subject of this book have been appearing at least since 1980. However, since most are in Russian, they undoubtedly have not attracted the attention they deserve. He is a sector head in the Hermtage and the president of a commission on the restoration of archaeological metal.

This substantial and abundantly illustrated volume is an encyclopedic dictionary of terminology and techniques of metalworking. The material is grouped into thematic chapters (casting, modeling, casting molds, cold metalworking… tools, etc.), each containing entries of terms arranged in alphabetical order. For each term, he provides an etymology, and where such exists, descriptive material in a Classical (or in important cases, later primary) text relating to it. One of his important points is that too much of the analysis and description of archaeological metals has been careless in its use of terminology. Since his book in the first instance is addressed to a Russian audience, he insists that if there is a perfectly good Slavic term, it should be used in preference to a foreign calque. However, much of the terminology here

is borrowed, a lot of it from French. It is too bad that he did not provide, at least as an appendix, a glossary which would also give the modern equivalents in other common scholarly languages, since this then would greatly help those of us who read and translate Russian work.

Many of these entries are very short, a few are somewhat quirky (e.g., *oshibka issledovatel'skaia* – mistakes in analysis). However, in many important cases, the entries are long and detailed, generally starting with a review of what has been written about a particular object, class of objects or technique, and then going on to his own analysis based on either his direct observation or what he can discern from photographs. It is rare that he agrees with much of anything others have written either in monographic studies or in annotations to exhibit catalogs. However, he is even-handed in the sense that he criticizes mistakes in some of his own earlier publications as well. His main point in all this is that one must acquire a deep and broad understanding of the techniques of metalworking in the ancient world, and in the first instance this has to be done by what he terms "traceology," the examination of the physical evidence by looking closely at the objects themselves. The various processes by which an object would be produced do leave their traces if one looks closely—information that can reveal a lot about casting, molds, hammering, soldering, etc. Too often scholars have reached the wrong conclusions by focusing on the surviving (or imagined) molds and tools, rather than the finished products. Good photos can tell us a lot. Some of his closeups are very revealing even for the untrained eye; in other cases though, it was difficult for this reader at least to discern what he found to be important evidence. While he is not the first to appreciate the importance of this, he insists that catalogs and analytical treatises should always include photos of all sides of the object in question, not just the obverse.

Appendices include essays on metalworking in the Eneolithic and early Bronze Age, on the Siberian Collection of Peter the Great, and on metalworking among the early East Slavs. There is also an appendix on measuring systems and a brief dictionary listing of the names of documented ancient craftsmen.

If Minasian is right, one comes away rather unsettled to think that so many of the experts over the decades have gotten so much wrong. At very least here, scholars who work with early metal will find specific sections of his book of great interest, as he expounds on Viking-era brooches (he does have an earlier article in German on them), "Greek" gold from Scythian burials, Siberian belt plaques, Chinese bronzes (relying on his observations made when an exhibit from Shanghai was in Russia a few years ago), and much more. Clearly specialists in this field are going to need to take a close look at the book. Whether or not they end up agreeing with him, the odds are they will come away looking at their material with new eyes. Of course it is too bad that only a second title page, table of contents and a longish summary are available here in English for those who cannot read the Russian.

John E. Hill. *Through the Jade Gate to Rome. A Study of the Silk Routes during the Later Han Dynasty 1st to 2nd Centuries CE. An annotated translation from the Hou Hanshu 'The Chronicle on the Western Regions' Updated and Expanded*. 2 vols. Vol. I. Text, Translation and Notes; Vol. II, Appendices and Bibliography. N.p., 2015. ISBN-13: 978-1500696702; 978-1503384620.

A draft version of John Hill's colossal study of this seminal document for the early history of the silk roads first appeared in electronic form on "Silk Road Seattle" over a decade ago and went through a second electronic version before appearing in print in 2009. The current edition, much expanded, had to be printed in two volumes. At least for the forseeable future (Hill is now revising for print publication his draft, annotated translation of the relevant parts of the *Weilue*), this will remain the authoritative analysis of the text. Those who wish to use Hill's work should ignore the on-line version, which will, one hopes, soon be replaced by his current translation, but without all the extensive and now dated notes which languish on the website. Given their size and substance, these two volumes are remarkably inexpensive and can be easily be ordered from on-line book dealers.

Apart from tweaking the translation, he has substantially expanded the annotation here, right down to very recent publications and has incorporated valuable suggestions he has received from experts around the globe. Hill's approach is to quote others' work in extenso, which makes these volumes very valuable as reference works for those who cannot access earlier scholarship. His notes and appendices in some cases are full-fledged monographs in their own right, on the locations described in the original source, on products, on the chronologies and identification of rulers, on the history of early exploration, and much more. We are all in his debt.

Martin Jacobs. *Reorienting the East. Jewish Travelers to the Medieval Muslim World*. Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennnsylvania Pr., 2014. xii + 331 pp. ISBN 978-0-8122-4622-3.

It would be a shame if this book, which I can but briefly note here, were to escape the attention of those interested more generally in the history of the Silk Roads and in the travel narratives which so often draw our attention as "primary sources." With the exception of Benjamin of Tudela, who is treated here in some detail, few Jewish travel narratives get much attention from those interested in that broader history, something which is understandable given the relatively narrow focus of their authors' concerns and the fact that so few of the authors ventured beyond the Holy Land. What Jacobs has to offer though consciously moves beyond the standard approach to "using" travel literature, which has tended to focus on whether or not it contains factual content that then can be used as a source. His concern is to understand the context for each and every account, which often involves in the first instance very specific religious motiva-

tions. If the earlier travelers seem to have been surprisingly open-minded in their dealings with Muslims (much less so Christians), by the Renaissance, attitudes toward Islam had hardened, the accounts thereby becoming much less charitable. An important element here is that the authors tended to write for a domestic audience about matters central to its concerns where descriptions of foreign settings and experiences served largely as rhetorical devices. What we get then is insightful examples of how we might analyze travel narratives, examples in which the Jacobs explicity eschews the simplistic "post-colonial" approaches to such narratives which are largely anachronistic applications of modern dicta to a time and materials about which they have little to say. Said's *Orientalism* and his acolytes are largely irrelevant. If we are going to understand the emphases (yea, biases) of such sources, we can do so only by developing a clear sense of how they were conditioned by their time, place and audience.

N[ikolai] N[ikolaevich] Kradin. *Nomads of Inner Asia in Transition / Kochevniki Vnutrennei Azii v razvitii.* Moscow: URSS, 2014. 302 pp. ISBN 978-5-396-00632-4.

This is a welcome collection of 16 essays, most previously published, some unpublished conference papers. Nikolai Kradin is one of the most accomplished Russian scholars working on Inner Asia, the author of over 400 scholarly works including several books. One of his concerns is to write for a broad audience of those who would learn about the history of Inner Asia. His interests as represented here include theories of state building and nomadic society, archaeology, and anthropology. In recent years, he has been involved on a regular basis in collaborative archaeological projects in Mongolia; aeveral reports on that work have appeared in this journal, including one in the current volume.

The essays here are grouped under the following headings: I. Theoretical Foundation; II. Archaeological Retrospective; III. Historical Dynamics; IV. Anthropology of Transition. The Xiongnu and Liao are of particular interest for Kradin; his anthropological studies focus on the transitions of the modern era.

While at least some of the essays, all published here in English, appeared originally in that language, some apparently have been translated from Russian for this occasion. A lot of important Russian scholarship deserves to reach a wider audience, which makes volumes such as this one particularly valuable.

N[ikolai] N[ikolaevich] Kradin; A[leksandr] L['vovich] Ivliev. *Istoriia Kidan'skoi imperii Liao (907–1125)* [A History of the Khitan/Liao Empire (907–1125)]. Moskva: Nauka—Vostochnaia literatura, 2014. 351 pp. + 17 color plates. ISBN 978-5-02-036566-7.

This volume and a promised second one merit serious consideration for translation, given the scope of their coverage. As the authors point out, even though there is a lot of scholarship on the Khitan/Liao, generalizing works are few. They recognize the continuing huge importance of Wittfogel and Feng's massive treatment, with its careful analysis of the written sources, but well over half a century has passed since it appeared. Whether or not one would agree with Kradin and Ivliev that the written sources have been pretty thoroughly mined by now, in that interim, there have been huge advances in the archaeology and art historical research on the Khitan/Liao. To have a broadly conceived treatment that makes full use of the archaeological record is something we very much need. Both Kradin and Ivliev have themselves been contributing in significant ways to that archaeological investigation.

After a brief chapter on the origins of the Khitans and a review of their political history, the volume takes up cities and settlement sites, burials and mortuary rituals, the economy, crafts and in a final substantive chapter treats more generally society and state. The conclusion is also the text of the several-page English summary. The very substantial chapters on mortuary rituals and crafts are by Ivliev, while the rest is indicated as being jointly authored. In the consideration of state and society though, one can clearly see the hand of Kradin, who has long been interested in theories of state building and approaches to studying nomadic and semi-nomadic polities in Inner Asia and is widely knowledgeable in that literature.

While the citations of primary source texts are genereally from standard Russian translations of them, the authors have used a wide range of scholarship in other languages. Readers not familiar with the Russian system of phonetic transcription of East Asian names will struggle here in trying to recognize, for example, the authors and titles of the many works of Chinese archaeology which are cited. It is not the Russian practice to provide the Chinese characters, and there is no reason to expect that they would use pinyin. In a work of this scope, it is inevitable that some works we might expect would be missing—for example Naomi Standen's important book published in 2007. Lu Jing's valuable dissertation on Liao ceramics makes it into the bibliography, but I did not notice any citation of it in the text.

The book contains several appendices: tabulations of intormation on Khitan settlement sites; on early burials, their orientation and one particular Liao cemetery in Jilin province; a chronological chart of the plans of Liao tombs; a chart of the dimensions of bricks in Liao tombs; tabulations of the sites known as sources for Liao metallurgy and of metalwork found at various Liao sites; two illustrated charts showing the evolution of ceramic shapes; and a table with information on known Liao kiln sites and their production. Much of the book is generously illustrated with good line drawings, maps and some photos; the color plate insert is of good quality. There is a bibliography but no index.

The promised second volume will take up a number of important topics: religion and spiritual culture, ethnic history, relations with other peoples, architecture, art, and more. Were there to be an interest in translation of this major work on the Khitan/Liao, it would involve significant editorial labor: among other things, the citations would need to be re-cast to bring them in line with normal non-Russian practice, with references to both the original texts and to other translations of them. It will be interesting to see what the

reaction of specialists is to this work as it stands, though my guess is that few of those who might want to read it can do so in Russian.

Igor' Vladimirovich Antonov. *Srednevekovye bashkiry* [The medieval Bashkirs]. Ufa: Kitap, 2013. 192 pp. ISBN 978-5-295-05716-8.

The author offers a view of medieval Bashkirs from within the territory of Bashkiria, an undertaking which, of course, might run the danger of reading the past too heavily through the lens of modern ideas of nation and ethnicity. I must leave it to others to decide whether his interpretations are sound. He repeatedly cites the work of R. G. Kuzeev, whose substantial *Origins of the Bashkir People* [*Proiskhozhdenie bashkirskogo naroda*] appeared in 1974, tainted, as Antonov admits, by prevailing Soviet orthodoxy. Here Antonov deliberately avoids Kuzeev's approach, which was to try to push the story of "origins" far earlier than any written sources would allow, perforce relying heavily on archaeological material. Rather, even though Antonov cites some archaeology, his focus is on the period between about the 9th and 17th centuries where in the first instance he can rely on written texts. Much of the exposition is a text-by-text summary and analysis, where a lot of attention is devoted to the names various authors used which arguably (if not always obviously) referred to the Bashkirs. Among the issues that concern him is the relations between the Bashkirs on the one hand and the Pechenegs, Kipchaks, Magyars, and Mongols of Ulus Jochi on the other. The question of the degree to which the Bashkirs in the period of Mongol rule might have enjoyed autonomy is an important one here. Very usefully, all his main "primary source" text passages are included in an appendix, compiled from standard Russian translations and, in a few instances, reproducing the texts of Muscovite Russian sources. Anotnov has published previously on this subject; this recent book of his should be worth a close look.

Rossiiskie ekspeditsii v Tsentral'nuiu Aziiu. Organizatsiia, polevye issleovaniia, kollektsii 1870-1920-e gg. Sbornik statei / Russian Expeditions to Inner Asia. Their organization, observations and collections (1870-1920s). Collection of Articles. Pod redaktsiey A. I. Andreeva. Sankt-Peterburg: Nestor-Istoriia, 2013. 332 pp. + 16 pp. plates. ISBN 978-5-4469-0057-2.

Aleksandr I. Andreev, the editor of this volume, is also the principal author, though there are chapters written by T. Iu. Gnatiuk and M. N. Kozhevnikova. The focus here is 16 expeditions to Inner Asia co-sponsored by the Russian Geographical Society: five headed by G. N. Potanin, four by N. M. Przheval'skii, three each by M. V. Pevtsov and P. K. Kozlov, two each by G. E. and M. E. Grumm-Grzhimailo and by B. L. Grombchevskii and one each by V. I. Roborovskii and V. A. Obruchev. Andreev is somewhat defensive about the purpose of the exploration, which outside of Russia has tended to be treated more as geopolitical to support Russian expansionist policies rather than scientific. While he readily admits most of the organizers were military men and the General Staff or other government agencies had a role, he insists that in the first instance the goals were scientific. We get here information on organization and financing (some of this drawn from archival material), survey chapters on transport and life on the expeditions, and then in greater detail information about the instruments and cartographic survey methods and on the collections of zoological, botanical, geological and ethnographic materials. To a considerable degree the source for the information is the voluminous published expedition reports, some of which were translated into other European languages. A number of the reports have been reprinted; most are accessible in a good academic library. It would have been nice had there been a section on the degree to which all the new information became known to the wider scholarly community through what was impressively rapid communication of results and sharing. But that is undoubtedly a subject for another book.

The approach here is somewhat mechanical, expedition by expedition, delighting in telling the reader exactly now many altitude readings were taken or how many botanical specimens brought back. It is very useful to know which institutions then served as the repositories for the material. One can see how, following on the pioneering work of Przheval'skii, who was largely self-taught in some of the disciplines needed, there was continual progress in the scientific substance and results. The book deliberately avoids saying much about archaeology and the study of historic sites, since those subjects have been treated elsewhere. The book is useful in its systematization of the material, which can then help considerably those who might wish to compare the Russian undertakings with those by non-Russians. It is reasonable to conclude with Andreev that the scientific contributions of these explorers were immense, since many of the regions visited had not previously been explored by Europeans. The collections of material they brought back substantially broaded knowledge of the natural history of Inner Asia.

There is but a brief preface and table of contents in English; the book includes several good quality black-and-white plates and indexes of personal and geographic names.

Wei-Cheng Lin. *Building a Sacred Mountain: The Buddhist Architecture of China's Mount Wutai*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2014. xiv + 321 pp. ISBN 978-0-295-99352-2.

Based on the author's Ph.D. dissertation supervised by Wu Hung, this book should be of interest to a broad audience. Its subject is the way in which Mt. Wutai in Shanxi Province became a Buddhist sacred mountain (the abode of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī). This development "involved a complex historical process that domesticated and localized te sacred presence of the foreign deity in ways that show how Buddhism was realized, practiced, and expressed in the religious landscape of medieval China" (p. 2).

There are many threads here, not just a study of the development of sacred geography. An important contributor to

the transformation of the site was the Empress Wu Zeitan (624-705); by the 8th century, veneration of Mañjuśrī was an imperial cult, and Mt. Wutai had become a major pilgrimage destination. This is a story not just of the shaping of the physical environment, in which the building of monasteries, their internal architecture and iconography were important. The process also involved the creation of a "virtual" space, associated with visions and the practices of esoteric Buddhism. Lin places the history of Wutai in a context of the interest in and translation of particular sutras, and then in the final chapter discusses how the veneration associated with the sacred mountain was transferred and transformed in remote locations. The key examples to illustrate this are the murals in the Mogao Caves at Dunhuang, painted in the 9th and 10th centuries, the most famous being in Cave 61, where the panorama of the entire mountain and its monasteries extends across all of the west wall. Having had the privilege of seeing these paintings a good many years ago, I was, nonetheless, puzzled by the question of how they were to have been viewed. Lin's analysis, supported by good photos and some very helpful schematic drawings, makes sense of how the worshipper in the cave would have experienced this virtual recreation of Mt. Wutai, where the screen at the back of the altar platform (on which would have rested a statue of the bodhisattva) blocks the key central portion of the mural.

Lin invokes comparative material on sacred geographies elsewhere, whose study should in turn be enriched by his material. For such a complex topic, the book is remarkably clearly written; there are numerous photographs (including a color insert), clearly drawn maps, and line drawings. The back matter includes transcriptions and translations of key texts and a lengthy glossary.

Iu. I. Elikhina. *"Obitel' miloserdiia". Iskusstvo tibetskogo buddizma: katalog vystavki / "Abode of Charity". Tibetan Buddhist Art. Exhibition Catalog.* [With additional essays and descriptive entries by K. F. Samosiuk]. Sankt-Peterburg: Izd-vo. Gos Ermitazha, 2015. 512 pp. ISBN 978-5-93572-617-1.

This catalog of an exhibition at the Hermitage from 9 October 2015–17 January 2016 is in the first instance the work of Julia Elikhina, the curator of the museum's Tibetan and Mongolian collections who put together the exhibition and has special expertise on Tibetan Buddhist iconography. Kira Samosiuk's contributions focus on the material from Khara-Khoto, whose paintings she previously had catalogued. This is a significant collection, all told 347 objects, including a good many works previously not displayed or published. Among them are sculptures and thangkas from the important collections assembled by E. E. Ukhtomskii, Iu. N. Rerikh (Roerich), P. K. Kozlov and others. The catalog has excellent color illustrations, including a lot of close-up details, and generous descriptive/analytical essays for each item. The material is organized by the categories of depictions in the Buddhis pantheon, which facilitates comparisons of the iconography. There is a glossary, a bibliography and a page summary in English. Every library which serves a community of those interested in Buddhist art should have this book.

Karl E. Ryavec. *A Historical Atlas of Tibet*. Chicago and London: University of Chicato Press, 2015. xviii + 202 pp. ISBN13: 978-0-226-73244-2 (cloth); 978-0-226-24394-8 (e-book).

Having just received ths book on the eve of going to press, I can but offer a few general observations. It is a pioneering work, underlying which is a huge GIS database which the author felt could not be made readily accessible in the near future. Hence the decision to publish a conventional print historical atlas, in elegant large format with carefully thought out color maps interspersed with short essays (perforce some of them repetitive) organized largely chronologically. Taken by themselves, the essays can serve as a kind of short course introduction to the history of Tibet.

As with any mappng project, there are many difficult choices about scale and conventions for captioning, which mean that the result is perforce something of an overgeneralization from data that might in digital form be very precise. To a considerable degree, apart from physical geography, the data here come from cryptic sources which may reveal something about political interconnections, administrative divisions and, above all the founding and importance of monasteries as focal points of power and settlement. So the fixed points on the maps are overwhelmingly derived from what we know about the locations of important, and, except for recent survey work, many lesser known monasteries and sacred sites. The chronological span of what is contained in any given map often is quite broad, which means that readers should not assume the data reflect the situation at one particular date. In many cases, the maps contain historical notes about important events, and are supplemented by small but sharp photos of key locations or iconography based on the historical imagination. Since establishing the exact boundaries of administrative divisions or other affiliations is usually impossible, to a considerable degree their names can be found here written across a somewhat vaguely defined territory or simply connected with a key monastic center or town. Among the more intriguing maps of a different kind is one that shows the approximate travel times/distances to Lhasa. In addition to the smaller scale maps of larger portions of Tibet, there are larger scale regtional ones, some of which, as appropriate, encompass areas in what today is Nepal and Ladakh when those were under Tibetan control.

My one concern about this valuable book is with the indexing, which seems based in the first instance on the narrative texts but does not begin to provide a guide to all the places captioned on the maps. Of course for that to have been possible would have required a different kind of reference grid (not just latitude/longitude). So, if one is reading about Tibetan history in a particular period and wants to locate a place that crops up, one simply has to search over the particular map that encompasses the same period. Not exactly a huge burden though, since every time one opens this atlas, one is likely to find something new and interesting.

The author acknowledges a huge debt to many individuals and institutions (to read his acknowledgement essay underscores the magnitude of the project and also charts an interesting course of the development of his scholarly inter-

ests). Apart from printed sources, he has done a substantial amount of on-the-ground survey and has tapped into such surveys done by others in the often still little known areas of Tibet. He readily admits limitations where data are not yet available, and can be commended for deciding not to wait forever to publish a work he would deem more perfect.

Complexity of Interaction along the Eurasian Steppe Zone in the First Millennium CE. Ed. Jan Bemmann; Michael Schmauder; [co-edited by Ursula Brosseder, Susanne Reichert and Timo Stickler]. Bonn Contributions to Asian Archaeology, Vol. 7. Bonn: Vor- und Frühgeschichtliche Archäologie Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, 2015. 708 pp. ISBN 978-3-936490-14-7.

Since I had some involvement (translating one of the articles and a bit of editing) in this magnificent volume, and since only a full review (beyond my capability) could do justice to its content, I will confine myself to a few summary remarks and a listing of the contents. The book is based on a conference held in Bonn in 2012, but the articles here go well beyond what was presented there, and a number of the essays were solicited after the fact to cover important topics. The result is, arguably, one of the most important contributions to our understanding of Inner Asian history to have appeared in recent years. Among the highlights are essays arguing for significant re-thinking of analytical approaches to our understanding of Inner Asian polities and the dynamics of broader exchanges.

Of particular value are some of the contributions by archaeologists, rich in concrete data but standing back from it to place it in meaningful interpretive contexts. While it is somewhat unfair to single out only two of the essays, I cannot but highlight those by Bryan Miller and Ursula Brosseder. The former mines the archaeological evidence to raise questions about the nature of the societies in "North China" where the Southern Xiongnu did not necessarily simply preserve their nomadic ways nor assimilate Chinese ones. Brosseder's purview is much of Eurasia in her book-length monograph, which will be essential reading for those of us who have tended glibly to cite finds of, e.g., Chinese artefacts in various places as evidence of long-distance exchange. In both of these essays, "complexity" of interactions is the byword; unraveling it makes all the evidence much more meaningful than we may have thought.

Readers interested in "Silk Road trade" will find Michal Biran's essay to be particularly stimulating, since it reminds us that periods of supposed decline in that trade may in fact need to be re-considered.

As with the previous volumes in this series, the production values are impressive—abundant sharp photography, drawings and maps; careful and extensive bibliographies. The commitment to publishing all this latest scholarship in English is admirable; clearly a lot of effort has gone into the editing of the texts.

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nic Threat. Parallels to the Late Roman Empire" (659–69).

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Nomads as Agents of Cultural Change. The Mongols and Their Eurasian Predecessors. Edited by Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran. Perspectives on the Global Past. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press: 2015. x + 345 pp. ISBN 978-0-8248-3978-9.

Were I not worn down by editing and now facing a publication deadline, I would attempt a longer review such as this very valuable volume deserves. As it is, a few general comments and a listing of the contents will have to suffice.

Based on a conference held nearly a decade earlier, but following which the essays were expanded and carefully coordinated into a thematically linked set (with a 45-page bibliography), the collection addresses the broad and important subject of how nomads and nomadic polities (there is an emphasis here on political institutions and ideas) contributed in important ways to cultural interchange across Eurasia. The time span is suitably broad, beginning back in the Bronze Age and coming down through the Mongol and immediate post-Mongol period. I think István Vásáry's cautionary preference for the term "factor" instead of the potentially misunderstood "influence" is worth keeping in mind here, as the approach of all the authors is to avoid glibly talking about influences and borrowings in the way such matters have tended to be treated in the past. Cultural change is a complex process.

In any event, we certainly have moved beyond the old stereotypes of bad nomads simply destroying everything in their path (even David Morgan, who is not wont to understate the destructive nature of the Mongol invasions, admits as much). To re-shape our understanding of the history though is going to require a lot of new research and reinterpretation. On the one hand, the essays here are excellent for laying the foundations for that future research, in that several of them systematically assemble the evidence and review the historiography. The degree to which the authors then move on to visionary projections of where we might go from here varies. Pulling together the evidence in the way William Honeychurch does in his review of the imported artefacts in Xiongnu graves or Thomas Allsen does in his treatment of population movements for which the Mongols were responsible creates a powerful impression of how significant the agency of the respective nomadic polities must have been. Among the more speculative of the essays, with continual reminders that one or another subject still needs to be studied, is that by Reuven Amitai on Syria. That the Mongols opened the way for the Mamluks to replace the Ayubbids is indisputable, but the ramifications of that change need to be worked out. As a Muscovy specialist, I would have liked more in István Vásáry's essay about the existing political culture and institutions if we are really to be able to assess the, granted, likely impacts of long-term Mongol rule in Russia. David Morgan's conversational concluding essay is a rather introspective reminder to the reader that his "authoritative" (and for the time, excellent) book first published in the 1980s had a much longer life than even he would have wished and still badly needs to be replaced by a work that would incorporate newer insights, especially in the realm of cultural history. I would certainly concur with him that the most important recent scholarship on the Mongols includes Allsen's *Culture and Conquest*, de Rachewiltz's annotated translation of the *Secret History* and Jackson's *Mongols and the West*. Might one now add to that list *Nomads as Agents of Culture Change*? Maybe not, but certainly it is a book that merits close attention.

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David Morgan. "Mongol Historiography since 1985: The Rise of Cultural History." (271–82)

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Contents

Plate I

[Pak, "Safe Journey!" p. 10]

a

b

Photos © Daniel C.Waugh

Regalia from the Tomb of the Gold Crown. Silla 5th–6th century: a) the crown H. 27.5 cm (National Treasure No. 87); b) detail of the gold belt L. 109.0 cm (NT 88); c) the gilt bronze soles L. 30.5 cm. Kyŏngju National Museum. (See Sillain 1996, Pls. 49, 52; Silla 2001, Pl. 271).

c

Plate II

[Compareti, Ancient Iranian," pp. 36, 41]

Photos courtesy of Carlo Cristi

1 (above).. Silk textile.

2 (right). Cotton shirt with silk lining.

3 (below). *Decoration of a silk caftan from Moshchevaia Balka, Russia. State Hermitage Museum, Inv. No. Kz 658*

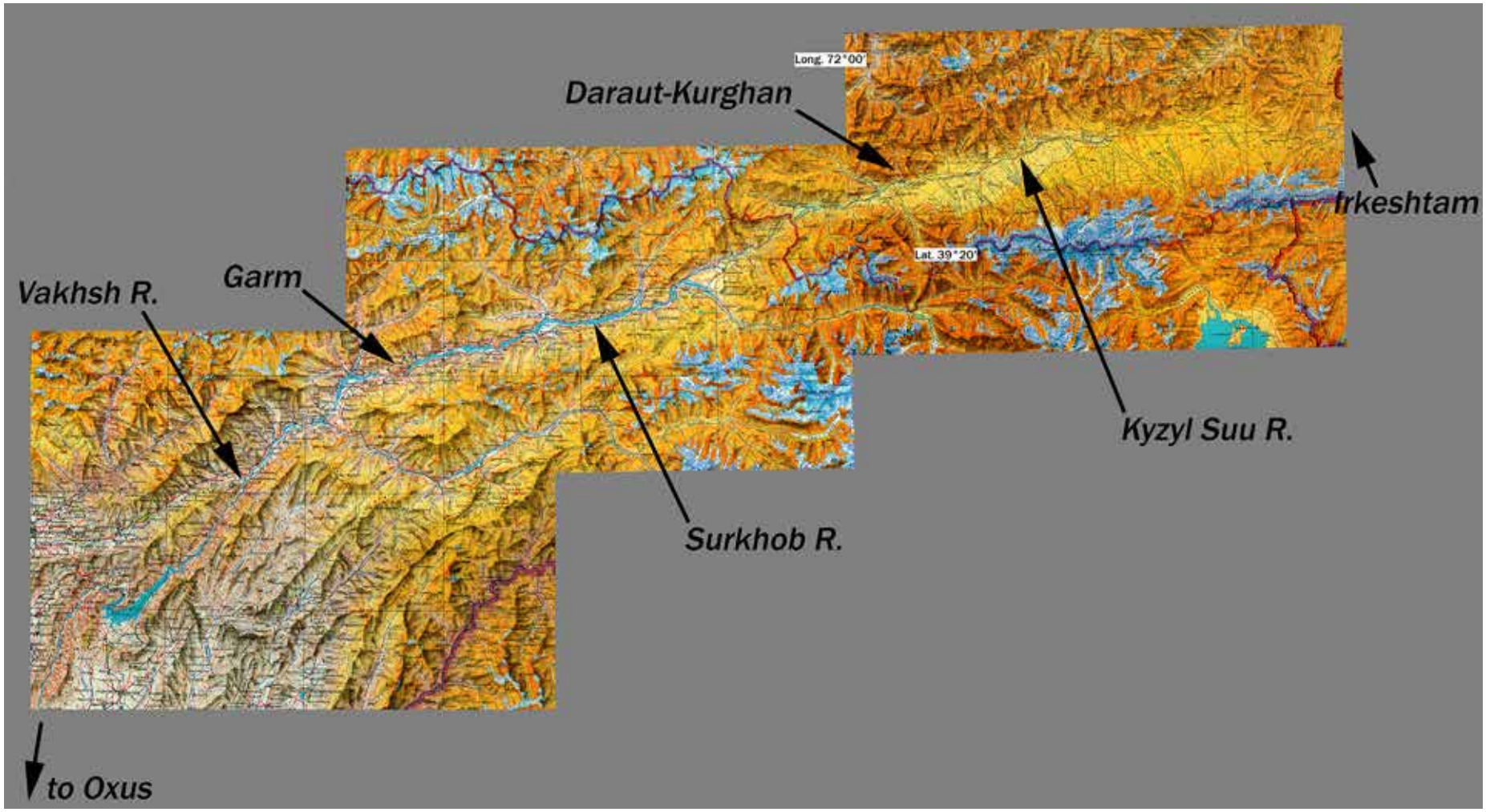
Photo © Matteo Compareti

Plate III

[Liu, "Nomads and Oasis Cities," p. 50]

Uighur princes, probably depictions of deceased family members. Fragment of mural from Bezeklik Temple No. 9, 9th century CE. Collection of the Museum of Asian Art (Berlin), III 6876a.

After: USSR General Staff 1:500000 maps quadrants J-42-B (Ordzhonikidzeabad) (1987=88 ed.), and J-43-A (Murgab) (1977 ed.).



Modern topographic map showing route starting north of the Oxus along the Vakhsh and Surkhob rivers in Tajikistan, passing Daraut-Kurghan and following the Kyzyl Suu River in Kyrgyzstan to the Chinese border. Just west of Daraut-Kurghan, the valley floor is at an altitude of 2415 m; the valley is flanked on the south by peaks rising to over 7000 m. Composite image.

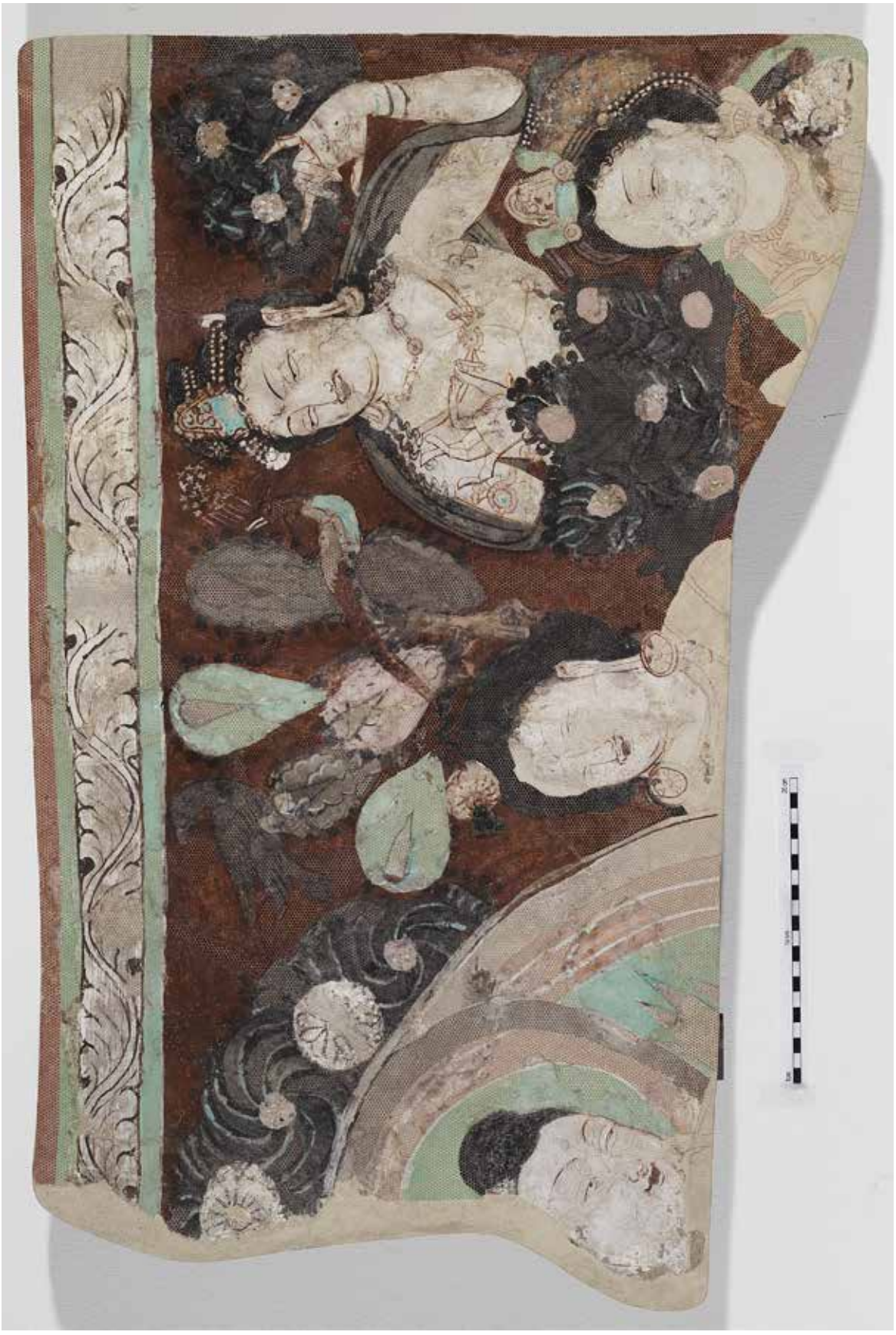
Plate IV

[P'iankov, "Maes Titianus," p. 65]

Cave of the Ringbearing Doves (Kizil Cave 123) as reconstructed in Dahlem.

Plate V — [Russell-Smith, "Berlin's 'Turfan Collection'," p. 154]

Plate VI — [Russell-Smith, "Berlin's 'Turfan Collection'," p. 156]



Detail of a preaching scene from the Painter's Cave (Kizil Cave 207, ca. 6th century CE), III 9148 b.

The dome in front of the mihrab, and view toward the mihrab from the north.

Plate VII — [Waugh, "The Mezquita," pp. 163, 165]

Plate VIII — [Waugh, "The Mezquita," p. 168]