

## CONTENTS

<i>TEXTS AND MANUSCRIPTS: DESCRIPTION AND RESEARCH .</i>	3
<b>Hiroshi Kumamoto.</b> Sino-Hvatanica Petersburgensia (Part I) . . . . .	3
<b>M. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya.</b> A Sanskrit Manuscript on Birch-Bark from Bairam-Ali. II. <i>Avadānas and Jātakas</i> (Part 2)	10
<b>A. Trotsevich.</b> A Brief Remark on Korean Books Research.	24
<b>M. Fomkin.</b> On the Literary Fate of Works by Sultan Veled .	27
<b>I. Zaytsev.</b> On the History of Book in the Jūchid Khānates .	33
 <i>PRESENTING THE COLLECTIONS .</i>	40
<b>E. Rezvan.</b> Oriental Manuscripts of Karl Fabergé. I: The Qurʾān	40
 <i>PRESENTING THE MANUSCRIPT .</i>	62
<b>O. Akimushkin.</b> A Rare Seventeenth-Century Hagiography of the Naqshbandiyya- Mujaddidiyya <i>Shaykhs</i> .	62
 <i>BOOK REVIEWS .</i>	68

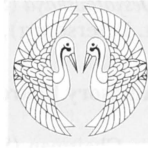
### Front cover:

“Portrait of a princess”, *Muraqqaʾ* X 3 from the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, Fabergé collection, fol. 31a, 9.5 × 16.5 cm. Moghūl school, mid-18th century, watercolour, gouache and gold on paper.

### Back cover:

Decorative composition from elements of the double frontispiece of a Qurʾānic manuscript, the same album, fol. 29a, dimensions within the outer border 18.0 × 21.0 cm. Presumably Tebriz, 1540s—1560s. Mounted in India, mid-18th century.

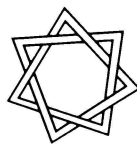
THESA PUBLISHERS  
IN CO-OPERATION WITH  
ST. PETERSBURG BRANCH  
OF THE INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL STUDIES  
RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES



# **Manuscripta Orientalia**

*International Journal for Oriental Manuscript Research*

Vol. 7 No. 1 March 2001



**THESA**  
**St. Petersburg**

esting parts of the folklore collections preserved in the archive. It is for bringing together pieces of folklore kept at the largest academic repositories of Eastern documents in Russia that we have to thank Dr. Kulganek, all the

more so for their presenting in such well-organised and informative form.

I. Petrosyan

**Ancient Buddhist Scrolls from Gandhāra. The British Library Kharoṣṭhī Fragments. Richard Salomon with contribution by Raymond Allchin and Mark Bernard. University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1999, 271 pp. + 34 pls. + Appendix.**

The book under review represents a unique feat. Richard Salomon was brave enough to undertake a detailed description of the British Library's entire collection of manuscripts and ceramic inscriptions in Kharoṣṭhī writing. He has taken into account all aspects: dating, place of discovery, means of preparing writing materials, palaeography, orthography, special features of language and style, content of identified works, general conclusions about the culture of Gandhāra, characteristics of the local Buddhist tradition, and novelties introduced by the materials under consideration into the history of Buddhism.

Since 1962, when John Brough released a separate volume of fragments from the *Dharmapāda* manuscript in Kharoṣṭhī script in Gāndhārī prakrit from manuscript collections in St. Petersburg and Paris, such complete and detailed studies have been lacking. In his own words, Salomon's book is merely the first volume of his study; the publication of the texts themselves with translation is anticipated in the near future.

The description of newly discovered birch-bark scrolls formed the basis for his first book, and the discovery itself served as the stimulus for writing it. It occurred that members of the Manuscript Section of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies were among the first to learn of these new manuscripts. In 1994, Mark Bernard, a member of the Preservation and Conservation Department, Oriental and India Office Collections of the British Library, worked in the repository of Eastern manuscripts at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies. It was he who told us of the difficult task of restoring birch-bark manuscripts in lamentable condition recently acquired by the British Library. Since a preliminary inspection showed that the new manuscripts were similar to already published fragments of the *Dharmapāda*, we decided that the middle part of this manuscript, which has still not come to light, had finally been found.

R. Salomon's study demonstrates that we were wrong. The British Library acquired yet another birch-bark manuscript, probably not linked to the first one. It consisted of 29 fragments. It remains unclear whether this is an entire volume in the form of scrolls or whether the scrolls existed independently. Salomon counted 21 original scrolls of individual fragments. The number of separate hands he identified also totals 21.

Since news of the discovery appeared, scholarly interest in the manuscript has grown rapidly. There is reason for this: the manuscript is from ancient Gandhāra and may be unique (debate continues over whether a manuscript of the

*Dharmapāda* discovered in Khotan was copied in India or Central Asia). Moreover, it is possible that the most ancient of Indian manuscripts has finally appeared. The speculation proved founded: Salomon gathered all possible proof that it was copied between the beginning of the first and second centuries A.D. The most important link in the chain of proof is the mention of historical figures active at the time of the manuscript's creation: *mahākṣatrapa* Jihonika and Āspavarmana. They can be identified as Indo-Scythian rulers of the early first century A.D., judging by their names known through legends on coins and inscriptions.

Salomon successfully integrated the new manuscript into Gandhāra Buddhism, analysing this in chapter 1: "The background: Gandhāra and Gandhāran Buddhism". The book's second chapter provides a detailed description of all Kharoṣṭhī writing materials held at the British Library. They are divided into two groups: birch-bark manuscripts which have only recently joined the collection, and inscriptions on whole ceramic vessels and fragments of inscriptions on ostraca.

The first part of the book — on the manuscript — is the most valuable. Salomon has done immense work, deciphering the manuscript and identifying the texts it contains. It is clear that we deal here with a collection, although not all of its parts have yet been identified.

Salomon notes the following groups of texts identified by their contents:

1) fragments of Hīnayāna *sūtras* with commentaries; they are not numerous (see section 2.2.1). The best preserved is the *Saṅgīti-sūtra* with an unknown commentary (fragment 15). Texts such as this *sūtra* as an important link in the formation of the *Abhidharma-piṭaka* and Buddhist philosophy as an independent branch of knowledge. Fragments 12—14 were identified as a text parallel to the *Aṅguttaranikāya*. Fragments 26 + 29 preserve excerpts from an unidentified *sūtra*.

2) Most numerous in the manuscript are stories which are called *avadāna* or *pūrvayoga* (lit. "past rebirths"). The principle for selecting *avadānas* by content is not clear. Plots that we well know in Sanskrit and Pāli literature are represented by independent versions; in Salomon's view, these are close to stories translated into Chinese as part of the Dharmaguptaka canon. Previously, exact information on the spread of this school in Gandhāra was lacking. Salomon's conclusions are undoubtedly new, but require additional research.

Especially important is the question of which type of collection we encounter here. In many ways, the new manuscript is close to a birch-bark manuscript from Bairam-Ali (Merv oasis, Turkmenia). It is written in Sanskrit, in Brāhmī script, evidently somewhat later (5—7 centuries A.D.). (Excerpts from this manuscript have been published by

*Manuscripta Orientalia* since 1999). The text of both manuscripts contains quotations from *sūtras*, commentaries on them, and a collection of *avadāna* stories. Both manuscripts present the stories in abbreviated form and with indications that the text should be told in full (*vistareṇa* — “in detail”, with various additional explanations). It seems that a summary of a story's contents — and in the Bairam-Ali manuscript we find sometimes only the names of the heroes — is necessary as a mnemonic device to recall well-known plots. In both manuscripts, quotations from *sūtras* are followed by assurances that the *sūtras* are reliable and authoritative. There are similarities in other sections that we will note later.

There are also several differences. The Bairam-Ali manuscript does not mention historical figures. As concerns the companions of the Buddha Śākyamuni — people who lived in his time — there are no discrepancies: the texts of both manuscripts repeatedly mention Ānanda and Ajñātakaṇḍīya, Ājivaka and Anāthapiṇḍika, telling also of their previous rebirths. The Gandhāra manuscripts lacks only *jātakas*, which make up nearly half of this section in the Bairam-Ali manuscript. There is one other important difference: the Bairam-Ali manuscript contains a selection of rules from the *Vinaya* concluded by a colophon. The colophon enumerates the contents of the Sarvāstivādins *Vinayaṭīkā*, which is in itself an important indication that a canon existed for this school. The Gandhāra manuscript also has a section that is absent in the Bairam-Ali manuscript: “Scholastic Treatises and Commentaries” (section 2.2.2., pp. 26—30).

One is tempted to conclude that these selections of excerpts from texts of various genres, apparently copied by monks for their own use as mnemonics, could also have been used for preaching when the monks set out for new territories outside of India. This type of literature evidently took shape in North-West India and in Gandhāra in the first half of the first millennium, the “golden age” of Buddhism during which the faith actively drew new adherents. Gandhāra appears for the first time in this light; the Bairam-Ali manuscript also contains a collection that is new to scholarship. We discuss the importance of these literary finds below.

3) The third type of work discovered in the Gandhāra manuscript is described in section 2.2.3 — “Verses Texts” (pp. 30—5). Salomon identifies three texts: a) *Anavatapta-gāthā* (“Songs of Lake Anavatapta”). The text has been preserved in part. It is well-known in two Sanskrit versions, a Pāli text, and a Chinese translation; b) part of a poem known in a Pāli version: *Khaggavisāṇa-sutta* (“Rhinoceros Horn *Sūtra*”). The Bairam-Ali manuscript contains a fragment of the Sanskrit version of this poem; c) finally, the Gandhāra manuscript contains verses from the concluding section of the *Dharmapāda* (p. 55).

Among the important questions Salomon touches on in his work is his attempt to link the initial spread of Buddhism in Central Asia with the Dharmaguptaka school and the language of Gandhāra (section 8.2.1, “Hypotheses on the Dharmaguptaka and Gandhāra”). He refers to works by A. Bareau “Les sectes Bouddhique du Petit Véhicule”, Saigon, 1955, pp. 16—9, 29—30, 34, and É. Lamotte “History of Indian Buddhism from the Origin to the Saka Era”, Louvain, 1988, pp. 529—32. The history of the Dharmaguptaka school within India is not clear. Salomon's claim that Buddhism of the Dharmaguptaka school was widespread in the state on the territory of Niya and Krorayna is unfounded. Among Kharoṣṭhī documents dis-

covered on this territory, there is only one Buddhist text, which treats violations of rules dictating monastic life in the local community. It is clear from the texts of the documents themselves that this was a somewhat peculiar brand of Buddhism: he was greatly influenced by local religious beliefs. The monks also played an active role in the economic life of this tiny state and could own property. The question is, of course, complex, as Buddhist texts in Kushan Brāhmī writing are not numerous in Central Asia; large numbers of Brāhmī manuscripts began to appear only in the fifth century A.D. Early translations of Buddhist texts into Chinese show that they were based not on Sanskrit, but on Prakrit texts. But which ones? Scholars reject the Pāli language as an answer. They could possibly have been in Gandhāri, as manuscript in Gandhāri could have been brought from North-West India or Gandhāra.

In this regard, certain doubts arise in connection to chapter VI — “Palaeographic and linguistic features of Gandhāra scrolls”, and especially section 6.1 on the Gandhāri language. Salomon holds that the *avadāna* texts are close to the colloquial Gandhāri spoken in the region. The style and scarcity of grammatical forms suggest that we deal here with tales intended to be spoken aloud (p. 140). But was Gandhāri as attested in manuscripts a spoken language at all? (See G. Fussman, “Gandhāri écrite, Gandhāri parlée”, in *Dialectes dans les littératures Indo-Aryennes* (Paris, 1989), pp. 440, 498—9). It is as difficult to answer this question as the question of whether Pāli was a spoken language. And if both language were in fact spoken, then who spoke them and which texts were read aloud? Speakers could only have been extremely educated monks, which means that both languages would have been “spoken” only by a small group of initiates. In other words, they were languages of the Buddhist elite. In the main, they were written, literary languages. Copyists of Gandhāri texts do not appear to have been paragons of literacy; hence the poverty of their language.

Kaniṣka introduced Kharoṣṭhī writing and the Gandhāri language as the state language on the territory of Bactria not because he felt this was the spoken language of the local populace, but because Kharoṣṭhī writing was the only model for drawing up documents that approximated Aramaic models, the documents that served as the basis for Kaniṣka.

Salomon's claim that the language of documents from Nīa and Krorayna cannot be taken into account because this was the language of a distant region also seems dubious. It was there that we find preserved the sort of language for official documents that took shape in the Kushan empire. This language consists mainly of epistolary formulas. It seems unfounded to consider this language a spoken tongue.

In the case at hand, it appears premature to debate the existence of a special “canon in the Gandhāri language” (chapter 8, section 8.1.1, “The Gandhāri canon issue revisited”). The issue is not whether there was or was not a canon. The importance of the manuscript is that it allows us to answer the question of which Buddhist texts were recorded in written form earlier and when. In other words, what had been codified in writing by the first century A.D. Salomon's analysis of language and style, as well as detailed study of the Bairam-Ali manuscript, show that Buddhist texts continued to circulate in oral form and had only begun to be recorded in writing. The first half of the first millennium in Central Asia was a period in which the written and oral tradition continued to coexist. The latter was necessary to draw the broad masses to the Buddhist teaching; they could

not be immediately introduced to the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā*, recently discovered among Kushan-period manuscripts in Brāhmī writing in Sanskrit (see *Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection*. Jens Braarvig, editor-in-chief, vol. 1 (Oslo, 2000), pp. 1—52). What we have here are written excerpts from the canon, by all appearances, one of the first attempts to record what had previously circulated in oral form. Work on the written codification of Buddhist texts undoubtedly took place during this period in the monasteries of Northern India.

In chapter 4 (“Origin and character of the collection”), doubts arise in connection with section 4.3, “Archaeological parallels”. It seems saturated with facts unrelated to the Buddhist tradition. The same holds true with regard to other sections where Salomon draws parallels with other cultural realms as links in a chain of proof. Salomon’s view on the discovery of manuscripts enclosed in a clay vessel buried, it is assumed, on the grounds of a Buddhist monastery in Gandhāra is that these were worn manuscripts that had been recopied, as is indicated by the note *likhidago* (“[It is] written”) found on many scrolls (pp. 71—6). Salomon holds that this was a special ritual. Salomon is correct in describing the tradition of burying manuscripts, ritual objects, and human remains in clay vessels and reliquaries. But what was the purpose of this? We recall the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* in its early Pāli version; it describes the distribution of the remains from the Buddha’s funeral pyre among various regions and cities. It was considered a great boon to receive a handful of ashes or a fragment of scorched cloth, not to speak of a tooth or a half-burned bone. This was a relic to be buried in a place of honour, usually in a mortar, for veneration. As concerns old, worn manuscripts, they were hardly considered “escheated”, although they were no longer used for performing rituals. These were the holiest, most read, most “prayed over” texts, and they had to be interred as sacred objects. The clay vessel in which the Bairam-Ali manuscript was discovered, clearly placed in a mortar, also contained a clay statuette of the Buddha and Sassanian coins of Shāpūr II. This was undoubtedly a sacred relic which sanctified the place where it was buried. This point of view should be borne in mind.

A large Appendix (“Inscribed pots and potsherds in British Library”, pp. 183—247) contains an analysis of 5 full votive inscriptions on whole clay vessels — the large wheel-made vessels coarse red clay, globular in form (pot A, B, C, D, E) and 26 inscriptions on individual fragments. They all contain the same votive formula, more or less complete: a gift “to the universal community” apparently from noble and wealthy women (as is indicated by Salomon’s analysis of the proper names on pot B, see pp. 141—55). They ask for their health and the health of their husbands and those close to them. This sometimes includes “all living things”. Variant readings among the inscriptions are minimal: one inscription mentions “a teacher of the Dharmaguptaka school”; another “a teacher of the Sarvāstivāda school”. Hence, there is as yet no cause to speak of a predominance of followers of the Dharmaguptaka school in Gandhāra. The formula itself is well-known thanks to discoveries in Haḍḍa. It was copied by local scribes who appear to have been minimally literate craftsmen; for this reason, they presented certain *akṣaras* — especially ligatures of the *sta*, *kṣva*, *rva*, *rma* and other types — as they saw them. This creates difficulties in determining a single standard for writing these *akṣaras*. At the same time, they were evidently good craftsmen, for they adorned their inscriptions with flourishes: the lower parts of the *akṣaras sa* and *na* are curved downward, while the *akṣaras i* and *e* display flourishes that extend significantly upward. Salomon displays great scholarly acumen in this section, once again proving that he is a leading specialist on the Gāndhārī language and Kharoṣṭhī writing.

In addition to the Appendix, the book contains a Glossary (pp. 249—52), Bibliography (References, pp. 253—63), and Index (pp. 265—73).

The book makes an unusual impression: it resembles an encyclopaedia that brings together all that is known about Gāndhārī culture and a host of parallels with the cultures of other regions. The author’s professionalism is everywhere evident. We eagerly await the appearance of his second book, a continuation of the present study.

*M. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya*