

## NEWSLETTER

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### CIRCLE OF INNER ASIAN ART

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### NEW DISCOVERIES IN KUSHAN CHRONOLOGY

by **Joe Cribb**, Curator of South Asian Coins, Department of Coins and Medals, British Museum, London

An accidental find in northern Afghanistan has opened up a new era in the study of the Kushan kingdom of Central Asia. At a site known as the Kafir's Castle in Rabatak, near Pul-i-Kumri, in 1993 local people dug up a new stone inscription in Bactrian script naming the Kushan king Kanishka. The inscription, the dedication of a royal sanctuary composed by order of Kanishka, contains a range of new information on the Kushan empire, its history and religion. A translation and commentary by Professor Nicholas Sims-Williams (SOAS), together with my preliminary observations on its contents is now in press in *Silk Road Art and Archaeology*, the journal of the Hirayama Institute of Silk Road Studies, Kamakura, Japan, to be published later this year.

My own interests in Kushan chronology have prompted me to focus on the implications of the inscription for narrowing down the possibilities of the date of the first year of Kanishka's reign. In Central Asian and Indian history and art history this is a key date, around which the chronology of this important kingdom has been constructed. In India it is widely accepted that the year in question coincides with AD 78, the first year of the Saka era, whereas a different range of dates for the first year of Kanishka has been suggested by scholars elsewhere, ranging from AD 100 to AD 278.

The importance of the Rabatak inscription for this question is not immediately apparent. It repeatedly refers in its text to the first year of Kanishka's reign, but without any mention of any external events or eras to which to match it. It does however give the names of Kanishka's predecessors on the Kushan throne, naming his father Vima Kadphises, grandfather Vima Takto and great-grandfather Kujula Kadphises. This list of rulers has the authority of being presented in an official inscription.

The assertion that the first Kushan ruler to be recognised is Kujula Kadphises provides a link with the Chinese chronicle *Hou Han Shu* (History of the Later Han Dynasty), which, in a description of Central Asia compiled on the basis of information gathered before AD 107 (possibly before AD 90), states that Kujula is the founder of the Kushan kingdom and that he died aged more than 80, succeeded by his son who conquered India. This record makes possible the identification of "the statue of Vima" from Mathura, as Kujula's son Vima Takto, the first Kushan king to rule east of the Punjab.

This evidence placing the great-grandfather and grandfather of Kanishka in the latter half of the first century AD, makes it clear that the date AD 78 is out of the question for Kanishka's first year, and at the same time suggests that a date in the second half of the second century AD or later seem equally unlikely. The dating of Kanishka's first year to the first half of the second century AD accords well with the research I have been doing during the last fifteen years, trying to understand the links between the Kushans and their contemporaries. For example, Kujula is a contemporary of Khotanese kings of the mid first century AD and his reign follows that of the Indo-Parthian ruler Gondophares whose reign is thought to span the years AD 20-46. This chronology also corresponds with the synchronism of the later Kushan kings and their Sasanian neighbours.

My research suggests that a date early in the second century best fits the evidence, so I have proposed the following table (see p. 3) to take account of the evidence of the Rabatak inscription and the other connections I have observed between the Kushans and their contemporaries. An innovation presented in the table, which is more fully discussed in my other publications, is the suggestion that the inscriptions of Sodasa, satrap at Mathura, and Nahapana, satrap at Broach, were perhaps dated in the era of Gondophares. This suggestion is also linked to the assertion that Rajavula ruled at a later date than previously supposed, on the basis of the coins showing that he was succeeded by Gondophares as ruler in Jammu and by Sodasa in Mathura. This innovation also throws light on the dating of the Satavahana kings of southern India, contemporaries of Nahapana.

#### **Background reading:**

'The Sino-Kharoshthi coins of Khotan, and their attribution and relevance to Kushan Chronology', *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1984-5, pp. 128-152 and 136-149  
'New evidence for Indo-Parthian political history', *Coin Hoards*, volume 7, 1985, pp.282-300  
'Numismatic evidence for Kushano-Sasanian chronology', *Studia Iranica*, 1990, pp.151-193  
*The Crossroads of Asia*, with E.Errington (editors), Cambridge, 1992  
'Numismatic evidence for the date of the Periplus', *Indian Numismatics, History, Art and Culture, Essays in Honour of P.L.Gupta*, edited by D.W.MacDowall and others, Delhi 1992, pp.131- 145  
'The Heraus coins; their attribution to the Kushan king Kujula Kadphises, AD 30-80', *Essays in Honour of Robert Carson and Kenneth Jenkins*, edited by M.Price, A.Burnett and R.Bland, London, 1993, pp.107-134

## **CHARSADDA (PAKISTAN) PROJECT**

### **Report for the Easter Season 1996**

**Professor Taj Ali and Professor Ihsan Ali, Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar, Dr.R.A.E. Coningham, Department of Archaeological Sciences, University of Bradford and Dr.F.R. Allchin, F.B.A., Ancient India and Iran Trust, Cambridge.**

The third and final field season of fieldwork at the Bala Hisar of Charsadda was conducted between 14th March and 19th April 1996. The Pakistani contingent of the project team consisted of Professor Taj Ali, Professor Ihsan Ali, Mr Mohammad Naseem and three MPhil students, whilst British personnel consisted of Dr Coningham and an undergraduate from Bradford University and Dr John MacGinnis of Oxford University. Our aim for the season was to excavate a sondage to bedrock close to the location of Wheeler's deep sounding Ch.I in order to recover carbon material for dating. This aim was fully met with the excavation of two new trenches Ch. VIII and IX.

## Kushan Chronology

Kushan Chronology					
AD	Kushan kings on coins	Other kings on coins	eras	other eras	Chinese / Iranian
1-10	Yuezhi in Bactria and Kabul	Azes			
11-20	Kabul lost to Gondophares	Gondophares	Rajavula Azes 72 Azes 77	(AD 8) (AD 14) (AD 19)	Gondophares copying Parthian coins issued AD 8-12
21-30		Zeionises			Gondophares copying Parthian coin issued AD 26
31-40		Sodasa			
41-50	Kujula Kadphises in Bactria	Abdagases	Aśavarma	Gondophares era 26 (AD 45)	Warlike Bactrians to the north of Parthians in Sind according to the Periplus
51-60	in Kabul & Kashmir		Nahapana		
61-70	in Gandhara	Sasan	G-p Sri Satakarni	Gondophares era 41-46 (AD 60-5)	Khotanese Kings overstriking Kujula coins about AD 60; and copying Kujula coins before AD 73
71-80	in Punjab & Sind	Castana		Saka era 1 (AD 78)	Ban Chao in Khotan AD 73-107
81-90	Wima I Taktu as far as Mathura	Pakores	V-p Sri Pulumavi	Unknown era Year 279	Chinese Contact with first two Kushan kings in AD 86 and 90
91-100	Wima II Kadphises as far as Ganges			Unknown era Year 287	
101-110	Kanishka I		Kanishka era 1-23		
111-120		Yajna Sri Satakarni			
121-130	Huvishka		Kanishka era 26-60	Saka era 52 (AD 129)	Khotanese Kings copying Kanishka coins (c. AD 132)
131-140		Rudradaman			Huvishka and Roman coin issued AD 128 found together
141-160				Saka era 72 (AD 149)	
161-200	Vasudeva I		Kanishka era 67-99		© Joe Cribb 1996

Trench Ch. VIII measured 8m east-west and 3m north-south and was located 30m due west of trench Ch. VI, which was excavated during the last season. This was in order to create a profile of the mound's eastern stratigraphy. A 4.3m western extension, Ch. IX, was excavated from Ch. VIII right up to the eroding cliff-like face of the tell in order to help clarify the stratigraphic relationships of some of the higher, recently-disturbed contexts. Natural deposits were encountered at a depth of some 5m below the surface in Ch. VIII. Of this depth the top 3m consisted of very badly disturbed contexts, consistent with processes of soil robbing, animal burrowing as well as the undermining and collapse of the tell face above. Below this depth, however, we excavated almost 2m of 'in situ' deposits. Due to safety considerations we decided to limit the deep excavations to an area of 4m by 3m at a depth of 2m.

The 'in situ' deposits can be broadly divided into four major structural periods. The youngest consisted of a very badly eroded mud brick wall sitting on a 0.40m wide foundation of river cobbles (1030). This foundation ran 1.8m in an east-west orientation across the middle of the trench. Below the cobble foundation and its preparatory levelling, we excavated a large wall of unbaked mud bricks (1049) running north-west - south-east across the trench. It was 0.8m wide and individual bricks measured 0.8m long, 0.3m wide and 0.11cm thick. It survived to a height of 3 courses in places. A plaster floor level (1039) was associated with the wall to its south. The third major structural period, an apsidal structure (1054), was encountered whilst removing this wall. The apsidal building was built of unbaked mudbrick, and survived to a height of 2 courses. The wall was 0.6m wide and it can be estimated that the complete structure was some 5m wide. The oldest major structural period was encountered below the apsidal structure and consisted of two foundation pits (1070 & 1092), each measuring 1.1m deep and 0.9m in diameter. The pits are on a direct north-south alignment, some 2.7m apart. We have interpreted them as foundations as they are both full of river cobbles, seven hundred and eight-one in the case of pit 1070, and both have a void in the top for a pillar. When excavated it was found the cobbles were actually pressed into the base and sides of the pit suggesting that this was the result of pressure from a weight-bearing superstructure above. A series of very badly burnt deposits were encountered immediately above the pillared structure. Evidence for structural occupation in the 0.20m deposits below was very unclear. They appeared to consist of thin washes with cultural deposits and pottery dumps.

In conclusion we can state that this was an extremely successful outcome to the final season of excavations and investigations at the Bala Hisar. We have recovered material for the radiocarbon dating of the site and the artefactual categories, as well as having identified a structural sequence. Of the major structural periods, the apsidal structure and pillared structures are the most important discoveries. It is very tempting to draw analogies between the pillared structure, tentatively identified at the Bala Hisar, and examples such as at Patna - often such structures have been interpreted as representing Achaemenid influence. Whilst later Buddhist apsidal structures are relatively well known in the subcontinent, that at Sirkap for example, this example may be one of the earliest known from this region of the subcontinent. That it sits directly above the earlier pillared structure makes it tempting to identify a degree of cultural shift between the two, but also stresses a linkage in continuity of the placing of key focal structures. Soapy Red ware, also known as Red Burnished ware, was found throughout the excavated deposits. Generally it is accepted to date to between c.1000 and 500 BC. Some highly burnished black slipped pottery, perhaps representing Wheeler's 'local' Northern Black Polished ware, was identified in the higher levels of the 'in situ' deposits. We are also awaiting the results of the measuring of five C14 samples.

Whilst the majority of the fieldteam was engaged in the excavation, another team worked on the post-excavation processing of cultural material from the three seasons. Using Wheeler's pottery catalogue as a base, a more comprehensive ceramic typology was constructed this year and the three years' pottery catalogued. We also completed a full artefactual description of special and small finds from the three seasons. Black and white photographs were taken of each artefact and colour transparencies of selected objects. These preliminary assessments will greatly facilitate the completion of the first draft of the excavation report in 1997.

(Dr. Robin Coningham, Department of Archaeological Sciences, University of Bradford, U.K.)

## THE FRANCO-CHINESE EXPEDITION TO THE KERIYA VALLEY

Since 1991, a Franco-Chinese team has been engaged in the exploration of the Keriya valley in the Xinjiang province of China, a formerly important route of north-south communication that followed the course of the Yüttian River, flowing from the Tibetan frontier into the Taklamakan.

Led jointly by Henri-Paul Francfort (Director of the UPR 315 of the C.N.R.S., "Archéologie de l'Asie centrale : Peuplement, milieux, techniques") and Wang Binghua (Director of the Xinjiang Institute of Archaeology), together with Corinne Debaine-Francfort, the team consisted of Alain Thote, Joël Suire, Jorge Vasquez-Urzua, Abdurassul Idriss, Zhang Tienan, Xiao Xiaoyong, Liu Wensuo, Liu Guorui, Ahmed Rexiti, Wen Kang and Abdel Kader. The expedition has aimed to uncover traces of human habitation in the valley and along the dried-up water courses of the river's extensive delta, focusing on the development and movement of settlements in relation to environmental changes. The preliminary results of this expedition, from which these notes have been compiled, have already been published in *Arts Asiatiques*, Tome XLIX-1994, in *Archéologia*, No.317, November 1995, and in the *Comptes Rendus des Séances de l'année 1993* (Nov-Dec) of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres.

Of particular interest has been the exploration of Karadong, an agricultural settlement built around a small fortification, that once served as a staging post on the route to Kucha. The layout of buildings (constructed of wood and cob), irrigated fields, gardens and orchards resembles the more easterly sites of Niya and Loulan. The discoveries include remains of various buildings, coins and fragments of silk, both of Chinese origin, along with ceramics and cotton textiles showing a Kushan influence. Chinese suzerainty notwithstanding, Karadong seems to have belonged within the Gandharan cultural sphere - a fact confirmed by the style of fragments of wall paintings recovered from two Buddhist temples. The square structures contain one or two circumambulatory corridors, built around a central pedestal. These structures apparently somewhat pre-date those at Miran, and are thus the oldest known Buddhist remains in Xinjiang.

In 1994, a yet earlier phase of habitation was discovered to the north and west of Karadong, in another dried-up delta of the Keriya. This important site consists of a fortified city, extending over roughly ten hectares, and its necropolis. Believed to be some centuries older than Karadong, the site shows evidence of links with both India and China. The Franco-Chinese team will undertake a detailed study of these remains in October 1996, as well as further exploration of the delta in the hope of discovering other sites.

*(We look forward to publishing a report on the results of these activities, to be written later in the year by Corinne Debaine-Francfort. We are very grateful for her help in the preparation of this article.)*

## NEWS BULLETIN

### New Excavations in Chorasmia

The University of Sydney, Australia and the Karakalpak/Uzbek Academy of Sciences have recently inaugurated a long-term programme of joint fieldwork in Chorasmia south of the Aral Sea. In 1995 the Karakalpak-Australian Archaeological Expedition to Chorasmia was inaugurated and a first season of excavations was conducted at Kazakl'i-yatkan (5th century BC - 1st century AD) east of the Oxus River under V.N. Yagodin (Nukus) and S.W. Helms (Sydney). A long-term excavation programme is planned. The second season will start in August 1996. The Near Eastern Archaeology Department at the University of Sydney has formed a programme which aims to introduce Central Asian archaeology and history to the teaching and research curriculum. It plans to run a volunteer programme in 1997 with teaching of a new course on Central Asian Archaeology in Semester I of that year. A subsidiary research project is being conducted on aspects of the archaeology of Central Asian nomads by A.V.G. Betts (Sydney). For further details contact Dr Alison Betts, University of Sydney Central Asian Programme (USCAP), Archaeology A14, University of Sydney, NSW 2006, Australia. Tel: 02351-2090, Fax: 02351-4889  
email: alison.betts@antiquity.su.edu.au

*(We would like to thank Alison Betts, USCAP and Dr St. John Simpson, British Museum for this information)*

### **Archaeological Investigations at Merv**

The International Merv Project plans a fifth season of excavations and survey at Merv for September-October 1996. Directed by Dr. Georgina Herrmann, who recently has been awarded a 1996 Rolex Award for Enterprise, this season's excavations will focus on areas of Middle Sasanian domestic housing and Early Islamic metalworking in Gyaur Kala, and a Late Seljuk building in the medieval citadel of Shahryar Ark. A preliminary report on the 1995 season has just been published in *Iran* 34 (1996), 1-22, Pls.I-VI. (Other publications were listed in Edition 2 of the CIAA Newsletter.) The work at Merv also features together with the Sparta Project in a temporary foyer exhibition at the Institute of Archaeology: entitled 'Satellite, Spade & Sieve', organised by this year's Museum Studies MA students. The exhibition opened on 23 April and is due to run throughout the summer.

For further information about the Merv Project, contact Dr. Georgina Herrmann at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, 31-34 Gordon Square, London WC1H OPY.

*(Dr. St. John Simpson, British Museum)*

### **New Iran Museum in Hamburg**

The long awaited Iran Museum plans to open later this year in August or September. It was founded in 1991 by the late Keykhosrow Zareh, an architect of the Zoroastrian creed then living in Berlin, and Dr. Gerd Groppe. The building has been given by the University of Hamburg, and repaired with voluntary help on weekends by a group of Iranian students. The Parsee communities of Bombay and Surat in India dedicated the equipment of a fire temple, and many other things were offered by Iranians living in Germany and America. The small museum will have displays on the Zoroastrian religion, a historical gallery, a section devoted to the Iranians living in Germany, and a library. For further information, or if you wish to help in any way, please contact Dr. Gerd Groppe, Orientalisches Seminar der Universität, Rothenbaumchaussee 36, 20148 Hamburg, Germany. Tel: (040) 4123 3178/3055, Fax: (040) 4123 5674. The address of the Iran Museum Hamburg is Vogt-Kölln-Str. 30, 22527 Hamburg, Germany.

*(We would like to thank Dr. Gerd Groppe for providing us with this information.)*

### **Ancient Iran and the Mediterranean World Conference in Kraków**

The Department of Ancient History of the Jagiellonian University at Kraków, Poland, is celebrating the 75th anniversary of its foundation and the 85th birthday of Professor Józef Wolski by organising an international conference on "Ancient Iran and the Mediterranean World". The aim is to discuss the problems concerning all kinds of mutual contacts, i.e. political, cultural, artistic, economic, religious, between ancient Iran and the states and peoples of the Mediterranean, in the period from the Achaemenids to the Arab conquests. The conference will be held at the Jagiellonian University from 3rd to 5th September, 1996. Participants include A.Allara, M.G.Angelli Bervinelli, P.Arnaud, R.Boucharlat, P.Briant, M.Brosius, F.Dorna, M.Biland, Th.Harrison, S.Hauser, F.Holt, J.Howard Johnston, A.Invernizzi, A.Keaveney, H.Kennedy, A.Kurht, V.A.Livshits, A.Mehl, D.Metzler, V.P.Nikonorov, P.RiedTherger, Z.Rubin, R.Venco Ricciardi, Michael Whitby, J.Wieseñöfer. It is estimated that the cost required for each participant (including fee, accommodation and board) would be approximately \$300 (or equivalent). If you want to take part in the conference, please write to Prof. Dr. Edward Dabrowa, Uniwersytet Jagiellonski, Instytut Historii, ul. Golebia 13, PL 31-007 Kraków, POLAND. *(We would like to thank Professor Dr. Dabrowa for this information)*

### **Photo and Slide collection of Harvard University in the Fogg Museum of Art**

The Photo and Slide collection of Harvard University in the Fogg Museum of Art has acquired two collections of photos and slides relating to sites and objects in museums in Iran and Central Asia. The first is the collection of Baroness Ullens de Schooten, author of "Lords of the Mountain" (Qasghais) and companion of Yedda Godard in making photos of Iran. The other collection is that of Josephine Powell, and includes items amongst others from the Kabul, Samarkand and Tashkent museums.

*(Professor Richard Frye, Harvard)*

### **News from Japan**

Professor Kato of Soka University in Japan is starting excavation work at Krasnaya Rechka in Kirgizia. Professor Katsumi Tanabe of Kanazawa University is beginning excavations on the citadel at Dälverzin tepe in Uzbekistan. A seminar was recently held on 6th-7th July, 1996 on the Near East from Hellenism to the early Islamic period at Kanazawa University, Kanazawa, Japan, organised by Professor Sasake. Papers read included a technical study of Palmyrene textiles by Kazuko Sakamoto, pre-Islamic deities in Sogdia based on Islamic sources by Professor Nakao Odani, and the excavations at Merv by Dr. St.John Simpson. *(We are very grateful to Dr Simpson for the above news)*

### **News from Pakistan**

The Gor Kuttree excavation work was restarted in January 1996 under the leadership of Prof.Dr.F.A.Durrani. It is situated at the heart of the historic city of Peshawar. In 1993, excavations identified British, Sikh, Mughal, Hindu and Buddhist periods of occupation. Some pot sherds and coins of the Parthian period were unearthed. The University of Peshawar is completing the building of its new Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in which it will house some of the Gandharan and proto-historic material it has excavated in recent years. To commemorate the inauguration of this new building, the University is planning a South Asian archaeology conference in 1997.

*(We are grateful to Shah Nazar Khan and Jane Trimby for this news)*

### **Afghanistan Heritage Society**

Afghanistan Heritage Society is sponsoring conferences in New York at its headquarters at the Kevorkian Center for the Near East at New York University and elsewhere, publishing a journal devoted to the culture of Afghanistan. The society is seeking aid in preserving archaeological sites and monuments, and in recovering objects for the Kabul Museum. For further information contact the Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies, 50 Washington Square South, New York, NY, Tel: (212) 989-8877.

*(Professor Richard Frye, Harvard)*

### **Lukonin Lecture**

Professor Boris Marshak of the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, presented the Fifth Vladimir G. Lukonin Memorial Lecture, funded by a gift from Raymond and Beverly Sackler, at the British Museum, London on 15th July 1996. In a lecture entitled "Images of the universe in the early medieval art of Iranian peoples", Prof. Marshak demonstrated the huge depth of his knowledge with a masterly survey of images. He demonstrated how the wall paintings in private houses in Penjikent represent the universe, and drew attention to Sogdian and other nomadic figures appearing on funerary reliefs in China. Finally he showed allegoric themes in Sasanian metalware to reflect the importance of universalism in that area in the early medieval period. The lecture was followed by a reception.

MG

### **Stein Day**

This year the Stein Day was organised by Dr Susan Whitfield from the British Library. The morning session was taken up by two scientific reports on recent advances in dye analysis on paper (Prof. K Seddon, Belfast) - an important subject for finding the best possible method of restoration and conservation of the Diamond Sutra and other fragile manuscripts. The afternoon was taken up by short reports given by curators, as the main purpose of these annual meetings is to update everyone in the field about the current state of conservation and research concerning the Stein materials. A short talk was given by Prof. R. Whitfield on banners from the British Library recently identified as 10th century Dunhuang paintings. Susan Whitfield gave a demonstration of the IDP database.

LRS

### **UK Buddhist Studies Association**

The UK Buddhist Studies Association has been set up recently with the Inaugural Meeting being held at SOAS on 8th July 1996. Professor Richard Gombrich presented a paper on the Buddhist attitude to thaumaturgical healing rituals, followed in the afternoon by a paper given by Professor David Seyfort Ruegg on the Inner Asian *yon mchod* relation and its Indian precedents: the socio-religious and politico-religious link between a spiritual counsellor and his royal or princely donor. For further information on the Association, contact Dr. Peter Harvey at School of Social and International Studies, University of Sunderland, Forster Building, Chester Road, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear SR2 7PZ. e-mail: peter.harvey@sunderland.ac.uk

MG

### **CentralAsia-L: Announcement List for Central Asian Studies**

An announcement list has been established for Central Asian Studies called CentralAsia-L. The purpose of this list is to enable the distribution of announcements via e-mail about matters of interest to Central Asian Studies. This information distribution list is moderated and is not for discussion, and therefore subscribers need not fear lengthy messages or opinion and polemics. Anyone wishing to be aware of events, opportunities, resources, and programs in Central Asian Studies is welcome to subscribe. Current subscribership: ca. 950, Submissions: Moderated; Traffic: ca. 1 - 1.5 messages/day average. Moderator: John Schoeberlein-Engel <schoeber@fas.harvard.edu> To Subscribe to CentralAsia-L, send an e-mail message to: majordomo@fas.harvard.edu In the text of this message, write: subscribe CentralAsia-L To send an announcement to CentralAsia-L, address it to: CentralAsia-L@fas.harvard.edu

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

**In the Land of the Gryphons.** Papers on Central Asian Archaeology in Antiquity ed. by Professor A. Invernizzi, Monografie di Mesopotamia, V. Publ. by Le Lettere, Firenze, Sept. 1995. Price is Italian lire 290.000, and 10% for postage and packing.

*(We are reprinting details of this very valuable collection of papers on recent research in Central Asia as we have had a number of requests from our readers for information about how to get this volume. All the papers are in English.)*

This is a volume of the series "Monografie di Mesopotamia". Other volumes so far published in this series and concerning Iranian or Central Asian archaeology are :

Vol.1 The Parthian rhytons of Nisa by M.E.Masson and G.A.Pugachenkova. English translation of the original. (L.180.000)

Vol.2 Tappeh Hesar, ed. by R.H.Dyson,Jr. and S.M.Howard (L.180.000)

Vol.3 The Sasanian Manor House at Hajiabad, Iran by M.Azarnoush (L.290.000)

Vol.4 The Seleucid and Parthian terracotta figurines from Babylon in the Iraq Museum, the British Museum and the Louvre, by K. Karvonen-Kannas. (L.230.000)

The above volumes can be ordered directly from LICOSA, the sole foreign agents of Le Lettere Publishers. All orders and correspondence can be sent directly to them c/o their Export Dept., P.O.Box 552, Florence, Italy. Tel:(055)645415, Fax:(055)641257

*(We are grateful to Prof. Antonio Invernizzi for the above information)*

**Treasures from the Ob' basin. Sokrovishcha Priob'ya**, edited Boris Marshak and Mark Kramarovsky, exhibition catalogue, State Hermitage, St. Petersburg (Formica publishers, St. Petersburg, 1996)

This catalogue shows the extraordinary recent finds of imported medieval silver (9th-13th century) in northern Siberia, in the museum at Salekhard on the Ob', the chief township of the Yamal-Nenetsk district, and in the local museum at Muzhi up river. A selection of some of the most important pieces, augmented by locally worked silver or bronze and by some silver of northern Siberian provenance which reached the Hermitage in the 18th and 19th centuries, makes up this small but incredibly diverse exhibition of objects. They are from chance finds of hoards, burials and from shrines. This silver reaching Siberia came presumably as a result of trade or booty, and display provenance from Central Asia and Eastern Iran to Byzantium and the Crusader kingdoms, and even northern Europe.

*(We are grateful to Prof. J.M. Rogers for this information)*

### Bulletin of the Asia Institute

This is a series which specializes in Central Asian studies. Volume 8 which came out in May 1996, is entitled "The Archaeology and Art of Central Asia : Studies from the Former Soviet Union", and is edited by B.A.Litvinskii and C.A.Bromberg. Papers include Aegean-Anatolian motifs in the glyptic art of Bactria and Margiana by V.I.Sarianidi, the ethnic history of the Sakas by I.V.P'iankov, the Hellenistic architecture and art of the Temple of the Oxus by B.A.Litvinskii and I.R.Pichikian, ancient Samarkand : capital of Sogdiana by G.V.Shishkina, excavations at Staraja Nisa by V.N.Pilipko, the palaces of Toprak-Qal'a by Iu.A.Rapoport, worshippers from the northern shrine of Temple II, Panjikent by B.I.Marshak and V.I.Raspopova, the form and style of Sogdian ossuaries by G.A.Pugachenkova, the circulation of coins in Central Asia in the fifth-eighth centuries AD by E.V.Zeimal, and many more. The cost of each volume is \$73 (\$65 + \$8 for shipping).

You can get in touch with the Bulletin of the Asia Institute at 3287 Bradway Boulevard, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48301, USA. Tel:810.647.7917; Fax:810.647.9223 Internet:carol.bromberg@um.cc.umich.edu

### Caves of the Singing Sands and other publications on Dunhuang

Dunhuang - Caves of the Singing Sands, text by Roderick Whitfield, 2-volume set, London: Textile and Art Publications Ltd (12 Queen Street Mayfair, London W1X 7PL), 1995, Price: £315 (US\$475), inc. p+p

"Caves of the Singing Sands" is the first major English language publication on the caves in Dunhuang. Apart from a recently published collection of essays by the Director of the Dunhuang Research Academy (Tan Chung (ed): *Dunhuang Art, through the Eyes of Duan Wenjie*, Abhinav Publications, New Delhi, 1994) no other introduction to Dunhuang art has been available in English. The photographs were taken by Seigo Otsuka, and processed with digital technology which enables both fine detail and brilliant colour rendering. Most of the pictures had been published in

the Japanese version of this book (Tagawa, J: *The Art of Dunhuang*, NHK Publishing, Tokyo, 1992), an album with short plate descriptions. For this new version, Professor Roderick Whitfield wrote a completely new text, and added new pictures. Representative caves of each period are described in great detail, often with a drawing of the layout and illustrated by an amazing range of photographs from the full view of a cave or a wall down to tiny motifs. This way it becomes possible to understand more clearly the stylistic and iconographic changes, some of which lead to strikingly different looking caves within a short time span, especially during the earlier periods (Northern Liang 421-439 CE to Sui 581-618).

A book of this kind always triggers new research, especially when it coincides with other major events in the field: the recent *Serinde* exhibition in Paris threw new light on many artistic influences that travelled on the Silk Road, a fully illustrated catalogue is available in French, containing many of the Dunhuang pieces (*Sérinde, Terre de Bouddha*, Éditions de la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, Paris, 1995). The long awaited volumes on the Pelliot collection in the "Art of Central Asia" series are being published at last: the two volumes have come out in Japanese, one volume has been available in French and the second volume is just off the press (*Les Arts de l'Asie Centrale: Collection Pelliot du Musée Guimet*, Kodansha Éditions de la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, Paris, 1996). An English translation of the French edition is in preparation at the moment (edited by Roderick Whitfield, translation by Arabella Friesen) and will be available from Serindia publications later this year.

The Jiangsu Fine Arts Press has started publishing a series of large folio volumes each covering one or two caves in detail from the Thousand Buddha Cave Temples in Dunhuang and the nearby Yulin caves. In Chinese with a short English introduction, these volumes give an unprecedented number of details from the caves, as well as photos about the general layout.

LRS

#### **Newsletter on Afghanistan set up**

The Society for the Preservation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage (SPACH) issued its first newsletter recently, in May 1996. Established in September 1994 in response to a growing awareness and concern about the vulnerability of the cultural heritage of Afghanistan, SPACH aims primarily to share information about the state of the collections, historic monuments, archaeological sites and scholarship that have been affected by the years of conflict. Issue 1 of the newsletter contains interesting articles on new strategies for the Kabul Museum by Nancy Hatch Dupree, the fate of the Bactrian gold from Tillya Tepe, and the welcome news that the Government of Pakistan has decided to set aside some \$1 million to purchase antiquities from Afghanistan and Central Asia to prevent their illegal export. For more information please contact the editor, Brigitte Neubacher at UNOCHA, P.O.Box 1809, Islamabad, Pakistan. Tel : 92-51-253789/92; Fax : 92-51-261460 e-mail : spach@unocha.sdnpk.undp.org. Membership fee is Pak.Rs 1500/ US\$ 50 per calendar year, to be paid to SPACH A/C 1020205508251 (\$) at ANZ Grindlays Bank, P.O.Box 1004, Islamabad, Pakistan. Members in Europe/US may send their cheque/contribution to SPACH, c/o UNOCHA, 16 Avenue Jean Trembley, Petit Saconnex, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland.

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## CIAA LECTURES (1995-1996)

The lectures organised by CIAA at SOAS in this past academic year were extremely well attended and we are grateful to all who came and helped make them such a success. We would also like to thank all our speakers for such enthralling lectures. We have had many requests from readers of our Newsletter worldwide for more details about these lectures, so here follows a summary of all nine lectures that we hosted this academic year.

Our inaugural lecture on 24th October 1995 was presented by CIAA's Honorary President, **Professor A.D.H. Bivar**, Emeritus Professor of Iranian Art and Archaeology of the University of London. The lecture was entitled "Cultural elements in the Tillya Tepe finds". Prof. Bivar spoke on the Tillya Tepe treasures discovered in burials excavated near Shibargan in Afghanistan by Russian archaeologists in 1979. From the character of the grave-goods all the deceased were princely personages of nomadic background, probably Kushans, or Indo-Scythians (Sacaraucae) under Kushan suzerainty. A *terminus post quem* for the later burials was provided by a gold coin of the Roman Emperor Tiberius (A.D.14-37). Each burial contained some 5 kg of gold jewellery, but the most opulent was that of the chieftain. The speaker called attention to the cultural diversity of the artifacts, ranging from Greece to China, which makes this find so interesting.

Our November lecture was presented by **Deniz Cole**, a SOAS PhD student and CIAA committee member. In the lecture entitled "New clues in dating the ancient sites of Khotan", she outlined the conditions and accessibility of the sites in the region, following her trip in September 1995 to Xinjiang, and discussed differences in the style and iconography of the sculptures from the oasis towns of ancient Khotan. The talk emphasised the architectural features of religious buildings, concentrating on particular sites where the movement of sand-dunes has exposed areas previously covered. This, she claimed, provided new clues for dating and also raised questions concerning site layouts. Deniz concluded her talk by giving the latest information on various Northern and Southern Silk Road sites she had visited, and by discussing the new north-south "Desert Road" which cuts through the Taklamakan Desert and the impact of the oil industry on the region.

In December, **Professor Roderick Whitfield**, CIAA's President and Percival David Professor of Chinese and East Asian Art at SOAS, talked on "Dunhuang in recent light". He spoke following a two-week stay in Dunhuang in October 1995, to prepare for a volume on the site and its conservation with Chinese and western scholars. The book would be published in 1998 by the Getty Conservation Institute, which had been working at the site for some seven years. There had been an opportunity to inspect the six kilometres of sand fence installed in this programme, which had reduced the volume of sand reaching the caves by some 60%, as well as test plantings of tamarisk and other shrubs at the foot of the Mingsha dunes above the cliff. Chemical consolidation of areas of loose sand and gravel was being tested, and records of environmental conditions kept in three caves, including Cave 244 with its magnificent Sui triads of the early seventh century. Professor Whitfield showed a number of slides of details of the murals and stucco figures, with particular attention to the Sui dynasty (581-617).

**Shahin Bekhradnia**, who has recently received her M.Litt from Oxford, presented the lecture in January 1996, speaking about "The place of Zoroastrianism in Soviet Central Asia", concentrating particularly on Tajikistan. She spoke about the development of a sense of national identity amongst the Tajiks in the early 1990s. They expressed this through associations with the culture of pre-Islamic Iran. Over a short period of time, documentary programmes, journals, and newspapers carried articles which explicitly referred to the ethical order created by Zoroaster and displayed the symbols and icons normally associated with Zoroastrianism. The newly formed democratic parties adopted the Zoroastrian motto or names associated with the Zoroastrian era. Thus the growth of interest in Zoroastrianism was not in itself one of a spiritual dimension, but rather a vehicle for the expression of a new political order which united all Tajiks: Iranian (in its widest sense) nationalism, without being tied to Islam, a notion which appeared to be quietly condoned by the authorities, probably to stem the tide of Iranian style fundamentalism.

Our February lecture, entitled "The columns and capitals of Gandhara, with special reference to Jamalgarhi", was presented by **Dr. Elizabeth Errington** of the British Museum. The 1873 excavation of the main stupa enclosure of Jamalgarhi produced a large number of Indo-Corinthian half-capitals. According to Sir Alexander Cunningham, some of these sections were clamped together to form the capital of a column beside the main stupa. Analysis of the material however shows that the sections are all pilaster capitals and that no columns were found in the stupa enclosure. The discussion focused on the evidence for columns and capitals elsewhere in Gandhara and used this information to suggest how the capitals were utilised at Jamalgarhi.

In March, Dr. Susan Whitfield of the British Library spoke about "The Stein collection at the British Library and the Dunhuang Project". She reported on recent work on the Dunhuang and other manuscripts from Central Asia in the British Library. A brief history of the collection was followed by an examination of the various types of manuscripts and their importance for historical studies. She also outlined the Chinese manuscripts from Dunhuang previously uncatalogued and unpublished (Stein Nos. 6981 onwards), the non-Buddhist ones of which comprise the latter few volumes of *Yingzang Dunhuang wenxian* (Sichuan renmin chubanshe, Chengdu 1990-). Over the next three years the British Library plans to collate all the Stein material in the collection and to record the information on a computer database to make this material more accessible, and to contribute to the future development of Dunhuang and Silk Road studies. This will include details of the Dunhuang Chinese documents (about 14,000); other Chinese works both on paper and on woodslips; and material in several other languages : Khotanese, Tangut, Tibetan, Kuchean, Sogdian, Uighur, Eastern Turkic and Sanskrit.

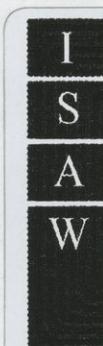
April saw us hosting two lectures. The first April lecture was presented by Dr. Georgina Herrmann of the Institute of Archaeology, University College London. In a talk entitled "Merv, a Central Asian City", Dr. Herrmann spoke about the recent excavations at the oasis of Merv in the Karakum Desert in Turkmenistan on the northeastern edge of Iran, and of the work of the International Merv Project which she jointly heads, which has been excavating there since 1992. A large urban site, it was founded during the Achaemenid period and continued to flourish in the subsequent Seleucid, Parthian, Sasanian, Seljuk and Timurid times. The cities were built not on top of each other but adjacent, preserved in a unique archaeological park. The IMP excavated in the earliest city, the citadel of Erk Kala and lower city of Gyaur Kala. The Erk Kala excavation was finished in the 1995 season. Occupation shifted later to the Seljuk Sultan Kala, the early Islamic city. An interesting discovery has been metal-working, associated with the production of crucible steel. Dr. Herrmann also mentioned the use of modern archaeological methods including the use of satellite technology, global positioning system, and advanced computer imaging in the excavations. Edition 2 of the CIAA Newsletter contained a summary of these findings, and we hope to continue to keep our readers abreast of further findings from Merv in the future.

In our second April lecture, Helen Wang of the British Museum spoke about "Stein's 'Recording Angel' Miss Lorimer". Florence Mary Glen Lorimer (1896-1967) spent thirteen years working on the collections of Central Asian antiquities acquired by Sir Aurel Stein in Chinese Central Asia : nine years in the British Museum and four years in Kashmir. She built up an impressive knowledge of the Eastern world and was in regular contact with some of the most respected academics of her time. Her excellence in her work earned her the sobriquet "Recording Angel" in Stein's correspondence with his friends, yet even her name has been a mystery to recent biographers and commentators of Stein's world. Miss Lorimer was, in fact, a remarkable woman in her own right. She was the 1902 Gilchrist scholar at Oxford, and one of the first women to be employed by the Bodleian Library. After working with Stein, Miss Lorimer pursued careers in both the commercial and academic worlds. Whilst her written work is often regarded as anonymous - for example, in the preparation of Stein's Reports and in the various library catalogues she worked on - it is still in valued use today.

Our final lecture in the middle of May was presented jointly by Professor Nicholas Sims-Williams of the Department of Near Middle Eastern Studies at SOAS and Mr. Joe Cribb of the Department of Coins and Medals of the British Museum, and was on "A new Bactrian inscription of Kanishka the Great". It was the most well attended of all our lectures due to the great interest in this new discovery, and thus had to be held in the SOAS Lecture Theatre, and was followed by drinks to celebrate the Circle's completion of its first year. First, Professor Sims-Williams gave an account of the decipherment of a Bactrian inscription recently discovered at Rabatak in the Baghlan province of Afghanistan, which describes events of the first year of Kanishka. Like Darius the Great in his inscription at Bisitun, Kanishka emphasizes the fact that his text is written in an "Aryan language" and boasts of his achievements in the first year of his reign, including the conquest of a wide area of northern India and the foundation of a temple containing statues of numerous deities as well as of his own ancestors. In this connection Kanishka gives the genealogy of the Kushan royal line, revealing the existence of a previously unknown ruler named Vima Taktu (Wima Takto). Then, Joe Cribb spoke about the historical significance of this discovery and how this affects, in his opinion, the chronology of ancient India. For further details of his interpretation, see his article in the front of this issue.

We hope to continue to bring you interesting lectures in the next academic year - for details see the next page. We look forward to seeing all of you again in September 1996.

Madhuvanti Ghose



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**CIAA LECTURES AT SOAS**  
(preliminary list, dates to be announced)

25 September      **Professor Roderick Whitfield (SOAS)**  
6pm, B102      Newly Discovered Dunhuang Paintings from the British Library

23 October      **Dr Elizabeth Errington (BM)**  
6pm, B102      The Archaeological Collection of Charles Masson in Afghanistan,  
1833-8: a Reappraisal  
(B102 is in the Brunei Gallery, opposite the main SOAS building)

November:      **Professor A D H Bivar (SOAS):** - What is Mithraism?  
**Dr Robin Coningham** (University- of Bradford) Charsadda Revisited: A  
Reconsideration of the Archaeology of the Bala Hisar

December:      **Dr Andrew Palmer (SOAS):** "The Hymns on Faith" - Visual Common  
Denominators as a Principle of Poetic Organisation in 4th Century Syrian Poetry

January:      **Dr Mary Stewart:** Chinese Monks and Monasteries

February:      **Dr Vesta Curtis (BM):** to be announced

March:      **Dr Youngsook Pak (SOAS):** The Otani Collection in Seoul

April:      **Dr David Scott (Brunel University):** to be announced

All are welcome to our lectures - we will be delighted to make personal contact with anybody interested in this field. If you would like to give a lecture on a relevant topic please do not hesitate to contact us.

**Dear Readers,**

Having completed the first year of our existence, we would like to thank everyone for the overwhelming interest and support that we have received from all over the world. Special thanks to all those who have written for our Newsletter. In the past few months we have made contacts with many organisations with similar activities as ours in a future issue we would like to devote a section to them. As before, we look forward to all your news items, articles or relevant information. Due to the great interest, we are putting the Newsletter on the Internet: see the address above. Please, also note the change of our e-mail address.

The fund which made our existence possible is now exhausted and we will gradually have to introduce charges for the Newsletter and the lectures - at the moment we are working on the best solution. We would be very grateful for any donations to make the existence of our Newsletter possible. Please send cheques or Eurocheques to our mailing address made payable to CIAA. Thank you once again for your continued encouragement and support.

**The Committee of the CIAA**

The *apsaras* on the title page is from Cave 249 in Dunhuang. Reproduced from *Zhongguo Shiku: Dunhuang Mogaoku*, Beijing - Tokyo, 1989-90, vol 1, p. 183

Compiled by Madhuvanti Ghose and  
Lilla Russell-Smith with Deniz Cole  
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