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## Circle of Inner Asian Art

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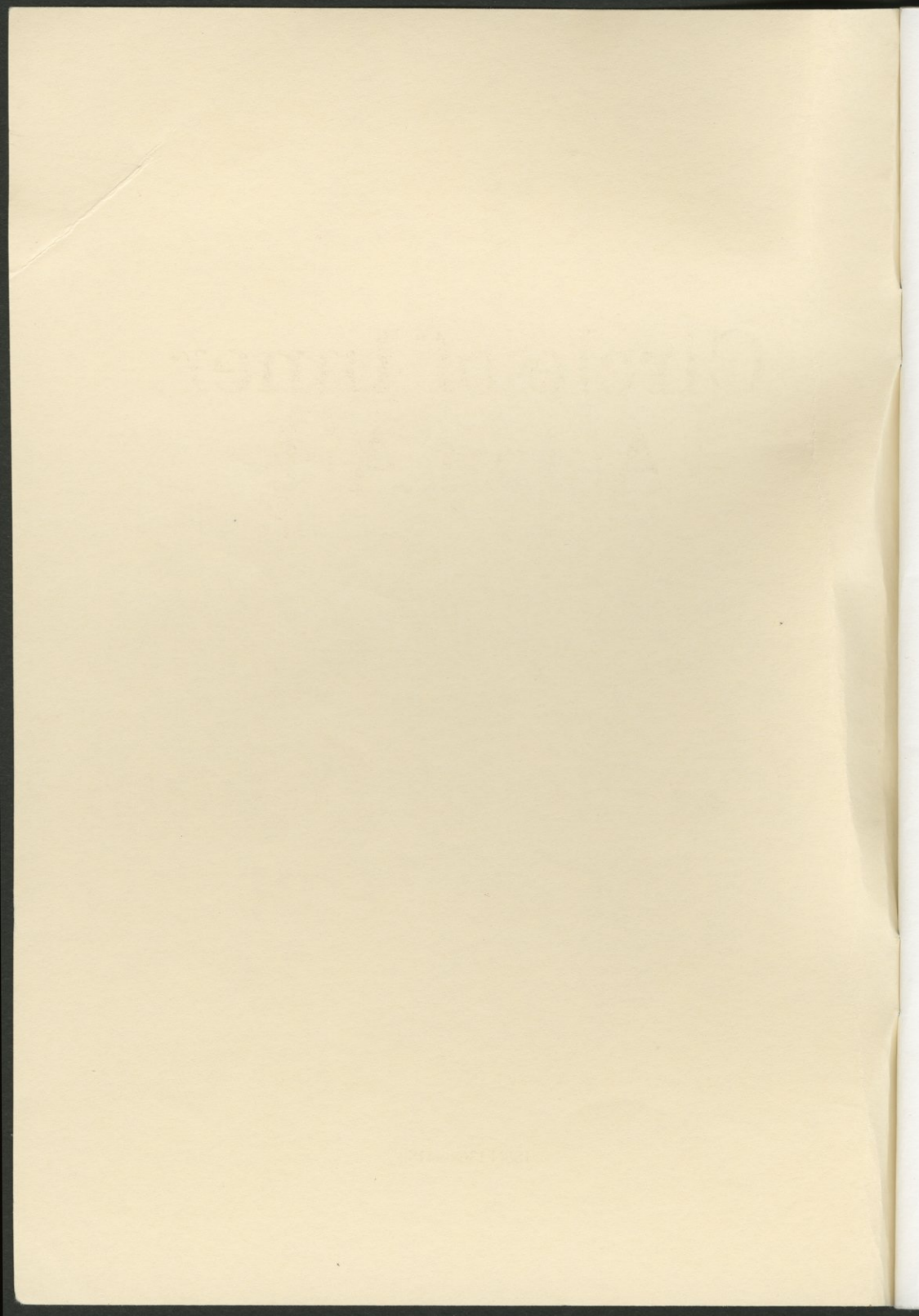
**NEWSLETTER**

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CIRCLE OF INNER ASIAN ART

# Circle of Inner Asian Art

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## CIRCLE OF INNER ASIAN ART

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### NEWSLETTER

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## CIAA LECTURES

## NOTE FROM THE CIAA COMMITTEE

**REPORT ON A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE EARLY BUDDHIST  
CAVES OF KIZIL, XINJIANG UYGUR AUTONOMOUS REGION,  
AND A FEW LIANG CAVES IN GANSU PROVINCE, CHINA**

by *Dr. Angela F. Howard, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, U.S.A.*<sup>1</sup>

The primary goal of this research project undertaken jointly with Professor Li Chongfeng, Department of Archaeology, Beijing University, during September-October 1998, was to reconstruct the fourth-century transmission of Buddhist art and religion from Central Asia to northwest China. I focused on the cave temple art of Kizil and examined its impact on a few and little known late fourth-century cave sites in Gansu. The basic hypothesis of this study is that the Chinese caves are derivative from the Central Asian experience. These caves are Wenshushan, Jintasi and Matisi.

Two significant breakthroughs in the study of Central Asian and Gansu art during the past twenty years warranted my reevaluation of Kizil's dating and its influence on Gansu. The eminent scholar Su Bai's revision of the dating placed the beginning of Kizil art at 300 A.D., possibly even earlier. This revised chronology based on Carbon 14 testing justified my project and lent support to the idea that the Buddhist art of the Gansu corridor was a beneficiary of the previous Central Asian experience. The other significant and fairly recent breakthrough entailed the Gansu caves I listed above which Su Bai brought to our attention in "The Liangzhou Cave Temples and the 'Liangzhou Style'". *Kaogu xuebao* 4 (1986): 76-8. He believed the caves to be representative of a distinct style, the 'Liangzhou Style', at variance with the Northern Wei, but did not clarify fully its components or its genesis.

I offer below some preliminary observations, while a more scholarly assessment will be forthcoming. The investigation started at the sites situated along the Gansu corridor, Jintasi and Matisi, south of Zhangye, set in the pine clad majestic settings of the Qinlian Mountains. We proceeded then to the site of Wenshushan, south of Jiuquan, also carved in the same mountain chain, but in desert surroundings. A fourth Gansu corridor site, Tiantishan, once located in the vicinity of Wuwei (the southernmost of the three towns) is no longer extant. I was able, however, to study some of the remaining Tiantishan frescoes and clay sculpture which are stored in the Gansu Provincial Museum, Lanzhou. My investigation of the caves confirmed the initial hypothesis that they embody the fourth-century style popular under the administration of the Liang clan. The structure of the caves, the doctrinal content of the cave decor, and the style of both painting and clay sculpture, all differ from those of the Dunhuang caves executed after the 439 A.D. Northern Wei dynasty conquest of the Gansu corridor. Further study of this evidence will clarify whether the sites I visited are all to be ascribed to Northern Liang patronage or to its predecessors. I offer below some observations on the Liang component factors of these caves.

The two Jintasi caves situated at an altitude of 2800 m are the best preserved. Tucked away in the midst of soaring mountains, they are inaccessible without the help of the Zhangye Cultural Relics Bureau (entrance is also barred by doors). The two Jintasi are very large caves of the stupa-pillar type. The East Cave is the largest, being about 10 m wide, 8 m deep, and 6 m high. Its central stupa is formed of five tiers, each one still adorned with well-preserved clay images whose size decreases as one ascends towards the ceiling. Sparse fragments of frescoes are still visible on the wall surface. The multi-tiered construction of the central stupa-pillar is the most striking development of Liang cave temples, while the facial traits of its clay sculpture

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<sup>1</sup> A project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), University Teachers Fellowships Program (v. CIAA NL 7, April 1998, p. 17).

indicate the ethnic origin of their non-Han patrons. The costume and jewelry are unique as well.

The site of Matisi has two constituent parts: the dilapidated Northern site presently occupied by a temple serving an ethnic minority of Tibetan extraction and the Qianfodong (Thousand Buddhas Caves). At the latter site only a couple of early caves are extant (the rest are dated Tang). Cave Two has a four-storeyed central stupa pillar, the clay sculpture of which has mostly disintegrated; Cave Eight with a similar layout is also poorly preserved. Due to such damaged conditions, this section of Matisi offers only glimpses of its former brilliance. The Wenshushan evidence is important especially for its frescoes. The cave structure is also of great value since other Indian approaches to monastic spaces are available besides the quintessentially Liang stupa-pillar construction. Three Wenshushan caves are fairly well preserved. Their dimensions are modest in comparison to the Jintasi, but the doctrinal complexity and brilliance of their painting is very exciting, as for example, in the Qianfodong. The ceiling decoration of one recently found cave (which has not yet been numbered or named) immediately reminds one of Kizilian green and blue decorative patterns. Its flying angels appear lifted also from a Kizilian context. There are numerous caves at Wenshushan, but they are completely gutted. Among them, however, one can still recognize a *vihara* structure (central hall with three cells on each side), the earliest such remaining evidence of monastic life in China.

The final destination of this research project was Kizil, where I stayed for nine days. Chen Shiliang, who heads the Kizil Research Institute, most generously allowed the visit and study of all ninety-eight remaining caves. Kizil is formed of four distinct locations, the Guxi and Gudong (West and East Gully), which are provided with stairs leading to the caves, and the Gunei and Houshan (Inner Gully and the Back Side of the Mountain), where to visit the caves is a challenge, unless one has some climbing skills. The earliest Kizil evidence is located in the Guxi where Caves 13, 38, 4, and 8 are considered to be the earliest remaining, executed at the start of the fourth century. All are stupa pillar caves with a corridor surrounding the structure.

A preliminary comparison between the Kizil and the Gansu corridor evidence shows important continuities between the two areas: the emphatic stress on stupa devotion, the use of Theravada iconography, adoption of similar chromatic effects (blue and green) especially in one of the Wenshushan caves. In the Gansu caves there are, however, also modifications. The most obvious pertains to the central pillar structure itself which is detached from the cave's surrounding walls and magnified vertically. The rise of exclusively Gansu adaptations are emblematic of the strength of its local culture. A study of the Liang elite as patrons of Buddhist art, of the influence foreign monks exercised on them, and of the coexistence in the corridor of Buddhism with traditional Han culture (Daoism and Confucianism) should explain why the Liang were capable of transforming in such a short span of time the formula they had received from Central Asia.

The project in clarifying the relationship of Buddhism and its art in two distinct areas, Central Asia and northwest China, carries another important implication. In fact, by linking the art of the Gansu corridor to the Kizil model, it shows the soundness of Su Bai's revised chronology. Moreover, this revised chronology strongly contrasts with the traditional 500 A.D. dating based on stylistic differences devised in the first quarter of this century by Grünwedel and von Le Coq, the German team which first investigated Kizil. The German scholars formulated a chronology based chiefly on style variations modeled on the Indian and Sasanian traditions with which they were familiar. Although knowledge of these two cultures is essential as a starting point, that of the Chinese culture is also crucial. The Gansu evidence, not known to the German scholars, affords now a more accurate and earlier dating. Western art historians must now reconsider the controversial "traditional" dating of Kizil art.



## EXCAVATIONS IN THE TASH-K'IRMAN OASIS OF ANCIENT CHORASMIA 1995-97

by *Svend Helms, Sydney University, Sydney, Australia.*

Since 1995 excavations in the Tash-k'irman oasis of east-bank classical Oxus river (Amu-dar'ya) Chorasmia have been conducted under the auspices of the University of Sydney Central Asian Programme (USCAP)<sup>1</sup> and the Karakalpak Branch of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences.<sup>2</sup> This part of east-bank Chorasmia is the only archaeological zone that the Chorasmian Archaeological Expedition, founded by S. P. Tolstov and others, did not fully explore.<sup>3</sup> It is also the last area in which fossil surfaces (*takirs*) have not been terminally disturbed by modern agricultural exploitation and where the water table is sufficiently low to allow access to basal levels of the larger antiquity sites.

Despite large-scale exploration and excavations since the 1930's, Chorasmia remains somewhat of an enigma, along with the lands to the north-east in the delta of the classical Jaxartes river (S'ir-dar'ya) known in ancient sources as the land of Saca. These northern regions of the greater Indo-Iranian borderlands lie on the threshold of the Inner Asian steppe and their social, cultural, political, and economic development lagged far behind that of regions south of the Zarafshan river (*i.e.*, Sogdia, Bactria, and Margiana) and only entered into the international cultural (and perhaps also economic) ambit of the late Iron Age in about the 7th/6th centuries B.C.: an abrupt change from a steppe Bronze Age (the Andronovo culture) heralded by a totally new pottery repertoire which has parallels throughout the Indo-Iranian region. Chorasmia itself is among several candidates for the location of the 'Aryan Expanse' and even for the homeland of the ministry of the prophet Zoroaster.<sup>4</sup> Both Chorasmia and the land of Saca appear in early Achaemenid listings of satrapies but their status in terms of Persian state control after, say, Artaxerxes I is uncertain. Certainly by the 4th century B.C. Chorasmia was an independent state, if only on the word of Arrian<sup>5</sup> who mentions Pharasmenes, king of the Chorasmians, who visits Alexander in Markanda (Afrasiab/Samarkand) in 329/328 B.C. and whose lands are said to border on those of the Colchians and the Amazons in the west. The hypothetical extent of this lost kingdom was augmented by Tolstov<sup>6</sup> when he shifted the location of K'ang-kui westward. This kingdom of K'ang-kui under Pharasmenes would thus stretch from the Volga or Ural rivers to Lake Issykul, bordered in the south by the Kara-kum and Kiz'il-kum deserts north of Sogdia and Margiana. After 329/328 B.C. Chorasmia disappears from Persian and Greek records entirely and is only alluded to in the Han Annals<sup>7</sup> (whence Tolstov's reconstruction). This is strange in view of the proximity of Sogdia and especially Bactria and its unique Greek coin issues up to the middle of the 2nd century B.C. and the southward movement of the Saca and the Yueh-chih. The status of Chorasmia during the pre-Kushan and Kushan eras is equally nebulous. The

<sup>1</sup> USCAP is directed by A. V. G. Betts (Sydney University).

<sup>2</sup> The excavations, the Karakalpak-Australian Archaeological Expedition, are jointly directed by S. W. Helms (Sydney University) and Professor Vadim N. Yagodin (Institute of Archaeology, History and Ethnography, Nukus). See S. Helms and V. N. Yagodin (1997) "Excavations at Kazakl'i-yatkan in the Tash-k'irman oasis of ancient Chorasmia: a preliminary report", *Iran* 35:43-65.

<sup>3</sup> S. P. Tolstov, (1962). *Po drevnim deltam Oksa i Yaksarta*. Moscow: Nauka.

<sup>4</sup> Normally taken to refer to the 7th century B.C. or a little later. See Helms and Yagodin 1997.

<sup>5</sup> *Anab.* iv.15

<sup>6</sup> S. P. Tolstov, (1953) *Auf den Spuren der althoresmischen Kultur*. Berlin: Verlag Kultur und Fortschritt.

<sup>7</sup> See for example J. Markwart, (1938) *Wehrot und Arang. Untersuchungen zur mythischen und geschichtlichen Landeskunde von Ostiran*. Leiden: Brill.

great site of Toprak-kala<sup>8</sup> falls into the latter time frame and its architecture and sculpture reflects the Kushan dynastic style: but this does not prove Kushan suzerainty over the land (for example, not one item of Buddhist practice has been found, whereas such evidence increases exponentially from the Zarafshan river southward: Chorasmia, above all other ancient lands of Central Asia, was a stronghold of the Zoroastrian religion in various forms, well into the Muslim era). According to the current state dating (which is questionable) major sites continued to flourish well into the 4th century A.D., followed by new occupation usually attributed to the Afrighid dynasty<sup>9</sup> up to the advent of Islam.

The objectives of the Karakalpak-Australian Archaeological Expedition are, initially, to re-examine the archaeological evidence between the 7th century B.C. and the 7th century A.D. in order to augment and verify the now much destroyed archaeological remains copiously recorded by the Chorasmian Archaeological Expedition. In addition a comprehensive database is being created for the whole of ancient Chorasmia. In short the main aim is to achieve a near total reconstruction of an entire satrapy for the pre-Islamic period. Two major sites are under investigation: Tash-k'irman-tepe is the site of a large regional religious sanctuary; Kazakl'i-yatkan is a massive 'urban' site (over 36 hectares) which may have been the capital of Chorasmia up to the 1st/2nd centuries A.D.

### Tash-k'irman-tepe

The site is located on an ancient canal system and covers an area of about 10 hectares. There are two main parts visible on the surface today: a monumental stamped mud and mud brick platform with a centrally located temple; and outlying buildings. None of the remains suggest domestic, industrial or military functions. Given the excavated evidence it is likely that Tash-k'irman-tepe had a religious significance.

The platform consists of two-metre high thick stamped mud walls retaining a platform which was made with alternating layers of sterile sand and mud bricks. A preliminary (relative) construction date based on pottery finds, points to the late 5th or early 4th century B.C.<sup>10</sup> Purpose built shallow bins paved and sealed with bricks have been found at various places on the platform. All of these contain packed ashes. There are signs of earlier construction at the north end of the platform which are relatively dated to the so-called Archaic period (7th/6th centuries B.C.), indicating that the complex may have a very early beginning. The supposed temple lies at the geometrical centre of the platform and consists of a series of regularly jogged corridors surrounding a central cella. This cella (only partially excavated) was reconstructed by inserting a large brick podium which, according to pottery finds, dates to the Kushan era beginning in the 2nd century A.D. Architectural parallels can best be found at Takht-i Sanghin<sup>11</sup> or the Temple of the Oxus which was built in the 3rd century B.C. but which also contained purely Achaemenid objects in its treasury. The outlying buildings to the south of the temple at Tash-k'irman-tepe contain brick sealed bins with ashes similar to those on the platform. Tentatively then, the complex at Tash-k'irman-tepe is interpreted as a place of fire worship. Its size, even in comparison with the much larger Temple of the Oxus, might identify it as the regional religious centre of (at least) east-bank Chorasmia which flourished, in one form or another, from the Archaic period well into the Kushan era.

<sup>8</sup> Iu. A. Rapoport and E. E. Nerazik (eds.) (1984) *Toprak-kala. Dvoretz*. Moscow: Nauka; E. E. Nerazik and Iu. A. Rapoport (eds.) (1981) *Gorodishche Toprak-kala (raskopki 1965-1975 gg.)* Moscow: Nauka

<sup>9</sup> See Helms and Yagodin 1997.

<sup>10</sup> All pre-1st century B.C. dates are at present relative: an absolute chronology will have to be achieved with C14 determinations.

<sup>11</sup> B. A. Litvinskiy and I. R. Pichikiyan (1981) "The temple of the Oxus", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 2:133-168.

**Kazakl'i-yatkan/Akcha-khane-kalesi**

Kazakl'i-yatkan is the largest, most complex 'urban' site to be found in ancient Chorasmia with the exception of Kiuzeli-g'ir<sup>12</sup> and Kalal'i-g'ir<sup>13</sup> in west-bank Chorasmia. The former belongs to the beginning of the Archaic period (7th/6th century B.C.) and its architecture was thought by Tolstov to reflect Avestan characteristics.<sup>14</sup> The latter, Kalal'i-g'ir, is attributed to the late Archaic period (ca. 5th century B.C.) and presents some evidence of at the very least cultural connection with the Achaemenid empire in terms of architectural style and decoration.<sup>15</sup> The current date range of Kazakl'i-yatkan is between the 5th century B.C. and the 1st/2nd century A.D. The site consists of two parts. A lower enclosure (about 27 hectares) was defended by a galleried wall some 6 metres wide with regularly spaced arrow slits and towers. One corner tower has been partly cleared showing that already in the 5th century B.C. the fortifications included a *proteichisma*<sup>16</sup> or outwork following the line of trace. An upper enclosure was set into and onto the north-west corner of the lower and is still standing some 15 metres above the lower trace of fortifications. This enclosure is heavily fortified with 8-metre square two-storeyed towers (the corner ones enlarged), galleried curtains with ranks of arrow slits, and a series of *proteichismata*. Two complex gateways of the "labyrinth before wall" type are visible on the surface. These give access to the lower enclosure. Traces of monumental structures are visible within the upper enclosure. These may be interpreted as non-secular in terms of their architecture. There is one obvious temple and also a *temenos* of some kind. The most imposing ruin, however, was built at the precise centre of the enclosure and consists of two 10-metre square towers flanking a partly preserved barrel vault with a 4.5 metre span. Sondages against the exterior of this complex show that the foundations are deep and, like the temple at Tash-k'irman-tepe, are set into and on a platform of sterile sand and mud bricks. The earliest relative date ascribed to these remains is in the 5th century B.C. There are, however, remains of earlier structures.

Kazakl'i-yatkan may have been the capital of ancient Chorasmia as early as the 5th century B.C. The size of the settlement, the massive and much rebuilt fortifications, and the 'sacred enclosure' underline the importance of the place. A close parallel may be seen at Dil'berdzhin-tepe<sup>17</sup> in northern Afghanistan, whose enclosure is of similar proportions and whose interior is also filled with temples of various kinds. The major excavated remains at Dil'berdzhin-tepe belong to the Kushan era but, were obviously built on Greco-Bactrian and even 'Achaemenid' structures. The central complex in the upper enclosure of Kazakl'i-yatkan has been identified as a mausoleum (a *naus* ?) on the basis of architectural parallels the best of which, although much smaller, was found at Ai-Khanoum.<sup>18</sup> If this is so, then it is possible that Kazakl'i-yatkan (as the capital) was the burial place of the first kings and queens of an independent Chorasmia, including perhaps Pharasmenes himself and perhaps even Hystaspes<sup>19</sup>, the first patron of Zoroaster. Excavations will continue in 1998.

<sup>12</sup> Tolstov 1953.

<sup>13</sup> Tolstov 1953.

<sup>14</sup> See S. W. Helms (1997) *Excavations at Old Kandahar in Afghanistan, 1976-1978: stratigraphy, pottery and other finds*. Oxford: Archaeopress (BAR Int. Ser. 686).

<sup>15</sup> See S. P. Tolstov 1962. A fragment of a griffin-headed stone capital was found in a small hypostyle hall. This fragment is a direct parallel to more monumental capitals at Susa and Persepolis. Recently a quarry site with similar fragments was found in the Sultan-uzdag range a few kilometres north of Kazakl'i-yatkan.

<sup>16</sup> See A. W. Lawrence (1979) *Greek Aims in Fortification*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

<sup>17</sup> V. S. Dolgorukov (1984) "Oboronitel'n'ie sooruzheniya Dul'berdzhina" *Drevniyaya Baktriya* 3:58-92.

<sup>18</sup> F. Grenet (1984) *Les pratiques funéraires dans l'Asie Centrale sédentaire de la conquête grecque à l'islamisation*. Paris: CNRS.

<sup>19</sup> *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie* (1914):541-542.

**RECENT DISCOVERIES OF COIN HOARDS IN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN: A QUESTION OF CLANDESTINE DIGGINGS AND THE ILLICIT TRAFFIC IN ANTIQUITIES**

*by Dr. Osmund Bopearachchi, C.N.R.S., Paris, France.<sup>1</sup>*

During the course of the last six years many hoards containing early Indian (bent-bars and punch-marked), Indo-Greek, Indo-Scythian, Indo-Parthian and Kushan coins have been found in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Most of these hoards were discovered either accidentally or as the result of clandestine diggings. ancient sites in Afghanistan, like Aï Khanum and Hadda have recently been pillaged and looted and for this reason a great number of hoards were unearthed and have often turned up in Pakistani bazaars or in the European coin markets. Apart from a few hoards to which I have had direct access, most of them have been scattered world-wide and I have been confronted with the problem of reconstituting them. During my recent visits to Pakistan I was able to gather more reliable information about the contents of some hoards. I also went to many places to investigate the circumstances in which the hoards were found. The results of these investigations have been published from time to time in various journals. I still have not finished studying them, so my only aim here is to present briefly the provenance and important characteristics of these hoards and to make some observations regarding their composition. While developing these aspects I wish to take the liberty to focus your attention on one of the major problems that historians and archaeologists have to face today when studying the history of Central Asia: that is the question of clandestine diggings and the illicit traffic in antiquities.<sup>2</sup>

As we know, the study of hoards and coins is vital especially for the enigmatic period of Central Asian and Indian history. The prime importance of numismatic evidence in reconstructing the history of the Greeks and of the nomadic tribes who reigned over Central Asia and India after the death of Alexander the Great has been rightly emphasised by many historians. It is because of the scarcity of ancient texts and of available archaeological data that the numismatic evidence constitutes the main source for the reconstruction of their history. These coins carry a great deal of information enabling us to understand their role within a historical context and this is conveyed to us in many different ways. Apart from the design and inscriptions which constitute the basic elements for identifying them, the style, overstrikes, minting techniques, metrology, iconography, along with the find spots associated with particular monograms, enable us to evaluate geographical localisation of different kingdoms and to define to a certain extent a relative chronology for the kings who issued them.

Apart from the two major finds of Mir Zakah and Aï Khanum, which will be discussed to a certain extent in this paper, many other minor finds were made in Afghanistan, but their exact provenance is not known. It is beyond doubt that all these other finds are the result of clandestine diggings. A hoard containing imitations of Athenian 'owls', coins of the 'eagle' series and of Sophytes was found most probably in 1990 in northern Afghanistan and was later published by H. Nicolet-Pierre & M. Amandry (1994). Apart from the 65 coins that they have catalogued, many other coins

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<sup>1</sup> This article is based on the paper presented at the workshop organised by the Central Asian Silk Road Working Group, University of California at Berkeley, U.S.A. on the 3rd of December 1997.

<sup>2</sup> This report is based, on the one hand on my investigations carried out in Pakistan, Germany, Japan, France, U.S.A. and England since 1993 and on the other hand on information given to me by my colleagues. I am indebted to the Kreitman Fund for Central Asian Numismatic Research of the Royal Numismatic Society of Great Britain and the Hirayama Silk Roads Fellowships Programme for the financial aid which enabled me to carry out my research.

belonging to the same hoard appeared in the coin market in recent years. I have published five of them elsewhere.<sup>3</sup>

One very important hoard was found in recent years in Tadjikistan. The hoard was found in Kulab, a village situated on the right bank of the river Oxus, on the opposite bank from Ai Khanum. It was taken to Peshawar for sale and contained more than fifty tetradrachms and 700 oboles of Seleucid and Graeco-Bactrian kings. During the course of the last six years more than twenty coin hoards were found in Pakistan and I had access to most of them. Nowadays most of the ancient sites in Pakistan are occupied by Pakistanis or Afghan refugees. Villages are built on the mounds, while soil from the mounds has been used to build the exterior walls. The drums of ancient columns are sometimes used as weights for doors. Farmers have found such hoards while ploughing fields close to the ancient city walls. About eight years ago, while digging the earth to build a house, some villagers of Shaikhan Dheri found a hoard of 600 gold coins of Kanishka.

Clandestine diggings have been going on for many years in Pakistan. As a result, many sites around Pushkalavati are now completely destroyed. In February 1994, an earthen pot containing twenty kilograms of Indo-Scythian and Indo-Parthian coins was discovered in the ancient city of Pushkalavati. Composed mainly of debased silver coins, the whole hoard was found very tightly clumped together. Treasure hunters first tried to break it with hammers and various other instruments expecting to find some gold in the middle. Failing this, they used a pickaxe, and broke it into three pieces. In sheer ignorance they got rid of the whole hoard for a handful of rupees. Aman ur Rahman, who has acquired the entire hoard, is now in the process of cleaning it. Once this technical problem is solved, the hoard will be available to scholars for further studies. Three more hoards surfaced in the Peshawar bazaar in 1997. They are still uncleaned, but apparently are composed of Indo-Scythian and Indo-Parthian coins. Other hoards have been found recently in Pakistan in the village of Khar near Pandyal in the area of Bajaur in the North West Frontier (October 1993)<sup>4</sup>; in Wesa, a village in the Chach region (January 1994)<sup>5</sup>; in Mian Khan Sanghou in the Mardan district (December 1993)<sup>6</sup>; in a broken vase in the bed of the Swat river near Khauzikhelai in the Swat valley near Saidu-Sharif (1992)<sup>7</sup>; in Siranwali, a remote village situated mid-way between Gujranwala and Sialkot (1990, 1993)<sup>8</sup>; in Sarai Saleh, situated on the North West Frontier in the Abbottabad district (January 1994), and in Attock.<sup>9</sup>

The coin hoard most important for its historical value probably came from the ancient site of Ai Khanum in Afghanistan. It is difficult to say whether all the coins were found in the same spot or in different places. What is certain is that all coins in question are Graeco-Bactrian, struck according to the Attic standard. The total number varies according to different informers. The hoard or hoards may have contained more than 1,000 coins. For the last six years, Ai Khanum has been systematically pillaged and looted. All the Corinthian capitals have been removed from the site. I have seen

<sup>3</sup> O. Bopearachchi, "Sophytes, the enigmatic ruler of Central Asia", *Numismatica Chronica*, 1996, pp. 19-32.

<sup>4</sup> 800 Indo-Greek drachms of Apollodotus I, Antimachus II and Menander I.

<sup>5</sup> 220 tetradrachms and 1000 drachms of Apollodotus I, Antimachus II, Menander I, Lysias, Antialcidas and Eucratides I.

<sup>6</sup> 83 silver coins: Apollodotus I, Antimachus II, Menander I and Zoilus I.

<sup>7</sup> 800 coins: Apollodotus I, Antimachus II, Menander I, Lysias, Antialcidas, Philoxenus and Nicias, including a good number of tetradrachms: 200 of Menander I and four of Antialcidas.

<sup>8</sup> 1990: 400 coins of Apollodotus I, Antimachus II and Menander I and Amyntas. 1993: 300 drachms: Apollodotus I, Antimachus II and Menander I, Lysias, Philoxenus and Amyntas.

<sup>9</sup> 93 tetradrachms (3 of Antialcidas and 90 of Menander I) and 600 drachms of Menander I, Zoilus I, Lysias, Antialcidas and Amyntas. V. Osmund Bopearachchi and Aman ur Rahman: *Pre-Kushana Coins in Pakistan*, Pakistan: Iftikhar Rasul IRM Associates (Pvt.) Ltd., 1995.

photographs taken by a Japanese historian who went to the site in 1993, which clearly show people loading marble and stone pillars and capitals onto a number of trucks parked inside the boundaries of the ancient site. They are recycled for construction purposes. Huge holes have been dug everywhere. Treasure hunters have used metal detectors originally brought to the country to detect Russian land-mines. This information was also conveyed to me by two foreign officers who worked in Afghanistan for UNO and who went to Ai Khanum in 1994. One showed me a fragment of a Corinthian capital given to him as a present by a looter. A certain number of bronzes probably from Ai Khanum also appeared in the London market in May 1994. In recent years more and more bronze statues of Heracles from Ai Khanum have reached the Peshawar bazaar. In January 1998 I saw, in the same bazaar a gold bracelet in the form of a snake with Greek letters engraved on the surface which also seems to have come from Ai Khanum.

One of the largest ancient coin deposits ever attested in the history of mankind was discovered, accidentally, in 1992 in the village of Mir Zakah, situated 53 km north-east from the city of Gardez in Afghanistan. According to my enquiries it must have consisted of three to four tons of gold, silver and bronze coins, dating from the fourth century B.C. to the second century A.D. It is also believed that it contained more than two hundred kilograms of gold objects. This report is based on what I have seen in the Pakistani bazaars and on what I have heard from different people who have been to the find-spot. Of course, second-hand information should be handled with extreme caution, especially when our informers have a tendency either to exaggerate or to romanticise the event. We still do not know under what circumstances the deposit was found. According to the rumour going around the Peshawar bazaar, a woman from Mir Zakah one day while fetching water from a particular spring famous for its sweet water found a gold coin in her vessel. Once alerted, the neighbouring villagers hurried to the find-spot and started digging. I was also informed that many were killed over ownership claims. The gold coins and jewellery of high value were sold to Japanese, English and American collectors of antiquities for millions of dollars. I managed to obtain some photographs of gold and silver objects from a dealer in Islamabad. Among them were a seated lion holding a *cervid* in its claws, an ibex with coiled horns, an eagle perched on a socle, a plaque depicting a 'master of beasts' wearing nomadic dress, a Dionysiac face, etc. People in the bazaar described to me a silver cup encrusted with precious stones, with a gold medallion inside it. It seems that this same cup has entered a private collection in New York. The photographs of this object correspond to the description given to me by my Pakistani friends. In January 1998, I was able to see with my own eyes a similar silver cup with a medallion of Dionysus inside it. It also seems to have come from Mir Zakah. A few left-overs, especially broken pieces of jewellery, like earrings, pendants, bracelets *etc.* can still be seen in the Peshawar bazaar.

I was able to examine in the same bazaar six sacks full of coins, each weighing fifty kilograms. The scepticism of some scholars who have thought that the coins in question came from the Kabul Museum, as a result of the recent pillage and havoc, could be eliminated at once by looking at their condition. All the coins are covered with a black layer of sulphide or mud.<sup>10</sup>

These 'fairy-tale discoveries' have now become an unending nightmare. The finding of large quantities of coins within a short period of time has caused many problems, leaving very little time to explore their immense historical importance. The discoveries were unfortunately made at a very bad moment. The political instability in Afghanistan makes impossible any attempt to have these hoards preserved in a local museum for further study. In May 1993, as a result of the civil war in Afghanistan, the National Museum of Kabul was destroyed by several rockets and subsequently looted. The photographs of the completely destroyed Kabul Museum were published in *II*

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.* pp. 11-13.

*Giornale dell'Arte*. (n° 119, February 1994.) These photographs were taken in October 1993, during the visit to the destroyed museum by Mr. Sotirios Mousouris, a representative of the General Secretary of the UNO and Mr. Nadjibullah Popal, the Director of the Museum. Not a single coin is left in the cabinets where formerly over thirty thousand coins were stored. Coins from the first Mir Zakah hoard, the Kabul hoard, the Qunduz hoard (627 Graeco-Bactrian coins and their imitations), coins from the excavation of Ai Khanum including two major hoards, and from Begram, were among those looted. Only the coins from Tepe Maranjan, believed to be in the vaults of the Presidential Palace, are said to be intact.

According to an article by Imtiaz Hussain, which appeared in the *Frontier Post* in Pakistan (8th April, 1994) the CIA recovered antiquities in three different raids in Peshawar. The objects were allegedly stolen from the Kabul Museum some time ago. The two arrested were the agents of a gang operating in the U.S.A. and other Western countries, according to the police. Such activities have been linked to heroin smugglers. Similarly, all the coins from the Qunduz hoard were first taken to London, then to the U.S.A. and finally to Germany. Everybody seems to have refused to buy these well-known coins. Fortunately all the coins of this hoard are well published and illustrated, and dealers and collectors did not want to take the risk of acquiring them. Out of the 115 coins from the Tchaman-i-Hazouri hoard that Daniel Schlumberger published, 14 coins suddenly appeared in the Peshawar bazaar in 1994, and were unknowingly purchased by Aman ur Rahman, a Pakistani collector. When preparing the publication of his collection, I realised that these 14 coins were the stolen property of the Kabul Museum. My Pakistani friend willingly agreed to donate them to UNESCO. Some of the coins found in the excavations of Ai Khanum have now begun to appear in the London coin market. Already three out of the six silver bilingual coins of Agathocles depicting the Hindu deities Balarāma-Saṃkarāna and Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa have been in the London market. I have completely lost touch with these coins from Ai Khanum and Qunduz. From time to time, one or two coins appear in the sale catalogues mixed with the coins from recent finds. I also saw a bronze statuette in the London market formerly in the Kabul Museum, which had been found in the Begram excavations by Joseph Hackin.

The fate of the coins from the first Mir Zakah deposit is much worse: of 10,000 coins kept in the Kabul Museum, only 20 were illustrated in the short catalogue done by R. Curiel. Thus it is now impossible to know whether the coins appearing in sale catalogues are from the recent hoards or from the looted coin cabinets of the Kabul Museum. The best gold and silver objects and coins found in the second deposit of Mir Zakah have already been dispersed all over the world and there is no hope, at least for the moment, of keeping track of their final destination. This task has become extremely difficult because it is not easy to know whether most of the gold objects that I have seen are all really from the Mir Zakah deposit or from Tilia Tepe. Wild rumours persist about the whereabouts of more than 20, 000 Bactrian gold objects from Tilia Tepe legally excavated by the Russian archaeologists. It is normally believed that all these gold objects were never given to the Kabul Museum, but being kept instead in a vault in the National Bank in the Presidential Palace from November 1978. I have so far seen not a single piece which could be from the Tilia Tepe Bactrian golds as published by Sarianidi. As we know, Sarianidi excavated six out of seven graves. It seems that the seventh grave was illicitly excavated some years ago and some of the gold objects may have come from these diggings. I met one Afghani dealer who has been to the site, and his account of the grave corresponds well to the description given by Sarianidi regarding the other six tombs. Museums and important organisations have of course the right to refuse to acquire any of these items taken out from Afghanistan illicitly. All my attempts to convince responsible organisations to preserve this trunk load of extremely valuable documentation came to nothing. In this situation, virtually nothing can be done to save the coins and objects found in the second Mir Zakah deposit. In fact, according to very reliable sources, more than 2,500 kilograms of the hoard were taken to Switzerland illicitly, and are now being kept in

Basel. These coins were apparently taken from Peshawar in a private aircraft. I learnt from competent authorities that, according to Swiss legislation, the whole deposit has now become legal.

Any war against trafficking in antiquities through Peshawar will be lost even before it is started. In an article entitled "The Antiquities Trade: a police perspective", which appeared in the book *Antiquities Trade or Betrayed Legal, Ethical and Conservation Issues*, published in 1995 (p. 224), Richard Ellis describes how the police received information that a dealer in London was trafficking in antiquities plundered from Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Arts and Antiquities Squad in collaboration with the Department of National Heritage investigated the dealer, obtained search warrants and seized about 40 Gandharan Buddhas and temple friezes. A map marking the find-site of the largest piece was found, and the smugglers and their route from Pakistan, via Japan, to the West could be identified. A full report was sent to the Pakistan Embassy in London, the National Museum in Pakistan, and via Interpol to the Pakistan Police, all with a view to proving that these objects had been stolen from Pakistan, in order that the dealer could be prosecuted for dishonestly handling the items. After more than 18 months of inaction on the part of the Pakistani authorities it was still not possible to show that the goods were stolen, and so they had to be returned to the dealer. Concerning the police, customs officers and civil servants in Pakistan, Richard Ellis pointed out that they are often "bought off" by dealers being poorly paid and poorly equipped. "If you are going to ask them to prevent the smuggling of antiquities from Afghanistan which pass through their territory, then you are asking them to commit suicide. Those antiquities are... brought out by the same smugglers who bring out the heroin, people so well armed that they were able to stop the Russian Army. The police, should they risk intervening, would be instantly out-gunned and killed. Who can blame them for turning a blind eye?" Unfortunately, this is what is actually happening in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

**PRE-KUSHANA COINS IN PAKISTAN**  
by Dr. Osmund Bopearachchi & Aman ur Rahman



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**THE ANCIENT CEMETERY OF ALAGOU (AWRIGHUL), TIANSHAN,  
XINJIANG PROVINCE, P.R.C.**

by *Professor Zhang Yuzhong, Xinjiang Institute of Archaeology, Urumqi, Xinjiang  
Uyghur Autonomous Region, People's Republic of China.*

In 1976, in the course of railway construction linking Turfan and Korla, the archaeological team of Xinjiang province excavated 85 graves, dating from between the Spring and Autumn period and the Han dynasty, at the eastern end of the Alagou valley (Alagou Dongkou), about 60 km west of Tuokesun, south of Urumqi. In 1984, more than 40 tombs were excavated near the Dongfeng factory, at the 70 km marker. The Alagou valley was an important cross-road even before the Western Han, yet its history and cultural features are still unclear. No excavation report has yet been published. The abundant early cultural remains recovered from the two burial complexes are introduced here.

**Alagou Dongkou Cemetery (87° 42' E, 42° 50' N)**

There are two types of tombs. The main one is represented by a stone-chambered vertical pit with a wooden cover. Multiple burials, containing ten or many more skeletons piled one on top of the other, are common. Cutting marks were evident on a number of skulls and limb bones. The burial objects include a great number of pottery vessels, mostly painted, usually with black designs on a red ground, with saw-tooth designs, triangles and whorls; in some the whole body is covered with parallel vertical and short diagonal lines. There are some wooden articles, small bronze objects, stone pestles, awls, sea shells, carved bone items and other ornaments. Horse and goat bones were commonly sacrificed with the burials.

Four examples only of a second burial type, with a vertical pit with wooden chamber, were located amongst the graves of the first type. They were single or double burials. When still intact, the body was in supine position with limbs extended and the head towards the west. The dead had long plaited hair, covered with a silken hair net, and wore various woollen textiles and furs. These four tombs, although disturbed by robbers, yielded a rich inventory marking the high status of the deceased. The burial items include pottery, bronzes and gold, and a few small iron knives. There are quite a number of gold artefacts, which are very distinctive (such as gold tiger and lion plaques). Pearl and agate ornaments were also found. The bronzes include distinctive square-based bronze stands with animals on top. There are *dou*-vessels, lacquer objects and silk textiles, one with an embroidered phoenix, from the Central Plains of China, but fewer examples of painted pottery, or none at all.

The tombs with stone chambers can be divided into early and late periods. The early tombs contain mainly painted pottery, the four later tombs little or none: the latter are datable to the Warring States and Qin or Han periods. C14 data give an approximate date of c. 2700-2000 BP.

**Dongfeng Factory (87° 47' E, 42°49' N)**

The Dongfeng burial complex is located on the slopes along the south bank of the Alagou river. In an area 500 m from east to west, 100 m from north to south, 43 pebble mounds have been identified and excavated. The tumuli are either circular or square in shape. The corners of the square tumuli were marked with piles of large stone pebbles, linked by additional pebbles along the perimeter. After excavation, 41 of these mounds turned out to be tombs. The remaining two, smaller in size than the rest, are on a hill to the west of the cemetery, and had no burial chambers, skeletons or other remains. These two tumuli may have had a ritual connection with the cemetery,

since the deceased were all buried with their heads towards the west. Ritual stone circles and tumuli have been found at other Xinjiang burial sites.

Most of the 41 tombs feature a stone-chambered vertical pit, with amassed pebbles, the entrance to the tomb a little smaller than the bottom. Occasionally, there is no chamber, and the corpse is placed directly underneath the pebbles. The opening of the tomb is covered with wood or else layers of stones filling the chamber. The base of the tomb is lined with branches, wooden boards or a layer of stones. Some of the tombs yielded a large wooden basin used as a funerary container. In other cases reed mats, woollen fabrics or felt were used to line the base of the pit.

The most common type of burial is the multiple one, with a variety of principal and secondary burials. In some of the piles of stones there were some human bones and funerary items. The multiple burials contained up to twenty individuals, placed in different positions. The dead belong to both sexes and vary in age. A distinctive feature is the inclusion of sacrificed goat and horse heads, usually matching the number of the people buried inside the tomb.

The majority of burial items consist of painted pottery, with a few wood, bronze and bone artefacts and ornaments. The pottery is hand-made with decoration usually either in black or red on a red ground with ornamental patterns including triangles, criss-crosses in triangle shapes, whorl designs, wave patterns, and linear patterns. The painting extends to the inside of the rim. The main combinations of pottery vessels are either *guan*, *hu* and *bei* or *guan*, *bo* and *bei*. Some dou footed cups are characterised by a single lug on the rim, a rare feature in Xinjiang. The Dongfeng burials yielded mainly felt and woollen textiles. Only two tombs had three small fragments of iron, suggesting that at that time the use of iron was not yet widespread.

Three tombs have a small stone chamber, just large enough to hold the body of a child, flanking the main chamber. One child was five years old, another possibly an infant. These three children were wearing hair net and felt cap, woollen robe and felt boots: some also had necklaces. The corpses were wrapped with woollen fabric and felt, fastened with woollen thread. They were buried supine with limbs extended and head to the west. The infant was placed in a coffin consisting of a big wooden dish.

These tombs show some analogies with the early Alagou Dongkou tombs in terms of burial style, structure and contents. Stone chambers and surface structures of pebble circles are used at both sites. Both use multiple burials and the main burial items are pottery, mostly painted, and almost identical in typology and ornamentation, demonstrating that they belong to the same cultural group.

At Subashi, in Shanshan county in the Turfan basin, some tombs dated from the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods to the Western Han period have been excavated. They are like the stone-chambered tombs at Alagou and Dongfeng. Social differentiation is already evident from the finds: joint burials of couples have been found as well as slave sacrifices. In some tombs, skeletal remains placed in a secondary location show evident marks of cutting. Such traces of cutting and trepanning have also been found in the Alagou stone-chambered tombs, but not at Dongfeng.

The Han History records that at the time of Emperor Wu's (r.140-87 BC) campaigns in the Western Regions the so-called Gushi people lived in the Turfan basin. Under Xuandi (r. 73-49 B.C.), the Gushi were defeated and split into former Jushi, later Jushi and six other states north of the Tianshan mountains. Huang Wenbi's researches established that these groups occupied the Turfan basin, the northern side of the Tianshan mountains and the eastern Tianshan valleys. The Gushi-Jushi peoples were the ancient natives of eastern Xinjiang. In the Warring States and Western Han

periods they had a very close relationship with the Han empire, the Xiongnu and other contemporary kingdoms in Xinjiang.

C14 tests on six samples taken from the wooden covers or lining of six tombs from Dongfeng show four with an approximate date of 3300-3000 BP, and two with a date between 2700 and 2600 BP. This confirms our preliminary estimate that the latest Dongfeng burials are earlier than the Alagou stone-chambered tombs and the Shanshan Subashi tombs. As for the four later tombs at Alagou, this paper argues that they are likely to be Jushi rather than Saka or Xiongnu. They are similar to the tombs that have been excavated at the Wulabo reservoir in the southern suburbs of Urumqi. The numerous tiger-shaped gold plaques show that the Jushi people were specially fond of tigers. These burials with rich furnishings must have belonged to the Jushi nobility.

The Alagou tombs have provided new material for the understanding of the connection between Xinjiang and the Central Plains in the pre-Qin period. This is the area in Xinjiang where the greatest amount of painted pottery has been recovered, influenced by the painted pottery cultures of Gansu and Qinghai, especially the Machang culture and the Huoshaogou culture in the Gansu corridor. The triangles, vertical lines and net designs from the above two cultures can all be found on the Alagou painted pottery. Sea shells found in the tombs demonstrate that a connection existed between Xinjiang and the Chinese metropolitan area well before the Western Han period.

The archaeological material also reflects that Alagou Gushi culture was related to the Chaowuhugou culture in Hejin county and the southern edge of the Tianshan. From the burial structure and style, both cultures display stone-chambered vertical pits with multiple burials and piled-up stones, with pebble tumuli on the surface. Funerary items include similar single-handled cups and pottery *hu*-vases. The typical handled *guan*-jar from Chaowuhugou is also found in Alagou. These two sites are close both geographically and chronologically and they reveal common archaeological features.

The excavations have highlighted the relationship between Alagou-Gushi culture, the Chaowuhugou culture of the southern Tianshan, and the Saka culture of the Yili river. Before the Western Han dynasty, these routes from the Turfan basin to the Yanqi basin, and to the Yili river were important for the migration of nomadic peoples, trade, and east-west cultural diffusion. The Gushi-Jushi people living in the Alagou valley contributed to this interchange.

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High footed bronze basin with animal sculpture found in Alagou. (Ht: 32 cm; Warring States, Qin or Han periods.)

## NEWS BULLETIN

### A Note on Changes in the Policies Governing Archaeological Research in Xinjiang

In the July 5, 1998 issue of *Zhongguo wenwu bao* (Chinese Cultural Relics News), 52 (cumulative 617), an important announcement was made concerning the policies governing archaeological research and conservation in Xinjiang as well as significant shifts in the aims of the various organs charged with these tasks. These changes have been made in pursuance of planning documents for 1995 and 2010 put forward by the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Regional government. Insofar as they relate to archaeology and cultural relics in Xinjiang, the main features of the new plans and policies are as follows:

(1) Construction projects aimed at the preservation of 14 national level units and 154 regional level units will be undertaken. These include the second stage project at Yarghul (Yarkhoto, Jiaohe), the fourth and fifth stage projects at Qizil Buddhist caves, badly needed repairs at Qumtura and Simsin Buddhist caves near Kucha, protection and maintenance of six important units in Qorghas (Huocheng) County, etc. (2) Construction of museums is proposed. During the period of the "95" plan, strenuous efforts will be made to turn the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Regional Museum into a large-scale museum of considerable importance.<sup>1</sup> Efforts will be made to construct a museum dedicated to the physical anthropology of the ancient peoples of the region.<sup>2</sup> Museums are also planned for the Astana Cemetery and Yarghul Ancient City in the Turpan area. New district museums are envisaged for Chöchäk (Tacheng), Bayingholin (Bazhou), Khotan, Qumul (Hami), Altay, Bortala (Bozhou), and Shikhuza (Shihezi).<sup>3</sup>

(3) An increased emphasis on archaeological surveys, excavations and preservation is planned. Emergency surveys and excavations will be carried out in connection with the building of the railroad into the southern part of Xinjiang as well as with the exploration and utilization of oil fields in the Tarim, Turpan, Qumul and Jungghar (Yarish) basins. An effort will be made to establish a major archaeological field station for both the northern and southern parts of the region. Capital construction will be devoted to implement an archaeological information network for the entire region and to ensure that archaeological initiatives will be adequately supported. Plans are being made for the development of investigations on the Wusun culture of the Ili River valley, on the Kuchean culture of Kucha and Toqsu districts, and on the Jushi or Gushi culture of the eastern Tängri Tagh (Tian Shan), as well as on the exploration and research of sites in Niyä and Yengishähär (Shule). The completion of old site reports is also being urged.<sup>4</sup> An attempt will be made to finish within the current year the Xinjiang volume of China's illustrated archaeological atlas. (4) An increased emphasis on the scientific study of cultural relics and in museology is recommended.

<sup>1</sup> A new, multi-storeyed wing of the museum dedicated to conservation is already under construction.

<sup>2</sup> This is a project that Wang Binghua, former director of the Xinjiang Institute of Archeology and Cultural Relics (Xinjiang Kaogu Wenwu Yanjiusuo) and I have made a top priority since the beginning of our joint research plan in 1993. We are extremely gratified that the government of Xinjiang has now given it official backing.

<sup>3</sup> Bazhou and Hami already have superb collections of artifacts and human remains, but they are housed in small, temporary quarters not suitable for opening to the general public.

<sup>4</sup> I consider this to be an extremely important task for the archeologists of Xinjiang. There exists an astonishing wealth of materials and data that have been collected during the last two decades and more, yet only one site report has ever been published for Xinjiang: Beshbalik (Beiting), but that was done by the Institute of Archeology (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Peking), not by a local team.

Several important projects will be singled out for directed research, including the physical anthropology of the ancient peoples of the region,<sup>5</sup> the culture of Kucha, archaeological research on Buddhist art, and the organization of co-operative investigations with colleagues elsewhere in China and abroad.<sup>6</sup> The protection and conservation of excavated sites will be strengthened as will the conservation of wall paintings in caves and tombs, ancient architecture, textiles, paper and ancient human remains. Efforts will be made to acquire and apply advanced technologies toward these ends.

(5) This item has to do with the economic and administrative restructuring necessary for carrying out the above plans. (6) As an example of what must be done to realize the aims stated in item no. 5, the establishment of a Xinjiang Shiku Yanjiuyuan (Xinjiang Grottoes Institute) is envisaged. (7) In this item, the necessity of advanced training for archaeological workers in Xinjiang is stressed. Before the conclusion of the "95" plan, the aim is to ensure that over 60% of all such individuals have received higher education and that the number of those with specialized training relevant to their jobs be not less than 40%. (8) During the period of the "95" plan, the following exhibitions will be sent abroad: "Artifacts from the Silk Road in Xinjiang," "Buddhist Artifacts from Xinjiang," "Silk and Woollen Textiles Excavated in Xinjiang," "Artifacts Excavated at Niyä," etc. The purpose is to publicize the archaeological importance of Xinjiang worldwide.

*Professor Victor H. Mair, Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies,  
University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, U.S.A.*

#### **Report on stolen art objects from Gansu Province, P.R.C.**

The Hexi corridor in Gansu province has formed an important section of the silk route since the Han dynasty. A great number of early Buddhist grottoes and tombs with rich contents are witness to a once highly developed economy and culture. The Buddhist grottoes in this area include not only the most well-known ones like the Dunhuang and the Majishan caves, but also Wenshushan, Jintasi, Matisi, Tiantishan, Binglingsi, the Northern and Southern Grottoes Temples, etc. These grottoes contain wall paintings and stone or clay sculpture and range in date from as early as the fourth century A.D. to the nineteenth century.

As this area has been through many wars and rebellions, the caves are occasionally damaged. Furthermore, in the last five years, with the opening of the Chinese economy, new social problems have occurred, such as the current high unemployment. This directly influences the conservation work in the Gansu area. In addition, nowadays, the trading in illegal antiquities has become very profitable. Although the Chinese government has introduced the strictest laws to prevent this kind of crime (sometimes involving capital punishment), the theft of the art works continues. Most worrying is that many of these art criminals are well organised, and have contacts with art dealers in Hong Kong, Taiwan, or England. Usually, the objects are smuggled out of China inside cargo six months after their theft. This kind of international criminal co-operation makes the recovery of stolen works of art very difficult.

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<sup>5</sup> Since this was the focus of the international research project I started in 1991 and since it has been an extremely sensitive and difficult subject from the very beginning, nothing pleases me more than to read this portion of the announcement. I believe that it is a good indication of the way in which archaeology (like just about everything else in China) is continuing to gradually open its doors to the world.

<sup>6</sup> This is a clear signal and an invitation which should not be missed. I encourage all of my colleagues who are interested in the archaeology and cultural history of Eastern Central Asia to take advantage of this opportunity.

The following is a list of stolen art objects from government administered institutions in Gansu, all of which disappeared in recent years: (1) a human-size money tree (*yaoqianshu*) from the Han dynasty, stolen from the exhibition hall of the Gansu Provincial Museum in 1997; (2) a flanking Bodhisattva sculpture from the Tang dynasty or the Tibetan period from cave 10 in the Binglingsi Grottoes, stolen on 26 November, 1997; (3) ten heads of a set of the Eighteen Arhats, and two heads of the flanking Bodhisattvas, stolen in 1997 from the Lohan Cave, Southern Grottoes Temple; (4) a clay donor figure, stolen in 1995 from cave 76, Maijishan; (5) more than thirty *tangkha* paintings from the Qing dynasty, stolen from Shuailian cave, Maijishan; (6) all stone sculptures from the Northern Wei Dynasty in Baoquan temple, Heshui. According to Professor Dong Yuxiang, Bureau of Archaeology, Gansu Province, Lanzhou, this grotto group has now virtually disappeared.

### **Important discoveries in 1996/1997 in Xinjiang Province, P.R.C.**

A wooden coffin was excavated from the cemetery 95MN1 in Niya in October, 1997. This coffin was made of the whole trunk of a huge poplar tree. The trunk was hollowed out and is long enough for a couple to be positioned feet to feet. This couple complete with their clothing were well preserved by the dry desert climate. Both have clear European facial characteristics. A wooden cup, a wooden basin and a container were also found inside the coffin. A jewellery box made of rattan with some broken pieces of a bronze mirror was placed on the right side of the female head. To the right side of the male head, a pottery jar was placed, and on the other side, a wooden slingshot-like object with a belt attached to two pockets was found. It contained a pinch of white powder. The woman was found wearing a white silk skirt, green twilled trousers and a hood. The man's woollen coat is better preserved than the woman's clothes.

### **Three current projects of the Bureau of Archaeology and Cultural Relics of Xinjiang**

The excavation of the ancient tombs in Fukang is led by Vice Director Yu Zhiyong, and was begun on 30 June, 1997. Around 1994, several golden objects had been excavated from the ancient tombs in the Fukang area. In addition, pottery and bronze vessels dating from the Warring States Period to the Han dynasty, were unearthed in another ancient cemetery about 3-5 km from Fukang. The design of these ancient tombs around Fukang is very similar to those along the Tianshan mountains and in the Turfan Basin in northern Xinjiang. According to Vice Director Yu, these tombs probably belong to the same culture. Many records from the Tang dynasty mention that a route established by the Jushi people connected Fukang and Turfan. This was used as the main route to connect between the former Jushi and later Jushi. Therefore, these tombs might belong to the Jushi culture.

The excavation of the ancient tombs in Shihezi is the responsibility of Vice Director Zhang Yuzhong. This cemetery site, 150 km from Urumqi, was discovered during a field trip in 1996. The researchers found a large pile of stones, and a tomb 2 km from the stone pile. This tomb has a stone chamber above ground with a vaulted ceiling which is unique to Xinjiang. It had been disturbed by local tomb raiders, and only scattered human and horse bones are left. To the west of the stone chamber, a stone coffin covered by a smaller pile of stones was excavated. The coffin contains very similar pottery to that found in the Ili valley. It is not clear whether this coffin and stone chamber belong to the same culture; however, the design of the earthenware suggests the stone coffin might be related to the Wusun or Saka culture. About 2 km to the south of this tomb, some ancient tombs containing earthenware with incised pattern were excavated. Both the design of the tombs and earthenware are very similar in style to those from Krasuk, Kazakhstan, dating between 1200 B.C. and 700 B.C.

These important discoveries show that the Shihezi area may contain important archaeological finds. However, to date very little work has been done in Shihezi and therefore the Bureau of Archaeology and Cultural Relics of Xinjiang will conduct a thorough investigation in late 1998.

The excavation of the ancient tombs near Sailimu lake, which started in July, 1998, is the responsibility of Lu Enguo. Three big tombs, 30 m in diameter and 2.3 m in height, were found to the northwest of the Sailimu lake. This year prolonged rains flooded the lake causing a great amount of damage to these three tombs. The latest report suggests that a third of each tomb has been lost in the flood, increasing the urgency of this project. These three tombs may belong to the Wushun or Saka culture.

### **Expeditions into the Gashun Gobi in Xinjiang Province, P.R.C.**

The writer has made four expeditions into the Mongolian and Chinese Gobi deserts. The first in 1993 in Mongolia with Russian scientists and the second, third and fourth with Chinese scientists in 1995, 1996 and 1997. These expeditions were primarily concerned with tracking down the little-known wild Bactrian camel *Camelus bactrianus ferus* which lives in the heartland of the desert and is the ancestor of all domestic Bactrian stock. There are under a thousand left in the world and the wild Bactrian camel is more endangered than the giant panda. The vast and still partially unknown region of the Gashun Gobi encompasses the Chinese nuclear testing area. In 1995 we were fortunate to obtain permission to travel there to survey this remarkable mammal which has survived numerous atmospheric nuclear tests. On this expedition, we managed to take unique photographs of a wild camel with a seven-hour-old calf. It had given birth deep in the remote Kum Tagh sand dunes.

In 1996, during one of these research expeditions, my Chinese colleague Professor Yuan Guoying and I made a diversion from the lake of Lop Nur to try and reach Loulan from the east. This ancient city was an important metropolis of the Middle Silk Road until it was abandoned in about 400 A.D. when the inland lake of Lop Nur, on which it had hitherto depended for survival, dried up. It was discovered at the turn of the century by the eminent Swedish explorer Sven Hedin. We made a 44-mile round trek on foot to Loulan, through some of the most hostile country in the world. With only a compass as a guide and in the aftermath of a dramatic sand storm, we reached Loulan by following a dried-up river bed and then trekking over a perished oasis until we arrived at the outlying Buddhist tower. The city is in a remarkable state of preservation and many of the upright wooden poplar posts remain to highlight the remains of buildings. Before we set out for Loulan, we had also discovered quite by chance, on the northern shoreline of Lop Nur, the outpost of Duying, a look out post on the Middle Silk Road, also abandoned in about 400 A.D. Neither Hedin nor Stein had reached Duying although it had been visited by a Chinese archaeologist in the 1930's. We found many artefacts, coins, beads, clothing and jade which we presented to the authorities in Urumqi.

As a result of our expeditions, the State Environment Protection Agency of China has agreed to the establishment of the Lop Nur Nature Sanctuary to protect the last remnant herds of wild Bactrian camels. The sanctuary will encompass 105,000 sq. km of unique desert eco-system in the Gashun Gobi. Substantial funding has just come from the Global Environment Facility in Washington and as a result, the amazing wild Bactrian camel which has adapted to drinking salt water and survived over 45 atmospheric nuclear tests should be saved from extinction.

*John Hare, Founder, Wild Camel Protection Foundation, School Farm, Benenden, Kent TN17 4EU, U.K. The Lost Camels of Tartary - A Quest into Forbidden China by John Hare has recently been published. London: Little Brown, 1998. Hb., £18.99.*

### The Garuda Valley Foundation

The upper reaches of the Sotlej (Langchen Khambab) within the province of Ngari Khorsum in Western Tibet, known from the tenth to seventeenth centuries as Gugé and, prior to its conquest by Tibet, as the Inner Gateway of Shangshung, are the repository of some of Tibet's finest and most important remaining cultural treasures. These include the tenth century temple complex of Tholing, the nearby citadel of Tsaparang, the monastic centres of Mangnang and Daba, and the cave paintings at Dungkar.

Due to the comparative inaccessibility of the Langchen Khambab gorge, the damage inflicted on religious buildings and artefacts during the Cultural Revolution in 1966-67, though serious, was far less here than elsewhere in Tibet. Although statuary was destroyed throughout the area, a number of religious structures and wall-paintings have survived to a restorable degree. The most serious casualty was the famous mandala chapel of King Yeshe-O, at the centre of the Tholing complex, where only the outer walls remain standing. On a recent visit to the town of Zanda Xian, part of which has been extended over the remains of Tholing, I was concerned to see that rebuilding was taking place at the mandala temple. To my untutored eye this took the form of several unsupervised labourers making sunbaked bricks of clay and piling these up into rough walls. This may have been akin to the building methods used by Rinchen Zangpo a thousand years ago but it struck me as a crude attempt at reconstruction unworthy of the site's major significance as the power-house of the so-called 'second diffusion of Buddhism' in Tibet (I would argue that it was essentially the first, and therefore all that more significant!).

There are those who feel that any form of reconstruction, however good or well-meaning, is inappropriate. The distinguished Tibetologist Roberto Vitali, for example, considers the Tholing complex to be irreparably compromised and is therefore concentrating his efforts on working with others on a symbolic reconstruction of Tholing based on ancient documents. I understand that Martin Brauen is similarly concentrating on computer-generated reconstructions of three-dimensional mandala structures.

There remains, however, the problem of how best to maintain existing sites which are fast deteriorating. It can be argued that this is entirely a matter for the authorities in Tibet, but they are the first to admit that they lack resources, qualified personnel and expertise. Nor is this simply a matter of preserving what is known. The 70 or so miles of the Langchen Khambab gorge from Tirthapuri at the upper end down to Tsaparang have still to be properly charted and studied as a whole. For example, in a very brief foray into the Kyunglung region at the higher end of the gorge this summer I entered a large complex of temples, *chortens* and cave-dwellings which I understand from the villagers of Kyunglung to be no more than an offshoot of a far larger complex on the other bank of the river: the presumed site of Kyunglung Ngulkar (Silver Citadel of the Garuda Valley), the capital of the ancient Bon kingdom of Shangshung. Although briefly visited by Tucci in 1932 and others since, my understanding is that this is one of a number of extensive sites which remain largely uncharted.

Hitherto, the Langchen Khambab has been a hidden preserve, a cultural secret which those in the know have for perfectly valid reasons kept to themselves. I believe that has to end. Increasing accessibility coupled with the expansion of tourism is now putting this extraordinary area at serious risk. Both Tholing and Tsaparang have been the targets of thieves for some years and my understanding is that this is now extending to other less well-known sites. The authorities' quite understandable response to these thefts has been to lock up what they can and take the keys away, as has happened with the three cave temples above Dungkar.



The Lanchen Khambab civilisation deserves to be internationally recognised as a world heritage site. Given appropriate support and encouragement, I have no doubt that the Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region would be prepared to consider and promote a scheme to give the area recognised status. I have, provisionally, called this proposal the Garuda Valley Foundation, and have written to a number of individuals who can be regarded as stakeholders for their views. I urge anyone who shares my concerns and who would be prepared to support some such scheme to write to me at 46 Roderick Road, London NW3 2NL, U.K.

Charles Allen,  
Author and traveller, U.K.

### News from Mongolia

The Joint Mongolian-Russian-American Archaeological Expedition (JMRAAE) co-directed by John W. Olsen, completed its fourth field season in the Gobi Desert during May-July, 1998. (*For a report on the 1997 field season and a map*, v. CIAA NL 7, April, 1988, pp. 11-13.) Excavations at Chikhen Agui rockshelter in Bayan Hongor aimag were completed and the deep Paleolithic sequence at Tsagaan Agui, also in Bayan Hongor, was exposed in a new area of the cave. Reconnaissance work undertaken in southern Gov'-Altai aimag extended down to within just a few kilometers of the Chinese border in Altai suum and the isolated Azh Bogdyn Nuruu range was surveyed for scattered surface occurrences of Paleolithic artefacts. The 1998 expedition completed a circumnavigation of the large, currently saline lake, Orog Nuur, investigating remnants of Pleistocene beaches and associated archaeological complexes with the aid of radar remote sensing imagery from the American Space Shuttle. Additional strand lines were identified and surveyed east of Boon Tsagaan Nuur, suggesting this lake was also formerly much larger. JMRAAE plans to return to the Valley of Lakes in 1999 to continue these investigations along with further diggings in the Tsagaan Agui Cave.

The Mongolian Academy of Humanities was established in 1998 as a parallel organisation to the long-standing Mongolian Academy of Sciences. The Academy's current President is Luvsandamba Dashnyam, Rector of the Mongolian Knowledge University in Ulaanbaatar, a small but growing liberal arts university constituted to foster and preserve aspects of Mongolian traditional life including the healing arts, language, customs, and music. The Academy of Humanities is intended to internationalise the scope of the Mongolian Knowledge University's charge and will hopefully become a major venue for the interaction between Mongolian scholars and foreign counterparts. On April 19, 1998 John W. Olsen was elected an Honorary Academician of this Academy. Additional information can be obtained from President Dashnyam at Central PO Box 153, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Fax: +976 1 45 83 54.

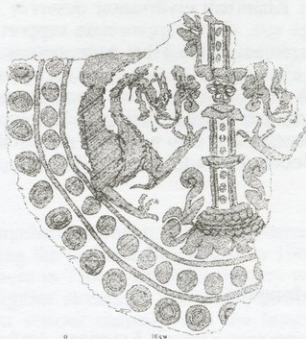
*(We are grateful to Professor John W. Olsen, Head of the Department of Anthropology, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona, U.S.A. for this information.)*

### Silk finds from ancient Turkic burials in the Altai region

The history of studying ancient Turkic antiquities (sixth - tenth centuries A.D.) of the Altai region has been going on for almost 150 years. At present about 177 investigated ancient Turkic burials are known in this area. Forty-three of them were excavated by the East-Altain group of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the Siberian Department of the Russian Academy of Sciences, under the leadership of V. Kubarev. Unfortunately, the overwhelming majority of textile finds from these burials have not been published by the authors of the excavations and therefore have not entered the scientific sphere.

Materials of almost half of the above mentioned 43 burials of the ancient Turks contain the remains of clothes - mainly made of silk. Frequently these are only small fragments; however in several burials significant parts of clothing were found. As a result of laboratory work 12 types of silk ornaments were drawn. Three of them represent versions of the same motif: two dragons and a 'tree of life' in a medallion (v. illustration). They differ from each other in the size of the medallions, details in the images and the colours. Silks with similar ornaments are known to be of Chinese origin, and there are many similar examples from China, Mongolia, Middle Asia, Japan etc. These

are reliably dated to the seventh - eighth centuries A.D. In addition to these roundel designs, a few examples of rhomboid, geometrical and vegetative patterns were also found. There are also eight or nine kinds of non-ornamented silks of various colours. The overwhelming majority of the patterned silks examined are monochromatic textiles - there is only one polychromatic sample known. In general, taking into account the few ornamental motifs and textile designs of Sogdian manufacture, their geometrical style and specific colour scale, it is possible to conclude that practically all examined silk textiles are of a Chinese origin. However, it is possible that some of them were made in Middle Asia. The analysis of the technical characteristics of these textiles could help determine their origin. Almost all of these textile finds should be dated to the end of the eighth - ninth centuries A.D. because many of them came from the complexes where silks with medallions and dragons were also found. Therefore the latter finds can be dated to this period. Only some of the textiles, in particular those which are non-ornamented, probably belong to the late Tang period (ninth - tenth centuries A.D.)



At present, the ornamentation of Chinese silks from the ancient Turkic burials of the Altai can be compared with finds from Bobrovskiy cemetery (Kazakhstan), Moshevay Balka (Caucasus) amongst others. These finds include ornaments which are absent in other sites. Obviously, the further study of the this group of silk textiles is important and is of special interest for the history of Chinese silk production. However, it is possible to make some preliminary conclusions and answer some questions: these textile finds in ancient Turkic burials confirm data in written Chinese sources about the quantity of silk which was sent to the nomads of Central Asia as tribute or payment. Thus, the dating of these silk textiles (end of seventh - eighth centuries A.D.) coincides with the flourishing of the Silk Roads. The distribution areas of Chinese silk in Central Asia could help in the understanding of possible ways of its penetration. The plentyfulness of Chinese silk in ancient Turkic burials allow us to affirm that the wearing of silk clothing was not solely the privilege of the rich and noble nomads. These textile finds make it possible to reconstruct the costume of the ancient Turks. In addition they allow us to consider questions of interaction and borrowings between the costumes of the ancient Turks and the Tang Chinese.

For further information please contact: Dr. Gleb Kubarev, Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Siberian Department, Russian Academy of Sciences, pr. Lavrent'eva 17, 630 090, Novosibirsk, Russian Federation. E-mail: kubarev@archaeology.nsc.ru

*Dr. Gleb Kubarev,  
Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Novosibirsk, Russian Federation.*

### **Polish-Uzbek rock art research project**

The Polish-Uzbek research project was established in 1993 to investigate the rock art of Uzbekistan. The project has been led by Andrzej Rozwadowski (Ph.D. candidate - Institute of Prehistory, Adam Mickiewicz University of Poznan) and Dr. Muhiddin Huzanazarov (Institute of Archaeology in Samarkand, Uzbek Academy of Science). In 1993 and 1994 the investigations were carried out in the Valley of Samissay situated in the Nuratau Mountains (Central Uzbekistan). In 1996 research was conducted at the rock shelter Zaraut-Kamar in southern Uzbekistan. Between 1993 and 1996 other rock art sites, such as Sangi-Dziumon and Aksakal-Atasay, were also studied. In 1997 the area of research was extended to the territory of southern Kazakhstan with the co-operation of Dr. Zaynullo Samasev from the Institute of Archaeology in Almaty, Kazakh Academy of Science. In the same year the Valley of Tamgaly in south-east Kazakhstan was visited. In 1998 joint Polish-Kazakh-Uzbek research was carried out in Arpauzen Valley in the Karatau Mountains in south Kazakhstan. This expedition was joined by Kenneth Laymer (rock art student of University of Southampton).

The first results of the project have been published in the book *Rock art of Uzbekistan*, edited by A. Koško, T. Sirinov, W. Rączkowski, Poznań 1997 (v. pp. 46-47. of this *Newsletter*). The next volume is in preparation.

### **A new archaeological mission to Kazakhstan**

In August 1997 Professor Henri Francfort (C.N.R.S., Paris, France), in conjunction with the Almaty Museum and Ligabue Research & Study Centre, conducted a preliminary reconnaissance of kurgans in the Altai region of Kazakhstan. Ground-penetrating radar was employed by Michele Pipan and Luca Baradello (University of Trieste) in order to determine the position of burial chambers prior to excavating a large Scythian tomb in 1998. For more information see: *Ligabue Magazine* 16 (No. 31), 1997, pp. 186-187.

*Dr. St. John Simpson,  
Department of Western Asiatic Antiquities, The British Museum, London, U.K.*

### **Al-Farabi Academy, Shymkent, Kazakhstan**

The Al-Farabi Academy, organised by the southern Kazakhstan branch of the Academy of Sciences and the South Branch Research Foundation, would like to invite specialists from the fields of Central Asian studies, archaeology, ethnography, folklore studies, social anthropology, ecology and environmental studies to participate in field-work in southern Kazakhstan. In the sphere of archaeology, the Academy conducts excavations of the burial grounds and petroglyphs of Bronze Age nomads, the remains of early agricultural settlements, and the cities of the late medieval period (Turkistan, Otyrar, Sauran, and others). In ethnography and folklore studies, the Academy researches the traditional culture of nomadic and sedentary regions from the 17th century to the post-Soviet period. In social anthropology, the Academy conducts research on the social structure and identities of the various cultural groups of southern Kazakhstan in the pre-Soviet, Soviet, and post-Soviet periods. In the field of ecology and environmental studies, the Academy undertakes botanical, zoological and geographical field-studies in the western Tianshan mountains and in the desert sands of the Kyzyl Kum.

For more information, please contact: Igor Savin, Secretary Al-Farabi Academy Shymkent, Kazakhstan. E-mail: savin@chimkent.almaty.kz

### **A newly discovered Sogdian architectural monument in Northern Kyrgyzstan**

Located in the area adjacent to the south of the Tianshan, in the valley of the Chu river is a settlement of the 6th-12th centuries A.D. known in scientific literature as the Red River Site. Its central part, *i.e.* citadel and *shakhristan*, is situated 36 km along the Bishkek-Tokmak road, 25 km to the southwest of the Turk *kagans* capital Suyab (Ak-Beshim site). A hill with the remains of a Buddhist shrine was excavated on the site in the early sixties and early eighties. In 1996 - 1997 excavations were conducted by Kyrgyz and Japanese archaeologists. A building was discovered dating to the 8th-9th centuries, 60 m away from the walls of the shrine and not connected with it functionally. In the course of the two field seasons, the exterior contour of the building and two-thirds of its ground plan were traced.

The one-storied building, almost square in plan (21 m x 22 m), with its walls oriented in the four directions with a deviation of 15 degrees is built with *pakhsa* blocks and raw brick. The interior plan is multi-chambered, compact and follows a construction scheme which remained unchanged during the entire time of its existence. The history of the building had at least five construction periods divided with breaks insignificant in time. Each period is characterised by the raising of the floor level and replanning within the bounds of the basic walls. The space between the lowest and the highest floors is 2.5 m. The building contained living, official, household and cult chambers. The cult chamber is may be distinguished from the others due to its greater size and the round hearths with the remains of white sterile ash. Two pits filled with cinders and ash were also discovered. The building is characterised by the abundance of cinders, as well as hearths and ovens of different kinds, ashpits and calcined spots on the floors of chambers of all periods. Cinder insertions are often found in the inner and outer walls. Heaps of cinder were also found between the floors. A great number of animal and bird bones were discovered in the layers. During the excavations, ceramic and metal objects possibly of a ritual function, including three-legged lampions, their lids, a censer and a mortar were found. Of special value for the dating of the building are local and Chinese coins from the time of the Tang dynasty (618-907 A.D.) found at the site. At the present stage of research the most probable conclusion is that the building was connected with the fire-cult and related rituals, including the offering of sacrifices.

*K. Kato, Soka University, Tokyo, Japan; V. D. Goryacheva and S. J. Peregudova, Institute of History, Kyrgyz National Academy of Science, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.*

### **Appeal for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and the Restoration of Peace in Afghanistan**

The Japanese Society for West Asian Archaeology was founded in January 1997 by young Japanese archaeologists working in the Middle and Near East, including Egypt, with the purpose of promoting the archaeological studies of the region in Japan by encouraging the exchange of information. The president is Prof. Kiyohiko Sakurai. Shocked by the continual destruction and plunder of the irreplaceable historical and cultural heritage of Afghanistan, much of which is being sold illegally, and feeling that immediate action needs to be taken, the Society proposed an appeal at their 3rd General Assembly on June 6, 1998 at Tsukuba, Japan. The main aim of this is to assess the disastrous situation, and to prevent more damage, by worldwide co-operation with international organisations, societies and academic institutions concerned with the conservation, restoration and preservation of the region's heritage. For further information contact: Prof. Ken Matsumoto, Secretary of the The Japanese Society for West Asian Archaeology, Institute for Cultural Studies of Ancient Iraq, Kokushikan University, Tokyo, Japan. E-mail: matsumoto@kokushikan.ac.jp; Web-page: <http://web.kokushikan.ac.jp:8803/WestAsia>.

### Archaeological research in Iran

Research and rescue excavations are being conducted in all parts of Iran by the Iranian Cultural Heritage Organization (Mirath-i Farhangi). The results are being reported in a glossy magazine called *Mirath-i Farhangi* and in a series of Research Reports; these Iranian publications usually contain English abstracts. This research is also being reviewed by Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis and St. John Simpson in *Iran*, the annual Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies.

Dr. St. John Simpson,

Department of Western Asiatic Antiquities, The British Museum, London, U.K.

### The Asiatic Foundation in St. Petersburg

Started by a group of Russian scientists in June 1994, the Foundation aims to contribute to the study of the history, archaeology and culture of Central Asia. Primary activities include archaeological and historical research in Central Asia, publishing, developing computer data bases, facilitating scientific contacts among different countries, scientific tourism in Central Asia.

The Foundation receives funding from various independent, non-governmental sources: from members' fees, contributions, donations, publishing and foreign grants. Projects currently underway include archaeological excavations in Central Asia, computer data base of history and archaeology of the Hsiung-nu (Xiongnu), joint archaeological expeditions and publishing. Three volumes of the series *Archaeological sites of the Xiongnu* including A. Davydova: *The Ivolga fortress* and *The Ivolga cemetery* and S. Minyaev *Derestuj cemetery* have been published (v. p. 42. of this Newsletter). The books have Russian text, English summary, illustrations and a detailed list of all objects in English.

For more information please contact: Dr. Sergei Minyaev, Institute of the History of the Material Culture, Russian Academy of Sciences, Dvortzovaja nab. 18, St. Petersburg, 191186, Russian Federation. Tel/fax: +7 812 520 4389; e-mail: min@asia.iimc.spb.ru

### Between Han and Tang: Art and Archaeology of a Transformative Period

The East Asian Art program in the Department of Art History at the University of Chicago is initiating a joint research project on art and archeology of the period from the third through to the sixth centuries - one of the most important formative and transitional periods in Chinese art and cultural history. The project will re-evaluate the scholarship on the period in light of new archaeological information and in a spirit of collaborative research between the U.S.A. and China. It aims to bring scholars together to examine previous scholarship, to present new research and to generate opportunities for enduring international exchanges of research data, methodological approaches, and interpretive strategies. A team of scholars from five institutions (the Department of Art History, University of Chicago; Department of Archeology, Peking University; the Department of Art History, Central Institute of Fine Arts, Beijing; the Institute of Archaeology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing; and the Department of History of Art and Architecture, Harvard University) will organise three international conferences that will be held over the next three years. They will invite scholars from various institutions and disciplines to present their work and meet with other scholars. The first conference, on religious art between Han and Tang dynasties will be held at the University of Chicago in the autumn of 1999. The second conference, to be held at Peking University in the summer of 2000, will take as its

theme artistic and cultural interactions. The third conference, projected for the summer of 2001 at the Central Institute of Fine Arts, will examine secular arts and material culture. The publishing of conference proceedings as well as a bibliographic index of resources in art history and archaeology is planned. The project is funded by a grant from the Henry Luce Foundation, Inc.

For further information, please contact Katherine Tsiang Mino, University of Chicago Fax: +1 773 702 5901; e-mail: [kmino@midway.uchicago.edu](mailto:kmino@midway.uchicago.edu)) or Li Chongfeng, Peking University. Fax: +86 10 6275 1667.

### **Asian Studies Newsletter Archives**

Comprising an extensive collection of academic and cultural newsletters and association bulletins dealing in whole or in part with Asian affairs and Asian Studies, the Archives have been developed and maintained since 1970 with three primary objectives in mind: (1) the creation of a centralised collection of newsletter-type materials containing information about the growth and state of Asian Studies and Asia-related organisations and about the activities of various institutions and individuals. Most publications on file are in English, French or German, while a growing number are in Chinese, Japanese, Korean and other Asian languages. Many have experienced very limited circulation. Some have appeared in mimeographed or xeroxed format, others more closely resemble professionally printed magazines in their appearance. (2) The preservation of these same materials for long-term scholarly use, especially as libraries and individual recipients of newsletters generally discard them on account of their perceived ephemeral nature. (3) The creation of a database that serves as the basis for the preparation of various bibliographies and reference tools, some of which have already been published. All work on the Archives has been undertaken by Frank Joseph Shulman on a private voluntary basis, as a long-term service to researchers, students, librarians and the general public. Well over 1,500 titles from throughout the world are currently on file.

All files in the Asian Studies Newsletter Archives are open by appointment. Requests for a limited number of xerox copies of individual issues of newsletters are filled at cost whenever possible. The co-operation of newsletter and association bulletin editors, university centres, various organisations and associations, cultural groups, and individuals everywhere will always be appreciated. Please direct all correspondence to: Frank Joseph Shulman, Asian Studies Newsletter Archives, 9225 Limestone Place College Park, Maryland, 20740-3943, U.S.A. Tel: +1 301 935 5614.

### **Visual materials on Buddhist art and archaeology regarding Inner Asian studies in the SOAS Library**

Apart from its rich collection of books and periodicals in both western and various vernacular languages regarding Inner Asian studies, the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London also holds a valuable and interesting collection of visual materials, *i.e.* 3 1/4" x 3 1/4" slides and photographs. The greater part of the visual material relates to Buddhist art and archaeology and consists of the following three collections with some miscellaneous additions. Of the three collections, the first two have been either poorly documented or not identified at all and anyone interested in incorporating identification and producing an introduction as part of their own research work would be most welcome.

#### *Courtauld Institute of Art collection*

The Art and Archaeology Section of the SOAS Library was established in 1957. This was made possible by the transfer of the Asian art collection from the Courtauld

Institute of Art, University of London. Amongst this collection were about 2,000 b. & w. 3 1/4" x 3 1/4" slides and 1,000 photographs of Buddhist antiquities related to Central Asian studies. The majority of the slides present images of various Buddhist sites in the Indian subcontinent such as Ajanta, Bharhut, Bodhgaya, Mathura, Sanchi, etc., and were produced in the 1920's and 1930's. The photographs are arranged according to the main cultural divisions and include images of Buddhist antiquities from Dunhuang, Turfan, Afghanistan, Tibet (including photographs of Tibetan banners presented by Leopold Davis) and the Indian subcontinent.

It should be noted that the Courtauld Asian art collection was largely due to the generosity of Sir George Eumorfopoulos (1863-1939), connoisseur and collector of Asian art. His financial contribution toward the development of the Asian art studies at the Courtauld between 1933 and 1939 and his bequest of books and artworks facilitated the creation of a very significant collection. His bequest included a set of the Horyūji scrolls, enormous facsimile collotype reproductions (of which only 20 sets were produced) of the wall-paintings in the Kondō of the Horyūji Temple in Japan and many other valuable volumes on East Asian art mostly published in the first quarter of the 20th century. These items are all now part of the Art & Archaeology Section of the SOAS Library.

#### *E. H. Hunt collection*

The collection comprises 900 b. & w. 3 1/4" x 3 1/4" slides and 2,000 photographs and glass-plate negatives on Indian material of archaeological and anthropological interest connected with the work of E. H. Hunt, F.R.C.S., produced between 1917 and 1930. Of these some 800 items are of Buddhist interest from the regions of Ajanta, Aurangabad, Raigir, and other places in the Indian subcontinent.

#### *SOAS Buddhist Art Project*

The project was undertaken by Professor Emeritus John G. Burton-Page (b. 1921) and J. Strub between 1973 and 1975. It consists of a pictorial archive of around 5,500 b. & w. photographs and negatives of Buddhist antiquities from various sites in the Indian subcontinent, including Ajanta, Amaravati, Bedsa, Bharhut, Bodhgaya, Gandhara, Mathura, Sanchi, Sarnath, etc. Each print is accompanied by hand-written descriptive notes and arranged by alphabetical order of the sites. The project also produced a manuscript bibliography of approximately 3,000 monographs and journal articles in western languages on Buddhist art and archaeology of the Indian subcontinent, arranged by subjects, *i.e.* epigraphy, iconography, numismatics, sculpture, etc.

More information on the Library's collections of Central Asian studies and the SOAS Library in general as well as on-line public access catalogue can be found on the Internet: <http://www.soas.ac.uk/Library>.

*Y. Yasumura, Art Section, SOAS Library, University of London, U.K.*

#### **The International Dunhuang Project Database**

Containing details of over 20,000 Central Asian manuscripts with over 1,000 high quality colour images, the International Dunhuang Project (IDP) database is now accessible to all on <http://idp.bl.uk>. The database also contains indexes, bibliographies and site details for many of the manuscripts. Intended primarily as a scholarly tool, the interface allows access to the general user as well. It is interactive, allowing scholars to send their own comments and research to be entered on to the database (with full accreditation). Data, including images, are being added daily. In a few years, there will be images of thousands of previously unpublished paper and wood fragments, opening new possibilities for scholars worldwide. Individuals or

institutions can also perpetuate the tradition whereby many of these manuscripts were produced. The 'Sponsor a Sutra' scheme enables anyone to sponsor the digitisation of a particular sutra or group of sutras from as little as £50. Your details and any dedication you wish to make will be added below the image on the database, just as donor names appear in the colophons of manuscripts and the bottom registers of paintings.

In addition to the database itself, IDP will be adding several web-pages over the next few months with background detail to the manuscripts, such as the development of the book format in China and an introduction to the languages and scripts of Central Asia. If you know of relevant web-pages for links and for suggestions and more information, please contact Susan.Whitfield@bl.uk or Colin.Chinnery@bl.uk

**Bead research**

The Bead Study Trust was founded with the intention of encouraging research into beads, both ancient and ethnographic, from all parts of the world. It publishes a newsletter twice a year, organises occasional events and is preparing a full printed catalogue of the Beck Collection of Beads, held in the Department of Archaeology & Anthropology in Cambridge. The Trust welcomes news about relevant Central Asian discoveries, either in the form of additions to its Bibliography or as articles on bead research, which may be printed in the Newsletter. Enquiries and correspondence should be addressed to The Secretary, Bead Study Trust, 29 Eliscombe Road, London, SE7 7PF, U.K. E-mail: bead.study.trust@aapi.co. uk.

Dr. St. John Simpson,  
Department of Western Asiatic Antiquities, The British Museum, London, U.K.

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**SAM FOGG**

Rare Books and Manuscripts

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## EXHIBITIONS

### **Asian Art in London**

From the 10th to the 21st of November, 1998, London hosted a celebration of Asian art. The major contributors to this were the many dealers who prepared special exhibitions in their permanent premises scattered all over the city. The auction houses organised around 14 auctions of Asian art, while a special exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts (centred on a selection of Chinese ceramics from the Au Bak Ling Collection), an *ad hoc* show at the Percival David Foundation, two concurrent exhibitions at the Victoria and Albert Museum on Japanese art and one at the Brunei Gallery (SOAS) on selected Islamic works of art from the Al Sabah collection have all strongly contributed to a success which, most likely, will be repeated next year. It is in fact the will of the steering committee of this first edition of "Asian Art in London", with Michael Spink as Chairman, to transform this event into an annual feature. Starting next year there are plans to include non-commercial side-events such as concerts, series of lectures, more museum exhibitions, which alongside the commercial activities lying at the core of such a huge promotional effort, will transform London into a world-centre of Asian Art. 'Asian' has to be understood as mainly signifying the Far Eastern countries, though a larger representation of Indian and Southeast Asian art is envisaged at present in the future.

For our readers, we have chosen to mention a few dealers' exhibitions with highly representative artefacts of those cultures and geographical areas covered by this newsletter. Anna Maria and Fabio Rossi have selected Bactrian material collected over the years, ranging in time from the 4th-3rd millennium B.C. to the 1st millennium A.D. and represented by objects such as bronze censers, necklaces, bowls, cosmetic pots in bronze, gold, silver, rock crystal and other media. The exhibition has provoked a strong interest amongst scholars and collectors, quite beyond the expectations of its organisers who did not prepare a catalogue. Given the scanty information and scholarly publications on the geographical and cultural area of Western Asia and Bactria, which deserve more thorough studies than the few published up to now, it is hoped that the material gathered by Rossi and Rossi will stimulate further research in this field.

An interesting and stylistically homogenous group of Gandharan sculptures, dated to the 1st-2nd century A.D., was presented by John Eskenazi, who has been collecting from different sources the series of low reliefs and standing Buddha figures featured in his exhibition. Central Asian and early Chinese textiles were amongst the ancient fabrics to be seen in the shows of Michael Franses (Textile Gallery), Jacqueline Simcox and Francesca Galloway. The recent influx of early textiles into the art market is contributing to their study to an unprecedented level. Dating from the 2nd century B.C. to the 1st century A.D. and later, these fragments are further evidence of the sophisticated weaving techniques and artistic traditions.

*Dr. Filippo Salviati, University of Rome, Rome, Italy*

### **"Tibet: Culture and Art" Museum of Art and Design, Helsinki, Finland**

Nearly 500 exhibits from eight different collections were on show in this recent exhibition (16 April - 2 August 1998) displaying both the religious and secular aspects of the rich pre-1959 Tibetan culture. Several items from the 14th Dalai Lama's private collection in Dharamsala were on public display for the first time in the West.

These included 20th century thangkas, jewellery, two Tibetan scripture cases and various ritual objects. The welcome loan of the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives' statue collection (exhibited in part ten years ago in Switzerland) contributed a range of the oldest items: mainly Tibetan bronzes from the 14th to the 19th centuries. Rugs, jewellery, amulet boxes and furniture were on loan from private Finnish and American collectors, and the Phuntsog Wangyal collection in London provided six thangkas. In addition, several religious costumes and ritual masks were included in the exhibition, surrounded by sets of Nepalese ritual objects from the Namgyal Monastery in India. The collection of photographs from the Tibet Foundation complemented the objects on display.

A richly illustrated catalogue entitled *Tiibet - kulttuuri ja taide / Tibet - Culture and Art* edited by Marianne Aav is available from Museum of Art and Design, Korkeavuorenkatu 23, Helsinki, FIN-00130, Finland. Tel: +358 9 622 0540; fax: +358 9 622 05455, +358 9 626 733.

*(We would like to thank Marjo Alafouzo, MA Candidate, Department of Art & Archaeology, SOAS, University of London and Alpo Ratia, Turku, Finland for this information.)*

**“The Glory That Was Pakistan: 50 Years of Archaeological Research in Pakistan. A Photographic Exhibition”**

This photographic exhibition was organised by the National Heritage Foundation and the Department of Archaeology of the University of Peshawar, North West Frontier Province, Pakistan. It began in Peshawar from 9 February and then travelled to Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi and Quetta, where it concluded on 23 March, 1998. It aimed at assessing the growth of archaeology in Pakistan since independence by focusing on the new chapters that have been added to the country's cultural history by national and international institutions and the contribution of individual scholars. The exhibition looked at prehistory, the Indus civilisation and the issue of its origins and decline, the Gandhara Grave Culture, the Swat excavations, the Achaemenid, Greek, Scythian, Parthian and Kushan periods, Buddhist art of Gandhara, the Hindu Shahi and Turk Shahi periods, the rock carvings in the Upper Indus Valley, and finally Pakistan's Islamic heritage from its origins as revealed in the excavations at Bhambore and Mansura. This exhibition was held as part of Pakistan's Golden Jubilee celebrations and is accompanied by a catalogue (*v. p. 44 of this Newsletter*).

**“Treasures of Indian Art: German Tribute to India's Heritage”  
Indian Museum, Calcutta, India**

Some of the finest pieces from the collection of the Museum of Indian Art of the State Museums of Berlin, Prussian Cultural Foundation are included in this touring exhibition travelling around India. The 92 masterpieces, which include sculptures, miniatures and objects of decorative art were first shown at the National Museum in New Delhi (14 August - 30 September 1998). At present the exhibition is on show at the Indian Museum in Calcutta (15 October - 15 November 1998) and it will also be travelling to the National Gallery of Modern Art, Bombay (21 November 1998 - 15 January 1999). These art objects are being shown abroad for the first time. This unique exhibition is a gift to the people of India on the occasion of the completion of the fiftieth anniversary of India's independence. A catalogue has been published in English.

**"In the Footsteps of the Buddha: Iconic Journey from India to China"  
University Museum and Art Gallery, The University of Hong Kong, P.R.C.**

This is the largest exhibition of its kind ever held in Hong Kong, drawing from the artistic traditions of India, Sri Lanka, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand, Nepal, and from the Tibetan and Xinjiang Autonomous Regions of China as well as from Han Chinese cultural zones of Northern and Central China. The main focus of this exhibition (26 September -15 December 1998) is to trace the migration of art and ideas in ancient times from *ca.* second century B.C. to the thirteenth century A.D. through a study of art objects from the regions named above. The emphasis of the exhibition is on the various religio-economic and social impulses that created the vibrant cultural exchange of that period. Over 120 objects are on loan from well-known museums in Europe and America and from renowned collectors in Asia and the U.S.A. The Museum für Indische Kunst, Berlin has lent about 60 art objects, including paintings from Kizil and Turfan which have never before been exhibited in Asia. The Art Institute of Chicago, which has some impressive South and Southeast Asian pieces, and the Cleveland Museum with its rich Chinese and Indian art collections, have also generously lent rare and precious objects. In addition, local and international private collectors are also showing their objects.

A catalogue of the exhibition in English is available (*v. p. 46 of this Newsletter*). For more details please contact, Fung Ping Shan Building, University Museum and Art Gallery, 94 Bonham Road, Hong Kong, P.R.C.; web site at: <http://www.fa.hku.hk/Exhibit.html>

**'Sacred Visions: Early Paintings from Central Tibet'  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, U.S.A.**

Running from 5 October, 1998 to 17 January, 1999, the show focuses on a group of Central Tibetan portable paintings on cloth (*thangkas*) dating from the eleventh to fifteenth centuries. Considerable effort is made to set the works in the context of Nepalese and Bengali artistic production, to use stylistic features as a basis for more accurate and specific dating, and to draw attention to the extent of foreign influence prior to the emergence of a truly Tibetan idiom. This exhibition is the first to bring together the finest early Tibetan paintings known and to concentrate solely on this subject (*v. CIAA NL 7, April 1998, p. 28*).

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## CONFERENCES

### Conference reports

#### **"Nomads in a Sedentary World"**

**International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden, The Netherlands**

This international colloquium devoted to a discussion of the role that nomads played in the socio-economic and political development of the sedentary world took place on 2-3 July 1998. Its aim was to study this issue in historical perspective in areas ranging from Eastern Europe to West Asia to China, Iran and India. Papers relevant to our readers were presented by A. M. Khazanov, University of Wisconsin, Madison, U.S.A. (Keynote address - "Nomads in the History of the Sedentary World"); A. K. Narain, Benares, India ("A Case Study of the Sakas in South Asia") and E. I. Kychanov, Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation ("Nomads in the Tangut State of Si Sia, 982-1227").

The proceedings of this colloquium will be included in a special volume of studies on the subject.

#### **"Preservation of Dunhuang and Central Asian Collections"**

**Third International Conference, Berlin, Germany**

During the second international conference on the "Conservation of Manuscripts from Dunhuang and Central Asia" in Paris and Chantilly (v. *IDP News* 5, 1996) it was agreed that in future the group should be extended to include more museum specialists and that the next conference should also deal with the problems of preserving and restoring other materials from Central Asia than manuscripts. The Third International Conference took place between 13-16 May, 1998. The Museum of Indian Art (Museum für Indische Kunst, MIK) and its director, Marianne Yaldiz, joined the Staatsbibliothek as hosts. Scholars from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and from Urumqi as well as Peking were present. Papers of interest to our readers included Mirsadik M Iskhakov: "The Sogdian manuscripts from Mount Mug and some new discoveries of manuscripts from Uzbekistan - their conservation, restoration and cataloguing"; Liu Zhixiao: "Buddhist rock cave temples of Xinjiang and the ethnic group who created these works of art"; Margarita Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya: "Preservation and study of manuscripts of the first millennium from Dunhuang and other regions of Central Asia"; Rustam Tursonovich Abdukamilov: "The Afrasyab paintings and its subject's connection with the Avesta"; Susan Whitfield: "Adding images and going on-line: further developments of the IDP database"; Du Gengcheng: "The collection and preservation of Central Asian materials in the Xinjiang Museum"; Masud Samibayev: "The problems of conservation and restoration of the wall paintings from the palace of the king of Samarkand in Afrasyab"; Laure Feugère: "The restoration of a fragment of a painting of Guanqing from Dunhuang (Musée Guimet EO 17669)" and Monique Cohen: "Fragments d'Asie Centrale - bilan d'une enquête".

There were also two round-table discussions on the aspects of conservation of Central Asian materials and on recent developments and future perspectives of the International Dunhuang Project. There was a visit of the collections both of Turfan and of other Oriental manuscripts as well as the restoration laboratories of the Staatsbibliothek. At the MIK the present state and future plans for the International Dunhuang Project were discussed. The participants from Central Asia and Xinjiang

pleaded their urgent need for help and training in conservation and restoration. Monique Cohen (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, France), Mark Barnard (Oriental and Indian Office Collections, British Library, London, U.K.) and Ernst Bartelt, the head of the Staatsbibliothek's restoration department, were elected to an informal group which is to consider ways of helping our Central Asian colleagues. Finally, the museum's collections - they were in early stages of dismantling due to the imminent rebuilding work (v. *CIAA NL* 7, April, 1998, p. 16.) - and its restoration workshop were visited.

(We would like to thank Dr. Hartmut-Ortwin Feistel, Deputy Director, Orientabteilung, Staatsbibliothek, Berlin, Germany for this information.)

**"In the Footsteps of the Buddha: An Iconic Journey from India to China"**  
**University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, P.R.C.**

This one-day symposium held on 26 September 1998 coincided with the opening of the international exhibition of Buddhist art at the University of Hong Kong (v. p. 31 of *this Newsletter*). The keynote speaker was Dr. Pratapaditya Pal ( U.S.A.) who presented a paper entitled: "From Meditation to Incantation: Changing Nature of Buddhist Art and Praxis". Other speakers included Professor Helmut Brinker (Switzerland): "The Power of Esoteric Buddhist Divinities"; Professor Du Gencheng (People's Republic of China): "Gandhara Style as seen in the Buddhist Art Collection of the Xinjiang Museum"; Dr. Jan Fontein (U.S.A.): "The Evolution of 'Indianization'"; Professor Piriya Krairiksh (Thailand): "The Mystery of Srivijaya in Thai Art"; Professor Ma Shichang (People's Republic of China): "Style and Theme of Kizil: A Study through Select Examples"; Dr. Don Stadner (U.S.A.): "Pagan without the Glass Palace Chronicle"; Professor Marianne Yaldiz (Federal Republic of Germany): "The Concept of the Cosmological Buddha" and Dr. Chhaya Haesner (Federal Republic of Germany): "Iconography of Turfan: Select Examples in the Buddhist Art of the Xinjiang Region".

**"Worlds of the Silk Roads: Ancient and Modern"**  
**Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia**

The Australasian Society For Inner Asian Studies (A.S.I.A.S.) held their Third Biennial Silk Roads Conference between 18 - 20 September, 1998. 18 papers were presented by leading Australian and international historians on a range of ancient and modern Inner Asian subjects ranging from the Achaemenid Empire to the 1990's. Special guest Professor Nicholas Sims-Williams of SOAS, University of London, U.K. delivered two significant papers: the first on the spread of Syrian, Greek and Iranian Christianity in Central Asia, and the second on a very recent translation of perhaps the oldest Bactrian document yet discovered, a marriage contract from 4th century Afghanistan. Samuel Lieu, Professor of Ancient History at Macquarie and Honorary President of the A.S.I.A.S., spoke about the contacts between the Sassanid and Chinese dynasties on the eve of Islamic conquests. A paper on Persian poetry and literature by Alois van Tongerloo was delivered *in absentia*. Peter Magee of Sydney University's Department of Archaeology spoke on the university's recent archaeological work in the eastern regions of the Achaemenid Empire. Colin Mackerras examined the development of the Uyghur state in the 8th century. Michael Underdown discussed the Northern Silk Road contacts between Turfan and Korea. Craig Benjamin analysed the creation and consolidation of the early Kushan Empire under the Kadphisean monarchs. David Christian, President of A.S.I.A.S., analysed the evidence for regarding the essentially east - west Silk Roads as north - south steppe roads as well. The rest of the papers dealt with the later periods.

In addition, a volume of papers from the Second A.S.I.A.S. Conference entitled *Worlds of the Silk Roads: Ancient and Modern. Proceedings of the 2nd A.S.I.A.S. Conference, September 1996* edited by D. Christian and C. Benjamin (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998) was launched by Nicholas Sims-Williams at the conference. It will be in print very soon: The Australasian Society for Inner Asian Studies is the major Australasian academic association of historians interested in Inner Asia, and looks forward to staging a Fourth Conference in October 2000, and to the publication of papers from this Third Conference. All enquiries should be addressed to Craig Benjamin, Secretary of A.S.I.A.S.; e-mail: garigal@acay.com.au

*(We would like to thank Craig Benjamin, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia for this information.)*

**"The Third Silk Road Conference"**  
**Yale University, New Haven, U.S.A.**

A three-day conference between July 10-12, 1998, marked the close of the three-year **"Silk Road Project: Reuniting Turfan's Scattered Treasures"** funded by the Henry Luce Foundation (v. *CIAA NL 6, November 1997, p. 16, CIAA NL 7, April, 1998, pp. 34-35*). The twenty-five original members of the project (twelve Americans and thirteen Chinese) presented papers, as did eleven other scholars also working on subjects related to Silk Road studies. As a group, these papers show that the field of Turfan studies has taken shape so quickly that it has already spawned sub-fields.

Wang Binghua's paper was the only one that addressed the important subject of the original residents of the Turfan oasis: the Jushi (or Gushi) people. A group of rectangular vertical pit tombs at Jiaohe suggest that these were built by the Jushi people, whose tombs differed markedly from the sloped path ones so characteristic of the later Chinese who settled Turfan in the third and fourth centuries A.D. Mariko Walter, Stanley Insler and Yang Jidong discussed evidence of Buddhism at other Silk Road sites including Niya, Parthia and Dunhuang in the period before A.D. 500. Richard Frye explained why he emphatically did not believe the mummified corpses of Xinjiang were Tocharians. More than ten papers examined different aspects of Chinese society, institutions and religion during the period of the Gaochang kingdom (500-640) and direct Chinese rule (640-803) including Chen Guocan (taxes), Deng Xiaonan (women), Al Dien (tomb inventories), Valerie Hansen (the spread of Buddhism into Turfan), Qiu Ling (epitaphs), Rong Xinjiang (Daoism), Eric Trombert and Victor Xiong (the equal-field system), and Zhu Lei (social strata).

Many participants were interested in the influence of Iranians and other foreigners in Turfan. Oktor Skjærvø looked at the textual evidence regarding the presence of Iranians and Manichaeans in Turfan. Wu Zhen presented a wide variety of textual and artistic evidence of a non-Chinese presence in Turfan and explained the changing meaning of the term *hu* (barbarian), while Marc Abramson also examined a variety of Chinese ideas about foreigners in the Tang period. Larissa Schwartz introduced the Sogdian tombs from Guyuan, Ningxia. The period of Uyghur rule (802-1283) received attention from Kahar Barat (Buddhist hierarchies) and Israfil Yusuf (Uyghur contracts). Eva Jane Neumann Fridman presented the latest paper chronologically, which analysed the mixing of Shamanism and Buddhism among the Kalmyk and Buryat Mongols in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

There were several papers investigating art historical questions. Zsuzsanna Gulácsi discussed the problems regarding the influence of Mani's picture-book on the formation of Manichaean pictorial art in Turfan in the eighth-eleventh centuries. She identified several specific Manichaean themes and argued that Manichaean pictorial art remained closely integrated with its original book-related context. Elizabeth M. Owen, one of the co-organisers of this conference, analysed the origin of the motif of

the pearl-bordered medallion which appeared throughout the region. Lilla Russell-Smith spoke about the influence of Uygurs on Dunhuang art, concentrating on the tenth century and considering the historical and stylistic evidence. The last part of her talk focused on the interaction between Uygur, Chinese, Tangut and Liao art by using the example of a Bezeklik wall painting. Annette Juliano and Judith Lerner gave a detailed analysis of the iconographic program of the Miho Museum funerary couch, which is Chinese in form and function, but its relief decoration is predominantly non-Chinese, depicting various ethnic groups. Among the studied images were the goddess Nana, and a Zoroastrian funerary rite. Sarah E. Fraser gave a detailed introduction to the methods, tools and materials used by artists and workshops in the Turfan region between the fifth-ninth centuries, examining sketches, pounces, wood block printing, embroidery and sculptural moulds. Free-hand drawings and differing artistic skills were also taken into consideration. It was concluded that in the later period the efficient production tools and official documents point to a professionalised labour structure for artisans. Wu Min discussed the silk textiles excavated from the Astana graves. Judy Chungwa Ho concentrated on the way ethnicity and gender shaped modes of representations of women in tombs in Turfan. Ma Shichang considered the various influences that shaped the Buddhist art in Kucha, Kocho and Dunhuang. Janet Baker selected the image of the Heavenly King in tombs and temples and compared a figure found in an Astana tomb with better-known Chinese examples.

Denise Leidy reconstructed the iconographic program of Cave 20 (Grünwedel's Cave 9) in Bezeklik and considered the rituals and religious practice that shaped the artistic program, drawing on comparisons from early Tibetan art. Nobuyoshi Tanabe talked about the wall paintings in Toyok Caves 42 and 20, and concluded that they illustrated early apocryphal visualisation texts, from a period when the visualisation practices and the corresponding iconography were still being formed. Angela Sheng talked about the innovative combination of simple designs with complex weaves used on silks found in the Turfan area, which do not conform to the principles generally true of Chinese silks. Her paper also examined the relationship between social change and transfer of technology in Turfan during the sixth and seventh centuries. Jonathan Karam Skaff gave the results of his extensive research of the more than 150 silver Sasanian and Arab-Sasanian coins and the corresponding written documents found in Turfan. Many of these coins date from the fourth century A.D., from which period there are no corresponding finds from China. Shifts in trade routes may explain this and other differences between such finds in the Turfan region and in China. Zhang Guangda talked about the presence of Iranian deities in the Turfan Chinese texts and in the art of the area. The conference concluded with an important paper by Nancy Shatzman Steinhardt reconstructing the ritual function and art historical importance of the city and ritual complex in Beiting (Beshbalik).

Those who are interested may consult the project web-site for abstracts of these papers and specific information about ordering a hard copy of the conference proceedings, which will be available soon. The web-site will also contain information about the papers which have been accepted by journals for publication. In addition, in the near future, it is planned to post three different items that are the products of this project: an introduction to the history of Turfan and of the different expeditions that excavated the site by Zhang Guangda and Rong Xinjiang; a bibliography of mostly Chinese-language articles about Turfan compiled by Rong Xinjiang; and a database of over 3,000 Turfan documents and artefacts, which concentrates on items published in Chinese made using Access (Office T97 version) and Twin Bridges Chinese-language software. For further information please contact Professor Valerie Hansen (e-mail: [valerie.hansen@yale.edu](mailto:valerie.hansen@yale.edu)); web-site: <http://www.yale.edu/ceas/sr.html>

*(We would like to thank Professor Valerie Hansen, Yale University, New Haven, U.S.A. for some of this information.)*

## **Forthcoming conferences**

### **The Sixth Annual Central Eurasian Studies Conference, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, U.S.A., 27 March, 1999**

Graduate students, faculty and independent scholars are invited to submit abstracts of papers on Central Eurasian issues in all fields. Two panels are being organised for Central Asian papers, one on ancient and medieval Central Asia, and another on modern Central Asia. Abstracts of up to two double-spaced pages in length are due by 8 January, 1999. A collection of abstracts of papers selected will be published by the date of the conference. Please indicate affiliation (if any), address, e-mail address and telephone/fax number. Notifications of acceptance and other information will be sent to the authors on 20 January, 1999. There is a US\$20 fee for participants who are not currently affiliated with the Bloomington Campus. The fee is payable after receiving the notification of acceptance and should be sent together with a letter of intention to attend which is due on 30 January, 1999.

Queries and abstracts may be e-mailed directly to the panel moderators: Ancient and Medieval Central Asia to Ron Sela (rsela@indiana.edu) and Modern Central Asia to Daniel Prior (dprior@indiana.edu). Address: The Sixth Annual Central Eurasian Conference, Goodbody Hall 157, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405, U.S.A. Tel: +1 812 855 9510; fax: +1 812 855 7500.

### **Central and Inner Asia Seminar, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 23-24 April, 1999**

The Central and Inner Asia Seminar (CIAS) is dedicated to studying the cultures and activities of ancient and modern nomadic peoples that occupy the region from the China Sea to Eastern Europe, and their relationship with surrounding sedentary cultures. The CIAS grew out of the Canada-Mongolia Association in 1990 and at that time began sponsoring a regular series of annual lectures. In 1993 the individual lectures were replaced by an annual seminar and the proceedings from these have been printed in two volumes of working papers. A third volume is in press.

The subject of the next Seminar will be "**Religion, Customary Law and Material Culture Among the Nomads**". The organisers would welcome proposals on this subject, which may be interpreted broadly in terms of the historical past and of influences transmitted to modern life and values. "Religion" is to be interpreted broadly to include all aspects of religious art. By "customary law" is meant the complex nomadic Turko-Mongolian customs and traditions which were elevated to the status of law by Chingis Khan in the 13th century and which often conflicted with the laws and practices of the religions of Islam, Christianity and Buddhism when these spread among the various nomadic peoples of the Eurasian steppe. "Material culture" encompasses the physical remains (archaeological, art historical, architectural including the 'minor' arts, both religious and secular) which played a role in religion or law, or the interaction of the two.

Resources permitting, the proceedings of the Seminar will be published (for previous publications, please consult the below-mentioned web-site). While participants will be responsible for their travel and living expenses, the organisers will make every effort to facilitate the stay in Toronto and, upon request, to advise about the availability of modestly priced accommodation. Proposals for twenty- or forty-minute presentations can be sent to Professor Michael Gervers (102063.2152@compuserve.com) and to Professor Wayne Schlepp (schlepp@eagle.ca). Address: Central and Inner Asia



Seminar, c/o The DEEDS Project, Room 14290 Robarts Library, 130 St. George St., University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 3H1, Canada. Web-site: <http://www.utoronto.ca/deeds/cias/>

**The Fifteenth International Conference of the European Association of South Asian Archaeologists, International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), Leiden University, The Netherlands, 5-9 July, 1999**

The South Asian Archaeology Conference will be held this time in the Netherlands. In agreement with ideas discussed at the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Association in 1997, it has been decided to introduce a few changes in the established practice of organising these conferences. The main concern was the ever-increasing number of papers submitted in recent years, which seemed to threaten the effectiveness of the conference. Therefore papers will be arranged in clusters of related themes or subjects in the fields of prehistoric archaeology, historical archaeology and art history. Those who wish to contribute a paper should have a Ph.D degree, or enclose a letter of recommendation from their supervisor. Abstract should be sent before 1 February, 1999. The organisers reserve the right, if necessary, to make a selection on the basis of the abstracts. Priority will be given to new results in terms of excavations, fieldwork, material or methodology. Research papers on any aspect of South Asian Archaeology and Art History are welcome. Those who will not present a paper will have to register before 15 June, 1999.

The conference fee is fl. 150 (Dutch guilders), fl 75 for students. For a registration form or more details please address all correspondence to: Congress Team SAA 99 c/o International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), P.O.B. 9515, 2300 RA Leiden, The Netherlands. Tel: +31 71 527 2227; fax: +31 71 527 4162; e-mail: [IIAS@RULLET.LeidenUniv.NL](mailto:IIAS@RULLET.LeidenUniv.NL) (message subject: SAA 99)

**European Conference of Iranian Studies, Paris, France, 6-10 September, 1999**

The Fourth European Conference of Iranian Studies is being organised by the "Monde Iranien" and is open to all specialists of Iranian civilisation from its origins to modern times. Papers can be presented in French, English, German or Italian, the official languages of the Societas Iranologica Europaea (SIE), and should not exceed 20 minutes. They will be presented by theme and arranged by subject in parallel sessions. The deadline for registration was 15 October, 1998. Conference fees for members of the SIE: FF300; non-members: FF600; Students: FF100. Fees do not include travel or accommodation and are payable before 15 June, 1999. The conference will be held at the Cité universitaire internationale de Paris. For further information, including a registration form, contact: Secretariat, Monde Iranien, CNRS - 27, rue Paul Bert, 94 204 IVRY-sur-Seine France. Tel: +33 1 4960 4005; fax: +33 1 4521 9419; e-mail: [iran@drl.cnrs.fr](mailto:iran@drl.cnrs.fr)

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## NEW PUBLICATIONS

### Recent journals

*Cahiers d'Asie Centrale - Revue de l'Institut français d'Études sur l'Asie centrale (IFEAC)*, Nos. 1-2 (double issue)

Aix-en Provence: 1996. Annual subscription FF165. Order from Edisud, La Calade, RN7, 13090, Aix-en Provence, France. Tel: +33 42 216 144; fax: +33 42 215 620.

This double-issue deals with the topic of Roads of Trade and Ideas. Articles in French and English have been grouped according to subjects. Under the section **Traders and Craftsmen** articles of interest to our readers include: "Relations entre l'Asie centrale et l'Inde à l'époque hellénistique" (Claude Rapin); "Les marchands sogdiens dans les mers du Sud à l'époque préislamique" (Frantz Grenet) and "Les routes caravanières entre villes de l'Inde et de l'Asie centrale" (Razia G. Moukminova). The section **From Architecture to Music** includes the following articles: "Begram: Along Ancient Central Asian and Indian Trade Routes (Sanjyot Mehendale) and "La genèse centre-asiatique des minarets indiens" (Galina A. Pougatchenkova). "Les frontières occidentales de la diffusion du bouddhisme en Asie centrale" (M. I. Filanovitch and Z. I. Ousmanova) is in the section called **Beliefs and Believers**. **IFEAC** was set up in 1992, its periodical is published twice a year. Each issue offers a specific theme as well as papers about current scientific research. The geographical area covered includes the Five Central Asian Republics (Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tadjikistan) and neighbouring areas (Northern Afghanistan, Iranian Khorasan, Chinese Xinjiang). Ethnic groups studied are the Turco-Mongol peoples such as Tatars from Kazan (Tatarstan) and Crimea, the Mongols, the Kalmuks, the Caucasian Muslims (specifically Azeris); the Siberian peoples such as the Yakutus, the Tunguses. **IFEAC** can be reached in Uzbekistan: 18 a, Shilkov Street, 70031 Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Tel: +7 3712 394 703; fax: +7 3712 891 656.

*SPACH Newsletter*, Issue 4, April 1998

edited by Brigitte Neubacher, c/o. UNOCHA KABUL, P.O. Box 1809, Islamabad, Pakistan. Tel: +873 761 473 186; fax: +873 761 473 187; e-mail: unrco@kابل.isb-com.net

The latest issue of the newsletter of the Society for the Preservation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage (SPACH) contains a report on the current status of the Bamiyan Buddhas by Nancy H. Dupree; an interview with Professor A. H. Dani on the illegal trade of artefacts from Afghanistan, and the resulting situation in Pakistan; a small piece about the inventory of Kabul Museum objects, including the Telya Tepe gold hoard; an appeal from Federico Mayor, Director-General of UNESCO, for international solidarity to protect Afghanistan's cultural heritage (Islamabad, 16 September, 1997); and ongoing work by UNCHS (Habitat) to restore the building and surroundings of the Kabul Museum.

SPACH is building a resource centre and is looking for donations of articles, publications, books or other relevant information resource. If you would like to help SPACH's activities by becoming a member (US\$50 per year) please write to SPACH c/o. ARIC P.O. Box 1084, University Town, Peshawar, Pakistan. Tel: +92 0351 775 3661; fax: +92 51 272 932; e-mail: spach@spach.org.pk; web-site: <http://www.spach.org.pk>

**Dunhuang-Tulufan yanjiu** (Journal of Dunhuang and Turfan Studies) (vol. 3, 1997) Beijing: Peking University Press, 1998. pp. 439, 4 b. & w. plates. RMB52, with 10% p.&p. Order from Peking University Press, 100871 Beijing Daxue Chubanshe Faxingbu, P.R.C. Tel: +86 1 6275 4140; fax: +86 1 6255 6201. For more information please contact one of the editors, Rong Xinjiang, e-mail: rxj@ihw.com.cn

This important journal has been published since 1995 in collaboration between four institutions in China, Hong Kong and Thailand. Three volumes have appeared so far, each containing over 300 pages of scholarly articles, followed by obituaries, book reviews and a list of relevant new publications. As the Preface of the first volume points out, after decades of researching the materials found in Dunhuang, Turfan and in the surrounding area, it has become clear that they cannot be fully understood in isolation and have to be studied together in order to understand important links. With one exception (Georges-Jean Pinault: "The Rendering of Buddhist Terminology in Tocharian", vol. 1, 1995, pp. 9-36), the language of the articles is Chinese. Each issue has a contents page in English. Tables and black-and-white illustrations are included where appropriate.

The main focus is on historical and linguistic research, but several very important articles on art history have also been published. Titles of interest to our readers quoted from the English contents page include Jiang Boqin: "Nagarāja and Ganeśa: An Iconographical Study on the Sui Mural in the Mogao Grottoes" (vol. 1, 1995, pp. 139-160); Ma De: "The Mogao Grottoes and the Buddhist Communities in Dunhuang" (vol. 1, 1995, pp. 161-176); Rong Xinjiang: "The Nature of the Dunhuang Library Cave and the Reason for its Sealing" (vol. 2, 1996, pp. 23-48); Meng Sihui: "An Iconographical Study on the Painting of Tejabrabha Buddha" (vol. 2, 1996, pp. 101-148) and Xu Ziqiang: "New Concordance of the Numbering System of the Mogao Grottoes" (vol. 2, 1996, pp. 149-162). Rong Xinjiang's article gives a summary of the conflicting ideas concerning the sealing of Cave 17, and argues convincingly for 1006 A.D. as the most acceptable date, which is even earlier than the traditionally quoted opinion of Paul Pelliot, which had linked the sealing of the cave to the Tangut attack in 1036. Rong points out that nothing seems to link the finds to such an attack, and argues that Cave 17 was a sacred deposit of Snajiesi, one of the most important temples in Dunhuang. Meng Sihui gives a very exhausting list of all known paintings of Tejabrabha, or the Buddha of the Blazing Light. Each example is illustrated with a line drawing, with all figures identified within the paintings. An iconographical analysis and comparisons to the sutra texts conclude this important article.

Volume 3 appeared in August this year. Articles include: Rao Zongyi: "The Exorcist Words of Tomb Inscriptions from Dunhuang" (pp. 13-18); Yang Fuxue: "The *Saddharmapuṅḍrikasūtra*: Its Recensions in Central Asian Languages and Chinese" (pp. 23-44); Zheng Binglin: "Two Documents Concerning the Sogdians at Dunhuang" (pp. 191-208) and Wang Jiqing: "The Chinese Texts Acquired by A. Stein in His fourth Central Asian Expedition" (pp. 259-290). The Memoritum section contains obituaries of H. W. Bailey, Jiang Liangfu, Chang Renxia and Zhou Peixian, each including a full bibliography of the deceased. There is a long review article by Zhang Guangda on the important three-volume *Vostochny Turkestan v drevnosti i rannem srednevekov'e* listing the full contents (pp. 339-370). Useful book reviews and a list of new publications concludes this volume. This journal is a very welcome addition to the publications on Dunhuang, Turfan and Central Asian studies.

## New publications on Iran

### **Art of Ancient Iran. Copper and Bronze, the Houshang Mahboubian Family Collection**

by Houshang Mahboubian. London: Philip Wilson, 1997. pp. 345, copious colour ill., two maps. £95.

This magnificently produced volume presents the unique collection of ancient copper and bronze artefacts from Elam, Luristan, Amlash, Kaluraz and Urartu, as well as from the Achaemenid, Parthian and Sasanian periods of Iran, acquired by Houshang Mahboubian and his family. The inspiration came from his father, Dr Benjamin Mahboubian (1868-1968) who was the first Iranian to carry out extensive excavations in the Iranian world.

A brief introduction (pp. 13-33) provides a geographical and historical framework for the artefacts, and is followed by detailed descriptions and illustrations of over 400 selected objects from the collection. These are accompanied by anecdotes about the circumstances under which some of these objects came to be incorporated into the collection, both by Dr Benjamin Mahboubian in the first decades of our century and by his son, later on. In the appendix, Dr Peter Northover analyses the history of early copper and its alloys, examining the metal contents of many objects in the collection.

The volume provides a rare opportunity to look at some seldom-exhibited examples of early copper and bronze art from the Iranian world. These objects show the tremendous continuity in Iranian artistic tradition from the very early to the late periods.

### **Proceedings of the Third European Conference of Iranian Studies**

(Pt. 1. Old and Middle Iranian Studies), edited by Nicholas Sims-Williams. *Beiträge zur Iranistik 17*, Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1998. pp. v+179, 17 plates, hb.

This volume contains the proceedings of the Third conference of the *Societas Iranologica Europaea* (SIE), convened in Cambridge, U.K. in 1995. The editorial committee has sensibly decided to publish papers dealing with Old and Middle- and Modern Iranian topics in two separate volumes, unlike its unwieldy Bamberg (1991) predecessor. As the editor notes, several papers were either revised or withdrawn by their contributors prior to publication. As a result, we are offered a solid set of studies by leading Iranists in epigraphy, religious history, linguistics, literature, numismatics, paleography and sphragistics. Papers have been thematically arranged in two sections, "Religions and cultures of ancient Iran" and "Texts and languages". Only salient features can be highlighted here.

Martin Schwartz ably arrays possible etymologies for the Pahlavi divinity *ssn* (Gk. **Σασάν**) as a follow-up to Philippe Gignoux's analysis of the enigmatic figure, Sāsān, of that dynasty's namesake. Schwartz has now already elaborated on his hypothesis in the Vladimir Livshits *Festschrift*, (*Bulletin of the Asia Institute*, vol. 10, 1998). Gherardo Gnoli strengthens his recent position in favour of a sixth-century dating of Zarathustra by examining a Manichaean dating of the prophet which, he contends, stems from an *interpretatio Judaica* of Zoroaster as Ezekiel. He demonstrates that this dating was transmitted to the Manichaeans in a Hellenistic setting. In examining Classical and New Persian sources, Gnoli ingeniously exhibits how two otherwise antagonistic traditions, Mazdean and Manichaean, concur on a similar dating of the seer. James Russell lucidly dismisses the question of conversion to Manichaeism by

any Armenian monarch. By examining Manichaean, Sogdian and Armenian Christian writings, he concludes that Mar Gabyrab's putative apostolic mission was possibly based on an overhauling of older Armenian textual evidence when transmitted to Central Asia. The Sogdian text places his travels to Erevan (misidentified as Arebanos) during the late 3rd century B.C., a time when Zoroastrianism flourished in Armenia; also, the invention of the Armenian script occurs only after the 5th century B.C. Iris Colditz provides a valuable overview of Manichaean doctrinal judgements in dealing with apostates, debtors and sinners which, interestingly, reflected Sasanian legal penalties for similar culprits. This consonance reveals the politic position adopted by *Mānī* and his cohorts to garner wider popular acceptance. Rika Gyselen examines six seals that display archaic features of dress. An Elamite or Achaemenid influence in the apparel of the inscribed figure becomes problematic since this particular style is absent in the Parthian era. The (re)-emergence of this during the Sasanid era remains a *non-liquet*. Iraj Mochiri examines copies of eleven badly preserved Sasanid coins in private collections. Stylistic features of Kavād I are discussed, but given their inferior metallic quality it is difficult to identify their provenance or reason of issue. A. D. H. Bivar offers an informed and occasionally humorous discussion of the life and times of Ali Mirdrakvandi, the Luri tribesman, author and factotum of American and British officers during wartime Iran, whose imaginative if tradi-comic writings display Old Iranian cosmic overtones.

Turning to the linguistic and textual section, there are learned discussions of diverse Old and Middle Iranian languages. Antonio Panaino attempts a translation of three *daēvic* utterances in Yt. 19.57, 19.60 and 19.63. Hintze, according to him, avoided this in her edition of the *Zamyād Yašt* so as to preserve the "rhetorical effect" (p. 71 n.1); Panaino, however, postulates a sexual connotation in these utterances and, perhaps over-pedantically, offers Latin translations for the same which may leave some students and readers nonplussed. Nicholas Sims-Williams' emendations to the sensational Rabatak inscription mark a watershed for Bactrian and Kushan studies. His revised text and translation accompanied by an appendix of possible Chinese etymologies of Kanishka's ancestors will be essential reading for Central Asian history. Ronald Emmerick again displays his expertise in Khotanese by deciphering an archaic orthographic feature of the diacritic, *ei*. Werner Sundermann analyses varying readings of a difficult Middle Persian matrimonial term. Oktor Skjærø offers yet another seminal study of linguistic and thematic parallels. His masterful comparison of a Sogdian fable with the Paikuli inscription further strengthens the fact that the Iranians, among other ancient peoples, were cognisant of literary traditions, which, although cast afresh in varying milieu and epochs, betray an indigenous oral heritage. Philip Huysse re-evaluates Kerdir's inscriptions to suggest readings for three ambiguous phrases in the light of recent research. Enrico Morano assembles and re-edits a Parthian crucifixion hymn from the Turfansammlung (including for the first time M 390) with a translation and commentary. Taken together, the scattered readings of the manuscripts logically describe the betrayal, trial and crucifixion of Jesus. Carlo Cereti provides a useful *catalogue raisonné* of Avestan, Pahlavi and Pāzend manuscripts in Italian museums and universities which continues in the trend of his earlier findings from the Bhandarkar collection, Pune, India (see *East & West*, vol. 46, 3-4 (1996) [1997]: 441-51). Christiane Reck offers an up-to-date report on the cataloguing of the Middle Iranian fragments in Sogdian script under the aegis of the *Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland* project. An impressive "multi-volume catalogue" for all Middle Iranian fragments from the Turfan expeditions is also in progress (p. 148). Ludwig Paul provides a survey of the Zazaki language, its dialects and select morphological features in relation to other modern West Iranian languages.

Burzine K. Waghmar  
PhD candidate, Iranian Studies, SOAS, London, U.K.

## Recent publications from Russia

### **Derestuj Cemetery**

by Sergey Minyaev. *Archaeological Sites of the Xiongnu*, vol. 3. St. Petersburg: Asiatic Foundation. US\$25 (+US\$15 p. & p.). For further information, please contact: Sergey Minyaev (min@asia.iimc.spb.ru)

Derestuj burial ground has been the subject of detailed investigations over recent years. The site has yielded very important evidence for Xiongnu social history. There are several groups of mounds, each containing several burials. In the centre of each burial complex there is a tomb with masonry above the grave with other burials arranged around it. The central burial was usually made in a wooden coffin placed into a stone cyst. Several artefacts were found in the central burials, but almost none in the secondary graves. While both men and women were interred in the central burials, the secondary ones contained remains of infants and juveniles, some of them bearing signs of violent death. This would suggest that the Xiongnu practiced human sacrifice.

A large number of artefacts were found in the graves, the most common being belts and other details of clothing, (principally plates made in the Ordos style), ceramics, glass stone beads, etc. The belts consisted of a central part (normally two bronze plates) and other details like small bronze and stone plates, bronze, iron, and stone rings, fasteners, etc. Scenes in the Ordos style are represented on the bronze plates - for example fighting horses, a beast of prey grasping a herbivorous animal and fighting dragons.

### **Russian language publications on Central Asia**

"Ancient nomads of Central Asia", edited by Y.A. Zadneprovsky (St. Petersburg, 1997. pp. 113) is a collection of articles drawn from various specialised Russian bulletins. It includes three main sections. The first one focuses on the Wusun and K'ang-Chü, whilst the second part approaches the problem of the Yüeh-chih and their migrations. The last chapter deals with the ancient nomads on the periphery of Bukhara and Samarkandian Sogdia, the interrelationship between nomads and settlers in the Bukhara oasis and the problem of the south-eastern expansion of the Sarmatians.

I.N. Chlopin in "Eneolithic period of South-western Turkmenistan" (St-Petersburg: Evropeyskiy Dom, 1997. pp. 301 with 4 plans and 126 plates) focuses on the early archaeological period in Turkmenistan, approaching the discourse in chronological sequence. The first chapter is devoted to the early Chalcolithic period and the author analyses the archaeological context, examining burial construction, skeletal remains, grave assemblages and rituals, cultural affiliations and chronology. The same methodology is employed in the second and third chapters on the Middle Eneolithic and the Late Eneolithic periods. The volume is completed by a fifty-page summary in English.

"Saka of the Low Syrdarya according to data from the Southern Tagisken cemetery" by M. A. Itina and L. T. Yablonsky (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1997. pp. 182, 79 tables and ills.) is the first full edition of both the archaeological and physical anthropological data from the cemetery of the Southern Tagisken. For many years the territory of the ancient Syrdarya delta has been the scene of complex research work conducted by the Institute of Ethnography of the USSR Academy of Sciences, the present Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences. This work has brought to light numerous monuments on the banks of old river beds

dating from the Neolithic to the Late Middle Ages. These excavations have placed the Aral Sea culture of the Saka within the ambit of the 'Scythian world'. The data from the excavations in Southern Tagisken not only confirm the validity of this, but also provide ample material for identifying the directions of the early Saka population's cultural ties with the east and west.

I. V. Pyankov in "Central Asia in classical geographic tradition - A source study" (Moscow: Oriental Literature, 1997. pp. 343, maps) makes available in one place all the references of classical authors to the geography of Central Asia. The classical geographical authors' interest in mountain ridges, rivers, as well as peoples and nearby countries is also described in this book.

V. S. Solov'ev in "Northern Tokharistan in Early Middle Ages" (Eletz, 1997, pp. 210, 83 drawings) gives the first full investigation of the history and culture of North Tokharistan in the fifth-eighth centuries A.D., based on the written sources and archaeological materials. The author considers the historical geography, political situation, ethnic history, economy, architecture, art, religion, language and script. He believes that the art was mainly Buddhist, and the script in principal use was Bactrian. The book includes a discussion on the cultural relations with China, India, Iran, Byzantium and Sogdia.

*(We are very grateful to Professor Dr. Boris Stavisky, Russian State University for Humanities, Moscow, Russian Federation, for this information.)*

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## Recent publications from Pakistan

### **The Glory That Was Pakistan: 50 Years of Archaeological Research in Pakistan. A Photographic Exhibition. February-March 1998.**

edited by F. A. Durrani and Ihsan Ali. Peshawar: Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar and National Heritage Foundation, 1998. pp. 116, map, over 100 colour ills.

This is the catalogue that accompanies the exhibition on Pakistan archaeology (*v.p. 30 of this Newsletter*) that was held to celebrate Pakistan's Golden Jubilee. The first section deals with pre- and protohistory. Particularly of interest to our readers are the chapters dealing with the early historic period. In "The Indus-Oxus School of Buddhist Art" M. Farooq Swati (pp. 27-36) dismisses arguments for the Greek or Roman origin of Gandharan art and concludes that this School could have originated in the Swat Valley and that the Buddha image was created for the first time in Uddiyana. "Rock Art in Pakistan" by M. Nasim Khan (pp. 45-48) considers especially the rock carvings and inscriptions of the Upper Indus Valley. "Coinage in Pakistan" by Gul Rahim (pp.49-55) looks at coins in the region from the earliest indigenous punch-marked ones to the Islamic and the British. The book concludes by considering briefly the Islamic heritage of Pakistan. This is more of a handbook accompanying the exhibition than a proper catalogue. However, it is very interesting because of the number of colour photographs it contains, and because useful bibliographies accompany each of the articles for those who wish to pursue any particular subject further.

### **In Quest of New Cultural Horizons in the Gomal Plain**

by M. Farooq Swati and Taj Ali, with introduction by Dr. Farzand Ali Durrani. Peshawar: National Heritage Foundation, April 1998. pp. 24, 3 colour plates, map. Pak.Rs. 50.

This small booklet begins with a brief introduction by Dr. F. Durrani which considers the archaeological importance of the Gomal plain in the Dera Ismail Khan district of the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. Dr. M. F. Swati and Dr. Taj Ali look at the surface collections from the newly discovered site of Jhandi, which seems to indicate pre-Harappan antiquity from the potsherds, terracotta female figurines and stone tools collected. Colour plates illustrate some of the objects. This is part of the National Heritage Foundation's research project to establish an environmental and cultural profile of the Gomal plain. For more information, please contact Dr. Farzand Ali Durrani c/o Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar, Pakistan. Tel/fax: + 92 91 841 698; e-mail: durrani@nhf.pwr.sdnpk.undp.org

## New publications on Buddhist Art

### **The Ajanta Caves. Ancient Paintings of Buddhist India**

by Benoy K. Behl. London: Thames and Hudson, 1998. pp. 255, with 213 ills., 189 in colour, a map, select bibliography, index, hb. £42.

The primary focus of this beautifully illustrated book was to photograph the world-famous mural paintings in the rock-cut Western Indian caves of Ajanta accurately and comprehensively. This has never been done before because of the restrictions on the use of artificial light within the cave interiors. An introductory section (pp. 11-58) considers the site with its early Hinayana and second creative phases, the working



methods and scale, the nature and scope of the murals and their preservation, the sculptures in the caves, the discovery and appreciation of Ajanta from the 19th century onwards, the role of painting and photography in reproducing the murals and the impact of Ajanta on Asian art. There is also a short note (pp. 59-62) on the Jataka stories by Sangitika Nigam and an appendix on early descriptions of the caves.

The bulk of the book consists of colour plates from the principal painted caves, i.e. caves 1, 2, 16, and 17, showing scenes from the Buddha's life and from Jataka stories. This is what makes this publication so special, because the author's expertise with photography in low light permits one to see for the first time details and subtle nuances of the murals which are not even discernable to the naked eye when one visits the site due to the protective conditions under which the caves are maintained. No other previous publication on Ajanta has as many colour plates. The use of long exposures which pick up natural ambient light has enabled Behl to show the paintings as faithfully as possible to their true colours. However, one regrets the lack of a scholarly exposition of the paintings. The text has been aimed very much at the non-specialist reader.

**Tabo: A Lamp for the Kingdom. Early Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Art in the Western Himalaya**

by Deborah E. Klimburg-Salter, with contributions by Christian Luczanits, Luciano Petech, Ernst Steinkellner, Erna Wendl. Milan: Skira Editore, 1997. pp. 279, copious ill., £40

The subject of this serious art historical study is the monastery in Tabo, a small village in the Spiti valley in the Indian province of Himachal Pradesh. The geographical remoteness of its setting belies the historical importance of the site; it was in fact the pre-eminent religious centre of the kingdom of Purang-Guge on the western side of the Himalayan watershed, matching Tho-ling on the eastern side in religious and artistic importance. The kings of Purang and Guge established their West Tibetan kingdom during the 10th century after the collapse of royal dynastic rule in Central Tibet, ruling a territory that stretched from Ladakh to Purang. The oldest element in the monastic complex at Tabo is the *gstug-lag-khang* or main temple, founded almost certainly in 996 A.D. by Ye-shes-'od, lama and third king of Purang, who undertook an enormous missionary work in the Western Himalayan region that involved building, proselytising and the translation of Buddhist literature into Tibetan. The temple was renovated in 1042 A.D. by his grand-nephew, Byang-chub-'od, who continued the missionary work of Ye-shes-'od by building yet more monasteries and through his invitation to his court of the Bengali teacher Atisa who subsequently played so important a role in the second diffusion of Buddhism in Tibet (*phyi-dar*, 10th-13th centuries).

The *gstug-lag-khang* at Tabo is an art historian's dream: intact in both structure and decor, Klimburg-Salter and her colleagues have been able to propose a chronology and an interpretation of the iconographic programme (consisting of both sculptures and wall-paintings) on the basis of the wealth of inscriptional evidence contained within the temple itself, Carbon 14 dating, archaeological and art historical evidence and other historical documents and literature. Klimburg-Salter presents the iconography of the main temple in detail, distinguishing between two phases of artistic production (corresponding with the founding and renovation of the temple respectively) and identifying the iconographic themes and functions of the various parts of the temple - entrance hall, assembly hall, cella and ambulatory. Numerous photographs and diagrams assist the reader in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the overall schema. The book also includes chapters by Erna Wendl, Christian Luczanits and Luciano Petech on the depiction of textiles at Tabo, the clay sculptures and an introduction to the history of West Tibet.

**In the Footsteps of the Buddha: An Iconic Journey From India To China**

edited by Rajeshwari Ghose, with the collaboration of Puay-peng Ho and Yeung Chun-tong, with articles by Helmut Brinker, Jan Fontein, Rajeshwari Ghose, Chhaya Haesner, Puay-peng Ho, Li Chongfeng, Stephen Little, Liu Ming-wood, Ma Shichang, Krairiksh Piriya, Don Stadner, Maurizio Taddei, Marianne Yaldiz. Hong Kong: University Museum and Art Gallery, The University of Hong Kong, 1998. pp. xii, 378, 121 col. ills., 6 maps, selective glossary, bibliography. HK\$ 380.

This book is the catalogue that accompanied the homonymous exhibition, held at the Art Gallery of the University of Hong Kong from 26 September to 15 December, 1998 (v. p. 31 of this Newsletter). It is made up of two sections: the entries to the exhibits, and a collection of articles compiled by several Asian and Western scholars. Even though the introductory essay by R. Ghose discusses the issue of the origin of Buddhist art in India and recognises the question of aniconism in early Indian Buddhist art as the subject of an on-going debate among scholars (the two major contenders being Susan Huntington and Vidya Dehejia), inviting the readers to their own judgements, the catalogue fails to take into consideration the two different perspectives. The images are interpreted and titled according to the traditional view, not avoiding some disappointing inconsistencies.

The scope of the book is to show and examine the processes of transformation and adaptation of Buddhist religion and related imagery that took place along with its transmission into Southeast Asia and China. Images and objects inevitably changed their formal features and meanings in order to suit new systems of ideas and practices in different social and cultural contexts. Particularly relevant to this question is the article by R. Ghose, which discusses the concept and function of icons and images, and the stylistic changes that marked the journey of Buddhism and its iconography from India to China. J. Fontein examines the process of regional adaptation in the Buddhist art of Southeast Asia, while H. Brinker follows the equivalent path in the context of China. Other essays are concerned with specific categories of objects and images from the Buddhist world (their nature, function and dating), and with the question of the impact and interaction between different traditions. The article by M. Taddei consists of a survey of the scholarly work carried out in the last decade on Gandharan art. This volume could serve as a good source book for scholars and students involved in Buddhist studies, as it provides a substantial corpus of essays and bibliographical references.

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## **Recent publications on Central Asia**

**Sztuka Naskalna Uzbekistanu** (Rock Art of Uzbekistan)

by Aleksander Koško, Timur Širinov and Włodzimierz Rączkowski. Poznań: Adam Mickiewicz University, Institute of Prehistory, Poznan and Uzbek Academy of Science, Institute of Archaeology, Samarkand, 1997. pp. 285, b. & w. ills., bibliography, index, Polish text with English summary.

This publication has an English summary (pp. 251 ff.) which provides us with a general overview of the research by a group of Polish and Uzbek archaeologists at the rock art site of Sarmishsay in the Nuratau mountains in Uzbekistan. It takes a contextual analytical approach, inferring a textual interpretation of petroglyphs. More than 140 sites have been identified in Uzbekistan so far, dating from the Mesolithic period to the late Middle Age. The history of research of Uzbek rock art and the

archaeological and cultural background of Central Asia are presented in the first two chapters. The following chapter by Huzanazarov (pp. 43-127) provides location, theme-description, styles and artistic techniques of the sites located in the western Tianshan, comparing them with examples from adjacent areas. He classifies them into four chronological phases based upon particular recurrent motifs; for instance, the Eneolithic period is characterised by the depiction of women, the Bronze Age by oxen, chariots, solar signs, large beasts and anthropomorphic figures, whilst the vivid representation of the 'animal style' would be diagnostic of the Scytho-Saka cultural world. Finally, those petroglyphs depicting armed horsemen would belong to the Turkic culture.

Next, Roswadowki (pp.127-140) presents a general introduction of the Sarmishsay valley where more than 1000 single petroglyphs have been detected. He also attempts to provide a general chronology, taking into consideration stylistic and iconographic variations, further emphasising the importance of the contextualization of a given site and the researchers' awareness of their methodological constraints. The cultural context of this rock art expression is given by Rączkowski and Stanislawski (pp.141-150). Economic, social and ideological phenomena have been analysed according to the *Annales* School precepts, in terms of long- and medium- term changes. Methodological problems and alternative perspectives are addressed in this chapter. Stanislawski's chapter (pp.161-203) attempts to 'reconstruct' the language system of the Sarmishsay rock art, examining their signs and organisation and the nature of the relationship between three semantic domains (anthropomorphic, zoomorphic and geometric) within the given cultural context. He also points out the importance of the environmental factor when interpreting this ancient form of expression. The last chapter by Roswadoski (pp.205-235) deals with the problem of ethnic interpretation in the studies of Central Asian rock art, especially when considering the much-debated Indo-European issue. He interprets the semantic layer of petroglyphs within Indo-Iranian mythology. First, he questions the validity of the idea of 'ethno-specific' elements diagnostic of a given society, in this case focusing on the presence of Indo-Iranian markers such as the 'wheel vehicle' and the 'horse'. Secondly, a completely different contextual approach is introduced based on the assumption that rock art codifies a given interpretation of the world. He compares two semiotic systems: rock art and mythology. Even if a given motif refers to a certain mythological background, one should not forget that the same motif may occur in a completely different semantic context. Thus, attention must be paid to the relationship between petroglyphs and the semantic associations defining a given set of relationships.

The publication makes a valuable contribution to the understanding and identification of petroglyphic art in Uzbekistan.

**L'Uomo d'Oro-La cultura delle steppe del Kazakistan dall'età del bronzo alle grandi migrazioni.** (The Golden Man: Steppe culture from the Bronze Age to the Migration Period in Kazakhstan)  
edited by Grigore Arbore Popescu, Chiara Silvi Antonini and Karl Baipakov. Milan: Electa, 1998. pp. 253, 548 colour ill. (catalogue, pp. 104-247.), Lit.120.000.

This beautifully illustrated catalogue presents the archaeological artefacts recently exhibited at Palazzo Te, Mantua, Italy (v. *CIAA NL 7, April 1998, p. 24*). The exhibition was jointly organised by the Ministry of Culture of Kazakhstan and the Municipality of Mantua. The volume itself reflects this joint cooperation as it includes articles written by Kazakh archaeologists and Italian scholars .

The first section presents two introductory articles on the intermediary role played out in the past by the nomadic populations inhabiting present-day Kazakhstan, and on the current state of archaeological research in the region (Popescu pp. 3-10, Baipakov pp. 11-16).

The second part (pp. 17-65), written by Karl Baipakov and Erbulat Smagulov, has been chronologically divided into three main phases: the Bronze Age (sixteenth-seventh centuries B.C.), the Iron Age (eighth-third centuries B.C.) and the Period of the Great Migrations and the Ephemeral Empires which lasted from the 3rd century B.C. to the 6th century A.D. Supported by drawings, maps and photographic illustrations, the authors introduce and explain the culture, economy and social background of Kazakh nomadic peoples within a historical perspective. The section concludes with drawings showing the evolution of burials in the various *skurgan* types.

A third part, including monographs by Italian authors, further investigates some of the most-debated topics in nomadic archaeology. Parlato in "L'Epopea Scito-Saka" (The Scytho-Saka Period, pp. 69-76) talks about sources of investigation in discussing the identity of Scyths and Sakas; Antonini in "l'Arte Animalistica delle Steppe" (The Animal Style of the Steppes, pp. 77-86) introduces the problem of the origin of the so-called "Animal Style", its probable Indo-Iranic background and discusses the endurance of this cultural tradition. Lo Muzio in "Le Pratiche Funerarie nelle Steppe Asiatiche" (Funerary Practices in the Asian Steppes, pp. 87-94) describes the funerary practices amongst various nomadic cultures of the steppes. Bruno Genito in "I Nomadi e l'Europa" (Nomads and Europe, pp. 95-101), studies the evolution of pastoral nomadism during the medieval period.

The last section is devoted to the objects, which are well illustrated in colour plates, some of them for the first time, and described by brief captions. A selected bibliography which includes most of the Russian articles on the subject is provided at the end of the volume.

In this catalogue the attention is focused on the political and cultural roles played by the Sakas and their tribal allies in that geographic buffer area currently within the borders of Kazakhstan, mid-way between western China, India and Central Asia. Attempts have been made by the authors to visualise some of the defining elements of these ancient nomadic cultural entities, providing a general overview of the symbolic world to which they seemed to belong, basing much of their speculations on the artistic repertoire the ancient nomads left behind as evidence of their "silent" passage.

**Treasures of the Eurasian Steppes: Animal Art from 800 B.C. to 200 A.D.**

by Tina Pang. New York: Ariadne Galleries, 1998. pp. 175, 196 colour ill. US\$55.

This is the accompanying catalogue of the exhibition held in New York at Ariadne Galleries from 25 March - 30 April, 1998 (v. *CIAA NL 7, April 1998, pp. 26-27*). It is undoubtedly well presented in terms of format and quality of illustrations. The beautiful photograph of the gold pectoral with turquoise-inlaid eyes (p. 113, no. 118) is a good example. The Introduction gives a brief, but exhaustive description of the nomadic lifestyle of the peoples of the steppes and their history, with reference to the much-debated problem of the identification of the Scythians and the Sakas. Reference is also made to all the other nomadic peoples that inhabited the Eurasian steppes throughout the centuries, linking East to West, such as the Sauro-Sarmatians, the Huns-Xiongnu, the Yuezhi (Rouzhii) and the Xianbei. These nomadic cultures are represented in the 200 and more pieces collected by Torkom Demirjian of Ariadne Galleries over the years.

The catalogue includes a range of objects for personal adornment, weapons and utensils for every-day life from western Europe (e.g. the Villanovian horse bit, p. 20, no.2) to Iran (Luristan bronzes), from the Caucasus (harness plaques) to Yunnan, China (Dian bronzes). All items are illustrated and captioned with references. They seem to share certain iconographic features, thus revealing the extent of the stylistic "cross-pollination" of nomadic art (p. 9). A selected bibliography is provided to complete this well-presented catalogue.

The extent of the artistic permutation played out within the Eurasian continent by the nomads is yet to be clearly defined; however, the attention shown by Ariadne Galleries in the publication of this catalogue represents yet another sign of the renewed interest in this aesthetically-appealing yet poorly-understood symbolic world. The exhibition of these objects, although decontextualised from their original environment, was arranged to stimulate a much wider appreciation of the aesthetics of the "animal style" art which permeated most of the Eurasian steppes during the first millennium B.C., and to encourage further research in this subject.

**Bronze Age and Early Iron Age Peoples of Eastern Central Asia**

edited by Victor H. Mair. *The Journal of Indo-European Studies*. Washington D.C.: Institute for the Study of Man and The University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 1998. 2 vols. pp. 899, 200 ills. and maps, index, US\$165 (US\$4.50 p. & p.). Order from Institute for the Study of Man, 1133 13th St. NW, Washington D.C. 20005, U.S.A.

These two important volumes include most of the papers presented at the Conference on the Bronze Age and Iron Age Peoples of Eastern Central Asia, held on April 19-21, 1996 in Philadelphia. As such they represent the most comprehensive scholarly investigation of the evolution of Eurasian civilisation, particularly of the Tarim Basin and surrounding areas yet published. More than forty substantial articles from distinguished specialists in related fields contribute to conjure up a still-blurred yet fascinating picture of the pre- and protohistory of this vast archaeological area which played a pivotal role in the cultural transmission between East and West. Approached from different angles - archaeology, migration and nomadism, linguistics, physical anthropology and genetics, metallurgy, textiles, geography, climatology, history, mythology and ethnology - this fairly new field of research, further stimulated by the recent archaeological discoveries in the region, may provide important data for the understanding of the origins of the much-debated Indo-European peoples and the evolutionary patterns in East Asia. Six of the world's leading authorities in linguistics present a section entirely devoted to the detailed analysis of the ancient Tocharian language and its relevance for the ancient people who inhabited Eastern Central Asia. The publication is further enhanced by the appendix "Place, people and site names of the Uyghur region pertinent to the archaeology of the Bronze Age and Iron Age", compiled by Victor H. Mair and Dolkun Kamberi (pp. 857-864), surely welcomed by the majority of researchers involved in the field, as an extremely helpful tool of orientation.

**Silu kaogu zhenpin** (Archaeological Treasures of the Silk Road in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region)

edited by Ma Chengyuan and Yue Feng, with essays by Yue Feng, Israfil Yusuf, Anniwaer Hasimu, Jia Yingyi, Yu Zhiyong, Li Wenying and Zhou Jinling. Shanghai: Shanghai Translation Publishing House, 1998. pp. x, 321, 142 col. ills., 2 maps.

Published in conjunction with the exhibition of the same name held in the Shanghai Museum, Shanghai, P.R.C. (1 April - 15 October, 1998, v. *CIAA NL7, April 1998, p. 25*), the book contains five research papers the specialists involved in the recent excavation projects in Xinjiang, and a catalogue section of 142 objects, each presented with a colour photograph and a short entry. These objects, ranging from 1000 B.C. to 1200 A.D., are divided into eight sections: cultural relics predating the Silk Road, an infant mummy, Silk Road textiles, written records and documents, painting, sculpture, articles for daily use and the male mummy of Yingpan.

Many of these objects have never been published before and the book therefore provides up-to-date information on the art-historical and archaeological studies of Xinjiang. For example, the discovery from Tomb No.15 at Yingpan, excavated in

1995, is regarded as one of the most important archaeological finds of the Han and Jin dynasties (206 B.C. - 420 A.D.). Eleven objects from this particular tomb are included in the catalogue, including the male mummy of the tomb, his luxurious woolen robe, embroidered woolen trousers, mask, jewelry, wooden furniture, and daily tools. A well researched and comprehensive paper, written by the joint excavators Li Wenying and Zhou Jinling, is the first detailed report about this site, providing a wealth of information concerning the burial style, the items unearthed, the historical background, the cultural exchange between East and West, and the possible trading route.

The work contains four other essays: the first by Yue Feng is a summary of the achievements of archaeological work in Xinjiang. Israfel Yusuf and Anniwaer Hasimu divide the ancient scripts into the Chinese, the Aramaic and the Brahmi writing systems and give a general introduction to the ancient languages found in Xinjiang. Professor Jia Yingyi discusses the woolen and silk textiles excavated along the Silk Road. She presents detailed results of her research on the technology and the pattern design of the silk and woolen textiles in Xinjiang, and suggests that sericulture and silk reeling had begun in this area as early as the third century. The fourth essay by Yu Zhiyong is a study of the ancient site of Niya.

Though lacking a bibliography, this book provides a wide ranging selection of archaeological discoveries, with some well researched articles which could prove a useful reference to scholars of Central Asian art history and archaeology.

#### **Handbook to the Stein Collections in the U.K.**

edited by Helen Wang. London: British Museum Press. Due early 1999.

Aimed at researchers, students and all those interested in Sir Aurel Stein and his collections, the Handbook lists the U.K. organisations which house Stein collections. In London these include the British Academy, British Library, British Museum, National Portrait Gallery, Royal Asiatic Society, Royal Geographical Society, University College London and the Victoria and Albert Museum. The Bodleian Library, Corpus Christi College, Oxford University Press, Oxford University School of Geography and the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford and the Cambridge University Library in Cambridge also hold relevant materials. For each organisation the information is arranged under five headings: collection history, collection description, publications, accessibility, contact details. The individual entries have been compiled by the curators, librarians and archivists who look after the respective collections. There are four appendices: reports of the Stein Days held at the British Museum and British Library in 1995 and 1996; (2) CEAW Oldham's obituary of Stein; (3) a chronology of Stein's life and (4) a full bibliography relating to Stein, his life and work. The Stein Handbook manuscript is with the publisher now.

For further information, contact: British Museum Press, 46 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3QQ, U.K. or Andrew Meadows, Curator of Greek Coins, British Museum, WC1B 3DG, U.K.

#### **Central Asia Phrasebook**

by Justin Jon Rudelson. London: Lonely Planet Publication, 1998. pp. 240, including index. £3.99

Lonely Planet now publish a Central Asia Phrasebook with chapters on Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Pashto, Tajik, Uyghur and Uzbek; smaller sections are devoted to Burushashki, Khowar, Kohistani, Mandarin, Mongolian, Russian, Shina, Tashkorghani, Turkmen and Wakhi. This is a useful and cheap addition to any Central Asian travel-kit.

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## LECTURE ABSTRACTS

We have had many requests for our lecture abstracts. Dr. Amy Heller as the CIAA's European guest speaker presented a special lecture in April 1998. Mei Jianjun gave a talk in May 1998. We are grateful to the authors for sending in these abstracts.

### **DULAN: SOME PRELIMINARY REMARKS ON THE ARCHITECTURE AND ARTEFACTS OF THE TIBETAN EMPIRE**

by *Dr. Amy Heller, Associate Member of the C.N.R.S. (U.R.A. 1229), Paris, France.*

The recent excavations of 8th-century tombs in Dulan county (Qinghai province) have revealed important evidence of the customs and daily life of the ancient Tibetan empire which, built on military conquest and matrimonial alliance, extended from Lhasa at the centre far into Central Asia for a period of about three hundred years ending in the mid-tenth century. In contrast to the excavations of other grave sites in Tibet which have generally produced very few artefacts, a wealth of objects have already been recovered from Dulan.

The area of Dulan was important as a stop-over point in the route linking Tibet with the junction of three other major trade routes: the Hexi corridor linking the Tang capital Chang'an with Dunhuang, the Mekong River valley road linking the Kokonor with Burma and India via the Nanzhao kingdom, and the Kokonor-Chengdu route. The fall of the Tibetan empire in the mid-ninth century - which in part disrupted trade patterns - coincided with initial indications of changes in climate which by ca. 1000 A.D. resulted in increasing desertification and desiccation to the west of the Kokonor. It seems that Dulan became sparsely inhabited at about this time. During the Royal period of Tibetan history, the Tibetan sovereign (Tsenpo, *b'tsan-po*) was the focus of a cult which revered him as the divine descendant of a sacred mountain, held to guarantee prosperity and well-being of his subjects both in this life and in an after-life that was modeled on a terrestrial paradise of lush pastures for livestock and abundance of food and good health for humanity. To ensure access to this paradise, the Tsenpo and the landed aristocracy were buried in tent-shaped tombs with quantities of different kinds of offerings that were deemed necessary upon rebirth: clothes, jewelry, food, retainers, servants, animals, armour and the like. The Tibetan chronicles contain much detailed information relating to burial rituals. Although official edicts proclaimed Tibetan support of Buddhism during the last quarter of the eighth century, it is known that the Tsenpo maintained their ancestral burial and sacrificial customs until the collapse of the dynasty in central Tibet in 842 A.D.

The Dulan graves, unlike the famous royal grave mounds at Chongye in the Yarlung valley, have been forgotten for centuries. The German adventurer Filchner passed south of Dulan in the 1930's and described finding a silver saddle, gold hair ornaments, a stone lion weighing 25 kg, and clothes, in caves and a stupa near the burial mounds, some of which were intact and some damaged. These finds notwithstanding, he did not pursue his explorations in what he apparently considered an insignificant area (Filchner, Bismillah, Leipzig, 1938: 102-103).

The most important Dulan excavation to date is of a tomb known as Reshui, a mound perhaps 80 m high (Xu Xinguo, *WWB*, 21 July 1996:3 "Tibetan Cemeteries in Dulan County, their discovery and investigation", translated by B. Doar in *China Art and Archeology Digest*, 1997, vol. 1:7-12). This mound has so far revealed two distinct structures. About 4.5 m below the top of the mound, a rectangular pit for animal burial was discovered, 5.8 m long, 4.8 m wide, 2.25 m deep; the walls are almost 1 m



burial was discovered, 5.8 m long, 4.8 m wide, 2.25 m deep; the walls are almost 1 m wide. The pit contains bones of sheep, horses, yak and deer, and was sealed with large logs. 10 m below the top of the mound, a rectangular wall made of alternating layers of stone and wood beams has been discovered; mud bricks have also been used. Both construction methods and dimensions strongly evoke the Yarlung valley tombs. A cruciform multi-room chamber has been excavated on the north side of the Reshui mound, again made of alternating layers of wooden beams and stone. The entire structure measures 21 m from east to west, and 18.5 m from north to south. Access would have been provided by a rectangular shaft on the northern side. It is constructed as if there was a central chamber with a doorway facing north, while there are smaller chambers off a hallway crossing the central chamber. There is evidence of fire damage. There were no human remains. The central chamber contained many small pieces of silk textiles, fragments of garments and pennants, the eastern chamber was found to contain bone eating utensils, and the western chamber contained wheat grains. There were many wooden slips (ca. 5 cm x 1.5 cm x 0.3 cm thick) inscribed in Tibetan, hung on a piece of string. Several were illegible, but enough could be read to see that it is a sort of inventory, probably of the contents of the tombs. The shape of the wooden slips corresponds with the shape known from eighth to tenth century Tibetan contracts recovered from Central Asian sites (Turfan, Astana, Urumqi, Bezeklik). Other finds include a very small, hollow parcel-gilt silver head with two faces, a silver cup believed to be Sogdian or a Tibetan copy of a Sogdian design, a leather boot, a Buddhist flag of silk, a gold buckle with seed pearls, and gold ornaments.

In front of the Reshui mound there were 27 stone circles, approximately 1.5 m in diameter, as if an antechamber to the mound, 5 trenches, 165 m long, 90 cm wide, stretched in front of the foreground. Here were found the skeletons of 87 horses. In the center of the first trench, beneath a large boulder, a silver casket had been buried; it was apparently intended to contain *sarira* (relics), and resembles Sogdian silver and Tang parcel gilt silver reliquaries. In the 27 pits, yak skulls and hooves were found in 13 holes, while eight had dog skeletons. Seven smaller tombs surround the main mound, some of which have recently been pillaged and left with the summit wide open, revealing their mud brick, stone and timber chamber structure.

Elsewhere in Dulan county, another type of structure has been excavated at Kexiaotu: namely, a large mound measuring approximately 8 m high and about 40 m in diameter, surrounded by smaller mounds. A long (160 m) brick wall, 1 m thick, borders the site. Two stone lions and a stone stele were removed from the site in the 1950's. On the inner side of one of the brick walls, a jar with rim was immured; a pillar base with a sun design, approximately 60 sq cm was also excavated in this part of the site. The large mound contains a three-tiered structure. At the lowest level below ground was a courtyard with one arched doorway leading to a large chamber. The construction was of packed bricks and stone with timber beams as ceiling. At ground level there were an additional two chambers and, uppermost, another smaller hole beneath the summit of the mound. Two camel skulls inscribed with Tibetan letters and charms were found inside the smallest hole. All the other chambers were empty, save for occasional wooden slips with Tibetan lettering, similar in size to those found in Reshui. Investigations below ground level are continuing. Small clay ex-voto known as *tsha-tsha* in Tibetan have been excavated nearby.

### Textiles and Silver

Many fragments of fabrics were found during the excavations of 1982-1986: 350 fragments of silks, gauze, hemp, ribbons, techniques of tabby, weft-faced compound twill, warp-faced twill, as well as the earliest *kesi* yet discovered - older than the *kesi* ribbons on the so-called Zandaniji sutra wrappers recovered from Dunhuang - as well as woven gold thread, again the earliest known prior to the 871 A.D. Famensi reliquary deposit. Their typology and description have been made in the article by Xu

Xinguo and Zhao Feng in the *Bulletin of the National Museum of Chinese History* (nos. 15-16, 1991: pp. 63-81) and the duck motif was studied again by Xu Xinguo in *China Tibetology* (no. 1, 1996: 3-26). These scholars studied several kinds of silk and brocades, identifying the Western Asian or Central Asian origin of some, while the rest (almost 80%) are believed to be of Chinese manufacture. One brocade from Persia is the earliest known textile with an embroidered Pahlavi inscription. Perhaps the most distinctive group of fabric fragments were weft-faced compound twill silks with designs of birds holding ribbons in their bills and pativa on the crest of the head, standing on pearl thrones inside medallions or garlands of leaves and flowers.

### Rock carvings

In the lateral valley across the river from the Reshui tombs, there is a surprising change in climate due to orientation of slopes. Conifers and grass pasture appear at 2,000 m approximately. Several rock carvings have been discovered in this valley, including a Buddhist triptych, two figures on slate and one on red sandstone. Due to striations in the rock, the iconographic identification is not easy to establish. However, the figures' crown, robes and jewelry are similar to examples of eastern Tibetan rock carving dating to the early ninth century, in which the garments of Tibetan royalty were adapted as costumes for Buddhist deities. In conformity with the time-frame of the tombs, and the co-existence in Tibetan civilisation of the ancient Tibetan royal cult and the official support of certain Buddhist ideals, it is probable that the triad represents Vairocana with two bodhisattvas. To conclude, the artefacts and tomb architecture of the Dulan region substantiate many aspects of the traditional accounts of the early Tibetan empire. The excavations of tombs in Dulan were undertaken from 1982-1985 and stopped for lack of funds. They were partially renewed in 1995 and ceased again until 1998, when, thanks to the contributions of private donors, excavations and research in the area were resumed.

### COPPER AND BRONZE FINDS IN PREHISTORIC XINJIANG, CHINA: A TECHNOLOGICAL STUDY

by *Mei Jianjun*, Department of Archaeology, University of Cambridge, U.K.

The origins and early development of bronze metallurgy in China have been a subject of long-standing debate over the past fifty years and remain unresolved, though recent scholarship is inclined to claim the possible presence of outside influence from the West. An Zhimin, a leading Chinese archaeologist who previously took the stance of the independent invention of metallurgy in China, recently remarked that "early copper artefacts quite possibly originated from or came into China through the prehistoric 'Silk Road'". This actually suggests that Xinjiang, which has been virtually ignored in previous studies of early metallurgy, is a key area in attempts to understand the early development of Chinese civilisation.

Xinjiang, the westernmost provincial region of China and the eastern part of Central Asia, was an important crossroad on the ancient Silk Route. Although there were some finds from the expeditions conducted by Aurel Stein, Sven Hedin and Huang Wenbi during the early part of the twentieth century that indicated the existence of prehistoric cultures in Xinjiang, the prehistory of Xinjiang as a whole has remained virtually unknown until quite recently.

It is only in the last twenty years that more than sixty prehistoric sites have been found and reported in Xinjiang. These reveal the existence of diverse prehistoric cultures throughout the region. More than 130 radiocarbon dates are available covering most of these sites, dating them to a period ranging approximately from 2000 to 400 B.C. (*Radiocarbon Dates in Chinese Archaeology, 1965-1991*, Beijing:

Wenwu, 1991: 294-335). It has been established in several recent synthetic studies of early Xinjiang that there existed two cultural periods, corresponding to the Bronze Age (ca. 2000-1000 B.C.) and Iron Age (ca. 1000-400 B.C.). Though these sites can be broadly assigned to two periods, the relations between them and the cultural sequences of prehistoric Xinjiang are still poorly understood.

According to the researches that have been done so far, the regional cultural cores or groups that can be ascribed to the Bronze Age include Suletangba'e, Aketala, Gumugou, Xintala, Haladun, Wupu, Nanwan, Yanbulake, and Ke'ermuqi, while those ascribed to the Iron Age include Chawuhugou, Qunbake, Subashi, Aidinghu, Alagou, Wulapo, Tiemulike, Heishantou and Xiangbaobao.

The evidence found so far for the earliest use of copper and bronze in Xinjiang possibly comes from the Suletangba'e site in Shufu county, southwestern Xinjiang, which may date to about 2000 B.C. Seventeen copper fragments were collected from this site. Analysis show that two samples were copper and tin bronze respectively. Evidence for the use of copper and bronze in Xinjiang during the first part of the second millennium B.C. also comes from the cemetery at Gumugou in the Luobubo region, from Xintala settlement in Heshuo county and from Tianshanbeilu cemetery in Hami city.

The later part of the second millennium B.C. saw a marked growth in the use of copper and bronze. There are three regional centers for the use of copper and bronze during this period: one is the Tacheng and Yili region, the other is the Altai region, and the third is the Hami and Balikun region. Important finds from this period include the Age'ersen hoard of bronze implements, some copper and bronze implements recovered from Tacheng city, the Ke'ermuqi cemetery, the Wupu cemetery, the Nanwan culture and the Yanbulake culture. These finds show clear evidence of Andronovo cultural influence in Xinjiang. Scientific analysis shows that tin bronze, arsenical copper and copper were in use during this period.

Significant further development can be seen in the production of copper and bronze during the following first millennium B.C. Nearly thirty sites of this period have been reported as yielding copper and bronze artefacts. These sites roughly cluster into two regions: one is the Turfan and Yanqi Basin, and the other the Yili River Valley, suggesting the presence and growth of regional cultural centres. From this period, iron came into common use in Xinjiang, signalling the coming of the Iron Age. Amongst the most important sites of Iron Age Xinjiang are the Chawuhugou cemetery in Heijing county, the Qunbake cemetery in Luntai county, the Tiemulike and Zhongyangchang burials in Xinyuan county, the Alagou cemetery in Urumqi region (v. pp. 13-15 of this Newsletter) and the copper mining and smelting site in Nileke county. A preliminary examination revealed that the use of tin bronze predominated during the early Iron Age, while a few examples of copper and arsenical copper use were also noted. Cultural connections between Xinjiang and its neighbours to the west and east are clearly indicated by some copper and bronze forms.

Apart from a few large vessels such as cauldrons, most of the early copper and bronze objects found in Xinjiang are small items such as tools, weapons, ornaments and utensils of daily use. In contrast to bronze assemblages from western Central Asia, there have as yet been no finds of metal amulets and seals in Xinjiang.

The most important discovery in the field of prehistoric metallurgy in Xinjiang is the copper mining and smelting site at Nulasai in Nileke county. Preliminary scientific examination of fragments of ore, slag and matte suggests that copper sulphide ores and arsenide ores were probably used for smelting a copper-arsenic alloy at this site. The existence of smelting at the Nulasai site is clear evidence of a significant advance in metallurgy in Xinjiang during the first millennium B.C.

## CIAA LECTURES 1998/99

- 16 September, 1998     **Professor Zhao Feng** (Vice Director, China National Silk Museum, Hangzhou, P.R.C.)  
"Western Motifs on Chinese Textiles (6th to 10th Centuries)"
- October 7     **Aleksandr Naymark** (Independent Researcher, Berlin, Germany)  
"Preislamic Bukhara as reviewed by its coinage"
- October 14     **John Hare** (Conservationist, Explorer, U.K.)  
"In the footsteps of the wild camel - New discoveries near Loulan, Xinjiang, P.R.C."
- October 29     **Professor Susan Huntington** (Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A.)  
"Aniconism, the origin of the Buddha image, and the early Buddhist art of India"
- November 18     **Dr. Filippo Salviati** (University of Rome, Rome, Italy)  
"Eurasian studies in Europe. East meets West in the work of Alfred Salmony (1890-1958) and Mario Bussagli (1917-1988)"
- December 2     **Professor Takao Moriyasu** (Department of World History, Faculty of Letters, Osaka University, Japan)  
"The Uighurs in Dunhuang around the tenth-eleventh centuries"
- December 14     **Hilary Smith** (Guide and Lecturer, U.K.)  
"Travels in the Guge Kingdom"
- January 6, 1999     **Dr. Li Chaoyuan** (Deputy Director, Shanghai Museum, P.R.C.)  
"The Shanghai Museum and Antiquities from Chinese Central Asia"
- January 20     **Professor Nicholas Sims-Williams** (Dept. of Near and Middle East, SOAS, University of London, U.K.)  
"Polyandry in the Hindukush: a Marriage Contract from Fourth-Century Afghanistan"
- February 17     **Professor Sam Lieu** (Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia)  
"Manichaean Art from Central Asia and South China"
- March 17     **Charles Allen** (Author and Traveller, U.K.)  
"The Search for Shangri-La: a New Reading of Tibet's Early History"
- April 28     **Dr. Martha Carter** (Independent Scholar, Madison, Wisconsin, U.S.A.)  
"Newly Discovered Silver Vessels from the Period of the Early Tibetan Monarchy"

**ALL LECTURES ARE HELD AT 6 PM AT SOAS  
IN ROOM G51 (MAIN BUILDING).**

Dear Readers,

Since our last issue appeared in April 1998 we have been fortunate to host several events of great interest. Our European guest lecturer was Dr. Amy Heller (C.N.R.S., France), who gave a talk and a seminar. The abstract of the lecture can be read in our new "Lecture Abstracts" section, which we have introduced in response to numerous requests. The 1998/99 series was launched with a very well attended presentation on Liao textiles given by Professor Zhao Feng (China National Silk Museum, Hangzhou, P.R.C.).

We welcome Laura Vigo and Wei Ch'enhsuan, the two new members on our committee. This issue is once again larger than the previous one, and we have regretfully had to turn down long articles sent to us. May we take this opportunity to thank all our contributors and all those, who have provided information from near and far. CIAA Newsletter 9 will be the Spring/Summer issue; we are very grateful for all information and contributions and look forward to receiving all your comments. Please send all communications by post, fax or e-mail to the CIAA.

Finally we would like to thank for the continued support of all our subscribers and wish you all a successful and happy New Year.

The CIAA Committee.



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