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## Circle of Inner Asian Art

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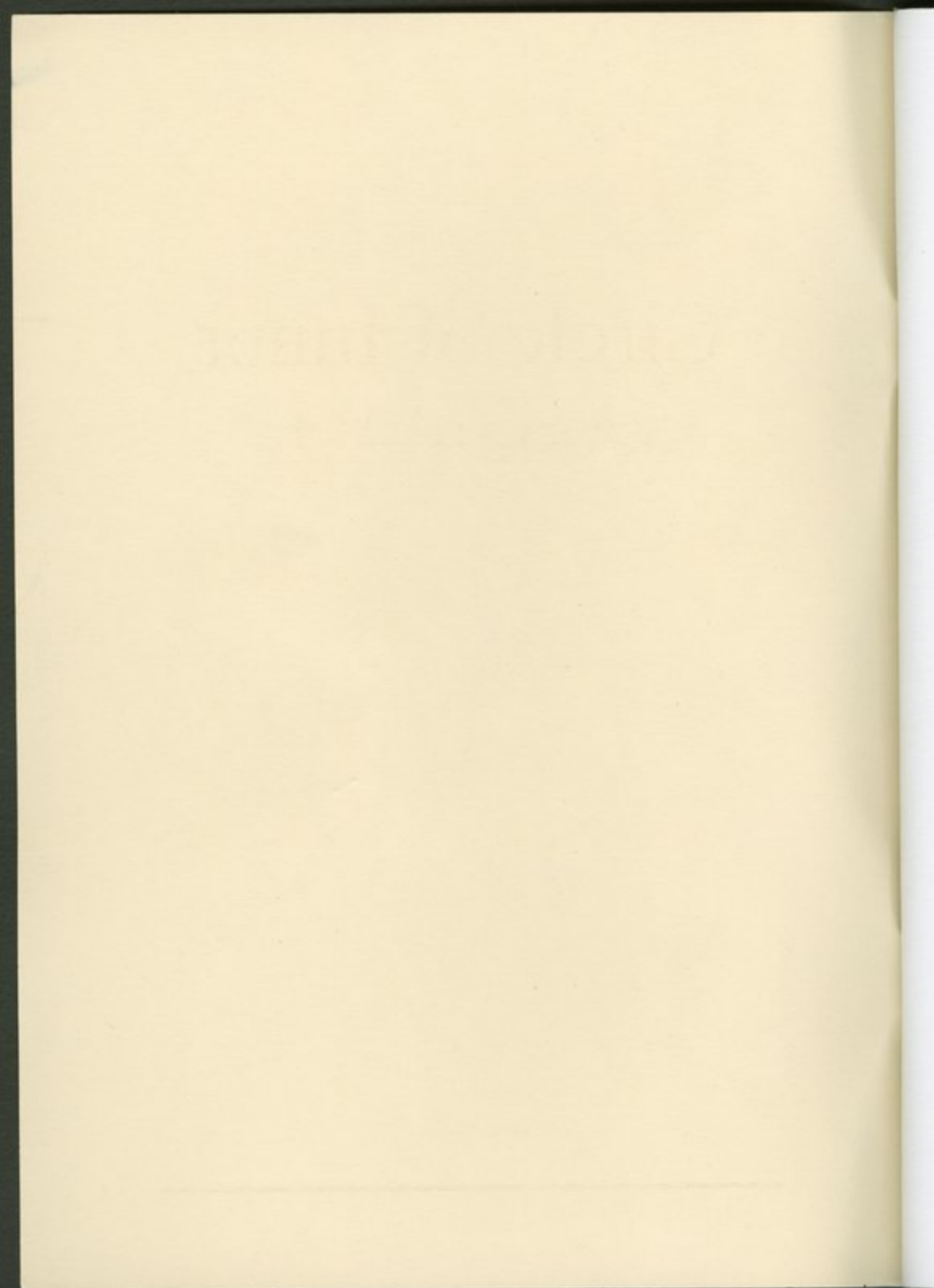
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### NEWSLETTER

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## CIRCLE OF INNER ASIAN ART

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## CIRCLE OF INNER ASIAN ART

### NEWSLETTER

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## NOTE FROM THE CIAA COMMITTEE

The CIAA Committee is pleased to announce the publication of the new volume of the *Journal of the CIAA*, which is now available in both print and electronic formats. The new volume contains a number of articles of interest to the CIAA community, and is a valuable addition to the literature on the history and culture of the region. The new volume is available for purchase at a special discount price for members of the CIAA. The new volume is available for purchase at a special discount price for members of the CIAA.

### 1. Two Sogdian dancers in China: dancing and dancing

#### 1.1 Historical records concerning the Sogdian dance

Chinese scholars have been studying Sogdian dance in history and culture from the first century AD. The earliest records date to the Tang period, the middle, when the Sogdian dance was introduced by the Sogdians and the Tang. The Tang and the Sogdians were the first to introduce the Sogdian dance to China, and the Sogdian dance was the first to be introduced to China.

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# STUDIES OF SOGDIAN DANCING IMAGES IN CHINA

by Professor Zhang Qingjie, Director of the Institute of Archaeology of Shanxi Province, Director of the Research Centre of the Culture of the Northern Dynasties, P. R. C.

During the thriving period of the Silk Road, Sogdian merchants played an important role in contacts between China, Persia and Rome. They not only transferred goods between the East and the West, but also participated in cultural exchanges. From the Eastern Han dynasty onwards, the influence of the Sogdian way of life was noteworthy in China. The impact in particular of their fabled music and dance was due to the considerable immigration of Sogdian peoples. According to the *Hou Han Shu*, the *Wuxingzhi*, 'Record of Foreign Costume', frequently cited by scholars, '[that] the Emperor Lingdi (r. 168-188 A.D.) was very fond of Sogdian costume, canopies, beds, chairs, food, harps, flutes and dance, therefore Chinese aristocrats in the capital followed him warmly.' An increasing quantity of archaeological evidence with depictions of Sogdian musicians and dancers has been found and attracted the attention of academic circles. However, some problems persist, notably, what kind of differences were there between the two renowned Sogdian dances *huteng* and *huxuan*? To which of these two dance forms do these single or double dancing images found in archaeological excavations belong? What is the exact date for the transmission of these Sogdian dances to China? Recently discovered archaeological materials on Sogdian dancing images provide us with a chance to clarify the matter.

## 1. Two Sogdian dances in China: *huteng* and *huxuan*

### 1.1 Historical records concerning the *huteng* dance

Chinese scholars know these Sogdian dances as *huteng* and *huxuan* from historical records. Most of the detailed sources date to the Tang period; for example, poems about the *huteng* dance written by Liu Yanshi and Li Duan. The Tang poet Liu Yanshi described the performances of a Sogdian dancing boy, extolling his whirling and complex movements as follows:

The dancer from Tashkent appears young,  
He dances to the music before the wine goblet, as rapid as a bird.  
He wears a cloth cap of foreign make, empty and pointed at the top,  
His Sogdian robe of fine felt has tight sleeves. ...  
The body leaps gyrating as on an axle, the jewelled belt jangles.  
The feet move in rapid motion, the embroidered boots are soft.  
Wildly jumping on the new carpet of pure white and crimson wool. ...  
It appears as if some light flowers have spilled over a red candle. ... (Dien, 1985)

Li Duan wrote a poem entitled "Hu-teng dancing boy":

The *huteng* dancing boy comes from Liangzhou,  
His skin is as white as jade and his nose is straight and pointed.  
He folds a linen shirt, and the vine-shaped streamer around his waist.  
He kneels down and murmurs in his Sogdian tone,  
Ready to dance for the Chinese officials.  
The Anxi mayor watches with tears, the Luoyang poet writes a song for him.  
Stamping his foot on a carpet, he moves his eyebrows,  
Dancing with a leaping hat and sweating in red.  
Getting drunk and leaning to the east and west,

He jumps all round the lamp in soft boots.  
In melody he rapidly moves and whirls,  
Hands on waist he makes a humpback like a crescent.  
In the end the string instrument is played,  
The bugle horn sounds loud from the garrison.  
Huteng boy, huteng boy,  
Do you know the route to your hometown has been cut off?

Moreover, in the *Xin Tang Shu*, Chapter 17 on Music, *Jiaofang tiao*: 'The royal dancing group has ten different teams with 72 children: the first one is the *Zhezhi* (Tashkent) dance; the second is the sword dance; the third the *Burmen* dance; the fourth is the drunken *huteng* dance, whose dancers wear red silk tops, silver belts and wool hats, the fifth ... the sixth ... etc.'

### 1.2 Historical records concerning the *huxuan* dance

Many sources exist testifying to the *huxuan*, such as the *Xin Tang Shu*, chapter 2 on Music and the *Tong Dian*, chapter 16: 'The so-called *huxuan*, is a dance in which the dancer whirls as rapidly as the wind'.

According to the *Jiu Tang Shu*, Biography of Wu Chensi and his son Wu Yanxiu: 'Yanxiu lived in a different ethnic area for a long time and was able to speak Turkic. When he visited the Tang princess, Yanxiu always sang Turkic songs and danced the *huxuan* dance with such a wonderful appearance that he was adored by the princess'.

In the *Jiu Tang Shu*, Biography of An Lushan, we read: 'An Lushan dances the *huxuan* before the Emperor Xuanzong, as rapidly as the wind'. A similar record is found in the *Xin Tang Shu*, Biography of An Lushan, as follows: 'An Lushan was even fatter in his late years, and his big tummy almost reached his knees, and only when he moved his shoulders very hard was he able to walk. However he danced the *huxuan* in front of the Emperor Xuanzong, as rapidly as the wind'. In the *Xin Tang Shu*, *Liluezh*: 'The *huxuan* dancer stands on a ball and whirls as rapidly as the wind'. In another chapter, *Wuxingzhi*, it records: 'The *huxuan* dance from Sogdia (*Kangju*), is renowned for its fascinating whirls and became popular in the Tang period.' In the chapter entitled *Xiyu zhuan*, the 'Record of Samarkand', mentions: 'In the early years of the Kaiyuan reign (713-41), Samarkand contributed armlets, crystal cups, agate vases, ostrich eggs, dwarfs and *huxuan* dancing girls. Later, Samarkand contributed jades, carpets for dancing, lions, and *huxuan* dancing girls'. In the same chapter, in the record of Shini (a Central Asian state) we find: 'In the Kaiyuan reign, the Shini state contributed *huxuan* dancing girls. The Shini king Naluoyan complained that Dashi (the Arab Empire) demanded too much tax, and the Tang Emperor Xuanzong sent people to pacify him'.

Bai Juyi (772-846) and Yuan Zhen both wrote famous poems about the *huxuan* dancing girl, describing how the dancing girl from Samarkand could whirl as fast as wind and snow and that the dance was predominantly learned by Tang courtly ladies.

### 1.3 Differences between the two Sogdian dances *huteng* and *huxuan*

Firstly, *huteng* and *huxuan* are two distinct dances. Although modern people are easily confused by these two dances, contemporary people in the Tang dynasty understood the distinction between the two. For example, the *Yuefu zalu* written by Duan Anjie, described Tang dances as follows: 'Strong dances (*jian wu*) include *Linda*, *Alian*, *Zhezhi* (Tashkent), Sword, *Hu-xuan* and *Hu-teng*. Soft dances (*ruan wu*) include *Liangzhou*, Green Waist, *Suhe* incense, *Qizhe*, *Tuanyuan xuan*, *Ganzhou* etc.' Here *huxuan* and *huteng* are mentioned together; both belong in the strong dance category, but clearly they are different.

Secondly, the origins of these two dances are different: Liu's poetry records that the *huteng* dancer came from Tashkent while most of the *huxuan* dancers came from Samarkand and at least one from the Shini state, which can be proved from the sources cited above.

## 2. Newly discovered dancing images of *huteng* in China

### 2.1 Northern Dynasties period (386-581)

The earliest *huteng* dancing image is carved on an ink stone, dated to the Northern Wei dynasty (386-534), excavated from the tomb of Sima Jinlong (d. 484) in Datong (the old capital Pingcheng), Shanxi province, and now housed in the Shanxi Museum. A couple of *huteng* dancing images dated to the Northern Qi dynasty (A.D. 550-577) were found as follows: a yellowish pottery pilgrim flask, covered with an amber glaze, excavated in 1971 from the tomb of General Fan Cui (549-575) in Anyang, Henan province. On both sides of the body of the flask are depicted four male musicians playing instruments and a boy dancing in the middle, standing on a small lotus pedestal. All the figures wear costumes with folded collars and tight sleeved jackets with belts and boots, which are typical of Central Asian costume.

An identical type of pottery flask, covered with a green glaze, dated to the Northern Qi dynasty and is in the Palace Museum, Beijing (Fig. 1). The pottery pilgrim flask covered with a greenish glaze, was found in Guyuan, Ningxia province and its moulded design is extremely close that of Fan Cui. *Hu-teng* dancing images are depicted on both sides of the flask body. Surrounded by four musicians, the male dancer performs on a round carpet and looks backwards. Four musicians play the drum, *pipa*, harp and clapper. A polychrome painted statue of the cosmological Buddha, dated to the Northern Qi period, is in the Linju Museum, Shandong province. It shows images of *huteng* dancing, including one dancer and four musicians, painted on the robe of the Buddha.

One panel of the stone funerary couch dated to the Northern Qi Dynasty and now in the Miho Museum, Japan (Fig. 2), depicts *huteng* dancing images. In the middle a dancer lifts his arms up and twists. He stands on one leg and lifts the other up. There is also a group of musicians, playing the *pipa*, harp and flutes. This above depiction is similar to that on the stone funeral couch dated to the Northern Qi dynasty discovered in Anyang, Henan province and now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, U.S.A. The stone funerary couch screen from An Jia's tomb (d. 579) in Xi'an, dated from the Northern Zhou dynasty (557-581) contains three *huteng* dancing images.

### 2.2 Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618-906)

During the Tang dynasty, *huteng* dance was still very popular. The mural painting found in the east hall of the tomb of Su Sixu in Xi'an (Fig. 3) depicts in the middle a male dancer wearing Tang costume with a belt and red boots, on a carpet, lifting his left arm and jumping. Nine musicians and two singers surround him, all wearing Tang costume and playing instruments which include the *pipa*, harp, clapper and flute.

Among the Shōsō-in treasures in Japan is a Tang period *pipa* decorated with *huteng* dancing images; on the back of an elephant, a Sogdian dancer is whirling and three musicians are playing the flute, Chinese *xiao* flute and drum.

Sometimes the *huteng* dancer is surrounded by an orchestra; sometimes he dances alone. For example, a Tang tomb was discovered at Yanci county, Ningxia province, whose owner was of Sogdian origin. On the stone tomb gateway, two male dancers are depicted on both sides as tomb door guardians. Similar to Yu Hong's dancers,

they are all male, dancing and whirling at high speed. Other *huteng* dancing images dated to the Tang period are:

- a. On the tomb mural painting excavated at Shan-mian-shi-chang in Xi'an;
- b. On the stone stele discovered from Xingfu Monastery and now in the Beilin Stele Museum in Xi'an;
- c. On the Nirvana stone stele dated to the time of the Empress Wu (r. 684-705) and now in the Shanxi Museum, Taiyuan.

### 2.3 New Interpretation of the *huteng* dance

The Chinese scholar Xiang Da interpreted the *huteng* dance as follows: 'According to two Tang poems written by Liu Yanshi and Li Duan, the *huteng* dance came from Tashkent (*Shiguo*); and the dancers had a Sogdian-Iranian appearance, which can be proved by the sentence 'his skin is as white as jade and his nose is big.' The male dancer normally wears a Sogdian hat, decorated with pearls which shine during the dance; a tight-sleeved shirt, whose back is too long for dancing and must therefore be folded and a streamer painted with a grape vine which flutters in the wind when he dances. The characteristics of the dance are whirling round very fast, jumping and stamping the foot. It is possible that the dancer makes a humpback on the carpet and then suddenly jumps up. The instruments for the *huteng* dance include the flute and *pipa* and at the end of the dance a stringed instrument joins them.

Xiang Da's interpretation on the *huteng* dance is very important. However the research is old and based purely on texts, not on visual evidence. According to newly discovered archaeological materials, such as the images found from the tomb of Yu Hong, dated to the Sui period (581-618) in Taiyuan (Fig. 4), we arrive at new interpretations as follows:

1. The so-called vine streamer is not 'a streamer painted with a grape vine' but a kind of streamer shaped like a vine which flutters in the wind.
2. Why do the poems speak of 'whirling round'? Because the dancer stands on a round carpet or pedestal to dance.
3. The instruments for the *huteng* dance include the flute and *pipa*, but, based on the visual evidence, more than these two were found, namely, the harp, drum, *bili* and *bo*.
4. The dancing carpet seen on the coffin relief of Yu Hong provides a good test for evaluating Liu's poem 'Wildly jumping on the new carpet of pure white and crimson wool', and Li's 'Stamping his foot on a carpet, he moves his eyebrows'.
5. The dancers are male, which is proved both by all the archaeological materials and by the Tang poems such as 'The dancing boy from Tashkent'.
6. The dancers are normally drunk during the performance. According to Liu's poem 'the boy throws away the wine cup' and Li's poem 'Getting drunk and leaning to the east and west', it seems in order to dance freely the dancer needed to drink wine. That is why in the *Xin Tang Shu*, chapter 17 on Music, *Jiaofang tiao*, one royal dancing team is called the 'drunk *huteng*'. Coincidentally, on the back of the marble outer-coffin of Yu Hong, the dancer is depicted beside a huge wine jar. The other Yu Hong relief portrays the *huteng* dancer 'getting drunk and leaning to the east and west'. This feature has definitely never been found in the *huxuan* dance, neither in historical sources nor among the archaeological materials.

### Conclusion

From both, textual sources and newly discovered archaeological evidence, our conclusions are as follows:

Firstly, *huteng* and *huxuan* are two different dances although they both require dancers to whirl very fast; and both were popular in medieval China. The *huteng* dancers are all male but the *huxuan* dancers can be male or female.

Secondly, both these dances have their origins in the Sogdian region but from slightly different areas: the *huteng* dancers normally came from Tashkent, while most of the *huxuan* dancers were from Samarkand, and one from the Shini state.

Thirdly, the *huteng* dance was first transmitted from Central Asia to China during the Northern Wei period (386-534) and prevailed from the Northern Dynasties to the Tang periods. Most male *huteng* dancers wear Sogdian costumes, and occasionally Chinese, with belts, boots, and sometimes with streamers. They dance on a dancing carpet, which is either round or square, and sometimes on a lotus pedestal. Most dancers are accompanied by musicians; occasionally they dance alone. The transmission of the *huxuan* dance from Central Asia to China occurred later, most likely in the Tang period (618-906). According to the archaeological evidence and historical sources currently at our disposal, however, some scholars believe it occurred in the Northern Zhou Dynasty (557-581).

Fourthly, it is worth noting that during the Northern Dynasties period (386-618), archaeological evidence suggests that all single dancers were male; single female dancers first appeared during the Tang period. Most examples can be seen in Dunhuang mural paintings.

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(Translated from the original Chinese by MM, with editorial assistance from HAS)



Fig. 1. Pottery flask, Guyan, Ningxia province (Northern Qi period 550-577 A.D.)

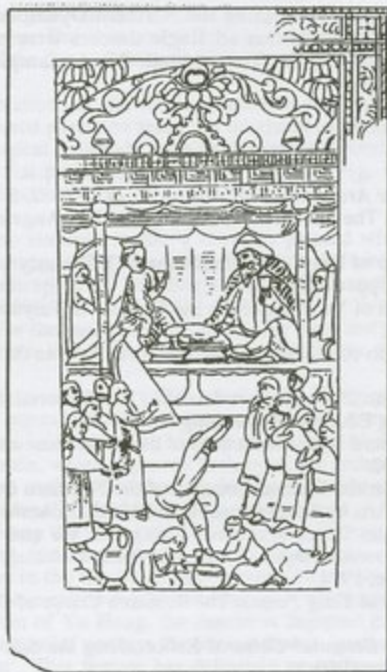


Fig. 2. Line drawing of a panel from a stone funerary couch (Northern Qi period 550-577 A.D.), Miho Museum, Japan



Fig. 3. Mural painting, Tomb of Su Sixu, Xi'an, Shaanxi province



Fig. 4. Stone relief from Tomb of Yu Hong (Sui period 581-618), Taiyuan, Shanxi province

#### ZOROASTRIAN ART IN CHINA AROUND THE SIXTH CENTURY A.D.

*by Professor Shi Anchang, Palace Museum, Beijing, P.R.C.*

Recently a number of Chinese materials pertaining to the Huoxian religion [the Chinese term for Zoroastrianism] have been found as a result of archaeological excavations and the rediscovery of old monuments. These include tomb stelae,

figured stelae, Zoroastrian temples, stone grottos etc.<sup>1</sup> Two questions present themselves to all interested or involved in studies in this field: are these materials and images really relevant to Zoroastrianism? And whether or not Chinese Zoroastrians indicated their religious faith allegiance in their burials?

It is natural for such questions to linger. Although Chinese historical sources intermittently mention the Zoroastrian deities "Hu-tian", there are neither images nor any detailed text on its religious ritual. This makes it rather difficult to identify the recent materials with Zoroastrian art. Moreover, Chinese Zoroastrianism, the Huoxian religion, was transmitted from Iran through Central Asia, and most Chinese Zoroastrian materials have been recovered from tombs. By contrast, in Iran or Central Asia, archaeological excavations of Zoroastrian sites have found hardly any comparable burial materials as rich as the funerary couch, stone outer-coffin and tomb mural paintings from Yu Hong's tomb in Taiyuan<sup>2</sup> and An Jia's tomb in Xi'an.<sup>3</sup> However, after careful studies, scholars are becoming more familiar with these images, including Zoroastrian deities, holy fire accompanied by Zoroastrian deities, Zoroastrian ritual depiction and symbols. Let us examine the following examples in more detail.

### 1. The Image of Deities with the fire altar of Zoroastrianism

The so-called "fire and deities" image is the image of the sacred fire accompanied by Zoroastrian deities. It is mainly seen as the key motif for the tombs of Chinese Zoroastrians (or people who were strongly influenced by Zoroastrianism). It depicts fire-worship and the admiration of good Zoroastrian deities showing apparent Zoroastrian religious feeling. This genre of image may be divided into four types, based on the materials from eight different tombs.

- 1.1 The image depicts the sacred fire in the middle, flanked by two Zoroastrian deities who are praying or taking care of the fire; examples include the entrance/lintel painting of An Jia's tomb (d. 579) in Xi'an (Fig. 1); the stone relief on the outer-coffin of Yu Hong (d.592) in Taiyuan (Figs. 2 and 2a); and the two funeral couches in the Shelby White & Leon Levy Collection in New York.<sup>4</sup>
- 1.2 The image depicts the sacred fire in the centre with Zoroastrian deities flanking both sides. Examples are the epitaph stele of Gou Jing (d. 529) in Luoyang,<sup>5</sup> (Fig. 3) and the decorated stele of Ru Xiaocao (d. 522) and one hundred local people.<sup>6</sup>
- 1.3 The image shows the sacred fire and the precious pearl "Mani" in the centre, surrounded by Zoroastrian deities above and on both sides, and comes from the tomb stele of Xiao Hong (d. 526) in Nanjing.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Shi Anchang, "List of Zoroastrian materials in China during the 6<sup>th</sup> century", paper presented at the Symposium of Relationship between China and Foreign Countries in History, organised by Peking University, Nov. 2002, in Beijing, P.R.C.

<sup>2</sup> The Institute of Archaeology of Shanxi : Excavation of Yu Hong of the Sui Dynasty in Taiyuan, Shanxi, *Wenwu*, No.1, (2001), : pp. 27-52 (with 40 illustrations, several in colour).

<sup>3</sup> The Institute of Archaeology of Shaanxi : Excavation of An Jia's tomb of the Northern Zhou in Xi'an, *Wenwu*, No.1, (2001) : pp. 4-26 (with 32 illustrations, mainly in colour).

<sup>4</sup> Martha I. Carter, 'Notes on two Chinese Stone Funerary Bed Bases with Zoroastrian Symbolism', *Iran, Questions et Connaissances*, vol.1, Paris 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Shi Anchang, 'Bei Wei Gou Jing muzhi ji wenshi kao' [A study of the military officer Gou Jing's epitaph of the Northern Wei Dynasty, *The Palace Museum Journal*, No. 2, Beijing 1998. It is also published in Shi's book, *Shanben beilie lunji* [Collected Works of Precious Rubbings from Stone Tablets], Zijincheng Publishing House, Beijing, 2002.

<sup>6</sup> Shi Anchang, 'Bei Wei Ru Xiaocao he yi yibairen zaixiang beikao' [A study of the stele with images of the Zoroastrian Deity and inscriptions erected by Ru Xiaocao leading a hundred members of a local society in the Northern Wei Dynasty], *The Palace Museum Journal*, 4, Beijing, 2002.

<sup>7</sup> Shi Anchang, 'A study of Xiao Hong's tomb stele of the Southern Liang Dynasty', *Collected Works of Precious Rubbings from Stone Tablets*, Zijincheng Publishing House, Beijing, 2002.

Let us take the example of Yu Hong's coffin relief: the image (Figs. 2 and 2a) is carved in the middle of the front part of the stone coffin base. In the middle there is an altar containing a flaming fire blazing from a lamp-base composed of three elements. The upper part is decorated with lotus petals and two steps form the lower sections. Two deities, half-eagle, half-man, stand confronting each other at both sides. They have western eyes, large noses and big beards and are dressed in Central Asian costumes consisting of crowns with two streamer ribbons, red tops with short sleeves, long covers on their shoulders, soft belts around their waists, (painted in red, the colour of fire) while both of them have eagles' legs, claws, tails and wings. It is worth noting that they both wear gloves and masks held over the mouth in one hand, while with the other they reverently touch the altar.

According to the Zoroastrian principle, fire is the symbol of the highest deity. The fire altar is the focal point of the sacrifice and prayer can only reach the heavenly beings by means of fire. Various fire altars are constructed in the home, the temple and the court which are worshipped with full ritual, during which the priest has to wear a mask over his mouth in order to avoid the possibility of profaning the fire.<sup>9</sup> The relief on the outer-coffin faithfully displays these Zoroastrian rituals.

A similar image has never been found in Central Asian burials; however, it was the key motif for the reverse of Sasanian Persian coins (Fig. 4), and also can be seen on Sogdian ossuaries (Fig. 5). Obviously all of these follow the same tradition. The only difference is that on the stone outer coffin of Yu Hong, it is not priests but a pair of half-eagle, half-man deities, who are both more idealistic and artistic. A similar image can also be seen in the entrance lintel painting of An Jia's tomb in Xi'an. We call this type of image 'the Deity with the fire altar of Zoroastrianism', which is different from the image of Zoroastrian human disciples worshipping fire in front of an altar.

## 2. Images of funeral ritual

A funeral ritual image is depicted on the Northern Qi (550-577) stone funerary couch now in the Miho Museum Japan (Fig. 6). In the middle of the upper part, a priest in a robe stands in front of a fire altar. He wears a *padam*, a special white mask for Zoroastrian ritual in order to protect the purity of the sacred fire. Four people are shown behind him, two kneeling down and two standing up, each with a knife cutting his own face. Five more people stand with crossed hands. On the other side of the altar there is a plate with food. In between the priest and the altar there is a vase with a globular body. Above there are two women with bags in their hands. Three camels are at the barrier. At the bottom two women and three men are depicted, along with three horses. All wear Central Asian costumes.<sup>10</sup> In the centre of the stele a small dog stands beside the priest and faces the fire.

Two features of this image attract my attention as follows:

- 2.1 The mourning ritual of "marking the face and cutting the ears" at the funeral ceremony was long popular among ancient Eurasian nomads. The family and friends of the dead use knives to mark their own faces and cut their ears to mourn the dead, with blood and tears mingled together. In Chinese historical sources it was mentioned as follows:

<sup>9</sup> Lin Wushu, *Bosi baihuojiao yu gudai Zhongguo* [Zoroastrianism and Ancient China], Xin Wen Feng Publishing House, 1995, p. 55.

<sup>10</sup> Judith Lerner, 'Central Asians in Sixth Century China: A Zoroastrian Funerary Rite', *Iranica Antiqua*, vol xxx. 1995, p. 179.

- a. Huns (Xiongnu): "In A.D. 91 (the third year of Yongyuan reign of the Han Dynasty), when the Xiongnu people heard the death of Bing, the whole state cried for him, marking their faces until blood comes." (*Hou Han Shu*, chapter 49, Biography of Geng Bing);
- a. Turks: "When the dead lay underneath the canopy, his/her sons, grandsons and relatives killed lambs and horses as sacrifice, and offered them in front of the canopy. They started to mark their faces with knives and cried, with blood and tears falling down. This mourning ritual occurs seven times during the funeral ceremony." (*Tong Dian*, chapter 197, Record of the Turks);
- a. Dunhuang People: "During the period A.D. 227-233, the Dunhuang Mayor Cang Ci died at his place of work. When people of Central Asian origin heard of Ci's death, they met together and mourned at the local governmental offices in Wujixiaowei and Zhangshi, marking their faces with knives to show their grief." (*Record of the Three Kingdoms*, Biography of Cang Ci);
- a. Khotan people: In A.D. 519 (the second year of the Shengui Era of the Northern Wei Dynasty), the Dunhuang scholar Song Yun travelled to Khotan, saw "at a funeral ceremony local people cut their hair and mark their faces to mourn the dead. Their hair is normally four *cun* long." (*Record of Luoyang Temples*, chapter 5);
- a. Tang ethnics: "In A.D. 649 (the 23<sup>rd</sup> year of Zhenguan reign of the Tang Dynasty) Emperor Taizong died in May in Chang'an. Hundreds of ethnics who visited Chang'an to contribute goods and send missionaries heard the news and cried loudly, cutting their hair, marking their faces, cutting their ears, thus blood falls everywhere." (*Zizhitongjian* chapter 199).<sup>11</sup>

## 2.2 According to Zoroastrian doctrine, before the burial ritual, the "Dog-watching" ritual should be done several times.

The so-called "Dog-watching" ritual, means a four-eyed dog should be taken to watch over and guard the corpse of the Zoroastrian. According to the *Avesta*, the chosen dog should have yellowish skin and four eyes or white skin with yellow ears. Take it near the corpse and it will drive away infectious poison from the corpse. Obviously four-eyed dogs do not exist, but modern Parsis regard a dog which has two marks above its eyes as a "four-eyed dog". The reasons for performing the "Dog-watching" ritual are various, among which probably the most important one is that Zoroastrian people believe that the four-eyed dog has the capability to identify whether or not death is certain. If the person is really dead, the dog will watch the corpse vigilantly and in an alert fashion; however, if the person is still dying, the dog will pay no attention to it.

When the family wraps the shroud around the corpse, the dog must be taken to watch; and then the dog will visit the corpse from time to time, until it is removed from the mourning room. After the first dog-watching ritual, the room should be sterilised with burning sandalwood and frankincense, and the fire is lit. Then a Zoroastrian priest should read aloud from the Zoroastrian doctrine in front of the fire, taking care of the fire, and continuing until the corpse goes to the burial ground. Other people are also allowed to stay in the same room to read aloud the doctrine, but they have to keep three steps away from the corpse in order to avoid the infectious poison.<sup>12</sup>

The Miho image suggests that during the sixth century Central Asian immigrants in China mixed two rituals at their funeral ceremony: one is the mourning ritual of "marking the face and cutting the ears" following their own ethnic tradition; the other is the Zoroastrian ritual, the so-called "Dog-watching".

## 3. Images of fire worship

<sup>11</sup> Cai Hongsheng: *The Nine-Surname Ethnics in Tang Dynasty and Turkic Culture*, Zhonghua Shuju, Beijing, 1998.

<sup>12</sup> Lin Wushu, *The Funeral rites of the Indian Parsi*, Xin Wen Feng publishing house, Beijing, 1995.

The stele erected by Ru Xiaoce leading a hundred members of a local society during the Northern Wei Dynasty, dated 522, has two parts with images of the Zoroastrian Deity and inscriptions. According to the stele inscription, "We realised ... [missing words] heart and soul. We know that heaven opens for good spirits and that hell is a frightening place to go. Therefore, we establish this niche and persuade our neighbours to pray here. The person who worships the Zoroastrian deities piously will be saved. Here we study the doctrines and carve the images of the deities on the stele." The Chinese characters 'Qian' and 'Xian', both mean Zoroastrianism here; the niche referred to is a local Zoroastrian Temple. It is worth noting that most of the devotees bear the surname 'Ru', suggesting that they are descendants of the Ruru ethnic community. According to the historical book entitled *The Surname Dictionary in the Yuanhe Era*, the entry under Ru says: 'When Ruru ethnics migrated to China, they used "Ru" as a surname.' Therefore it is clear that the stele is made by Ruru descendants in China who believed in Zoroastrianism.

Although the main images on the stele have vanished, the surrounding designs are characteristic of Zoroastrian art:

**3.1** At the top of the stele there are images of Zoroastrian deities with the fire altar, which are similar to the ones on the stone epitaph stele of Gou Jing of the Northern Wei, and the reliefs on the marble outer-coffin of Yu Hong of the Sui Dynasty.

**3.2** There are two servants shown who stand beside the stele. The left one holds hemp juice or pomegranate juice; the right one lifts a small fire altar. Comparable images may be seen on the door frame of the tomb chamber of An Jia of the Northern Zhou Dynasty, and the mural paintings from Panjikent in Central Asia.

**3.3** A large fire altar is depicted underneath the Zoroastrian deities, and flanked by priests and disciples. It can be linked to Persian coins, which have similar compositions and depictions.

**3.4** The image carved on the pedestal is a kind of monster called a *Juetian*, which is never found on Buddhist stelae, but which can be seen on some archaeological materials and monuments from the Northern Wei to the Tang Dynasties, such as the stone coffin of Yuan Mi of the Northern Wei Dynasty, the tomb stele of the wife of Feng Yi also of the Northern Wei Dynasty, the tomb stele of Xiao Hong of the Southern Liang, and the Gongxian caves in Henan province as well as on the saddles of the Tang *sancai* glazed pottery camels.<sup>13</sup> It is quite different from the tomb guardian monster, both in terms of visual image and function, and may thus be identified as a Zoroastrian motif.

The stele erected by Ru Xiaoce leading a hundred members of a local society is a typical Zoroastrian stele carved by the Northern Wei common people, with depictions of Zoroastrian disciples, fire worship and Zoroastrian deities quite different from Buddhist stelae.

#### 4 Research methods

Our research methods in this field may be summarised as follows:

**4.1** Searching the *Avesta* and other historical sources, in order to analyse the materials and images;

<sup>13</sup> Jiang Boqing, 'Tang An Pu mu suochu sancai luotuo suojian shengyu pidai de xian shen' [The Icon of Zoroastrian Deity on the Bag of Tang's *sancai* Glazed Pottery Camel from An Pu's Tomb], *Tang Studies Journal*, VII, 2001, p. 55.

4.2 Comparing these with the Iranian, Sogdian and Bactrian Zoroastrian materials in order to understand them more fully;

4.1 After comparison, the differences between the above two may be considered in two ways: either they belong to Zoroastrian art which once existed in Iran, Central Asia or China but which has yet to be discovered, or their iconography has been influenced by and mixed with that of the different ethnic groups encountered along the Silk Road, such as Sogdian, Turkic, Xianbei, Jujuan (Rouran) and so forth. This necessitates careful interpretation and an attempt to disentangle the different backgrounds;

4.1 The religious image is always mixed with Central Asian ethnic secular rituals, and must be considered as a whole. At the moment the study of Chinese Zoroastrianism is still in its infancy and our understanding is rudimentary. However, the details of these relevant sites and their burial rituals should not be ignored since they help us to understand the images.

One interesting question that has so far presented itself is the relationship between Chinese Zoroastrian art and Buddhist art. I highlighted this in my article entitled *Sheng huo xian shen tuxiang kao* [A Study of the image of the Deity with the fire altar of Zoroastrianism] published in the book *Shanben beitie lun ji* [Collected works of Precious Rubbings from Stone Tablets].

Zhang Guangda mentioned the inscription of the Jin-guangmingjing (Diamond) *sūtra* from Turfan.<sup>14</sup> In his book entitled *Tulufan chutu hanyu wenshu zhong suojian yilang zhu diqu zongjiao de zongji* [Some Iranian religious evidence in Turfan Chinese Texts], he says: 'According to the inscription, the Buddhist *sūtra* was copied in A.D. 430 by General Suo and his family at the Zoroastrian temple/ Queen Mother's palace in Gaochang (Turfan). Here we do not know what the relationship is between the Zoroastrian temple and the Queen Mother's palace, but it is clear that Buddhism and Zoroastrianism were existing simultaneously in Turfan as early as the fifth century.' It is possible that some Zoroastrian icons were put in the temple, but none has yet been found.

At present the earliest examples of Zoroastrian art found in China are dated to the beginning of the sixth century A.D. Xiao Hong's tomb stele of the Southern Liang is dated A.D. 518. The tomb stele of the wife of Feng Yi of the Northern Wei Dynasty, and the stele erected by Ru Xiaocun leading a hundred members of a local society also from the Northern Wei Dynasty, are both dated A.D. 522. They suggest that Zoroastrian art in China had reached a mature and flourishing period around the beginning of the sixth century A.D.

During the 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D., Buddhist cave shrines thrived in China, and the most famous cave temples such as at Dunhuang, Yungang and Longmen were established, along with Cave 169 of Binglingsi in Gansu Province, which according to its inscription, was begun in A.D. 420.

To sum up, during the 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries, both Zoroastrian and Buddhist art made considerable developments in China. Although their origins and iconography were very different, influences and the borrowing of motifs from each are likely to have occurred. However, the art of these two communities developed independently in China and reached their own splendour. What is certain is that Zoroastrian art in China and its relationship with Buddhist art merits further study.

(Translated from the original Chinese by MM, with editorial assistance from HAS))

<sup>14</sup> *Dunhuang & Turfan Studies*, vol. 4, Peking University Press, Beijing, 1999, p. 1.



Fig. 1. The carved, painted and gilt stone entrance lintel of An Jia's tomb (d. 579 A.D.) in Xi'an



Fig. 2. Drawing of the stone relief on the outer-coffin of Yu Hong (d. 592 A.D.) in Taiyuan, Shanxi province (after *Wenwu* No. 1 (2001), Fig. 31)



Fig. 2a. Detail of Fig. 2 showing the left-hand figure. (Drawing by Professor Xie Chengshui, Visiting Scholar, Department of Art & Archaeology, SOAS, London, U.K.)



Fig. 3. Line drawing of the decoration of the epitaph stele of Gou Jing (d. 529) in Luoyang, Henan province



Fig. 4. The obverse and reverse of a Sasanian period (224-651 A.D.) Persian coin



Fig. 5. A Sogdian ossuary



Fig. 6. One panel of a stone screen from a funerary couch (Northern Qi period, 550-577 A.D.), Miho Museum, Japan

### SOME OBSERVATIONS ON SEṄGAMĒDU: A HINTERLAND TRADE CENTRE OF ARIKAMĒDU, TAMIL NADU, INDIA

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#### Introduction

Among the various excavated historical sites in India, the site of Arikamēdu (Wheeler: 1945, Casal: 1947-50, Begley: 1989-92) still remains one of the most fascinating areas of research for India's maritime trade with the outside world.<sup>15</sup> But the crucial area of study i.e. the hinterland trade relations that Arikamēdu shared with its environs and the trade routes through which consignments travelled to the west remains an area to be studied *in extenso*. However, Champakalakshmi (1996) and Rajan (1997, 2002) deal with this aspect to a certain extent. There is an increasing

<sup>15</sup> An earlier version of this paper was read at the Annual Conference of the Indian Archaeological Society held in Kerala (December 2002). The dates referred to in this sentence are excavation dates.

demand from the scholarly world (Begley 1996; Ray 1995, 2002) to search for the origin and development of Arikamēdu through its hinterland centres and not on the coastal regions alone. The present paper is an attempt to investigate the role of regional centres around Arikamēdu stressing the special importance of Sengamēdu and the Thirukōyilūr region located in the South Arcot district of the state of Tamil Nadu in India (Fig. 1). The former has been excavated to a larger extent, and from the latter, a hoard of Roman coins has been unearthed.

### Sengamēdu

The name Sengamēdu (12°1'N 79°40'E) is derived from the fact that numerous bricks, brickbats and pottery sherds have been found strewn in the area.<sup>16</sup> In order to ascertain the nature of the typical black and red ware in the context of the habitation level along with remains of massive brick structures on the riverbanks, the site of Sengamēdu was subjected to a small-scale excavation in 1953.<sup>17</sup> As one of the earliest megalithic habitation sites to be excavated in Tamil Nadu, the site is a useful one to study for a better understanding of the gradual cultural transformation from the Megalithic to the Early Historic period in the light of the Rouletted pottery and other associated artefacts.

The site of Sengamēdu (Nallur district), covering more than 25 acres, stands on the left bank of the river Maṇimukta and is situated at a distance of 23 kilometres from Vriddhachalam in Villupuram district. The river Maṇimukta has its source in two small streams, the Maṇi and the Mukta which rise in the Kalrayan hills in the Salem district. After running almost parallel to the river Vellār in an east westerly direction, the Maṇimukta along with the river Gōmukhi joins the Vellār near Srimushnam. A revered temple dedicated to the Hindu god Viṣṇu is located at the confluence of these rivers. The famous port of Arikamēdu lies 80 kilometres northeast of Sengamēdu (Fig. 1).

A unicultural site in nature, the chronology of Sengamēdu has been assigned to pre-Rouletted, Rouletted and post-Rouletted periods, ranging roughly from 300 B.C. to A.D. 200-300 on the basis of the material cultural remains. The occupation of the site begins with the megalithic people who used Black and Red Ware. The divergent variety of domestic utensils represented in this level is suggestive of a permanent settlement. Much of the pottery was found to have different graffiti symbols. The cuttings at the habitation level have also yielded interesting evidence of an infant burial interred in a Black and Red Ware dish in a shallow pit with few disarticulated bone remains (Fig. 2).<sup>18</sup> This may have megalithic affiliation. The infant burial recalls a similar one encountered at the habitation levels at Kodumapaḷ (Erode district). But unlike Sengamēdu this child burial is an articulated one.<sup>19</sup>

The succeeding period (Period II) is characterised by the induction of Rouletted pottery (Fig. 3) resembling Arikamēdu specimens occurring along with Black and Red Ware. A single sherd supposed to be Russet coated painted pottery was also noticed at the same level. The associated artefacts consisted of shell bangles (Fig. 4), ivory objects, stone objects and glass and chert beads (Fig. 5). In the final stages (Period III) one could observe the domination of coarser and locally manufactured Rouletted pottery forming the bulk of the total ceramic assemblage. During the entire span of time, the Black and Red Ware tends to appear in all strata but is cruder during the later periods.<sup>20</sup> The recent exploration work undertaken by the authors at the site has revealed new evidence, such as a stoneware lamp with multiple wicks, a male

<sup>16</sup> The name means 'mound of bricks'.

<sup>17</sup> Banerjee 1956, pp. 43-46, 1956a, p.32 Sharma 1953.

<sup>18</sup> Banerjee 1956, p. 46.

<sup>19</sup> Rajan 1994, p. 54.

<sup>20</sup> Ramchandran 1980, pp.103-05.

terracotta figurine with an elaborate headdress and ornaments, a Ringwell and a pot burial. The Black and Red Ware burial pot was placed in a small pit on the upper levels of the river section. It contained ash mixed with loose soil, Black and Red Ware sherds and bone pieces.

The role of hinterland centre played by Seṅgamēdu was probed using the following factors. Firstly, the remains of massive brick structures were determined from the scrapings of the wall section on the riverfront (Fig. 6). Although the excavators divided the structures into three different phases they could not establish a precise chronological framework. However, the occurrence of two Ringwells in the river section allows us to date the structures tentatively (Fig. 7).

The antiquity of terracotta Ringwells in Tamil Nadu is generally dated to first half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D.<sup>21</sup> This would date the middle phase to the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. Interestingly, a comparative study of the brick sizes from the early structural period between Arikamēdu (33x23x6.8cms) and Seṅgamēdu (30x18x7.6cms) more or less tally in their dimensions. Whether the structures at Seṅgamēdu functioned as a warehouse or in some associated form remains uncertain. The proximity of the structures to the riverside tempts us to identify such a function but further investigation is needed. The absence of any prominent structural remains in other excavated sites like Thirukōyilūr and Maḷigaimēdu (South Arcot district) adds importance to the analysis of the structures at Seṅgamēdu, and thus strengthens the possibility of its having been a major hinterland centre.

The most important evidence that highlights the hinterland trade relations that Seṅgamēdu shared with Arikamēdu is the existence of the Rouletted pottery. But in the absence of any tangible evidence related to Roman craft traditions, the occurrence of the same pottery offers a datum line to fix the relative chronology.

But unlike Arikamēdu where the Rouletted pottery coexists with Black and Red Ware, in Seṅgamēdu there is no such evidence in its lower levels. Here the pottery makes its gradual appearance in the transition period. The excavators are of the view that the pottery might have arrived at a slightly later date around the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D.<sup>22</sup> As such, if we assume the construction of the brick structures around the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. on the basis of the Ringwells, the logical derivation for the arrival of Rouletted pottery coincides with the chronology of Arikamēdu and is contemporary with it. The limited digging yielded a total of eleven sherds of Rouletted pottery largely belonging to the lower levels. The pottery is invariably wheel thrown, from well levigated clay, well fired and with a lustrous black slip. The internal base of the sherds bears rows of roulette designs akin to the sherds found at Arikamēdu.

The same pottery type tends to continue in the upper levels in a degenerated form made of thick-sectioned dark Red and Brown Ware.<sup>23</sup> Apart from this, the influence of trade contacts with Arikamēdu is further indicated by the occurrence of indigenously produced amphorae of Red Ware.<sup>24</sup> Even the shapes of the amphorae and Red Wares such as dishes, flanged lids, small cooking pots with protruding bellies, shallow dishes and storage jars, etc. resemble similar wares from Arikamēdu. The finding of a single sherd which is supposed to be Russet coated painted pottery along with the Rouletted pottery needs further consideration. Although the excavator makes reference to the particular sherd, we were unable to see any illustration of it. A closer examination of the sherd shows close resemblance with the painted sherds reported at Arikamēdu both by Wheeler and Begley.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Soundararajan 1994, p.151, Begley 1996, p.108.

<sup>22</sup> Banerjee 1956, p.45, Ramachandran 1980, p.105.

<sup>23</sup> Ramachandran 1980, p.103.

<sup>24</sup> Banerjee 1956, p. 45.

<sup>25</sup> Wheeler 1946, p. 52, Pl.XXXI.C; Begley 1996, Fig. 4.189

Wheeler reported the occurrence of a carinated vessel bearing white painted designs as a local ware belonging to the early phase (mid or late I<sup>st</sup> century A.D.) in the southern sector. On the other hand, Begley also found a fragment of a vessel executed with rows of rectangular designs or circles in white colour.<sup>26</sup> In both instances, the chronology of the sherds complement each other and fall within the upper limit of the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. The significant aspect one might observe here is that similar kinds of painted sherds from Sengamēdu too, on the grounds of fabric and chronology, are on a par with those from Arikamēdu. The debate regarding the nomenclature of the sherd is beyond the scope of this paper; our comparison is made on the painted design, fabric and chronology not on the name. Even if we consider the sherd as Russet coated pottery then it only reflects the cultural interactions that Sengamēdu shared with the western part of Tamil Nadu. A careful study of the pottery types in their totality and their context with Arikamēdu<sup>27</sup>, if undertaken, might yield more results leading to a better understanding about the intra-site relationship. Additionally, the excavated site of Thirukōyilūr has also produced evidence of painted sherds in stratified levels.

### Discussion

The occurrence of Rouletted pottery at vantage centres is a conspicuous feature. Here we would like to consider the remarks of Begley who aptly advocated that Rouletted pottery occurs only in urban or religious centres.<sup>28</sup> If we take this argument as granted, then the examples found at these sites urge us to reassess their status as 'urban centres'. But we must be cautious in defining the role of urban centres since the criteria for urban traits vary from region to region. The geographical and climatic factors that play a major role in determining the establishment of cities and their trade setups differ in every region and hence one may not expect the same trade network as that which prevailed between the cities of north India during the Early Historical Period.

Sengamēdu, in its bid to qualify as an urban centre, obliges by furnishing antiquities made from marine shell in the form of bangles, glass and chert beads, ivory objects and, more precisely, structural edifices and Ringwells. The recovery of objects that are undoubtedly alien to the site is ample proof for its being considered the centre of a local trade network.

Although detailed study of the hinterland trade networks in the early historical period in Tamil Nadu is in its infancy, the following discussions call for a fresh approach. On the basis of the spatial distribution of artefacts, the probabilities of more than a single trade route both coastal and inland, might be discussed. The recent satellite imagery survey conducted over the major drainage systems and coastal area of north Tamil Nadu has revealed the presence of a palaeo shoreline at Mannārgudi and Tiruvudaimarudūr that spread up to four kilometres west of Chidambaram. This means the area was encroached inwardly by the sea where, at the meeting point of Maṇimukta and Veḷḷar rivers five kilometres away from the sea, there existed a riverine port going up to Sengamēdu.<sup>29</sup> Assuming the reality of a port near Sengamēdu, a coastal route starting from Arikamēdu via Karaikādu appears to be viable for transportation. But with regard to this theory, scholars have raised doubts as to whether the findings can be used to establish the existence of ports and trade routes.

<sup>26</sup> Begley 1996, p. 200.

<sup>27</sup> Begley 1996, p. 117.

<sup>28</sup> Begley 1992, p. 181.

<sup>29</sup> Ramaswamy *et al* 1992, p. 20

Secondly, the wide arable area around the political centre of Thirukōyilūr, the capital of the Sangam age ruler, Malaiyamān, can also be explored. The discovery of a hoard consisting of 193 Roman gold coins (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D.) near Thirukōyilūr (Kōttakam/Sorayapaṭṭu) along with jewellery items<sup>30</sup>, local issues of Malaiyamān<sup>31</sup> and other stray finds add significance to this region. The strategic location of Thirukōyilūr and the landmark *tamil-brahmi* inscription of Athiyamān<sup>32</sup> at Jambai are suggestive of a well-knit trade network extending from Marandahalli (Kolar region) to Utaṅgarai, Cheṅgam (North Arcot region), Thirukōyilūr, Jambai and linking Seṅgamēdu with Arikamēdu.<sup>33</sup>

To corroborate this evidence, the survey around this region demonstrates a high concentration of habitational sites containing cultural elements of the Iron Age succeeded by the Early Historical period. The very presence of such sites located in and around Thirukōyilūr and Seṅgamēdu ranging from five to fifty acres in extent thus establishes a hierarchy for understanding the ancient settlement pattern of this region (Fig. 1). In addition to this, we might also draw attention to a cluster of early Jain settlements located in and around the trade routes.

The distribution pattern of Rouletted pottery from excavated sites like Thirukōyilūr<sup>34</sup> and Maḷigaimēdu,<sup>35</sup> if taken as a determinant for identifying trade routes, is again suggestive of other major hinterland trade routes that linked Arikamēdu with the other trade centres in the west as well as in south of Tamil Nadu, given their location which comes within the reaches of Seṅgamēdu. The finding of the neck portion of an amphora at Thirukōyilūr<sup>36</sup> in the lower levels (Period I) and which resembles the Arikamēdu specimens, adds significance to the above statement.

Thus, in the light of the above discussions it is evident that the true nature of Arikamēdu can only be thoroughly understood from the context of the internal dynamics that revolved around the hinterland centres like Seṅgamēdu. The prosperity of port sites, especially those on the seacoast, to a larger extent rests with their hinterland centres. It would not be possible to think about the existence of Arikamēdu without the support of these centres because it was these centres that provided much needed basic amenities for their subsistence apart from their involvement in the trading network. Our study highlights the urgent need to undertake an intensive survey and further spadework in these areas and not only at Arikamēdu.

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<sup>30</sup> Nagasamy 1996, pp. 24-26.

<sup>31</sup> Krishnamurthy 1990.

<sup>32</sup> ruler of Tagadur, modern Dharmapuri region.

<sup>33</sup> Personal communication from Dr. K. Rajan.

<sup>34</sup> Kasinathan & Majeed 1996, pp.14-16

<sup>35</sup> A brief note on the excavations at Maḷigaimēdu was published in a local vernacular magazine (*Annam Darisanam*, April 2000). The rest of the reports remain unpublished.

<sup>36</sup> Kasinathan & Majeed 1996, p. 16.

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We are grateful to K. S. Ramachandran (Indian Archaeological Society); Dr. K. Rajan (Tamil University, Thanjavur); and Dr. H. P. Ray (JNU, New Delhi) for their encouragement and valuable suggestions. We are also thankful to M. S. Mani and Lakshmi Narain of the society for their help with maps and photographs.

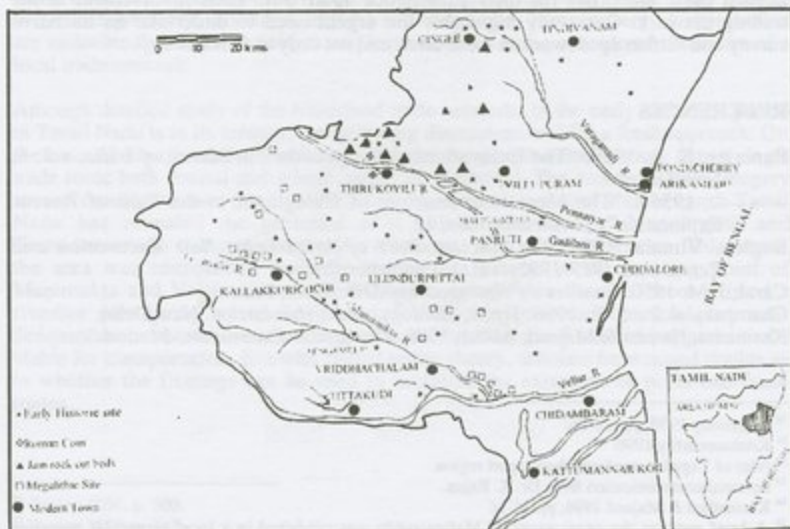


Fig. 1. South Arcot region, Tamil Nadu

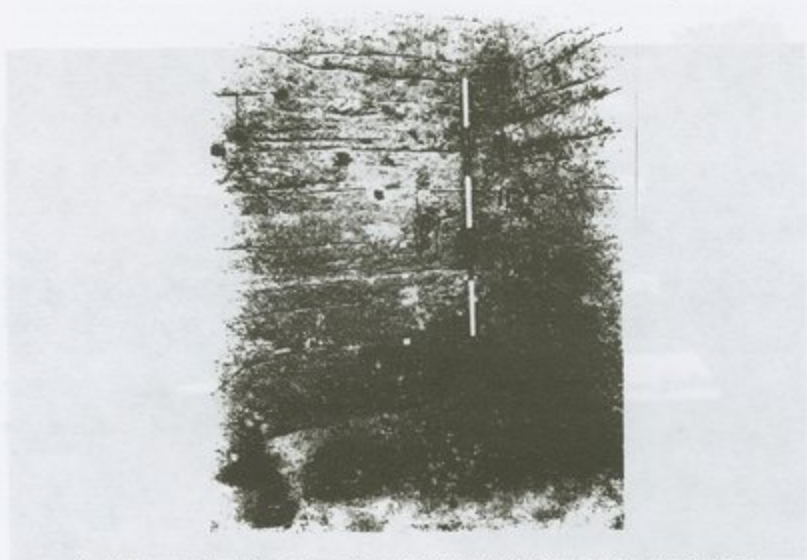


Fig. 2. Excavated trench showing section with burial from Seṅgamēdu, Tamil Nadu, India

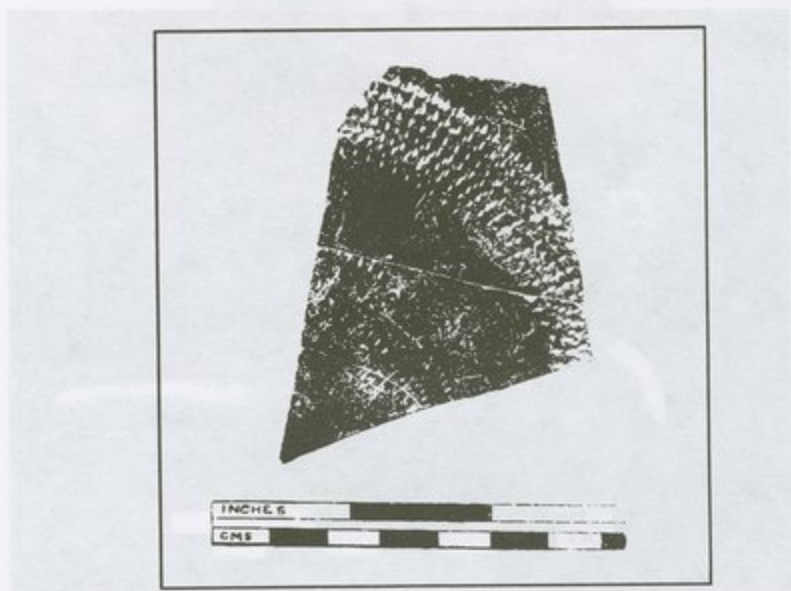


Fig. 3. Rouletted pottery of Seṅgamēdu, Tamil Nadu, India

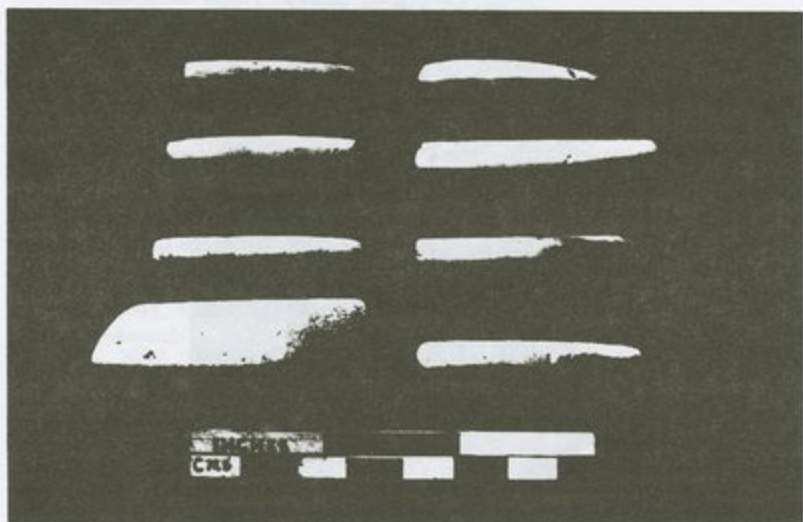


Fig. 4. Shell bangles from Seṅgamēdu, Tamil Nadu, India

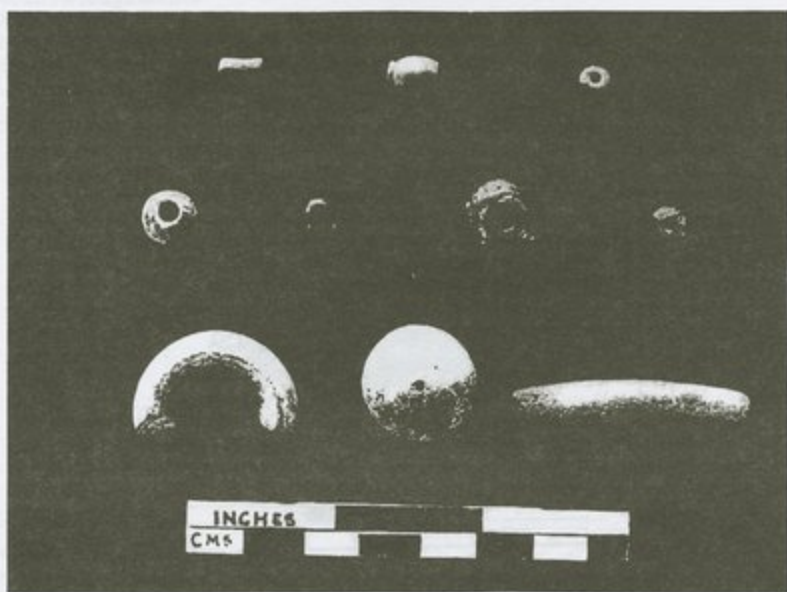


Fig. 5. Glass and Chert Beads from Seṅgamēdu, Tamil Nadu, India



Fig. 6. Brick structures from Sehgamedu, Tamil Nadu, India



Fig. 7. Section showing Ringwells from Sehgamedu, Tamil Nadu, India

# EARLY MEDIEVAL INDIAN OCEAN TRADE: EXCAVATIONS AT SANJAN, INDIA

by *Dr. S. P. Gupta*, Chairman, Indian Archaeological Society, New Delhi, India, with *Kurush Dalal, Abhijit Dandekar, Rukshana Nanji, Rohini Pandey and Rhea Mitra*,

It is common knowledge that India had long-distance trade with the Persian Gulf countries, including ancient Mesopotamia (modern Iraq), Iran, Oman, Failaka Island, Bahrain, etc. from about 3000 B.C. to about 1700 B.C., when the Indus-Saraswati Civilisation flourished but there is much less appreciation of the fact that there was a similar sea trade between the countries on the east and west of India during the early medieval period, generally bracketed between A.D. 700 and 1200. This trade is sometimes called the 'Arab Trade' since it has been presumed that it was largely in the hands of the Arabs. This is, however, only partially true since the Indians and Iranians were equal partners in the trade of this period.

In this trade, which spread from the Red Sea through the Indo-Pacific region and reached China and Japan, India and Sri Lanka played a major role. This has become clear to us from our recent excavations conducted at the near-the-sea-coast site of Sanjan, 60 km. from Bombay. The time-bracket of this site is A.D. 800 to 1200. Sanjan was selected for excavation because it was a well known settlement of the Zoroastrians or Parsis in India and connected with their known history. The Parsis too had participated in the sea-borne trade.

## Sanjan and the Parsis in India

The history of the Parsis in India is largely based upon the *Kisseh-i-Sanjan* or the 'Story of Sanjan' written in Persian in A.D. 1600 by a Parsi priest named Bahman Kaikobad. It may be noted that the replacement of the Ummayyad dynasty by the Abbasids in Khorasan (northwestern Iran) in A.D. 748 and the development of Baghdad in Iraq as the main commercial centre for the Middle East after A.D. 766 created great political instability. Islamic pressure-groups against Zoroastrians hindered their commercial activity in Hormuz and by A.D. 766 the armies of Caliph Mansur had annexed the dominions of the Spahbads, the last representatives of the Sasanian state tradition and of the Zoroastrian faith. As a consequence, a group of Parsis left Khorasan and set sail for India—as Hormuz was then in rebellion.

Sanjan, as we know it today, is a small town, but local tradition has it that earlier it encompassed a large area including the nearby present day settlements of Davier, Zai, Marol, Nargol and Saronda. Some have theorised that the coast of Umargam also must have once been a part of Sanjan port and that the Parsis could even have landed there. There also existed a fort on the coast of Umargam. There is a fort in Sanjan itself but it is a very small one, 532 feet long and about 438 feet wide. According to the Thana Gazetteer the fort was built by the Portuguese in 1613. But local tradition ascribes the fort to Jadi Rana. It was undoubtedly the Portuguese headquarters as it was at a strategic location on the Vairoli river which constantly gets sea water through the Vairoli creek from the Umargam coast, hardly 9 km. away. Large craft of about eighty tons could land at Sanjan from Umargam at high tide. They generally came empty and were laden with timber and rice from Sanjan.

Sanjan falls geographically in the north Konkan region of Western India. Politically, it has been a part of southern Gujarat. Going by the traditional date of A.D. 697 for Diu and A.D. 716 for Sanjan, it can be said that the Zoroastrians arrived there during the time of the Western Chalukyas who held sway over southern Gujarat. Sanjan also

Diu and A.D. 716 for Sanjan, it can be said that the Zoroastrians arrived there during the time of the Western Chalukyas who held sway over southern Gujarat. Sanjan also had a population of Arab merchants and Kufi settlers whose descendants are known today as the Navayat Muslims. The Parsis enjoyed a peaceful existence at Sanjan for about 700 years but faced great trouble when their settlement was attacked in 1393 by Sultan Mahmud's general Alaf Khan. The Parsis fought valiantly in alliance with the Hindu king but were finally defeated. In 1938 when Dr. Wilson visited Sanjan there were only two or three Parsi houses there. Nargol, believed to have once been a part of Sanjan, had about 150 Parsi houses. Saronda near Nargol had 50 Parsi houses. Jhia, Bordi, Davier, Tadgam, Maroli and Ahu also had a few Parsi houses. The settlements surrounding Sanjan had survived even though Sanjan itself lay deserted for about four centuries. After 1534, it came under Portuguese control. They named it St. John. In 1926 Sir Thomas Herbert described it as St. John the Vakas. The Marathas ruled Sanjan from 1738 to 1817, after which it was occupied by the British. Sanjan was repopulated only when it came under the control of the British.

### Excavations at Sanjan

The rolling mounds of the ancient site of Sanjan (N 20° 11' 59.6; E 72° 48' 00.2) are located some 2.5 km from Sanjan Railway Station in Taluka Umargam, District Valsad, Gujarat (Fig. 1). The site overlooks the northern bank of the Vairoli river where the sea-creek of the same name joins it. The area is locally known as the *bandar* or port because even today boats from the Arabian Sea come here regularly. It was excavated in 2002.<sup>37</sup>

The main aims of the excavations were:

1. To establish the date of the foundation of the settlement
2. To establish the nature of the occupation
3. To ascertain the role of Sanjan in the East-West trade in the Indian Ocean

### The Structural Phases

The excavations revealed the existence of several structural remains which were divided into two phases (Fig. 2).

The first or the earliest structural phase (Phase I) lay upon layer 7 and is represented by a large structure made of burnt bricks. The bricks measure between 35 and 40 cm in length, 21 and 25 cm in breadth and 6 and 7 cm in thickness. Only parts of the northern and western walls are seen in the excavated area. The walls are made up of 15 courses of baked bricks below which is seen the foundation of three courses of cobbles interspersed with clay. The later inhabitants have robbed a large portion of the western wall of the structure of its bricks. This was seen very clearly in the form of a 'ghost' wall in the southern section of the excavated area.

To the west of the structure lay a deep 'Ringwell' made up of nine rings. The rings are straight sided and are between 33 and 39 cm in height. The rings have everted rims and are very slightly splayed in the lower two centimetres.

The second or later structural phase (Phase II) was situated at a depth of 1.05–1.10 m from the extant surface of the mound. It was made up of a small wall of burnt bricks, one course thick and two courses high and running north-south. To its east was a floor made of horizontally placed brickbats and cobbles. This floor was covered with a 10 cm thick layer of rammed sticky clay.

<sup>37</sup> See *India Today International*, 20 January 2003, pp. 54–55.

To the west of the wall were two large Ringwells both with an average diameter of 80 cm. They are in the same alignment as the wall. We presume that these Ringwells served as toilets. Lying above the Ringwells were large numbers of brickbats, probably denoting the collapsed walls of an adjacent structure and also large-scale destruction and desertion of the site (Fig. 3).

It may be noted that a large number of artefacts was found associated with the wall and floor of Phase II. Prominent amongst these were two complete glass bottles, an iron ladle, two silver coins and one copper coin. The first of the silver coins bears on its obverse an elephant walking towards the right in a circle of dots; on its reverse are a number of letters in the Brahmi script. The second is a broken fragment of a Sasanian silver issue. The copper coin is a corroded highly debased Indo-Sasanian or Gadhya coin.

### **The Pottery**

Before conducting excavations we made a surface survey. It revealed sherds ranging from coarse wares to fine porcelains. It may be noted that many of the wares found at the site had never been previously reported in India in regular excavations. So far the following wares have been identified:

Porcelain, Glazed Grey Stoneware, Glazed Pink Ware, Pink Ware, Red Slipped Pink Ware, Glazed Buff Ware, Mica Washed Red Ware, Slipped Grey Ware, Coarse Grey Ware, Slipped Red Ware, Coarse Red Ware and Red Polished Ware.

### **Porcelain**

The porcelain found at this site is very fine and well made, ranging in colour from white and cream to grey, light green and pale blue. Some of the sherds appear to be Chinese Qingbai and Yue wares.

### **Glazed Grey Stone ware**

The fabric of this ware is grey in colour and it was made of very well levigated clay and appears to stop just short of being porcelain. The colours in this ware are mainly shades of green and grayish-green. The most important feature of this pottery is the presence of spur marks on the inside surface of the bases of the bowls. These spur marks are rough to touch and are evenly spaced and white in colour. Most are squarish in shape. These could be of great relevance in establishing the provenance and chronology of this pottery. Similar spur marks have been observed on vessels at the site of Mantai, Sri Lanka.<sup>38</sup> Some of the body sherds have incised designs. The shapes in this ware are jars, bowls and dishes, although the rim fragment of a vase-like vessel has also been found. The bases are ringed. This ware has a very compact fabric like porcelain. Some of these sherds have a mottled effect on the surface either due to the glaze, firing or deliberate effort. Some sherds are quite thick in section. A few of these sherds may be of south Chinese origin.

### **Glazed Pink Ware**

The predominant shapes in this ware are convex-sided bowls and dishes. The colour of the core ranges from a pale creamy pink to a darker reddish/orange shade. The fabric has a fine, soft kaolin-like texture and is in some cases very chalky. There is a profusion of elaborate decoration in this ware. A pearly glaze is used to coat the incised and painted designs. The designs are mainly free-hand curved lines forming abstract, floral or stylised motifs.

### **Pink Ware**

The fabric of this ware is similar to Glazed Pink Ware, but is devoid of any surface treatment. The colour of the core ranges from pale creamy pink to reddish pink. The

<sup>38</sup> Carswell and Prickett 1984, Pl. 13B.

sherds are mainly thick in section and sturdy, indicating storage and transportation uses. It should be mentioned that a large number of handles have been found in this ware.

### Red Slipped Pink Ware

The shapes in this ware appear to be predominantly pots and jars. The core is grayish pink and in some cases pink. The texture is medium-coarse. The surface is treated to a slip that varies in colour from a bright red to dark red and brown.

### Turquoise Glazed Ware

This is a very dramatic and interesting ware showing imagination and versatility in treatment, decoration and shapes. The fabric is fine, chalky, soft and, in some cases, medium-coarse depending upon the purity of the clay used. The colour of the core ranges from milk white to yellow. The surface treatment shows great versatility. The smaller vessels have white and cream glaze. Some sherds have a grayish-brown matte glaze. The larger vessels have green, blue green and turquoise glaze. These have been identified as Turquoise Glazed Ware (TGW) or South Mesopotamian Islamic TGW. This is also variously termed by different scholars 'Hib'<sup>39</sup>, Sasanian-Islamic Blue Glazed pottery etc.<sup>40</sup> Some scholars call it 'Abbasid', 'Samarra' or 'Basra' ware. Glover defines it as 'soft, yellow-buff fabric often with fine texture and inclusions with a thick turquoise alkaline-glaze which is usually ill-fitting, crackled and applied over low relief ornament'. There is evidence of over-firing and vitrification on some sherds. This vitrification may also be due to the vessel's repeated use for preparing glazes or the melting of glass. The glazes themselves appear to have been treated differently in order to achieve certain effects, e.g. crackle effect, mirror finish, etc. On a few sherds the glaze is almost half a centimeter thick.

The shapes vary from storage jars and globular pots to large and small bowls, dishes and cups. There is a range of rims within each category from the everted external projecting to the inverted and those with bilateral projections. High-necked jars, convex-sided bowls and bowls with flaring sides are present in this collection. Special mention should be made here of a high-necked vase in TGW with four handles, two of which are extant. A similar kind of vessel is reported from Nishapur in Iran.<sup>41</sup>

The designs are very interesting and unusual. The decorations are done by techniques such as appliqué, painting, incision, impression and stamping. One design resembles very closely one of the vessels found at Susa, which has been dated to the ninth century A.D.<sup>42</sup> Floral designs, zigzags, horizontal and curved bands, dots, etc. are also observed. The unglazed samples have some incised and intricate patterns, which are very well executed. None of the designs in this ware is seen on the coarse wares.

### Red Polished Ware

Three fragments of this ware have been found. The first is a spout with six perforations at its base and the second is part of a sprinkler. These sherds are of great significance considering that Red Polished Ware has been reported from various sites in association with Early Islamic Pottery and sometimes also with Chinese wares. Sites such as Mantai in Sri Lanka<sup>43</sup>, Siraf in Iran, Suhar in Oman<sup>44</sup> and Qana' in Yemen<sup>45</sup> amongst others in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean have yielded all three wares. Archaeologists have used Red Polished Ware as a chronological marker to establish trade contacts between these sites and the Indian subcontinent. The

<sup>39</sup> Mason 1991.

<sup>40</sup> Rougeulle 1996, p. 162.

<sup>41</sup> This reference from the Internet, applies to The Rietze Collection.

<sup>42</sup> Lane 1947, p. 9, fig. 5.

<sup>43</sup> Carswell and Prickett 1984.

<sup>44</sup> Kervran 1996, p. 38.

<sup>45</sup> Sedov 1996, p. 16

earliest date of Red Polished Ware in India with types like sprinklers goes back to the first century A.D. in northern India. However, it is only rarely found in the post-Gupta, i.e., post A.D. 500 levels. Thus, its presence at the eighth century site is at present enigmatic, but might suggest the existence of earlier sites in the neighbouring region.

The site of Sanjan proved to be exceptionally rich in antiquarian remains. A large number of artefacts in iron, copper, terracotta, stone, glass and shell were found in the excavations.

### Glass Objects

The single largest group of artefacts from the excavations consists of glass objects. These include: vessel, bangle and ring fragments and other miscellaneous objects. Many of the glass objects display an iridescent patination. For the purposes of streamlining the artefactual analysis of the corpus of glass objects has been split up into glass vessels and other glass objects.

### Glass Vessels

In the course of the excavations, an unusually large quantity of glass vessels and vessel fragments was encountered. These range in size from large fragments to very tiny chips that are often difficult to hold. The fragments vary in colour, surface treatment, shape and decoration. It is also very significant that a few intact or nearly intact glass bottles and other vessels were also found. Other diagnostic objects include bases, finials, a thick stopper-like object and a disc reminiscent of the 'marvered' glass objects produced by medieval Neareastern glass manufacturers between the eighth and twelfth centuries A.D.<sup>46</sup>

The glass objects exhibit a wide variety in colour, thickness and shape. Colours range from light and dark green, pale blue, dark blue, clear, yellow, and one or two specimens of an opaque white.

### Other Glass Objects

This category includes bangle fragments, ring fragments and a few miscellaneous objects. The bangle fragments from Sanjan are similar to such objects seen at most early historical and early medieval excavations in India. They are mainly plain and a few bear appliqué dots in white. They are mainly opaque black in colour with a few examples of transparent green. It is interesting to note here that whilst three probable bangle fragments in copper have been recovered from the excavation, not a single example of a terracotta bangle fragment was recovered.

### Coins

As many as 32 coins were collected from the excavations. They include 21 of copper, four of which are probably of lead and seven silver coins. Twelve coins with some discernible features were given to Dr. S. Gokhale of Pune for decipherment. She has identified five of these. They are: a small silver coin with an elephant on the obverse and a lion on reverse. This coin is attributed to the second century A.D. The lion was the mint mark of the Satavahana mint at Nasik. The combination of the two symbols on such a small issue shows remarkable craftsmanship; a fragment of a silver Sasanian coin with traces of a fire altar on the reverse. The coin can be attributed to the 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D.; a small silver coin with an elephant facing right on the obverse and a Brahmi legend on the reverse. The legend reads, *Amavalisa*, and can be attributed on palaeographical grounds to the 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D.; a silver coin of the Sultan of Sind, dated to 900 A.D. It bears Arabic legends on both faces: the obverse bears a legend, *Allāh yathiq 'umar wafāh an nasr*, whilst the reverse bears the

<sup>46</sup> Carboni 2001, pp. 291-93.

legend, *Allāh Muḥammad rasūlallāh*; and the fifth is a highly corroded Indo-Sasanian copper coin. The obverse depicts the bust of a king and the reverse bears faint traces of a fire-altar. It is ascribable to the 10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

### Beads

In all 113 beads were recovered from the excavations and the site. The dominant material is glass with 91 beads, followed by terracotta with nine, carnelian with four, garnet, chalcedony, paste and copper are represented by a single specimen each. Two of the beads may be made of agate or a glass mimicking it known as agate glass. Of the last two beads one is made of an as yet unidentified material whilst the other is made of an unidentified white stone.

### Dating

In the absence of absolute dates<sup>47</sup>, the tentative dating of the site on the basis of historical, ceramic, numismatic and artefactual data is between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D.

### Conclusion

The tentative and preliminary conclusions suggest a thriving site, economically strong and viable. The site was involved in trade, both local and foreign. Thus, Sanjan was probably a vital link in the Indian Ocean trade which stretched from the Red Sea region to China and Japan.

The 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century Indian Ocean trade, as is now absolutely clear from various studies, involved several countries in the east and the west of peninsular India. Pottery of the kinds we have found at Sanjan from well-dated layers of regular excavations are found at several sites on the East African, Red Sea and Arabian peninsular coasts, Iraq, Iran, India and Sri Lanka as well as in countries of southeast Asia such as Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines and Indonesia as well as China and Japan (Fig. 1). Further excavations at the site will certainly throw more light on the large network covered by the Indian Ocean trade in the early medieval period.

### Acknowledgements

Archaeological work and its reporting is always a collective effort. Hence I should like to acknowledge the contributions of Dr. (Mrs.) Mani Kamerkar and Mehr Kellawala for the history of Sanjan. Dr. Kurush Dalal was the Field Director. Dr. Abhijit Dandekar and Rukhshana Nanji wrote the report on the pottery along with Dr. Dalal. Ms. Rhea Mitra handled the antiquities and Ms. Rohini Pandey carried out excavations in the trenches along with others. Mr. M.S. Mani did the graphics with Mr. Jassu Ram. Mr. Laxmi Narayan was responsible for the photographs. To all of them I am extremely grateful.

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*India Today International*, 20 January 2003, pp. 54-55.

<sup>47</sup> Samples for C<sup>14</sup> dating have been sent to the laboratory.

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Fig. 1. Map showing the site of Sanjan and the trade network of the early medieval period

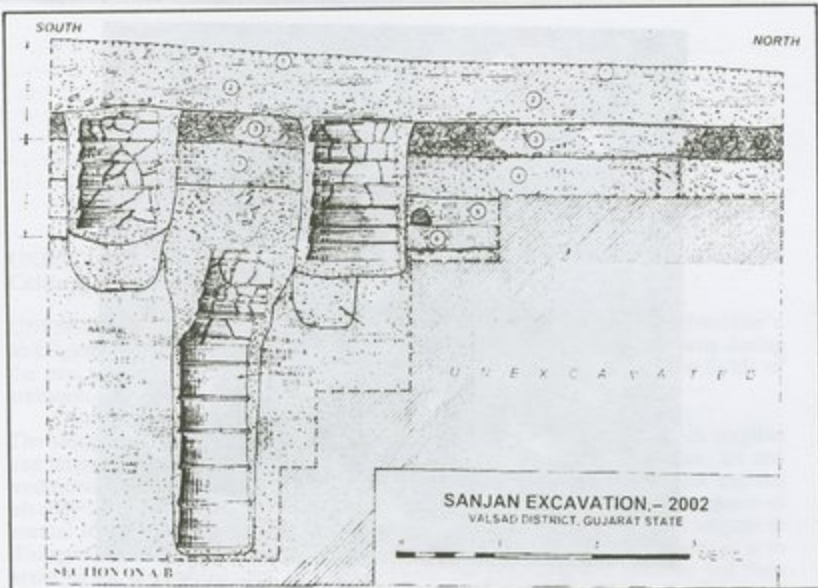


Fig. 2. Section of the trench excavated at Sanjan, Gujarat, India



Fig. 3. Turquoise Glazed Ware sherds found at Sanjan, Gujarat, India



Fig. 4. A handled pot of Turquoise Glazed Ware from Sanjan, Gujarat, India

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## NEWS BULLETIN

### **UNESCO's Mandate and Activities for the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage**

UNESCO has responded firmly to the challenge of rehabilitating Afghanistan's endangered cultural heritage, which has suffered irreversible damage and loss during the past two decades of war and civil unrest. This applies notably in the fields of archaeological sites and the prevention of illicit traffic of cultural property.

The safeguarding of all aspects of the cultural heritage of Afghanistan, both tangible and intangible, including museums, monuments, archaeological sites, music, art and traditional crafts, is of particular significance in terms of strengthening the cultural identity and a sense of national integrity. Cultural heritage can become a point of mutual interest for former adversaries, enabling them to re-build ties, to engage in dialogue and to work together in shaping a common future. UNESCO's strategy is to assist in the re-establishment of links between the populations concerned and their cultural history, helping them to develop a sense of common ownership of monuments that represent the cultural heritage of different segments of society. This strategy is therefore directly linked to the nation-building process within the framework of the United Nation's mandate and concerted international efforts for rehabilitating Afghanistan.

With reference to the UN Secretary-General's dictum, "Our challenge is to help the Afghans help themselves", policies and activities for the safeguarding of Afghanistan's cultural heritage focus on training and capacity-building activities related to the preservation of this cultural heritage.

Entrusted by the Afghan government to coordinate all international efforts aiming to safeguard and enhance Afghanistan's cultural heritage, the organization coordinates and carries out various activities. As the UN Programme Secretariat for Culture, Youth and Sports, UNESCO is supporting the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture and related government agencies by coordinating all activities in the field of culture.

In May 2002, UNESCO organized in Kabul, in cooperation with the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture, the first International Seminar on the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage, which gathered 107 specialists in Afghan cultural heritage, as well as representatives of donor countries and institutions. The participants gave presentations on the state of conservation of cultural sites across the country and discussed programmes and co-ordination for the first conservation activities to be undertaken. This seminar resulted in more than US\$7 million being pledged for priority projects. These funds will be allocated through bilateral agreements and UNESCO Funds-in-Trust projects. An eleven-page document containing concrete recommendations for future action was adopted, in which the need to ensure effective cooperation was emphasized.

To this end and following the Afghan authorities' request to UNESCO to play a coordinating role in all international activities aimed at the safeguarding of Afghanistan's cultural heritage, UNESCO has established an International

Coordination Committee. The statutes of this committee were approved by the 165<sup>th</sup> session of the organization's Executive Board in October 2002. The committee will consist of representatives of the Afghan government and leading international specialists belonging to the most important donor countries and organizations providing funds or scientific assistance for the safeguarding of Afghanistan's cultural heritage. It will meet on a regular basis to review on-going and future efforts to rehabilitate Afghanistan's cultural heritage. The first Plenary Session will be held in Paris from 16 to 18 June 2003.

### Bamiyan

Immediately after the collapse of the Taliban regime in December 2001, UNESCO sent a mission to Bamiyan to assess the condition of the site and to cover the remaining large stone blocks with fibre glass sheets to protect them from the harsh climatic conditions during winter (Fig. 1).

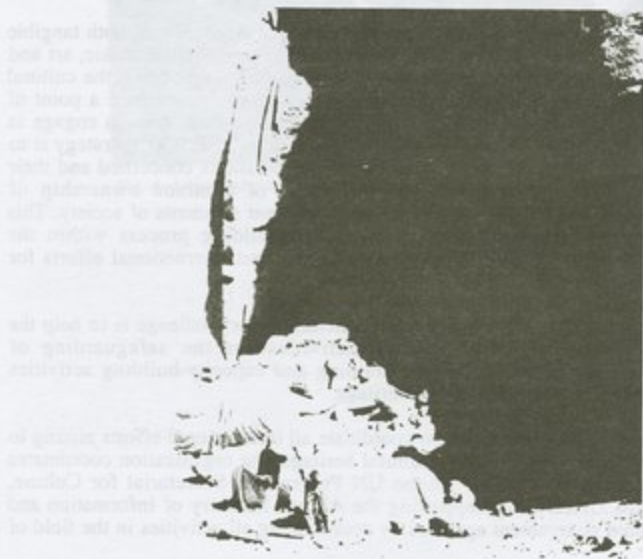


Fig. 1. Remains of the Large Buddha covered for protection at Bamiyan, Afghanistan (December 2001)

In July 2002, a second UNESCO mission jointly organized with the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and directed by its president, Professor Michael Petzet, was undertaken in order to prepare conservation measures at the Bamiyan site.

A project preparation mission to Bamiyan composed of German, Italian and Japanese experts was then undertaken from 27 September to 6 October 2002. It was noted that over 70% of the mural paintings dating from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. in the Buddhist caves had disappeared, either through neglect or looting. In one cave, experts even found tools of the thieves and the remains of freshly removed paintings. In response to this situation, a contract was concluded with the local commander, General Jawad, who immediately provided ten armed guards to be responsible for the permanent surveillance of the site. It was also noted that large cracks had appeared in

and around the niches where the Buddha statues had previously been situated, which could lead to the collapse of parts of the niches and inner staircases within some caves. In response to this situation, the experts carried out complementary measurements and advised on appropriate actions to consolidate the cliffs and the niches. ICOMOS also financed the restoration of a Sunni mosque and another building, both of which are located in close proximity to the niche of the large Buddha. The fore-mentioned building will be used for accommodation of the guards, as well as by UNESCO to store equipment. As a result of this mission, the Japanese Foreign Ministry generously approved a UNESCO Funds-in-Trust for the Safeguarding of the Bamiyan site with a total budget of US\$1,815,967 (Fig. 2).

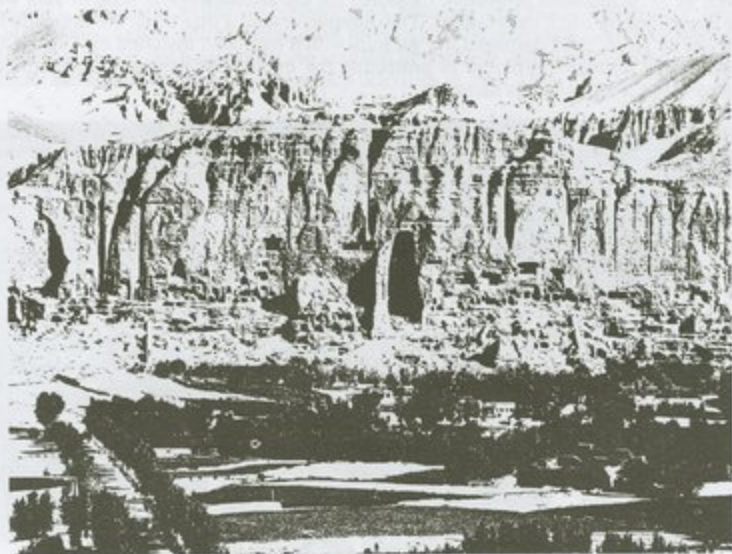


Fig. 2. The Small Buddha site at Bamiyan, Afghanistan, after destruction

Following delays due to the war in Iraq, the first activities under this project will start in July 2003 with the scientific documentation of the back of the niches and of the remaining pieces from the Buddhas, the clearing of the niches and the conservation of these pieces. The consolidation of the niches will commence in 2004. To that aim, large scaffolding has been given free of charge by the German Messerschmidt Foundation and options for its transport from Germany to Afghanistan are currently being explored.

An Expert Working Group on the Preservation of the Bamiyan site was jointly organized by UNESCO and ICOMOS and held in Munich, Germany, from 21 to 22 November 2002. Twenty-five experts participated in this conference and evaluated the present state of conservation of the site on the basis of the results of the two above-mentioned missions. They also discussed and compared different conservation methods and issued recommendations for concrete future activities.

### Jam and Herat

In March 2002, UNESCO sent two consultants to Jam and Herat. Professor Andrea Bruno, architect, and Professor Marco Menegotto, structural engineer, assessed the state of conservation of the Minaret of Jam, as well as the Fifth Minaret, the Gawhar Shad, the Citadel, the Friday Mosque and other monuments in Herat, before drafting project documents for their conservation.

Two months later, Professor Bruno and Andrea Borgia, a hydrologist, carried out a UNESCO mission to advise on the consolidation of the Jam Minaret's foundations, the stabilization of its overall structure and the water flow of the two rivers nearby, as well as to recommend protective measures for the archaeological zone of Jam which is threatened by illicit excavations. This mission revealed that while the dramatic high floods of April 2002 damaged the gabions which had been installed by UNESCO in 2000, they remained efficient in protecting the monument, which has perhaps only survived as a result of this measure.

These protective efforts are indeed all the more significant in light of the fact that the Minaret of Jam was inscribed as the first Afghan property on the UNESCO World Heritage List in June 2002 (Fig. 3).

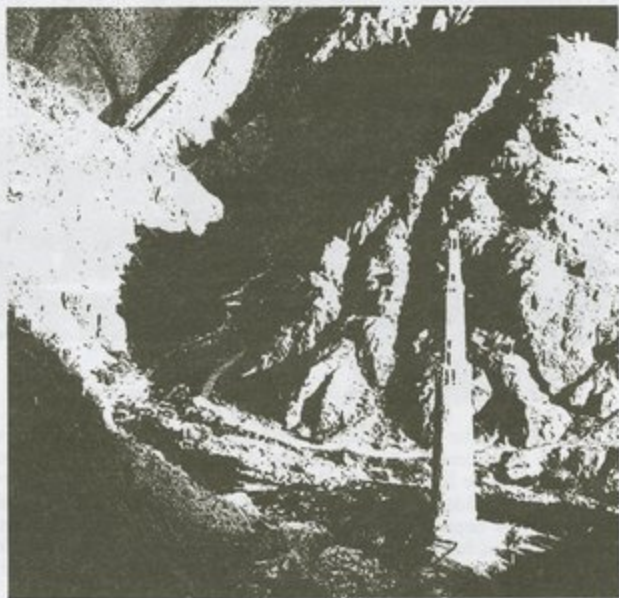


Fig. 3. Jam Minaret from the south, Afghanistan

From 16 October to 7 November 2002, architects Tarcis Stevens and Mario Santana from Leuven University carried out detailed metric documentation of the five minarets of the Gowhar Shad Musalla in Herat, as well as of the Jam Minaret. They combined this documentation with a preliminary training session on the use of a Total Station for Afghan experts. The Total Station was donated by UNESCO to the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture. This training session will be continued in August 2003 with a mission by four specialists from the universities of Leuven and

Berkeley, during which highly detailed documentation of the Herat monuments and the Jam Minaret will be produced with a laser scanner.

An Expert Working Group on the Preservation of Jam and the Monuments in Herat was held at UNESCO Headquarters on 30 January 2003. Among the twenty-three participants were Dr Sayed Makdoom Raheen, the Afghan Minister of Information and Culture, Mr Zahir Aziz, Ambassador of Afghanistan to UNESCO, Mr Omar Khan Massoudi, Director of the Kabul Museum and Mr Abdul Wasey Ferooz, Head of the Afghan Institute of Archaeology. The experts evaluated the present state of conservation of the site of Jam, as well as of the Fifth Minaret, the Gawhar Shad, the Citadel, the Friday Mosque and other monuments in Herat (Fig. 4) on the basis of the results of the previous UNESCO missions. They also addressed the problem of illicit excavations, compared different conservation methods and made emergency and long-term conservation and co-ordination proposals with reference to the identified priorities. This Working Group meeting resulted in concrete recommendations, which will allow the commencement of emergency activities in June 2003.

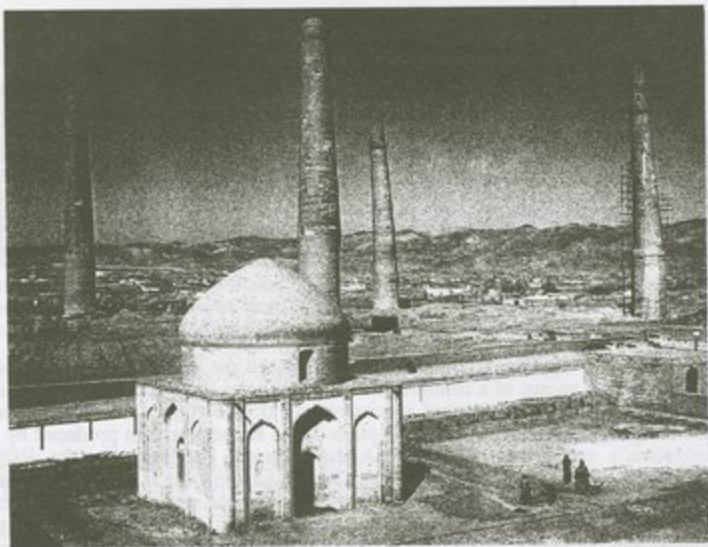


Fig. 4. The four minarets of the Sultan Hussain Baiqara Madrassah at Herat, from Queen Gohar Shad's Gardens, with the Mir Ali Sher Nawai mausoleum, Afghanistan

In November 2002, the Swiss authorities announced the approval of a UNESCO Funds-in-Trust project for emergency consolidation and restoration of the site of Jam, with a total budget of US\$124,300. In addition, the Italian authorities gave US\$499,460 through the UNESCO Funds-in-Trust cooperation for emergency consolidation and restoration of the monuments in Herat and Jam.

The first activities under these projects began in April 2003 with the construction of a project house in Jam, the clearing of the Jam riverbed, as well as the repairing and the strengthening of the gabions installed in 2000 by UNESCO and damaged by the April 2002 high floods. In July 2003, detailed geological soil studies will be carried out at the Jam and Herat minarets for the definition of their consolidation. At the same time, the Fifth Minaret in Herat, which is in imminent risk of collapse, will be subject to temporary emergency consolidation.

### Kabul Museum

Immediately after the collapse of the Taliban regime in December 2001, UNESCO sent a mission to identify and gather together the remains of various statues and objects in the Kabul Museum and to prepare a project for their restoration.

In view of the urgent needs of the Kabul Museum and the climatic problems with the beginning of the winter, UNESCO took immediate emergency action in November 2002. This involved the installation of new windows in several rooms on the ground and first floor (Fig. 5), as well as a deep water well with a pressure tank and plumbing to ensure a water connection for the conservation laboratory. In addition, a large electric generator was donated to ensure the supply of electricity.



Fig. 5. Kabul National Museum showing replacement windows, Afghanistan

In January 2003, the Greek government commenced the restoration of the Kabul Museum building as part of a commitment it made during the Kabul Seminar, held in May 2002, to donate an amount of approximately US\$750,000. UNESCO provided the Greek specialists with drawings and plans of the Kabul Museum produced by the organization's consultant, Professor Andrea Bruno. Furthermore, the British International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) has installed a new restoration laboratory composed of two rooms, one wet-room and one dry-room, both of which were funded by the British Museum. The French CEREDAF donated conservation equipment and the newly created French DAFA, together with the Musée Guimet in Paris, carried out a training course for the museum's curators.

### General

In September 2002, UNESCO concluded a contract with the French NGO Agence d'Aide à la Coopération Technique et au Développement (ACTED), for the emergency repair of the protecting roof of the nine domes of the Hadji Pyada Mosque in Balkh – the oldest mosque in Afghanistan – in order to preserve it from the harsh climatic conditions during winter.

In 2002, UNESCO jointly revived the tile-making workshop in Herat with SPACH. This workshop was attended by 60 Afghan trainees learning the production of traditional tiles.

Complementing UNESCO's operational activities, the organization is promoting existing and developing new normative instruments for the legal protection of

tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Given that the prevention of illicit excavations and illicit traffic is a major challenge in contemporary Afghanistan, UNESCO supports the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan to ban illicit excavations and to control borders to prevent the smuggling of illicitly acquired movable cultural objects.

In conclusion, it can be stated that to date, funding and other forms of assistance well exceeding the US\$7 million pledged during the May 2002 Kabul Seminar have been given for cultural projects in Afghanistan. To summarize, the UNESCO Funds-in-Trust programme has been entrusted with the following amounts from donor countries: US\$1,815,967 from the government of Japan for the conservation of Bamiyan; US\$769,000 from the government of Italy for three projects for the monuments of Herat and Jam; US\$124,000 from the Swiss government for Jam, and US\$850,000 from the government of Germany in 2002, through ICOMOS Germany and the German Archaeological Institute, for the restoration of the Babur Gardens and for the training of Afghan archaeologists.

Further to these Funds-in-Trust donations, bilateral contributions include US\$5 million from the Aga Khan Trust for Culture for the restoration of the Babur Gardens in Kabul and the rehabilitation of traditional housing in Kabul, Herat and other cities. The Greek government has also earmarked US\$750,000 for the restoration of the Kabul Museum building, and the French Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan (DAFA) is currently carrying out preventive excavations. The French Musée Guimet conducted a training course for the staff of the Kabul Museum, while the British Museum has restored three rooms at the Kabul Museum for the installation of a conservation laboratory. In addition, UNESCO has provided US\$400,000 under its Regular Budget for the biennium 2002/03 for cultural activities in Afghanistan.

UNESCO would like to take this opportunity to thank all of these generous donors for their indispensable contributions. It should also be emphasized that these cultural funds come from specific cultural budgets. As such, they are in no instances taken from humanitarian funds, but rather, constitute an addition to them.

*Christian Manhart, Program Specialist in charge of Afghanistan's cultural heritage,  
UNESCO, Paris, France.*

## **Preserving Afghanistan's Silk Road Art: A Virtual Catalogue of the Begram Ivory and Bone Carvings**

### **Introduction**

Supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the *Virtual Catalogue of the Begram Ivory and Bone Carvings* project is being directed by Dr. Sanjot Mehendale of the Department of Near Eastern Studies, UC Berkeley, U.S.A. This preservation project involves one of the most extensive sets of finds formerly housed in the National Museum in Kabul, Afghanistan: the Begram ivory and bone carvings, all of which are now gone – looted, sold on the black market, or destroyed – from the Kabul Museum. These magnificent carvings – several hundred in number – are unparalleled yet paradigmatic examples of the syncretic nature of Silk Road art and cultural exchange from the early Common Era. Their disappearance will constitute an irreparable loss to scholars, to non-academic devotees of the Silk Road, and to the cultural heritage of Central Asia. There is an urgent need to preserve a thorough and accurate record of these finds so that they may continue to bear witness to the richness of the cultural exchange between East and West along the ancient Silk Roads, and so that they might be studied anew by scholars seeking to locate them within refigured understandings of ancient Central Asian cultures.

### **The Begram Ivory and Bone Objects**

The ancient site of Begram (Bagram) is located to the northeast of Kabul, Afghanistan. The fame of Begram rests on the discovery of a large hoard of objects – including Indianesque ivory and bone objects, Chinese lacquers, and Roman glassware and bronzes – which exemplified the rich cross-cultural setting of the region along the ancient Silk Roads. In 1997, after extensive research in the Begram archives of the Musée Guimet in Paris, Dr. Mehendale completed a dissertation on the Begram objects which included new interpretations about the nature of the finds as well as a complete catalogue of each ivory and bone object discovered at Begram. This work is the latest comprehensive study of these finds since their discovery in 1937-1939, and was awarded its "Outstanding Dissertation in the Fine Arts and Humanities" for 1997 by the University of California at Berkeley.

The trove of Begram ivory and bone carvings is unparalleled in number and stylistic complexity by any other finds of carved ivory and bone in South or Central Asia. The imagery on the carvings is almost exclusively representations of women, in scenes of recreation and repose in semi-secluded quarters or in other separate, self-contained spaces. The initial excavators and most subsequent scholars considered the site itself to be a royal city, the objects a royal collection discovered in what had been a palace, the ivory carvings produced in India and brought to Central Asia as part of a royal entourage. Consistent with these assumptions, the imagery had been thought to suggest that the carvings were part of furnishings from the royal harem.

Dr. Mehendale's research on the archaeological context of the objects, however, and comparative stylistic analysis suggest another set of hypotheses for these carvings and their setting: that instead of a royal city, the site may have been a trading centre along ancient Silk Road routes, that the objects may have been part of an artisan's or merchant's stock rather than a royal treasure, and that their provenance may have been Central Asia rather than "heartland" India. Congruent with these new hypotheses, a re-examination of the imagery suggests that, rather than a harem, the objects' representations may be of a heretofore unexamined courtesan class. Since the completion of her dissertation, Dr. Mehendale has lectured extensively on Begram and Silk Road art and archaeology, and has published several articles on the Begram finds.

### **Crisis in Afghanistan**

The more than two decades long crisis in Afghanistan, in addition to tremendous human loss and suffering, has had an enormous impact on the country's cultural heritage. Many of the country's archaeological sites – at the heart of nearly two millennia of Silk Road trade and exchange – have been pillaged, vandalized or destroyed. The wilful destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas has received much international attention, and the National Museum in Kabul has been looted and heavily damaged, with many of its objects destroyed. In addition to the ravages brought about by ideological fanaticism and acts of war, a more subtle vanquishing of the rich archaeological heritage of Afghanistan is occurring. Many *sui generis* objects are disappearing through a well-organized and funded illegal market, funnelled into the hands of private collectors and unlikely ever again to see the light of day. Compounding the loss is the fact that for most of these objects there exists little or no pictorial or textual record.

### **A Virtual Database of the Begram Ivory and Bone Carvings**

In light of the long crisis in Afghanistan, Dr. Mehendale has been seeking ways to ensure the continued existence of a full record of the remarkable objects from Begram. Copies of the original archaeological reports, published in France in the 1930s and 1940s, are rare and inaccessible to English-only readers. And the

photographic archives at the Musée Guimet in Paris are fading and will be lost if not digitally reproduced.

A virtual collection of the Begram ivory and bone objects will combine text and images in a searchable database. As an affiliate of the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative (ECAI) at UC Berkeley, Dr. Mehendale has access to the technological resources for this aspect of the project. (ECAI is a global federation of scholars contributing to the creation of a networked digital atlas. Information technology specialists collaborate with archivists, librarians and curators, and with researchers in the humanities and social sciences. See <http://ecai.berkeley.edu/>). The collection will be the only extant complete record of these Begram finds. And it will be designed to be accessible worldwide via the internet, both to scholars and to the general public.

For further information, contact Dr. Sanjyot Mehendale, Department of Near Eastern Studies, 250 Barrows Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-1940, U.S.A. Tel: +1 510 643 5845; fax: +1 510 643 8430; e-mail: [sanjyotm@uclink4.berkeley.edu](mailto:sanjyotm@uclink4.berkeley.edu)

### **New SOAS MA in Buddhist Studies**

A new Masters programme in Buddhist Studies will be offered at SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London) from September 2003. It will be the most extensive programme of its kind in Europe. The MA programme offers sufficient breadth and depth to provide study pathways for students with a wide variety of backgrounds and objectives in Buddhist Studies, from those planning to move on to specialised language or fieldwork-based MPhil/PhD research to those interested simply in broadening their knowledge and awareness of Buddhist traditions and cultures through academic study. The programme can be taken over 12 months (full time) or 2-3 years (part-time).

The MA programme draws on the expertise of internationally recognised specialists in Buddhist Studies at SOAS and provides access to a wealth of resources for the study of Buddhism available in the SOAS Library and in nearby institutions such as the British Library and the British Museum.

By selecting courses to suit the particular needs of each student, the MA in Buddhist Studies can provide:

- A specialised research training MA in Buddhist Studies (including Asian Buddhist languages). This pathway is suitable for students contemplating advanced postgraduate research in Buddhist Studies at SOAS or elsewhere.
- A broad MA programme for students with some background in the academic study of Buddhism who wish to enhance their knowledge of Buddhism in Asia, with or without language study.
- A special interest MA, which enables students to study in depth a particular Buddhist region or tradition, whether India, Tibet, South East Asia, China or Japan, etc.

The MA in Buddhist Studies comprises three taught courses and a dissertation. In 2003-4 there will be courses and half-courses covering Indian, Tibetan, South East Asian, Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, as well as opportunities for individual supervised research and textual translation in these and other areas.

It is recognised that students enter the MA in Buddhist Studies from a variety of educational and linguistic backgrounds, and with different objectives. Prospective students should therefore contact the Director of Studies, Dr. Tadeusz Skorupski, at

an early stage of their application to seek advice on the most appropriate options for study. Applicants may also wish to contact another member of staff in their area of special interest (see list below).

Staff contributing to the MA Buddhist Studies in 2003-4 include:

Dr. Tadeusz Skorupski, Director of Studies, Indo-Tibetan Buddhism, Tantric Buddhism, Ritual (ts1@soas.ac.uk)  
 Prof. T. H. Barrett, Chinese Buddhism and Chinese Religions (tb2@soas.ac.uk)  
 Dr. Lucia Dolce, Japanese Buddhism, Japanese Religions, returning from Research Leave May 2003 (ld16@soas.ac.uk)  
 Dr. Ulrich Pagel, Buddhism in India, Tibet and Central Asia (up1@soas.ac.uk)  
 Prof. Geoffrey Samuel, Leverhulme Visiting Professor from August 2003, Buddhism and Society in Tibet and South East Asia (Geoffrey.Samuel@newcastle.edu.au)  
 Dr. Youxuan Wang, Chinese Buddhism and Buddhist Texts (yw8@soas.ac.uk)  
 Prof. Brian Bocking, Current Chair of Religious Studies department, Chinese Buddhism & Japanese Religions (bb@soas.ac.uk)

Please also note that Dr. Kate Crosby, Indian and South East Asian Buddhism (kc21@soas.ac.uk) will be on research leave in 2003-4. Applicants interested primarily in Japanese Buddhism should note also the established SOAS MA in Japanese Religions (convenor: Prof. Brian Bocking, bb@soas.ac.uk). The convenor in 2003/4 will be Dr. Lucia Dolce (ld16@soas.ac.uk).

Details of courses available in 2003/4 are currently being finalised and will be available shortly on the SOAS website. The MA application form is available at <http://www.soas.ac.uk>

#### **Endangered Languages: Ph.D. Studentship SOAS, U.K.**

Applications are invited for a PhD studentship in Field Linguistics in the Endangered Languages Academic Programme, SOAS, University of London. Applicants should hold an MA degree in Linguistics from a UK university or equivalent institution. Area of language specialisation is open but preference will be given to students intending to work on an endangered language of Africa or Asia.

The studentship will include full payment of fees and a maintenance bursary of £9832.00, renewable for a further two years. The closing date for applications is 30 June 2003.

For more details, and for an application form, please see the website ([www.hrelp.org](http://www.hrelp.org)), or contact Zara Pybus on +44 (0) 207 898 4578 or e-mail: [zp2@soas.ac.uk](mailto:zp2@soas.ac.uk).

#### **Phase One of the Mellon Digitisation Project completed at The British Museum**

Over three hundred fragile and very rare paintings on silk and paper are preserved in the Stein Collection at the Department of Oriental Antiquities of the British Museum, London, U.K. This is without doubt the most important material collected during Sir Aurel Stein's expeditions together with the manuscripts that were originally kept in a secret cave temple at the Thousand Buddha Caves near Dunhuang, in Gansu Province, western China. The sheer volume and the extremely good condition of the material preserved by the desert climate makes this find unparalleled in the world for the study of the medieval period of China and Central Asia. Dunhuang is an ancient oasis town, located where the northern and southern branches of the Silk Road united to lead to the then Chinese capital Chang'an today known as Xi'an. Some time in the eleventh century the carefully packed bundles of manuscripts and paintings were put

into a small cave and sealed off by a wall, which was then painted to blend in with the decoration of the neighbouring bigger cave temple. It was only in about 1900 that a Daoist monk who looked after the by then abandoned site accidentally found the entrance to the small cave.

The Dunhuang material obtained by Sir Aurel Stein during his second (1906-8) and third expeditions (1913-1916) was sent to England. In the early 1920s it was divided, with two-fifths remaining in London, and three-fifths being transferred to India and now housed in the National Museum, New Delhi. When the British Library separated from the British Museum in 1973 the paintings, textiles, sculptures and other objects were retained by the museum.

Arthur Waley's detailed descriptive but unillustrated catalogue of the paintings was published in 1931. A large portfolio of colour plates appeared in 1921, introduced by Laurence Binyon. Roderick Whitfield published the most comprehensive and lavishly illustrated catalogue in 1982-3 (Roderick Whitfield: *The Art of Central Asia - The Stein Collection in the British Museum*, Tokyo: Kodansha, vols. 1-2) with a third volume devoted to the remaining Stein material. A short catalogue, which accompanied the last major exhibition, could only present the most important paintings (Roderick Whitfield and Anne Farrer: *Caves of the Thousand Buddhas, Chinese Art from the Silk Route*, London: British Museum Publications, 1990). All of these are now out-of-print.

The lack of easily accessible catalogues coincides with growing demand for the paintings to be made accessible to researchers and the general public. In the last decades a completely new field of study, coined Dunhuang studies, or *Dunhuang xue* in Chinese, has sprung up, and the pressure on the important collections of Dunhuang paintings, manuscripts and artefacts to show the fragile and light sensitive material on a regular basis has become overwhelming. With the growing interest in the Silk Road, Central Asia and Buddhism, Dunhuang itself has now become a thriving tourist centre with its own airport. As a consequence there is also a growing demand for the wider availability of good reproductions of the paintings for popular and scholarly publications.

Now with the help of digital technology it is becoming possible to study the scattered Dunhuang material together - in a virtual form. One of the most important pilot projects of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation based in New York, U.S.A. is the creation of the "Mellon International Dunhuang Archive" in collaboration with the Dunhuang Research Academy in China, Sarah Fraser from Northwestern University and libraries and museums around the world. One of the main objectives of this project is through digital photography to re-connect, virtually, the wall paintings in the cave temples in Dunhuang with the portable paintings, manuscripts and textiles once also in Dunhuang, but now dispersed in many different countries.

Work on the digitisation of the tens of thousands of manuscripts in the British Library is well under way. The IDP web-page (<http://idp.bl.uk>) gives easy access to the tens of thousands of manuscripts and manuscript fragments that are already accessible on their web-site.

The Stein digitisation project is the first of its kind in the British Museum. Several departments have been collaborating throughout the year. The project is managed by Carol Michaelson, Assistant Keeper at the Department of Oriental Antiquities and the day-to-day co-ordination, scheduling and approval of Phase One was my task. The photographing of some of the Dunhuang paintings poses special challenges to the photographers, and digital photography has provided the technical solution. Some of the paintings are very large: almost three meters by three meters in size. Others are hanging scrolls about four meters long: these were probably originally made to hang from the gravel cliff face at Dunhuang. Several of these paintings and some long

handscrolls were photographed in their entirety for the first time as part of this project. The pictures were taken with a traditional camera using a digital back. Their excellent quality makes it possible to zoom-in to see the smallest detail at twice the size of the original. In the case of the long handscrolls and banners the individual shots taken will be stitched together in the Museum's New Media Unit, allowing the possibility of scrolling through the entire image for the first time. Most of the several hundred fragments also brought back by Stein have never been published before, and are available for specialist research for the first time. It is known that in several cases fragments belonging to paintings now in New Delhi or in Paris are in the British Museum collection, and it will be possible to reunite these parts by computer technology. Chinese scholars will be able to study the inscriptions and details in hitherto unprecedented clarity in China itself, where the digital images will be accessible.

A tour consisting of about 60 paintings is accessible to all interested on the Museum's COMPASS web-site <[www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/compass](http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/compass)>. Phase Two started in April 2003 and is co-ordinated by Dr. Cecilia Braghin. In this phase the textiles and selected three dimensional sculptures and objects brought back by Stein will also be digitised.

*Dr. Lilla Russell-Smith, Independent Scholar, U.K.*

#### **The Past of Iraq at The British Museum, London, U.K.**

Spurred on by the great surge of public interest in the holdings from Iraq in The British Museum since the outbreak of the war, the Education Department and the Department of the Ancient Near East organised a series of gallery talks on the evenings of 27 and 28 March, followed on 1, 2 and 3 April by a series of hour-long lunchtime lectures in the Stevenson Lecture Theatre. Apart from notices posted within the museum and available at the Information Desk, there was very little advance publicity. However, such was the level of public concern that the events were very well supported and the speakers enthusiastically received. Talks were given by Christopher Walker, Sally Irving, St. John Simpson, Irving Finkel and Dominique Collon, with the Keeper of the Department of the Ancient Near East, John Curtis on hand to answer questions.

John Curtis also inaugurated the lecture series with a review entitled 'The Cultural Heritage of Iraq', in which he showed slides of the varied countryside in Iraq and views of various sites under excavation. However the most poignant part of his talk was devoted to the pictures he showed of his Iraqi colleagues along with images of many of the objects in their care both in the open and in the museums, mainly the Baghdad Museum. Listeners were left in no doubt about the vulnerability of many of the antiquities, situated as they were on mounds rising above the riverine landscape, and thus an invitation to the building of look out positions or gun emplacements. Although moveable objects in the Baghdad Museum had been packed up for protection, many objects were too large to move and the museum was situated close to possible target areas for bombing. Dr. Curtis stressed that the governments of Coalition countries had been informed about the location of antiquities, but he pointed out that not only did some open sites suffer damage in the last Gulf War in 1991, but also that some provincial museums were also looted. Some of these looted objects have shown up on the art market in London, and Dr. Curtis was able to inform the audience that a few had been identified, impounded and sent back to Iraq, due, in no small part, to the vigilance of curators at The British Museum.

The second lecture, given by Dr. Dominique Collon was entitled 'Sumer, Babylon, Assyria and the cradle of Civilisation'. This was a survey of the material culture of Mesopotamia from the earliest pottery and cylinder seals to the reliefs from the city

palaces of Nineveh and Nimrud. She too reminded us of the fragility of Iraq's treasures, but perhaps her most important point was to reveal that for the fourth time the British Museum had the opportunity to acquire the Burney relief, an intriguing plaque depicting a taloned goddess standing between owls on addorsed lions (*see photo below*). The museum is inviting donations to enable it to acquire what would be one of the most important pieces in its Mesopotamian collections.

The most entertaining talk was reserved for the last: Dr. Irving Finkel spoke on 'First Writing and Mesopotamia's literary legacy'. In the course of his lecture Dr. Finkel progressed from his own apprenticeship in Assyriology to the decipherment of cuneiform by Rawlinson using the trilingual text at Bisitun in Iran, and the development of writing from a simple pictographic record of goods and rations to a complex script capable of conveying literature, medicine, dictionaries and magic. Although the audience was unable to read the tablets illustrated by Dr. Finkel, such was the artistry of the speaker that all felt they had understood the system of writing dictionaries by category rather than by alphabetic system (the alphabet was first adopted on a large scale for writing Aramaic), and shared in the chance discovery among thousands of clay fragments of the first line of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*.



The Burney Relief

The British Museum hopes to organise a further series of talks and gallery visits centred on the Islamic objects from Iraq after Easter. For more information, see the website: [www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk](http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk)

(HAS)

**11<sup>th</sup> Vladimir G. Lukonin Memorial Lecture, The British Museum, London, U.K.**

This year's lecture entitled 'Assyrians and Medes' will be given by the distinguished scholar, Professor David Stronach, of the University of California at Berkeley, U.S.A. and will take place on Tuesday, 8 July 2003 at 6 pm in the BP Lecture Theatre.

The lecture is free, but entry is by ticket, obtainable from Claire Burton, Department of the Ancient Near East, The British Museum, London WC1B 3DG, U.K. Tel: +44 20 7323 8315.

**Great Britain-China Centre Lecture**

The author Patrick French will discuss his new study of a 'lost land' in a lecture entitled "Tibet, Tibet", on Wednesday 4 June, at the Great Britain-China Centre in London.

With Tibet off-limits to foreign travellers at the moment, this evening with the biographer of Francis Younghusband is as close as you will get to a fascinating land, and one of the most persistently troubling of international issues. In his book *Tibet, Tibet* (2003), Patrick has crafted a compelling journey through modern-day Tibet, locked in China's embrace, that also explores 'the mind's Tibet', puncturing some of the myths inspired by the theocracy on the Roof of the World.

The book will be available for sale at 35% discount, from 6 pm, during the drinks reception. Drinks will be followed by the lecture at 6.30 pm which is free to GBCC members, and £3 for non-members. Address: Great Britain-China Centre, 15 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PS. . Please RSVP to +44 20 7235 6696; e-mail: [contact@gbcc.org.uk](mailto:contact@gbcc.org.uk)

**Ancient India: An informal discussion group**

A group of scholars based in Oxford, U.K. announces the formation of a new, informal discussion group.

The aim of the group is to bring together scholars from a variety of disciplines (e.g., Archaeology, Art history, History, Numismatics, Anthropology, Religious Studies, Oriental Studies) to discuss key aspects of South Asia's social, economic and religious history. The main period of interest is c. 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. to the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D., that is, covering the rise and spread of early historic cities, states and empires; the development of Buddhism, Jainism and proto-Hindu theistic cults; and the spread of pan-Indian artistic idioms. The boundaries, however, are flexible, and discussion is expected to extend into both earlier and later periods.

Meetings, to be held, on average, two to three times per term, will take the form of 40 minute papers, which, it is hoped, will encourage focused, problem-orientated exchange between textual and material-based scholars of ancient history. The primary emphasis will be on discussion. Papers by visiting scholars are particularly encouraged. The following themes are of particular interest to the group: early iconography; theories of religious and social change; ritual identity; history of pilgrimage; theories of state and urbanization; kingship and divinity; "high" and "low" religious traditions; interactions between Buddhism, Jainism and Brahmanical traditions; and ancient sites and modern politics.

On a more general level, particular attention will be paid to the interplay, and sometimes, conflict, between different narratives (eg. archaeological, textual, theological, 'folk', sectarian, colonial, nationalist) of the past. To what extent are the

parameters of historical knowledge shaped by the particular historiographic, theoretical and methodological boundaries of our respective disciplines? How satisfactory is the level of integration between the aims and methods of these disciplines, and how reliable are the frameworks of analysis that we use to interpret other disciplines' (primary, but usually secondary) sources? How do we respond to shifting interpretative paradigms in each others' disciplines?

The first meeting was held on Wednesday 14 May, with a presentation by Lance Cousins (Pali Text Society), entitled "Stupa and cetiya in Pali texts: a survey". The second lecture will be held on Tuesday, 10 June. Naman Ahuja (Ashmolean Museum) will discuss "Re-contextualising some early Buddhist imagery; or a study of a forgotten Indian pantheon, c. 200 B.C. to A.D. 200." It will take place in the Seminar Room of the Institute of Archaeology, 36 Beaumont Street, Oxford at 4.45 pm.

For further information and if you wish to present a paper, please contact Dr. Shailendra Bhandare (shailendra.bhandare@ashmus.ox.ac.uk) or Dr. Julia Shaw (julia.shaw@merton.ox.ac.uk).

#### **Academic Research Prize: Iran**

The Research Institute on Culture, Art and Communication in Tehran, Iran announces the sixth Cultural Research of the Year First Prize and calls for dissertations and academic research works. In honouring the academic efforts of the researchers, professors and university students who have done research and academic work on Iran, the committee for selection of outstanding academic works on Iran plans to select the outstanding works and introduce them at a ceremony which will be held by the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, sometime in the middle of December 2003 in Tehran, Iran.

The following points may be helpful for those interested in sending their works to the review committee. Iranian and non-Iranian academics are encouraged to participate provided that their work is related to Iran and falls into one of the following categories: socio-cultural issues, mass media, history and geography of Iran, literature, religion, folklore, art, sociology, ethnology and anthropology.

A committee will review all the works and will select at least five of them for the award ceremony. Only those works that have been produced during the year 2002 are qualified to be considered for this year's ceremony. Those participants whose works are selected will receive a return travel ticket and will be provided with all costs during their stay in Iran. The committee will accept those works that have been produced in one of the following languages; English, French, German, and Arabic. A copy of the applicant's original work is to be received not later than 6 July 2003.

For further details, contact Miss Salehi, Cultural Research of the Year, The Research Institute on Culture, Art and Communication, No. 11, Dameshgh Street, Near Vali-Asr Square, P.O. Box 14167, Tehran, Iran. Tel: +98 21 890 5374; fax: +98 21 890 1298; e-mail: researchyear2003@yahoo.com; website: www.cultural-research.net

#### **IFEAC – French Institute for Central Asian Studies – new Website**

The French Institute for Central Asian Studies (IFEAC) would like to announce the creation of its website at <www.ifeac.org>. For those who read the French language and are interested in finding out more about our activities, please find information about our publications, such as *Les Cahiers d'Asie centrale* (the periodical of our Institute), and many others; topics studied by our researchers; and past and future conferences and colloquia.

IFEAC may also be contacted by post in Tashkent at 18a, rue Rakatboshi (ex-Spilkov), 700031 Tashkent, Uzbekistan or in Paris via the Ambassade de France en Ouzbékistan, Service de la valise diplomatique, 128bis, rue de l'Université, 75007 Paris, France.

#### **Volunteers sought for excavations in Uzbekistan**

The University of Sydney Central Asian Programme is again inviting volunteers to join their September 2003 season of excavations in Uzbekistan. Participants will spend 13 days working with archaeologists on the major fortified site of Kazakl'i-yatkan in the Oxus delta before going on to a tour of the Silk Road cities of Khiva, Samarkand and Bukhara.

For further information, contact the Director of the University of Sydney Central Asian Programme, Dr. Alison Betts ([alison.betts@archaeology.usyd.edu.au](mailto:alison.betts@archaeology.usyd.edu.au)); website: [www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departs/archaeology/CentralAsia/homepage.htm](http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departs/archaeology/CentralAsia/homepage.htm)

#### **The Center for the Study of Eurasian Nomads Fieldwork Sponsorships 2003**

Fieldwork opportunities in 2003 being offered by the Center for the Study of Eurasian Nomads (CSEN) include an archaeological survey with small excavations at Baga Gazaryn Chuluu, located in south central Mongolia, in the Middle Gobi province; continuing excavations at the Chastiye Kurgany Burial Mounds in southern Russia, 150 km northeast of Rostov-on-Don in the North Black Sea region; and continuing excavations at the Golden Hills Khazar fortress, located in the lower Don River region, about 70 km east of Rostov-on-Don.

Complete information on these excavations, including applications, are available on the CSEN website: <http://csen.org>. For further information, please contact Dr. Jeannine Davis-Kimball ([jkimball@csen.org](mailto:jkimball@csen.org)).

#### **Aurel Stein's *Sand Buried Ruins of Khotan* available in facsimile**

Books For Travel, a U.K. based specialist travel publisher, is offering exact facsimile copies of the original of Aurel Stein's first great book *Sand Buried Ruins Of Khotan* at the greatly reduced price of US\$150 inclusive of post and packing. The normal retail price is over US\$200 plus postage. The book is beautifully produced, with all the original photographs and map, and bound in red engraved boards. This book has been out of print since the original was published in London in 1903.

Tel: +44 1985 850 4768; fax: +44 1985 850 583; website: [www.booksfortravel.org.uk](http://www.booksfortravel.org.uk); or e-mail: [bwbws@aol.com](mailto:bwbws@aol.com) to order your copy, quoting the code "bws".

#### **Publication of course material on elementary Uzbek**

Central Asian Free Exchange (CAFE) is pleased to announce that their beginners Uzbek course which they have taught in Uzbekistan for ten years has now been published and is easily available. The name of the course book is *Marhamat*.

*Marhamat* is designed to accommodate a variety of learning styles and situations, from formal classroom learning to an informal language helper with no training to individual study. It presents the language in segments related to real life situations.

Students will be able to use the language while progressing through the coursebook. *Marhamat* consists of 5 units each followed by an intermezzo which gives additional dialogues and phrases that are frequently used in daily life. The coursebook is accompanied by 2 audio CDs recorded directly from the units and intermezzos allowing you to hear native speakers' pronunciation, followed by the English translation. The audio CDs will aid students in listening practice, pronunciation, and as an aural review of vocabulary.

The cost for the hard-bound coursebook and 2 CDs is US\$50 plus shipping. All orders outside North America require prepayment in US Dollars. For further information, please e-mail: [cafeuzbek@aol.com](mailto:cafeuzbek@aol.com)

### **Summer Courses in Uzbek and Kazakh**

The Uzbek program will be held from 18 June-13 August 2003 and the Kazakh program from 23 June-18 August 2003. Kazakh instruction will be organized through the Adilet School of Law (Almaty) and Uzbek instruction through the Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages (SSIFL). The cost of the Almaty program will be US\$1,500, and for the Samarkand program, US\$1,200. This sum covers course tuition, books and materials, excursions, housing with local families, most meals, health insurance, and 6 credit hours from Indiana University in the U.S.A. Limited grant money is available to cover program costs and some transportation. For more information, please contact: [celcar@indiana.edu](mailto:celcar@indiana.edu). To apply online, go to <http://www.indiana.edu/~overseas/applications/applications.shtml>

### **Open Society Institute, Global Supplementary Grant Program**

The Network Scholarship Programs of the Open Society Institute is pleased to offer supplementary grants to students from selected countries of Eastern and Central Europe and the former Soviet Union. The purpose of the program is to enable qualified students to pursue Doctoral studies in Humanities and Social Sciences at accredited universities in Western Europe, Asia, Australia and North America. Global SGP grants will be awarded on the basis of academic excellence and financial need. The grants will provide supplemental funding for up to one year of study with the option to apply for a second year. Reapplication procedures will be outlined in the academic year 2004-2005 application form.

Only students who have been accepted into a full-time doctoral (Ph.D.) program at an accredited university are eligible to apply. The preference will be given to students pursuing advanced studies in regionally relevant areas that will directly benefit the quality of academic development in their home country.

Eligibility criteria: 1. Only those students who have already been awarded partial or full tuition, room and board stipends, or other types of financial aid may apply. (All applicants will be asked to provide the fullest possible account of their actual financial situation, including copies of financial aid requests to the Host University, and any award documents from any source of support); 2. Candidates must be nationals of one of the following countries: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Yugoslavia (Serbia Montenegro and Kosovo); 3. Candidates must be under 40 years of age at the time of application; 4. Candidates must demonstrate proficiency in the spoken and written language of their host institution.

The deadline for receiving applications for the 2003-2004 academic year is 1 April 2003 (for students pursuing Ph.D. in North America, Asia, Australia) and 2 June 2003

(for students pursuing Ph.D in Western Europe). For further information and to obtain an application form please visit website: <http://www.soros.org/scholar/globalssp.html>. Applicants may also apply online at <http://www.soros.org/grants/oas>. Paper and online applications are equally evaluated. Alternatively, contact: Khilola Rakhimberdieva, Scholarships Program Coordinator, Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation –Uzbekistan, Zarbog 31 Street (formerly Roza Luxemburg), Tashkent 700031, Uzbekistan. Tel: +99 8 71 120 5408/ 120 5409/ 120 5410/ 120 5411/ 120 5412/ 1205 4123/ 120 5010/ 120 5011; fax: +99 8 71 120 6854; e-mail: [khilola@osi.uz](mailto:khilola@osi.uz)

### **Fayaz Tepe To Be Restored**

Termez, today a quiet, unremarkable city in southern Uzbekistan, was once at the heart of Central Asian Buddhism, and home to the Buddhist monastery of Fayaz Tepe. Plans to restore the historic site are moving forward amid improved security in the region (*see CIAA NL 15, June 2002, p. 38*).

In the seventh century A.D., when Xuanzang visited Central Asia on his way from China to India, he reported that Buddhism appeared to be thriving in the region, with hundreds of temples and thousands of monks. One place in particular stood out in Xuanzang's recollections — the ancient city of Termez, located on the banks of the Amu Darya in what is now Uzbekistan.

In the fourteen centuries that have passed since then, instability, hardship, and religious intolerance have systematically chipped away at the region's Buddhist relics. The ousting of the Taliban has left countries in the region feeling more secure about the safety of their own Buddhist sites. In Termez, plans are under way to begin restoration of the historic Fayaz Tepe monastery, built more than a thousand years ago outside the city walls. The project is co-sponsored by the Japanese government, the Uzbek Culture Ministry, and UNESCO. Tokyo has promised to contribute US\$700,000 to the project.

Michael Barry Lane, UNESCO's representative in Uzbekistan, says that the agreement is actually several years old, but that work was delayed following the events of 11 September 2001: "In fact it was approved about two years ago. But unfortunately, between the time that the project document was signed and when it was supposed to start, the situation in neighbouring Afghanistan worsened and security was tightened in the Termez region and Surkhanda'yev province. So it meant that, in fact, we were not able to bring any Japanese experts here."

The Fayaz Tepe site consists of a rectangular building complex with a stupa. The walls of the sanctuary and parts of the central court bear the remains of mural paintings. Lane says that the preservation work is likely to start "very soon," adding that the restoration of Fayaz Tepe is only the beginning of a more ambitious project: "The [Uzbek] Ministry of Culture has prepared a draft preservation plan, and a preliminary project has been prepared for the conservation of the site. [This eventually] will take in not just Fayaz Tepe but all of the antiquities in the Termez region, and integrate them into a kind of master plan, for the preservation of the cultural sites in Termez region dating from the Islamic period and the pre-Islamic period and so on, and for the development for cultural tourism."

Several other Buddhist monuments have been discovered in the surroundings of ancient Termez. Kara Tepe, a complex of Buddhist monastic and ritual structures, and the 16 meter high Zurmala tower, the largest Buddhist stupa remaining in the region, are among the most important. The excavations of such sites have lent valuable insight into the culture of the region's former Buddhist community with the discovery of sculptures, paintings, and inscriptions. Many of these historic relics have been

gathered at the Surkhandar'ya Regional Museum of Termez, and the Museum of the History of the Peoples of Uzbekistan in Tashkent. Excavation work at the sanctuary of Fayaz Tepe has turned up one of the most celebrated pieces of early Central Asian art: a limestone sculpture showing the Buddha in meditation with disciples.

Traces of Buddhism have been found in all five former Soviet Central Asian republics. But many Buddhist sites are concentrated around Termez, the former northern capital of ancient Bactria, a historic region that included southern Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and northern Afghanistan. Buddhism spread from Gandhara into these regions through the trade routes and then spread to Sogdiana in central Uzbekistan and north-western Tajikistan and later, in the seventh century, to southern Kazakhstan and northern Kyrgyzstan. "In Tajikistan and in Kyrgyzstan there are also some Buddhist sites dating from a later period, from the seventh and eighth centuries," Lane said. "There is one in Kyrgyzstan close to Bishkek, which is called Krasnaya Rechka (Kyzylsuu). And there is an important site in Tajikistan called Adjina Tepe. It contained the biggest reclining Buddhist statue (*parinirvana* Buddha) in Central Asia which is now conserved in a museum in Dushanbe."

Central Asia was home to many religions before the arrival of Islam. The Magok-i-Attari mosque in Bukhara, Uzbekistan, illustrates this cultural diversity. It was built upon a Zoroastrian temple, which in turn was built upon a Buddhist shrine.

The Uzbek historian Malik Abdyrazzoqov encourages the government to protect the country's diverse heritage at all costs: "The history of Central Asia is very old. Here we had different religions like Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism and Buddhism. We had the influence of Indian, Iranian and Turkic cultures as well as of Islam. All of this is the nation's heritage. Every nation has to have its own heritage. It doesn't make any difference if it is the heritage of the Russian, the Tajik, or the Jews. There's no difference. We have to say that this is all world culture."

Lane says projects like the restoration of Fayaz Tepe contribute to the improvement of international understanding, dialogue between cultures, and the peaceful resolution of crisis. He echoes a statement issued by the Japanese Embassy calling the preservation project a "symbol of tolerance" that is especially crucial at times of religious divisions like those racking the world today.

But some local observers warn that the wave of cultural awareness might in fact damage rather than restore the country's historic monuments. Allimardon Annaev, a Tashkent-based historian, says cultural festivals and other events in Uzbekistan often include fireworks and cannon shots that do irreparable damage to centuries-old monuments like the Registan mosque in Samarkand. He says the problem is not addressed by the authorities although newspapers have reported it. "I have myself witnessed tables and ceramic bricks — some hundreds of years old — breaking and falling as a result of cannon fire," Annaev said. "And, as these special cannons were fired, cracks appeared on the walls of the Registan Square, on the walls of the Shir Dor *madrasah*, and on the minarets."

Still, Lane says the Uzbek policy is very much in line with that of UNESCO in terms of promoting cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, and the revival of traditional cultures. He says Uzbekistan celebrates its history as a continuous chain of civilization that includes all periods and influences.

*Antoine Blua, with contributions from Mirasror Ahrorov  
(A longer version of this article first appeared on Radio Free Europe  
[<http://www.rferl.org>])*

### **Derge Kangyur (Parpud) on CD-ROM**

The Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center has released the 103 volumes of the *Derge Kangyur* (Parpud) on a set of 10 CDs. These CDs are readable on both Mac and PC computers. This set is packaged in a handsome case. In order to make this collection more widely available to practitioners, dharma centres, and scholars the set is priced at a promotional price of US\$195, inclusive of postage. This covers only a small part of the costs of scanning and manufacturing of these copies. For libraries and similar institutions, it will cost US\$1030. Payment can be made by cheques in US dollars, Mastercard and Visa cards through Charity Wave, or by bank draft. Many other Tibetan Buddhist titles are also available. For more information, see website: <http://www.tbrc.org>.

### **Stok Palace Collection in Leh, India**

Raja Jigme Wangchuk Namgyal is very keen to raise funds to document his most valuable collection in the Stok Palace Museum at Leh, Ladakh. The specialist would be required to travel to Leh, photograph the collection which includes many *thangkas* and other objects, and to undertake the preparation of a catalogue. Anyone with the expertise and knowledge for creating such a catalogue should contact Radha Raina ([nirlac@vsnl.net](mailto:nirlac@vsnl.net)).

### **Loulan Tombs Robbed And Desecrated**

The 2000-year old tombs of Loulan, an ancient kingdom on the Silk Road have been robbed, according to reports in the Chinese press. A number of ancient tombs have been ruined, and a host of beautiful mural paintings within the tombs have been destroyed. Zong Tongchang, a noted archaeologist from the Palace Museum in Beijing, who visited the site at the beginning of the year, said that his team had happened to encounter a white car with no plates in the region of Lop Nur, in northwestern Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, where the relics were located. The car escaped. However, following the car's tracks, the team discovered the pillaged tombs, said Zong. Several tombs had been opened and unearthed, and the wooden boards of the coffins with skeletons and silk fragments were scattered all over the area. In an elegant, well-laid tomb beneath a pagoda, all five wooden coffins had been opened. The colourful mural paintings in the tomb, including a painting of two fighting camels, were smashed.

The ancient Loulan (Kroraina) kingdom was located at the eastern fringe of the vast, desolate Taklamakan Desert in southern Xinjiang. According to historical records, it was a booming and famous city situated at the juncture of the southern and northern strands of the ancient Silk Road. The city reached its climax during the Later Han Dynasty (25-220 A.D.). By that time, it had become a trading hub on the Silk Road, dealing mainly in silk from interior areas, glass from Ferghana, and perfume from Parthia, both leading central Asian countries whose coins were used in Loulan. The kingdom was buried by shifting sands during the fourth century and soon disappeared from historical records until it was rediscovered at the beginning of the last century by a Swedish explorer, near Lop Nur Lake. Archaeologists have yet to reach consensus on the reason for the city's sinking into oblivion. Experts hold that the enigma will be resolved once the tombs of the Loulan kings are discovered and excavated.

The pagoda was long considered a holy site in Loulan. Therefore, according to experts, the tomb under the pagoda is likely to belong to someone of high status. The tomb is distinguishable from the others by its size, building technology and colours. There are also images of nobles and feudal officials in the mural paintings. Camels represented a symbol of power in the Loulan region, and model camels were

permitted to exist only in the tombs of those of high social standing. The tomb thus probably belonged to the royal family of the kingdom, according to the archaeologist Zong. Chinese archaeologists subsequently discovered large quantities of mural paintings at an ancient Loulan tomb that local media had earlier reported as having been robbed. Archaeologists on a special investigative mission following the reports of the robbery, found that the tomb consists of two burial chambers. In the square front chamber, they found bright-coloured mural paintings on the four walls. Archaeologists also found the lower part of a pillar, covered with mural paintings of many wheel-shaped designs, standing in the middle of the tomb chamber. They reported that the pillar had been destroyed by the robbers.

*Mark Hall, Curator of Archaeology Niigata Prefectural Museum  
of History, Nagaoka, Japan*

### **American Center for Mongolian Studies now online**

The American Center for Mongolian Studies (ACMS) website is now on line ([www.mongoliacenter.org](http://www.mongoliacenter.org)). This site offers information on the ACMS, including information on how to join. It has information and links for academic research projects in Inner Asia, Mongolian study programs in the U.S.A. and Mongolia, and announcements of events, publications, fellowships, exhibits and jobs. Information on the activities of the 14 institutional members of the ACMS is also on the site. This site will be updated regularly to include new information and announcements, and to add links to additional academic research projects and sites of interest.

The ACMS was incorporated in April 2002 to encourage and facilitate academic projects in Mongolia and the Inner Asian region, which includes Mongolia and the border areas of China, Russia and Central Asia, such as Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, Buryatia, Tuva and eastern Kazakhstan. It is supported by member institutions and individuals, private foundations, and the U.S. government. The two primary projects of the ACMS include the opening of a permanent office and library in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, to support international academics working in Mongolia and educational exchange programs, and the creation of fellowships to facilitate academic exchanges with Mongolia.

The ACMS is a growing consortium of U.S. academic institutions, including colleges and universities, museums and research institutes. Members also include individual scholars, the business community and other people and organizations interested in the region. The ACMS is currently seeking institutions and individuals who are interested in becoming Charter Members of the ACMS. If you have any links or announcements you want placed on the site (or on the Mongolia Society listserver), please contact Charles Krusekopf, ACMS Director ([ckrusekopf@austincollege.edu](mailto:ckrusekopf@austincollege.edu)) or ([ckrusekopf@mongoliacenter.org](mailto:ckrusekopf@mongoliacenter.org)).

### **On Site Graduate Seminar in Art History in China**

In summer 2002, from 18 May to 22 June, Professor Li Chongfeng, Archaeology Department, Beijing University, and Professor Angela F. Howard, Art History Department, Rutgers University, conducted a graduate seminar in Xinjiang, the Autonomous Uighur Republic, studying *in situ* the caves of Kizil, Kumtura, Subashi, Simsim, Kizilgaha, Mazabaha, Tuhulakeaiken, and Taitai'er.

The seminar was funded by the Henry Luce Foundation and administered by the Asian Cultural Council, New York. Dr. Howard led a group of five graduate students from different U.S. Universities - Harvard, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Stanford, while Dr. Li led six Beijing students. For the first time foreign scholars and students were

welcomed to reside for such a length of time at Kizil and allowed to undertake an in depth study of the grottoes which represent the Buddhist art of the ancient Kingdom of Kucha on the northern Silk Route.

The seminar was a collaboration and used to great advantage both archaeological and art history tools. Specific topics addressed included: the chronology of the sites, the structure of the caves and their mutual relationship, changes of the natural surroundings affecting the distribution of the caves, and the doctrinal importance of the earliest phase of Indian Buddhism (*Hinayāna*) in the decoration of the caves.

Because of the enormous wealth of the material at hand there is no doubt that further study and investigation are needed in order fully to understand the art of Central Asia and specifically of Kucha. It is clear, however, that it cannot be treated merely as the art of a transition area between the two cultures of India and China, for it is an independent and fully-fledged artistic and religious creation.

*Professor Angela F. Howard, Art History Department, Rutgers University, U.S.A.*

#### **The "Silk Road Seattle" Website**

CIAA NL 16, December 2002, pp. 22-23, communicated the posting of John Hill's new *Hou Han Shu* translation on the Silk Road Seattle website (<http://depts.washington.edu/uwch/silkroad>). The other resources of that very extensive website are worth noting; its scope stretches the chronology of the "Silk Road" down through the seventeenth century. The project was initiated by a generous grant from the Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities at the University of Washington, and work continues on building the site's resources thanks to additional funding from the Silkroad Foundation in Saratoga, California. The goal of the project is to provide a collection of on-line resources in the first instance for a general audience, although we also welcome opportunities to facilitate scholarly exchange as in the case of John Hill's translation. Submissions of material and suggestions are most welcome and may be made to the project director, Professor Daniel C. Waugh ([dwaugh@u.washington.edu](mailto:dwaugh@u.washington.edu)).

To date, the site includes:

- An extensive virtual Art of the Silk Road exhibition (*see pp. 63-64 of this Newsletter*)
- A Silk Road atlas, featuring historical maps of cultures or states, maps of travellers' routes, and an interactive map exercise for those wishing to test their knowledge of the geography of the Silk Road. The maps are all ones created specifically for this project, but there are also links to other recommended map resources.
- A collection of historical texts in English. In the first instance, these have been chosen from older editions or translations not under copyright (examples: Jean Chardin, Adam Olearius). However, one goal is to encourage submissions of new and recent translations, as exemplified by John Hill's from the *Hou Han Shu* and Nicholas Sims-Williams' of two of the "Ancient Sogdian Letters". Such submissions can be presented either as "drafts" or in finished form. To have such a collection of texts available for those who cannot access the originals can facilitate teaching about Inner Asia and may also be valuable for scholars.
- Web pages on "Traditional Cultures", so far highlighting the culture of the pastoral nomads (the subjects include Animals, Dwellings, Food, and Religion). All of these are richly illustrated. A forthcoming addition here will

be the first rendering into English of one of the most important Kyrgyz epics, *Khojojash*.

- Web pages on "Cities and Architecture", so far including locations in China, India, Uzbekistan, Iran and Turkey. These are generously illustrated with excellent photographs and some historic drawings; the text varies from relatively short summary material to longer essays. In some cases "interactive" maps allow one to pinpoint the location of key architectural monuments. Some forthcoming additions may initially be presented as photograph galleries (with minimal text) until there is time to write more extensive text. Contributions both of descriptive text and images would be most welcome to permit expansion of the number of cities covered.
- Annotated "Teaching and Learning Guides" aimed especially at educators and individuals wishing to learn on their own about the Silk Road. Included already are extensive links to lesson plans and syllabi, annotations for quite a long list of videos, and at least the beginning of annotated bibliographies for reference and general reading. A page with annotations of museum websites is forthcoming soon.
- Information about Silk Road events and resources specific to the University of Washington and the region around Seattle.

*Professor Daniel C. Waugh, University of Washington, Seattle, U.S.A.*

#### **The Silk Road: Special online course from the Silkroad Foundation**

This non-credit, distance-learning course, aimed at beginners in Silkroad cultures, was taught between 23 March and 14 June 2003 and cost only US\$150.00. It was taught by Professor Daniel C. Waugh, of the University of Washington, Seattle, U.S.A. It is hoped that there will be more ventures of this nature in conjunction with the development of the University of Washington's on-line Silkroad resource.

It aimed to introduce the history of cultural and economic exchange across Eurasia for nearly 2000 years, beginning around 200 B.C. The silk roads were many, going east-west and north-south, and silk was only one of many items of exchange. Important components of the history of the Silk Road were the dissemination of religious beliefs and artistic interaction. Among the topics covered were: the geography of Eurasia, the culture of the Inner Asian nomads and their interaction with sedentary centres, major urban centres such as Dunhuang and Samarkand, the products and mechanisms of trade, the spread of Buddhism, Islam and Christianity and the evidence of their artistic legacies. The course explored the reasons for the rise of the Silk Road trade as well as its decline.

#### **New online Newsletter from the Silkroad Foundation**

The first issue of the Silkroad Foundation's newsletter *The Silk Road* is now available online. You can read the newsletter directly on-line (<http://www.silkroadfoundation.org/toc/newsletter.html>) or reach it through the Silkroad Foundation's website (<http://www.silkroadfoundation.org>) and then following the newsletter link. The editor, Chuck Cox would welcome any feedback, suggestions, or contributions ([info@silkroadfoundation.org](mailto:info@silkroadfoundation.org)).

## EXHIBITIONS

### **"Tibetan *Thangkas*"**

**The British Museum, London, U.K.**

A free exhibition of Tibetan *Thangkas* is to be held in Room 91 of the Museum from 71 September-7 December 2003.

For information contact The British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG, or see the website [www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk](http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk)

### **"*Thangkas*: Buddhist scroll-paintings from Tibet"**

**Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, U.K.**

This exhibition of around twenty Tibetan *thangka* paintings is selected from the Museum's own collection as well as from three private collections. Their subjects include Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, benign or wrathful guardian deities, *mandalas* (including a Wheel of Life) and an outstanding group of 18<sup>th</sup> century portraits from Eastern Tibet of lamas of the Shamar and Situ lineages, painted in the refined Karma Gadri style.

The exhibition in the Eric North Room runs from 22 July to 5 October 2003. For further information contact: Department of Eastern Art, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, OX1 2PH, U.K. Tel: +44 (0)1865 278067; fax: +44 (0)1865 278078.

### **"Seeing Lhasa: British Depictions of the Tibetan Capital 1936-1947"**

**Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, U.K.**

Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, was the dream destination for Western explorers during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Only the lucky few managed to reach Tibet, inspired by the remoteness of its location on the "roof of the world" and the romance of Shangri-La. The exhibition 'Seeing Lhasa' which will run from 7 September 2003- November 2004, features rare photographs, albums, watercolours and film - much of which has never been exhibited before. The richness of Tibetan cultural traditions - in textiles, dress, architecture, ritual and ceremonial - are all displayed. Stunning images illustrate aspects of Tibetan life that are no longer visible in the city vacated by the Dalai Lama in 1959. The exhibition also includes portraits of many notable public figures, including the Dalai Lama and members of the Tibetan religious and governmental hierarchies.

During the period covered by this exhibition, a British Mission was established in Lhasa. This enabled the British to cultivate close political and social relations with members of the Tibetan elite. 'Seeing Lhasa' reveals the way in which the city of Lhasa, its palaces, monasteries and aristocratic houses, became the backdrop for a social world in which the British and Tibetans interacted. They ate and drank, watched films and played football together and these activities were photographed and filmed as part of the British diplomatic agenda. The exhibition demonstrates the aesthetic accomplishments of many members of British missions to Tibet. Some of the first colour film was shot in Tibet during this period and will be shown in the exhibition. This unusual exhibition will have broad public appeal, as much for those

interested in Tibetan culture and history as for those who find inspiration in magnificent costumes, painted interiors or architectural ornamentation. It will also appeal to everyone interested in photography and film and British colonial history. 'Seeing Lhasa' is accompanied by a site-specific installation by the Tibetan artist Gonkar Gyatso (Leverhulme Artist in Residence at the Pitt-Rivers Museum 2003). A fully illustrated book edited by Clare Harris and Tsering Shakyas will be published by Serindia Publications in September 2003.

For further information contact: The Pitt Rivers Museum, South Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3PP, U.K. Tel: +44 (0)1865 270938 (Kate White); e-mail: kate.white@prm.ox.ac.uk; web site www.prm.ox.ac.uk

**"Tibetan Rituals: The Secret Visions of the Fifth Dalai Lama"**  
Musée des Arts Asiatiques Guimet, Paris, France

This recent exhibition concentrated on the ritual aspects of Tibetan Buddhism, and more specifically on the secret visions of the Fifth Dalai Lama (1617-1682), who not only united Tibet under his political rule, but was also an intense student of different sects of Tibetan Buddhism, thus appropriately fulfilling his role as the religious leader of Tibet. His visions were written down in manuscripts, and are very rare. Tibetan Buddhism uses many different types of implements during rituals, and the exhibition space was divided accordingly. The display began with metal sculptures and *thangkas*, of which can be specially mentioned a magnificent 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century sculpture of Avalokiteśvara, whose *dhoti* was decorated with textile patterns showing various animals inside roundels. The motifs suggest an earlier than 13<sup>th</sup> century date, and are clearly different from the later Yuan period textile patterns. Similar motifs, but on a smaller scale, can be found on the 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century metal sculpture from the Western Himalayas. An 18<sup>th</sup> century silk *thangka*, gold embroidered with sewn *vajra* motifs, was equally impressive. A rare manuscript (1647-1681) written by the Fifth Dalai Lama, and pertaining to his secret visions, was shown in a darkened room. The manuscript, written in gold on a black paper, depicted mandalas and objects needed during specific rituals. A large number of black *thangkas* depicting ferocious deities added to the mystic atmosphere. A substantial collection of ritual implements (e.g. ritual daggers and *vajras*) was shown in the next room, followed by household artefacts, but with a Tantric twist. Thus on display were to be found rugs with a pair of skeletons (*Citipati*) and cabinets decorated with *Mahakala* surrounded by skulls, and cremation ground scenes. Several of the items on display were from private collections, thus giving a chance to see in public these interesting and intriguing objects. "The Secret Visions of the Fifth Dalai Lama" was an impressive effort to show the effect of Tantric Buddhism on Tibetan art, and the complicated nature of Tibetan Buddhist ritual. An illustrated catalogue, with comprehensive entries (in French) is available (see CIAA, NL 16, December 2002 [2003] p. 29).

(MA)

**"De l'Indus à l'Oxus: Archéologie de l'Asie Centrale"**  
Musée Archéologique Henri Prades, Lattes, France

This exceptional exhibition depicting mainly objects from Afghanistan opened on 15 April and will be on show until 31 August 2003 in the beautiful museum in Lattes, near Montpellier in the south of France. Objects displayed show the exquisitely crafted artefacts which were created over millennia in the regions of ancient Bactria and Gandhara during the pre-Islamic period. Mainly culled from private collections from all over the world, as well as public collections from France, and displaying many objects which have never previously been exhibited in public, this exhibition is certainly worth a visit to the south of France. It includes Bronze Age artefacts, such as

a group of silver objects, and an inscribed vessel, as well as Gandharan Buddhist sculpture and jewellery, coinage, as well as representations of other deities from the region, and includes sculptures in marble as well as bronze sculptures and masks showing Brahmanical and Buddhist divinities. The objects cover the period from the Bronze Age to the time of the Shahi rulers of the northwest. A catalogue describing and illustrating all the objects on display will be published by the curator, Professor O. Bopearachchi, at the end of May 2003.

Address: Musée Archéologique Henri Prades, 390, av. de Pérols, B.P. 52, 34972 Lattes, France. Tel: +33 4 6799 7720; fax: +33 4 6799 7721; e-mail: [musee.lattes@free.fr](mailto:musee.lattes@free.fr); website: <http://musee.lattes.fr>

#### **"Divine Presence"**

**Casa Asia, Palacio del Barun de Cuadras, Barcelona, Spain**

This exhibition of sculpture from India and the Himalayas is on show from 26 March until 22 June 2003 at the galleries of Casa Asia in the Palacio del Barun de Cuadras in Barcelona, Spain. Jane Casey, the curator of the exhibition, has brought together some of the greatest sculpture of the Indian subcontinent from a wide variety of collections in Europe and the United States. The major public lenders to the exhibition include the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Asia Society Galleries, New York and the San Antonio Museum, Texas. In addition, various unpublished or little known pieces from private collections are also on view. Images from almost every major period in Indian, Nepalese and Tibetan art are represented through 59 works. The exhibition is accompanied by an illustrated catalogue (in Spanish, Catalan and English), written by Jane Casey, Naman P. Ahuja and David Weldon.

For further information contact: Casa Asia, 373 Avenida Diagonal, Barcelona, Spain; website: [www.casaasia.org](http://www.casaasia.org).

#### **"The Two Emperors: China's Ancient Origins"**

**Australia Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia**

This exhibition is showing from 29 March to 15 June 2003. Uncovering the tombs of two ancient Emperors, this exhibition is one of the most significant to leave China in over a decade. "Two Emperors" highlights the shortest and longest dynasties in China's history: the Qin and the Han. This stunning exhibition includes formidable life-sized terracotta warriors, exquisite gold, jade and bronzes, and captivating farmyard animals, pigsties and granaries. Dating back over 2000 years, the most recently excavated remains have never previously been seen in Australia. In 221 B.C. the First Emperor, Qin Shihuang, one of the most forceful figures in history, established the political empire from which the name China derives. His harsh rule lasted only 16 years, yet he left an enduring legacy including the Great Wall of China and his now famous burial site. After the fall of the Qin came the Han dynasty, which lasted 400 years. From the burial place of the fourth emperor of the Western Han, Jingdi, visitors will see the abundant remains of everyday life and will sense the changing mood from the dark dominance of Qin military might to the welcome peace, stability and prosperity of the Han.

For further information contact the museum website: [http://www.austmus.gov.au/exhibitions/two\\_emperors/introduction.htm](http://www.austmus.gov.au/exhibitions/two_emperors/introduction.htm)

**"Himalayas: An Aesthetic Adventure"**

**The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.**

This exhibition runs from 5 April to 17 August 2003, and it is the first major exhibition to include works of art from the entire Himalayan region, comprised of objects from India, Kashmir, Nepal, Pakistan, Tibet, and Bhutan to explore the particular beauty and artistic achievement that developed from a spiritual tradition unique to the Himalayas. The exhibition will include 187 works mostly of religious art created between the sixth and nineteenth centuries from private and public collections in North America, Europe, and Asia. Most of these objects have never before been publicly exhibited.

The exhibition features temple sculptures of stone and wood, works in terracotta, and exquisitely cast bronzes that have been embellished with inlaid gemstones, gilding, and paint; vividly coloured paintings—from reverential portraits to awe-provoking deities—on cloth, palm leaf, paper, and wood; and ritual objects in various media. These works emerged within the framework of the theological needs of the two great Asian religions—Hinduism and Buddhism—that prevail to this day in the Himalayas. Although the objects originally functioned as instruments of religious ritual and devotion, they also express the aesthetic impulses of countless generations of artists, among whom were many creative geniuses. Each object in the exhibition has been carefully selected principally for its aesthetic excellence.

"Himalayas: An Aesthetic Adventure" can be seen as a response to a contemporary expansion of interest in the Himalayas, whether in the increasing study of Tibetan Buddhism, the growing popularity of trekking in Nepal, or the current attention given to visiting yoga ashrams in the Indian foothills. The geography of this region exerts a powerful magnetic pull on Western seekers of both adventure and spirituality, just as it has done for millennia for millions of Hindus and Buddhists, though with greater devotion than adventurism. Unfortunately, the Himalayas are changing radically and rapidly, both environmentally and religiously, due to demographic, political, and social factors. Yet, even though these beautiful objects reflecting the piety of generations of devotees are presented in these altered circumstances, they continue to enchant us with their beauty. The intent of this exhibition is to provide the viewer with visual evidence of the spiritual aspirations of those who have defied the physical hardships of an arduous mountain terrain to express their soaring creative spirit. The exhibition is curated by Dr. Pratapaditya Pal (visiting curator for Indian, Himalayan and Southeast Asian Art), and by Betty Seid (exhibition coordinator, The Art Institute of Chicago). A catalogue, *Himalayas: An Aesthetic Adventure*, accompanies the exhibition and is published by the Art Institute of Chicago and The University of California Press, 308 pp., 240 illustrations, priced at US\$65.00 (hardback) or US\$39.95 (softback). It is edited by Pratapaditya Pal, with contributions by Amy Heller, O. von Hinuber, and Gautama V. Vajracharya. Essays and catalogue entries investigate the cultural milieu in which the works of art were created. All works featured in the exhibition, about seventy percent of which have never been published or publicly exhibited, are illustrated in full colour. An appendix provides translations and interpretations of important Tibetan, Nepali, and Kashmiri inscriptions.

For more information contact: The Art Institute of Chicago, Department of Asian Art, 111 South Michigan Avenue, 60603/6110 Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. Website: [www.artic.edu](http://www.artic.edu). The exhibition will move to the Freer-Sackler in Washington on 18 October 2003 until 11 January 2004.

**"The Glory Of The Silk Road"**

**The Dayton Art Institute, Dayton, Ohio, U.S.A.**

176 rare treasures were displayed from 8 February–11 May 2003, including objects made of gold, silver, gilt bronze, jade, clay, silk and paper, with forms ranging from sculptures, ceramics and paintings to textiles and manuscripts. These works included some of the most powerful and groundbreaking archaeological finds in northwestern China. This is the first time that most of these objects have been shown in the United States. These rare and ancient works, most dating from the 6<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> centuries, were drawn from collections in museums and archaeological research institutes in Beijing, Shaanxi and Gansu provinces, and the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region of China. Discovered along the ancient Silk Road, these treasures provided a comprehensive overview of 500 years of history of the Silk Road.

The exhibition included Chinese works of art as well as works brought into China along the Silk Road from ancient India, Greece and the Roman Empire. The exhibition explored the themes of cross-cultural exchanges and influences among China, Central Asia and the West, with an emphasis on China. The presentation focused on several aspects of the art of the Silk Road: the spread of Buddhism; the early presence of Christianity and other religions; silk and other textiles from China and Central Asia; rare religious and non-religious manuscripts from Turfan; changing styles of gold and silver work; as well as cross-cultural influences in dance and music.

The collecting of art and artefacts from the Silk Road in China has a century-long history. During the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a great number of Silk Road treasures were removed from Xinjiang and Dunhuang during the expeditions led by Sven Hedin, Aurel Stein, Albert von Le Coq, Albert Grünwedel, Paul Pelliot, Langdon Warner, and Otani Kozui. In the late 1920s, the Chinese archaeologist Huang Wenbi conducted a number of expeditions in Xinjiang. Unfortunately, significant portions of the Le Coq collection were destroyed by fire in Berlin during World War II. The works that survived have thus become even more important and valuable sources for the study of the Silk Road and Central Asian art.

This exhibition was co-organized by The Dayton Art Institute and the National Museum of Chinese History and was curated by Li Jian, Curator of Asian Art at The Dayton Art Institute. The exhibition catalogue is written by an international team of curators and scholars, including Valerie Hansen (Yale University), Angela Sheng (Canada), Katherine R. Tsiang (University of Chicago) and Wang Binghua (Xinjiang Institute of Archaeology). An international symposium on the exhibition took place in April 2003.

For more information contact the Dayton Art Institute Museum at 456 Belmonte Park North, Dayton, Ohio 45405-4700 U.S.A.; Tel: +1 937 2235277 or 800 2964426; fax: +1 937 2233140. e-mail: [info@daytonartinstitute.org](mailto:info@daytonartinstitute.org)

**"The Sensuous and the Sacred: Chola Bronzes from South India"**

**The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A.**

This exhibition will be on display from 6 July to 14 September 2003. South Indian bronzes, most notably bronzes produced under the reign of the Chola dynasty between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, are famed for their subtlety of modelling and fluent outline of form. Balancing graceful realism and heroic classicism, Chola bronzes are among the best known and most admired objects of art from the subcontinent. Drawn from important collections of temple bronzes in the United States and Europe, this exhibition of approximately 60 South Indian sculptures presents the first major survey of the art of Chola bronzes. Organized in three thematic sections, the exhibition focuses on the iconography of the Hindu gods Shiva and Vishnu, along with examples

of Buddhist bronzes. While most of the works are from the Chola period, a few later bronze pieces are included to expand the iconographic scheme and place the Chola works in the larger context of South Indian bronze sculpture. Photomurals of temples, as well as bronze statuary fully draped, ornamented, and ready for processional rituals, recreate the context in which these religious icons are seen and worshipped in South Indian temples today. The exhibition is organized by the American Federation of Arts and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution.

For further information contact The Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106, U.S.A. Tel: +1 216 4217350; e-mail: [info@clevelandart.org](mailto:info@clevelandart.org); website: [www.clevelandart.org](http://www.clevelandart.org)

**"Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia (1256-1353)"**

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

This exhibition runs from 13 April to 27 July 2003. At the time of his death in 1227, Genghis Khan had unified the Mongol people, organised a nearly invincible army of fearless nomadic warriors, and set into motion the first stage of the conquest of an enormous territory that would be completed by his sons and grandsons. With extraordinary speed and devastating ruthlessness the Mongols created the world's largest empire, stretching at its greatest extent from Korea to Hungary. But the legacy of Genghis Khan extends well beyond the battlefield. The Mongols' promotion of pan-Asian trade, their avid taste for luxury goods, and their practice of relocating artists combined to produce an unprecedented cross-fertilization of artistic ideas throughout Eurasia. This exhibition examines the important artistic and cultural achievements that occurred in the Iranian world in the aftermath of the Mongol invasions. It was a period of brilliant cultural flowering as the Mongol masters sought to govern their disparate empire, and in the process they sponsored the creation of a remarkable new visual language. By uniting eastern and western Asia for over a century, the Mongols produced a unique occasion for cultural exchange that forever changed the face of art in Iran, making it a focal point of innovation and synthesis for the next three hundred years. As the lively manuscript illustrations, opulent decorative arts, and splendid architectural elements assembled for this exhibition all reveal, this too was Genghis Khan's legacy.

For further information, contact the Museum at 5905 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90036, U.S.A. or see the museum website, [http://www.lacma.org/khan/index\\_flash.htm](http://www.lacma.org/khan/index_flash.htm)

**Art of the Silk Road**

This innovative virtual exhibition (<http://depts.washington.edu/uwch/silkroad/exhibit/index.shtml>) is curated by Dr. John Szostak. The exhibition includes text, maps and several hundred high-quality digital images arranged under the headings of Cultures, Religions, Trade, and Intercultural Exchange. The primary access point for the material is a time-line from which users may select a "culture." Schematic maps were created specially for the exhibition, and essays were solicited from individuals with a broad range of specializations. Each object is accompanied by separate descriptive text, and the images may be enlarged for closer viewing. The exhibition was made possible by the generous cooperation of a number of important museums whose objects are depicted and thanks to contributions of photographs from a number of individuals. Participating museums include: The British Museum, Musée du Louvre, Berlin Staatliche Museum für Indische Kunst, Victoria and Albert Museum (London), Seattle Art Museum, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, and the Inner Mongolia

Museum. The exhibition will be maintained in its current form for the indefinite future (although it is likely to be hosted on the Seattle Art Museum website). As other materials become available, there may be some incremental changes in content. Comments regarding the exhibition may be sent to Daniel Waugh <dwaugh@u.washington.edu>.

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## CONFERENCES

### Conference Reports

#### **Workshop of the British Institute of Persian Studies Edinburgh, U.K.**

The fifth BIPS Workshop took place from 25-26 May 2003 in Edinburgh, Scotland. Presentations covered a wide range of topics from palaeo-economic studies to the modern History of Iran. In a very personal and amiable atmosphere the workshop provided snapshots of the individual projects and their various stages of research from planning to completion.

Marjan Mashkour from Paris offered an insight into archaeozoology, a study area, which significantly contributes to our knowledge of local economies and trade, but which is still neglected in the Iranian context. Derek Kennet and Seth Priestman introduced their work on the Williamson collection project. This valuable surface collection of Sasanian and early Islamic ceramic material from southern Iran is currently evaluated with regard to the variation within assemblages as well as the distribution of single pottery types. Once completed, the study will provide new evidence for patterns of regional ceramic distribution and long-term economic developments. Another study concerned with the regional distribution of ceramic shapes and decorative patterns was presented by Gabriele Puschnigg, who is working on the possible links of pottery types from Merv, Turkmenistan, with northern Iran.

The Malayer coin hoard is a find of great numismatic significance, as it contains a large variety of early Greek coinage. Despite the fact that a sizeable collection of coins from this hoard is preserved in the Iranian National Museum, it has to date received little scholarly attention. Andrew Meadows from the British Museum has finally studied the collection last year and reported on his preliminary conclusions concerning single coin issues and die studies.

Robert Hillenbrand presented research on the Medieval Mosques and Mausolea of Turkmenistan, a topic related to his forthcoming publication on the religious architecture of the Merv Oasis. He specifically discussed structural problems and the use of decorative patterns laid in brick to produce highly plastic effects in the changing conditions of daylight. Medieval architecture was also the subject of the doctoral research currently undertaken by Alireza Anisi at Edinburgh University on tomb towers in Iran. These towers present a distinct form of architecture in medieval Iran and are frequently adorned with inscriptions.

Underglaze painted wares of the 14<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> centuries and paintings in Armenian churches in 17<sup>th</sup> century New Julfa represented two of the chronologically later research topics. Rosalind Haddon is currently gathering material from various international museum collections to verify issues of uniformity in the ceramic material from Iran and its neighbouring countries. The increase in western influence on the style and composition of paintings in 17<sup>th</sup> century New Julfa was analysed by Amy Landau, who is planning more fieldwork on this subject.

Other projects focused on literary themes, such as the context and setting of medieval Persian *ghazal* poetry performance by Dominic Brookshaw. This study tries to

reconstruct the actual circumstances and practicalities of poetry performance, integrating questions of the architectural settings and the role of gardens. Evangelos Venetis in his research followed the common traditions of the Shahnamah and Iskandarnamah, a project tracing the lines of transmission between chronologically distinct sources. Further presentations included Lloyd Ridgeon's analysis of the controversial figure of Ahmad Kasravi in contemporary Iranian society and Ali Ansari's study of present day sources on Iran.

The Bakhtiari Lions Project, which was already introduced at the last workshop, has moved to a further stage and Paul Luft reported that evidence on the stone Lions is currently being gathered in Iran. Peter Morgan gave a presentation on the short exploratory survey he was able to undertake at Darabgird, where he located substantial remains of industrial activities inside the city. A comprehensive project of archaeological reconnaissance is planned for the coming years.

*Dr. Gabriele Puschnigg, Institute of Archaeology, University of London, U.K.*

#### **"Coinage and Buddhism"**

**ONS Study Day, Headley Lecture Theatre, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, U.K.**

The Oriental Numismatic Society (ONS) Study Day was recently held at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, UK, organised by the Heberden Coin Room on 24 May, 2003. The theme of the day was "Coinage and Buddhism". The first paper by Joe Cribb (Department of Coins & Medals, The British Museum, London) entitled "The numismatic evidence for dating the Bimaran casket" considered the staeite and gold reliquaries discovered at stupa 2 in Bimaran, near Jelalabad in Afghanistan by Charles Masson in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It discussed the dating of the Buddha images on the gold reliquary by considering related reliquaries and Buddha images on Kanishka I's coins and Gandharan sculpture. The second paper by Madhuvanti Ghose (Department of Eastern Art, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford), "Re-considering the Bimaran Reliquary", once again dealt with the intriguing subject of the famous gold casket and suggested a new interpretation for the fourth figure on it as Prince Siddhartha, besides proposing a date for the Buddha images and the reliquary in the latter half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE. Michael Willis (Department of Oriental Antiquities, The British Museum, London) presented the final paper, "Coins and Relics" which discussed the various types of relics found in different stupa deposits from around South Asia, and the intriguing fact that early central Indian relics do not include coin deposits, which are mainly found in the Gandharan region. It was regretted that the paper to be presented by Shailendra Bhandare (Heberden Coin Room, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford), who had planned the event, on money usage in the *jātakas* could not be read due to unforeseen circumstances; it is hoped that the paper will be presented on another similar occasion.

#### **"Afghanistan, ancien carrefour entre l'est et l'ouest"**

**Musée Archéologique Henri Prades, Lattes, France**

The international colloquium, *Afghanistan, Meeting Point between East and West*, took place between 5-9 May 2003 at Lattes on the occasion of the exhibition, *De l'Indus à l'Oxus: Archéologie de l'Asie Centrale* (see pp. 59-60 of this newsletter). Many renowned experts on Afghanistan gathered from all over the world. On 5 May, the colloquium began with an overview presented by G. Fussman, "L'Afghanistan comme objet de connaissance archéologique" in which he stressed the importance of research in the region, followed by an account of Unesco's current activities in Afghanistan, "Les activités de l'Unesco en faveur de la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel afghan", by C. Manhart; and "Archéologie, patrimoine et développement

économique" by P. Leriche, who discussed the word "patrimony" and the importance of developing the region responsibly, with insights from the site of Termez. This was followed by the section devoted to *Archaeology*, which started with the very exciting presentation by H.-P. Francfort, "Toreutique bactrienne à l'âge du bronze", in which he discussed some new finds from Bronze Age Bactria including some objects on show in the exhibition. He also next read the paper sent in on "Le complexe de Adji Kui 1 (Turkmenistan, III-II millénaire av. n. ère)" by G. Rossi-Osmida which considered the preliminary findings from that site. P.L. Kohl next presented a paper on "The relevance of western Afghanistan for the early trade in tin-bronzes during the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC", followed by "La conduite de l'eau au champ: la Bactriane sur un chemin d'ouest en est" by P. Gentelle. B. Lyonnet discussed "Des collections céramiques du Musée de Kaboul" and the session ended with a presentation of 3D imagery of the site of Aï Khanoum: "Aï Khanoum et la '3D': un essai de restitution" by G. Lecuyot. The day concluded with a special session devoted to the subject of *Trade*, with lectures on "Bribes d'histoire du commerce bactrien" by E. de la Vaissière who discussed references to Bactrian traders in textual sources, and "What sustained the Graeco-Indian kingdoms in Afghanistan: Probing into the Indo-Greek economy" by A.K. Singh.

6 May started with the morning session devoted to *Literary sources*. "Les villes antiques entre Hérat et Kandahar: étude toponymique" by C. Rapin and C. Baratin was followed by the paper of U.P. Arora in which he considered the references to Bactrians in Persian and Greek accounts. F. Thierry next focussed on the "Yuezhi et Kouchans. Pièges et dangers des sources chinoises". This session was followed by the one on *Numismatics*. J. Cribb in a paper entitled "Numismatic insights into the Dayuezhi in Bactria" talked about the imitation Heliocles coins and their implications on the pre-Kushan period. D. MacDowall next discussed "The role of Demetrius in Arachosia and the Kabul valley" which was followed by "La reconquête au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle de l'est iranien par l'empire sassanide" by R. Gyselen using seal inscriptions. The last session of the day was on *Epigraphy*. One of the most interesting papers of the entire conference was that of P. Bernard and G. Rougement, "Une nouvelle inscription grecque de l'Asie centrale" in which they read a Greek poem by Sophytos from Afghanistan. This was followed by another exciting discovery of "A new inscription dated in the 'Yona' (Greek) era of 186/5 B.C." on a Buddhist reliquary presented by R. Salomon, which confirmed the existence of an Indo-Greek era. H. Falk next spoke about the beginnings of *stupa* worship in the Bajaur region with the help of inscriptional evidence. Next, N. Sims-Williams discussed some revised readings of seal inscriptions in the paper "Some Bactrian seal-inscriptions" while F. Grenet discussed "Nouvelles données sur les Kidarites au Tokharistan (c.420-465)".

The last day of the colloquium was entirely devoted to *Art History*. It began with a comprehensive survey of Dionysiac iconography by K. Abdullaev in the paper entitled "Les motifs dionysiaques dans l'art de la Bactriane d'après les trouvailles en Afghanistan, Tadjikistan et Ouzbékistan". M.L. Carter next presented "An unusual marble acrolithic head attributed to northern Afghanistan" which has close parallels to the marble head in the Ortiz Collection. The later history of Afghanistan from the 6<sup>th</sup> century onwards was discussed by A. Rahman. In the paper "Les protecteurs du Bouddha: du Gandhara à l'Afghanistan", A.-M. Quagliotti discussed representations of Skanda Karttikeya and Vajrapani as attendants of the Buddha in episodes of Indra's visit. In the afternoon, there were a series of papers which considered Bamiyan. D. Klimburg-Salter discussed the possible location of the *parinirvana* Buddha at Bamiyan in the light of new interpretations of the Chinese pilgrim accounts in her paper "Old evidence - new hypothesis, the case of the Parinirvana Buddha". K. Tanabe also discussed Xuanzang's description of Bamiyan and focussed on the transmission of a Sasanian necklace motif which might throw more light on the dating of the 38 meter Buddha at Bamiyan in "Foundation for dating the 38 meter Buddha image at Bamiyan". D. Bivar again discussed Bamiyan by considering "The jewel of Khingila: a memento of the great Buddha of Bamiyan" by assigning the paintings in

the grotto of the larger Buddha to the time of Khingila, while N. Odani considered "A classical vine scroll in the wall painting of Bamiyan" found in the same niche. V. Schiltz presented the paper "Notule sur un ours énigmatique" which was followed by V.C. Srivastava's presentation, "Maitreya Buddha on the Silk route". M. Ghose discussed "A rare image of the Goddess Nana from Afghanistan" by focussing on a bronze plaque depicting the goddess on show at the exhibition, while M. Yaldiz in her paper, "These boots are made for walking .. travellers from east to west? The enigmatic transformation of a monk into a Buddha in Central Asian art" talked about the iconography of a monk wearing boots. The colloquium ended with the presentation of the final thoughts and concluding remarks by Gérard Fussman and Paul Bernard, with all the participants agreeing that the research presented during the sessions was a testament to the degree of scholarship carried out on Afghanistan despite the testing times of the last two decades, and with the hope that such future conferences would include the participation of colleagues from Afghanistan itself.

### **Ilya Gershevitch Memorial Symposium University of Bologna, Ravenna, Italy**

To celebrate the official inauguration of Ilya Gershevitch's Library at the University of Bologna (sede di Ravenna), the Faculty of Preservation of the Cultural Heritage and the Italian Institute for Africa and the Orient (ISIAO) organised on 11 April 2003 in Ravenna an International Seminar on "The Scholarly Contribution of Ilya Gershevitch to the Development of Iranian Studies". It took place in two different venues of the University of Bologna in Ravenna: the morning session was held in the "Aula Gershevitch" (Gershevitch Hall) of the Seminario Arcivescovile of the University, and the afternoon session, which included the official inauguration of the "Gershevitch Library", with open display of the rarest and most important books, was held in the premises of the "Dipartimento di Storie e Metodi per la Conservazione dei Beni Culturali".

The principal papers presented were as follows: G. Gnoli (ISIAO and University of Rome 'La Sapienza', "I. Gershevitch and the development of Iranian studies"); A. Panaino (University of Bologna, "The scholarly contribution of I. Gershevitch to the Young Avestan studies and its impact on the history of Zoroastrianism"); A. Rossi (Istituto Universitario Orientale Naples, "I. Gershevitch and Iranian linguistics and dialectology"); N. Sims-Williams (SOAS London, "I. Gershevitch and Bactrian studies"); W. Sundermann (Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, "I. Gershevitch and Manichaean studies"); E. Filippone (Istituto Universitario Orientale Naples, "I. Gershevitch and Balochi"); A. Chaudhri (Cambridge, UK, "An Ossetic prayer to Ilya"); E. Morano (SOAS London, "I. Gershevitch and Sogdian studies") and Farrokh Vajifdar (London, "I. Gershevitch and the Parsis", in absentia, read by A. Hintze) spoke about Ilya Gershevitch's outstanding contribution to the world of Iranian Studies, from Avestan and Old Persian to Bactrian, Manichaean Studies, Balochi, Ossetic, Sogdian and generally Iranian linguistics and dialectology.

*Dr. Enrico Morano, Lecturer in Iranian Languages, SOAS, University of London, U.K.*

### **"Himalayas: an Aesthetic Adventure"**

**Art Institute Of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.**

The symposium took place on 4-6 April 2003 in conjunction with the exhibition of the same name, curated by Dr. Pratapaditya Pal, foremost specialist on Himalayan art,

clay, sculpted in wood or stone, as well as illuminated manuscripts and book covers. This exhibition is the result of Dr. Pal's influential career spanning more than five decades of research as documented by numerous books and exhibition catalogues devoted to the study and connoisseurship of the arts of India and the Himalayas. Sponsored by the Thomas and Margot Pritzker Family Foundation, the three-day symposium at the Art Institute of Chicago gathered leading scholars of several countries as well as collectors and connoisseurs of Tibetan, Nepalese and Kashmiri art.

Dr. Pal opened the symposium with a session on aesthetic theories and principles. Professor Gerald Larson (Indiana University) discussed Abhinavagupta's perspective on poetry, art and religion. Abhinavagupta (A.D. 950-1025) was a devout Kashmiri Shaivite who was a thinker, musician and poet. Larson explained the theory of *rasa* (taste/emotional experience), emphasizing the resonance of the eight basic *rasa*, which beyond the literal and metaphorical leads to the immaterial realm of spirituality and aesthetics as the pinnacle of *ananda* (bliss) plus *rasa*. Dr. Sthaneshwar Timalina (Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri) related his unique experience as he is both a native practitioner and a scholar involved in Newar *tantric* art and aesthetics. Since the Newars were the practitioners of *Tantra*, their art and architecture became the medium for the preservation of the esoteric aspect of *Tantras*. He showed how Nepal had received the aesthetic philosophy and esoteric practices of Kashmir as well as the *Tantric* traditions of Bengal through cultural exchange during the 9<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries. Professor Erberto Lo Bue's presentation "The Spirit of Tibetan art, an Introduction", addressed the major topic of Tibetan aesthetics as expressed in Tibetan art and literature. While emphasizing the importance of copying, as reported by Tibetan historical sources, Lo Bue raised the issue of the basic paradox of Tibetan art - how Tibetan scholars and artists have preserved Indian aesthetic ideas as conveyed into Tibet through the Buddhist literary and art works of India, yet simultaneously they have occasionally departed from their Indian models. Quoting principally from the writings of Padma dkar po, Si tu Pan chen, 'Jam mgon Kong sprul and Kah thog Situ, Lo Bue demonstrated that Tibetans possess not only highly developed aesthetic feelings, but also a nuanced and articulate vocabulary to express their ideals as well as those they have inherited from the Indian artistic traditions.

The next session was devoted to "Collecting and Connoisseurship", bringing five major collectors of Tibetan art to the podium: the speakers were Tom Pritzker, Helmut Neumann, Michael Henss, chairman Richard Ernst and discussant Steven Kossak. Ernst's career as professor of Physical Chemistry at Zurich Polytechnic University has led him to an appreciation of both the aesthetic and scientific aspects of Tibetan paintings which he described, with emphasis on certain pigment analyses as factors in chronological assessment. Professor Ernst raised six questions for general reflection: Can you live with the fact that virtually all Tibetan art came out of the country illegally? Would you consider returning major pieces if the situation in Tibet were to improve? How can we prevent the disappearance of art in private hiding places? Can private owners provide adequate long-term conservation? How can we prevent the loss of circumstantial information on provenance? How much restoration work can you tolerate?

In a talk entitled "In the Footsteps of Rinchen Zangpo", Tom Pritzker presented his itinerary of explorations in west Tibet and the western Himalayas during the past 25 years. As a result of a three-month trek in Dolpo in 1978, his keen affinity with Tibetan and Himalayan cultures led him to a commitment to collect as well as to preserve Tibetan archaeology and art in Tibet, and to promote scholarship. Pritzker illustrated his lecture with slides from his family expeditions in west Tibet leading to the re-discovery of the mural paintings of the Dunkar and Par caves west of Toling and the 1999/2001 expeditions to Dolpo, leading to the restoration of a monastery and re-discovery of a library of 650 Tibetan illuminated manuscript of the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century. By contrast, Helmut Neumann was first fascinated by Kashmiri and Tibetan

century. By contrast, Helmut Neumann was first fascinated by Kashmiri and Tibetan art and subsequently travelled in the Himalayas and to Tibet as a result of this passion. Neumann discussed criteria for judging the aesthetics of Himalayan art works as well as the philosophy and motivations for collecting. Michael Henss completed an art history doctoral thesis in Western art but working in an architectural preservation program in Ladakh led him to change his field of study to Tibetan art history, and to collect Tibetan art as an expression of his appreciation of the aesthetics and cultural milieu.

The discussant, Steven Kossak of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, posed questions about collectors' responsibility towards scholarship: Should scholars and museums be allowed to publish and exhibit works of art from private collections with the dating and provenance that they thought appropriate, or must they follow the owner's description? The overwhelming opinion of the panel recognised the need for academic freedom and the need of collectors to support such efforts.

The session "Images, Inscriptions and Contextuality" began with Professor Gérard Fussman of the Collège de France who showed the chronological relationship between the alphabets of the inscriptions of the upper Indus rock engravings and the arts of Kashmir and Tibet. His research has led him to date certain statue types to the early 7<sup>th</sup> century (see: K Jettmar *et al.*, *Antiquities of Northern Pakistan*, Vol. 2, Heidelberg, 1993). Dr. Gautama V. Vajracharya (University of Wisconsin) presented the Itumbahal painting and its inscription which informs us that the cult of the *yaksha* in Kathmandu survived long after its disappearance in India, while aesthetically, this painting shows the influence of Rajput painting. The present writer discussed the difficulty of interpretation of Tibetan inscriptions on works of art in the exhibition. If in some cases clear religious or historic information is provided, often complete understanding remains elusive, and must be complemented by investigation in the Tibetan historical and literary sources as well as scientific analyses of pigment, c-14, and iconographic and aesthetic analysis. Professor Rob Linrothe (Skidmore College) made remarks on inscriptions and methodology of interpretation as discussant for this session.

The session "Form and Transformation in Himalayan Art" was chaired by Dr. Jane Casey, curator of the exhibition "Divine Presence" at Casa Asia (Barcelona, Spain) (see p. 60 of this Newsletter). Dr. John Siudmak's presentation "Squaring the circle: reconciling epigraphic and stylistic factors in the art of Kashmir" highlighted the recently discovered Kashmiri statue attributed by inscription to the reign of King Durlabhas. There were two kings of this name, who ruled consecutively: 626-662 A.D. and 662-712 A.D. respectively. Siudmak assessed the inscription in the light of stylistic information to determine that the late Classical style had already emerged in the seventh century or at the very latest by the early eighth century, rather than the second quarter of the eighth century. He also reviewed Professor Fussman's attribution of the scripts with which in some cases he disagreed, and considered that certain examples previously dated by Fussman to 580-630 on paleographic grounds should instead be attributed to the early seventh century. Dr. Anne Vergati of the C.N.R.S. (Paris) discussed Malla paintings between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, illustrating her discussion with the painting of Prince Chakravartindramalla performing the Tuladana Ceremony (1664), which is a historic document on costume and architecture of the period as well as an expression of the aesthetic ideals. Dr. David Templeman's paper "The Presence and Absence of Landscape in Tibetan art" showed symbolic landscape, as in the Tara of the Ford Collection, the landscape of enlightenment, as in the Virupa of the Kronos Collection, and the landscape as represented for the depiction of the *arhats*. Aldo Mignucci presented "Tibetan Black Thangkhas: Origins and Early Developments of a Painting Tradition". Utilising inscriptional evidence and c-14 analysis of the silk support, he discussed two *nag thang* which may be clearly attributed to the early 14<sup>th</sup> century. Recalling the ancient Chinese manuscripts on black paper and the c. 9<sup>th</sup> century examples of paintings on

silk recovered from Dunhuang to show the model of Chinese Buddhist painting using silver ink, he also discussed possible influences from Pala India and Nepal which led the Tibetans to develop this technique into a distinctive genre of Tibetan painting.

The last session was a full morning of lively discussion with all the panelists making, in some cases, quite impassioned declarations about the motivations for collecting or the basis of chronological attributions, determined by stylistic analysis versus inscriptional evidence. For the issue of dating, Ian Alsop, scholar of Nepalese and Tibetan art, summarised his perspective thus, "Dating objects to within 25 or even 50 years on stylistic grounds alone without reference to objects dated by inscription or some other textual evidence is unrealistic." Dr. Pal chaired the discussion with humour and many insights about methodology as well as aesthetic observations. He announced that he will henceforth concentrate his efforts exclusively on Indian art. Dr. Pal's contributions in curatorship and research of Tibetan and Himalayan art over the past half-century have greatly enriched our understanding and appreciation of both the cultural milieu and the aesthetic ideals of the Himalayas, thus the symposium concluded with a standing ovation to Dr. Pratapaditya Pal.

*Dr. Amy Heller, C.N.R.S., France*

*(This article appeared in the Tibet Journal, no. 1-2, Spring-Summer 2003. We are grateful to the Journal for allowing it to be published here.)*

**"Between the Empires: A conference on India 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE- 4<sup>th</sup> century CE"**  
**Department of Asian Studies, University of Texas at Austin, Texas, U.S.A.**

This conference took place from 10-12 April 2003 in Austin, Texas. Papers of interest to our readers presented at the conference included: "Defining early Indian art" (Rick Asher, University of Minnesota, U.S.A.), "Numismatics and History: The Gupta-Maurya interlude in the Gangetic plain" (Shailendra Bhandare, University of Oxford, U.K.), "New perspectives on the Mauryan and Kushan periods" (J. Mark Kenoyer, University of Wisconsin, Madison, U.S.A.), "Inscribed pots, emerging identities: The social milieu of trade" (Himanshu P. Ray, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India), "A well sanitized shroud: Asceticism and institutional values in the Middle Period of Buddhist monasticism" (Gregory Schopen, University of California, Los Angeles, U.S.A.), "Recent discoveries of early Buddhist manuscripts and their implications for the history of Buddhist texts and canons" (Richard Salomon, University of Washington, Seattle, U.S.A.), and "From the Mauryas to the Guptas: Reactions to foreign influences, social and religious change" (Michael Witzel, Harvard University, U.S.A.).

**15<sup>th</sup> Annual Nicholas Poppe Symposium on Central/Inner Asian Studies**  
**University of Washington, Seattle, U.S.A.**

This conference took place on 17 May 2003 in the Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilization, University of Washington, Seattle. After a welcome address by Professor Ilse D. Cirtautas, some of the papers presented were: "Mongolian Studies in the Republic of Buryatia: A Tribute to Nicholas Poppe" by Dr. Nikolay Tsyrempilov (Institute of Mongolian, Tibetan and Buddhist Studies of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Ulan Ude, Buryatia, Russian Federation); "Numerals in Inner Asian Ethnonyms" by Dr. Penglin Wang (Department of Anthropology, Central Washington University, Ellensburg, WA, U.S.A.); "The Current State of the Kazakh Language" by Dr. Jaksylyk Khuseinov and Dr. Ilse Cirtautas (Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilization, University of Washington); "Kazakhstan: Cultural Diversity and

Kazakhstan); "Nation and State Building in Uzbekistan" by Dr. Mirzohid Rahimov (Institute of History of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences, Tashkent, Uzbekistan); "The Central Asian Turkic Community in Korea: 1920-1950" by Dr. Hee Soo Lee (Department of Cultural Anthropology, Hanyang University, Seoul, Korea, Visiting Scholar, Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilization, UW); "Ecological Issues in Xinjiang" by Dr. Stanley Toops (Department of Geography, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, U.S.A.)

**Rocks and Hard Places: Society and the Environment in Central Asia**  
University of California, Berkeley, U.S.A.

This conference, on 14 and 15 March 2003, was organised by the Caucasus and Central Asia Program, the Institute of Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies, the Silk Road Working Group and the Department of Near Eastern Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, and sought to examine the relationships between environments and communities in Central Asia historically, as well as links between the environment — and notions of 'environment' — and policies and politics in the region today. Several issues were of particular interest: What role has the physical environment played historically in the development of societies in Central Asia; specifically, how have Central Asian nomadic and sedentary cultures adapted to the demands of the physical world? What role has the environment had in shaping governance in the region? Conversely, how have regional administrations tried to use or alter the physical environment to suit their needs? What impact has the physical environment had on attempts to modernise the region? How have environmental factors affected domestic and foreign policies in Central Asia, and how do they fit into actual and potential regional conflicts? To what extent have new approaches to environmental concerns affected the management of resources in the region? The conference included the following papers: "The Politics and Poetics of the Nation: Urban Narratives of Kazakh Identity" by Saulesh Esenova, McGill University; "Indigenous Afghan Architecture: Structure and Culture" by Thomas Barfield, Boston University; "Water in Central Asia: Cooperation and Conflicts" by Viktoriya Levinskaya, Visiting Fulbright Scholar; "The Conservation of Agricultural Biodiversity in Uzbekistan: The Impact of the Land Reform Process" by Eric Van Dusen, Post-Doctoral Fellow, UC Berkeley; "Prehistoric Landscapes of Communication: Reconstructing Social and Economic Orbits of Mountain Pastoralists in the Dzhungar Mountains" by Michael Frachetti, University of Pennsylvania; "The Archaeology of Semirechye from the Bronze Age through the Medieval Period: Does Climate Matter?" by Claudia Chang, Sweet Briar College; "The Pulse of Asia: The Role of the Environment in Culture Change of Early Central Asia" by Fredrik T. Hiebert, University of Pennsylvania and "The Steppe Meets the Sown West and East of the Caspian: Environmental Constraints to Distinct Historical Processes" by Philip Kohl, Wellesley College.

UC Berkeley Panel discussants and Chairs included: David Stronach (Near Eastern Studies), Shahwali Ahmadi (Near Eastern Studies), Sanjyot Mehendale (Near Eastern Studies and Caucasus and Central Asia Program), and Barbara Voytek (Institute of Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies).

*Dr. Sanjyot Mehendale, Department of Near Eastern Studies & Executive Director Caucasus and Central Asia Program, University of California at Berkeley, U.S.A.*

## Forthcoming Conferences

### UKABS Conference

SOAS, University of London, U.K., 2 July 2003

At this year's United Kingdom Association of Buddhist Studies (UKABS) conference there will again be a section for postgraduate papers or work in progress reports.

For further information contact: Jamie Cresswell, Institute of Oriental Philosophy European Centre, Taplow Court, Taplow, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 6ER, U.K. Tel: +44 01628 591213; fax: +44 01628 591244; e-mail: jc@iopec.org

### "Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan"

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, California, U.S.A., 13-15 June 2003

This exhibition, co-organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, is the first to explore the important artistic developments that occurred in the Iranian world as a result of the Mongol conquest of both western and eastern Asia. The Legacy of Genghis Khan focuses on the period of Ilkhanid rule - an era that witnessed extraordinary achievements within the sphere of Persian art and culture. The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, which presents this exhibition from 13 April-27 July 2003 (*See p. 63 of this Newsletter*), will host a special international symposium from 13-15 June that will build upon the exhibition and move beyond the scope of the exhibition catalogue.

The three-day symposium will provide a forum for discussion and debate on a variety of topics, representing multiple disciplines including history of art and architecture, archaeology, and history of science.

The following papers will be presented on 13 June in the session "Culture and Commerce in the Mongol Empire": "Cultural Transmission and Exchange in the Mongol Empire According to the Biographical Dictionary of Ibn al-Fuwati" by Devin DeWeese (Indiana University); "The Maritime Trade of Qish during the Mongol Period" by Ralph Kauz (Munich University); "Metalwork of the Golden Horde: Problems of Genesis" by Mark Kramarovsky (State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg); "Mongol-Mamluk Embassies and Exchanges of Gifts" by Donald Little (McGill University); "Ilkhanid Political Self-Representation: Residences, Diplomacy, Coinage and Taxation" by Bert Fragner (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna). The session entitled "Lifestyles at the Courts of the Ruling Elite" will include the following papers: "The Excavation of the Palaces of Genghis Khan and Ögödei at Avgara, Mongolia" by Noriyuki Shiraishi (Niigata University); "The Excavations of the Ilkhanid Palace at Takht-i Sulaiman: A Re-examination" by Dietrich Huff (German Archaeological Institute, Berlin); "Hülegü Moves West: High Living and Heartbreak on the Road to Baghdad" by John Masson Smith Jr. (University of California-Berkeley); "An Imperial Mongol Silk Tent" by Louise Mackie (Cleveland Museum of Art); "The Royal Ilkhanid Household" by Charles Melville (Cambridge University).

On 14 June the session entitled "The Arts in Ilkhanid Iran and Neighbouring States, Part I" will have the following lectures: "Paper: The Transformative Medium in Ilkhanid Art" by Jonathan Bloom (Boston College); "In the Beginning...: Illustrated Frontispieces in Ilkhanid and Injuid Manuscripts" by Marianna Shreve Simpson (Baltimore); "Patronage of the Arts of the Book in Early Fourteenth-Century Shiraz"

by Elaine Wright (Chester Beatty Library, Dublin); "Old Images in Contemporary Forms: Thoughts on the Great Mongol Shahnama and some of the Injuid Shahnama Manuscripts" by Eleanor Sims, (London), while Part II will include: "People, Places, Styles: Ceramic Production in Ilkhanid Iran" by Oliver Watson (Victoria and Albert Museum, London); "Persian Poetry in Ilkhanid Art and Architecture" by Bernard O'Kane (American University, Cairo); "Chinese Motifs in Thirteenth-Century Armenian Art: The Mongol Connection" by Dickran Kouymjian (California State University, Fresno); "The Mongols in Retrospect" by Priscilla Soucek (New York University).

The following lectures will take place on 15 June in the session called "State and Religion in Ilkhanid Iran" "Horoscopes and Planetary Theory: Ilkhanid Patronage of Astronomers" by George Saliba (Columbia University); "Inflationary Currency under the Ilkhans and their Successors" by Stephen Album (Santa Rosa, CA); "Reflections on a 'Double Rapprochement': Conversion to Islam among the Mongol Elite during the Early Ilkhanate" by Judith Pfeiffer (University of Chicago); "Religious Diversity under Ilkhanid Rule c. 1300 as Reflected in the Freer Bal'ami" by Teresa Fitzherbert (Ashmolean Museum, UK); "The Mongol Legacy of Persian Farmans" by Abolala Soudavar (Houston). The concluding address, entitled "The Mongol Empire in World History" will be delivered by David Morgan (University of Wisconsin, Madison).

The symposium will be held in LACMA's Leo S. Bing Theater and is open to the public, free of charge. For further information contact Sarah Sherman, tel: +1 323 857-6011 or e-mail: ssherman@lacma.org.

**"The Kazakh Civilization in the Context of the World Historical Process"**  
**Kainar University, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 6-9 July 2003**

The conference devoted to the 1600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Attila is held in collaboration with the Institute CEDIMES, Pantheon-Assas, Paris, France. Topics for discussion will include: 'The modern classification of civilization'; 'Civilizations: culture, economics and war'; 'The role played by people in 'civilizational development'; 'Main values, institutions and dynamics of the Kazakh Civilization'; 'Kazakh Civilization and problems of cultural identity'; 'The historical experience of civilizational co-operation and interactions' and 'Kazakh Civilization in the contemporary world'.

For more information, contact Kainar University, office 203, 7A Satpayev St. (corner of Seifullina St.), 480013 Almaty, Kazakhstan. Tel: +7 3272 646786, 629554, 620403; fax: +7 3272 620403, 629554; e-mail: kainar@intelsoft.kz

**"European Association of South Asian Archaeologists, 17<sup>th</sup> International Conference on South Asian Archaeology"**  
**Bonn, Germany, 7-11 July 2003**

The conference is organised by KAVA (Commission For General And Comparative Archaeology) and the Eurasia Department of the German Institute of Archaeology.

Following a Plenary Session addressed by Bridget Allchin, Burkhard Vogt and Magdalene von Dewall, there will be two sections each day: 1. *Prehistoric Archaeology* : in which the principal speakers will be Jean-François Jarrige, Catherine Jarrige, Cameron Petrie, Richard Meadow, Mark J. Kenoyer, Sharri R. Clark, Benille Priyanka, Ihsan Ali, Farid Khan, Luca M. Olivieri, Giorgio Stacul, Rakesh Tewari, David MacDowall, Christine Fröhlich, François Widemann, Sylvia Winkelmann, Gian Luca Bonora and Mike Teufer.

Section 2 devoted to *Historical Archaeology* will have as its principal speakers Carolyn Woodford Schmidt, Martha L. Carter, Nakao Odani, Richard Salomon, John Siudmak, Marion Frenger, Laxmi Shankar Nigam, Joe Cribb, Anna Filigenzi, Nasim Khan, Deborah Klimburg-Salter, Harald Hauptmann, Elena Kuzmina, Haruko Tsuchiya, L. Feugère, Adalbert J. Gail, Boris Marshak, Helmut Neumann and Katherine Anne Paul.

It will take place in the Wissenschaftszentrum, Ahrstrasse 45, D-53175 Bonn-Bad Godesburg, Germany. For further information contact: the Secretariat, KAVA, SAA 2003 Secretariat, Eendenicher Strasse 41, D-53115 Bonn, Germany. Tel: + 49 1888 7712 49; e-mail: info@kava.dainst.de

#### **4<sup>th</sup> INSAP Conference**

**Magdalen College, University of Oxford, U.K., 3-9 August 2003**

The Inspiration of Astronomical Phenomena (INSAP) developed out of a belief for the need to examine the many and various cultural impacts of the perceptions about the day- and night-time sky. INSAP exists to provide a forum for a broad sampling of artists, historians, philosophers and scientists to compare notes and have the chance to ask about each other's work. The conference is sponsored by the Steward and Vatican Observatories, and will feature presentations by, amongst others, Dr. Jim Bennett (Director of the Museum of the History of Science in Oxford), Dr. David Brown (University College, London) on Mesopotamian astrology and Professor Clive Ruggles (University of Leicester) whose field is Archaeo-astronomy.

There will be fewer than 150 attendees, who will represent a broad range of scholars and students. Most of those attending will be expected to present original studies and research results, either as papers delivered orally or as posters, but some will be admitted as "observers" who are expected to participate otherwise fully (i.e. take part in discussions, ask questions of the speakers, go on the field trips,) during the meeting. Latest information, including a list of principal speakers, is available on the website: <http://ethel.as.arizona.edu/~white/insap/insap4x.htm>

#### **Carpets and Textiles in the Iranian World 1400-1700**

**Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, UK., 30-31 August 2003**

This conference is organised jointly by the Beattie Carpet Archive at the Ashmolean Museum and the Iran Heritage Foundation. Currently there is a gap between historians of the social, economic and literary life of the Iranian World and scholars focused primarily on objects. Opportunities for the development of new insights through interdisciplinary contacts are rare. The publication of the proceedings of an interdisciplinary conference held in 1983, *Carpets of the Mediterranean Countries 1400-1600*, which has been described as "the most important single work published on the subject in the last 40 years", provides evidence of the value of such meetings in a field which for too long has been out of the mainstream of scholarship.

Now that carpet studies have, for the first time, been given a recognized place at the University of Oxford, it is timely that a serious attempt be made to bring together scholars from different disciplines whose individual expertise could illuminate different aspects of the history of carpets and textiles. A conference is therefore planned that will focus on carpets and textiles of the Iranian World, concentrating on the Timurid and Safavid periods. The approach will be interdisciplinary rather than object-orientated. The thematic outline below indicates a few of the research issues that will be discussed: art historical matters and questions; the organization of carpet and textile production; the social function and importance of carpets and textiles; cross border influences; trade & economy; studies of objects; the history of technology; The application of scientific techniques to art historical problem.

The number of attendees is limited to 100. The conference fee of £40 (£20 concession) includes buffet lunches, tea and coffee over the two days. College accommodation can be arranged, if required. To reserve a place, contact Emma Dick, Ashmolean Museum, tel: +44 (0)1865 278 076; fax: +44 (0)1865 278 078. E-mail <emma.dick@ashmus.ox.ac.uk>

**"Manichaeism and Ancient China"**

**The Quanzhou Maritime Museum, Quanzhou, Fujian Province, P.R.C.  
1-5 September 2003**

This international symposium is organised by The Quanzhou Maritime Museum, Department of History at Zhongshan (Sun Yat-Sen) University, Quanzhou. The convenors are Wang Lianmao (Curator of the Quanzhou Maritime Museum) and Lin Wushu (Professor of Religious History). The main themes to be addressed are: the dissemination of Manichaeism in China, especially along China's southeastern coastal areas and Manichaean texts unearthed in Dunhuang and Turfan as well as any other Manichaeism-related research.

All correspondence should be addressed to Professor Lin Wushu, History Department, Zhongshan University, Guangzhou, 510275, P.R.C. Fax: +86 20 84113308.  
E-mail: linwushu@hotmail.com;

**International Association for Tibetan Studies, 10<sup>th</sup> Seminar**

**The Aris Trust Centre for Tibetan and Himalayan Studies, University of Oxford,  
U.K., 6-12 September 2003**

For further information, see the full page advertisement in *CIAA NL 15, June 2002, p. 53* and the website: <http://www.wolfson.ox.ac.uk/iats/home.html>

**"13<sup>th</sup> International Numismatic Congress"**

**National Archaeological Museum, Madrid, Spain, 15-19 September 2003**

The 13<sup>th</sup> International Numismatic Congress will be held in Madrid between 15 and 19 September 2003. It will be organised on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport by the Department of Numismatics of the National Archaeological Museum, and with the collaboration of the International Numismatic Commission. The congress will be held at the Palace of Exhibitions and Congresses. During the congress the Survey of Numismatic Research (1996-2001) will be published, together with a medal commemorating the 13<sup>th</sup> International Numismatic Congress.

For further information contact: Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Departamento de Numismática, Madrid, Spain. E-mail: num@man.es

**"Maintaining the Links: Language, Identity and the Land"**

**Broome, Western Australia, Australia, 22-24 September 2003**

This is the seventh international conference hosted by the Foundation for Endangered Languages. The conference website includes conference & registration information, conference programme, details of excursions and the call for papers. For further details contact: Joe Blythe, Tel/Fax: +61 (0)8 9192 8382; mobile: +61 (0)409 881153;

e-mail: dubala@myplace.net.au, or: jungurra@yahoo.com.au.  
http://www.ogmios.org/conference/index.htm

**Annual Conference, Central Eurasian Studies Society  
Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A., 2-5 October 2003**

The Central Eurasian Studies Society (CESS) invites panel and paper proposals for the Fourth CESS Annual Conference, to be held from 2-5 October 2003, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A. The event will be held at Harvard University, hosted by the Program on Central Asia and the Caucasus at Harvard's Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies.

Panel and paper topics relating to all aspects of humanities and social science scholarship on Central Eurasia are welcome. The geographic domain of Central Eurasia extends from the Black Sea and Iranian Plateau to Mongolia and Siberia, including the Caucasus, Crimea, Middle Volga, Afghanistan, Tibet, and Central and Inner Asia. Membership in CESS is not required for participation in the Annual Conference, though we strongly encourage it, and CESS membership entitles you to reduced conference registration fees. CESS does not have funds to support the costs of conference participation beyond members reductions. Participants must obtain their own funding (some information is available on the Supplementary Conference Information page of the website).

The pre-registration deadline is 1 September 2003. For further information: CESS Annual Conference, Dr. John Schoeberlein, Program on Central Asia and the Caucasus, Davis Center, Harvard University, 625 Massachusetts Avenue, Rm 262, Cambridge, MA 02139 U.S.A. Tel: +1 617 496 2643; fax: +1 617 495 8319; e-mail: CESSconf@fas.harvard.edu; website: [http://cess.fas.harvard.edu/CESS\\_Conference.html](http://cess.fas.harvard.edu/CESS_Conference.html)

The hosts of future CESS conferences are as follows: 2004 - Indiana University (Bloomington); 2005 - University of California-Berkeley; 2006 - University of Michigan-Ann Arbor; 2007 - University of Washington-Seattle; 2008 - University of Wisconsin-Madison.

**"Central Asia - Perspectives From The Field"  
SOAS and LSE, University of London, U.K., 7-8 November 2003**

This is a conference for research students to present and discuss their fieldwork. The Central Asia Research Network (CARN) and the UK Central Asia Graduate Students Network are pleased to announce the conference "Central Asia - Perspectives from the field". The conference is hosted by The Centre for Contemporary Central Asia and the Caucasus, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and The Centre for Global Governance, London School of Economics and Political Sciences (LSE). Ph.D. students and other young scholars who have recently undertaken field research are invited to submit paper abstracts covering any subject on Central Asia. For the purpose of this conference 'Central Asia' refers primarily to the five former Soviet republics. Papers are particularly welcome from researchers from the Central Asian countries. The organisers can give some assistance with visas and accommodation, but cannot cover any international travel expenses.

Proposals should be submitted via e-mail to [conference@pobox.com](mailto:conference@pobox.com) (as an attachment in MS Word, RTF or PDF format). Please include: 1) Name; 2) Institutional affiliation; 3) Title/position; 4) E-mail address; 5) A one-page resume/CV; 6) Title of Paper (maximum 20 words); 7) Abstract of Paper (maximum 250 words). The deadline for abstracts is 31 May 2003. Notification of acceptance

will be by the end of June. Full details of the program, conference fee, registration and accommodation arrangements will be available by the end of August and will be posted on the organiser's web sites listed below. The working language of the conference is English. The Central Asia Research Network (CARN) is a Europe wide network of young scholars who are currently conducting research in and about Central Asia. It has held three conferences, the latest being in November 2002 at the University of Cologne where some 50 students from the EU, Central Asia and the USA participated. Further details are available at [www.ca-research-net.org](http://www.ca-research-net.org); For all enquiries contact: [conference@pobox.com](mailto:conference@pobox.com)

#### **19<sup>th</sup> Annual South Asia Conference**

**University of California at Berkeley, California, U.S.A., 13-14 February 2004**

The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual South Asian Conference will take place from 13-14 February 2004 at the University of California at Berkeley, California, U.S.A. No individual papers are to be submitted, but guidelines for panel proposals will be available soon through the Conference website. The deadline for panel proposals will be 3 September 2003.

Contact details for correspondence are: 19th Annual South Asia Conference, Center for South Asia Studies, 10 Stephens Hall MC 2310, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-2310, U.S.A. Tel: +1 510-642-3608; Fax: +1 510-643-5793; E-mail for conference correspondence: [csasast@uclink.berkeley.edu](mailto:csasast@uclink.berkeley.edu); website: <http://ias.berkeley.edu/southasia/conference.html>

#### **Association for Asian Studies (AAS) Annual Meeting 2004**

**San Diego, California, U.S.A., 5-7 March 2004**

The deadline for papers for the meeting is 5 August 2003. Abstracts must not exceed 250 words and must be received in hard copy. Faxed abstracts are acceptable, provided a hard copy follows in the mail; e-mail submission is unacceptable. Only pre-registration by 1 December 2003 will ensure the names of participants appear in the printed programme. The mailing address for submissions is: Association for Asian Studies, 1021 East Huron Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104 U.S.A. Further information and relevant forms may be accessed: <http://www.aasianst.org/deadline.htm>

#### **"The South Asian Legacy of Sir Aurel Stein"**

**De Montfort University, Leicester, U.K., 5-6 March 2004**

This international conference is being organised by Practice Research and Advancement in South Asian Art And Architecture (PRASADA), De Montfort University, Leicester, U.K. in collaboration with the Circle of Inner Asian Art, SOAS, London, U.K and the Department of Indo-European Studies, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary. Sir Aurel Stein is regarded as the most important British explorer of Central Asia in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Studies on Stein tend to concentrate on his expeditions along the Silk Road and deal relatively little with his achievements in the field of South Asian textual and material studies. The conference plans to present Stein's other interests: his contact with South Asia as well as with his native country, Hungary, where he received inspiration to explore the East and with which he remained in touch until his death.

We expect papers dealing either with the person of Stein and his contact with South Asia or with any aspect of South Asian research to which Stein has at one time made a contribution. The conference will be organised in the form of panels dealing with Stein and South Asian material culture, South Asian texts as well as with Stein, Hungary and South Asia. The panel on Stein and South Asian material culture

welcomes proposals exploring Stein's work on South Asian archaeology, historical topography and on Indian art and its influences outside South Asia. The textual panel will include presentations on Old and Middle Indo-Aryan texts that Stein had either studied or discovered, while the panel on the explorer's Hungarian roots will investigate how much his native country contributed and responded to the development of the ideas that lead Stein to India (and later to Central Asia). Participants are invited to give a 40-minute presentation followed by a 20-minute discussion. We are planning to publish the proceedings in a volume. The deadline for applications is 30 September 2003. Speakers are expected to send an abstract of about 150 words by 15 January 2004. If participants of the panel agree, papers may be circulated amongst its members a week before the conference.

Anyone interested in delivering a paper should contact Imre Bangha by 20 June 2003 at PRASADA, De Montfort University, Leicester City Campus, Leicester LE1 9BH, U. K.; e-mail: imre.bangha@orinst.ox.ac.uk.

#### **Association for the Study of Persianate Societies (ASPS) 2<sup>nd</sup> Biennial Convention Yerevan, Armenia, 2-4 April 2004**

The Association for the Study of Persianate Societies (ASPS) calls for participation in its Second Biennial Convention, entitled "Society, History and Culture in the Persianate World", to take place in Yerevan, Armenia between 2-4 April 2004. Proposals for special panels should be submitted either directly or through one of the regional offices listed below. Proposals sent by e-mail or fax will be accepted. Topics include culture, language and literature, religion and philosophy, democracy and civil society, politics, economic history, technology and economy, history and memory, and art, archaeology and architecture. The deadline for submissions is 15 July 2003. It is anticipated that ASPS will obtain a grant to reimburse travel expenses for participants from India, Pakistan, Central Asia, Eastern Europe and Russia, and to assist participants from the United States and Western Europe who are not supported by their own institutions. ASPS, Iran, will seek a similar grant to cover travel expenses of participants from Iran.

Interested scholars in the U.S.A. should send their name, address, e-mail, affiliation, title of proposed paper and a 1-2 page abstract to: Rudi Matthee, History Department, Munroe Hall, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19716, U.S.A. Fax: +1 302 831 1535; e-mail: matthee@juno.com. Regional Offices: Council for Eurasia: Institute of Oriental Philology, Jagiellonian University, al. Mickiewicza 9/11, 31-120 Krakow, Poland (krasnowo@vela.filg.uj.edu.pl). Armenia: Caucasian Centre for Iranian Studies, Khorenatsi str. 26, 375010 Yerevan, Republic of Armenia; tel/fax: +3741 56 7207, +3741 556191; e-mail: caucas@infocom.am. Iran: Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Tehran, near Pol-e Gheysa, Tehran, Iran; tel: +98 21 802 5917; e-mail: jshadi@yahoo.com. India: Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Mehrauli Road, New Delhi 110067, India; e-mail: A. W. Azhar Dehlvi azhar@bol.net.in. Tajikistan: Institute of Language and Literature, 21 Rudaki St., Dushanbe-025, Tajikistan; tel: +992 372 216011; +992 372 216011; e-mail: Bahriiddin Aliev aliev\_bt@hotmail.com. Uzbekistan: French Institute for the Study of Central Asia (IFEAC), 18A Rakatboshi Street (ex-Shpil'kov), 700031 Tashkent, Uzbekistan; e-mail: ekarimov@uzinfo.silk.org

#### **ICANAS-37, International Congress of Asian & North African Studies Moscow, Russian Federation, 16-21 August 2004**

The congress will be hosted by the Orientalist Society of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Further information on the terms of participation, visa requirements, lodging, thematic workshops, sessions, cultural events such as trips to other cities, and

miscellaneous organisational issues will be communicated in Circular Letter No 2 to be sent out by the Secretariat of ICANAS-37 to all the regular ICANAS participants before March 2003. Attached to Circular Letter No 2 there will be an individual form which is the official application to participate in ICANAS-37. These applications will be accepted until 1 September 2003. Circular Letter No 3, acting as the guarantee document of the Organising Committee, will confirm the participation in the academic and cultural programs of ICANAS-37. This will be sent out during the first half of 2004. The organisers would welcome any input on the organisation of special sessions, hearings, seminars and workshops. Please send all correspondence to the Head of the Secretariat of ICANAS-37, Professor Dmitry D. Vasilyev, ICANAS-37, 12 Rozhdestvenka St., Moscow-103753, Russian Federation. Fax: +7 095 9257788; e-mail: ivran@orc.ru.

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## NEW PUBLICATIONS

### New publications on Central Asia

#### **The Silk Road and the World of Xuanzang. The Asahi Shimbun 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary Commemorative Exhibition**

(exhibited Nara Prefectural Museum of Art, 12 June – 8 August 1999, Yamaguchi Prefectural Museum of Art, 20 August – 11 October 1999, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum, 23 October – 19 December 1999). Tokyo: Asahi Shimbun 1999. 100 pp (Japanese text), 222 pp. of col. pls and maps, 76pp. (English text) [no price available].

This extremely well-produced exhibition catalogue brings together a great deal of material concerning the intrepid and determined Chinese monk Xuanzang (c 602-664). On his own initiative Xuanzang travelled for sixteen years, between 629 and 645, by the land route across Asia to India, in search of Buddhist documents. When he returned to China he spent the rest of his life translating them. Encouraged by Emperor Taizong, Xuanzang also set down his notes on the Western Regions, an invaluable source of information then and now, while his eventful journey also inspired the fictional account *Journey to the West* (Monkey) and countless dramatisations thereof. A total of 222 exhibits, drawn from a wide variety of international institutions, and covering from Xuanzang's own time down to a TV animation and a TV drama of the 1970s (in which the role of the monk was played by an actress, leading to a popular misapprehension of Xuanzang's gender among Japanese audiences of the time!). Both the catalogue entries and the introductory essays appear in both Japanese and English, making this work very accessible.

Takayasa Higachi, with the title 'The Eastward Expansion of Buddhist Culture,' has written a brief outline of the early history of Buddhist sculpture and monuments. Perhaps unavoidably, a number of the place-names are misspelled, but remain fairly easily identifiable. One should note also that the term Tianshan Southern Road is used to refer to what Western readers may be more familiar with as the route skirting the northern perimeter of the Taklamakan, which does indeed lie to the south of the Tianshan range.

Akira Miyaji's more substantial essay is entitled 'Xuanzang Sanzang, a bridge between China and India: his personality, footsteps, and the schools of Indian art in his times.' Miyaji sees Xuanzang from three perspectives: as a seeker after truth; as a determined information gatherer; and as a pragmatic individual. After directing our attention to Professor Kuwayama's research indicating that Xuanzang's Records of the Western Regions may well have contained more detailed information pruned or censored by Tang officials (Kuwayama Shoshin, Daijo Bukkyo: Chugoku Nihonhen 9 Daito Saiiki-ki, Tokyo 1987), Miyaji narrates Xuanzang's journey and provides an account of India and Indian Buddhist art at that time, as well as the list of the seven images brought to China by him, in addition to 657 scrolls of Buddhist scriptures and 150 relic grains.

Akio Donohashi addresses himself to 'Xuanzang and the Priests and Monks who brought Buddhism to Japan from China', since there were Japanese monks, at least one of whom had studied with him in China, who followed Xuanzang's example, by collecting relics and scriptures to take with them back to Japan, with religious implements and accessories, and portraits of Buddhist monks. Donohashi speculates

on the fact that Xuanzang's own portrait seldom appears among the latter "one could even say that the Song artists sought to depict Xuanzang not as some unearthly saint, but rather as a character from a drama. One can almost hear the sound of the recitation of the sutras coming from his lips and the sound of his footsteps across the hot desert sands."

The popular image of Xuanzang, carrying a backpack heavily laden with scrolls, appears on the front and back covers of the catalogue, in a fourteenth-century Japanese painting on silk, and a rubbing of a Chinese engraved stone (dated 1933 but apparently made after this same Japanese painting). The section of the exhibition: 'Sanzang Fashi in Legend: the World of *Xiyouji* (The Journey to the West)' includes other representations of travelling monks, notably two very fine paintings on silk in the Pelliot collection and one painting on paper, from the Tenri University Library. Here it is appropriate to note that Victor Mair (in his paper "The origins of an iconographical form of the pilgrim Hsüan-tsang," *Tang Studies*, no.4, 1986, 29-41) has already pointed out that the travelling monk shown in the paintings on paper is not Xuanzang nor even Chinese, but has facial features of a definite Central Asian type. Mair's contention is undoubtedly correct. In Japan, however, the type is specifically identified with Xuanzang, who appears in this guise, both on his own, and as the central figure in two fourteenth century paintings of Xuanzang and Sixteen Deities (nos.183 and 184 in the catalogue). These Japanese paintings of Xuanzang showing him wearing a distinctive necklace of skulls that never appears in the comparatively early images of travelling monks from Dunhuang. The skulls are explained by Nakano in the context of the legend of Xuanzang, as being those of Xuanzang himself, repeatedly reincarnated and setting forth in each existence to search for the Buddhist scriptures, only to meet with a violent death in the Moheyanji desert, at the very outset of his desert journey. Only in his final incarnation was he rescued by a giant manifestation of Vaishnavana, guardian king of the north.

The continuing legend of Xuanzang is the subject of the third essay, by Miyoko Nakano: 'Sanzang Fashi in Legend: the World of *Xiyouji* (The Journey to the West)'. Nakano shows how the legends began to appear as soon as twenty years after the death of Xuanzang in 664, and have continued to the present day. Finally, Toru Takahashi writes 'On the road traveled by Xuanzang.' Takahashi and his companions sought to follow Xuanzang's route on the ground, on foot and by modern means of transport, although travel in some areas proved politically impossible. He notes inconsistencies in the directions and distances recorded by Xuanzang, as well as discrepancies revealed by modern research into place names and ancient sites since those originally conducted by Cunningham and Foucher. A final comment concerns the difficulties encountered at Mathura through the creation of a new residential district: "The forces of urban development that eradicated the ruins of the Great Kanishka Stupa in Peshawar, Pakistan are now extending to India as well."

All in all, this catalogue and the exhibition it accompanies provide a wealth of useful and authoritative information about the famous monk, whose travels, life and translation work inspired so many.

(RW)

#### **The Unknown Hsüan-tsang**

by D. Devahuti. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001. Pp. xxx + 184, bibliography, index. 7 b.&w. illus. Rs. 495.

This is the posthumous edition of articles and research material found among the papers of the late D. Devahuti (1929-88). She was the author of various books on Indian history. Hsüan-tsang's (hereinafter Xuanzang) life and work became her

research topic because of India's links with China and Central Asia that increasingly interested her in the last decade of her life. Unfortunately her untimely death prevented her from completing her work and systematically arrange it for publication. According to the preface this would have been part of a considerably larger work on Central Asia. D. Devahuti's sister, Veena Sachdev, found the research papers and approached Devahuti's friend and research colleague Tan Chung for the preparation for publication. The result is inevitably a book that is very personal and shows work in progress.

The preface (pp. xii-xv) is an emotional and personal account by the author's sister Veena Sachdev giving the reasons for this project and the background information about Devahuti's life, research and achievements. The foreword by Tan Chung (pp. xvi-xxiii) continues this theme and gives a detailed introduction about Xuanzang and the current state of research about him. Although a few references are missing (notably Sally Hovey Wriggins, *Xuanzang: A Buddhist Pilgrim on the Silk Road*. Oxford: Westview Press, 1996), this is a useful overview. The introduction (pp. xxv-xxix) is a more systematic summary of Xuanzang's life and work.

There are four completely unrelated parts each showing various aspects of Devahuti's translations and work in progress. In part 1 entitled "The Life of Hsüan-tsang", Devahuti gives an English summary of Chapters 6-10 of Huili's (completed by Yancong) biography of Xuanzang entitled *Da Ciensi Sanzang fashi zhuan* (pp. 1-16). Huili was Xuanzang's student who assisted with the translation work of the *sūtras* brought back from India. In part 2 part A (pp. 17-34), Xuanzang's correspondence with Prajñādeva and Jñānaprabhā is translated from the Chinese by Tan Chung from the same biography by Huili. Part B (pp. 34-74) appears to be Devahuti's exact but selective English translation of Annemarie von Gabain's work (*Briefe der Uigurischen Hsien-Tsang Biographie*) published in 1938 and includes all Chinese and Uyghur quotes. Part 3 (pp. 75-116) is a translation from the French again recounting Xuanzang's life as quoted in the *Histoire de la vie de Hiouen-thsang et de ses Voyages dans l'Inde* (Paris, 1853) by S. Julien. Part 4 (pp. 117-50) entitled "The General Account of India in the Ta Tang Hsi Yü Chi" draws attention to the India related parts of Xuanzang's work. Devahuti based this section on various published and unpublished translations available to her at the time.

The appendix gives an inventory of the Buddhist texts translated by Xuanzang in chronological and alphabetic order. A bibliography and index complete the volume. This book has a number of factual and typographical mistakes and should therefore be used with caution. A clearer layout of the various unrelated parts with an exact explanation of Devahuti's original contributions would also have been desirable. However, it is an achievement that through the publication of this volume most of this work will not be wasted and can be quoted by future scholars. It is, of course, of special interest to those working on the links between India and China.

Dr. Lilla Russell-Smith, Independent Scholar, UK.

#### **Painted Buddhas of Xinjiang. Hidden treasures from the Silk Road**

Photographs by Reza. With essays by Jacques Giès, Laure Feugère and André Coutin. London: The British Museum Press, 2002. Pp. 168, colour illus., map, glossary. £29.99.

Beautifully presented with a dramatic black background colour used for most pages containing photographs, this book captures the mystical beauty and colour contrast of the cave temples in China's Xinjiang Autonomous Region. Reza, a photographer born in Iran, has worked for several internationally acclaimed magazines covering political events in Iran, Afghanistan and other countries. He was awarded the World Press Prize in 1983, 1986 and 1996. Looking at his other work it is clear that he has a very

good eye for colour contrast, drawing attention to the beauty in small details perhaps easily overlooked by others.

This book is very much the result of Reza's vision in other ways too. Most importantly, according to the introduction by André Coutin, the making of the book would not have been possible without Reza's personal contacts in the area. Those of us who have been trying to get illustrations and their copyright from cave temples in China understand the importance of this only too well. Once agreement had been reached in principle, Reza chose "10 caves out of 363 from the ancient kingdom of Kucha, narrowing the choice down to the paintings with the best-preserved colours in the best-preserved caves" (p. 10). As the introduction goes on to emphasise, these caves are still not easy to access and the book is an excellent way to introduce the wider public to the hidden beauties of this region.

The book is very much dominated by the dramatic colour presentation already known to us from the pages of *National Geographic*, where Reza's work has often been published. His style is ideally suited to present the world of the caves. Reza used a system of mirrors to reflect daylight from the entrance to the wall paintings (p. 12), and this means that the colour contrasts are very sharp and vibrant.

Many of the wall paintings from the Kucha area were taken to Berlin by the Turfan expeditions at the beginning of the twentieth century, where some of them can still be seen at the Museum of Indian Art. Unfortunately many others were destroyed during the bombing of Berlin during the Second World War. In Paris, where Reza lives, the Musée Guimet also has important pieces from the region. Jacques Giès, chief curator, and Laure Feugère, the head curator in the department of Chinese and Central Asian Buddhism at the Musée Guimet, wrote the explanatory texts. As it is essentially a visual experience to look through, the book, the essays and descriptions are secondary and support and explain the images. They give excellent background information to the non-specialist reader.

A detailed map shows the exact location of the caves of the Kucha region. Through the example of the Musicians' Cave, Laure Feugère explains the architectural features and general layout of the caves in the area. Then she concentrates on the question of style and technique. Jacques Giès gives the historical background to the site in a chapter entitled "In the heart of Serindia: The Kingdom of Kucha" (pp. 37-53).

The second part of the book concentrates on various motifs that emerge from the photographs' section entitled: "Symbols of the Buddha", "Past lives: the *jātakas*", "Gods and humans" and "Animals". Many of the descriptions retell stories such as *jātakas* from the previous lives of the Buddha, and offer a very enjoyable read. However, there are several spelling mistakes and oversights with regards to Chinese names and the spelling of Sanskrit terms, some of which are also carried over to the glossary. We may also point to other small errors; for example, Beijing was not called by this name until the Ming dynasty, so it is difficult to see what the authors refer to when calling one of the items "The wolf at the gates of Beijing" (p. 146). This piece shows a story of uncertain origin in any case and the description goes on to discuss scent-hounds known to the Tang emperor. Elsewhere Sir Aurel Stein is called an 'Englishman' (p. 50), but in fact he was born Hungarian and became a British citizen only in 1904 after his return from his First Expedition.

The authors also deliberately avoid discussing specialist topics such as the recent publications with regards to the dating of the wall paintings, and simply refer to the on-going debate, stating its importance (pp. 44-45). The short list of books recommended under "Further Reading" does not offer more guidance on this topic either, as for example, Su Bai's works in Chinese and Angela Howard's in English are not mentioned. However, in keeping with the book's character, the general reader

will find several interesting publications listed which to read more about Silk Road sites and history.

The book's main aim is to draw attention to a generally less known region that in Reza's words deserves "to be recognized as the heritage of mankind as a whole" (p. 10). The first book in English about the important caves from the Kucha area, this is a beautifully produced new addition to a growing library of albums about specific Silk Road sites.

*Dr. Lilla Russell-Smith, Independent Scholar, U.K.*

*(A longer version of this review will be published in the next issue of the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, July 2003.)*

### **Dunhuang Manuscript Forgeries**

Edited by Susan Whitfield. London: The British Library, 2002. Pp. 358, 8 colour plates, 105 b.&w. ills., tables, bibliography, index. £36.

This volume contains the papers given at the first conference dedicated to the topic of Dunhuang Manuscript Forgeries organised in 1997 by the editor Susan Whitfield, Director of The International Dunhuang Project at the British Library. This workshop was held at The British Library between 30 June and 2 July, 1997 (v. *CIAA NL 5, May 1997*, p. 15 and *CIAA NL 6, November 1997 [1998]*, p. 21.) The aim of the workshop was to pool the existing information on forgeries; to attempt to identify the methods used for forging; and to establish the extent of the forgeries. All the major collections of Beijing, London, Paris and St. Petersburg were represented and leading scholars came from the U.K., China, Japan, the U.S.A., Germany, Denmark, Switzerland and Taiwan. A small group was established to monitor research. The results of the workshop were presented at a seminar jointly organised by the CIAA and the IDP at SOAS. Presentations were given by Professors Fujieda Akira, Lewis Lancaster and Rong Xinjiang to an audience of over a hundred people.

The papers are now published as volume 3 of the series *British Library Studies in Conservation Science*. This volume is dedicated in memory of the late Professor Fujieda Akira who was the first and leading figure in bringing the problem of Dunhuang manuscript forgeries to light. As his important articles on the subject were first published in the 1960s and 1970s, a debate on the topic of forgeries is long overdue.

In the introduction, the editor draws attention to many of the complex problems faced by curators and researchers of the Dunhuang material. After a short summary of the history of the library cave, she explains how the manuscripts were taken to various collections all over the world. Lajos Lóczy, as a member of an Hungarian expedition, first reached the caves in 1879 and told Aurel Stein about them almost 25 years later, not 'on their return' as mentioned on p. 5. Although Stein might have heard or read about this Hungarian expedition, he was only 17 years old at the time. Stein started working for the Government of India in 1888 and at the time of organising his first expedition, he was not yet a British citizen (he was granted citizenship in 1904).

Whitfield draws attention to the various circumstances that made it easier for the forgers to succeed, such as the desire of Hoernle to prove his discovery of a new language. This encouraged him to forget his own initial misgivings regarding the authenticity of the manuscripts. His mistakes — since then notoriously famous in specialist circles — also underline the possibility of erring even for the most experienced eye. This is an important topic that emerged as the result of the conference: it was very clear that experts from China, Japan and Europe were equally certain about the validity of their argument in favour or against the originality of an

object, in most cases quoting experience and eye. For example Fang Guangchang is convinced that experience will mean that fake manuscripts can be singled out (pp. 84-95). In contrast, the scientists argue that only scientific methods can lead to real impartiality in judging the originality of the manuscripts. Whitfield gives a balanced view pointing out that even the recognised scientific methods can be flawed at times, as for example, due to the use of old paper for the creation of a modern fake manuscripts. While reading the volume it becomes clearer than ever that these questions can only be researched successfully as the result of teamwork. The curator's experience and eye should ideally be backed up by various scientific methods such as radiocarbon dating, and also the recent methods of palaeography for studying the way Chinese characters were written in different periods. An example of the latter is Ishizuka Harumichi's paper "Identifying forgeries of Dunhuang manuscripts on palaeographical analysis and a study of writing materials" (pp. 216-21).

Whitfield also draws attention to the new tools of computer databases being put together which for the first time make possible the comparable study of a large number of Chinese characters and Buddhist texts in an unprecedented way. The different attitudes in east and west to the act of copying and to the manuscripts themselves is also pointed out by Whitfield (pp. 12-13). Whilst in our modern western culture we aim to recreate the past exactly as it was in China and Japan manuscripts are viewed much more as "living" works of art, closely connected to the present.

Whitfield concludes that it is most important to establish exactly what we mean by "Dunhuang manuscripts": whether this term refers only to manuscripts from Cave 17 or also those found elsewhere in Dunhuang some of which date from a considerably later period. It is also important not to take the provenance of the manuscripts today in the major collections for granted, as there is always a possibility of misattribution of provenance. At the same time the commonly held view that most manuscripts collected after 1910 are forgeries is unlikely to be correct in Whitfield's view purely on the basis of quantity and quality and is also due for reassessment.

The papers published in this volume cover a wide range of subjects. In a paper entitled "Genuine or fake?" Monique Cohen draws attention to the complexities in recognising fakes in well-established museum and library collections (pp. 22-32). She considers the various recognised methods for copying and discusses the finest forgers of calligraphy and painting such as Zhang Daqian (1899-1983). She emphasises that the provenance of a work and its history between its discovery and its entry into a collection must be considered. In Dunhuang the difficulty lies in establishing what happened between the summer of 1900 — the generally accepted date for opening the Library Cave — and Stein's arrival in 1906. For years, paintings and manuscripts had been taken out of the cave and presented to officials. Secondly a large number of manuscripts remained at the site until 1910. Cohen concludes in accordance with the generally accepted view that it is unlikely that forgeries would have been made before 1909.

She presents several case studies, in particular two paintings in the Freer Gallery that originated in the collection of Ye Changchi. Without arriving at definite conclusions she expresses her doubts about the unusual features she observed on a silk painting of Dizang (Kshitigarbha) that entered the Freer Gallery of Art in 1935. Although she is right in pointing out the unusual stylistic and iconographic features, some of these may, in my opinion, perhaps be explained with a slightly later date (late tenth, early eleventh century) and the influence of Uyghur patrons in that period.

Roderick Whitfield (no relation to the editor) in "Forgeries and Dunhuang painting" (pp. 96-102) on p. 99 gives his opinion about the same Kshitigarbha painting and summarises the results of his examination. He identifies details 'such as the white stitching of the *kāśāya* and the small gold lozenges that adorn its fielding' and dates the painting to the final years of the tenth century. In this paper Roderick Whitfield

examines other known instances of forged Dunhuang paintings that have entered museum collections. He draws attention to the importance of studying small, seemingly unimportant details in order to identify the genuine works. He points out that the fakes often use 'baits for the unwary' (p. 97) such as exact dates, famous names and the mention of Dunhuang in their inscriptions, and concludes 'that we should not be unduly worried by forgeries. Once we learn to recognise them we need no longer bother with them' (p. 101).

In a very different paper John A. Fields and Kenneth R. Seddon discuss the "Scientific detection of fakes and forgeries?" (pp. 33-40). The authors undertook scientific research and chemical analysis of the dye of Dunhuang manuscripts at Queen's University in Belfast. In the first part of the paper they draw attention to the limitations of scientific methods. They go on to argue that all curators and conservators should receive scientific training and emphasise the importance of collaboration between scientists, conservators and curators. The differences between objective and subjective data and invasive and non-invasive analysis are considered, and the experimental methods listed. They also draw attention to the importance of photography as a crucial part of the scientific record and to the importance of building an internationally recognised standard database of the manuscripts, such as the IDP database. Their conclusion to the question 'can we detect fakes?' is a maybe! Their other paper is on "Chemical analysis of dyes on a selection of Dunhuang manuscripts" (pp. 258-67). This gives a complete list of the available techniques for the scientific examination of artefacts and a description of the detection of *huangbo* dye in various manuscripts. They draw the conclusion that this methodology looks very promising for identifying fakes.

Rong Xinjiang's 'The Li Shengduo Collection: original or forged manuscripts?' (pp. 62-83) is extremely well documented. Li Shengduo (1858-1937) came from a family of book collectors and was a high government official. Rong's article examines how so many Dunhuang manuscripts could have entered his collection, and argues that they were stolen from the Ministry of Education after Japanese scholars had examined them in 1910. Although the theft was discovered and a scapegoat found, 'Shortly afterwards, the Revolution of 1911 led to the overthrow of the Qing dynasty and the government was too distracted with other matters to pay attention to the theft of Dunhuang manuscripts' (p. 63). In the second part of the paper Rong examines the current whereabouts of this material. The third part argues that later many forgers claimed that their manuscripts came from Li's famous collection in order to pretend that they were genuine. In the Appendix a full catalogue of the relevant Dunhuang manuscripts is given.

In Jean-Pierre Drège's "Random notes on Dunhuang forgeries" (pp. 41-49), the main focus is on the smaller collections of Dunhuang material. His opinion too is "that the questions raised by far exceed the questions solved" (p. 41). His other paper entitled "Dunhuang papers: preliminary morphological analysis of dated Chinese manuscripts" (pp. 115-79) is an extremely important and detailed study, first published in French in 1981. This updated version is its first English version thereby making the arguments available to many more scholars especially in China and Japan. Drège gives a detailed comparative analysis of a large corpus including available data on content (dating, text) and physical appearance (height, width, thickness and appearance of paper used) of the manuscripts. A clear pattern emerges that can be very valuable for dating manuscripts. Akao Eikei takes this idea further in his short paper entitled "On changes in paper type and number of lines of text per panel as seen in the Dunhuang manuscripts" (pp. 180-83).

Lewis Lancaster writes about "The Dunhuang manuscripts: the current state of research" (pp. 51-61). He points out that due to China's incredible heritage in printed books, the research of handwritten manuscripts is less advanced than elsewhere. At the same time the art of calligraphy popular in China keeps old writing styles alive.

In his other paper entitled "Fragments and forgeries: strategies of judging authenticity" (pp. 222-26), Lancaster discusses the importance of the study of the "glyph" or the physical shape of Chinese characters. Professor Fujieda had noticed "that certain manuscripts attributed to Dunhuang contained glyphs that were not part of the system of writing at the time when the material would have been produced" (p. 222). The way Chinese characters can be put into computers has also thrown the spotlight on the structure of Chinese characters. He suggests that the Dunhuang manuscripts should be compared with the matching sections of the Koryo or Jin editions of the Chinese Buddhist canon.

Following this theme Hélène Vetch studies the "Discrepancies between manuscripts and printed sources" (pp. 227-33). She points out the danger of drawing conclusions too quickly. Anna-Grethe Rischel studies the paper structure and fibre condition of a group of manuscripts (pp. 236-59). Table 1 compares the smallest characteristics of the paper mould, sheet formation, surface and the inscription. Table 2 analysis the chemical composition; and Table 3 the fibre characteristics.

Fujieda Akira writes about "Chronological classification of Dunhuang Buddhist manuscripts" (pp. 103-14). This article was published in Japanese in 1987 and is a comparative study of the different groups of Dunhuang manuscripts, dating them to five different periods. Cristina Scherrer-Schraub and George Bonani's "Establishing a typology of the old Tibetan manuscripts: a multidisciplinary approach" (pp. 184-215) approaches the completely different problem of the Tibetan fake manuscripts, studying the writing, and the small motifs.

A Japanese team writes about the "Physical analysis of ancient manuscripts of the Otani Collection" (pp. 268-90). Lou Kamtong about "An overview of the collections in the Taipei National Central Library" (pp. 291-94) where about 150 manuscripts are kept, many of which came from Li Shengduo's collection. Cheng A-tsai continues this theme with "Provenance and verification of Dunhuang manuscripts in Taiwan" (pp. 295-306). Lev Menshikov writes about "The mixing of fact and fiction" in Russian literature describing the discoveries in Dunhuang and argues for the genuineness of the St. Petersburg manuscripts. Nadia Brovenko describes "The *Sifang* Manuscripts from Berezovsky's collection" (pp. 311-15).

Ueyama Daishun discloses "How I came to be convinced that the Otani Collection contains forged manuscripts (pp. 316-20). Du Weisheng gives "A short description of eight Dunhuang forgeries in the National Library of China" (pp. 321-27).

A list of contributors, extensive bibliography and a detailed index completes the volume. The conference and the resulting volume are very important for the research of Dunhuang manuscripts and related fields. It is hoped that it will act as a catalyst for starting other similar projects in the future.

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### **Monks and Merchants. Silk Road Treasures from Northwest China. Gansu and Ningxia, 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> Century**

by Annette L. Juliano and Judith A. Lerner, with essays by Michael Alram, Chen Bingying, Albert E. Dien, Luo Feng, Boris I. Marshak. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., with The Asia Society, 2001, hb, pp. 352, colour ill. throughout, maps, glossary, bibliography, index, US\$65.

This substantial and very beautifully produced volume accompanied a major exhibition, which marked the opening of the new gallery at Asia House in New York. It presents for the very first time many important objects from Gansu and the

neighbouring Ningxia provinces, which were previously only exhibited in Chinese provincial museums and largely unknown in the west.

By describing the selected objects and their context the catalogue draws attention to very important trends in pre-Tang Chinese art, and explores questions of 'ethnic identity', the characteristics of Chinese art versus non-Chinese art, intercultural influences, their role in shaping the essential elements of Tang art and the importance of religious and funerary arts in tracing these important cultural changes.

The 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> centuries in this area of northwest China is a relatively under-researched period as most mainstream works have focused on the Han and Tang dynasties. Traditionally less attention has also been paid to the art of non-Han people in the formation of Chinese art. This exhibition and catalogue focus on these issues and once again underline the importance of the trade routes not only in transmitting art forms and cultural ideas, but also in shaping the art of the following period in a decisive way. Because of the surrounding mountains, the Hexi corridor in Gansu province was the only passage way from Dunhuang and the Silk Road oasis cities beyond, to the Chinese heartland, and this is why its art reflects some of the most important cultural changes of this period.

The book represents an exemplary collaboration between two well known experts, whose joint work now spans more than a decade. Annette L. Juliano and Judith A. Lerner's attention was drawn to the hitherto relatively little-known collections and period by their joint work on the so-called Miho funerary couch.<sup>1</sup> Although Chinese funerary slabs of the pre-Tang period had been known from Western collections, they had represented a somewhat exotic side-track of Chinese art. Juliano's and Lerner's recent work has focused on the detailed study of these funerary couches. The exhibition is the direct result of the authors' trip to China in 1997, collecting material from provincial museums that they visited in Gansu province.

The objects published in the catalogue are familiar to experts, as they are displayed in Chinese provincial museums. This reviewer saw many of them in 1993, but photography was not allowed, and many were unpublished. The exhibition and this catalogue bring them to a wider audience for the first time. Juliano and Lerner are the first to put these objects into context in an English language publication, and the first to bring together such a large number of objects from one area of China. The result fills a very important gap, and deals with many issues that will require to be researched for long years to come. Many of the essays are written by Juliano and Lerner, who also selected the objects.

Due to the nature of this large project, however, many authors collaborated on the catalogue and the individual entries. All the objects are described in great detail. Apart from the authors of the essays themselves, catalogue entries were also provided by Susan Benington, Colin Mackenzie, Julie Segreaves, Nicholas Sims-Williams and Zhang Guangda, ensuring the highest level of expertise. However, inevitably the overall picture presented is somewhat fragmented, and future researchers will need to work on connecting some of the ideas.

Following a very concise introduction written by Juliano and Lerner the material is presented in four parts. Part I entitled "Setting the Stage" contains three essays together with the entries for the related objects. In "The Silk Road in Gansu and China" the principal authors give an excellent summary of the history of the region. However due to the shortage of space some generalisations distort the complexities of the art of this period. The authors point out the influence of Indian Gupta art and the

<sup>1</sup> For example: Annette L. Juliano and Judith Lerner: 'Miho Couch Revisited in Light of Recent Discoveries', *Orientalism*, Vol. 32, 8 (October 2001).

art of Xinjiang on the Sui-dynasty caves of Dunhuang (p. 32), but do not say that some of the earliest caves that clearly show the influence of Chinese figure painting also date to this period. Another small point is that when emphasising the devastating effect of the persecution of Buddhism (p. 33) the authors fail to mention that due to the period of Tibetan occupation (781-848) much of Gansu, including Dunhuang escaped this fate, which explains the importance of Buddhist art in the region.

The selected objects illustrate the early art of this region well. It is good to see 'old friends' such as the famous bronze horses from the Gansu Provincial Museum in Lanzhou (cat. nos 2-4) together with lesser-known objects. The two selected unicorns (cat. nos. 6, 7) show the remarkably similar iconographic motif in different materials: painted wood and bronze. One of the Sogdian letters found near Dunhuang and today in the British Library (cat. no. 8) is translated in full by Nicholas Sims-Williams.

In 'The Unbroken Thread: Nomads in China' Annette L. Juliano introduces the subject of China's relationship with her nomadic neighbours. In 'Encounter with Nomads' Albert E. Dien lists and describes all the important nomadic groups of the relevant period. He also explores the assimilation of these nomads through the example of the tomb of Li Xian, who was a prominent member of a local family in the area of Guyuan in Ningxia province. Many of the finds from this tomb were selected for the exhibition.

Local tombs were usually constructed under ground using the painted bricks typical of the region. Of these three examples were selected (cat nos. 10-12). The fragments of a lacquered coffin dating to the late 5<sup>th</sup> century was also displayed (cat. no. 16), along with provincial tomb figurines (cat. nos. 22-26 and 36-39). The dragon-head finials (cat. no. 29) and the Sasanian glass bowl (cat. no. 30) are objects that are portrayed later in the 9<sup>th</sup> century in the Buddhist banner paintings of Dunhuang, although this is not mentioned here. The beautiful Hellenistic ewer, which was probably made in Bactria in the 5<sup>th</sup> century is one of the spectacular objects found in Li Xian's tomb in Ningxia, dating to the mid-6<sup>th</sup> century. It illustrates how far luxury objects travelled on the Silk Road in perfect condition to be treasured by local officials.

Part II, "Buddhist Monks: Transmission and Translation" contains two essays: 'Buddhist Art in Northwest China' by Annette L. Juliano and 'Gandhara in Gansu' by Chen Bingying. The former provides a general background to Buddhist art in the region, the latter explores Gandharan influence, summarising the known views. Some important object descriptions in this part highlight the importance of the Buddhist art of the pre-Tang period in Gansu province outside Dunhuang. Some cave temple sites such as Maijishan and Binglingsi are relatively well known, but others such as Tiantishan much less so. Only in the last few years did attention shift from the Dunhuang and Yulin caves to the other lesser known caves in Gansu province, which date largely to this pre-Tang period.<sup>2</sup>

Juliano and Lerner are the first to incorporate some of these results in a major catalogue aimed at the general public. It is, however one of the short-comings of the catalogue, that due to constraints of space and in order that the focus remained on the objects exhibited, the Buddhist art of the region could not be explored further with the inclusion of other, even smaller sites. The catalogue also draws attention to stylistic similarities between Maijishan and the relatively recently discovered Qingzhou sculpture.

<sup>2</sup> Most recently: Angela F. Howard, 'Liang Patronage of Buddhist Art in the Gansu Corridor during the Fourth Century and the Transformation of a Central Asian style', *Between Han and Tang: Religious Art and Archaeology in a Transformative Period*, ed., Wu Hung, Beijing, 2000 and Marilyn M. Rhie, 'Buddhist Sites of Gansu', *The Flowering of a Foreign Faith: New Studies in Chinese Buddhist Art*, ed., Janet Baker, Mumbai, 1998.

Among the exhibited objects, the fragment of a banner found outside caves 125 and 126 in Dunhuang is most interesting (cat. no. 45). Dating to 487 A.D. in the Northern Wei period (386-535) it shows embroidered donors wearing Xianbei dress. Maijishan's graceful style is represented by several clay sculptures (cat. nos. 60-65) including an *apsaras* or *tianren* (not *tianjen*).

Part III "Foreign Merchants: From Colonists to Chinese Officials" contains several essays: 'The Merchant Empire of the Sogdians', by Judith A. Lerner, 'The Sogdians in their Homeland', by Boris I. Marshak and 'Sogdians in Northwest China', by Luo Feng. This is perhaps the most exciting part of the catalogue and where this project comes to fruition. It presents objects found in tombs of Sogdians in China, and explores their role in Chinese culture, trade and society, drawing attention to the important role Sogdians played in the northwestern region. As Chinese researchers up to the present have been somewhat reluctant to explore the part played by non-Chinese in the formation of their mainstream art, this section is of the greatest importance. However, despite this, some of the issues raised are not explored in detail and remain in the realm of general remarks (about *hu* [barbarians] versus Han [Chinese], for example) but this is an important start. The selected objects reflect the initial interest of the principal authors and include tomb doors (cat. no. 80) as well as many other objects, for example, the elements of a mask made of gold foil pieces (cat. no. 90) dating to the Tang dynasty (618-906). A special section concentrating on coins is introduced by Michael Alram ('Coins and the Silk Road').

Part IV bears the title "Conclusion" and all the objects in this section belong to the Tang dynasty and represent the 'Cosmopolitanism and the Tang', as the title of Juliano's and Lerner's final essay also indicates. The most important of them is a funerary couch found recently in Tianshui (cat. no. 106), which was accompanied by the figures of five musicians (cat. no. 107). The catalogue ends somewhat abruptly with a good example of nesting reliquary caskets from *Dayunsi* ('Temple of the Great Clouds') in Jingchuan County, Gansu province and dating to the Tang dynasty (cat. no. 120).

No Chinese characters or diacritics were used due to the general nature of this work, but the catalogue is accompanied by detailed footnotes and references. Occasional mistakes, such as erroneous spellings or wrong dates, do occur, but this is almost inevitable in a large and complex project of this kind. An extensive glossary, a detailed bibliography and index complement the volume.

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## New publications on Tibet

### Tibet's Ancient Religion Bön

by Christoph Baumer. Bangkok: Orchid Press, 2002. English translation by Michael Kohn from a revised version of *Bön: Die lebendige Ur-Religion Tibets*, Graz: ADEVA, Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1999. Pp. 200, colour illus., maps, chronological table, bibliography, indices.

This book would be a worthwhile acquisition for any library or personal study because of its extraordinary pictorial documentation alone. Anyone who enjoys leafing through the *National Geographic* will love it. Most of the photographs were taken by the author—in Tibet, mainly, but also in Yunnan, India and Nepal—and

demonstrate a considerable talent. Not just for decoration, they have clear connections to the neighbouring prose 99% of the time. Panoramas of vast uninhabited landscapes alternate regularly with photos of humans and their cultural productions. This pictorial presentation nicely matches the author's approach to Tibetan folk religion as the response of humble humans threatened by an overpowering natural environment. In contrast to many books and articles written about Bon in recent decades, which have tended to stress Bon's relationship (or non-relationship) with Indian-derived Buddhism, Bon scriptures, and Bonpo monks, Christoph Baumer goes to the local folk and folk-priests—mediums, shamans, weather makers—and draws a picture of Bon as (truly, or historically, or at base) animistic and shamanistic. To the usual Indocentrism, the author offers an opposing position. What is interesting about Tibet is primarily what is truly native to it, secondarily connections with its southeastern (Nanzhao, Yunnan) and northern (Silk Route) neighbours. This could surely be a refreshing perspective from some points of view.

In overviews of this type, generalisations (like those I have just made), while serving the useful function of reducing complexities, are likely to result in occasional oversimplifications, distortions and misrepresentations. I do not have the patience to go into these sorts of problems here. Instead, I will just point out a few more or less isolated but weighty statements that beg to be challenged or corrected.

A sensationalist emphasis on blood sacrifices keeps surfacing throughout the book. Sacrifices of chickens and goats by northern Nepalese Tibetan ethnic groups may be seen today in various parts of Nepal, and I think few would find reason to argue that these never occur. But reading the label to the picture on p. 45, 'Animal sacrifices are still made today, even by Buddhist communities; Gelug monastery Riwo Dechen, near Chongye, central Tibet,' and then observing the sheep's head in the picture standing next to a neatly stacked tower of *kabtse*—deep-fried Tibetan 'pretzels' in a marvellous variety of shapes—tells me that this is just a rather normal altar set-up for Tibetan New Year (for a written source on this, see for example Tawa & Tashi Topgyal, 'The Lifestyle of Nomads', *Tibet Journal*, vol. 23, no. 3 [Autumn 1998], pp. 34-49, at p. 47). The decorated tower of *kabtse* (*kha-zas*) called *sder-kha* is as important to Tibetan New Year as the Christmas tree to Christmas. The sheep's head, in my own experience, has always been one made of porcelain, not a real one like in the picture, although I have heard it said that sometimes a sheep's skull is used. But until I am shown an unretouched video of the Dge-lugs-pa monks ritually sacrificing this sheep, I will feel certain that the presence of its severed head in the picture demonstrates that they were able to procure one from their all too un-priestly neighbourhood butcher. Not every ritual use of animals, animal products, or animal figurines necessarily implicates ritual sacrifice, or even a 'survival' of the same, as the author often glily implies.

'New Bon ... starting in the nineteenth century, spread in the eastern provinces of Kham and Amdo following the teachings of Sangye Lingpa (1340-1396) and adopted many elements from the Buddhist Nyingma school' (p. 28). Clearly something is wrong with the chronology of this passage. Certainly New Bon received its main impetus in the 18th, if not already in the 17th century (I believe Mi-shig-rdo-rje, born 1650, was its true originator). The author has mistakenly given us dates for the Rnying-ma-pa treasure teacher (*gter-ston*) Sangs-rgyas-gling-pa (whose actual dates might still have to be moved back 60 years), when, without a shadow of doubt, he intended the New Bon *gter-ston* Sangs-rgyas-gling-pa, who lived from 1705-1735 (also known as Byang-chub-rdo-rje-rtal).

On p. 146: '... could it have been here that the mythical capital of Shangshung, Ngülkhar, the legendary "Silver Castle" in which Tšnpa Shenrab was born, was located?' Lord Shenrab was not born in a silver castle in any legend known to me. He was born in Bar-po-so-brgyad, the capital of 'Ol-mo-lung-ring (and not of Zhangzhung) in Tazik (Stag-gzig). His one-volume biography called the *Mdo-'dus* does,

however, have Lord Shenrab visiting Khyung-lung Dngul-mkhar (Garuda Valley Silver Castle), near Mount Ti-se (Kailash), on his way home to Tazik following his visit to Kong-po. It was there, in "Silver Castle", that his recently wedded wife Rkong-za, the daughter of the Lord of Kong-po, gave birth to their son Gshen-bu Rkong-tsha.

The wall painting photographed on p. 84 is labelled: 'Sacred diu puzzles with an astrological function are found in temples of Bön as well as Buddhism: Gelug monastery of Tashi Lhunpo.' The 'diu' represents *lde'u*, which means 'riddle' or 'enigma' (see p. 83). Simply reading the Tibetan-language title floating above the checker-board pattern (with one syllable in each square) proves something altogether different. It says it is a *kun-khor* (short for *kun-tu khor-ba*, 'turning everywhere', although Tibetans call it *kun-bzang-khor-lo*, 'wheel good every which way'). This special form of concrete (or acrostic) poetry, often seen on the porches of Tibetan temples, was directly inspired by the third chapter of Dandin's *Kāvya-dārśa* (the only work of Indian *kāvya* poetic theory that was translated into Tibetan). The lines at the bottom explain how it should be read - from the upper left corner to the lower right, and from the upper right corner to the lower left, then from left to right one line at a time. The subject of the praise is the tenth (or the seventh if you prefer) Panchen Lama (1938-89), whose name can be found by reading diagonally from the upper corner on your left to the lower corner on your right: 'Blo-bzang-phrin-las-lhun-grub-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan'. There is nothing even remotely astrological about it. It is a poem of praise to the late Panchen Lama and to Bkra-shis-lhun-po Monastery.

I must express my disappointment with the author's decision to use only phonetic representations of proper names. Doing so, far too often, makes them impossible for even the most seasoned Tibetologists to recognise (there are some who compromise by giving correct spellings in parentheses or in the index entries). For example, who would guess that the phonetic name of a Bon monastery, 'Ü Wün' (p. 67), would be the same as the properly spelled G.yu-bun ('Turquoise Mist')? Well, I suppose I did, but it surely was not easy. Similarly, 'Tobden' (on p. 147) is Rtogs-Idan Monastery, not Thob-Idan as one would expect from the phonetic rendering. 'Palha Puk' looks like Pha-lha Phug (Pha-lha being the well known aristocratic family), when instead it has to be Spa La-phug (Spa is the name of one of the six most important Bon clans, while La-phug is a place name, meaning 'radish').

Tibetan art historians will be most excited by the photos of early southern Tibetan mural paintings from Sras-mkhar Dgu-thog (of the Bka'-brgyud-pa school) and the Bon temple of Spa La-phug (also known as La-phug Bde-chen-sgang), with proposed datings to the 13th and 15th centuries respectively (see pp. 128-9, 139). Given the La-phug paintings' importance for Bon art history, also stressed in Baumer's journal article on the subject in *Oriental Art*, it may be worthwhile to give a rough translation of Dpal-tshul's entry on La-phug in his survey of Bon monasteries (*G.yung-drung Bon-gyi Bstan-byung*, Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre, Dolanji, 1972, vol. 2, pp. 605-6):

'After that, the greater headquarters [of the Spa family], La-phug Bde-chen-sgang, in southern La-stod, seems to have been founded more or less in the time of Spa-ston Rgyal-ba-shes-rab [direct disciple of Khyung-rgod-rtal whose birth took place in 1175], in about the fourth *rab-byung* [i.e., 1207-1266]. Some say instead that it was founded by Dpal-Idan-bzang-po [two generations later]. An assembly of teaching and meditative accomplishment—for teaching, learning, meditation and practice—was instituted and flourished there. A succession of thirteen Spa family lamas with "Good" (*bzang-po*) [in their names] appeared there, including [in chronological order] Bla-ma Spa Don-grub-bum-bzang, Dpal-Idan-bzang-po, and Nyi-dpal-bzang-po, and the teachings spread and increased even more. In later times, the descendents of the Spa family reached a bottleneck (*nyag*

phra), and that is why, even if the teachings continued, they became constricted. Still, even today the meditation practice community and the three receptacles (images, sacred books and chortens) remain as they were. [The following sentence, in smaller letters, may be an added note:] Here, there are many very holy inner receptacles, such as the mask portraying A-bse made by the hands of Stong-rgyung. It is claimed that this is the place of the pig-faced sky-goers, a substitute holy place for the site where the *devas* and *asuras* engaged in combat.'

For more on La-phug, see Thondup Lhagyal's contribution in S. Karmay & Y. Nagano, eds., *New Horizons in Bon Studies*, National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, 2000, p. 458. Lhagyal concludes that it is very difficult to point out who the founder was, or when it was founded (it seems to have been used as a retreat place for several generations before its foundation as a monastery). It was here that Spa-ston Bstan-rgyal-bzang-po composed his important histories of Bon and of the *Zhang-zhung Oral Transmissions* in the 1470s. La-phug's heyday lasted from the 13th through the end of the 15th century, when the main centre of the Spa family lineages shifted first to Rgyal-mo-rong and finally, in the 19th century, to Ye-tha in Nag-chu-kha. This historical data could help confirm the 15th century dating for the paintings, proposed on grounds of stylistic comparison, although a date a century or two earlier might prove worthy of consideration.

At first I was intrigued and even somewhat excited when I opened up to the picture of a beautifully arranged Tibetan monastic library in Sigyal (Srid-rgyal) Monastery, the oldest existing monastery in the vicinity of the sacred mountain of Kong-po (p. 159). The label says, 'The library of Sigyal Monastery holds a complete edition of the Bñ canon, comprising 406 volumes.' Since only one Bon Kanjur collection is known to have survived intact, that of Dbal-khyung Monastery in Nyag-rong, and not even one Bon Tanjur (or Katen/Bka'-brten) collection (the Katen that has been reprinted recently in about 360 volumes is a new collation of texts gathered from here and there), this would be very good news. However, I slowly came to realise that the number 406 comes from totalling the number of 113 volumes in the Kanjur and 293 in the Katen. This number was derived (see the main text on p. 159), without acknowledgement, from Samten Karmay's article, "A General Introduction to the History and Doctrines of Bon", *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Tōyō Bunko*, vol. 33, 1975, pp. 171-218, at p. 190. Even here, they are not in fact 'volumes', but the main titles that are being counted (Karmay took the numbers from Per Kvaerne's 1974 journal article listing of titles found in one particular canon catalogue, one among many, and every catalogue is unique in the numbers of titles and volumes it lists). Hence our illusion that the author actually counted 406 volumes of canonical works in this particular library simply dissolves, and we remain in the dark about which Tibetan books are in the picture (the thin red-covered binding-boards on some of them, including the one the monk is holding in his hands, suggest that they are recent reprints, not original manuscripts or xylographic prints).

If asked to recommend a good introductory reading on Bon, I would probably name this book as a general overview, with only minor reservations. Typographical errors are few (note the 'Bñpo chronic' on p. 16), and an excellent job has been done with the layout of (mainly colour) illustrations and maps. There is a chronological table, a very long list of relevant publications (the majority of them not explicitly cited in the text), and, rather unfortunately, in my opinion, three separate indices, where one index would be enough, as is the fashion in German academia these days.

Dan Martin, Research Associate, Department of Indian Studies, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel

**Religion and Secular Culture in Tibet, Tibetan Studies II**

edited by Henk Blezer, *PIATS 2000, Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the Ninth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2002. US\$69.

The book under review constitutes the second of three volumes of the general proceedings of the ninth seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, held between June 24 and 30, 2000, in Leiden. In total, it contains 26 articles discussing selected aspects of the secular and religious culture of Tibet, both from textual and anthropological perspectives. Most of the contributors hold senior positions in Tibetology at universities around the world. Particularly welcome are seven articles by Tibetan scholars who joined the proceedings from the Peoples Republic of China. In view of the thriving Tibetological research community in Lhasa and beyond, it is to be hoped that the enhanced inclusion of indigenous scholarship becomes a regular feature at future Tibetan Studies conferences.

Since, in a review of this kind, it is not possible to discuss the content of all 26 contributions in detail, I shall only reproduce their titles and indicate the thematic orientation of the contributions.

Broadly speaking, the content of the volume falls into eight sections:

(1) **BUDDHISM (GENERAL)**: Samuel, Geoffrey, "Buddhism and State in Eighth Century Tibet", pp. 1-19; Karmay, G. Samten, "The Rituals and their Origins in the Visionary Accounts of the Fifth Dalai Lama", pp. 21-40; Bentor, Yael, "Fourfold Meditations: Outer, Inner, Secret, and Suchness", pp. 41-58; Burchardi, Anne, "Towards an Understanding of *Tathāgatagarbha* Interpretation in Tibet with special reference to the *Ratnagotravibhāga*", pp. 59-77; Mathes, Klaus-Dieter, "'Gos Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal's Extensive Commentary on and Study of the *Ratnagotravibhāgavyākhyā*", pp. 79-95; Dge 'dun rab gsal, "Skal ldan mgur ma dang de'i khyad chos", pp. 97-112; Templeman, David, "Iranian Themes in Tibetan Tantric Culture: The *Dākinī*", pp. 113-127; Cousens, Diana, "The Visionary Lineages of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo", pp. 129-142.

(2) **BUDDHISM (HERMENEUTICS)**: Verhagen, Peter, "Studies in Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Hermeneutics (3): Grammatical Models in Buddhist Formulas", pp. 143-161; Arènes, Pierre, "Hermeneutique des *tantra*: Le *Ye shes rdo rje kun las btus pa'i rgyud las 'byung ba'i rgyan bdun rnam par drol ba* de Śraddhikaravarman", pp. 163-183.

(3) **BUDDHISM (ANTHROPOLOGY)**: Sihlé, Nicolas, "Lhachö [*Lha mchod*] and Hrinän [*Sri gñon*]: The Structure and Diachrony of a Pair of Rituals", pp. 185-206; Holler, David, "The Ritual of Freeing Lives", pp. 207-226.

(4) **BUDDHISM (GENDER)**: Bde skyid sgrol ma, "A chung gnam rdzong bsam gtan chos 'phel gling gi btsun ma'i 'tsho ba spyod stangs skor dpyad pa", pp. 227-244; Byang gnos pa tshe g.yang, "Grags can bud med bstan ma'i sku rien blo bzang tshe sgron dang khong gi skor mdo tsaṃ gleng ba", pp. 245-258; Havnevik, Hanna, "A Tibetan Female State Oracle", pp. 259-288.

(5) **BUDDHISM (GREAT PERFECTION)**: Meinert, Carmen, "Chinese Chan and Tibetan *Rdzogs Chen*: Preliminary Remarks on Two Tibetan Dunhuang Manuscripts", pp. 289-307; van Schaik, Sam, "The Resolution of the Simultaneous and Gradual Approaches to the Great Perfection in the *Klong chen snying thig*", pp. 309-320; Winkler, Jakob, "The *Rdzogs chen* Murals of the Klu khang in Lhasa", pp. 321-343.

(6) **BON (GREAT PERFECTION)**: Klein, Anne C., "Unbounded Functionality: A Modest *Rdzogs chen* Rejection of the Classic *Don byed nus pa* Criterion", pp.

345–363; Rossi, Donatella, "A Brief Survey of the *Lung rigs rin po che'i mdzod blo gsal snying gyi nor* by Shar rdza Bkra Shis rgyal mtshan (1859–1934), pp. 365–378.

(7) BON (GENERAL): DON GRUB LHA RGYAL: "*Gshen rab mi bo che'i mdzad mam bsdu ma'i skor gleng ba*", pp. 379–401; Vorndran, Eika, "Coming into Existence: Bon Notions of Embryological Development", pp. 403–412; Tshe dbang lha mo, "*Bod kyi shes rigs las 'byung ba'i skor rags tsam gleng ba*", pp. 413–418; Dbra khyung dge bshes skal bzang nor bu: "*Zhang bod kyi gso ba rig pa'i grol phugs 'bum bzhi dang rgyud bzhi'i skor la dpyad pa*", pp. 419–430.

(8) LITERATURE: Roesler, Ulrike, "The Great Indian Epics in the Version of Dmar ston Chos kyi rgyal po", pp. 431–450; Robin, Françoise, "The Unreal World of Tibetan Free Verse Poetry: A Preliminary Study of Topics and Themes in Contemporary Tibetan Free Verse Poetry", pp. 451–470.

The production quality of this book, as well as the editorial attention devoted to its contributions, is of the highest order. Included in Brill's TIBETAN STUDIES LIBRARY, conceived under the inspired stewardship of Albert Hoffstädt, alongside nine other proceeding volumes of the Tibetan Studies conference in Leiden, this publication series will set a new standard in the dissemination of Tibetological research. While, as a whole, probably outside the financial reach of most individuals, it should be an integral part of all university libraries with an interest in Tibetan studies. To many Tibetologists, these volumes will become a standard work of reference, reflecting not only the current state of research but also illustrating the breadth of Tibetan studies in the 21st century.

(UP)

## New publications on South Asia

### Bamiyan Afghanistan

by Naka Atsushi, Tokyo, Toho Publishing, 2002. ¥1800.

This little book is a photographic record of the Bamiyan site following the destruction of the two colossal Buddhas, with brief captions in Japanese and English, but no accompanying text. Plate 1, a mural of a seated Buddha in Cave 330, has had its eyes deliberately worn away, but otherwise sits in mute testimony of Bamiyan's early influence on the style of Buddhist images in the region of Khotan on the southern silk Road. About half the photographs in the book document the sorry destruction, not merely of the two colossal Buddhas, but of many other caves; the remainder illustrate the plight of the local inhabitants, ploughing with oxen as they have done for millennia, but also using dogs imported from Germany to sniff out landmines.

(RW)

## OBITUARY

### Ksenia Borisovna Kepping (1927-2002)

Ksenia Kepping was one of the foremost Tangut scholars in Europe and, for those of us who know no Russian, she was the most important Tangut scholar in the world for she also spoke and wrote perfect English. In recent years she spent several months in the British Library working on the Tangut documents in the Stein collection. With her erudition, combined with an immensely charming and attractive personality, she was always a welcome visitor.

Ksenia was born in Tianjin, China, into a Russian émigré family. Her father Boris von Kepping was Swedish and served as a White Army officer. He fled Russia for Harbin where he met and married Olga Viktorovna Sviatina. They eventually settled in Tianjin where their two daughters were born. Ksenia's uncle, Viktor Sviatin, eventually became the head of the last Russian Orthodox Mission in Peking until 1954. Ksenia was very close to her uncle and greatly respected his devotion to his faith and his honesty and integrity. She had intended to write about the end of the Russian Mission and was keen to have news of the fate of the buildings from recent visitors to Peking, though she remained nervous about admitting publicly to the family connection.

In Tianjin, Ksenia attended the secondary school of the Society of Soviet citizens until the entire family was 'repatriated' to Russia. Archbishop Viktor was appointed Metropolitan of Krasnodar but the rest of the family was sent to remote Kazakhstan and their troubles were increased by having to leave all their possessions behind as there was so little room in the railway trucks. Ksenia's brilliance and her mastery of Chinese enabled her to enter the 'State University of Middle Asia' in Tashkent and later the Faculty of Oriental Studies in Leningrad State University where she studied in the Department of Chinese Philology between 1955 and 1959.

Despite a divorce which left her a single mother, Ksenia began to work in 1966 on the Tangut collections made by Kozlov. She worked with E. I. Kyachanov and M. V. Sofronov and together they produced a Tangut dictionary in 1969. Later she made her own study of the Chinese military treatise *Sunzi bingfa* in Tangut (published in 1979). Ksenia's Chinese background was invaluable in her work for the basis of study of the language, thought and institutions of the Tanguts was through the translation of Chinese texts. As the documents in the collections made by Kozlov and Stein were often fragmentary and extremely varied in type, ranging from the legal code to poetry and folklore, Ksenia had to read very widely and relied a great deal on the exchange of ideas with scholar-friends in a variety of fields.

It was clear from Ksenia's wide-ranging conversation when she was last in England that she had many research plans. She was fascinated by the mystery of the death of Genghis Khan, wanted to replace the foreign, externally imposed terms Tangut and Xixia with Minia, to understand the reason for the disintegration of the Minia state and also wanted to commemorate the service of her uncle Viktor. Sadly, she died after an operation, leaving her twin sons Leonid and Boris, and many friends drawn to her by her enthusiasm for research and her great personal charm and distinction.

I am grateful to Ksenia's family for information and to my colleague Katia Rogatchevskaia for translation.

Frances Wood, Curator of Chinese collections  
The British Library, London, U.K.

## LIST OF LECTURES FOR 2003

**KINDLY NOTE THAT WE NOW HOST ONLY ONE EVENT EACH TERM**

30 May 2003 **Professor Deborah Klimburg-Salter** (Institut für Kunstgeschichte, University of Vienna,  
(Friday) 6 pm Austria)  
Lecture Theatre, "The Mystery of the Parinirvana Buddha at Bamiyan."  
SOAS Main Building  
13 November 2003 **Sun Shuyun** (Independent Scholar, U.K.)  
(Thursday) 6 pm "Across the Himalayas-Buddhist India and Chinese Culture"  
Brunei Gallery In collaboration with Asian Art in London 2003.  
Lecture Theatre,  
SOAS, London.

**ALL ARE WELCOME**



If you would like to advertise in the next issue of the CIAA Newsletter, please contact us for the advertising rates:

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Dear Readers,

The articles in this large issue cover an extensive range of topics: two translated articles discuss the evidence of Sogdian dancers and Zoroastrian art on the basis of classical Chinese texts and *realia*; and two preliminary reports on excavations recently undertaken at the trading stations Sengamedu and Sanjan in southern and western India respectively. We are also pleased to include a working report on UNESCO's initiatives at funding and repairing damaged Afghan sites.

Readers will recall that in our last issue we carried a report on pp.17-18 about the Charles Masson Collection exhibition organized by Dr. Elizabeth Errington, Assistant Curator of South Asian Coins, The British Museum, London, U.K. and funded by the Neil Kreitman Foundation and the Townley Group of the British Museum Friends. We wish to clarify that the report compiled by Karen Debrowska was extensively based on the literature contained in the museum flyer, textual panels accompanying the exhibition, as well as a talk delivered by Dr. Errington at the museum and her article published in *Minerva* (November-December, 2002), pp. 53-55.

We note with regret the passing of two stalwarts of Pakistan studies: Karl Jettmar (1918-2002) and Annemarie Schimmel (1922-2003).

The committee congratulates Dr. Laura Vigo who was awarded her Ph.D. for her thesis on palaeo-ethnography and nomadic archaeology in northwest China during the third and second millennia B.C. Shortly after the award she delivered an absorbing lecture for the CIAA on aspects of the Shajing Bronze Age culture of China. Professor Deborah Klimburg-Salter of the University of Vienna was our annual visiting lecturer. Having examined Xuanzang's sojourn in the Bamiyan valley using the latest findings of Japanese scholarship, she proposed an alternative site for discovering the remains of the Parinirvana Buddha.

We are very proud to note that one of the founders of CIAA, Dr. Lilla Russell-Smith, has been nominated a fellow of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Her election marks her as the youngest fellow in the history of that Academy. In addition, we felicitate Professor János Harmatta on receiving the Gold Medal of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences for his internationally acclaimed work in Classical and Oriental studies.

We thank all our readers for their contributions and wish everyone pleasant summer holidays.

The CIAA Committee

## LIST OF LECTURES FOR 2003



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