

The Silk Road

Volume 1 Number 2

"The Bridge between Eastern and Western cultures"

December 2003

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The Silk Road is a publication of the Silkroad Foundation. *The Silk Road* can also be viewed online at <http://www.silkroadfoundation.org>

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FROM THE EDITOR

It is my pleasure to introduce the second issue of the Silkroad Foundation's Newsletter which contains a range of articles that should interest general reader and specialist alike. I respond to these essays on both a personal and a professional level. On the one hand, the Silk Road embodies a kind of romantic and romanticizing vision of a past which may come alive when I visit the locations where history unfolded. On the other hand the historian in me keeps whispering that I should beware of reading too much into the past from its remains that have survived to the present.

It has been my privilege to have seen the Sogdian murals at Afrasiab on the outskirts of Samarkand, to have visited, however briefly, the famous Sogdian town of Panjikent, to have seen Sogdian petroglyphs in the Hunza Valley in northern Pakistan, and to have driven out to the Dunhuang "limes" in the area not far from where Aurel Stein discovered the famous "ancient Sogdian letters." In fact, almost anywhere we might step along the various paths of the ancient Silk Roads, we can imagine we are following in the footsteps of the Sogdians, who played such an important role in the Inner Asian trade for a major part of the first millennium CE. Similarly, visiting the Kazakhs or (in my case) the Kyrgyz in their Central Asian mountain pastures brings to life the remarkable, centuries-old, descriptive accounts we are fortunate to have regarding the traditional culture of the pastoral nomads who contributed so significantly to the movement of peoples and goods across historic Eurasia.

As a historian interested in periods for which the archaeological record provides essential source material, I am especially intrigued by the material

remains of Sogdian culture. To the casual visitor, the dusty mounds of Afrasiab or Panjikent or even the darkened and damaged originals of their murals barely speak, but they come alive through the expertise of scholars such as those whose essays on the Sogdians occupy the largest part of this issue of our Newsletter. I have had the personal pleasure of hearing Boris Marshak lecture for our Silk Road Seattle events back in 2002 and witnessing how his gentle erudition charmed all who met him. For half a century he has been one of the giants of Sogdian studies. More recently, in conjunction with the stunning exhibit of Silk Road art at the Dayton (Ohio) Art Institute (in which many of the objects spoke to the importance of the Sogdians) I shared the stage with Aleksandr Naymark and heard first-hand his discussion of the remarkable Varakhsha palace which he has now written up for these pages. His essay offers an excellent example of historical detection, where the written sources and material remains can be brought together into a narrative that questions accepted wisdom in attempting to make sense of events which occurred some 1200-1300 years ago. Étienne de la Vaissière's elegant summary about what we are learning on the lively frontier of the study of the Sogdians in China should encourage everyone to read his book, the first major synthesis of all that is known about the Sogdian merchants and one which deserves to be translated for those who cannot read the French. Everywhere one turns in the literature on Sogdiana, one encounters the name of Frantz Grenet, who is Director of the Franco-Uzbek Archaeological Mission that has been continuing the excavations at Afrasiab and at other sites nearby. We can be much encouraged by the way in which international participation in Cen-

tral Asian excavations has expanded in the post-Soviet era, not the least of the benefits being that the results are becoming more widely known than they were in the days where so much of the important scholarship appeared mainly in Russian.

Yet Sogdiana rarely makes the front page news, whereas the tragedy of Bamiyan is, alas, all too fresh in the minds of everyone. The destruction of so much of value in Afghanistan's cultural heritage and the threats from looting to that which remains in the ground should not obscure the fact we are also living in a time when important new discoveries continue there. One thinks, for example, of the earliest physical copies of Buddhist writings, which somehow were spirited out of Afghanistan before the Taliban could destroy them and are now being made available for scholars to decipher. Just as we await eagerly the appearance of each volume in the Early Buddhist Manuscripts Project, we wait with bated breath to learn the results of the continuing excavations by Zemaaryalai Tarzi, in search of the reclining Buddha at Bamiyan. If the international community wishes to contribute to projects honoring and preserving the cultural heritage of this true crossroads of civilizations, then supporting the protection of archaeological sites and

the continuation of major excavations and the study of their results should be a higher priority than the reconstruction of the standing Buddhas of Bamiyan, however important symbolically that might be. It is no small miracle that in current conditions in Afghanistan any kind of serious archaeology can be undertaken.

Saulesh Yessenova's article introduces us to another important aspect of the preservation and understanding of the past. It is at once alarming and heartening to learn how Kazakh family genealogies are in danger of being ignored by the younger generation and at the same time are being actively preserved by their elders. This, in a culture where memory of family and kin has always been at the heart of identity. Just as in many places we are racing against time to rescue material culture from the architects of modern development, so also is it important to record and preserve traditions that inevitably change due to the realities of "modernization."

Bob Jones's experience among the Kazakhs of Xinjiang serves as another reminder of how rapidly tradition is being encroached upon by the economic demands and temptations of development. Even where one can go high enough into the mountains to es-

cape diesel fumes, fast food and busloads of tourists, it would be a mistake, of course, to imagine that the life of the herding families is unchanged from the way it was, say, back in the time when William of Rubruck or Marco Polo travelled through Inner Asia.

We need to remember that the chronologically most recent layer in any kind of excavation, be it in the ground or in human memory, may not be a reliable guide to the layers of earlier centuries. As we learn more about the Silk Road, on whatever level we study it, we find ourselves both overwhelmed by how much is known (and is there to be learned) and dismayed by how much may never be known. To me the romance of the Silk Road is its challenge to venture into what for most of us is *terra incognita*. Just as we think we are beginning to identify secure landmarks along the way, we realize that even the best experts may disagree about what they mean. Our challenge is to overcome the limitations imposed by our experiences in the present in order to be able to recover a past whose shards are buried in the sands of memory.

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The Archaeology of Sogdiana

Boris I. Marshak

The Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg

Sogdiana (or Sogd) is a region in Central Asia that was populated by Sogdians, people speaking and writing in an Eastern Iranian language. According to Greek and Roman authors, Sogdiana included territories between two rivers, the Amu Darya and Syr Darya. Khorasm, which occupied the Amu Darya delta, was not part of Sogdiana. Later Sogdiana, beginning at least in the first and second centuries CE, occupied a smaller territory. Thus its southern border was no longer along the Amu Darya but along the Zeravshan mountain range. Ferghana and Ustrushana, situated between Chach (the Tashkent oasis), Ferghana and Sogdiana, did not belong to Sogdiana, although the inhabitants of Ustrushana wrote and, perhaps, spoke the Sogdian language. Big Tokharistan, a successor of Bactria, was located south of the Zeravshan mountain range. It is not clear, however, whether the Sogdians populated all the lands which Greek and Roman authors attribute to Sogdiana. It is possible that these authors referred to administrative boundaries of the Achaemenid Empire, ignoring population distribution in the area. According to archaeological convention, any monument located in the lower Zeravshan and Kashkadarya River valleys (but not to the south or north-east of this territory) is defined as Sogdian regardless of the date. I should note, however, that prior to the first and second centuries CE, in archaeological terms, there is no difference between Sogdian culture and cultures to the south of the Zeravshan mountain range. This said, in the present article, following the established convention, Sogdiana denotes the region including the Zeravshan and Kashkadarya River basins. Clearly, the archaeology of Sogdiana is dated no earlier than the first millennium BCE, when Sogdians emerged on the historical stage. How-

ever, for a more complete picture we need to note the monuments of earlier periods.

The most ancient archaeological findings on the territory of Sogdiana date to the Middle Paleolithic period. There are a few Upper Paleolithic settlements (in Samarkand, for example) as well; at the same time, nothing from the Neolithic period has yet been found. Sarasm, situated between Samarkand and Panjikent, is an Eneolithic monument dated to the fourth and third millennia BCE. Abdullo Isakov and his students, as well as Roland Besenval and Bertille Lyonnet, studied this monument which consists of several settlements that occupy hundreds of hectares. Sarasm pottery combines characteristics of northern Iranian (Tepe Hissar), southern Turkmen (Geoksur), southern Afghan (Mundigak), Khorasm (Keltiminar), and even southern Siberian (Afanasiev) cultures. There are, perhaps, local types as well. Bezanval attributes such "multiculturalism" of Sarasm to the resettlement of people from different lands to this area, attracted there by the mineral resources of the upper reaches of the Zeravshan River.

The Bronze Age is not well studied. However, we are aware of the Zamanbaba culture in the lower Zeravshan Valley. Dated to the early Bronze period, this culture is close to the Afanasiev culture in Siberia. Also, a burial cave was discovered in Zardcha-Khalifa, a location near Panjikent, dated the beginning of the second millennium BCE. This cave is attributed to the second phase of the Sappali culture, a variant of the Bactrian-Margiana culture. The Andronov steppe culture penetrates the Zeravshan basin somewhat later, in the first half of the second millennium BCE, as evidenced in the Muminabad tomb

in Samarkand region and the Dashti Kozy tomb to the east of Panjikent. These unrelated monuments do not help, however, to explain the origins of the Sogdians.

Urban development in Sogdiana began sometime in the early first millennium BCE, i.e., in the early Iron Age, when a new culture emerged in Samarkand and Kashkadarya, Sogdiana [Isamidinov]. Some characteristic features of this culture are more archaic than those included in the Bactrian-Margiana cultural circle or even those of the more ancient culture of Sarasm. For example, so-called semi-huts appeared in place of houses made of unbaked brick and consisting of several rooms. Plain pottery, sometimes decorated with simple painting, replaced dishware found in sedentary settlements which was produced with the use of a potter's wheel. This pottery is different from the Andronov type. At the same time, the emergence of Iranian-speaking tribes in the first millennium BCE, including the ancestors of historical Sogdians in the regions where the latter lived, is often associated (although empirically unsupported) with the arrival of Andronov tribes.

If, indeed, these tribes that populated the steppe during the late Bronze Age invaded Sogdiana, they must have lost their older pottery tradition by the time of the invasion. The fact is that, about the same time, in the beginning of the first millennium BCE, nomadic pastoralism had developed in the steppe, the original area of the Andronov culture, replacing the old herding-agricultural type of economy. Nomadic pastoralists, as ethnographic research has shown, do not make pottery. Most likely, it was the invasion of the nomads that reduced to practically nothing the achievements of the Bactrian-Margiana



The ruins of Panjikent

culture, although it did not eliminate old traditions completely. Some invaders settled on deserted and fertile lands and took up agriculture. Mountain people, always in need of additional land, participated in this process as well. Pottery has always been a typical product among them, right down to modern times [Peshchereva].

In the eighth and seventh centuries BCE, settlements with semi-huts were replaced by large cities, among them Kok-tepe (with an area of 100 hectares; the name is the modern one) and Samarkand (220 hectares; the ancient town was Afrasiab). The study of these sites by the Uzbek-French expedition demonstrates that the process of erecting city walls in Samarkand and Kok-tepe and shrines in Kok-tepe included large-scale works [Rapin, Isamiddinov and Khasanov]. According to Isamiddinov's reasonable hypothesis, irrigation canals in Samarkandian Sogdiana, the length of which was more than 100 km, were built at about the same time as the cities. With some changes, these canals survived until the present. Three important factors facilitated this socio-economic transformation: rapid population growth on fertile land, military organization of a newly established state ruled by those who not long before were nomads, and the advanced cultural traditions of the Bactrian-Margiana culture, which still

survived to some degree.

A new stage in cultural development in Sogdiana began in the seventh and the sixth centuries BCE. Its characteristics were found in Bactria, Margiana, northern Parthia, and, somewhat later, in Khorasm as well. These characteristics (for example, cylinder cone-shaped pottery made with the use of the potter's wheel and the production of large, rectangular, unbaked brick) did not spread beyond the territories in the northeast of Sogdiana. It has been argued that these lands were included in the same state in the seventh and the sixth centuries. However, it is not clear yet what was this state's major political and administrative center. Even before this period, a new large urban center, the remnants of which are now called Er-kurgan, emerged in southern Sogdiana. In 1950, Aleksei I. Terenozhkin developed relative and absolute systems of chronology of Sogdian pottery and other specimens that were dated between the sixth century BCE and the end of the eighth century CE. Cultural change (as much as it can be assessed by archaeologists) did not occur immediately after Bactria, Sogdiana, and Khorasm were conquered by Cyrus the Great and became part of the Achaemenid Persian Empire in the second half of the sixth century BCE. New elements (in particular, open forms of pottery - cups and bowls,

characteristic of Iranian culture) spread only in the fourth century BCE during the late Achaemenid and the early Hellenic periods. During the Hellenic period, semi-huts were built along with unbaked brick constructions. The Kurgancha settlement in southern Sogdiana, which was excavated by M. Khasanov, dated the fourth and the third centuries BCE, is characteristic of this trend.

Neither Persian influence during the Achaemenid period nor Greek influence in the Hellenic epoch had an immediate impact on the Sogdian culture. Greek forms in the Afrasiab pottery, including "fish plates" and kraters appeared in the third century BCE during the rule of the Seleucids, not right after Alexander the Great's conquest of Sogdiana in the 320s BCE. Nomads conquered Sogdiana in the end of the third century. Greeks may have returned to Sogdiana in the first half of the second century, but by mid-century, the nomads took it over again. Ancient oriental elements prevail in the architecture of the Greek period. A typical example is the Afrasiab city wall. It was built from large unbaked bricks of a type unknown in Greece on which were written the names of the makers in Greek letters. Unbaked brick constructions were typical of Sogdiana during its whole history. The French-Uzbek expedition excavated at the Afrasiab citadel a large storehouse for grain that belonged to the state or the temple. This storehouse had been built in the time of Greek rule and then was burned, most likely during the nomadic conquest.

Burial sites of the nomadic population near oases date from first centuries BCE to the first centuries CE. Artifacts produced by sedentary masters, including pottery made on the potter's wheel, were popular among pastoralists. During the period between about the late second and the first centuries and the first and the second centuries CE, tall goblets became a widespread item, and iron arrowheads replaced those made of bronze. The urban culture of Samarkand, Er-kurgan, and other cities and settlements dating from this period is well explored. However, in contrast with the situation for Er-kurgan, the later period from the end of the second to the fourth centuries is not well studied for Samarkand. Under

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the rule of the Kushan kings in the second and the beginning of the third centuries, urban life flourished in Tokharistan. Sogdiana, on the other hand, declined during the same period, although the depth of the decline should not be exaggerated. The Sogdian "Ancient Letters" show that in the beginning of the fourth century many Samarkandians lived and traded in China, mailing and receiving letters from their hometown. A public temple of the gods with two pillars made of burnt brick in the main hall was built around the third century in Er-kurgan.

At least from the second century BCE to the first century CE, there were also smaller fortified buildings, often with a square main floor. These buildings had towers at the corners of the square floor or in the middle of each side. In the latter case, the floor plan of the building is cross-like. These tall, two-story constructions were built for military defense and were not suitable for living. Sometimes walls were built around the central fort, and the space between the fort and the wall was filled with dwellings. Similar forms in rural forts emerged much earlier in Iran (Shakhi-Kumys). They were also found in Ferghana, Ustrushana, and Chach. In Sogdiana, citadels in small rural settlements were expanded so that the original four towers and spaces between them were transformed into inner quarters around which new walls with eight towers were erected. In the fifth century, there were landlords' palaces near citadels. These palaces were fortified, and, by the sixth and the seventh centuries, actual castles emerged with a tripartite system of military defense. Each palace consisted of a residential tower, often built around the old fort tower, as well as the inner and outer systems of reinforcement. In most cases, warriors inhabited residential towers and masters stayed in the inner yard, while the outer wall served to defend dwellings of subordinate landowners, landowners and tenants.

Iurii Iakubov discovered a settlement in the upper reaches of the Zeravshan River (Gardani Khisor) dated to the end of the seventh or beginning of the eighth centuries that was built entirely around the master's palace. Later, when these palaces were abandoned by their inhabitants, they eroded into flattened hills, hundreds of which have

survived in Samarkandian Sogd and in the upper Zeravshan Valley.

Very little is known about the structure of ancient Sogdian cities. The so-called palace of Er-kurgan is similar to houses of wealthy urban residents in Hellenic and Kushan Bactria. The streets of Er-kurgan crossed at 90 degree angles, making square blocks. However, it is uncertain when we should date this systematic design. In Samarkand of the third to fifth centuries, a wall separated the northern third of the city that was densely filled with houses from the other part of the huge area, which was only sparsely settled. Starting with the sixth century, houses of aristocrats were built between this wall and the ancient outer palisade. In the fourth century, some Huns conquered Sogdiana and founded a new Samarkandian dynasty. Later, by the end of the fourth century and, especially, in the fifth century, the population of the country rapidly increased. In the fifth century, new urban centers such as Panjikent were built, which included both citadels and cities proper laid out in a regular plan. The city walls dating from that period were tall with frequent towers and many loopholes. They looked impressive, but were ill suited for military defense. The Hellenic (Bactrian) tradition survived in the architecture of temples in Panjikent and Jar-tepe (between Panjikent and Samarkand). Beginning in the third century BCE, stamped terracotta statuettes appeared, specifically those depicting a seated Hellenic goddess. In the first centuries CE, largely female votive figurines became widespread. Terracotta icons depicting a god or goddess in a temple niche were typical in Samarkandian Sogd in the sixth century. Right up to the fifth century, Sogdian coins imitated Hellenic types. In the fifth century and especially in the sixth century, Sassanian silver coins began to circulate in Sogdiana. Local imitations of Sassanian drachmas also date from the same period.

In general the fifth century marked a number of important changes. A Zoroastrian House of Fire was added to one of the two temples in Panjikent. An altar with the perpetual fire appeared as well in the fifth century in a temple in Er-kurgan. This is also the period when the first vaulted, surface

burial chambers were constructed in Panjikent to hold the ossuaries in which, according to Zoroastrian custom, the bones of the deceased were collected. Such chambers and ossuaries were common in Samarkandian and Bukharan Sogdiana in the sixth and on down to the eighth century.

Growing prosperity in Sogdiana resulted in the emergence of a new type of dwellings for aristocrats in the seventh and the eighth centuries. These dwellings were divided into three parts: living quarters, quarters for the domestic economy, and ceremonial public rooms. The ceremonial halls were decorated with wall paintings and wooden reliefs and statues. Houses of the elite in Samarkand and Panjikent were similar to the palaces of the Sogdian rulers at Varakhsha and Panjikent, albeit smaller in size, and the homes of the wealthy urban residents resembled those of the aristocrats. Standards of living among ordinary citizens improved as well. Professional builders constructed two-story houses with complex vaulting both for nobility and ordinary inhabitants. In the seventh and first half of the eighth centuries the bronze coins minted in Samarkand, Panjikent and other centers had square holes in the center (imitating Chinese designs) so that they could be strung on cords. The abundance of these coins is an indication of the growth of retail trade in these cities.

The pottery of the third to the sixth centuries speaks to emergence of local schools that developed distinct forms (at Tali Barzu near Samarkand [layers 1 to 4, G. V. Grigoriev's excavation]; earlier layers of Panjikent). In the seventh century, a new style of pottery, imitating the designs on silver dishes, emerged in new pottery centers such as Kafyr-kala near Samarkand (G. V. Grigoriev's excavation). This development reflects urban dwellers' attempts to affect the lifestyle of wealthier counterparts. In the periphery, however, especially in mountain regions, pottery was still hand-modeled and burnt in a fire rather than being made with a potter's wheel and fired in a furnace. Urban citizens used hand-modeled pottery as well, including dishes for meal preparation. Many artisan shops, including those whose masters worked with metal, were found in Sogdian cities such as Panjikent.

The houses of peasants who lived in the mountains were different from urban dwellings, resembling the houses of Mountain Tajiks in the twentieth century. In the plain, and especially in proximity to cities, there were houses which more or less corresponded to urban norms. The architecture of fortified residences was similar to that of the houses of wealthy citizens.

In the Sogdian decorative arts images of the gods were formed under the Greek influence, to which were added Iranian elements in the fifth century and, in the sixth century, Indian elements. Secular narrative painting was used to illustrate literature of different genres, such as epics, fairy-tales and fables that used local, Iranian, Indian, and Greek plots. Feasts and other celebrations, and equestrian hunts were favorite themes in this painting. Occasionally, artists utilized events of recent history. The mature Sogdian style of the seventh and the eighth centuries was dynamic, and featured a bright and harmonious palette. Among the mineral pigments ochre predominated, and Badakhshani ultramarine was used for the backgrounds.

In the eighth century after several military actions the Arabs conquered Sogdiana, which became one of the richest parts of the Caliphate. However, economic prosperity was combined with cultural assimilation. In the second half of the eighth and the ninth centuries, urban citizens adopted Islam. Simultaneously Persian (Tajik) language replaced Sogdian, although for a long time afterwards inhabitants of rural areas continued to speak Sogdian.



Ossuaries on display in the Samarkand Museum of History, Art, and Ethnography

The Uzbek-French expedition [Frantz Grenet, Ivanitskii, Iurii Karev] discovered in Samarkand two palaces of Arab vicegerents dated to the 740s or 750s. Their architecture is not Sogdian. Under the Arabs, local principalities gradually lost autonomy, and noblemen and wealthy merchants abandoned small towns such as Panjikent. However, it was a time of the rapid growth of large cities, such as Samarkand and Bukhara, which then became administrative centers. In the ninth century, Sogdiana lost its ethnic and cultural distinctiveness, although many elements of Sogdian material culture are found in materials dating from the ninth to the eleventh centuries. This is why, starting with the ninth century, it is impossible to speak of Sogdian culture on the territory of Sogdiana itself at the same time that it survived until the eleventh century among Sogdian immigrants who resettled in eastern Central Asia and China.

About the Author

Dr. Boris Il'ich Marshak has headed the Central Asian and Caucasian Section of the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg since 1978, the same year in which he assumed direction of the archaeological excavation at the important Sogdian town of Panjikent (Tajikistan) where he had been working since 1954. The leading expert on the archaeology and art history of Sogdiana, he is a fellow of many international learned societies and has lectured widely around the world. His books include *Sogdian Silver* (in Russian) (Moscow, 1971) and most recently *Legends, Tales, and Fables in the Art of Sogdiana* (New York: Bibliotheca Persica Press, 2002).

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Returning to Varakhsha

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There are archaeological monuments and archaeological monuments. After a while you start distinguishing a kind of individual presence in these hills. Some of them are grim and unfriendly, others leave a light, pleasant imprint on your soul. Varakhsha is one of the most welcoming and enjoyable sites where I have been fortunate to excavate. Even the wind performing its lonely dance in the roofless empty halls of the palace sounds like a distant chorale. As to the Sogdian lunar god Mah, whose light floods the uninterrupted dreamy plains stretching from the foot of the citadel to the flat horizon, I have not seen him so beautiful in any other part of the world. These personal feelings make me wish to revisit the site, but, by themselves, they do not constitute a legitimate reason for a scholarly return to Varakhsha, a monument which has held an exceptional place in the history of exploration of Sogdiana. Such a scholarly re-examination is necessary for our understanding of the site

in order to update it in the context of recently-studied monuments and to make use of materials brought to light by the last decades of research.

The very first Sogdian archeological site

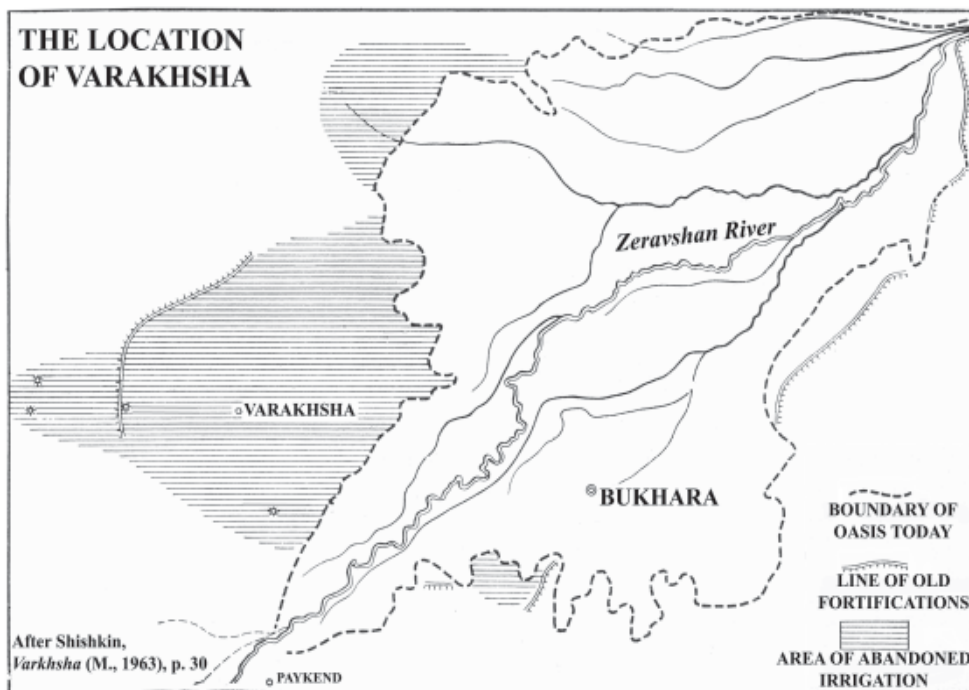
A British artist and adventurer, James Fraser, who collected information about the Uzbek Khanates while traveling in Khorasan in 1821 and 1822, mentioned that the Bukharan oasis would

afford a rich field to the antiquarian, for there are several sites of ancient cities scattered over it, among the ruins of which, gems, coins, medals, and various antique utensils and arms are to be found. One person who was himself a dealer in such articles, mentioned to me a city called Khojahwooban, which he described as having been overwhelmed by sand, under which

extensive ruins lie buried; in this place after rain, people go to dig for such articles, and find a great many; particularly plate, and utensils of gold and silver, for all of which they find a ready market with Russian merchants, who, he assured me, would give five times their weight for such articles of metal, and a very high price for all carved gems. I should indeed have doubted greatly the rates he quoted for such things, and would have believed that it was a trick to induce me to make purchases, had it not been for the prices actually demanded by others in Mushed, and those which he himself offered for individual articles, which convinced me that the merchants of Bokhara had found ready, and probably ignorant purchasers for things of which they could hardly be judges. [Fraser, p. 98]

Fifteen years later, another British traveler, Alexander Burnes wrote:

About twenty-five miles north-west of Bokhara, and on the verge of the desert, there lie the ruins of an ancient city, called Khojuoban, and which is assigned by tradition to the age of the caliph Omar. Mahommedans seldom go beyond the era of their Prophet, and this proves nothing. There are many coins to be procured in this neighborhood; and I am fortunate in possessing several beautiful specimens, which have turned out to be genuine relics of the monarchs of Bactria. They are of silver, and nearly as large as a half-crown piece. A head is stamped on one side, and a figure is seated on the reverse. The execution of the former is very superior; and the expression of features and spirit of the whole do credit even to the age



of Greece, to which it may be said they belong. They brought numerous antiques from the same place, representing the figures of men and animals cut out on cornelians and other stones. Some of these bore a writing that differs from any which I have before seen, and resembled Hindee. [Burnes, pp. 319-320]

Indeed coins and gemstones presented in the engraved plates illustrating Burnes' book are of great interest.

The same Khwaja Uban was said to be a source of important finds under the Russian colonial rule. The famous Russian scholar and eager collector of gemstones, Alexander Semenov mentions that one of the most resourceful people trading in antiques at the turn of the 20th century used to say that the most precious of his objects came from Khwaja Uban [Semenov 1957, pp. 149-150]. Semenov thought that his informant referred to the site situated in the now deserted area beyond the western border of the Bukharan oasis on the road to Khoresm [Semenov 1945, p. 30].

The very first archaeological survey conducted in the area of Khwaja Uban by Vasilii Shishkin in the early 1950s established that the actual site bearing this name is rather small and did not conform to this image of an antiquarian Klondike responsible for the gigantic volume of finds which throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries filled the local market with antiquities. Shishkin's survey brought to light almost no archaeological material from the surrounding plain either. Moreover, the hillock Khwaja Uban and the area around it produced nothing datable prior to the fifteenth century, except for the bricks of the early Islamic period which were re-used in the construction of the building itself [Shishkin 1963, p. 134].

The explanation for this little mystery of Khwaja Uban turned out to be the local toponyms. Shishkin pointed out that by the end of the nineteenth century the entire zone of the abandoned lands of ancient irrigation situated to the West of the Bukharan oasis was called Chul'-i Khwaja Uban. We know now that this designation of the desert on the western fringes of the Bukharan

oasis appears in a local chronicle as early as the late Ashtarkhanid period [Tali - Semenov 1959, p. 138]. The reason why the name of the one and not very significant site was extended to the large territory was the great popularity of the *mazar*, the "holy grave" situated on the top of the archaeological mound of Khwaja Uban. [Among the early descriptions is that by Vambery. The most detailed is Shishkin 1963, p. 134; for fictionalized description of life on this mazar in the early twentieth century, see Aini 1949, p. 210 ff.]. Bukharans shared a popular belief that this mazar had special healing powers and the complex of the buildings constructed in the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries on the top of the mound served as a *makhaw khona* - "a reservation for lepers." In other words, it was not the Khwaja Uban site, but the huge zone of desolate lands of ancient irrigation in the western part of the Bukharan oasis (about 700 sq. km), that produced such a large volume of various archaeological finds. Yet, there is little, if any, doubt that the ruins of the ancient city "overwhelmed by sand" mentioned by Fraser and Burnes are the remains of Varakhsha, by far the largest and the most impressive among the archaeological sites situated in this zone. This makes Varakhsha the very first Sogdian archaeological site mentioned in European literature.

On the other hand, the name of Varakhsha was well known to the historians of Central Asian long before Shishkin identified it with the mysterious Khwaja Uban. This was due to the important role that Varakhsha played in local history during the dramatic period of the Arab conquests. At that time, the old Bukharan ruling family moved the royal court to Varakhsha, thus turning it into the scene of many tragic events of their dynastic history.

This "residence" status may also explain the exceptional role that Varakhsha later played in the traditional pre-Islamic calendar of Bukhara. The history of Bukhara written by Muhammad Narshakhi in 943-4 CE relates that

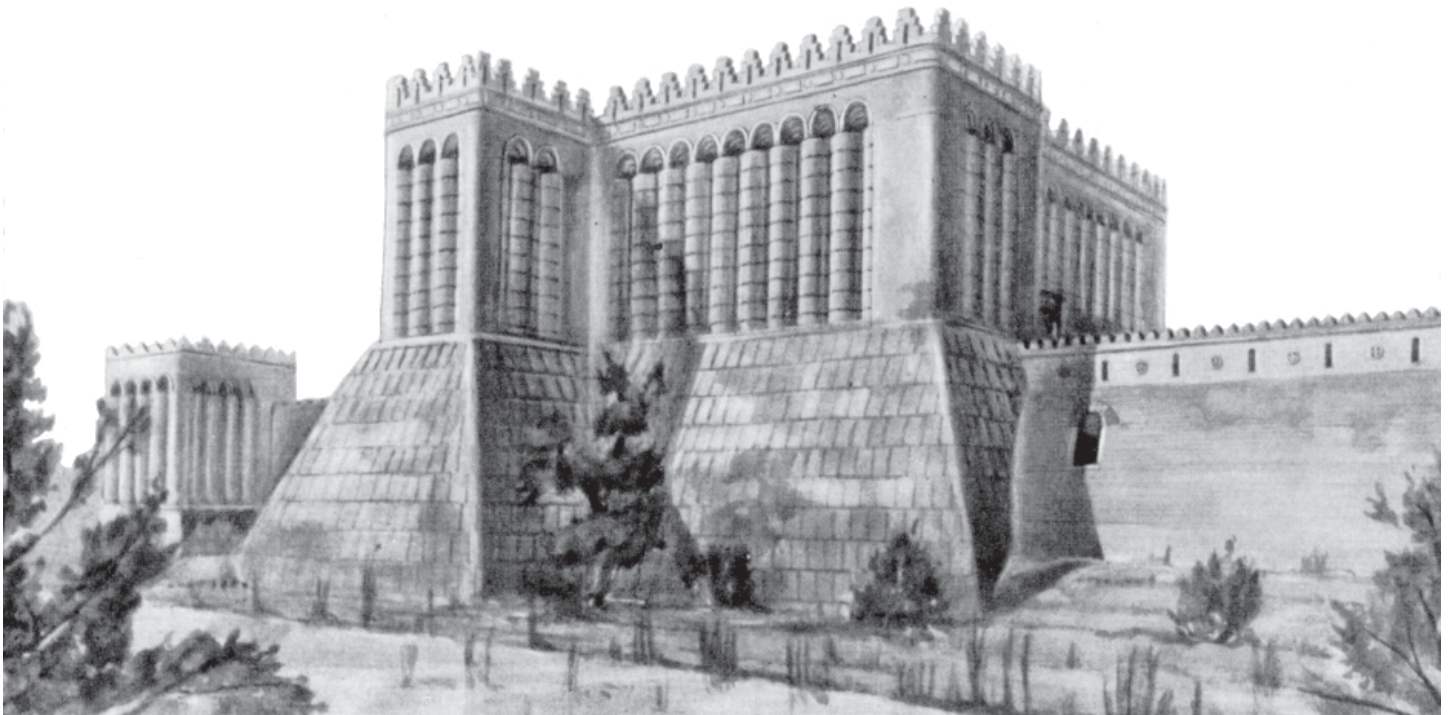
every (year) for fifteen days there is a market in this village, but when the market is at the end of the year they hold it for twenty days. The

twenty-first day is then New Year's day, and they call it the New Year's day of the farmers. The farmers of Bukhara reckon from that (day) and count from it. The New Year's day of the Magians is five days later. [Narshakhi-Frye 1954, p. 18]

As we know from ethnographic materials, Central Asian festivals of this type required participation of local lords or squires - *dihqans*, whose role was to start the agricultural year by plowing the first furrow. The "farmer's New Year" of the entire Bukharan oasis would require participation of the Dihqan of Bukhara, i.e. the Bukhar Khuda, originally the king and then a descendant of the kings. This very well corresponds to various passages in contemporary early Islamic writings (for example: Biruni, Firdawsi) ascribing to dihqans and kings from old dynasties the function of the ritual leaders of the agricultural community.

Apart from the temporary political and religious significance connected to its residence status, well-fortified Varakhsha was an important military outpost on the western border of the oasis [Muqaddasi - de Goeje 1906, p. 282]. It was also a considerable trade center situated on the road between Bukhara and Khoresm [Istakhri - de Goeje 1870, p. 338; Ibn Hawqal - de Goeje 1873, p. 400] and in the contact zone between the nomads and sedentary population. As its population deliberately rejected township rights, it was considered "the largest of the villages" in the Bukharan oasis [Narshakhi - Frye 1954, p. 18], but we can safely assume that it was also a major center of crafts, because Narshakhi states that the suburbs of Varakhsha "were like those of Bukhara" itself [Narshakhi - Frye 1954, p. 17; Naymark 1999, pp. 49-50]. This statement of the chronicle is supported by the discovery of the traces of industrial quarters in Varakhsha's environs made in the course of the surveys and small scale excavations conducted by the archaeological expedition of the Museum of Oriental Art in the 1980s. Last, but not least, Varakhsha was the center of a large agricultural area "irrigated by the twelve canals" [Narshakhi - Frye 1954, p. 17].

Varakhsha's role in local history, and especially the abundance of the infor-



Source: Shishkin, *Varakhsha* (1963), facing p. 96

The Varkhsha palace (V.A. Nil'sen's reconstruction)

mation in written sources, attracted the attention of scholars as early as the nineteenth century, but it was Vladimir Barthold who first suggested the correct location of the ancient settlement by placing it near the well Varakhchin had marked on the nineteenth-century maps [Barthol'd 1963, p. 167]. Later Barthold's student and one of the first serious amateur archaeologists of Russian colonial Turkestan, L.A. Zimin, mentioned in the report on his archaeological trip to this area that the remains of the ancient town were the large mound Varakhsha and extensive adjacent ruins [Zimin 1917, p. 131, n. 4]. These were situated at a distance from Bukhara which corresponds quite well to the four farsakhs mentioned by Sam'ani [Bartol'd 1963, p. 167] or a one day trip reported by Ibn Hawqal [Ibn Hawqal - de Goeje 1873, p. 400].

Vasilii Shishkin and archaeological exploration of Varakhsha

Yet Varakhsha had to wait for its true explorer for two more decades. During the Bolshevik revolution the only two archaeological institutions of Russian Turkestan - the Tashkent and the Ashkhabad Circles of the Amateur Archaeologists - disappeared together

with the representatives of Russian colonial administration (Zimin, for example, perished in the hands of the Baku Revolutionary Tribunal). The turmoil of the Civil War (1918-1920) left Russia ruined, and the subsequent process of rebuilding the country's economy prevented the allocation of resources to support Central Asian archaeological research. New investigations of ancient cultures of the area started in the second half of the 1920s and reached a fairly significant scale only by the second half of the 1930s.

By that time, Vasilii Shishkin, the man who was destined to become the real discoverer of Varakhsha, had already spent a fairly significant amount of time in Bukhara. He originally did not plan to become an archaeologist at all. Born in 1889 in the village of Spaso-Talitskoe near Viatka, Shishkin followed the steps of his father in selecting the profession of a teacher. After graduating from Viatka College, he received an appointment in the Siamsin Higher Initial College as a teacher of drawing, but in September of 1915 was drafted into the army and fought on the south-western front. With the end of the First World War in 1918, Shishkin returned to his peaceful occupation but was

drafted once more, this time by the Red Army. Following the end of the Civil War, he was ordered to Turkestan. Fascinated by Central Asia and not an army man by persuasion, Shishkin demobilized and by 1926 graduated from the Oriental Department of Tashkent University. In 1928, he received an appointment to Bukhara as the local representative of the Uzbekistan committee for the preservation of cultural heritage. Despite the strained conditions and limited resources, he did a lot for the preservation of Bukhara's cultural heritage. These, however, were the roughest years of the Soviet era when almost any activity was pregnant with trouble. Well versed in local languages, Shishkin worked closely with the surviving Bukharan architects, ganchkors, painters, embroiderers and other artists. Many of them were famous in the pre-Soviet era, and some worked on the orders of the former Amirs. According to the then existing practice, these lucky ones were assigned a court rank. In 1936, however, the record of such a formal affiliation with the Amir's court proved to be dangerous: when the wave of Stalin's proscriptions reached Bukhara this "incriminating fact" started being used as sufficient pretext to sentence a person to certain

death in Siberian camps. Shishkin tried to save old artists by using his official status and the position of an outsider. He testified on their behalf during the court procedures, although he certainly realized the danger of engaging in controversy with local secret police (NKVD), which of course saw him as a mere obstacle in their efforts to meet their targets of a certain number of arrests and convictions. This "unwise behavior" labeled Shishkin, a Russian from Viatka, as a "Bukharan nationalist," and one day a warrant was issued for his arrest. Shishkin's personal popularity and a mere chance, however, saved him - a well-wisher inside the NKVD who happened to learn about the pending arrest warned Shishkin several hours in advance. Shishkin caught a train to Tashkent shortly prior to the beginning of the regular nightly harvest by the NKVD. As often happened at the time, the prosecution did not bother to pursue him; they could hardly cope with the plan of proscriptions imposed on them by the central authority. Shishkin returned to Bukhara as a member of the Tashkent Institute of History and Archaeology a year later, when a new wave of repressions had wiped out those NKVD investigators themselves. Yet, after this incident he completely switched to the safer field of archaeology and for a while did not work in the city itself.

It is, however, a rare ill wind that blows no good. Indeed, it was this dramatic encounter with the almighty secret police that pushed Vasilii Shishkin to the lands of old irrigation on the western fringes of the Bukharan oasis. The further steps simply followed the logical path: the largest and the most impressive of the monuments situated in this zone, Varakhsha, simply called for excavation. Once on the site, Shishkin noticed the outlines of rooms on the surface of the elevation to the east of the citadel. This looked promising, and the first excavation spot was set there. One of the rooms turned out to be filled with the fragments of ornamental and figurative decorative stucco in early (what was then considered Sasanian) style. This find became a true archaeological sensation. That is how the palace of Varakhsha became the very first Sogdian monumental edifice to undergo archaeological excavations.

The Varakhsha excavations, which had been interrupted by World War II, resumed in 1949 and then continued for another six years. They stood out among the contemporary archaeological work in Central Asia because of the unusual attention devoted to the building history of the edifice and the meticulous recording of different architectural materials. I believe that Shishkin's initial education as a painter and his later interest in the history of architecture were largely responsible for this unusually advanced methodology. The quality of the work on the excavation turned Shishkin's expedition into one of the major schools of Central Asian field work in which many future leading scholars, like archaeologist Lazar Albaum, orientalist Nataliia D'iakonova, the architect V. A. Nil'sen, and art historian V. A. Meshkeris were trained.

Yet Varakhsha's primacy in the study of Central Asian adobe brick architecture carried negative aspects as well. The majority of simple "methodologies" allowing an archaeologist to synchronize different stages in rebuilding of adobe architectural structures, now considered to be the alpha and beta of Central Asian archaeology, had not yet been developed at the time of Varakhsha excavations. For example, excavators did not pay special attention to the passages between the rooms; in the majority of cases, no effort was made to establish the correspondence of numerous floor levels in neighboring rooms through the connection to the repairs of their common walls, etc. Consequently, no true archaeological stratigraphy was elaborated, and hence no archaeological dates could be offered for the famous Varakhsha paintings and stucco.

The Varakhsha excavations came to a halt in 1954. Since then, Central Asian archaeology and art history advanced both by the accumulation of a large quantity of new precise data and through the development of research methodologies. As a result, our understanding of Varakhsha, once the most advanced monument of Sogdian archaeology, lagged behind the now much better dated and understood monuments excavated on the sites of Panjikent and Afrasiab.

In the 1970s, a joint expedition of the Moscow Institute of Restoration and the

Institute of Archaeology of the Uzbekistan Academy of Sciences removed the paintings on the southern wall of the Blue Hall at Varakhsha, but without any effort to clarify the building's history. In 1986-1991, the team from the Moscow Museum of Oriental Art conducted more or less extensive excavations on the site of Varakhsha, but because of conservation concerns, its work on the palace was mostly limited to the so-called *eiwan* in the western part of the palace. These small scale excavations discovered three different stages in the history of this part of the building [Alpatkina 1999; Alpatkina 2002], but provided practically no dating materials. Unexpectedly interrupted in 1991, they could not solve the major problems related to the chronology of the different stages in the edifice's building history, leaving us with the firm belief that more archaeological work is needed.

Narshakhi's story of the Varakhsha palace

Yet, it is possible to solve some of the puzzles even without excavations. In doing this, we can utilize some new data accumulated in Sogdian numismatics, art history and archaeology in general. Even more beneficial, however, may become yet another unique feature of the Varakhsha palace: this palace is the only archaeologically known Sogdian architectural structure which has a written history. Indeed, in the *Tarikh-i Bukhara* composed in 332 AH/943-4 CE by Muhammad Narshakhi we find a special passage devoted to this building:

There was a palace in it [Varakhsha - A.N.], the beauty of which is told in a proverb. It was built by a Bukhar Khudah more than a thousand years ago. This palace had been destroyed and abandoned for many years when Khnk Khudah restored it. It again fell into ruins, and again Bunyat b. Toghsada, Bukhar Khudah, rebuilt it in Islamic times and made his court there till he was killed in it. Amir Isma'il Samani convoked the people of the village and said, "I shall give 20,000 dirhams and wood, and shall take care of the rebuilding of it. Part of the building is standing. You make a grand mosque out

of this place." The village people did not want it, and said that a grand mosque was unnecessary and unreasonable for their village. So the palace existed till the time of the amir Ahmad b. Nuh b. Nasr b. Ahmad b. Isma'il al-Samani. He brought the wood of that palace to the city and used it to build a mansion which he made at the gate of the fortress of Bukhara. [Narshaki - Frye 1954, pp. 17-18]

Although no exact dates are found in this passage, it gives us an opportunity to enhance the dating of different stages in the history of the building if we use the four mentioned historical figures as chronological anchors.

Stage One - The Palace of Khunak

The information provided is certainly insufficient to identify the anonymous Bukhar Khudah, who built the palace "more than a thousand years ago." Yet the second personage of this story, Khnk Khuda is certainly a historical figure. He appears once more in the text of *Tarikh-i Bukhara* as one of the leaders of the anti-Arab coalition of 88/707:

Among the villages of Bukhara, between Tarab, Khunbun, and Ramitin, many troops gathered and surrounded Qutaiba [b. Muslim - A.N.]. Tarkhun, ruler of Sughd, came with many troops. Khnk Khudah¹ came with a large army; Vardan Khudah with his troops, and king Kur Maghanun, nephew of the emperor of Chin also came. [Narshakhi - Frye 1954, p. 45]

It is quite obvious that even combined the two mentions of Khnk Khudah in the *Tarikh-i Bukhara* are insufficient to help with the identification of this mysterious man.

The presence of the Khuda component of the name (New Persian - "master" as a substitution for Sogdian *xws*) places this personage in a group with Central Asian princes such as Bukhar Khuda - "Lord of Bukhara", Vardan Khuda - "Lord of Varadana", Chaghan Khuda - "Lord of Chaghanian", Khuttal Khudah - "Lord of Khuttal", Saman Khuda - "Lord of Saman", etc. Yet in all known titles of this type, the first component is the name of the realm con-

trolled by the bearer of the title. In the case of Khnk Khuda, however, such an interpretation seems to be implausible - we are aware neither of an apanage, nor even of a village called Khnk in Sogdiana. The silence of written sources can hardly result from a gap in our knowledge. Judging from his role in the coalition of the year 88/707 (commander of large army) and from his rebuilding of the great palace, Khnk Khuda must have been a major prince. In other words, the title of this personage as it is given by *Tarikh-i Bukhara* appears to be "suspicious."

Fortunately, the same personage appears in the description of this very episode in Ya'qubi's *Tarikh*: "When Qutaiba left, Tarkhun Sahib of al-Sughd began to agitate and then Khnk Abu Shukr Bukhar Khuda and Kurmaghanun an-Nufasi came at the head of the Turks." [Ya'qubi - Houtsma 1969, p. 342]. Contrary to Narshakhi, Ya'qubi treats Khnk as a personal name. The accuracy of Ya'qubi's account compared with the version found in Narshakhi's work is attested by the appearance of a certain Shukr b. Khnk, evidently a son of the person mentioned by Ya'qubi, among other Central Asian princes in Tabari's account of the siege of Mug castle in 722 CE [Tabari - de Goeje 1906, II, 1447].

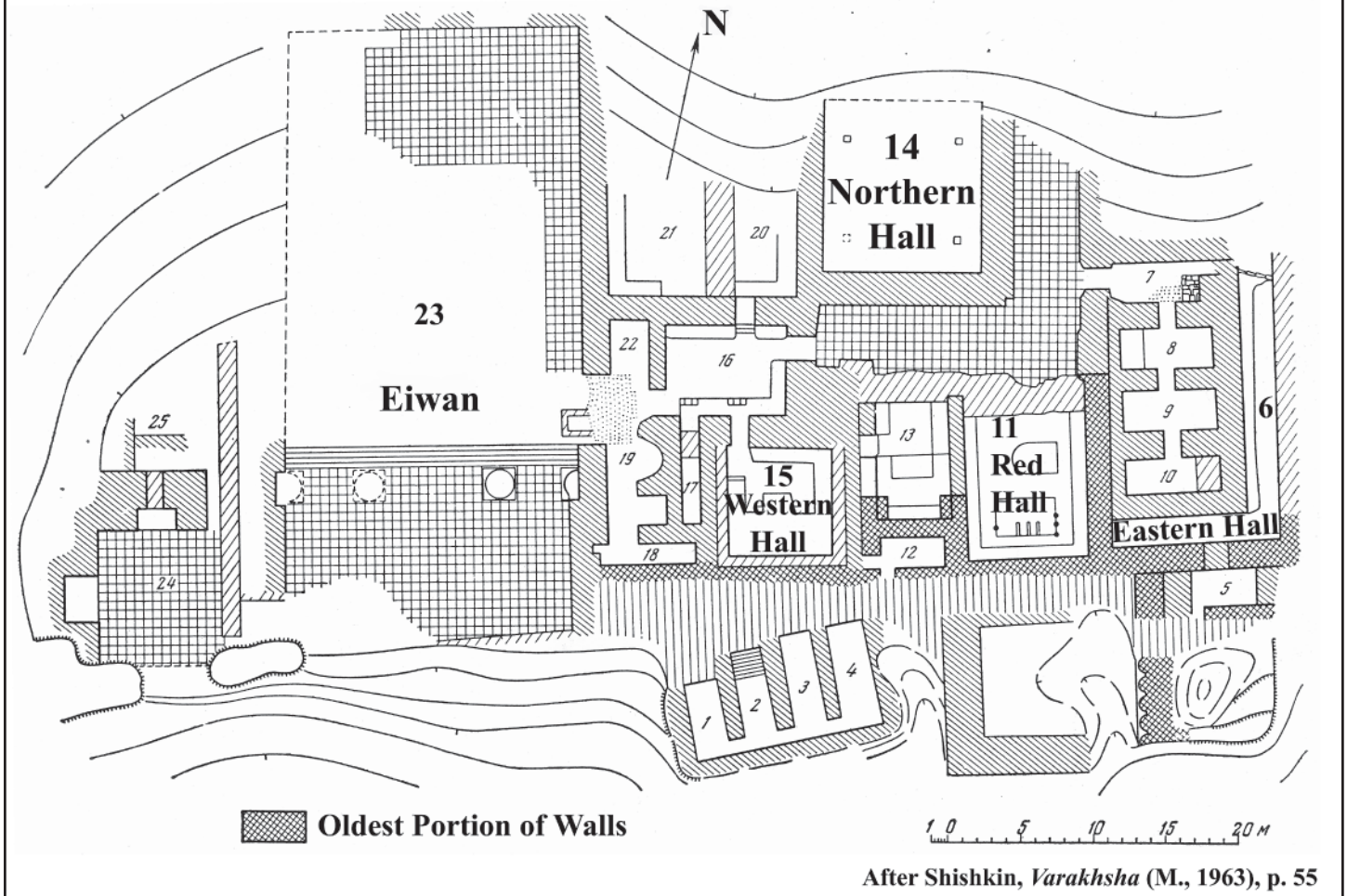
There is another drastic difference between the information of the two sources - Ya'qubi supplies Khnk with the title of Bukhar Khuda. The veracity of Ya'qubi's account in this matter is indirectly supported by Narshakhi himself: it is unclear why a certain Khnk Khudah would resolve on restoring the Varakhsha palace of the Bukhar Khudah dynasty; yet if we accept the version of Ya'qubi, everything falls into place.

In other words, the fairly slim data of written sources suggest that the restorer of the Varkhsha palace, a certain Khnk, was a Bukhar Khuda who ruled over Bukhara around 707 CE. All this may seem rather speculative, but fortunately there is an independent and authentic source which supports Ya'qubi's information - Sogdian legends on Bukhar Khuda drachms. One of the types of Bukhar Khuda drachms, which until now has escaped the attention of numismatists, carries the inscription *pwx'r xwß xn/wn/wk* - Bukharan King

Khunak or Khanuk. Another type of Khunak/Khanuk coins has puzzled scholars since the beginning of the twentieth century - the so called drachms with the long Sogdian legend, which reads clearly *pwx'r xr' xwß xw/nn/wk* - "Bukharan *Great King Khunak".² On the basis of typologic and stratigraphic considerations these coins can be attributed to the time of the Arab conquests, which makes the Khunak/Khanuk mentioned on them chronologically compatible with Khnk of Narshakhi and Ya'qubi (707 CE), the father of Shukr b. Khnk of Tabari (722 CE). In other words, a cross-examination of coins and written sources allows identification of the personage mentioned in *Tarikh-i Bukhara* as the restorer of the Varakhsha palace as a Bukhar Khuda named Khunak/Khanuk, who was active around 707 CE.

However, turning to the history of the Bukharan royal family as described in *Tarikh-i Bukhara*, we do not find such a ruler. In an abridged form, the story told by Narshakhi reads as follows. After the death of Bukhar Khudah Bidun, power was assumed by his wife, who ruled fifteen years on behalf of her minor son Toghshada. The reign of this queen (whom sources usually call by her title, Khatun) started prior to 674 CE, for she is said to have been in charge of Bukhara during the first Arab attack on Sogdiana led in that year by 'Ubaidallah b. Ziyad. According to Narshakhi, she reigned for fifteen years, i.e. to 689 CE or a little earlier. At the time of Khatun's death her son Toghshada was already fit to rule, but the throne was usurped by the ruler of Vardana, who remained in power until the systematic conquest of Sogdiana by Qutaiba b. Muslim, which started in 707 CE. "Qutaiba had to fight many battles against him. Several times, he drove him from this district so that he fled to Turkistan. Vardan Khudah died, and Qutaiba seized Bukhara. Qutaiba gave Bukhara back to Toghshada and made him ruler." [Narshakhi - Frye 1954, p. 10]. This happened in 90 or 91 AH/708 or 710 CE.³ Toghshada's reign ended with his assassination in Ramadan of 121 AH (August 11- September 9, 739 CE) near Samarkand, in the tent of the Arab governor of Khurasan Nasr b. Saiyar [Tabari - de Goeje 1906, II, p. 1693; Narshakhi - Frye 1954, pp. 60-2].

PLAN OF THE VARAKHSHA PALACE



How does our newly discovered Bukhar Khudah Khunak fit this picture? Chronologically his rule coincides with the usurpation of Vardan Khudah, and the simplest way to settle the discrepancy between the sources is to put an equals mark between these two figures. This seems quite possible since none of the written accounts mentions Vardan Khudah's personal name. Moreover, there could be quite a reasonable explanation how this one personage became "split" into two separate historical figures: since it was Qutaiba b. Muslim who "restored" Toghshada to the throne, Arab historians deliberately negated the legitimacy of Vardan Khudah's claim to the throne of Bukhara. Tabari, for example, labels Vardan Khudah the "Malik of Bukhara" [Tabari - de Goeje 1906, II, p. 1230], which is the exact Arabic equivalent of the title Bukhar Khuda, but never calls him Bukhar Khuda although he uses

this latter title when mentioning the enthronement of Toghshada in the year 91/709-710 [Tabari - de Goeje 1906, II, p. 1230]. In other words, the discrepancies between the two *Tarikh*s (Abu Shukr Khnk Bukhar Khudah of Ya'qubi versus Vardan Khudah of Tabari) likely result from the political agendas of the time. Likewise, the appearance of the strange combinatorial creature Khnk Khudah in the *Tarikh-i Bukhara* seems to reflect a retrospective attempt on the part of a descendant of the Bukhar Khuda family who supplied Narshakhi with the information about the Varakhsha palace to deprive the usurper of the royal title. In the part of his book written later, Narshakhi ran into Bukhar Khuda Khunak once more, while copying the text of the Arabic source from which he borrowed the episode about Qutaiba's encounter with coalition forces in 707 CE. In order to smooth the contradiction, Narshakhi gave preference to his oral local source and cor-

rected the Arabic text by splitting the original Vardan/Bukhar Khuda Khnk into two separate personages, Khnk Khuda and Bukhar Khuda. There is a clear trace of this simple operation in the text: the two "Khudahs" are mentioned only under their "titles," while "Tarkhun, ruler of Sughd" and "king Kur Maghanun, the nephew of the emperor of Chin" retained both their titles and their names.

What effect may this little investigation into the chronology of the Bukhar Khuda dynasty have on our understanding of the history of Varakhsha palace? I believe it establishes the fact that the actual building of the palace by Bukhar Khudah Khnk after "the thousand years" of neglect took place sometime immediately prior to Qutaiba's conquest of Bukhara. If we go further and accept the identification of Khnk, the Bukhar Khuda, with the anonymous usurper Vardan Khudah, we would be able to attribute this ma-

for re-building of the edifice to the time span between 689 (or a little earlier) and 709-710 CE.

Shishkin distinguished the earliest walls of the Varakhsha palace by their specific bond of vertically alternating courses of headers and stretchers "floating" in thick layers of unformatted clay mortar. The stage in the building history of the edifice characterized by this rather specific masonry technique ended in the major redesigning which was outlived only by a few walls incorporated into the later structure. Since Shishkin's excavations did not specifically aim to study this period, the original floors connected to this first building were reached only in a few cases, and we do not have a single complete chamber pertaining to this stage, except for tiny room twelve. Yet there is a very important piece of evidence coming from one of these floors. A coin found in the stratigraphic trench under room fourteen (Northern Hall) belongs to the most common type in the Bukharan "camel" series, which on typologic grounds can be dated to the second quarter of the seventh century [Naymark 2001, p. 174]. From the stratigraphic data received during the recent excavations in Paykend we know that such "camel coins" circulated along with Bukharan cash at least until the very end of the seventh century [Semenov 2003, p. 148]. How can this find affect the date of the earliest building? Even if we accept the earliest possible date of this "camel" coin (second quarter of the seventh century) as the date of the earliest structure in which it was found, it would be hard to fit a long period of neglect (even if it was ten times shorter than the metaphorical 1000 years of *Tarikh-i Bukhara*) between the middle of the seventh century and the reign of Khunak, which started in 689 or even earlier. In other words, the date of the coin does not allow us to associate the structure in question with the legendary palace of the anonymous Bukhar Khuda. On the other hand, Khunak's restoration of the palace reported by Narshakhi fits quite well into the end of this interval, i.e. it is possible that these earliest structural remains belong to his reign.

In other words, the earliest palace building does not belong to the fifth or the sixth century, as it was earlier

thought, but rather to the end of the seventh century. Unfortunately, without additional excavations, we can say very little about the actual layout of this building.

Stage Two - the Palace of Toghshada

The building of the second period is quite well known: the principal layout of rooms six (Eastern Hall), eleven (Red Hall), thirteen, fifteen (Western Hall), sixteen to twenty-one and the original walls of the so-called *eiwan* date to this time.

Our attribution of the early palace to the time of Khunak pushes the dates of the next stage in the construction history of the building to the eighth century. Unfortunately, almost no archaeological and numismatic material belonging to this stage has been recovered during the excavations. Some support for our date of this stage is provided by the famous scene painted on the southern wall in the Eastern Hall. Previously it was dated to the seventh

century, but an investigation into the textiles depicted in it led Alexander Belenitskii and Boris Marshak to believe that the eighth century is more appropriate as their date [Belenitskii and Marshak 1979; Belenitskii and Marshak 1981, p. 49]. The date of this painting suggested by Belenitskii and Marshak equally well fits into the rule of any of the two Bukhar Khudas of the early eighth century: usurper Khunak (689-708/9 CE) and his challenger and successor Toghshada b. Bidun (709-732 CE), but since there are sufficient grounds to associate the previous stage in the building's history with the former, we can attribute the second stage in the history of the building and the paintings of the Blue Hall to the reign of Toghshada b. Bidun.

On the first glance the clearly "zoroastrian" content of these paintings, which shows the royal couple performing a fire ritual in front of the giant figure of *Vashagn*, the Sogdian god of war and the celestial patron of the Bukhar Khuda family, seems to con-



Painting of the fire ritual in the East Hall

Source: Shishkin, Varakhsha (1963), Plate XIV (det.)

tradict the statement of the sources, that Toghshada b. Bidun "accepted Islam from the hands of Qutaiba b. Muslim" [Narshakhi - Frye 1954, p. 10]. We have, however, a reason to suspect that Toghshada's conversion was only a part of a political deal and that, in secret, he kept practicing the traditional Sogdian form of Zoroastrianism. In addition to the plain statement of *Tarikh-i Bukhara* that "he was still an unbeliever in secret" [Narshakhi - Frye 1954, pp. 60-2], we know that he was buried according to the local version of Zoroastrian burial rites [Tabari - de Goeje 1906, II, p. 1693; Narshakhi - Frye 1954, p. 62].

However, it is hard to imagine that an open statement of Toghshada's actual religious affiliation, like the one we find in the Eastern Hall, could be issued during the life of Qutaiba b. Muslim or during Toghshada's close affiliation with the Arabs in the 720s or 730s. There seems to be only one point in Toghshada's career when he could allow himself to do something of this sort. It was after the death of Qutaiba b. Muslim, when the Arab power in Mawarannahr was shaken, and the Bukharan King decided that time came to abandon his new masters. In 719, he asked the Chinese Emperor for help against the Arabs [Chavannes 1903, p. 203; 1904, p. 39; Bartol'd 1964, pp. 381-2]. His copper coin type which shows the scene of the fire ritual on the reverse belongs apparently to the same year(s) [Naymark 1999]. It was probably this apostasy of Toghshada that prompted the Arabs to keep another challenger for the Bukharan throne, Shukr b. Khunak, among their troops while suppressing the Sogdian uprising of 722 CE [Tabari - de Goeje 1906, II, p. 1447]: if necessary this landless prince could turn into a handy political resource.

In other words, the second rebuilding of the palace is likely to have taken place under Toghshada and most likely was completed around 719.

Stage Three - The Aesopic language of the Red Hall

The alterations of the third stage aimed the creation of the new system of gala halls. This involved modifying, partially replacing and extending the older combination of the Red Hall and the East-

ern Hall, which for some reason did not satisfy the owners of the palace any more. The Eastern Hall was not architecturally altered, but seems to have lost its function as a gala hall - instead of proper repainting and restoration having been undertaken, the losses of the painted surface on the southern wall which occurred during this period were replaced with a primitive geometric motif. No changes took place in the principal layout of the Red Hall, but here a new layer of paintings covered the older one. The Western Hall (room fifteen), however, was significantly modified and painted anew. Unfortunately, the state of preservation does not allow us to judge the content of these paintings. Similar decorative works must have been planned for room thirteen, but this hall was apparently still in the process of remodeling with the intention that it be decorated with paintings when the owners of the palace resolved on a new, fundamental alteration of the building's layout. Judging from this unfinished business, the third stage must have been very short. In the process of preparation for the next building stage, the Red Hall and room thirteen were partially destroyed, walled up and filled with debris separated by the regular layers of brick.

It is not clear what caused damage of the paintings in the Eastern Hall and why it became necessary to repaint the Red Hall. Shishkin thought that this was the result of simple aging, but this theory is incompatible with the newly established dates of the previous stage (eighth century, most likely around 719 AD), because, as we shall see later, there was not enough time for simple aging. There could be other reasons for neglect of some paintings and for the repainting of others. For example, a scene of a fire ritual involving the owners of the castle, like the one in the Eastern Hall, could cause major trouble for the owner of the edifice in the quickly changing political and confessional situation of the eighth century. Since we do not know what was the subject of the earlier paintings of the Red Hall, all theories about the causes for repainting would be mere speculation.

Surprisingly, the subject of the well-preserved upper layer of paintings in

the Red Hall also remains a matter of speculation. Even the completely readable repeating scenes of the lower register, which show a fierce fight between the hero riding an elephant and beasts, real and fantastic, finds no parallels in other Sogdian paintings. In other words, little has changed since Shishkin's times when the absence of firm parallels prevented him from suggesting an interpretation of these scenes [Shishkin 1963, p. 205]. This forces us to look for the formal prototypes beyond Sogdiana. The enlarged earlobes and the naked figure of the main hero, together with rich gold jewelry of undoubtedly Indian type recall the typical iconography of a Bodhisattva. The immediate source of this image was probably the iconography of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, who is shown riding an elephant. Besides the strikingly similar ratio between the body size of the elephant and the rider, which are exactly those found in the images of Samantabhadra, this analogy is supported by an "anatomic anomaly" of Varakhsha elephants. The elephant of Samantabhadra has six tusks, three on each side. The Varakhsha painter did not reproduce this fantastic aspect of Buddhist iconography, and reduced the number of tusks to normal. Yet, since the three tusks of Samantabhadra's el-



Source: Shishkin, Varakhsha (1963), Plate I (det.)

Detail of elephant from Red Hall



Source: Shishkin, *Varakhsha* (1963), Plate IV

The hunting mural in the Red Hall

elephant were “filling” the entire mouth, the painter of *Varakhsha* faced an unexpected problem: he did not know from where a single tusk should grow. Unable to solve this riddle, he made a wrong choice and placed the remaining tusk in the lower jaw.

In other words, the scholarly opinion which generally recognizes a strong Indian influence in the Red Hall paintings is correct. Yet this “Indic” iconography was not derived directly from India, but rather from eighth-century Tang art, or, more likely from the art of Eastern Turkestan of the Tang period. It is Puxian, the Chinese version of Samantabhadra [see for example: Li Jian 2003, p. 161], who is usually depicted riding a bridled and saddled elephant with festooned ears, i.e. an elephant which shares all the highly unrealistic characteristics of its cousin at *Varakhsha*. Our Sogdian painter could have encountered the Chinese iconography of Puxian in the *but-khaneh*, the house of idols, which was brought in

the trousseau of the “daughter of the king of Chin” and was established in Ramitan near Bukhara [Narshakhi - Frye 1954, p. 8].

The establishment of the iconographic prototype, however, does not provide much help in deciphering the meaning of the depicted scenes - there is no way that the fiercely fighting hero of the *Varakhsha* painting could be a Bodhisattva. Two interpretations of this figure seem possible.

The first one was suggested by Belenitskii and Marshak, who thought that the main hero of this painting was Adbag, the supreme divinity of the Sogdian pantheon. This idea rests on a strong, but sole argument: Adbag’s live attribute, an animal companion similar to the Indian *vahane*, which could be depicted as the god’s throne or as his riding animal, is known to be an elephant [Belenitskii and Marshak 1981]. Yet this interpretation is very hard to prove; the elephant rider displays no standard divine attributes which would allow a Sogdian to iden-

tify him as the depiction of a god. On the other hand, this absence of the standard indicators of the divine status may not be taken as an absolute negative proof, because, as we shall see further, the paintings of the Red Hall stand out from the entire system of Sogdian art by their genre characteristics, and thus the data accumulated in the course of the study of Sogdian paintings may not be completely applicable in this case.

Another possibility is to see in the elephant rider of the *Varakhsha* painting the King of the South, one of the four great monarchs of the four cardinal points [Pelliot 1923; Bartol’d 1966, p. 216; Marshak 2000, pp. 77-8]. This “geopolitical” concept was Buddhist in origin but undoubtedly popular in Sogdiana; its artistic embodiment is found in a building in the Sogdian city of Kushania [Chavannes 1903, p. 145]. The image of the King of the South, who was also known as the king of the elephants and the king of wisdom, would require the Indian appearance

and this, in turn, would explain why the Varakhsha painter drew on the iconography of Samantabhadra - Puxian. It is harder to explain why the King of the South was selected for depiction on the walls of the palace of Bukhar Khudas. These images could have a certain genealogical significance in legitimizing the origin of the Bukhar Khuda dynasty or could be a part of a larger iconographic program that included an "Indian Hall", analogous to what was found in European palaces during the popularity of Chinoiserie in the eighteenth century. There seems to be one aspect of this unusual imagery that supports the second interpretation over the first one. The main deviation from the rather faithfully reproduced iconography of Samantabhadra - Puxian, which makes the elephant rider at Varakhsha certainly a non-Buddhist figure, is the fierce fight with the fantastic and real beasts of prey. This alteration, however, is nothing other than the application of an ancient Near Eastern iconographic formula, which was widely used in the Iranian world in general and in Sogdiana in particular. As far as I know, in the Iranian world from at least the Achaemenid period and in the Near East in general throughout the early medieval period, a king and not a deity is depicted fighting beasts. Retrieval of this old iconographic formula could have transparent political connotations in the troubled eighth century.

Yet the most puzzling aspect of this painting is its genre characteristics. Indeed, in all known monuments of Sogdian art, we find a clear tendency to avoid repetition of scenes while here we see at least eleven similar compositions rhythmically repeated on the walls of the hall. Such intentional reiteration of one and the same statement yields very little information, but stresses the majesty of the main personage. This would fit well with the principles of imperial Achaemenid art, but it looks odd in Sogdiana, where most painted decoration is narrative in nature.

A rational explanation for the peculiarities of this genre can be offered if we accept Belenitskii and Marshak's congenial "religious" interpretation of the "animal run" frieze in the second register of the Red Hall paintings. Similar friezes with an "animal run" are known

in Sogdian art, but all animals in the Varakhsha palace display one very unusual feature - they are all saddled. Since each Sogdian god had an animal throne, often depicted as an Indian *vahane*, a riding animal, this procession of saddled animals can be interpreted as the depiction of the deities of the Sogdian pantheon [Belenitskii and Marshak 1981, pp. 32-3]. Yet this way of representing deities certainly deviated from standard iconographic programs commonly found in Sogdian gala halls, where gods would be depicted mostly in a sort of "blown up" icon on the back wall of the hall, as Vashagn, for example, was represented in the slightly earlier paintings of the neighboring Eastern Hall. Together with the unusual genre characteristics of the lower register, this leaves the impression that the patron ordered both the religious content and the political agenda of the paintings to be "coded" and hidden under the neutral cover of the rhythmically organized anthropomorphic and zoomorphic "ornament."

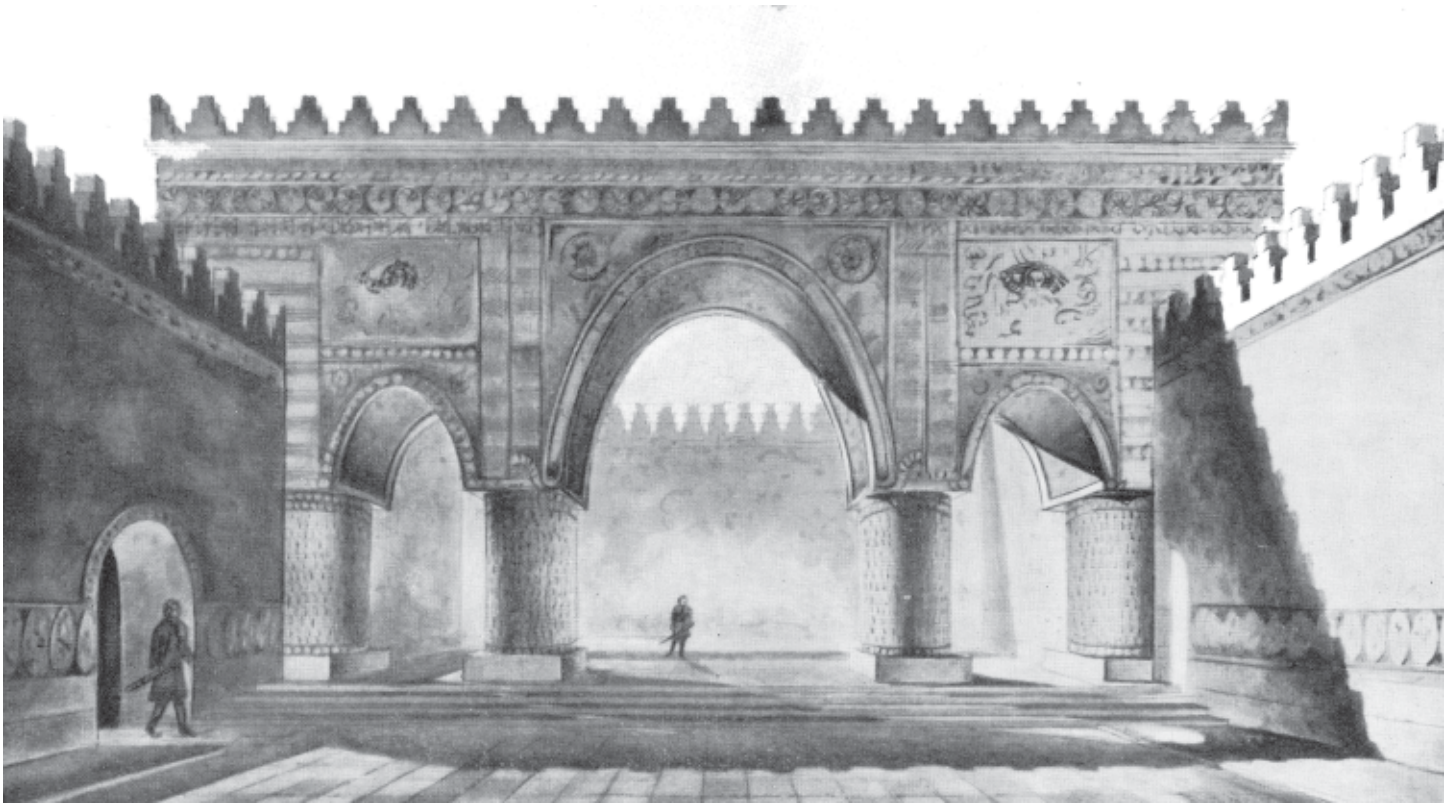
In the historical context of the eighth century, these observations on the language of the Red Hall paintings may be used as a dating resource. Such an Aesopic language perfectly fits the situation in which Toghshada would find himself from the time when Arabs restored their control over Sogdiana in 722 until his death in 738 CE. It is not clear how much time passed between the completion of the second stage (around 719 CE.) and the beginning of the third one. It is, however, tempting to suggest that the sharp change of building plans, such as the interruption of the unfinished reconstruction of the rooms, and subsequent conversion of the entire block of gala halls into a platform for a new building, indicates the "arrival" of a new master, i.e. reflects the situation when the power passed from Toghshada to his son Qutaiba in 738 CE, upon Toghshada's death. If this bold suggestion is correct, then the paintings of the Red Hall are likely to belong to the later part of Toghshada's reign, probably the 730s.

Before the final demolition of the roof construction, somebody cut off several pieces of paintings in the Red Hall. Shishkin thought that this was an act of vandalism performed by iconoclastic Moslems [Shishkin 1963, p. 83]. Several of these "cuts", which I was

able to investigate visually prior to removal of the last paintings during the re-excavations in the Red Hall in 1987, certainly do not comply with this notion. First of all, the easiest way to damage the wall painting on dry plaster would simply be to scratch off the painted surface, as we see in damaged paintings of Afrasiab. If something more serious was needed, the plaster itself could be knocked off the wall and brought down, as was done in the gala halls of The Panjikent palace. In the latter case, one would expect chaotic cuts going parallel to the surface of the wall in order to break off large "slabs" of plaster. Yet, the person who cut pieces of paintings in the Red Hall first marked the borders of the pieces that interested him by cutting circles around them. Then he cut deep into the wall, so that the final product of his work looked like a cone for which the painted surface of the wall served as a flat base. In other words, these cuts seem to be the result of very accurate and time-consuming work aimed at the removal of wall fragments with an intact painted surface. Since each cut concentrated on a certain compact element of images, like the head of a man or the wing of a gryphon, these cuts are very likely to be done by an artist who used this opportunity to obtain samples of superior work for his pattern collection from the paintings destined for inevitable destruction. This unusual fact provides us with a rare insight into one of the mechanisms that allowed the elements of pre-Islamic artistic tradition to be passed to the art of the early Islamic period.

Stage Four - The Palace of Qutaiba b. Toghshada

We know almost nothing about the next stage in the palace's life. It was during this stage that the central element of the later palace's plan, the elbow corridor, was designed. Marshak pointed out that such corridors were typical for Sogdian palaces and rich dwellings, and that even such details as the engaged wooden column fortifying the protruding corner on the elbow finds analogies in the early medieval architecture of Central Asia [Marshak 2000, p. 155]. Some traces of rooms belonging to this period were discovered on the top of the platform that incorporated the booted remains of the Red Hall and room thirteen. Judging from the brief



The iwān in V. A. Nil'sen's reconstruction

Source: Shishkin, *Varakhsha* (1963), facing p. 80

textual description (none of Shishkin's several publications devoted to the excavations in Varakhsha provides us with any illustrative materials), these indistinct fragments of walls could not be made into a comprehensible plan. Apatkina dates the erection of the massive arches of the iwān to this period [Apatkina 1999, 2002], but this does not seem right to me; the foundations of these constructions cut through the corresponding floor and certainly belong to the next stage (palace of Buniyat).

Of the finds of this period which could be used for dating, Shishkin mentions only an early shahada "Caliphate" fals. Although the coin is preserved in the Coin Room of the Samarkand Institute of Archeology, its poor state leaves no chance of a more precise attribution. No other dating materials are reported on the floors of this period, which were reached in the Western Hall, in the "elbow" corridor, in a trench in the Northern Hall and in the iwān.

We have almost no knowledge of the palace's decoration at that time. Reused in the next, fifth, state were the large terra cotta slabs with human fig-

ures in high relief covered with a thin layer of alabaster ground. Another unpublished slab of this type preserved in the Bukharan Museum shows a gryphon in low relief. Most likely belonging to the fourth period, neither the material nor the technique used in their production are found in the earlier architectural decor of Sogdiana, and they do not seem to find a place in the decoration of the third stage, which, in terms of technique, is very traditional. Altogether, these slabs look like an experiment which was meant to imitate some foreign prototype but, due to its unsuccessful nature, was not continued. Yet, the string drapery of these reliefs seems to correspond quite well to that known in Sogdian terra cotta figures and on slab-molded ossuaries of Samarkandian Sogd of the seventh century.

This period terminated with a major fire, traces of which are found in all the rooms where floors of this period were reached, except for the Eastern Hall and vaulted rooms in the south. This fire likely resulted from an event which Narshakhi described by saying that Qutaiba b. Toghshada "was a Mus-

lim for a while until he apostatized in the time of Abu Muslim (may God show mercy on him). Abu Muslim heard [of his apostasy] and killed him. He also killed his brother with his followers" [Narshakhi - Frye 1954, p. 10]. This took place in late 751 or early 752.

Stage Five - the Palace of Buniyat b. Toghshada

Our information about the second personage mentioned in the history of the Varakhsha palace, Bukhar Khuda Buniyat b. Toghshada, is limited to the two passages in the *Tarikh-i Bukhara* recording the succession of Bukharan rulers. The first of these passages is likely to be a later, literary interpolation full of chronological mistakes, contradictions, and inconsistencies [Narshakhi - Frye 1954, p. 8-9]. This suspicious passage is the only place where a certain Sukah is mentioned as brother and successor of Qutaiba b. Toghshada and as brother and predecessor of Buniyat b. Toghshada.

The second of these passages, on the contrary, bears no evident traces of later distortions. It repeats twice that

Buniyat b. Toghsada directly replaced his brother Qutaiba b. Toghsada, who was killed by Abu Muslim in Varakhsha around 753 CE [Narshakhi - Frye 1954, p. 10-11].

The majority of scholars who dealt with the dates of the Buniyat's reign tried to smooth out the severe discrepancies between these two passages and to combine their information in one coherent "system." As a result, in all published chronological and genealogical charts devoted to the Bukhar Khudah dynasty, we see Sukah succeeding his brother Toghsada and ruling for seven years, with Buniyat stepping in after the death of Sukah and remaining in power until his own assassination by the order of al-Mahdi [Smirnova 1981, pp. 426-8; Goibov 1989, pp. 39-44, 89-95; Frye 1995; Rtveladze 1999, p. 33].

However, the methodology of source studies does not allow a scholar to merge such diverging accounts without an investigation into the causes of the contradictions between them, especially when they appear in the adjacent chapters of one and the same source. Once started, such an examination immediately reveals that the first of the passages is a later interpolation by a real ignoramus who not only made a number of major mistakes in chronology, but also "constructed" evidence. One of his "constructs" is Sukah with his biography while, in reality, it was Buniyat who replaced his brother Qutaiba b. Toghsada. Fortunately, there are not any discrepancies in sources when it comes to the date of Buniyat's death: both these passages of the *Tarikh-i Bukhara* agree that he was murdered in the Varakhsha palace in 166/782-3 on the order of Caliph al-Mahdi, who suspected him of sympathizing with Muqanna's revolt. In other words, Buniyat "ruled" for 30 years from 751/52 to 782/3.

Since we attributed the construction activities of stage four to the times of Qutaiba b. Toghsada and interpreted the traces of fire which are found all over the palace as the evidence for the destruction of the building which occurred at the moment when Qutaiba b. Toghsada was killed, we should look at the subsequent reconstruction of the edifice as the work of Buniyat b. Toghsada.

This assumption is perfectly supported by the investigation of architectural remains; Shishkin was certainly right in attributing the latest reconstruction of the palace to the early Abbasid period. With the significant bulk of archaeological materials accumulated during the last 60 years of archaeological exploration in Sogdiana, we can now point to three prominent architectural features which put the early Islamic date of the reconstruction carried out during stage five beyond a reasonable doubt: (1) the use of baked brick (not recorded in Sogdiana until the 730s or even 740s); (2) the massive round brick columns supporting the passages in the so-called "eiwan" (one of the standard features in the repertoire of eastern Abbasid architecture, possibly derived from the older Sasanian tradition, but completely unknown in pre-Islamic Sogdiana); (3) and the very use of stucco as the means of architectural decoration (completely absent from the monuments of this area prior to the Arab conquest).

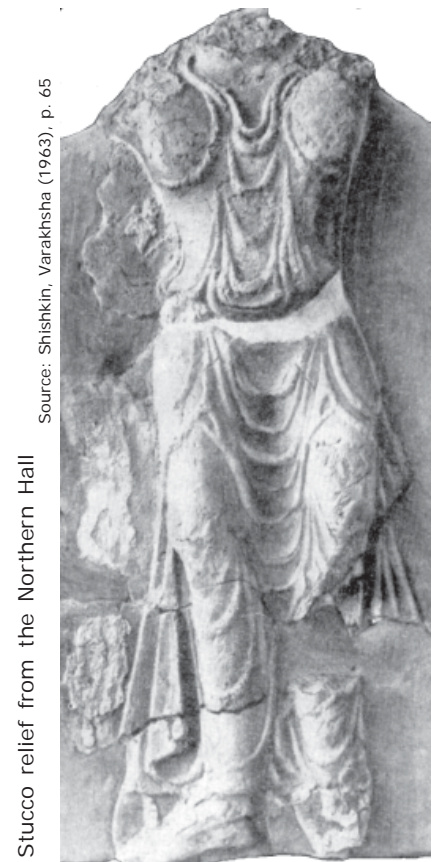
Some Conclusions

The original building of the palace dates to the reign of Khunak (689-709 CE). The first remodeling took place during the reign of Toghsada and the paintings on the blue background (the Eastern Hall and an early layer of paintings in the Red Hall) most likely belong to the period of his "apostasy" around 719. The new paintings of the Red Hall belong to the later part of Toghsada's reign, which ended in 738 CE. The fourth stage in the history of the building was connected to the enthronement of his son Qutaiba b. Toghsada (738-753 CE). Finally, Buniyat b. Toghsada (753-782) was responsible for the major reconstruction of the palace and the first stucco decoration. The content and genre characteristics of the Varakhsha paintings as well as their fate reflect the political instability of the time and the dubious position in which the rulers of Bukhara found themselves. Bukhar Khudas had to balance between their own pretension to rule over the Bukharan oasis and the overwhelming power of the Arabs. This position required a sophisticated maneuvering between the old national and religious traditions on the one hand and the at-

tempt to present themselves to Arabs as pious converts to Islam on the other.

About the Author

Born in Tashkent, Aleksandr Naymark received his education in archaeology and history at Tashkent and Moscow Universities. After moving to the United States in 1992, he received a Ph.D. in Central Eurasian Studies from Indiana University, his dissertation being on "Sogdiana, Its Christians and Byzantium: A Study of Artistic and Cultural Connections in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages." He has participated in more than 30 excavations in Central Asia and for a time worked in the Moscow Museum of Oriental Art as its curator of Central Asian pre-Islamic art and coins. Between 1997 and 1999 he was a fellow of the German Archaeological Institute in Berlin. Dr. Naymark is currently an Assistant Professor in Art History at Hofstra University. He has published widely on early Islamic art, numismatics and archaeology in Central Asia. He may be contacted at Aleksandr.Naymark@Hofstra.edu.



Stucco relief from the Northern Hall
Source: Shishkin, Varakhsha (1963), p. 65

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Notes

1. Thus, in the majority of manuscripts, in both scholarly editions and in all translations. The MS of the American Oriental Society reads Khbk Khuda [Narshakhi - Frye 1954, p. 45, n. †].

2. For detailed discussion see: Naymark 2001, pp. 264-278; Naymark 2001a, pp. 56-7; Naymark 2004.

3. Tabari dates this enthronement to 91 A.H. which leaves 31 years to the death of Toghshada in 121 A.H., while Narshakhi speaks about Toghshada's 32 years of rule.



Detail from mural of procession on south wall of the palace at Afrasiab (photographed in Afrasiab Museum)

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Sogdians in China: A Short History and Some New Discoveries

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The Sogdians were the inhabitants of fertile valleys surrounded by deserts, the most important of which was the Zeravshan valley, in today's Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. This Iranian-speaking people had a fifteen-centuries-long historical identity between the sixth century BCE and the tenth century CE when it vanished in the Muslim, Persian-speaking world. Although the Sogdians constructed such famous towns as Samarkand and Bukhara, they are quite unknown. Only specialists on the Silk Road know that they were among the main go-betweens of the exchanges in the steppe, in Central Asia, and in China during the first millennium CE, and especially between the fifth and the eighth centuries CE. During this period, the "inland silk road" and the "Sogdian trading network" are almost synonymous. The contemporary Sogdian, Chinese, Arabic, Byzantine, and Armenian sources describe the Sogdians as the great traders of Inner Asia. They managed to sell their products - musk, slaves, silverware, silk and many other goods - to all the surrounding peoples. A Greek text describes their trading embassies to Byzantium, some caravaneers' graffiti prove that they were in India, Turkish vocabulary is a testimony to their cultural and economic power in the Turkish steppe...

But their main market was always China. The Chinese branch of their network is by far the best known, and in China the number of new discoveries on the Sogdians is quickly growing.

When did the first Sogdian arrive in China to trade? Various answers have been given to this quite simple question, but one of the most popular, which

can still be found in many recent books or articles, makes Alexander the Great the villain of the story. Due to the disaster which befell Sogdiana during his campaigns there in 329-328 BCE, the Sogdians would have been forced to emigrate as far east as China. The creation of the Sogdian trading network between Samarkand and China thus was a by-product of the Greek conquest of the Achaemenid Empire. Needless to say, there is nothing in the available sources to support such an idea, which survived only because of its classical flavor and its familiar ring to the historian's ears. In fact the Chinese, Yuezhi, Bactrians, Indians and Sogdians who created the historical Silk Road did not need Greek help. Trade is yet another item that should be removed (after irrigation, town-planning and state-formation) from the long list of supposed Greek influences in the history of Central Asia. The list of real influences is already full enough with coinage, iconography and the alphabet (in Bactria)!

It has long been known that Chinese diplomacy towards the nomads in the second century BCE was instrumental in creating in Central Asia and further west, in Parthia, a market for Han products, especially silk. Chinese embassies traveled with thousands of bolts of silk but at very irregular intervals. The merchants in northwestern India and eastern Iran were quick to appreciate the potential for this exchange and followed the steps of the Chinese ambassadors back to China. As Du Qin, a Chinese statesman, put it in 25 BCE, "There are no members of the royal family or noblemen among those who bring the gifts. The latter are all mer-

chants and men of low origins. They wish to exchange their goods and conduct trade, under the pretext of presenting gifts" [Han shu, Hulsewé 1979, p. 109]. The Sogdians were doing exactly the same thing at the same time, and the first testimonies, in 29 and 11 BCE, on a Sogdian in China might also be found in the *Han shu*: "If in view of these considerations, we ask why [Kangju] sends his sons to attend [at the Han court], [we find] that, desiring to trade, they use a pretence couched in fine verbiage" [Han shu, Hulsewé 1979, p. 128]. Kangju, a nomadic state, the center of which was in what is now the southern part of the Tashkent oasis, included Sogdiana during the first century BCE. This desire to trade was a Sogdian one.

It is difficult to understand the next step in the establishment of Sogdian communities in China. It seems that some of the ambassadors and their families settled in China, especially in Gansu. Some late genealogies of Sogdian families in China seem at least to imply such a reconstruction. We know on a firm textual basis that as early as 227 CE, in Liangzhou (Gansu), when a conquering army was approaching from the South, "The various kings in Liangzhou dispatched twenty men including Zhi Fu and Kang Zhi, the ennobled leaders of the Yuezhi and Kangju Hu, to receive the military commander, and when the large army advanced north they competed to be the first to receive us" [Sanguo zhi, 4, p. 895]. The Hu from Kangju are the Sogdians, while the Yuezhi are the traders from Bactria and Gandhara, the Kushan Empire created by the Yuezhi tribes. The leaders of the biggest trading communities in

Gansu were sent to the invading army, and the Sogdians were already on a par with the greatest merchants of Antiquity, the Kushan ones.

The next step in the history of the Sogdians in China is provided by the "Sogdian Ancient Letters." These letters were left in the ruins of a Han watchtower, 90 kilometers west of Dunhuang in 313. Sir Aurel Stein discovered them there in 1907. They were sent by some Sogdian traders from Gansu to the West. One of them was sent from Gansu to Samarkand and described the political upheavals in Northern China. The Xiongnu, who were then sacking the main towns there, were called for the first time in an Indo-European language by the name which would be theirs in Europe a century later: the *Xwn*, Huns. The letter described also the ruin of the Sogdian trading network in these towns: "The last emperor, so they say, fled from Luoyang because of the famine and fire was set to his palace and to the city, and the palace was burnt and the city [destroyed]. Luoyang is no more, Ye is no more! [...] And, sirs, if I were to write to you about how China has fared, it would be beyond grief: there is no profit for you to gain from it [...] [in] Luoyang... the Indians and the Sogdians there had all died of starvation" [Sims-Williams, 2001, p. 49]. But the same text describes a Sogdian network well established in Gansu which was still there a century later. A Chinese text explains how "Merchants of that country [Sogdiana] used to come in great number to the district Liang [the present Wuwei in Gansu] to trade. When Guzang [i.e. Wuwei] was conquered [by the Wei in 439] all of them were captured. In the beginning of the reign of Gaozong [452-465] the king [of Sogdiana] sent embassies to ask for their ransom" [Wei shu, Enoki 1955, p. 44].

The fifth and sixth centuries were certainly the high days of Sogdian emigration to China. After the disruption of the Inner China network in the fourth century, a new network of Sogdian communities was created then. Many Sui and Tang texts or funerary epitaphs of Sogdian families describe how the great grandfather came to China during the Wei as *Sabao*, i.e. chief caravaner. These families established themselves first in Gansu, the next

generation moved into the main Chinese towns, and some Sogdians managed to reach the court. For instance, the biography of An Tugen in the *Beishi* (chap. 92 p. 3047) describes how An Tugen's great grandfather came from Anxi (western Sogdiana) to the Wei and established himself in Jiuquan (the western end of Gansu). Later on, An Tugen rose from the position of merchant to Grand Minister of the Northern Qi in the middle of the sixth century.

New discoveries from Guyuan in the Chinese province of Ningxia (Southern Ordos) provide a very good example of Sogdian families in China who did not achieve such high distinction. Six graves of one Sogdian family have been excavated there [Luo Feng, 1996 and 2001]. According to its name, the family should have originated from the Sogdian town of Kesh (Shahr-i Sabz, in Uzbekistan), and the texts of the funerary epitaphs describe indeed how the family migrated from the western countries. The archaeological content of these looted tombs confirms these western links, as some Byzantine and Sasanian coins, a seal stone inscribed in Pahlavi, and a Zoroastrian symbol were found there. The great grandfather, Miaoni, and the grandfather, Boboni, "served their country in the capacity of Sabao." The father, Renchou, "idled away his life, accomplishing nothing in his official career." A member of the fourth generation, Shi Shewu (d. 610), was the great man of the family, and through him the family became integrated into Chinese society. He was a military officer of the Sui, and his grave and funerary epitaph are Chinese. His elder son, Shi Hedan (d.

669), was translator in the Imperial Secretariat of the Tang. Another son, Shi Daoluo (d. 658) was a soldier. A grandson, Shi Tiebang (d. 666), was in charge of an army horse-breeding farm near Guyuan. Shi Daode (d. 678), from another branch of the Shi clan, and his uncle, Shi Suoyan, who is buried in same graveyard, were also members of the military and officialdom. We know also by name many other members of the family. Some of these names are simply transcriptions of Sogdian names: Shewu is the honorific personal name, but the public name was Pantuo. Shewu was pronounced Jia-mut, and Pantuo banda; together they provide Jimatvande, a well-known Sogdian name, "servant of Demeter", which was only divided in two halves for the need of the *interpretatio sinica*. The first names of the next generation sound Chinese, except in the elder branch: Shi Hedan and his son Shi Huluo have first names that seem to be transcriptions. After so many gen-



The Sogdian Sabao and ambassador An Jia negotiating with a Qaghan

erations in China, some of the members of the families still married in the Sogdian milieu, among them Shi Hedan, great-great-grandson of Shi Miaoni, who married a Kang (the Chinese surname of the natives of Samarkand), and Shi Suoyan, who married an An (from Bukhara).

These data are fascinating, because with the Shi family we can follow the



The main (western) wall of the Afrasiab painting in Samarkand: Chinese, Korean, and Iranian ambassadors.

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destiny of a specific Sogdian family in China and see how it became integrated first in the Sogdian milieu and then how it became sinicized in the Chinese administration. So far we lack other examples, due mainly to the novelty of the interest towards the Sogdian families in Chinese archaeology. Some other Sogdian graveyards have been found but badly published [See de la Vaissière and Trombert 2004, forthcoming, for other examples from textual sources].

The ancestors of Shi Shewu bore a title, Sabao, which is very interesting for the history of the Sogdians in China. It proves that the Sogdian communities in China were deeply rooted in the caravan trade. This title is a transcription of the Sogdian word *sartapao*, itself a Sogdian transcription of the Indian *sārthavāha*, chief-caravaneer, through a Bactrian intermediary [Sims-Williams, 1996]. In India the *sārthavāha* was not only the chief-caravaneer but also the head of the traders' guild. In China the title was imported first as early as the second century CE under the form *sabo* directly from India, for example in Buddhist texts which described the Buddha as a chief-caravaneer, and then a second time from the Sogdian form with the precise administrative meaning "head of the local Sogdian community." The "river of the sabao" in Chinese geography is the Zeravshan, which flows in Samarkand and Bukhara. So the heads of the Sogdian communities in China bore the titles of "chief caravaneer," and it is on this ambiguity that Shi Shewu played when he wrote that his ancestors "served their country in the capacity of Sabao." For a Chinese ear, they were officials, while for a Sogdian one, they were simply heads of caravan! We can see in the textual and epigraphical sources many such Sabao

installed in China. Most of the main towns of Northern China had in the sixth and seventh centuries their Sogdian community headed by a Sabao, who received a mandarin rank in the official hierarchy, at least from the Northern Qi to the Tang. These nouveaux riches had some wealthy funerary beds carved for them, where they displayed both their Sogdian culture and their integration into Chinese society, in a way the iconographic counterpart of the epitaphs of the Shi family. These funerary beds were an old Chinese tradition well suited for Zoroastrian purposes because it isolated the body from earth and water. Some of them have been known for a long time; for example, the Anyang (Ye) one, which shows a Sabao in his garden receiving the members of his community. Others have been found recently and have found their way into Chinese or foreign museums.

One of the most interesting was discovered two years ago near Taiyuan by a team of the Shanxi Archaeological Institute. The tomb of Yu Hong, who died in 593 at age 58, contained a funerary bed in the shape of a Chinese house, adorned by 53 carved panels of marble, originally painted and gilded. Yu Hong had traveled extensively, acting as an ambassador to the Ruanruan, in Persia and Bactria or Gandhara (Yuezhi), and to the Tuyuhun tribes near lake Qinghai. Then he served the Northern Qi and Zhou, and the Sui. He became Sabao in 580 and then nominal governor of a town. We know this because the funerary epitaphs of Yu Hong and his wife were discovered in the tomb. And the iconography fits very well the geography of the texts: we see on the panels Yu Hong hunting with nomads on horses, but also hunting on an Indian elephant or banqueting with his wife. Zoroastrian symbols are

clearly displayed: two priests half-bird, half-human wearing the traditional padam (a piece of cloth in front of the mouth) and Mithra and his sacrificial horse facing each other on each side of the entry [Marshak 2002, and Riboud 2003].

The trade links with Central Asia provided the communities from the fifth to the eighth centuries with waves of new immigrants. One specific example of these links is from a discovery on the main stage of the route, Turfan, in Xinjiang. Many Chinese documents were used there to cut paper clothing for the dead who were buried in the Astana cemetery. Among them is a list of taxes paid on caravan trade in the Gaochang kingdom (Turfan) in the 620s. The text is not complete but gives a fairly good idea of the identity of the main traders in Turfan: out of 35 commercial operations in this text, 29 involved a Sogdian trader. In 13 instances both the seller and the buyer were Sogdians.

In Inner China, the seventh century saw an evolution in the official position of the Sogdian communities. It seems that the Tang transformed quite independent and autonomous Sogdian communities loosely integrated in the mandarin hierarchy into more controlled "submitted counties" without Sogdian hierarchy. The Sabaos disappeared from the epigraphical and textual sources after the middle of the seventh century. But this period, up to the middle of the eighth century, was certainly the climax of Iranian influence on Chinese civilization. If the communities were suppressed, the families and individuals who were before inclined to stay within the Sogdian communities now were integrated more thoroughly into Chinese society. We can see people with typical Sogdian sur-

names, such as Kang, getting involved in all the fields of Tang social life.

Obviously many of them were merchants: around the main markets of the capitals, Chang'an and Luoyang, Sogdian temples, Sogdian taverns, and Sogdian shops flourished. They sold to the Tang elite the Western goods that were then à la mode [Schafer 1963]. Many young nobles or drunken poets celebrated the charms of the Sogdian girls, and the most famous of them, Li Bo, wrote:

*That Western hour with features like a flower
She stands by the wine-warmer, and
laughs with the breath of spring
Laughs with the breath of spring,
Dances in a dress of gauze!
Will you be going some where, milord,
now, before you are drunk?*
[transl. Schafer 1963, p. 21]

It was not just merchants, but soldiers, monks, and high or low officials who were of Sogdian descent. We have seen that the sons and grandsons of Shi Shewu served in the army. To quote another example, the New History of the Tang describes the family of An Chongzhang, Minister of War from 767 to 777. His ancestors were sabao in Wuwei (Gansu) during three generations. At the fourth generation, a member of the family An Xinggui became "Wude-era meritorious servant" and from then on the family belonged to the administration: the sixth-generation An Zhongjing was military Vice-commissary-in-chief of Hexi, and An Chongzhang was the leading member of the seventh generation.

Research on such materials is just beginning. Many funerary epitaphs of the Tang period should be used to understand the rapid pace of the sinicization of the Sogdians that took place under the Tang. It is already clear though that the rebellion of An Lushan is a major stage in this process. An Lushan was the main military governor of north-eastern China on the frontier with Korea and the Kitans. His father was a Sogdian installed in the Turk Empire and his mother was Turk; his first name is a straight transcription of the Sogdian Rokhshan, "luminous" (the same as Roxane, Alexander's wife). He established himself as a young boy in north-eastern China, acted as a translator

there in the markets, became a soldier and climbed from the rank and file to the top of the army. His rebellion in 755 nearly destroyed the Tang dynasty and put an end to one of China's Golden Ages. The rebellion was quelled only in 763 with the help of the Uighur nomads.

The rebellion has been described as if it was only a military coup by autonomous and very powerful armies [Pulleyblank, 1955]. The Sogdian identity of the rebels has never been investigated as such. Yet many texts described it as a Sogdian rebellion and described how many Sogdian traders supported An Lushan. Furthermore, some new discoveries prove that this idea was not due to a xenophobic bias in the Chinese descriptions of the revolt but in a way was something claimed by the rebels themselves: Shi Seming, the second successor of An Lushan, himself a Sogdian, put the Sogdian royal title of Jamuk (Jewel, transcribed Zhaowu in Chinese) on par with Huangdi on his recently discovered ceremonial jades. The troops of the rebels bore the Sogdian name of Zhejie, a fair transcription of the Sogdian Châkar "professional soldier" [de la Vaissière 2004, forthcoming].

The Sogdian milieu was torn apart by the rebellion, many Sogdians in China siding with the Tang. But from then on the Sogdians in China began to conceal their foreign origins. Maybe the clearest example is An Chongzhang, the Minister of War. In 756 he asked for the authorization to change his family name, "being ashamed to bear the same name" as An Lushan. He became Li Baoyu and the exchange was retroactive: his ancestors' family name changed also [Forte 1995, pp. 24-7]. There are many other examples of this kind of social hiding. To the degree that we can follow the destiny of some Sogdian families in Northern China up to the ninth century, we see that their great days are already by then gone. The pace of sinicization grew faster for security reasons, while the international trade with its new waves of immigrants was totally disrupted in the second half of the eighth century and reborn only on a very low level, if at all, during the ninth century. The Persian traders, arriving by sea in the main harbors of Southern China, became the main traders of the age. This was the

end of one millennium of a Sogdian presence in China.

About the Author

Étienne de la Vaissière is Assistant Professor at the Ecole pratique des hautes études, in Paris, where he teaches Medieval History of Central Asia. His dissertation on the Sogdian trade, a comprehensive analysis of the trading network from its creation to its end based on all the available sources, archaeological and textual, has been published (see below; it can be ordered on www.deboccard.com). He is currently working on Central Asian medieval sociology, on the Chinese as well as the Iranian side.

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Étienne de la Vaissière and Eric Trombert. "Des Chinois et des Hu. Migration et Intégration des des Iraniens orientaux en milieu chinois durant le Haut Moyen-Âge." *Annales. Histoire et Civilisations* (forthcoming in 2004).

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Forte 1995

Antonino Forte. *The Hostage An Shigao and his Offspring. An Iranian Family in China*. Kyoto, 1995.

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Anthony F. P. Hulsewé. *China in Central Asia : the Early Stage : 125 B.C. - A.D. 23*. An annotated translation of chapters 61 and 96 of the History of the Former Han Dynasty, with an introduction by Michael A.N. Loewe. Leiden: Brill, 1979.



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A segment of the procession depicted on the south wall of the palace at Afrasiab

Feng 1996

Luo Feng, *Guyuan nan jiao Sui Tang mudi* [Graveyard of Sui and Tang dynasties in the south suburbs of Guyuan] Beijing : Wenwu chubanshe, 1996.

Feng 2001

_____. "Sogdians in Northwest China," in Annette L. Juliano and Judith A. Lerner, eds., *Monks and Merchants. Silk Road Treasures from Northern China. Gansu and Ningxia 4th-7th Century*. New York: H.N. Abrams & Asia Society, 2001, 239-245.

Marshak 2002

Boris Marshak. "La thématique sogdienne dans l'art de la Chine de la

seconde moitié du VI^e siècle." *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettre, séances de l'année 2001*. Paris, 2002, 227-264.

Pulleyblank 1955

Edwin G. Pulleyblank. *The Background of the Rebellion of An Lu-shan*. Oxford: University Press, 1955.

Riboud 2003

Pénélope Riboud. "Le cheval sans cavalier dans l'art funéraire sogdien en Chine: à la recherche des sources d'un thème composite." *Arts Asiatiques*, 58 (2003) (in press).

Schafer 1963

Edward H. Schafer. *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand. A Study of T'ang Exotics*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963.

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Nicholas Sims-Williams. "The Sogdian Merchants in China and India." In Alfredo Cadonna et Lionello Lanciotti, eds., *Cina e Iran da Alessandro Magno alla Dinastia Tang*. Firenze: Olschki, 1996, 45-67.

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_____. "Sogdian Ancient Letter II." In Annette L. Juliano and Judith A. Lerner, eds., *Monks and Merchants. Silk Road Treasures from Northern China. Gansu and Ningxia 4th-7th Century*. New York: Abrams & Asia Society, 2001, 47-9.

The Pre-Islamic Civilization of the Sogdians (seventh century BCE to eighth century CE): A Bibliographic Essay (studies since 1986)

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Introduction

In the second half of the 1980s, an unprecedented development in Sogdian studies began. This did not result from the discovery of a mass of new written documents (contrary to what happened with Bactrian studies), nor to a large extension of field archaeology (on the contrary, the great excavations inherited from the Soviet period have since shrunk due to financial difficulties, with a few exceptions such as Samarkand and Paykend). The main reason for the blossoming of Sogdian studies has been, on the one hand, better communication among the specialists involved, and, on the other hand, chance discoveries in China, which have added a new angle to the perception of the historical role of the Sogdians.

Archaeological information from the Soviet republics, hitherto very sparsely disseminated in Western publications, has quite suddenly become more abundant. This is partly because all Soviet scholars, not only the senior ones, have been systematically encouraged to publish abroad, and partly because two newly created journals took a great interest in Central Asia: *The Bulletin of the Asia Institute* (USA, published yearly since 1987) and *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* (Japan, published

yearly since 1990 with special issues). Sogdiana and the Sogdians have exerted the greatest attraction, thanks to their historical role as intermediaries along the Silk Road and also to their particularly refined artistic culture (already in 1981 *Sogdian Painting*, published under the direction of Guitty Azarpay, was a revelation for many).

In reality, Sogdian studies have never ceased being cultivated in the West since the beginning of the 20th century, but for the main part had been confined to philologists working on the text material brought back by the British, German, French, and Russian expeditions in the Tarim region. The Sogdian part of this material is now fully published, except for some stray fragments. These generations of philologists achieved step-by-step a good understanding of the native Sogdian language, an Iranian language written in several scripts (in accordance to the various religions) which has been extinct since the eleventh century. In contrast, Western museums had contained very few items from Sogdiana (mostly coins), and just a few of these objects originated from Sogdian colonies in China (the funerary reliefs from Anyang and the religious image from the Pelliot collection, only recently recognized as Sogdian). What made Western archaeologists eventually come to the Sogdian field was the inaccessibility of Afghanistan after 1979 and, later, the invitations extended by the Soviet archaeological authorities as a consequence of *perestroika*. The French mission (MAFOUZ, i.e. Mission Archéologique Franco-Ouzbèke) opened the way at Samarkand in 1989, using the experience acquired by the DAFA (Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghani-

stan, 1922-1982) to which most of its founding members had belonged. Other foreign missions have followed recently: Italians in the Bukharan oasis (la Sapienza University, Rome) and now in the southern Zeravshan valley (Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente); and a joint mission of the University of California, Berkeley, and the Samarkand Institute of Archaeology in the Shahr-i Sabz oasis. Two German missions, a Polish one, and another French one (in Tajikistan) are also operating, but they specialize in the pre- and proto-historical periods which are not covered in the present paper.

Another decisive factor in the development of Sogdian studies has been the recent recognition of the Sogdian influx as a major factor in the cultural history of China in the Wei, Qi, Song and early Tang periods (fifth to eighth centuries) after many years of indifference or actual denial by Chinese scholars. Commercial records in Turco-Sogdian and Chinese, found in Turfan and Dunhuang, shed new light on the integration of Sogdian colonies into the social fabric of early mediaeval China. At the same time, the spectacular discovery of several sets of funerary reliefs commissioned by Sogdians in the second half of the sixth century has revealed a fully developed secular iconography in Sogdiana itself for this early period, of which almost no record survives. At present Sogdians are very much in fashion among Chinese archaeologists and historians, a trend one can only be pleased with, even if it occasionally is accompanied by some over-interpretation of the data. One can be sure that more texts and archaeological objects will surface in the near

future. The masterly book by Etienne de la Vaissière, *Histoire des marchands sogdiens* (Paris 2002), was the first fruit of the recognition of the existence of a "Sogdian space" extending far beyond the narrow limits of Sogdiana itself: to lands of Sogdian agricultural colonization in southern Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, to communities in the heart of China and Crimea, to administrators at the court of the Turkish *qaghans* in Mongolia, and even to individual traders in the Southern Seas.

The international community of Sogdians was numerous, but today the community of "Sogdologists" is still very narrow. The reader will probably notice a tedious recurrence of authors' names in the following listings. This situation, however, is rapidly changing as more and more students (especially American, Chinese, French, Italian, Japanese, and Russian) are entering this worthwhile field.

Reference journals

In addition to the two main journals already quoted (*Bulletin of the Asia Institute* and *Silk Road Art and Archaeology*), *Studia Iranica* (published in Paris) devotes much space to Sogdian subjects, both linguistic and archaeological. In Russian, *Rossiiskaia arkheologiia* [Russian archaeology, formerly *Sovetskaia Arkheologiia*] and *Vestnik drevnei istorii* [Journal of ancient history], both published in Moscow, still occasionally publish articles on Central Asia, but far less than before. For local information one has to consult *Istoriia material'noi kul'tury Uzbekistana (IMKU)* [History of the material culture of Uzbekistan], published by the Institute of Archaeology at Samarkand, and to *Arkheologicheskie raboty v Tadjikistane (ART)* [Archaeological works in Tajikistan], published by the Institute of History at Dushanbe. The first journal is published regularly, the second one with long delays. Both can be obtained only through academic contacts. The Samarkand Institute of Archaeology also publishes monographs, and a collection of yearly archaeological reports: *Arkheologicheskie issledovaniia v Uzbekistane* [Archaeological researches in Uzbekistan].

Bibliographical listings with commentaries

Some preliminary observations:

1) Almost all the works listed have been published since 1986. A few references prior to that date have been kept, however, when they still retain their value as books for daily consultation (e.g. I. Gershevitch, *A grammar of Manichean Sogdian*, 1954, or G. Azarpay, *Sogdian Painting*, 1981).

2) As usual (unfortunately) in scholarship, all the more so in Soviet and post-Soviet scholarship, many authors "recycle" material from articles to books, or from article to article, or from a version published in one language to a version in another. In such cases an effort has been made to retain only the most accessible and/or up-to-date presentation.

3) Materials of purely local relevance or miscellaneous character have not been retained, as they are incorporated (or destined to be incorporated) into broader synthesis. For such information the reader is referred to the tables of contents of the archaeological journals listed above. This rule does not apply, of course, to major sites, monuments or works of art, each of which generates a substantial bibliography by itself.

4) References in Russian (marked by an asterisk) have been kept to a minimum, i.e. to materials which have not been channelled through a Western language. Although their relative importance is decreasing, much important information is and will remain accessible only through publications in Russian and no student specializing in Sogdian studies can avoid learning this language (a most rewarding investment anyway).

The material is organized under the following headings:

1. General works on Sogdiana, books on the history and archaeology of Central Asia
2. Bibliographies
3. Sogdian language and literature (general)

4. Sogdian texts of direct historical relevance (editions and studies)
5. Toponymy, historical geography
6. Coins
7. Historiography of archaeological research
8. Architecture (general)
9. Visual arts (general)
10. Music
11. Archaeological sites
 - a. Samarkand
 - b. Middle Zeravshan valley (including the nomadic cemeteries)
 - c. Bukhara and Paykend
 - d. Kashka-darya valley (southern Sogdiana)
 - e. Panjikent
 - f. Upper Zeravshan Valley
 - g. Ustrushana (northeast of Samarkand)
 - h. Chach (the Tashkent area)
 - i. Sogdian settlements in southern Kyrgyzstan
12. Studies on specific historical periods
13. The Sogdians in the international trade
14. Archeological and textual testimonies of Sogdians in China
15. Religions
 - a. Local (Sogdian form of Zoroastrianism)
 - b. Buddhism in Sogdiana
 - c. Christianity in Sogdiana and in the Sogdian colonies
 - d. Manicheism in Sogdiana and in the Sogdian colonies

1. General Works on Sogdiana, books on the history and archaeology of Central Asia

* Brykina, G.A., editor. *Sredniaia Aziia i Dal'nii Vostok v epokhu srednevekov'ia / Sredniaia Aziia v rannem srednevekov'e* [Central Asia and the Far East in the mediæval epoch / Central Asia in the early Middle Ages]. Moscow: "Nauka," 1999 (series Arkheologiya).

Harmatta, J., editor. *History of civilizations of Central Asia. Vol. II : The development of sedentary and nomadic civilizations: 700 B.C. to A.D. 259^o; Vol. III : The crossroads of civilizations : A.D. 250 to 750*, ed. B.A. Litvinsky. Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 1994 and 1996.

* Koshelenko, G.A., editor. *Drevneishie gosudarstva Kavkaza i Srednei Azii* [The most ancient states of the Caucasus and Central Asia]. Moscow: "Nauka," 1985 (series Arkheologiya SSSR)

Litvinskij, Boris A. *La civilisation de l'Asie centrale antique*. Rahden / Westf.: Leidorf, 1998 (Archäologie in Iran und Turan, Bd. 3).

The two volumes of the UNESCO *History of civilizations of Central Asia* which cover the period under examination are very unevenly reliable and were loosely coordinated. The chapters were distributed according to principles of geopolitical "balance" hardly compatible with good scholarship. This inconvenience, does not, however, much affect the chapters concerning Sogdiana, which were entrusted to competent archaeologists, albeit too many (Mukhamedjanov, Litvinsky, Negmatov, Zadneprovskiy, Zeimal, Marshak, Zhang Guang-da). The publication was long delayed, which results in excessive outdated. Litvinskij's handbook is solid, but also slightly outdated by the time of its publication. The same remark applies the two Russian volumes, which however recommend themselves (even to those who do not read Russian) by their plates combining on a homogeneous scale selections of material representative from all regions and sub-periods.

2. Bibliographies

Grenet, Frantz et collaborateurs: *L'Asie centrale préislamique. Bibliographie critique 1977-1986*. Téhéran-Paris: Institut Français de Recherche en Iran, 1988 (*Abstracta Iranica*, volume hors-série 3) [reprint of reviews published in *Abstracta Iranica* 1-10, with supplement and indexes; continued, mainly by É. de la Vaissière, in the subsequent volumes of *Abstracta Iranica* (11-23-), section "Est de l'Iran"].

"Bibliography," in B.A. Litvinskii & Carol Altman Bromberg, editors. "The archaeology and art of Central Asia. Studies from the former Soviet Union." *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*, 8 (1994 [1996]), 269-290.

3. Sogdian language and literature (general)

Gershevitch, Ilya. *A grammar of Manichean Sogdian*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1954 (reprinted 1961).

Gharib, B. *Sogdian dictionary*. Tehran: Farhang Publications, 1995.

Sims-Williams, Nicholas. "Sogdian." In R. Schmitt, ed., *Compendium Linguarum Iranicarum*. Wiesbaden, 1989, 173-192.

Tremblay, Xavier. *Pour une histoire de la Sérinde. Le manichéisme parmi les peuples et les religions d'Asie centrale d'après les sources primaires*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2001.

Sims-Williams provides an update for Gershevitch's Grammar which remains indispensable (not only for the Manichean variant of the Sogdian language). Yutaka Yoshida has announced *The Sogdian language*, a textbook which will be most useful. Tremblay is not easy reading, but his book (despite the limited scope of its title) offers the only existing exhaustive bibliography on every text which has come to us in every language once spoken in Central Asia.

4. Sogdian texts of direct historical relevance (editions and studies)

Grenet, Frantz & Sims-Williams, Nicholas. "The historical context of the Sogdian Ancient Letters." In *Transition periods in Iranian history. Actes du symposium de Fribourg-en-Brisgau* (22-24 mai 1985). Paris: Association pour l'Avancement des études iraniennes, 1987, 101-122 (*Studia Iranica - Cahier* 5).

Grenet, Frantz; Sims-Williams, Nicholas; la Vaissière, Étienne de. "The Sogdian Ancient Letter V." *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*, 12 (1998 [2001]), 91-104.

Grenet, Frantz & la Vaissière, Étienne de. "The last days of Panjikent." *Silk Road Art and Archaeology*, 8 (2002), 155-196.

Moriyasu, T. & Ochir, A., eds. *Provisional report of researches on historical sites and inscriptions in Mongolia from 1996 to 1998*. Osaka: The Society of Central Eurasian Studies, 1999.

Sims-Williams, Nicholas. *Sogdian and other Iranian inscriptions of the Upper Indus*. 2 vols. London: Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum, 1989-92.

----. "The Sogdian inscriptions of Ladakh." In K. Jettmar, ed., *Antiquities of Northern Pakistan. Reports and Studies*, vol. 2. Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1993, 151-163.

----. "The Iranian inscriptions of Shatial." *Indologica Taurinensia*, 23-24 (1997-98), 523-541.

----. "The Sogdian Ancient Letter II." In M.G. Schmidt und W. Bisang, ed., *Philologica et Linguistica. Historia, Pluralitas, Universitas. Festschrift für Helmut Humbach zum 80. Geburtstag am 4. Dezember 2001*. Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2001, 267-280.

Sims-Williams, Nicholas & Hamilton, James. *Documents turco-sogdiens du IXe-Xe siècle de Touen-houang*.

London: Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum, 1990.

Yakubovich, Ilya. "Mugh 1.I. revisited." *Studia Iranica*, 31 (2002), 231-253.

Yoshida, Yutaka. "Translation of the contract for the purchase of a slave girl found at Turfan and dated 639." Appendix to V. Hansen, review of de la Vaissière, Etienne, *Histoire des marchands sogdiens*, and Rong, Xinjiang, *Zhonggu Zhongguo yu wailai wenming. T'oung Pao* (forthcoming).

The two main collections of primary historical sources in Sogdian are:

a) *the five Ancient Letters* (written in 313-314 by Sogdian merchants in Kansu, discovered in 1907 by Sir Aurel Stein near Dunhuang, kept in the British Library);

b) *the Mugh documents* (the archive of Dewashtich, last king of Panjikent, hidden in 722 in a mountain castle on the Upper Zeravshan, discovered in 1932, kept in the Institute of Oriental Studies in Saint-Petersburg). For the latter the documents are accessible in facsimile (*Documents from Mt. Mugh*, Moscow: Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum, 1963) and in a complete Russian edition which retains most of its value: *Sogdiiskie dokumenty s Gory Mug. Chtenie, perevod, kommentarii* [Sogdian documents from Mount Mugh. Reading, translation, commentaries]. Moscow, 3 vols, 1962-63 (A.A. Freiman, V.A. Livshits, M.N. Bogoliubov, O.I. Smirnova). Several documents have been recently re-edited (see above Grenet & de la Vaissière, "The last days of Panjikent"; Yakubovich), others are in the process of re-edition.

For the *Ancient Letters* the pioneering edition by H. Reichelt (*Die soghdischen Handschriftenreste des Britischen Museums*, II: *Die nicht-buddhistischen Texte*, Heidelberg, 1931), accompanied with facsimiles, is obsolete and will eventually be replaced by a new edition by N. Sims-Williams, who has already published articles alone or with collaborators who have written the historical commentaries (see above). Sogdian epigraphy is covered by Moriyasu and Ochir (the Sogdian inscriptions commissioned by the first

Turkish empire) and by Sims-Williams (in particular for the Upper Indus inscriptions discovered since 1979; his publication also provides the main reference to date on Sogdian onomastics). For recently discovered documents of a day-to-day character concerning Sogdian communities in China (merchants, peasants, monks), see below, the section "Archaeological and textual testimonies of Sogdians in China" (de la Vaissière & Trombert, Sims-Williams). Taken all together, these written records in the Sogdian language provide no more than glimpses on specific places and periods. The bulk of information on Sogdiana itself comes from Chinese records from the sixth to eighth centuries (E. Chavannes, *Documents sur les Tou-kiue (Turcs) occidentaux*. Saint-Petersbourg, 1903) and from Arabic chronicles concerning the conquest (mainly *The History of al-Tabari*, 38 vols., Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987-97).

5. Toponymy, historical geography

Grenet, Frantz & Rapin, Claude. "Alexander, Ai Khanum, Termez: remarks on the spring campaign of 328." *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*, 12 (1998 [2001]), 79-89.

Lurje, Pavel B. "Arabosogdica: place-names in Transoxiana as written in Arabic script." *Manuscripta Orientalia*, 7/4 (2001), 22-29.

----. "The element -KAQ / -KAND in Transoxanian place-names." *Studia Iranica*, 32/2 (2003) (in press).

Tremblay, Xavier. "La toponymie de la Sogdiane et le traitement de *xθ et *fθ en iranien." *Studia Iranica*, 32/2 (2003) (in press).

The historical geography of metropolitan Sogdiana is for the most part the domain of philologists (the ultimate reference being W. Barthold, *Turkestan down to the Mongol invasion*. 3rd ed. London, 1968, chap. I: *Geographical survey of Transoxiana*). Archaeologists in Soviet Central Asia, and now in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, undertook various regional surveys, but they were (and still are) not in a position to back them with a proper apparatus of large-scale maps, air

photographs, and satellite photographs, which are not accessible to them or, when they are, cannot be published. Consequently, the results of these surveys often take the form of bare lists of sites which are not precisely located. At the moment the best map of the Sogdian principalities (but with a limited choice of sites) is in la Vaissière 2002 (see below, section "The Sogdians in the international trade"). An issue presently under discussion concerns where the exact border of the historical regions of Bactria and Sogdiana was in Antiquity. The present author's opinion, shared with Claude Rapin (see joint article quoted), but not with all specialists, is that the area called Sogdiana initially extended southward to the Oxus river (the Amudarya) and shrank subsequently, the limit being established on the Hisar and Baysun ranges only from the Kushan period (first to third centuries CE). Taken in this perspective, the Hellenistic temple of the Oxus excavated at Takht-i Sangin on the northern bank was originally on Sogdian territory. On these excavations, the main references in Western languages are now : Litvinskii, B.A. & Pichikian, I.R., "The Hellenistic architecture and art of the temple of the Oxus," *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*, 8 (1994 [1996]), 47-66; Litvinskij, Boris A. & Pichikjan, Igor R., *Takht-i Sangin, Der Oxus-Tempel*, Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 2002 (Archäologie in Iran und Turan, Bd. 4); Bernard, Paul, "Le temple du dieu Oxus à Takht-i Sangin en Bactriane: temple du feu ou pas?," *Studia Iranica*, 23 (1994), 81-121 (a critical assessment of some interpretations of the excavators).

6. Coins

Rtveladze, E.V. "Pre-Muslim coins of Chach." *Silk Road Art and Archaeology*, 5 (1997/98), 307-328.

* Smirnova, O.I. *Svodnyi katalog sogdiiskikh monet. Bronza*. [General catalogue of Sogdian coins. Bronze]. Moscow, 1981.

Zeimal, E.V. "The political history of Transoxiana." In E. Yarshater, ed., *Cambridge History of Iran*, III.1. Cambridge, 1983, 232-262, Pl. 19-24.

----. "The circulation of coins in Cen-

tral Asia during the early medieval period" (fifth to eighth centuries A.D.)." *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*, 8 (1994 [1996]), 245-267.

Zeimal's article in the *Cambridge History of Iran*, a translation of an article originally published in Russian, presents the best analysis (despite a bias for late dating) of the early stage of the coinage of Sogdiana, from the imitations of Greek coinage until the seventh century. His article in *BAI* follows up.

7. Historiography of archaeological research

Gorshenina, Svetlana. "Un précurseur de l'archéologie et de l'ethnologie françaises en Asie centrale: Joseph-Antoine Castagné (1875-1958)." *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions & Belles-lettres*, 1997, 255-272.

----. "Premiers pas des archéologues russes et français dans le Turkestan russe (1870-1890). Méthodes de recherche et destin des collections." *Cahiers du Monde russe*, 40/3 (1999), 365-384.

Gorshenina, Svetlana & Rapin, Claude. *De Kaboul à Samarcande. Les archéologues en Asie centrale*. Paris: Découvertes Gallimard, 2001.

8. Architecture (general)

Chmel'nizkij, Sergej. *Zwischen Kuschanen und Arabern. Die architektur Mittelasiens im V.-VIII. Jh.* Berlin: Hosemann & Goebel GmbH u. Co Verlag KG, 1989.

* Semenov, G.L. *Sogdiiskaia fortifikatsiia V-VIII vekov* [The Sogdian fortification in the Vth-VIIIth centuries]. Sankt-Peterburg, 1996.

Chmel'nizkij is good reference for the abundance and quality of the illustrations, but his interpretations of the functions of some individual monuments are controversial. Together with a first-class study of the fortifications Semenov provides very interesting analyses on the historical context of the period covered.

9. Visual arts (general)

Azarpay, Guitty. *Sogdian Painting. The pictorial epic in oriental art*. Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1981 (with contributions by A.M. Belenitskii, B.I. Marshak, and Mark J. Dresden).

Chuvin, Pierre, editor. *Les arts de l'Asie centrale*. Paris: Citadelles & Mazenod, 1999 (contributions by B. Marshak and F. Grenet on the arts of Sogdiana).

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10. Music

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- Rapin, Claude. "Fortifications hellénistiques de Samarcande (Samarkand-Afrasiab)". *Topoi*, 4/2 (1994), 547-565.
- Shishkina, G.V. "Ancient Samarkand: Capital of Soghd." *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*, 8 (1994 [1996]), 81-99.
- Shishkina gives a clear and complete summary of the state of knowledge on pre-Islamic Samarkand before the Franco-Uzbek archaeological mission started its work in 1989. Work is still progressing in the interpretation of the cycle of mural paintings known as the "Ambassadors' painting," executed c. 660 in a royal residence and discovered in 1965 (see Grenet, Kageyama, Marshak).
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- Abdullaev, Kazim. "Nomadism in Central Asia: the archaeological evidence (2nd-1st centuries B.C.)." In A. Invernizzi, ed., *In the land of the Gryphons*. Turin: Casa editrice Le Lettere, 1995, 151-161.
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- c. Bukhara and Paykend
- * Askarov A.A., editor. *Gorodishche Paikend* [The ancient town of Paykend] (contributors: A.R. Mukhamedzhanov, Sh.T. Adylov, D.K. Mirzaakhmedov, G.L. Semenov). Tashkent: "Fan," 1988.
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- Semenov, "Studien..." tackles also some questions not related to finds in Paykend, e.g. the repertory of tales in the painting of Panjikent.
- d. Kashka-darya valley (southern Sogdiana)
- Sulejmanov, R.X. "L'architecture monumentale d'Erkurgan. Complexes culturels et communautaires." *Histoire et cultes de l'Asie centrale préislamique*, ed. P. Bernard & F. Grenet. Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1991, 167-172. Pl. LXV-LXVIII.
- * — — *Drevnii Nakhshab. Problemy tsivilizatsii Uzbekistana VII v. do n.e. - VII v. n.e.* [Ancient Nakhshab. Problems of the civilization of Uzbekistan in the 7th c. BC - 7th c. AD]. Samarkand; Tashkent: "Fan," 2000.
- This last book, unfortunately difficult to obtain, gives an account of combined surveys and excavations of the hitherto little known south-western part of Sogdiana (the historical region of Nakhshab) which flourished mostly in the period between the first and the sixth century AD, before the main focus of Sogdian civilization shifted to the Zeravshan valley. There is still no specific study of the upper Kashka-darya valley (the Shahr-i Sabz region).
- e. Panjikent
- * Belenitskii, A. M.; Marshak, B. I.; Raspopova, V. I. Yearly reports on the Panjikent excavations in *Arkheologicheskie raboty v Tadzhikistane*, continued until the 1985 season, in issue 25 (published 1994). Followed by Marshak, B.I.; Raspopova, V. I.; Shkoda, V. G. "Kratkii otchet o rabotakh na gorodishche Pendzhikenta v 1986-1999 godakh [Short report on the works at the ancient site of Panjikent in 1986-1999]," in issue 27 (published 2000), 189-208 (with full bibliography of the materials found during these seasons). Then superseded by:
- * Marshak, B. I.; Raspopova, V. I.; Shkoda, V. G. *Otchet o raskopkakh gorodishcha drevnego Pendzhikenta v 1998 godu* [Report on the excavations at the site of ancient Panjikent in 1998; continued in 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002...]. Sankt-Peterburg: Gos. Ermitazh, 1999 (with English summaries).
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- * Raspopova, V.I. *Zhilishcha Pendzhikenta* [The dwellings of Panjikent]. Leningrad: "Nauka," 1990.
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the art of Sogdiana (see above, section "Visual arts [general]") is mostly based on material from Panjikent and gives the fullest subject analysis so far attempted. For separate publications of some paintings see also the articles by Marshak, Marshak & Raspopova, section "Religions".

f. Upper Zeravshan valley

* Iakubov, Iu. *Rannesrednevekovye sel'skie poseleniia gornogo Sogda* [The early medieval rural settlements in mountainous Soghd]. Dushanbe: "Donish," 1988.

g. Ustrushana (northeast of Samarkand)

* Negmatov, N.N. "Bozhestvennyi i demonicheskii panteony Ustrushany i ikh indoiranskii paralely [The divine and demoniac pantheons of Ustrushana and their Indo-Iranian parallels]." In V.M. Masson, ed., *Drevnie kul'tury Srednei Azii i Indii*. Leningrad: "Nauka," 1984, 146-164.

* Negmatov, N.N. & Mamadzhanova, S.M. "Bundzhikat - srednevekovaia stolitsa Ustrushany [Bundzhikat, the medieval capital of Ustrushana]." In G.A. Pugachenkova, ed., *Kul'tura srednego Vostoka. Gradostroitel'stvo i arkhitektura*. Tashkent, "Fan", 1989, 91-99.

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h. Chach (the Tashkent area)

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* Buriakov, Iu.F. (ed.). *Drevnii i srednevekovyi gorod vostochnogo Maverannakhra* [The ancient and medieval town in Eastern Maverannahr]. Tashkent: "Fan," 1990.

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* Filanovich, M.I. "Sistema rasseleniia i gradostroitel'nye formy tashkentskogo mikrooazisa v drevnosti i rannem srednevekov'e [Distribution of population and urbanistic forms in the Tashkent micro-oasis in the Antiquity and Middle Ages]." In G.A. Pugachenkova, ed., *Kul'tura srednego Vostoka. Gradostroitel'stvo i arkhitektura*. Tashkent, "Fan," 1989, 35-51.

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i. Sogdian settlements in southern Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan

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Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1996, 367-390.

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* Rtveladze, E.V. *Aleksandr Makedonskii v Baktrii i Sogdiane* [Alexander the Great in Bactria and Sogdiana]. Tashkent, 2002.

13. The Sogdians in the international trade

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Trombert, Eric. "La vigne et le vin en Chine. Misères et succès d'une tradition allogène." *Journal Asiatique*, 289 (2001), 285-327.

14. Archaeological and textual testimonies of Sogdians in China

China Archaeology and Art Digest, vol. IV, number 1: Zoroastrianism in China. Beijing, 2000.

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Mode, Markus. "Sogdian gods in exile. Some iconographic evidence from Khotan in the light of recently excavated material from Sogdiana." *Silk Road Art and Archaeology*, 2, 1991/92, 179-214.

Riboud, Pénélope. "Le cheval sans cavalier dans l'art funéraire sogdien en Chine: à la recherche des sources d'un thème composite." *Arts Asiatiques*, 58 (2003) (in press).

Marshak's article is now the main reference on the Sogdian funerary reliefs found in Northern China, as it gives the only systematic comparative study of the five main graves, together with excellent parallels with the art of metropolitan Sogdiana.

15. Religions

a) Local (Sogdian form of Zoroastrianism)

Berdimuradov, Amruddin & Samibaev, Masud. "Une nouvelle peinture murale dans le temple de Dzhartepa II" (avec notes additionnelles par F. Grenet & B. Marshak). *Studia Iranica*, 30 (2001), 45-66.

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----. "Vaishravana in Sogdiana. About the origins of Bishamon-ten." *Silk Road Art and Archaeology*, 4 (1995/96), 277-297.

----. "Mithra, dieu iranien: nouvelles données." *Topoi*, 11 (2003) (in press).

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----. "On the iconography of ossuaries from Biya-Naiman." *Silk Road Art and Archaeology*, 4 (1995/96), 299-321.

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Sims-Williams, Nicholas. "Mithra the Baga." In P. Bernard & F. Grenet, ed., *Histoire et cultes de l'Asie centrale préislamique*. Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1991, 177-186.

----. "Some reflections on Zoroastrianism in Sogdiana and Bactria." In D. Christian & C. Benjamin, ed., *Silk Road Studies, IV: Realms of the Silk Roads: Ancient and Modern*. Macquarie University. Turnhout: Brepols, 2000, 1-12.

Shkoda, V.G. "The Sogdian temple: structure and rituals." *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*, 10 (1996 [1998]), 195-206.

Most of the literature is about individual deities, paintings, and objects (the most informative of these being the ossuaries, terracotta receptacles used for keeping the bones preliminarily excarnated according to the Zoroastrian ritual and sometimes carrying images). A complete repertory of all known images of Sogdian gods, together with their possible identifications in the Zoroastrian and/or Hindu pantheons, is now much in need. Sims-Williams, "Some reflections..." provides a stimulating approach to the specificity of Sogdian (and Bactrian) Zoroastrianism compared with the "orthodox," i.e. Sasanian, one. For a criticism of some of Marshak's views on the Sogdian calendar see de Blois, François, "The Persian calendar," *Iran*, 34 (1996), 39-54, esp. 46-49.

b) Buddhism in Sogdiana

* Karev, Iu.V. "Statuetka Bodkhisattvy Avalokiteshvary iz Samarkanda [A Statuette of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara from Samarkand]." *Vestnik drevnei istorii*, 1998, 108-117 (with English summary).

Marshak, Boris and Raspopova, Valentina. "Buddha icon from Panjikent." *Silk Road Art and Archaeology*, 5 (1997/98), 297-305.

c) Christianity in Sogdiana and in the Sogdian colonies

Klein, Wassilios. *Das nestorianische Christentum an den Handelswegen durch Kyrgyzstan bis zum 14. Jh.* Turnhout: Brepols, 2000 (Silk Road Studies III).

Sims-Williams, Nicholas. "Christianity: iii. In central Asia and Chinese Turkestan. iv. Christian literature in Middle Iranian languages." *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, V/5 (1991), 530-532.

---. "Sogdian and Turkish Christians in the Turfan and Tun-huang manuscripts." In A. Cadonna, ed., *Turfan and Tun-huang. The texts. Encounter of civilizations on the Silk Route* (Orientalia Venetiana, IV). Firenze: Leo S. Olschki editore, 1992, 43-61.

d) Manicheism in Sogdiana and in the Sogdian colonies

Sundermann, Werner. "Iranian Manichaean Turfan texts concerning the Turfan region." In A. Cadonna, ed., *Turfan and Tun-huang. The texts. Encounter of civilizations on the Silk Route*. (Orientalia Venetiana, IV). Firenze: Leo S. Olschki editore, 1992, 63-84.

(see also Tremblay 2001).

About the Author

Frantz Grenet heads the program in Religions of the Ancient Iranian World in the Division of Religious Studies at the École pratique des hautes études/Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris. Since 1989 he has been director of the Mission archéologique franco-ouzbèke (MAFOUZ) in Samarkand (<http://www.archeo.ens.fr/WEBAFRAS/asiacentrale.html>), which is in charge of the ongoing excavations at Afrasiab and other important sites. Dr. Grenet is one of the most distinguished specialists on the

archaeology and history of religions in Central Asia. His publications include *Les pratiques funéraires dans l'Asie centrale sédentaire, de la conquête grecque à l'islamisation* (1984), *A History of Zoroastrianism*, vol. III: *Zoroastrianism under Macedonian and Roman Rule* (1991) (with Mary Boyce), and numerous important articles, many dealing with the Sogdians. He is a Corresponding Member of L'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. He may be contacted at: frantz.grenet@ens.fr.



The 2003 excavations at Bamiyan against the backdrop of the Northern cliff

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Bamiyan: Professor Tarzi's Survey and Excavation Archaeological Mission, 2003

Zemaryalai Tarzi

The Marc Bloch University, Strasbourg

The Bamiyan Valley is one of the sites most often referred to in studies regarding the history and archaeology of Central Asia. It figures especially in studies of the expansion of Buddhism, thanks to the region's strategic location between India and China. Bamiyan is best known for its two giant standing Buddha statues, carved into the rock of the great cliff dominating the north side of the peaceful valley. One statue was 55 meters high and the other 38 meters high. The destruction of these two colossal statues by the Taliban in 2001 was headline news in all the international media.

Ever since the signature of the Archaeological Convention between the French Republic and the Afghan kingdom in 1922, French archaeologists have expressed an interest in Bamiyan. In his first report on the archaeological remains of Afghanistan, Alfred Foucher, who had played a major role in drafting the convention, had underlined the importance of conducting archaeological studies in Bamiyan. Some time later a mission was dispatched under the direction of André Godard, accompanied by Joseph Hackin and Jean Carl. A second mission followed, this time under the direction of Joseph Hackin, accompanied by his wife and Jean Carl as his architect. The result of their efforts is in volumes 2 (1928) and 3 (1933) of the *Memoirs of the French Archaeological Delegation in Afghanistan (DAFA Memoirs)*. These two missions studied the colossal statues, their niches' murals and the architecture and décor of the grottos including their reliefs and murals. Only one excavation was opened in the collapsed Grotto G, where, in addition to very old décor, objects such as Greek-Buddhist moldings and wood statues

of the Sui dynasty were also found in a kind of storage pit.

Following World War II several archaeological studies were undertaken in Bamiyan. The most important ones, which provide a clear date for the foundation of Bamiyan and its remains, are those by Zemaryalai Tarzi, Takayasu Hugushi and Deborah Klimburg-Salter. During the 1970s, eager to preserve the grottos of this famous valley in the Hindukush, Afghan scholars were assisted by Indian experts from the Archaeological Survey of India. The major projects were completed during the 1970s under the direction and supervision of Directors of Archaeology and Preservation of Historical Monuments, Chaibai Mostamandy and Zemaryalai Tarzi.

A great deal was accomplished in these studies. One focus of the work was the architecture of the region. Marc Le Berre, then DAFA architect, studied the Hindukush fortifications in the Bamiyan area and its surroundings. The result of several years of surveying, *Pre-Islamic Monuments of the Central Hindukush*, was published in 1987 as a posthumous work in volume XXIX of the *DAFA Memoirs*. In 1965 Paul Bernard, who was also DAFA director, studied the Shahr-e Zohak (the Red City), situated to the east of the Bamiyan Valley. There he found medical manuscripts in Sanskrit dating from the fifth century C.E. Other research focused on the study of ceramics: Jean-Claude Gardin dated ceramics

from the Muslim period found during surveys in the ruins of the Ghol-Ghola city; Bertille Lyonnet and Jean-Claude Gardin studied the ceramics collected by Marc Le Berre in the ruins of the Hindukush fortifications. Until the excavations of 2002-2003, however, no one had attempted to study the free-standing Buddhist monuments and related monumental architecture.

In preparation for this, Zemaryalai Tarzi had undertaken several survey missions during his travels to verify the



The head of a Buddhist divinity excavated at Bamiyan in 2003

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Overview of the 2003 excavation at Bamiyan

testimony of the famous Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang, who had visited Bamiyan in 632. In a conference at the Guimet Museum in Paris Prof. Tarzi reported on his unfinished research and expressed confidence in the existence of the "Eastern" monastery where Xuanzang saw a reclining 1000-foot-long Buddha statue. The "Eastern" monastery is located to the southeast of the 38-meter standing Buddha statue, somewhere in the lower area of the eastern part of the great cliff and not far from the only Bamiyan stupa. Now a French citizen, Prof. Tarzi was named Director for the French Survey and Excavation Missions in Bamiyan, funded by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The work began in 2002 but was unfortunately brought to a halt by General Djawad.

In 2003 the team of three Afghans and three French went to Bamiyan to continue the work aborted in the previous year. One goal was better to understand the topography of the terrain, which had been substantially altered by cultivated, terraced fields. The excavation was difficult and dangerous because of the fragility of the layers of heterogeneous sediments, which were extremely damp from intensive irrigation of potato fields. Thus the surveys were done on a large scale, with the installation of a 5-meter grid. The depth of the excavation was generally about 3.5 meters but in some places as deep as 5.6 meters, such as in survey A9 where, however, even at that

depth the floor was not reached.

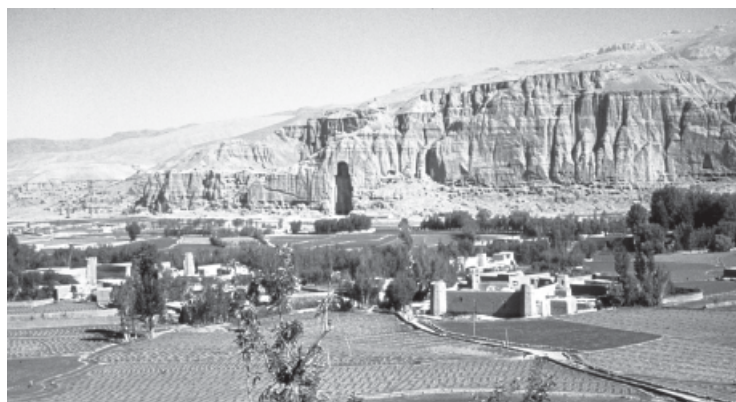
Three large sites were opened: Site A, composed of nine rectangles of 9 x 2.5 meters, along the north-south eastern border of the large (100 x 80 meter) square M; Site B, to the north, west and south the stupa and also part of the large square M; and Site E opened in the large square east of the 100-meter side. These three sites provided data on the geomorphology of the terrain, cycles of flooding, snow melt, the agricultural system, the initial establishment of the Buddhist site and its partial recovery during the Ghaznevid and Ghurid periods.

In the absence of coin discoveries or specific ceramic data, at present the initial establishment of the "Eastern" monastery site cannot be dated with

certitude, although it may be as early as the third century CE. Excavations in 2004 will examine the two-meter accumulation of soil which separates the layer of the initial period from that of the second. The stratigraphic similarity between Bamiyan, on one hand, and Tape Tope Kalan of Hadda and Lalma and Tape Sardar of Ghazni on the other, deserves careful study.

Bamiyan's second period is revealed most clearly around the site of the stupa. There one finds three rooms whose floors were tiled with cut limestone or schist. The final fire, probably initiated in the ninth century C.E. by the well-known Saffarid iconoclast, Yaqub b. Layth, left traces by transforming the limestone tiles into lime. Ceramic shards with relief from the Ghaznavid period (late tenth-eleventh centuries) were collected from around the base of the stupa. And glazed ceramics were also collected in an approximately two-meter thick layer, the oldest shards being from the Ghurid period (late twelfth century).

Finally during survey A9 Prof. Tarzi's team made the most remarkable discovery consisting in a substantial number of clay moldings which had fallen from the upper parts of a monument into a kind of well over an area 9 x 2 meters square and one meter thick. In this heap of fragments and clay statues seven heads or masks of the faces of Buddhist divinities were excavated with some difficulty due to the moist conditions and compression. This discovery confirms that the excavators have discovered the Bamiyan "Eastern" monastery visited by Xuanzang where the 1000-foot-long reclining Buddha statue may yet be found.



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The Bamiyan Valley (view to the north)

About the Author

Born in 1939 in Kabul, Professor Zemaryalai Tarzi completed his studies under the supervision of Professor Daniel Schlumberger, in the process obtaining three PhDs.

From 1973 to 1979, he was Director General of Archaeology and Preservation of Historical Monuments of Afghanistan. He later directed the excavations in Bamiyan and Hadda on the sites of Tape Shotor and Tape Tope Kalan. Exiled to France in 1979, he assumed the post of Professor of Eastern Archaeology at the Marc Bloch University of Strasbourg, France. He is currently Director for the French Archaeological Missions for the Surveys and Excavations of Bamiyan. Prof. Tarzi is the author of some sixty articles and books, he is also President for the Association for the Protection of Afghan Archaeology, Inc. based in San Rafael California.

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The 55-meter high standing Buddha at Bamiyan

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'Knowing the Road That Leads You Home': Family, Genealogy, and Migration in Post-Socialist Kazakhstan¹

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In 1990, soon after the beginning of "perestroika" (restructuring) in the former USSR and the rise of open public discontent with the Soviet regime and its colonial practices in non-Russian republics, the Kazakh *shezhyre* - a genealogy register of all Kazakh tribes and lineages - was published for the first time since the establishment of the communist regime in Kazakhstan.² Two versions of the *shezhyre*, similar to each other, compiled by Kazakh historians in the first decade of the 20th century, were published in 1990.³ They came out in Almaty in both languages, Kazakh and Russian, and not long after that, multiple *shezhyre* charts - schematic descriptions of genealogical structures drawn from these registers - became publicly available as well, distributed in Almaty and other cities in Kazakhstan through bookstores and newspaper kiosks. I recall experiencing a somewhat surprised and euphoric feeling when I first saw a *shezhyre* displayed in one of the Almaty kiosks. The *shezhyre*, it had seemed to me, was a testimony that was guarded from people by public officials, hidden for decades in closed stacks with limited access in the National Library or other restricted archives among other historical records. Disclosing such documents, it seemed to me, was an act confirming an ideological change, and a movement toward the rediscovery of the historical dignity of the Kazakh people.

Each of the two *shezhyre* versions is a hundred-page genealogical account of the Kazakh historic tribes, which focuses on the lineages that gave birth to Kazakh historical figures, political leaders, warriors, thinkers, and intel-

lectuals, as well as distinguished citizens of the time when the *shezhyre* was written. The *shezhyre* contains pedigree, details on kinship relations between tribes and lineages, myths of origins, and tribal demographics. Densely filled with detail, the *shezhyre* is hard to read, especially for readers unaccustomed to historical chronicles. In the summer of 1999, in the midst of my fieldwork, I was pleased to meet Akimbek-aga, a retired professor from an Almaty Veterinary School in his late sixties.⁴ He has been known among his family members and friends as a person with a keen interest in *shezhyre*, and they kindly referred me to him.

Akimbek-aga showed me his neat collection of books, brochures, and manuscripts, containing biographies and genealogy records that he kept in his Almaty apartment. He reached for the shelf and pulled out a book in a solid black cover, which he seemed to have prepared for our meeting. It was a *shezhyre* of the Argyn, including biographic data on a great succession of men, as well as some women, associated with this large Kazakh tribe in the Orta zhuz. Akimbek-aga explained that this *shezhyre* was of particular importance to him because it was his grandfather who compiled it before he died in the early 1950s. His cousin, a retired historian from The Kazakh Academy of Sciences in Almaty, finalized the manuscript and published it in 1996. Akimbek-aga turned the first pages of the book and immediately located the most distant ancestors of his lineage:

My *shezhyre* starts with Meiram. He comes from

Bekarys - one of the three sons of Alash, the ancestor of all Kazakhs. Meiram had four sons: Kuandyk, Suyundyk, Bugendyk, and Shugendyk. [...] My family comes from Suyundyk. He had four sons as well.

Akimbek-aga turned to the next page, and, using his finger to guide him through the text, continued: "The names of his sons are Toshkarak, Orazgeldy, Sygenshy and Karzhas. Manshyk and Mamyk (they all are Orazgeldy's sons); my direct ancestors go from Mamuk..." As he reached more recent ancestry, Akimbek-aga frequently elaborated on the contents of the book, which would set him off on tangents, telling stories and legends concerning his lineage, and then returning again to the book itself. After he was through his genealogy, Akimbek-aga posed a question, relating it to my initial inquiry, that is, what I, as a Kazakh woman, should look for in *shezhyre*. "If somebody asked you, *Kandi Kazaksyng*" ["which kind of Kazakh are you?"], what would you say?" After a short pause that he made to make sure that I was listening, he said:

The answer is in your ancestry. You should recount as many as seven generations - *zhety ata* - of your ancestors.⁵ You start with your father's name then you note your grandfather's name, and then the names of all other ancestors that you know. This is how you let people know about yourself,

your *ru* [lineage]; you pay respect to your ances try this way and show appreciation of your Kazakh origin shared by all [Kazakhs].

The tradition of shezhyre originated among Kazakh pastoralists to specify kinship links and ancestral paths in a single systematic manner. The shezhyre served the purpose of social structuring and lineage segmentation; thus, it was the major principle regulating community affairs and legal disputes. Moreover, as a powerful discursive representation, it embodied the lore that surrounded every social event. More recently, the shezhyre has become a topic often discussed within communities of rural elders who hold it as a cultural medium through which they express their values, construct and communicate their perceptions of social organization, and maintain local politics. Younger generations of Kazakh villagers, however, do not seem to be concerned with community activities requiring expertise in the shezhyre. Most of my informants, especially those with living parents, when I asked them whether they knew who were their lineage ancestors, excused themselves by referring me to their parents' records:

I do not know much about my genealogy, but my mother should have our pedigree chart...

or

I am Argyn... Well, my father told me the names in our *ru*... I just cannot remember... I was about forty when my father wanted to talk to me, his oldest daughter [child], about our *ru* for the first time....⁶

A young Kazakh woman, a university student in Almaty and one of those with more consistent shezhyre knowledge, commented:

We are all Naymans in our village. Nayman is a very large tribe that has many *ru*. I can't remember the *ru* that occurs in our village... I'm Kozhambet as of the seventh generation, and my *baska ru* [minimal lineage] is Dortoul. We are the only Dortoul family in the village....

We don't have relatives in the village.⁷

Young and middle-aged villagers who have moved to Almaty are quite similar in this regard to their urban counterparts; in the city, the shezhyre survives with the new senior enthusiasts like Akimbek-aga and his cousin who try to preserve it as body of knowledge that relates histories of dispersed Kazakh lineages to the national past.

Despite the relative lack of interest in the structure of Kazakh tribes and lineages that we find in Kazakh society, in general the shezhyre is commonly acknowledged as an unusually respectful cultural tradition and a powerful testimony to Kazakh identity. I was not surprised then to hear from a young Kazakh man, who had his *zhety ata* (names of seven generations of his ancestors) displayed as if it were a family photograph in his office at an international organization in Almaty, that "any Kazakh person, who has at least some degree of self-respect, should preserve the knowledge of his lineage ancestors." Such commitment to seeing the shezhyre as an ultimate source of moral rigor and identity prompted me to think of it as a "dominant symbol" among Kazakhs, which, similarly to the *mudyi* (milk) tree analyzed by Turner "refers to values that are regarded as ends in themselves" [1967, pp. 19-47]. This major characteristic of such a symbol, according to Turner, lays the basis for its multivocality - the complexity of meaning that indigenous actors, specialists and ordinary participants of the given cultural practice invest in it, and upon which anthropologists, who are as well involved in production of meaning in the culture they study, build up their interpretations and analyses [ibid.]. Following the perspective advanced in symbolic anthropology, the meaning(s) of a "dominant" symbol is "associated with human interests, purposes, ends, and means" [ibid., p. 20], "satisfying both existential and political ends"



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Yurt on an alpine meadow in the eastern Tianshan

[Cohen 1979, p. 102], and, therefore, tailored to specific situations. From this standpoint, relative lack of interest in shezhyre among younger Kazakhs does not preclude their responding to its appeal once they reach an older age when the shezhyre can serve them as a source of their authority in community affairs and help to handle the life crisis situation that occurs when someone becomes part of the shezhyre at a lineage cemetery. Furthermore, the meanings of the shezhyre and its relevance to society's needs and tastes shift across broader social and temporal realms. The intensity with which it draws boundaries between genealogically defined communities and reinforces community solidarity, provides a meaningful frame for linking families, generations, and communities; creates points of attachment to ancestral land, bridges rural and urban segments of the society; and supports other cultural practices, such as lineage segmentation, exogamy code, and patriarchy, which depend on the historical context in which the shezhyre is conveyed.

This contingency of cultural forms and their role in creating "the unity in experience" [Douglas 1966, p. 2] has been overlooked in research seeking causal-functional explanations of Kazakh identity. It has been argued that the tradition of shezhyre emerged within the Kazakh pastoral system as "a way of thinking, a way of interpreting ongoing processes through the prism of the genealogy of the individual or group" [Masanov 2002, p. 1], and, after sedentarization of Kazakh nomads in the 1930s, formed a "natural" constituency in their ethos as a nation [Masanov 2000; Karin and Chebotarev 2000]. Statements in which authors assert that genealogical thinking was transplanted unchanged from the past into the Kazakh present-day culture and social reality have followed this fairly consistent argument. For example, Khazanov believes that for a Kazakh "his parochial, regional, and/or kin-based tribal and clanal affiliations still have significant meaning and play an important role in his loyalties" [1995, pp. 124-125]. In his research, the shezhyre has figured as a "burden" of the pre-colonial past that has a particularly strong impact on rural society:

Kazakhs who migrated from their lands to other parts of the country, particularly those who settled in the multiethnic districts of Northern Kazakhstan, at present understand the clan structure less well than those who continue to live in their traditional territories. However, in the purely Kazakh districts even the children are well aware of their clanal affiliations. [ibid., p.125]

The problem with this approach is that, by following conventional wisdom of functional analysis, it fails to recognize that the shezhyre may only seem to represent some sort of "a long established pattern of values," which in turn "implies a rigid mental outlook or rigid social institutions," as Mary Douglas [1966, pp. 4-5] insisted in her critique of a materialist treatment of religion. In fact, the shezhyre is a symbolic form that communicates a more general view of the social order.⁸ For this reason, we cannot simply assume that social/ethnic processes in Kazakh so-

ciety form a "mirror image" of the ordering principles suggested in the shezhyre. Had they done so or had Kazakh society generated what Khazanov [1995, p. 125] calls "pure forms of tribalism" based on genealogical divisions, then (speaking in terms of my own research) we should expect to see native place associations formed by migrants (a common phenomenon in other developing countries) on the basis of their regions of origin. Yet, through extensive interviews carried out with recent Kazakh migrants who came to Almaty from different regions of Kazakhstan during my fieldwork in 1999, I found none.

In this essay, I explore the shezhyre in respect to its meaning in the context of rural to urban migration to post-socialist Almaty. Special attention is paid to how the idea of ancestral and family ties, a Kazakh cultural repertoire that places much emphasis on moral rigor, community spirit and solidarity, and family/kin group obligations, is involved in Kazakh migrants' lives. I intend to expand on this theme by drawing on an ethnographic case study. This study recounts a series of episodes from a history of a couple of recent Kazakh migrants, Madina and Zhanbolat (her husband), who arrived in Almaty a few years ago from a rural area bordering with Uzbekistan in southern Kazakhstan. Following Mary Douglas' analysis of religious symbolism, I argue that, in the given context, the shezhyre is a creative movement aimed at reducing anxiety on the part of older generation of villagers who use genealogical knowledge in an attempt to restore a "unity of experience" within their families and communities that was disrupted, from a rural point of view, by outmigration to the city.

It was a lovely autumn evening in mid-October 1999. The weather was fairly warm, although after sunset the air was infused with chills indicating that summer was gone. Madina was preparing dinner for her family, her husband and their two children, and her mother-in-law, who was visiting them in Almaty. She had already diced meat and vegetables in small cubes and was making pasta, vigorously manipulating the dough which came out of her wooden rolling pin as a large sheet, thin as paper. In the summer Madina used a spa-

cious summer kitchen in the yard that her husband built for her this year. A few days ago, she returned to their small indoor kitchen, separated from a living room by an improvised curtain. Every time when she had to reach for something, trying to avoid corners of compactly arranged cupboards, appliances, and boxes, she complained about the inconvenience of the size of her indoor kitchen.

In the living room, Ultugan-apa,⁹ Madina's mother-in-law, played with her granddaughter while trying to keep an eye on the TV. At one moment, she asked the girl: "*Men saghan kimmin?*" ["Who am I?"]. "*Siz menin ejemsiz*" ["You're my grandmother"], the girl replied, giving Ultugan-apa a big smile. Their relaxed interaction was interrupted when the other child, an older, energetic boy about to turn five, decided to run to the kitchen demanding his mother's attention. Ultugan-apa wanted the boy to come back so he would not distract his mother from cooking. Trying to manage the two children at the same time, she pointed her finger at the boy while asking the girl: "*Myna bala kim bolady saghan?*" ["Who is this boy?"]. "Arsen," she said moving towards her brother. Ignoring his sister, the boy ran to a window in the living room, trying to see if his *ekeji* [father], was coming home from work. "*Arsen mening agham...*" ["Arsen is my older brother"], the girl added. "Have you heard what she just said?" Ultugan-apa asked the boy, now afraid that he would get hurt if the window suddenly opened. He did not respond; instead, he ran across the living room to the television and increased the volume. "Hey, Arsen!" his grandmother could not resist yelling at him. Not quite scared, the boy nevertheless decided to seek sanctuary with his mother, asking her for a treat immediately as he reached for her skirt. She objected to his request, arguing that dinner was coming soon. He firmly held his mother's skirt and kept insisting when the door opened and his father entered the living room.

As he heard him coming, the boy released his mother's skirt and immediately ran towards him. Zhanbolat, his father, lifted his son over his head: "How are you, Arsen?" He let the boy down on the floor, and, at the same

moment, Ultugan-apa gently presented the girl to him since she was going to seclude herself in their bedroom to do Namaz (a Muslim evening prayer). Madina came out of the kitchen to greet her husband too. Briefly hugging him, she announced that the dinner was almost ready. As everyone sat at the table, Ultugan-apa took the little girl from her *kelin's* [daughter-in-law's] lap, placing her on her own. Madina mildly objected but her mother-in-law [*ene*] insisted, as she wanted Madina to enjoy her meal while she would feed the girl. After dinner, noticing that Madina was about to put some leftover food in the garbage, the older woman commented that it was sinful to waste food. Madina seemed to have appreciated the comment, as she agreed that throwing food away was a bad urban habit that she did not intend to acquire. The manner in which the two women interacted displayed nothing but concern, mutual respect, and warm feelings.

Madina came out of the kitchen carrying a food plate. She was going to see Zoya Il'inishna, an elderly Russian woman in her eighties, with whom they shared the house. Madina did not recall seeing their landlady on that day and wanted to make sure that she was all right. She was well, Madina gladly reported when she returned; she simply decided to stay inside, trying to adjust to the colder weather. As soon as his mother was back, Arsen followed her to the kitchen, asking for chewing gum, but she told him to wait and his grandmother shepherded the boy to the living room.

"Tell me [the names of] your 'seven fathers' [*zhety ata*]," Ultugan-apa asked the boy who was not pleased with his mother, "and you will get the thing." The boy climbed up the chair and, standing still on it, started recounting his genealogy, which was quite a performance: "*Mening zheti atam* [my 'seven fathers' are]..." He paused, trying to focus, and proceeded: "*Mening dey atam* [my 'big fathers' are] *Amangeldy, Zholdybay, ... hmm... Orazgeldy, Orynbasar...*" The boy spoke seriously and loudly, exclaiming each word. His grandmother nodded in approval with every name, encouraging the boy to continue. "*Mening atam Sapar, mening eken Zhanbolat, Arsen mening aghan!* [My grandfather

is Sapar, my father is Zhanbolat, and my name is Arsen!]" When the boy finished, his grandmother and his father, who had just come back from the yard where he had a cigarette, applauded him, praising his talents, which made him feel shy. Arsen hid behind his mother's skirt when she entered the room holding a plastic bag with candies. She offered him a candy but he refused, expecting a gum. "What's so good about gum? Candy is better!" she tried to tease her son. "You can swallow the gum... Anybody want a candy? ...*Apa* [mother], would you like a candy? ... Tea is going to be ready in a minute." Madina then turned to her son: "All right, let me get you a gum if you want it so much."

Madina's family comes from the Dzhetyysay village, formerly a *sovkhos* [state farm] center in southern Kazakhstan near Shymkent, the largest town in the region. This village was re-built during the Soviet period on the basis of an old Kazakh settlement. Vineyards have become its major agricultural business, serving as the basis for a newly constructed winemaking factory. Road maintenance, transportation, and garage services were part of the village infrastructure in the 1970s, along with a clinic and a professional school. Madina's father was a car mechanic, and her mother worked at a local clinic as an accountant. Madina was a middle child, having a younger brother and an older sister, Enzhu, who went to study nursing in Shymkent after she finished school. Enzhu married in Shymkent, and she and her husband relocated to Almaty where her husband was hired at a construction firm at the invitation of his ex-classmate who had arrived there earlier. Zhanbolat, Madina's husband, was born in Zhan Tobe, a smaller village populated by less than a hundred families in southern Kazakhstan. It is located near a district center named after a Kazakh poet, Abay, which is the largest settlement in the area. Zhanbolat was the fourth child in the family of his parents born after their two daughters and one son. Both his parents worked in the cotton industry, which was a major branch of their village economy. When Zhanbolat returned from military service in 1990, he replaced his father by taking up his job as a water-truck operator. By that

time, both his sisters were married, living with their husbands in neighboring villages, and so was his brother who stayed with his wife and children in a house that their father built for his family in Zhan Tobe. Zhanbolat and Madina met while she was visiting her distant cousin in his village. They were both twenty-one at that time, and, when Zhanbolat's parents became aware of his interest in her, they encouraged him to marry, driven by the desire to see their youngest son settled down (Zhanbolat was a late child; he was born in 1971 when his mother was forty-one years old). They married in the summer of 1992 and stayed with Zhanbolat at his parents' house where they had their first baby boy.

By the time of their marriage, which coincided with the collapse of the Soviet economy, life in Zhan Tobe had become more difficult. Zhanbolat and his parents maintained a tobacco field like many other families in the village. Zhanbolat marketed their harvest in rural Russia where people liked to roll tobacco leaves into cigarettes. In order to increase their income, his parents involved everyone in the family in working the field, including Madina, who had to leave her baby with her husband's young cousins. One day in August 1993, a fourteen-year-old girl was looking after the baby. Having trouble pacifying the baby, she gave him a small piece of cucumber, assuming that it was an appropriate food for him. The baby swallowed the cucumber, which made him terribly sick, but the girl was afraid to tell anyone about what she had done, hoping that it would pass. Late at night, they rushed to see a village doctor, who refused to see the baby at that hour. They drove to the hospital in the district center, which took another three hours, but it was too late to help their baby.

Madina and Zhanbolat were devastated. Enzhu, Madina's older sister immediately came to the village when she received the terrible news about her little sister's baby, and so did their parents, who came to support their daughter as well. Surrounded by her family, Madina secretly shared her thoughts: she blamed her in-laws who wanted her to work in the field. Had she looked after her baby herself, he would have been alive. Agreeing with

Madina, Enzhu wanted to help her sister to recover from her grief and invited her to Almaty. Zhanbolat was not aware of the discussion; however, he hoped that his wife's visit to Almaty would do her good. The only person who was not happy about this decision was Ultugan-apa, Zhanbolat's mother. She was not sure about her daughter-in-law separating from her husband and his family and told her husband and her son. Zhanbolat could not join his wife at that moment, as he wanted to join a team of his village fellows going to a marketplace in Russia. In this critical situation, Madina's parents intervened, insisting that Madina needed this trip to the city. When Zhanbolat came back from Russia, Madina was still in Almaty. He was sad about the loss of their baby, for which he blamed the local doctor and the entire healthcare system that he felt had let it happen. Later, Zhanbolat admitted that he increasingly "hated everything about life in the village." Not long after he returned from Russia, he went to Almaty in November 1993. His parents believed that he wanted to bring his wife home. However, he intended to join her, planning to spend the winter in the city.

While Zhanbolat searched for work, they stayed with Enzhu and her family. Madina suggested that Zhanbolat talk to her sister's husband, but her husband seemed to be unexcited about a construction business in which his *bazha* was involved. He met his friend from the military, a young Kazakh man from the country who worked at a bazaar and invited Zhanbolat to join their group of sellers. Zhanbolat had suitable skills that he had gained at a Russian marketplace, which helped, but, in contrast to his previous experience in retail as an agricultural retailer, in Almaty, Zhanbolat felt like a *commersant*. They marketed textile and wool products imported from India supplied by an urban relative. His job at the bazaar, Zhanbolat thought, was much better than the one that his *bazha* could help him with at the construction firm. Soon, Zhanbolat and Madina rented an apartment in Almaty and obtained residence permits.

In the meantime, Zhanbolat's parents expected them to return to the village. They were upset about their prolonged

stay in Almaty, blaming Madina, who they thought had convinced their son to stay away from home against his will. When Zhanbolat telephoned home, his mother tried to interfere, arguing that he let his wife have the upper hand. Zhanbolat had a good time in Almaty, meeting new people and making friends, but he preferred not to argue with his mother and tried to ignore what she said. In the early spring of 1994, he thought that they would return to the village, when Madina announced that she was pregnant. This news provoked Zhanbolat to abandon his idea of going back home: they had lost one baby there, and he could not let it happen again. Arsen was born in Almaty in November 1994, which was almost a year after Zhanbolat came to the bazaar. He appreciated his job; however, by that time, he became aware of the risks associated with the bazaar:

Work at the bazaar gave me good money, but it was a dangerous place. As sellers, we had to maneuver between policemen and groups of crooks [*raketchikov*]. Each group, trying to squeeze cash from us, insisted that they would "protect" us from other groups. We simply could not afford their "protection," as there were too many groups.

Zhanbolat was also confused about why there was not much solidarity among Kazakhs in Almaty and believed that it was disgraceful for Kazakhs to oppose each other. He commented:

You know, one thing I could never understand: when I was in the army (I served in Minsk [Byelorussia]), there were quite a few Kazakh guys, and we always stayed together. If one of us was in trouble, we all mobilized. [The situation] in Almaty is different. For example, at the bazaar, Kazakh guys confront each other arguing about money. This does not make Kazakhs look good in front of Russians who, perhaps, think that Kazakhs are like that, [i.e.,] have no unity.

In 1995, their group disintegrated after getting into serious trouble with some bazaar crooks. Zhanbolat hung around the bazaar for another year, doing different jobs here and there that gave him some income and much less moral satisfaction. He was still determined to become a *commersant* again. As he said in 1999: "commerce was the only thing that I wanted to do." In 1997, while Madina was expecting another baby, Zhanbolat had to abandon his plans and decided to find a job elsewhere. Short of money, they wanted to find an apartment with a lower rent.

Madina insisted that Zhanbolat should talk about a job with his *bazha* who had promised her that he would hire her husband. To her disappointment, Zhanbolat refused, trying to find his own way in the city. He believed that his *bazha* did not care about them and his promises were empty. One day, Zhanbolat's friend referred him to a coal distribution company in Almaty, which was hiring truck drivers. He finally had a job. Every morning, Zhanbolat had to load his truck with a portion of coal (two to three tons), deliver it to a customer and promptly come back to the station for another portion. In December 1998, his job took him to a small neighborhood behind the Kazakh Drama Theatre comprised of individual dwellings. As he found his customer's house, Zhanbolat impatiently signaled with the horn. He was about to leave, assuming that nobody was home, when he saw an elderly Russian woman appear on the porch. Zhanbolat was going to dump his load right on the street, as he was supposed to, when the woman asked him kindly to unload it in the yard. Zhanbolat reluctantly agreed.

Zhanbolat thought about this woman on the way back to the station, wondering about her family and children and why she had no one to help her. He remembered other elderly women, mostly Russian he thought, whom he saw sitting at sidewalks selling newspapers and tobacco or begging for cash. Zhanbolat decided that this happens because it is normal for Russians to abandon their elderly parents, as opposed to Kazakhs who have more concern about their parents. Zhanbolat had an image of his own mother whom he had left in the village. This was not

right, he thought, and suddenly felt guilty. He also felt angry with his wife, realizing she was responsible for their decision to settle down in the city. He blamed himself for not listening to his mother, who now seemed right in asking him to return home. Angry and confused, Zhanbolat decided to go for a drink with his friends. He also decided not to inform his wife that the elderly Russian woman, to whom he brought the coal, was looking for tenants in exchange for a little cash and household help. They did not need a new apartment, he thought, as he intended to go back to the village with his family.

That night, because it was not the first time that Zhanbolat returned home in a drunken state, Madina was more upset with her husband than usual. She refused to serve him dinner and raised her voice when he protested against such treatment. Zhanbolat barked that Madina had transformed into one of those Russian women who have no respect for their husbands. She disagreed, yelling that it was him, instead, who had become Russian--"Look at your drunk face! What kind of a Kazakh are you when you drink vodka every night!" Angry and frustrated, refusing to accept his situation with alcohol, Zhanbolat hit Madina across the face. Outraged with her husband's violent behavior, Madina left their home and headed to her sister's house. Overwhelmed with what had happened, she did not notice the freezing cold weather on that winter night. The next day her daughter had a severe fever. The poor girl was diagnosed with pneumonia and the doctors suggested she should stay in the hospital with her mother. After a few days, Madina's *zhizde*, as she called her older sister's husband, went to see his *bazha*. Zhanbolat was drunk. The news about his daughter's illness helped Zhanbolat to sober up. He remembered how their first baby died and was afraid that the same thing could happen to his daughter. Zhanbolat took it as a wake-up call and reconsidered his approach to his family:

They need me. And for me, my life has no meaning without my family. I just did not realize what my family means to me. I was unhappy because I could not find the right job for myself. I wanted to work in

commerce but I was thinking only about myself. I did not think of my family, all I wanted was to be successful and have cash. It was selfish, as I did not think about my family and my children. They needed me to be more caring and supportive.

They went to see Zoya Il'inishna, the elderly woman who was looking for tenants, and soon after they moved into her house. Zhanbolat fixed the roof and the gate. This was an old house with a yard and a garden. It was built before centralized heating and a sewer system were established in Almaty and it had no access to any of these infrastructural advantages. Madina looked after their landlord when she was sick and tried to make sure that it was warm in her rooms and that she had food. Appreciating her tenants' concern and their kind contribution to the household, the woman stopped charging them rent.

Eventually, Madina found a job at a restaurant specializing in Kazakh traditional cuisine. She joined a team of women making traditional Kazakh pasta. Zhanbolat used to come by the restaurant when she finished work at midnight. One night he was waiting for her when he saw an older Uzbek man who had come to see someone as well and asked Zhanbolat for a cigarette. The Uzbek man recognized a southern accent in Zhanbolat's speech, and they engaged in a conversation. This man was a self-employed chef, specializing in *palau*¹⁰ that he cooked outdoors in a large iron cauldron [*kazan*]. People invited him for funeral luncheons, picnics and parties at their out-of-town cottages. He had a sizable clientele among Almaty residents, including Kazakhs, Uzbeks, and Russian families. He planned to buy a car and was looking for a partner. A few days later, they finalized the deal. Zhanbolat and Madina finally acquired some degree of stability and, by the time I met them in 1999, they had managed to rebuild their lives in the city.

Madina served tea, pouring just a tiny bit in rounded Kazakh cups [*kese*], which was the manner in southern Kazakhstan. One could empty the cup in one sip, after which it was returned

to the hostess for a refill. In other parts of Kazakhstan, and especially in urban areas, it is different; so I asked Madina if she could pour more tea in my cup, in this way exposing my non-southern origin to Ultugan-apa, whom I saw for the first time that day. She asked me whether I was from Almaty or elsewhere, and about my parents, their names and origins. The conversation gradually moved to their own family affairs. Ultugan-apa had arrived in Almaty about three weeks ago. In the village, she had not been feeling well and Zhanbolat wanted her to visit a cardiologist in Almaty, which, according to Madina, was the major purpose of her visit. Ultugan-apa, however, said that she had come to observe an ancient Kazakh tradition, which is to welcome the spirits of their ancestors [*eruaktar*]¹¹ to their new home, mentioning a doctor's appointment only in passing. The cardiologist gave her a prescription, suggesting that she should make another appointment after she finished the treatment. But Ultugan-apa said that she could not stay away from home for that long. Her older son and his wife looked after the garden and the livestock that they shared, but she believed that they needed her back soon. A major reason why she intended to leave for the village, however, was her oldest daughter's son's circumcision ritual to be followed by a party [*sundet toi*] to which she was invited.

Her oldest daughter and family, including her husband and their three children, lived in a village fifty kilometers from Zhan Tobe. Her husband's father was a sovkhos director under socialism. These days he was retired but still actively engaged in local politics and had organized a peasant co-op specialized in raising tobacco in which his sons were involved as well. Their family was well-to-do: they had sponsored the construction of a house for a young couple when they married, purchased some furniture, and, recently, their son had purchased an imported car that he was going to drive to bring his mother-in-law to the party. The mother-in-law was somewhat jealous of their family. Because their father was well and able to provide his sons with jobs, they all stayed close to their parents' household. One of her sons went to Almaty to try his fortune; the other was at home, but he was not ready to assume

the responsibility over the household the way her husband had done. Ultugan-apa did not object to the fact that Zhanbolat and his wife decided to stay in Almaty:

Schooling and hospitals are better here, they say, and they have jobs. Nowadays nobody wants to work in the [agricultural] field. Only my little daughter still works in the cotton field for such little money, eh poor her... But she has no choice because her husband is an alcoholic and they have two children whom she has to feed.

She no longer tried to convince her son that he and his family should return to the village. Instead, she chose a different strategy that she thought would help her grandchildren who would grow up in the city to assert their link to their native village and the rest of the family despite their being physically distanced:

My husband did not pay attention to whether his sons knew their [ancestral] roots or not. He has his *zhety ata* [seven fathers' names] on a paper that his father wrote before he died. I kept it in a safe place, as I knew that it would be needed some day. I want my grandchildren to learn it by heart, especially Zhanbolat's children, because they moved out of our village where everyone knows each other.

I want them to know their roots, in which case people here would know that they are not [*kandyrgan duana* - i.e., a person with no roots like the dry tumbleweed] but have ancestry as all good Kazakhs. Here in Almaty, there are all kinds of people and things to do, and therefore it is easy to forget where you come from. I have been afraid that once my son and his wife moved here, they and their children would forget their way home. This is why I want my grandchildren to know their roots. To know who your ancestors are is the same as knowing the road that leads you home.

By using such a poetic thought rendering genealogy as a metaphorical connection with home, Ultugan-apa has expressed her concern about the unity and identity of her family in a way that eloquently explains her motivation to teach her grandson about his "seven fathers." To sum up on a broader note, this case study supports my earlier argument that by emphasizing one's relation to his or her ancestry, the shezhyre provided a meaningful frame for linking individuals, families, and generations. As in the case of my other informants whose stories I discussed elsewhere [Yessenova 2003], this elderly woman tried to shape her grandson's awareness of his ancestry. In all situations, the flow of knowledge, the names of lineage ancestors and the stories and legends describing their lives and virtues, indicates cultural transmission across generations. Thus, by playing an important role in raising grandchildren, Kazakh grandparents provide their offspring with a sense of generational continuity and shape their sense of the past.¹² This situation clearly resonates with accounts originating in different cultural settings [Epstein 1981; Paerregaard 1997; Ferguson 1999] in which grandparents become important attachment figures, acting in one way or another as major mediators across "an unbridgeable divide springing up between rural and urban kin" [Epstein 1981, p. 292].

My informants who arrived in Almaty from rural areas in the wake of post-socialism commonly acknowledged the shezhyre as an important aspect of Kazakh culture. At the same time, their testimonies also revealed the shallowness of their genealogical knowledge, the fact of which did not seem to bother any of them. The present case study, unfolding a dialogue between younger migrants and older members of their families across the rural/urban divide, suggests that my other informants' responses have not reflected all the processes associated with their migration, especially those emerging at the rural end. It is there, more specifically, within the space created through the flow of discourse between migrants' old and new homes, where thoughts and anticipations of attachment are generated. These projects that may or may not have an immediate impact on those who left for the city are initiated by

rural family members in response to their anxiety caused by outmigration.

In her classic study of religious rituals and rules of avoidance, Mary Douglas [1966, p. 3] demonstrates that some pollution ideas express "a general view of the social order" through their relation to social life. "In chasing dirt..., decorating," she argues, "we are not governed by anxiety to escape disease, but are positively re-ordering our environment, making it to conform to an idea" [ibid., p. 29]. This idea (or ideas) is grounded in concrete cultural norms, the observance of which supports expectations of integrity among members of given community. Therefore, as Douglas insists, "our pollution behavior is the reaction which condemns any object or idea," emerging in a community as a result of external pressures and is "likely to confuse or contradict cherished classifications" [ibid., p.36]. Quite similarly, in my view, Kazakh rural families employ the idea of common ancestry in dealing with their anxiety caused by the outmigration of their members. Genealogical knowledge in this case is a "metaphor of holiness" [ibid, p.54] that by reinforcing group boundaries expected to sustain continuity across the rural/urban divide plays out in the same way as the dietary rules and rules of avoidance in other societies.

About the Author

Saulesh Yessenova received her Ph.D. in Anthropology from McGill University in 2003. Currently, she is a post-doctoral fellow in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the University of British Columbia. Her research focuses on Central Asia where, over the past years, she carried her fieldwork as a doctoral student and as a fellow at the Center for the Study of Nationalism, Prague, and the University of Wisconsin's Global Collaborative Research Program. Now she is preparing for a new field trip to Kazakhstan's Caspian region where she works with local communities of herders. She may be reached on e-mail at: saulesh@interchange.ubc.ca.

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Notes

1. I am thankful for suggestions from Robbyn Seller (McGill University) and for useful comments on earlier drafts of this essay, the ethnographic material for which was collected as part of my doctoral research. The twelve-months of fieldwork (1999) for this research was supported by grants from the Research Support Scheme of the Open Society Support Foundation (grant No.: 98/1998), Social Sciences & Humanities Research Grants Subcommittee, and Pastoral and Agrarian Systems Equipe (FCAR). An Arthur Tagge McGill University Major Fellowship (1999-2000) and the Supplementary Global Grant Program of the Open Society University (2000-2002) funded a subsequent period of writing. I am grateful to these institutions for their support. I would like to express my warmest gratitude to my informants whose kind cooperation made my research project possible.

2. The term "*shezhyre*" was adopted in the Kazakh language after the Persian and Arabic word meaning "tree." Among the Kazakhs, it denoted specifically the oral tradition of genealogy reckoning that served the purpose of formation of political alliances, social structuring, and lineage segmentation, and was ultimately linked to the division of pasturelands and annual migration routes. The unified *shezhyre*, a written genealogical account(s) of all Kazakh tribes and lineages to which I refer here was compiled in the first two decades of the 20th century as a form of Kazakh political resistance. For an extended discussion of the *shezhyre* as an important historical narrative that effectively shaped the boundaries of Kazakh ethnicity, see Esenova (2002).

3. These are by Shakarim Kudayberdy-Uly (1990; [1991; 1911]) and Tynyshpaev Muhametzhan (1990 [1925]).

4. "*Aga*" is a Kazakh term and a respectful address to an older man that can be glossed in English as 'uncle' and may or may not be suggestive of a kinship relation.

5. In the past, each Kazakh lineage was composed of seven generations of the kindred stemming from the same

founding ancestor. When the lineage was expanding beyond seven generations, each set of the seventh generation's siblings was expected to form separate lineages. *Zhety ata*, glossed in English as "seven fathers," was the principle regulating exogamy expectations among Kazakhs.

6. The term "*ru*" in Kazakh language, in a literal sense, denotes "lineage." However, it is popularly used with reference to both lineage (minimal and expanded) and "tribe" (however, the proper term for the latter is "*taypa*"). Such inclusive use of the term *ru* has also been adopted in the contemporary literature on Kazakh social organization (see also Werner 1998, p. 610).

7. The term *Baska ru* stands for a minimal lineage, including seven generations of kindred stemming from the same ancestor, *zhety ata* [seven fathers].

8. In her classic work on pollution rituals Douglas demonstrated that the "contrary may be true." As she argues, "... some pollutions are used as analogies for expressing general view of the social order. For example, there are beliefs that each sex is a danger to the other through contact with sexual fluids. ... Such patterns of sexual danger can be seen to express symmetry or hierarchy. It is implausible [however] to interpret them as suggesting something about the actual relation of the sexes" [ibid., p. 3-4].

9. *Ultugan* is her first name. The suffix *-apa* indicates her advanced age as a grandmother.

10. *Palau* is an Uzbek traditional meal based on fried meat with carrot and rice.

11. "In their role as visitors in the home and agents of blessing, the Kazakh ancestors are called *aruaq*... or, more comprehensively, *ata-babalarding aruaq*, the spirits of the ancestors. [Arabic origin, Turkic plural form: *aruaqtar*]" [Privatsky 1998, p. 205]. "Kazakhs have ways of talking about their ancestors in genealogical terms... But when the ancestor-spirits are 'touched' with the blessing of shared food and holy words around the family table, Kazakhs do not use the Turkic terminology for the progenitors of the horde (*juz*) and clan (*ru*), nor the more recent lineage of the "seven grandfathers" (*zhety ata*). Instead it is the *aruaq*, the ancestor-spirits, characterized with an Arabic collective noun, who are united conceptually with the spirits of saints (*auliyening aruaq*) and prophets (*paygambarding aruaq*)" [ibid., p. 257]. ... "The *aruaq* are the primary actors in the Kazakh spirit-world..." [ibid., p. 205]. Accompanying serving and eating fried pastries with words, such as "*Aruaqqa tiye bersin*" (may it touch the spirit) in the dedication of the meal... to the memory of the ancestors... the practice that the family is trying to strengthen a relational bond with the ancestors, who are ritually passive" [ibid., p. 230].

12. Kazakh grandparents were always involved in the raising of their grandchildren. During the Soviet period, this tradition was, perhaps, reinforced because of the Soviet labor policy, according to which young mothers had to return to work after a short maternity leave. See Cynthia Ann Werner [1998, p. 600] for more information on this issue.



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Pik Pobedy (Mt. Tomur) in the Tianshan on the border between Kyrgyzstan and Xinjiang

Among the Kazakhs of Xinjiang

By Bob Jones

City College of San Francisco

Below me, a spectacular view of the western Tianshan and the glinting silver on the blue Issyk Kul. I was flying back to Urumqi from Chymkent and Almaty, after two weeks driving west on hard seats and mostly bumpy roads through the mountains of western China, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. I was terrifically excited about returning to Xinjiang and I anticipated the time I was to spend in the mountains. I was to embark on a week-long horse trek in this magnificent range, an exploration among the people who made these hills their home. The Tianshan, or Heavenly Mountains, stretch for fifteen hundred miles, from eastern Xinjiang near Barkol to the sandy wastes of Uzbekistan near Tashkent. It is the world's northernmost mountain range with 7000m-plus (22,960 ft.) peaks, the highest, Pik Pobedy (Mt. Tomur), on the Kyrgyz-Xinjiang border, reaching 24,400 ft. The eastern range is climaxed by grand Bogda Ola - the "Peak of God" - at 18,270 ft. in plain view from downtown Urumqi, the region's bustling capital. Bogda's white, cathedral-like peak stands shoulders above everything else. The range has been summer pasture for both Torgut Mongols and Kazaks for centuries; it is with these horse-riding and sheep-grazing nomads that I wish to visit.

I'm one day into my adventure. My young Kazakh guide Sailik has many friends here at Tianchi (Heavenly Lake) and seems to recognize everybody. Ambling about with Sailik I never seem to walk a straight line - too many people to greet. I end up sitting among the yurts of the Kazaks who summer near the lake. While the Kazaks here live in some of them, others are rented out to tourists. Tianchi has come down in the world. There has been rampant and uncontrolled development at the north end of the lake, and like all scenic ar-

reas in China where the hand of development has touched, the hand and touch are heavy. A cold mountain stream in the valley below the lake is marred by ugly concrete kiosks placed awkwardly in mid-stream. Waterfalls are defaced with construction litter. Swiss-style chalets of incongruous concrete and white tile mar the lower meadow area. An incomprehensible cable car system that, because of safety concerns, has never operated defaces the middle canyon from the entrance station to just below the lake.

The lake itself is still beautiful, however, and so I place my back to the development and look out toward the snow-covered peaks to the south. The lake is small, only two miles long, and narrow. Its eastern shore is a precipitous slope falling from a high, forested ridgeline. While the western shore is not flat, animal trails follow the shore-

line. The hillsides and ridges are dark green with firs and dotted with sun-drenched meadows. A golden eagle sails high above the lake. Next to it is a pile of yurt parts: three feet of felts, folded and stacked neatly on the wooden door; on top of that is the accorded laticework and the ceiling spokes, which fit into the *chanrach*, the circular hub that holds the entire structure together like myriad hands holding a ring aloft. It now sits like a crown on the top of the stack. The pile awaits loading onto the backs of cattle, to be transported high into the summer pastures.

I have no complaints about sleeping in a yurt here at Tianchi. It is warm and the sleeping quilts are more than adequate. It is large and roomy. I drank a great deal of beer with Sailik and two of his cousins last night. We drank by candlelight, Kazakh style, with each of



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A dismantled yurt ready for transport

us drinking in turn from the same bowl, refilling and passing it along. It is the way friends drink, he says. But Sailik is a clever guy. Maybe they had only one bowl. Though I slept well, my thighs are sore from riding a horse into the hills yesterday, balanced on a small, inadequately padded Kazakh saddle of wood. I fear the upcoming ride.

The plan was to ride up into the mountains with Sailik, searching out Kazakh encampments, and we would rely on their famed hospitality to stay the night. It is now almost dusk, and the day has been long. Two hours to the end of the lake, another two into a beautiful west-leading valley to meet with the party of Sailik's cousin, then another couple of hours leading the horses straight up to their summer encampment (*awil* in Kazakh). The yurt was put up in ninety minutes in the family's traditional spot overlooking a high alpine bowl, probably at about ten thousand feet. The mountains under my feet are rock and mottled green grass, cross-hatched here and there in patches where the grazing of sheep and goats is more noticeable. Only two other encampments are visible from here, far away across the bowl. The river creases the mountainside, and smaller watercourses are revealed by the upward advancing arrows of firs, a dark healthy green. Here and there are constellations of white sheep and goats set against the firmament of green meadows. It is all quite magnificent.

The ride up was comfortable, unlike that of the previous day. This saddle is broad and comfortable, the pace slow. Leaving the trash-covered north end of the lake behind us, we enter another, natural world. We ascend the trails and cross the streambeds surrounded by Kazakhs and their flocks. No tourists are here. Twice our horses splash across the deep cold river. My small Kazakh horse seems to take to me, or at least take advantage of me. I lead him up during the last climb, a steep ascent across young, green summer grass, and he rests his big head on my back and shoulder when we take the occasional break from the relentless climb. He has not yet had much exercise himself this year. He tries to lie down in the thick grass a few times, though Sailik says I must not allow him to do so. No kicks, no bites. He would turn around a few times to look at me

when I was riding, and a few times when I was leading he would nudge me along. My first long-term commitment to a horse seemed to be working out, though my impression of a sense of equine congeniality was a bit premature. Once at camp he would not let me near him.

We are encamped on a ridge top, or rather just below the ridgeline, on the north side. Only a few feet separate the magnificent views north and south. The weather over the Tianshan spreads out in all directions above us, but I can see below it to the south and northwest. To the south is a deep valley, and the tall massive bulk of Bogda Ola is covered with clouds. To the northwest stretches the Zungarian Plain. In the late afternoon sun, five large lakes lay glinting in the flat distance. It is a typical daytime mountain weather pattern: the morning is clear; in the afternoon, there is a buildup of thunderheads and a threat of thunderstorms. The sky clears again in the evening.

Sultan Sharip Kös is the 61-year-old patriarch of this family. His son is Adal, 30 years old. Adal's wife is Gulnur, 23, and they have a two-and-a-half-year old-son, Archen. Adal and Gulnur have been married three years. Aikun is Adal's older brother, 32 years old. Sultan Sharip Kös and Aikun have come up with Adal to help set up the summer camp. In a day or so all but Adal,



My Kazakh host Adal

Gulnur and Archen will head back down. Relatives often help out with this transhumant (i.e., vertical) migration to summer pastures, ensuring that the campsite is cleared and everything is set up quickly, helping to construct the yurt, and doing the initial herd count. Arriving at the encampment, Adal's brother and father have helped with the initial setup. Sultan Sharip, however, will leave the next day for the lake, and Aikun has already left to find a missing cow.

The Kös family has little, yet much. They seem content, but Adal and Gulnur's yurt is small by comparison to other Kazak yurts, and I was happy to record with my camera the five adults as they quickly assembled the structure from the great pile of parts on the ground. The yurt (*otaw* in Kazakh) is an extremely efficient and highly movable structure. The materi-



Gulnur and Archen in their yurt



Erecting the frame of the yurt



The completed yurt

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floor of a Kazakh yurt is divided into two basic sections, the entryway and a raised sleeping platform, which is earthen and covered with felts and rugs. The dirt entryway is where boots are taken off and left. At the center of the yurt is the iron stove and stovepipe that funnels the smoke out the top. On cold days it dispenses much heat. The yurt is also divided along gender lines. As one steps inside the yurt, to the door's left are hung all the horse paraphernalia: lariats, bridles, ropes, and other horse-related items. This is the men's domain. To the right are the cooking implements that belong to the camp's domestic commander, the wife. A wash-basin stands there and kitchen implements hang from the latticework. To the back wall are the trunks which hold clothing and other domestic items, and which are piled high with blankets and comforters. The back wall itself is hung with the large and exquisite embroidery on velvet which was part of the bride's dowry, and which is bestowed the place of pride in the yurt. The sleeping platform is divided along the same lines, with the right side belonging to the women and the other to the men.

als used for its construction are easily obtained. The latticework and spokes are of willow or poplar, and the felt blankets and straps are made from the wool of the sheep that is the mainstay of the Kazakh economy. The bright red latticework is of round-sectioned poles (the Mongol variant has a square section) and held together with metal connectors and cord. It is stretched out like an accordion into a circle that acts as the wall structure, while the low and colorfully painted wooden door and frame are the anchors to the latticework. The ceiling spokes are about eight feet long and curved at one end, each one tied to the top of the latticework, while the straight end is inserted into the *chanrach*. This curve makes the dome and the sidewalls higher, the yurt roomier. The skeleton, thus constructed, is covered with large waterproof felt blankets, and tied off with cords and flat woven or plaited straps. Rounding off the remaining essential parts of the yurt are the potbelly stove and stovepipe and the reed screens, which are placed between the outside felt and inside latticework.

The interior of the yurt is roomy. The

It is early morning, but I have already been up for hours. I slept well in the high mountain air, on the felt-matted sleeping platform with six other people. Everyone is up with the daylight, and, after milk tea and bread, the men are out tending to the livestock. There is no water source close by the camp; so every few days Adal and Gulnur must take the horses along the mountain path to the closest spring, quite a ways away, and fill the two ten-gallon plastic jugs they use in camp. Adal does not say much, but he is a very decisive person. He quit drinking years ago, quit smoking only the previous year. He takes care of the flocks of four closely related families, over 700 sheep and goats, plus horses and cattle. His family will be up here until October. The sheep and goats were sheared once in April; he does not need to worry about

that again until the fall. Approximately 450 of the animals are sheep raised for wool, about 100 for their meat, and 150 are goats. They have ten adult cows with five or six calves. Three horses round out the spread.

The sheep and goats must be counted each night, and Adal must account for them all. Naturally, the number of sheep and goats increases from day to day now, with the birth of lambs and kids. The animals are driven into an area just west of the yurt. Then, with people lining up across the field but leaving a wide opening, on a whistle and verbal command the animals begin to run through the opening. As they do, the couple counts them, Adal the sheep and Gulnur the goats. With only two people here during the rest of the summer, the counting must be quite a challenge. The clamor of the animals is constant, but with darkness, they all settle down quickly to a quiet sleep. The newborn lambs and kids, so fragile in the first day or two after birth, are brought into the warm yurt for the night. In their helplessness they are a very sweet addition to the group. Adal is up at daybreak before five a.m. to take the animals to the pastures, or *jaylaw*. Late in the afternoon he must again climb or descend to herd them back to the camp. The animals respond to verbal commands to move, and an occasional well-thrown and strategically placed rock encourages them in the right direction.

Adal took me along this day, up onto the ridge high above his camp. I search out a good view of Bogda Feng. There is a gentle, flower-strewn meadow above this pastureland, beautiful beyond words, green and lush, punctuated along the broad back of the ridge by rocky outcrops, colored with orange and yellow lichens. From near the top of this fairyland, I can look upon the vast, broad side of the Bodga Massif, the drifting clouds sometimes sparse and fleeting, accentuating the height of the 18,000-foot mountain. From where I stand, the main peak rises behind Akbulak, "White Headwaters," a lower, rocky handmaiden that sets off the awesome beauty of Bogda. A creek falls over a sheer rocky wall running across the empty valley, and the sound of the falling water carries clearly over the distance. There are horses grazing above me. A lone shepherd whistles to

his flock, somewhere hidden from my view. I am tempted to follow the summer routes along this magnificent valley, up beyond this idyllic place. The track below in the valley parallels the river, and for the past two days I have seen small caravans of Kazakh families, horses and cattle loaded down with all their summer needs - yurts, bedding, pots and pans - slowly making their way up to their family pastures. Often the sheep and goats are one or two days ahead of the family, herded by one or two family members.

It has been a few days, and I am having some stomach distress. I am not used to the plain Kazakh food and the somewhat unsanitary conditions of the camp. Before driving up to the lake, Sailik and I had stopped off at a local open-air market to purchase food for the pack trip. Besides the biscuits, fruit and cabbage, he also bought two kilos of fresh lamb. Plopped into a plastic bag, the meat hung from his saddle for almost three days before we cooked and consumed it. Aged, or rather, ripe. It is extremely difficult to keep clean under any conditions, given the huge numbers of animals and manure in the camp's immediate vicinity. It is a miracle that little Archen is not constantly sick. Kids that age constantly put fingers and other objects into their mouths, and he is no exception. His shoes are always sticky with cow dung. He is always running and constantly falling down. He wears split crotch pants, and, for a little boy reveling in the dirt, he probably has worms or other parasites. But he is a bright, healthy, cheerful and friendly little boy, who will reach up to grab my hand, who does not mind my holding him, who likes to play with his very loving father Adal and who misses his mother Gulnur when she is out of sight. He has already developed a relationship with the animals around him. He has a wonderful time commanding the cows - animals that are ten times his size, yet seem afraid of him. The staples of Kazakh meals are *nan* - the ubiquitous bread of Central Asian peoples - and *chaisz*, or milk tea: a concoction of brick tea, fresh cow's milk and salt; sour cheese; and short noodles, whittled from a ball of dough. *Kumiss* [*qimiz*], or fermented mare's milk, is popular during the summer months. The *nan* is unlike the round, flatbread of the Uyghurs and Uzbeks. It is a small, hard

loaf easily baked in camp, where there is no oven. It is nutritious, tasteless but palatable when dipped in tea. Because of its saltiness, the *chaisz* is thirst quenching, similar in effect to a sports drink. The brick tea is broken into smaller pieces and dumped into a large teakettle and boiled. The resulting tea is not too strong and delicious on its own. The preparer then measures out the right amount of salt into a bowl, pours tea into it, and then pours it all back into the kettle to mix and dissolve thoroughly. Bowls are placed on the felt platform, and fresh milk (first heated, then cooled) is ladled into each bowl, and tea is poured to mix them. The final product, with bits of cream and curd floating on the surface, is refreshing, and bowl after bowl is consumed, along with pieces of *nan* and *irimshiq*, hard, sour Kazakh cheese.

It is time to leave the Kös family and return to Heavenly Lake. Adal is already up and gone to take his sheep and goats out by the time I awoke. I have a real respect for him and his wife, with all the work they must do every day to raise their animals and little boy. During the day I spent with him up in the pastures, I saw him as a very independent and self-sufficient man, who understood well the mountains and weather, his animals and the solitary life of a nomadic family. The previous day, I had presented him with a pair of Russian-made binoculars that I had bought in the Urumqi bazaar. Certainly he would need them more than I. Their residence here for the summer and much of the autumn would be lonely enough.

Kazakhs today in China are in transition, and one day the future of this traditionally independent people will be determined. There are about a million and a half Kazakhs living in Xinjiang. The central government wants them to live in permanent villages and adopt a sedentary life. Many do, as the increasing numbers of Kazakh villages and towns at the foot of the Tianshan attest. There are two sides to this government policy. On the one hand, some would consider it a kind of cultural imperialism, forcing the traditionally horse-riding and nomadic Kazaks to live the way the agrarian and town-dwelling Han Chinese do, as farmers and merchants, and closer to the centers of administrative and political control.

They are encouraged to give up old ways. On the other hand, the government is also concerned about the standard of Kazakh living, and would prefer them to go to school, live closer to adequate medical care, and, in general, to raise their standard of living. But the transition to a sedentary lifestyle has been a perilous one for many formerly nomadic Kazakhs. Alcohol and drug abuse is common among young Kazakhs, and crime is all too frequent in the towns.

There are few economic opportunities for the Kazakh youths these days. The tourist trade at Heavenly Lake is dominated by Han Chinese, who run the hotels, shops and restaurants. Kazakhs (not known for their mercantile skills) are relegated to renting out their horses and yurts to tourists, and Kazakh children pose with lambs and ponies. Few Kazakhs go on to high school or college. Sailik is one of few Kazakhs I met in Xinjiang who had gone to college and graduated. As an educated Kazakh, he was troubled by the rivalry and chaos among the horse owners, each one jostling with the other in the rush to rent their horse to a tourist. Sailik had undertaken the cause of attempting to organize these horsemen and to bring some harmony and cooperation to this fledgling tourist industry. The traditional clan system seems to encourage dissension between rival families rather than cooperation. An old Bakhtiyari saying is relevant to the situation of the Kazakhs in China: "Me, my brother, and my cousin against the world; me and my brother against my cousin; me against my brother."

We are heading back down from the mountains. The vertical haul that took two hours the first day is accomplished in only 30 minutes in reverse and with the help of gravity. By the mid-afternoon, I am comfortably resting in the Kös family yurt above the north shore of the lake. They have done fairly well in catering to the tourist industry. The yurt is outfitted with a refrigerator, and there is a small stereo and television. Old Sultan Sharip is rather proud. Sailik poses with his uncle and cousins, and there is a wonderful closeness in this family. Sailik is the joker, and as we pose for some pictures, he teases Sultan Sharip about his fly being open. We all laugh heartily. My legs are fine. My horse, about as much in shape as I

was, is very glad for the rest. Back on my feet, I explore the nearby forest slopes. Now and again, riders come through leading their horses. I come across a few men butchering a sheep beneath a tree. And I sleep well that night. The next morning, before we take the van back to the city, Sailik and I head down to the creek to wash. Only after I have scrubbed my face with the clear water, do I notice the very clean sheep entrails draped over the shrubs and gently weaving back and forth in the flow of creek water nearby. But they do not faze Sailik, and his toilet is quickly done. We are soon on the road back to Urumqi.

About the Author

Bob Jones is a professional guide and Professor of Asian Studies at City College of San Francisco, where he has run the College's Summer Program in China since 1998. He specializes in the history and people of the Silk Road, and has lectured and led Silk Road expeditions for the Smithsonian Institution, the American Museum of Natural History, City College of San Francisco, and for Geographic Expeditions. He contributed to the Silk Road Foundation's "Travel the Silk Road" webpage (www.silkroadfoundation.org/toc/index.html). He is scheduled to lead a 17-day China-only Silk Road trip from May 4-20, 2004, for Crane House/The Asia Institute and the University of Louisville School of Arts and Sciences. From September 5-30, 2004, he will lead "The Silk Road Across Turugart Pass," a 26-day tour for Geographic Expeditions of San Francisco, which visits China, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. For information on both tours, contact Geographic Expeditions at 1-800-777-8183 or Bob Jones at silkroader@bellsouth.net.

Announcements

The Central Eurasian Studies Society (CESS) announces its Fifth Annual Conference, to be held October 14-17, 2004 at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, U.S.A.

CESS invites panel and paper proposals on topics relating to all aspects of humanities and social science scholarship on Central Eurasia. The deadline for submission of panel/paper proposals: APRIL 2, 2004. 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. Given the substantial interest in this conference, the program committee will be able to accept only a portion of the proposals submitted. The conference web pages for additional information are:

Main conference website:

http://cess.fas.harvard.edu/CESS_Conference.html

Registration:

http://cess.fas.harvard.edu/CESS_Conf-Reg.html

Program: (available in June 2004):

http://cess.fas.harvard.edu/CESS_Program.html

Full information about hosting and location at Indiana University:
<http://www.iub.edu/~cess2004>

CONFERENCE-RELATED CORRESPONDENCE SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO:

CESS 2004 Annual Conference
Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center (IAUNRC)
Indiana University
Goodbody Hall 324
Bloomington, IN 47405 U.S.A.
fax: +1 (812) 855-8667
tel.: +1 (812) 856-5263
e-mail: cess2004@indiana.edu

The Mongolia Society will hold its annual meeting in conjunction with the CESS conference. For more information: <http://www.indiana.edu/~mongsoc/>.

Current and upcoming exhibitions (as announced on the web sites of the hosting institutions):

Salvation: Images of the Buddhist Deity of Compassion

August 14, 2003–July 5, 2004

The **Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA)** celebrates the importance of the Buddhist deity Avalokiteshvara—also known as Guanyin, Kwanum, and Kannon—across Buddhist Asia. "Salvation: Images of the Buddhist Deity of Compassion" is on view in the Masterpiece in Focus gallery. Avalokiteshvara, the primary source of Buddhist salvation, was the subject of extraordinary works of devotional art in various forms across many cultures. Spanning 1,500 years, these works represent the finest creative achievements of India, Central Asia, China, Korea, Japan, and Tibet. For more information, visit the Museum's website at <http://www.lacma.org>.

Tibet: Treasures from the Roof of the World

October 12, 2003 - May 16 2004
The Bowers Museum of Cultural Art

2002 North Main Street
Santa Ana, CA 92706

Through the prism of its finest art, "Tibet: Treasures from the Roof of the World" offers Americans a rare glimpse into a great and mysterious world culture. Travelers trekked thousands of miles to see these treasured and priceless artifacts. Emperors presented them as gifts. Now, for the first time in the Western World, Americans will be able to see nearly 200 of these exquisitely created sacred objects, all with great cultural significance. The objects are from collections in Lhasa, including the Potala Palace and from the Tibet Museum.

For a preview: http://www.bowers.org/Tibet/exhibits_tibet.asp

Founded in 1936 as the Charles W. Bowers Memorial Museum and re-opened in 1992, the Bowers Museum of Cultural Art is one of Southern California's finest museums and Orange County's largest. International partnerships have been developed with the Palace Museum, Beijing, the British Museum, and many others.

Freer Gallery of Art / Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Smithsonian Institution

The galleries are located on the National Mall in Washington D.C., steps from the Smithsonian Metro stop. The Sackler Gallery is located at 1050 Independence Avenue, SW. The Freer Gallery of Art is located at Jefferson Drive at 12th Street, SW. As the national museum of Asian art for the United States, the Freer and Sackler (<http://www.asia.si.edu/>) contain some of the best collections in the world and also feature outstanding visiting exhibits. Note the following:

Fountains of Light: Islamic Metalwork from the Nuhad Es-Said Collection

Through February 29, 2004
Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

The Nuhad Es-Said collection, arguably the finest collection of Islamic metalwork in private hands, consists of twenty-seven inlaid brass, bronze, and steel objects dating from the tenth to the nineteenth century. "Fountains of Light: Islamic Metalwork from the Nuhad Es-Said Collection," the first exhibition of this superb group of objects in the United States, provides an in-depth view of the history of inlaid metalwork from its inception in Iran and present-day Afghanistan and Uzbekistan to its later development in Syria, Egypt, Iraq, and Anatolia (present-day Turkey).

**

Guardians of the Law: Chinese Luohan Paintings

December 2, 2003 - May 23, 2004
Freer Gallery of Art

Originating in India, the concept of "Luohan"—enlightened beings exempted by the great Buddha from the cycle of rebirth in order to act as guardians of the law—became a part of Buddhist cultic worship in China, where a small number of monks who were considered to have realized enlightenment, were selected to be luohans. The earliest Chinese representations of luohans can be traced to the 4th century, but it was not until after the 8th century that sinicized dragon-subduing, tiger-taming, or sea-crossing luohans evolved, forming a new group known as the Eighteen Luohans. Over time, depictions of luohans evolved from individualized to more formalized portraits. Arranged in chronological order, this exhibition presents 22, late 12th to 18th century works as well as an 8th century T'ang ewer and describes major trends in the evolution of luohan paintings as executed by both regional or court professionals and followers of literati traditions. The exhibition also includes a discussion of current scholarship about the Eighteen Luohans.

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Among the exhibits continuing indefinitely, note:

Buddhist Art

Freer Gallery of Art

This exhibition features painted scrolls, bronze and wood sculptures, and bronze ritual bells from Japan; stone carvings and sculptures from India; and Buddhist cave carvings and bronze statues from Imperial China all reflecting the influence Buddhism has had on these cultures.

For an online gallery guide: <http://www.asia.si.edu/exhibitions/online/buddhism/default.htm>

**

Luxury Arts of the Silk Road Empires

Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

The exhibit features examples of metalwork and ceramics from the collections of each museum which illustrate the effect of multicultural

interaction on the arts of the first millennium CE. Ornaments, bowls, cups, bottles, jars, mirrors, ewers, and ritual objects in gold, silver or silver and gilt, earthenware, or porcelain from Iran, China, Turkey, Syria, and Afghanistan are included.

For an online preview of the material: <http://www.asia.si.edu/exhibitions/online/luxuryarts/default.htm>

Note also the **online exhibition of Silk Road art:**

<http://www.asia.si.edu/exhibitions/online/silkroad/default.htm>

and

the gallery guide for **Arts of the Islamic World:**

<http://www.asia.si.edu/exhibitions/online/islamic/default.htm>

Selected Pottery Treasures from Xian

March 16 - June 10, 2004

The Miho Museum (Shiga Prefecture, Japan)

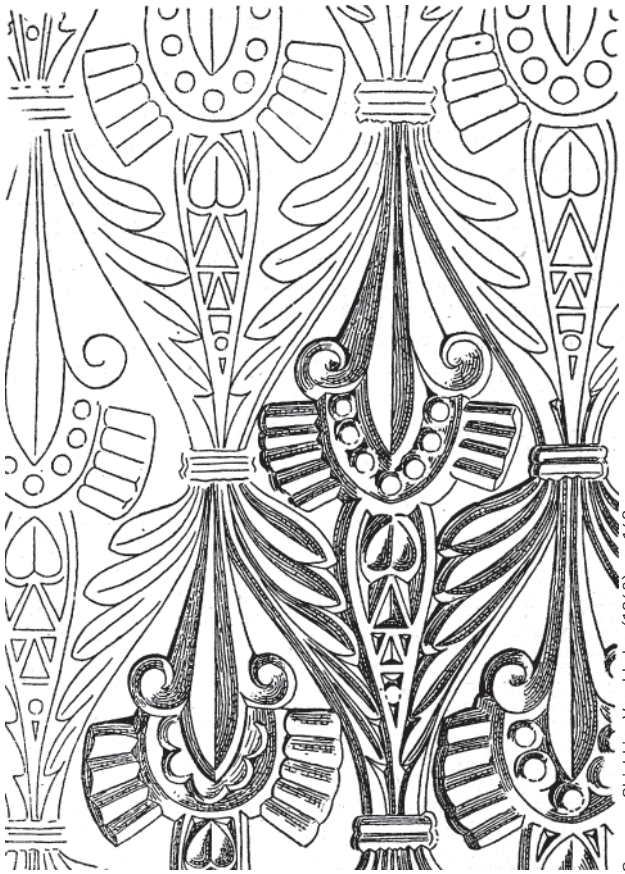
Chang'an (present-day Xian) was the capital of seven dynasties in China, beginning with the Han (206 B.C.–A.D. 220) and ending in the Tang (618–907) period. Come see the flowering of clay figurines from the pre-Han to Yüan (1271–1368) dynasties, through many masterworks—highlighting swift horses from the West that fascinated the ancient Chinese and beautiful women of the various dynasties—excavated from the vicinity of Xian.

Website: <http://www.miho.jp>

The Silk Road: Trade, Travel, War and Faith

23 April - 5 September 2004

The **British Library** (London) in association with the British Museum presents priceless and rarely seen Silk Road treasures from Aurel Stein's collection - considered one of the richest in the world - on display alongside key items from around the globe. The



Source: Shishkin, Varakhsha (1963), p. 169

Stucco ornamentation from Varakhsha

scholar, archaeologist and explorer Sir Aurel Stein fought rivals at the turn of the last century to be the first to uncover long-lost multicultural civilisations. The evidence had lain buried for up 2,000 years in tombs, tips and temples beneath the desert sands of eastern Central Asia. This exhibition brings together over 200 of Stein's seldom seen Central Asian manuscripts, paintings, objects and textiles, along with other fascinating artefacts from museums in China, Japan, Germany and France.

Take a journey eastwards from Samarkand via Dunhuang to Turfan through the Taklamakan and Gobi deserts. You will be immersed in the landscape, history and cultures of the Silk Road, as well as learning about the everyday lives of people living along the route. Their concerns are timeless to the human condition. Exhibits range from anti-war poetry, court documents to reclaim land from squatters and plague down to mousetraps, desert shoes and a letter apologising for getting drunk and behaving badly at a dinner party.

A valuable exhibition catalogue containing essays by Dr. Susan Whitfield (who is also the organizer of the exhibition) and other important specialists on the Silk Road will be available. For more information on the British Library and its collections:

<http://www.bl.uk>.

Dr. Whitfield is Director of the International Dunhuang Project, based at the British Library, which is a multi-year effort to make available on the Internet the documentation from the Inner Asian expeditions along the Silk Road, starting with the Stein materials in the British Library. To date, facsimiles of a great many of the documents have been posted along with Survey of India maps incorporating

the Stein expeditions' data, photographs taken by Stein, and some additional materials intended for educational use by younger audiences. The Project's web page is at:

<http://idp.bl.uk/>.

China: Dawn of a Golden Age (200–750 AD)

October 5, 2004–January 23, 2005
The **Metropolitan Museum of Art** (New York)

Spanning the centuries that witnessed the rise and fall of the Roman Empire and the early Middle Ages in the West, the Han (206 B.C.–A.D. 220) and Tang (618–907) dynasties mark the two great eras in early imperial China. During these periods of dynamic expansion, through political disunity and foreign invasion, Chinese civilization underwent a major transformation. This landmark exhibition will tell the story of Chinese art and culture during this formative period, focusing especially on cross-cultural interchange between East and West. Comprising some 300 objects in all, this will be one of the largest exhibitions ever to come out of China. While most of the objects are Chinese in origin, the exhibition will also present gold artifacts of the nomadic peoples from Mongolia, who occupied north China after the collapse of the Han dynasty, and luxury articles of glass and precious metals imported from Western and Central Asia during the 4th to 6th century. Works associated with the early spread of Buddhism in China will be displayed as well, including some of the most famous early Chinese Buddhist sculptures. The exhibition will conclude with a spectacular assemblage of works in every medium from the Tang period, interpreted as the culmination of several centuries of cultural exchange and adaptation resulting mass migrations and long-distance international trade. For information

Note: The URLs (internet addresses given in this newsletter contain no spaces where they break at the end of lines.



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View from Panjikent ruins over the Zeravshan Valley



Source: *Skul'ptura i zhivopis' drevnego Pendzhikenta* (1959), pl. VII (det.)

Drawing of mural from Panjikent, including famous image of harpist at left