

WRITTEN MONUMENTS OF THE ORIENT

VOLUME 12

No. 1 (24)

2026

PUBLICATIONS OF TEXTS



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RUSSIAN ACADEMY
OF SCIENCES

Institute of Oriental
Manuscripts
(Asiatic Museum)

Published with the support of



Founded in 2014
Issued biannually

Financed by the RSF
project N 23-28-10046

Founder:
Institute of Oriental
Manuscripts Russian
Academy of Sciences

The Journal is registered
by the Federal Service
for Supervision
of Communications,
Information Technology
and Mass Communications

CERTIFICATE
ПН № ФС77-79201
from September 22, 2020

Biannual Journal
ISSN 2410-0145
Language: English
12+



Institute of Oriental
Manuscripts
RAS
2026

WRITTEN MONUMENTS OF THE ORIENT

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Courtesy of Serge A. Frantsouzoff's Private Archive.)

Minasyan Tamara, Eliazyan Gayane, Khorozyan Armin

A Codicological, Artological and Material Analysis of the Gospel Matenadaran 378 in the Context of the Artsakh Manuscript Tradition of the 13th Century

DOI: 10.55512/wmo705613

Submitted: April 07, 2026.

Accepted: May 30, 2026.

Abstract: Manuscript 378 (Ms. 378), housed at the Mesrop Mashtots Matenadaran in Yerevan, is the oldest illustrated manuscript to have reached us from Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh), dating back to the 13th c.¹ Although the colophons do not specify the exact location where the manuscript was created, the information they contain suggests that it was written either in an ancient sanctuary on the site of the current St. John the Baptist Church in Gandzasar, or in the nearby Khokhanaberd fortress, which was the residence of princes.² This hypothesis is substantiated by the fact that the St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Gandzasar was constructed after the creation of the Gospel, and the territories were already the princely domains of the Hasan-Jalalyans.³ The study is structured in two main parts. The initial section presents a codicological and artistic analysis: the miniature system of Ms. 378 (comprising canon-tables, title pages, marginal ornaments and iconographic features) is considered in the context of the continuity of the Armenian tradition and regional interactions. These observations are complemented by manuscript colophons, which act as a significant source for the study of the history and cultural environment of Artsakh in the 13th c. The codicological and artistic analysis of the first part is complemented by the chemical and material study presented in the second part, which

¹ *Main catalogue of Armenian Manuscripts of Mashtots Matenadaran* II 2004: 139.

² MINASYAN 2015: 13–15.

³ GANDZAKETS'I 1961: 269–270. The Hasan-Jalalyan princely house, which traces its lineage to the Aranshahik noble family of eastern Armenia, experienced a period of significant growth and expansion during the 12th c., specifically in the 1160s. This expansion coincided with the reign of Vakhtang the Great (late 11th c. and early 12th c.). He was succeeded by his son, Hasan the Great, in the 12th c., after which the throne was passed to Hasan's son, Vakh-tang-Tangik, who died in 1214. During the reign of these princes, the political and economic foundations for the subsequent rise of Nerkin Khachen were established, which later enabled Hasan-Jalal Dola to ensure an unparalleled economic, cultural and political rise in Nerkin Khachen during his reign. After him, the princely branch of Nerkin Khachen came to be known as Hasan-Jalalyans, with the principal spiritual and political centre being the Gandzasar monastery. This monastery functioned as a princely and Catholicosate centre for centuries (ULUBABIAN 1975: 135–141).

allows for an assessment of the technical basis of the manuscript's creation and the exclusivity of the materials used. The study revealed the presence of high-value dyes, including cochineal, ultramarine, safflower, lead white and high-purity gold. The results obtained permit a new and comprehensive evaluation of the artistic and historical merits of the manuscript, emphasising its exceptional material basis. Consequently, the Ms. 378 is regarded not only as an artistic treasure and historical source, but also as a significant material for interdisciplinary research, which occupies a substantial place in the study of Armenian medieval codicology and cultural history.

Key words: Ms. 378 Gospel, Artsakh, 13th c., Gandzasar Monastery, miniature, iconography, colophons, dyes, X-ray fluorescence analysis (XRF), infrared spectroscopy analysis (FT-IR).

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Introduction

In the early 13th c., coinciding with a period of Armenian cultural flourishing, scriptoria adjacent to monasteries underwent substantial expansion and transformation, becoming the primary centres of book art and miniature painting. Although scriptoria had been in existence for several centuries earlier, it was during this period that their activities reached a highly developed and more organised form.⁴ Artsakh, as a significant centre of Armenian cul-

⁴ MATEVOSYAN 1998: 77–104.

ture, is distinguished by its rich tradition of manuscript art, one of the earliest and most symbolic monuments of which is the Ms. 378.⁵ It was written by the scribe Toros at the behest of Prince Vakhtang Tangik and Princess Khorishah, as evidenced by the manuscript's colophons.⁶ In academic discourse, the Gospel is often referred to as the "Gospel of Vakhtang Tangik"⁷ and it has garnered the attention of numerous researchers, particularly those specialising in art history.⁸ However, given that Vakhtang and Khorishah are listed together in the colophons as commissioners, it is deemed appropriate, in the interest of source studies, to utilise the designation "Gospel of Vakhtang Tangik and Khorishah".⁹

Ms. 378 is distinguished not only by its artistic merit, but also by its historical value. It constitutes a highly artistic exemplar of 13th c. writing and miniature painting, which simultaneously provides evidence for the formation of the manuscript tradition of Artsakh and the rise of Armenian culture.¹⁰

Methodology

The research methodology employed an interdisciplinary approach, integrating codicological, artological, and materials science frameworks. A codicological analysis was conducted to examine the structural and content features of the manuscript. Subsequent artological observations were then performed in order to reveal the iconographic and stylistic layers of the miniature system.¹¹ Finally, source studies interpretation was carried out to analyse the manuscript's colophons as a significant source of information on the history and cultural environment of Artsakh in the 13th c.¹²

⁵ HAKOBYAN & MINASYAN & TOROSYAN 2022: 35–36.

⁶ MATEVOSYAN 1984: 94–95.

⁷ HAKOBYAN 1989: 38–50.

⁸ SVIRIN 1939: 82; LAZAREV 1947: 186–188; HOVSEPYAN 1951: 761–764; DURNVO 1979: 248.

⁹ MATEVOSYAN, MINASYAN 2025: 86.

¹⁰ HAKOBYAN & MINASYAN & TOROSYAN 2022: 37, 142–150.

¹¹ HAKOBYAN 1989: 38–50.

¹² Matenadaran MS. 378: ff. 2a, 7a, 8b, 9b, 258b, 304b, 308a. URL: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346107617>.

The material study was conducted using non-destructive methods, incorporating X-ray fluorescence (XRF) and infrared spectroscopy (FT-IR) analytical approaches (see Chemical Analysis, Pl. 1). XRF was utilised for the identification of the elemental composition, while FT-IR was employed for the identification of the composition of organic materials and binders.¹³

The study's structure involves the arrangement of manuscript miniatures according to thematic sections. The subjects of the miniature material are extensive, and numerous images are presented in two parts. The codicological and artistic analysis of the first part is complemented by the chemical and material study presented in the second part. The figures pertaining to chemical analysis are primarily located in the second section, accompanied by the pertinent data. These were not incorporated in the initial section to avoid redundancy and superfluous presentation of the subject matter. In the first section, therefore, links are provided to the figures in the second part. This approach facilitates a comprehensive, systematic and legible presentation of the material.

1

1.1. Gandzasar monastery as a scriptorium

During the 13th c., the Gandzasar monastery emerged as the preeminent spiritual, cultural and writing centre of Artsakh, operating under the patronage of the Hasan-Jalalyan princely house. Gandzasar is mentioned in written sources as early as the 10th c.¹⁴ and between the 12th and 13th cc. it was an episcopal see and the royal sepulchre¹⁵ of the Khachen¹⁶ princes. From the 14th c. it became the seat of the Catholicosate¹⁷ of the Armenian East (Gandzasar). These circumstances contributed to the establishment of the scriptorium.

¹³ DERRICK & STULIK & LANDLY 1999: 43–79; CENTENO & GUZMAN & KLEPS & DELLA VÉDOVA 2004: 139–150.

¹⁴ ANANIA 2009: 42.

¹⁵ JALALEANTS 1842: 186–192.

¹⁶ In the early Middle Ages, Artsakh was frequently referred to as Khachen. Subsequently, the name Khachen was adopted for one of the provinces of Artsakh. KALANKATVATS'I 2011: 432; GANDZAKETS'I 1961: 209.

¹⁷ BALAYAN 2009: 171–188.

The development of the scriptorium was influenced by the spiritual and royal function of the monastery, as well as by the educational environment, where scribes and miniature painters were trained. The early written tradition of the monastery, which is mentioned already from the 10th c., provided the prerequisites for the formation of the school. Despite the absence of preserved manuscripts from the 10th–11th cc., and the reliance on written sources as the primary evidence,¹⁸ the 12th c. sources (Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi¹⁹ and Continuator of Samvel Anetsi²⁰) attest to the destruction and loss of manuscripts due to the Seljuk-Turkish invasions. This fact indicates the presence of a well-established written culture in Artsakh, the continuity of which was fully realised in the 13th c. by the Gandzasar scriptoria.

Theological, ritual, historical and interpretative manuscripts were copied in the Gandzasar scriptorium. The monastery housed a Matenadaran, which contained a rich collection of manuscripts. Thirteen manuscripts of the 13th–18th cc. copied here have been preserved, of which twelve are located in the Mashtots Matenadaran in Yerevan,²¹ and one in the library of the St. Jacob Monastery in Jerusalem (Jerusalem, manuscript 2273).²² Moreover, a collection of manuscripts that have been copied in other scriptoria across Armenia has been preserved in the Gandzasar Matenadaran. Of these manuscripts, approximately three dozen have survived, providing a testament to the profound activity of the monastery's scriptorium.²³

The Ms. 378 is the most ancient manuscript from Gandzasar that has been preserved; it was created at the beginning of the 13th c., even before the construction of the Church of St. John the Baptist (1216–1238). This indicates that the scriptorium was operational during the early stages of construction.

The manuscript tradition of Gandzasar is further augmented by the construction record of the monastery, comprising 27 lines and constituting an exceptional document (Pl. 1)²⁴.

¹⁸ KALANKATVATS'I 2011: 421; ANANIA 2009: 42.

¹⁹ AYRIVANETS'I 1890: 63.

²⁰ ANETS'I AND CONTINUATORS 2014: 213.

²¹ MINASYAN 2015: 13–21.

²² POGHARYAN 1974: 366.

²³ MINASYAN 2015: 21–23.

²⁴ BARKHUDARIANTS' 1982: 38–40.



Pl. 1. Gandzasar construction inscription (photo Samvel Karapetyan)

It chronicles the construction process and its culmination, while also incorporating the testimony of the builder, Hasan Jalal Dola. In this testimony, Dola presents himself as a “humble servant of God” and simultaneously as “the native sovereign of the high and great Artsakh world”. The inscription enumerates three significant dates: the commencement of construction in 1216, the completion of the edifice in 1238, and the consecration of the church in 1240.²⁵ Considering the historical value and scientific significance of the inscription, it is deemed appropriate to present it partially, with a focus on the most salient elements: “I, the humble servant of God Jalal Dola Hasan, son of Vakhtang, grandson of the Great Hasan, native and sovereign prince of the high and great Artsakh, the lord of Khokhanaberd and its borders. As my father passed away, he made a bequest in his last will that was intended for my mother, Khorishah (Khorishah was the daughter of the great prince Sargis), and myself, and stated that we should erect this church in our ancestral cemetery at Gandzasar. The commencement of construction was

²⁵ BARKHUDARIANTS' 1982: 38–40.

initiated in the Armenian year 1216, with the help of the benevolent God. I, having this work in my mind in this busy life, did not stop working and by the grace and mercy of the most merciful God, completed the church in 1238, adorning it with various reliefs and the dome with various compositions. The church was consecrated in 1240 during the reign of Catholicos Nerses of Aghvan”.

This inscription indicates that Gandzasar was constructed not only as a spiritual centre, but also as a symbol of power and culture, emphasising that Artsakh was perceived in the Middle Ages as a “high and great world”, where spiritual, political and cultural layers were intertwined. Utilising the aforementioned rationale, the colophons of Ms. 378 emerge as invaluable documents, providing a crucial complement to the information contained within the inscription. These colophons offer a comprehensive insight into two key aspects: firstly, the historical milieu that served as the backdrop for the manuscript’s creation, and secondly, the interrelationship between the patronage of the princely house and the spiritual life. Consequently, the Gandzasar inscription with the Gospel colophons, provides a comprehensive representation of the political, cultural and spiritual reality of Artsakh during the 13th c.

1.2. Circumstances of the creation of Ms. 378

As previously stated, Ms. 378 is regarded as one of the earliest and most valuable testimonies of the Gandzasar manuscript school. Toros is mentioned as a “humble scribe and painter” (Ms. 378, ff. 2r, 3v, 9v, 258v), suggesting that he was also the author of miniatures. The headpiece on folio 9b is of particular interest: on a dark blue background, the names of the patrons Vakhtang and Khorishah and their colophon are written in gold, and below this inscription, on a vertical column, Toros has written his name in red: “Toros the Painter” (see Chemical Analysis, Pl. 6). Despite the absence of extant manuscripts of Toros, his work in Ms. 378 evinces a high level of mastery and artistic quality.

The manuscript’s chronology remains controversial, as the date of its creation was not preserved due to the lack of the scribal colophon on the folio. This circumstance has given rise to various chronological hypotheses among researchers.

Garegin Hovsepyan has determined the year of composition of the manuscript to be between 1212 and 1216.²⁶ The basis of the author's work is the assertion that Princess Khorishah rebuilt the church of Metsaranits Saint Hakkob, not far from Gandzasar, in 1212,²⁷ and that Prince Vakhtang, according to the inscription of the Gandzasar monastery, died before 1216.²⁸ Vardan Areveltsi has noted that Vakhtang died in 1214, which provides a solid basis for placing the creation of the manuscript in the above-mentioned time period.²⁹

Artashes Matevosyan places the manuscript among the 1216 colophons,³⁰ while Bagrat Ulubabyan considers it to have been written in 1212.³¹ Alexey Svirin³² and Asatur Mnatsakanyan³³ posit the hypothesis that the manuscript was copied towards the close of the 12th c. or the onset of the 13th c. These views and historical facts indicate that the manuscript was most likely created in the first decades of the 13th c., with a probable date of between 1212 and 1214.

The early dating is also based on paleographic and iconographic features. The text is written in a late uncial script, distinguished by large and symmetrical letterforms, a straight linear structure, a system of *Nomina sacra* abbreviation and the full stop at the top of a word.³⁴ By the way, from the 11th c. onwards, punctuation marks were utilised as aids for both reading and pronunciation.³⁵ The Eusebius' Letter to Carpianus, the Table of Concordance (also the marginal ones) are written in small uncial script. The scribal colophons are written in vertical uncial script, distinguished by the rectangular structure of the letterforms and lines of equal height. This script type is considered to act as a transition from classical uncial script to round script from the 11th–12th cc. The colophon of 1261 has already been written in a large round script (Pl. 2).

²⁶ HOVSEPYAN 1951: 761–764.

²⁷ BARKHUDARIANTS' 1982: 12; BARKHUDARIANTS' 1895: 171.

²⁸ BARKHUDARIANTS' 1982: 38.

²⁹ VARDAN VARDAPET 1862: 140.

³⁰ MATEVOSYAN 1984: 94–95.

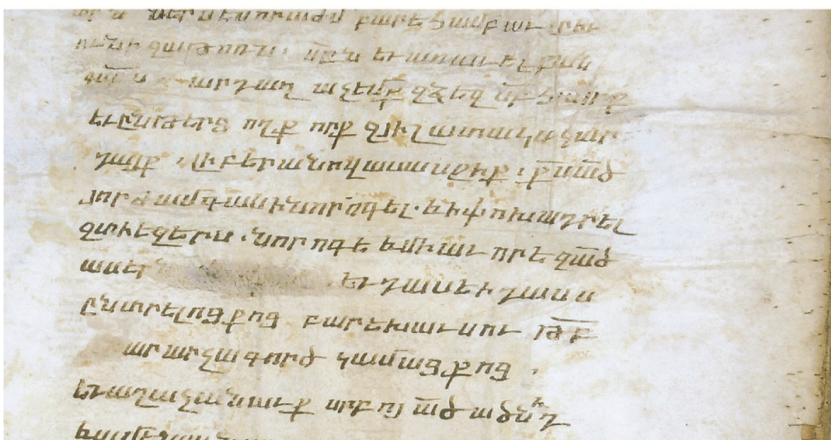
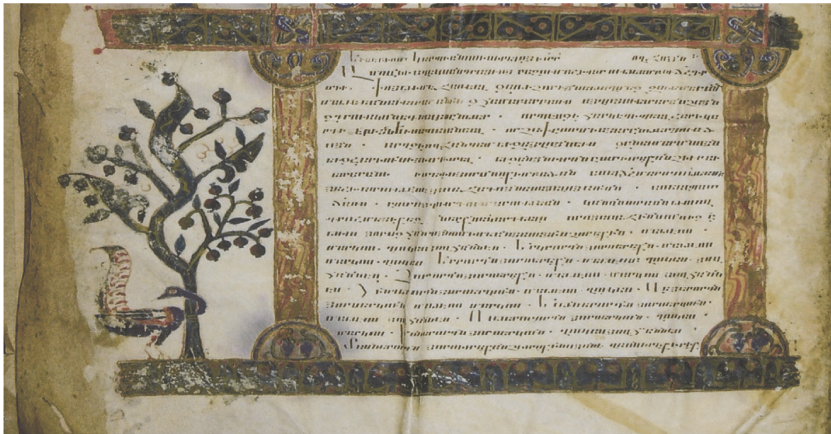
³¹ ULUBABIAN 1975: 142–144.

³² SVIRIN 1939: 82.

³³ MNATS'AKANIAN 1955: 620.

³⁴ For more on these scripts, see ABRAHAMIAN 1973: 61–77.

³⁵ STONE & KOUIMJIAN & LEHMANN 2002: 25–30.



Pl. 2. Script sample, marginal ornament and decorated letter

The absence of images depicting the Lord constitutes significant evidence for the early dating of the manuscript, given that such iconographic motifs are found in Artsakh manuscripts only from the end of the 13th c. and 14th c.³⁶

The Gospel is written on parchment of a superior quality, and consists of 308 leaves. The object's dimensions are 34×24.5 cm. The written content is presented in two columns, with a total of 17 lines per page. The binding is composed of brown leather, with a door, the core is constructed from board, and the lining is made of yellow silk. As for the content of the manuscript, it comprises Eusebius' Letter to Carpianus, the Tables of Concordances and the four Gospels. From a textual perspective, the Gospel of John is a subject of interest: some verses are omitted, about which the scribe left special notes. This indicates that they are not a loss, but rather the result of the scribe's conscious and intended approach.³⁷

1.3. The historical value of the colophons of Ms. 378

Ms. 378 comprises a series of colophons that yield significant information regarding the creation, donation, and subsequent fate of the book. Vakhtang Tangik and Khorishah commissioned the Gospel in commemoration of their family. As stated in one of the colophons: "By the order and expense of the pious and God-pleasing Vakhtang, the son of Hasan and grandson of Vakhtang, and his Christ-loving wife, Khorishah, who is the daughter of the great commander-in-chief Sargis, it was desired that our names be inscribed in the living book, in the confidence of God's love for humanity. The task of producing this life-giving and desirable Holy Gospel was entrusted to be written adorning it with various medicines, embellishing the Tables of Concordances and decorating the beginning of the Gospels with golden letter, ensuring the eternal remembrance within the house of the Lord" (Ms. 378, f. 308rv).

This colophon not only clarifies the circumstances of the manuscript's creation, but also confirms the spiritual and cultural role of the commissioning princely family. It is consistent with the construction inscription of the Gandzasar monastery, which also emphasises the names and origins of

³⁶ LAZAREV 1967: 112–115.

³⁷ *Main catalogue of Armenian Manuscripts of Mashtots Matenadaran II* 2004: 139.

Vakhtang and Khorishah, thereby testifying to the historical connection between the manuscript and the monastery.³⁸

Hasan's son, Vakhtang Tangik, was a prince of the Nerkin (Lower) Khachen (Artsakh) clan, and Khorishah was the daughter of Sargis Zakaryan, the supreme commander of the Georgian-Armenian joint forces, and the sister of Zakare and Ivane Zakaryan, the *de facto* rulers of northern Armenia at the beginning of the 13th c. This parallel observation lends the manuscript both local and pan-Armenian historical value, underscoring the pivotal role of the princely family in the preservation of cultural heritage.

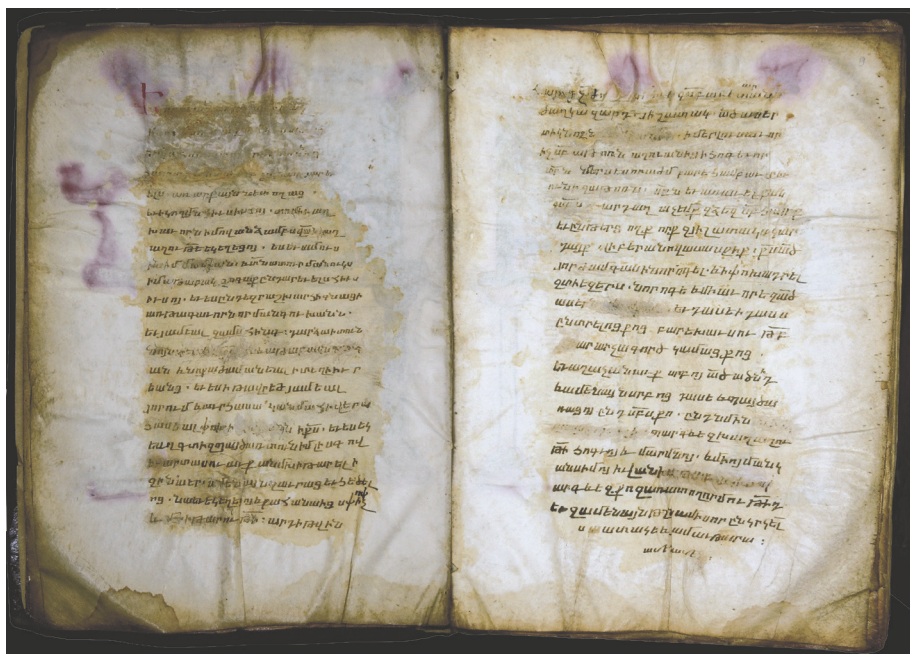
The colophons appended to the manuscript also convey the subsequent history of the commissioning family. Hasan Jalal Dolan, the offspring of Vakhtang and Khorishah, after the death of his father assumed the role of prince of Nerkin (Lower) Khachen and patron of the Gandzasar monastery construction. The construction of the church was executed in accordance with the stipulated will of Vakhtang Tangik: Hasan Jalal commissioned the construction of a new church in front of Khokhanaberd, in a location known as Gandzasar, on the site of a previous sanctuary. It was dedicated to John the Baptist and was notable for its architectural magnificence and its beautiful composition.³⁹ This suggests that prior to the construction of the new church, a scriptorium had already been established in Gandzasar, which indicates that the manuscript tradition preceded architectural innovation.

The Gospel was passed down from parents to Hasan Jalal, who, following the death of his wife Mamkan, donated it to the Gandzasar monastery in 1261. His colophon, preserved on page 8v of the manuscript, is of great historical value, as Hasan Jalal recounts in detail his arduous five-year journey to the court of Mangu Khan, the journey back, and the death of his wife (Pl. 3).

It is worthy of note that the colophons record the continuity of the four generations of the princely house: Vakhtang the Great-Hasan the Great-Vakhtang Tangik-Hasan Jalal Dola. This genealogical chain endows the manuscript with exceptional historical value, as it concurrently documents the hereditary rights of the princely house. The same chain is also recorded in the construction protocol of the Gandzasar monastery, which once again confirms the historical connection between the manuscript and the monastery.

³⁸ BARKHUDARIANTS' 1982: 38.

³⁹ GANDZAKETS'I 1961: 269–270.



Pl. 3. Ms. 378, the Hasan Jalal Dola's colophon of 1261

The colophons furnish us with information regarding the subsequent fate of the manuscript. During the plundering of the Gandzasar monastery in the 16th century, the manuscript was captured. However, in 1589, Prince Jalal, son of Mehrab Beg, redeemed it and returned it to the Gandzasar monastery. The following information is documented in the colophon: “Thus I received the Holy Gospel from captivity... and presented it to the holy monastery of Gandzasar” (Ms. 378, f. 7r).

In 1897, the final folios of the manuscript were restored by Sahak Vardapet Amatuni, a monk of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, who was both a codicologist and philologist. This fact is also recorded in a colophon (Ms. 378, f. 304v). The scribal colophon of the Gospel and three other folios (ff. 305–308) were torn from the manuscript over time for unknown reasons and were used as a guard leaf in a Synaxarion written in 1497 (MM 1508). The discovery of these folios was made by Sahak Vardapet Amatuni, who also undertook their restoration. It is regrettable to note that the folio recording the date of the manuscript's composition was not among these folios.

It is evident that the colophons of the Ms. 378 serve a dual purpose in that they not only document the history of the manuscript's creation and donation, but also highlight the spiritual and cultural role of the princely house. The construction inscription of the Gandzasar monastery, considered in conjunction with the aforementioned colophons, provides a comprehensive historical depiction, uniting family commemoration, lineage authority and the continuity of the monastic heritage.

1.4. Miniature and iconographic system

The Ms. 378 is distinguished by a multi-layered and systematic structure of the miniature, which expresses the high level of formation of the Artsakh artistic school of the 13th c. The scribe and painter Toros created ten canon-tables, three title pages, a portrait of Matthew the Evangelist (Ms. 378, f. 6v) and rich marginal ornaments. They are constructed on the basis of thematic, symbolic and compositional principles, thereby forming a harmonious artistic whole. The symbolic features of the miniatures are evidently associated with the architectural-sculptural composition of the Gandzasar temple. This connection is manifested in a number of stylistic parallels, including the three-column structure of the canon-tables, cross-shaped textures and the use of plant motifs. The same artistic elements are also present in the sculptural decorations of the temple.

Of particular interest are the lion-dragon images of princely symbolism (see Chemical Analysis, Pl. 4, 14), which in the manuscript reflect the lions symbolising the Hasan-Jalalyans. The headpieces of the canon-tables (Ms. 378, f. 7v–8r) depicting lions fighting dragons are a continuation of the symbolic iconography that is also found in the sculptural ornaments of the entrance to the Gandzasar temple (Pl. 4).

The artist chose to leave the dragon in its natural parchment shade, while utilising yellow and black for the lions. This solution is twofold: it is both decorative and symbolic. It serves to emphasise the idea of the power and victory of the princely dynasty. Similar motifs are also found in the frescoes of Geghardavank (1258) and in the Ani manuscripts, which indicates the prevalence of symbolic iconography.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ SVIRIN 1939: 85.



Pl. 4. Reliefs of lions at the entrance to Gandzasar Monastery
(photo Hrair Hawk Khatcherian)

The parallels observed, in conjunction with the identity of the client, suggest that the manuscript and the temple were both created within the same artistic and ideological milieu. A comparative observation of the richness of the temple's sculptural decorations⁴¹ also indicates the use of the same artistic and symbolic language in both manuscript art and the architectural-sculptural composition, revealing a unified artistic environment formed in Artsakh in the 13th c.

1.5. Canon tables, system of colour and marginal ornaments

The canon tables of Ms. 378 are arranged in a three-column structure. The configuration of the cross-shaped twin-rope weaves in the central part is a symbolic representation of the unity of eternity and faith (Pl. 5).

The bases and capitals of the columns are decorated with cross-shaped figures, floral and geometric motifs (see also Chemical Analysis, Pl. 4, 14). The trefoils found in the headpieces act as sacred symbols, which were also widely used in the manuscripts of the Cilician School.⁴²

The colour system is predicated on the principle of compositional balance, whereby dark shades (green, blue, brown, purple) are juxtaposed with bright colours (pink, white, yellow, red). The application of gold serves to enhance the visual opulence of the images.⁴³ The colour harmony and symbolic depth are confirmed by the highly artistic solutions of Toros' colour system.

⁴¹ DONABÉDIAN 2023: 24–27.

⁴² HAKOBYAN & MINASYAN & TOROSYAN 2022: 142–145.

⁴³ HAKOBYAN & MINASYAN & TOROSYAN 2022: 147.



Pl. 5. Ms. 378, canon table:
the colophon of the commissioners on the vertical beams: 6r



Pl. 6. Ms. 378, Matthew's title page, marginal ornament and decorated letter: 11r

Chemical analyses have shown that the dyes utilised are of a high quality: blue was obtained from ultramarine (lapis lazuli), green from Verona green earth, brown from walnut ink, red from Armenian cochineal, purple from cochineal mixtures, pink from a light shade of cochineal, white from lead white, and yellow from safflower. The creation of symbolic layers was achieved by utilising high-purity gold (60–95%), thereby accentuating the visual elements of the composition.⁴⁴ It is evident from the data presented that the manuscript under consideration exhibits a high artistic sophistication, thereby providing compelling evidence of the trade and cultural connections that characterised medieval Armenia.

Ms. 378 is also rich in marginal ornaments, which include bird figures, plant textures, and symbolic images.⁴⁵ The decorated letters are primarily knotted script, and the initial letters executed in gold script. Toros frequently employs acanthus ornaments and the design of small crosses, which shine with their light shades on a dark green and blue background. (Pl. 6).

The initial appearance of these motifs is documented in the 11th c. “Muḥni Gospel” (Ms. 7736), and their subsequent utilisation in the miniature painting of Arts’akh and Utik’ is well-attested.⁴⁶ L. Durnovo identifies stylistic affinities between the marginal ornaments and the Homilies of Mush, and likens the plant ornaments to the ornamental system of the Echmiadzin Gospel.⁴⁷

1.6. Thematic images

Thematic images contained within the manuscript are limited in number. The title page of John (Ms. 378, f. 259r) depicts the scene of the “Ascension” with Christ in a halo and four angels (Chemical Analysis Pl. 12). Folio 5v depicts the Virgin Mary holding the Christ child, with the angel Gabriel positioned to her right. Beneath this scene, two evangelists are represented, accompanied by the respective inscriptions: “Mariam”, “Gabriel”, “Evangelists”. In the case of the latter, it is challenging to ascertain which two they are (Chemical Analysis, Pl. 9). This thematic image was most likely added after the manuscript was copied, because its style stands out from the artistic

⁴⁴ OSPITALI & BERSANI & DI LONARDO & LOTTICI 2008: 1066–1073.

⁴⁵ HAKOBYAN 1989: 50.

⁴⁶ HAKOBYAN & MINASYAN & TOROSYAN 2022: 146.

⁴⁷ DURNOVO 1978: pl. 3.

decoration of the manuscript. This observation was initially made by Irina Drampyan and Emma Korkhmazyan, who noted that the image exhibits stylistic affinities with monumental art.⁴⁸ Subsequently, this observation was also addressed by H. Hakobyan.⁴⁹

The image of Mary in the Gospel can be seen as being in close alignment with the sculptural images of the Gandzasar temple in terms of symbolic layers. In the manuscript, the figure is depicted as a divine mediator between the faithful and Christ; in the sculptures of the Gandzasar temple, her image assumes a power-protective significance, which is related to the symbolism of the Hasan-Jalalyan environment. It is evident that the iconographic languages of the manuscript and the temple complement each other creating a unified ideological system. In this system, the image of Mary serves as a unifying element, representing both spiritual and secular power. The sculptures were examined by Z. Hakobyan and T. Avetisyan, who provided commentary on their iconographic significance.⁵⁰ This study proposes a new observation concerning the ideological connection between the painting and the sculpture.

In the margin of page 254r of the manuscript, there is a portrait of Joseph of Arimathea. The sketch portrait of Matthew the Evangelist, which is located on page 6v, appears to be more of a painting experiment than a complete iconographic composition, which testifies to Toros' searches and stylistic experiments.

1.7. Chemical and material analysis

The colophon of Ms. 378 states that the patrons commissioned the manuscript to be decorated with “many and various medicines” (Ms. 378, f. 308v), where the word “medicine” is used to denote a dye. The veracity of this information has been corroborated by contemporary chemical and material analysis, which has revealed a broad and remarkable array of dyes and binders.

The manuscript was illustrated with Armenian cochineal, ultramarine blue, safflower yellow, lead white, and high-purity gold. The parchment is

⁴⁸ DRAMPYAN & KORKHMAZIAN 1976: 59.

⁴⁹ HAKOBYAN 1989: 46.

⁵⁰ HAKOBYAN & MIKAYELYAN & ASRYAN & AVETISYAN 2023: 33.

composed of meticulously processed and burnished high-quality leather. Iron gall ink was utilised in the written surface, while walnut ink and cochineal were employed in the creation of miniature decorative elements.⁵¹ Furthermore, analysis by means of Fourier-transform infrared spectroscopy (FT-IR) revealed the presence of vegetable binders, namely gum arabic and egg yolk. Gum arabic was utilised for the creation of transparent layers, while egg yolk was employed for the purpose of colour thickening. This ensured the durability and long-term preservation of the pigments.⁵²

Evidently, the manuscript colophon and the results of modern scientific analysis provide complementary evidence. This finding lends further support to the hypothesis that the Gospel was embellished with superior materials by means of sophisticated artistic techniques.

Detailed data and spectral results of the chemical and material analysis are presented in the second part of the article: Chemical Analysis of Ms. 378.

2

Chemical Analysis of MM-378 Gospel Armenian Manuscripts

The study employed the following analytical techniques and instrumentation:

1. X-ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy (XRF)

Analyses were conducted using a portable HITACHI XRF instrument operating at a maximum acceleration voltage of 45 kV and current (μA). Measurements were taken over 25 seconds with an approximate spot size diameter of 50 mm². (Pl. 1)

2. FT-IR Spectroscopy

A Bruker LUMOS FT-IR spectrometer was utilized, covering a spectral range of 4000–600 cm⁻¹ with an accuracy of 4 cm⁻¹.⁵³ (Pl. 1)

3. Dino-Lite Digital Microscope

A Dino-Lite microscope with 1.3 MP resolution was employed for detailed imaging. (Pl. 1)

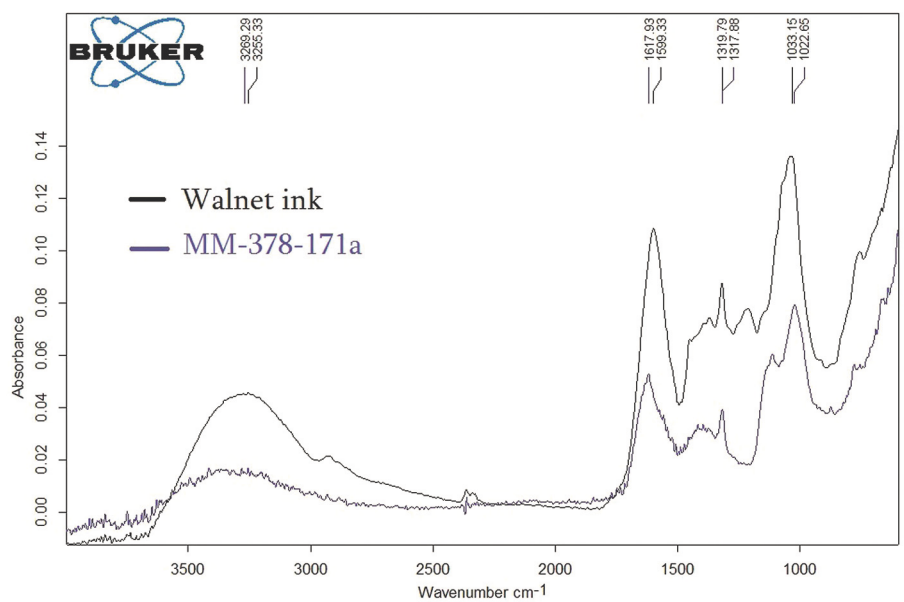
⁵¹ ELIAZIAN 2009: 137–170; ENGEL & ELIAZIAN 2006: 94–112.

⁵² DERRICK & STULIK & LANDLY 1999; CENTENO & GUZMAN & KLEPS & DELLA DELLA VÉDOVA 2004: 139–150.

⁵³ International Raman Users Group (IRUG). URL://www.irug.org.



Pl. 1: FTIR-ATR Spectroscopy, XRF Spectroscopy and Dino-Lite Microscope setups

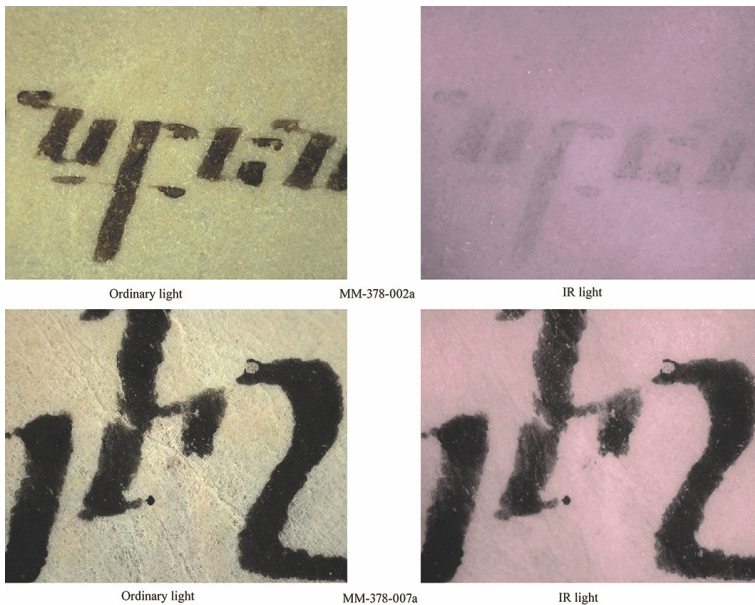


Pl. 2: IR spectrum of walnut ink

Black ink

Analysis of historical inks, particularly walnut and carbon-based varieties, reveals distinct compositional properties. Research conducted by our institute's chemists demonstrates that walnut ink, synthesized from Armenian walnut,⁵⁴ exhibits unique spectral characteristics (Pl. 2). Notably, its infrared (IR) spectrum displays a distinctive absorption peak at 1317 cm^{-1} (Pl. 3) serving as a diagnostic marker.

Further investigation of colophons (inscriptions) across manuscripts indicates that approximately 90% were penned using charcoal-based inks. Comparative IR imaging highlights a key difference: walnut ink exhibits partial absorption under IR light, whereas carbon-based ink is fully absorbed.⁵⁵ This contrast enables precise differentiation between the two ink types in multispectral analysis.



Pl. 3: Visual comparison of walnut and carbon inks under ordinary and IR light (samples MM-378-002a, MM-378-007a)

⁵⁴ KHOROZIAN & ELIAZAN 2021, 421–533

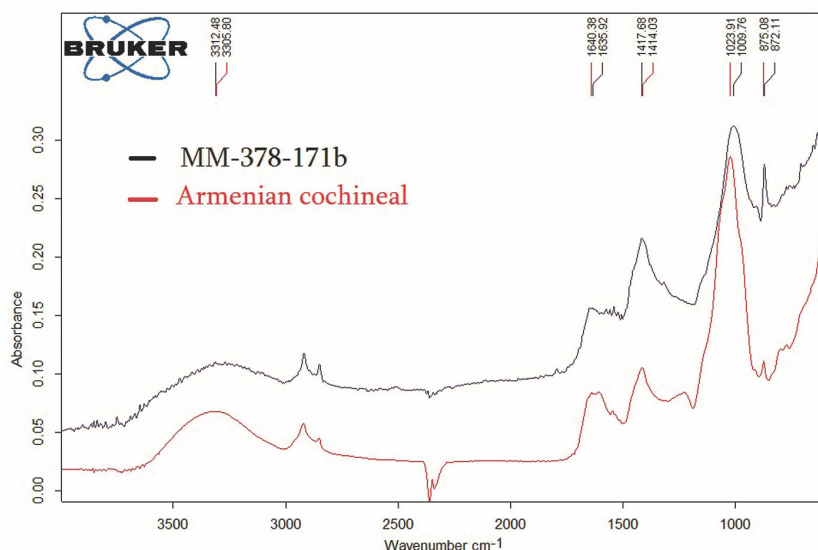
⁵⁵ ELIAZAN 2009, 137–170; ENGEL & ELIAZAN 2006, 94–112; LAU W.S. 1999.

Red Ink and Pigment Derived from Armenian Cochineal



Pl. 4 (MM-378-007b)

Armenian cochineal utilized as a red ink and coloring agent (see Pl. 5).



Pl. 5: Infrared (IR) spectrum of Armenian cochineal

Spectral Analysis Results:

- **Chemical Identification:** 3, 5, 6, 8-tetrahydroxy-1-methyl-9, 10-dioxo-7-[3, 4, 5-trihydroxy-6-(hydroxymethyl)oxan-2-yl]anthracene-2-carboxylic acid.

- **Key Spectral Peaks:**

- **872 cm⁻¹:** Deformation vibration of CH groups.
- **1009 cm⁻¹:** Stretching vibration of C-O groups.
- **1300–1414 cm⁻¹:** Deformation vibration of CH₂ and CH₃ groups.
- **1635 cm⁻¹:** Absorption band corresponding to anthracene double bonds. (MM-378-171b).

Blue Pigment

The blue pigment observed across all manuscripts was identified as ultramarine blue (Na₇Al₆Si₆O₂₄S₃). This determination was supported by spectral analysis⁵⁶ (Pl. 6).

⁵⁶ DERRICK & STULIK & LANDLY 1999, 43–79; CHUKANOV & SAPOZHNIKOV & SHENDKIR & VIGASINA & STEUDEL 2020: 1–24.



Pl. 6: MM-378-009b

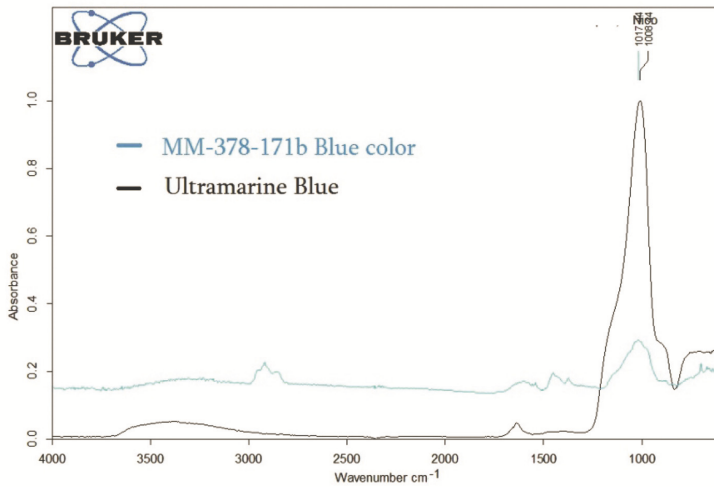
Infrared Spectroscopy (IR) spectrum analysis:

The IR spectrum of the blue pigment (Pl. 7) exhibited a characteristic absorption band in the range of $1005\text{--}1022\text{ cm}^{-1}$, corresponding to the Si-O-Si stretching vibration.

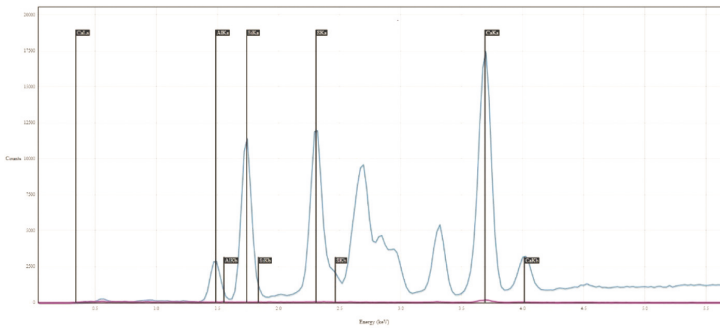
X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF):

XRF analysis of sample MM-378-171b (Pl. 8) confirmed the presence of aluminum (Al), silicon (Si), and sulfur (S), which align with the elemental composition of ultramarine blue.

These findings collectively confirm the use of ultramarine blue pigment in the manuscripts.



Pl. 7: IR spectrum Ultramarine blue



Pl. 8: XRF spectrum MM-378-171b Blue color

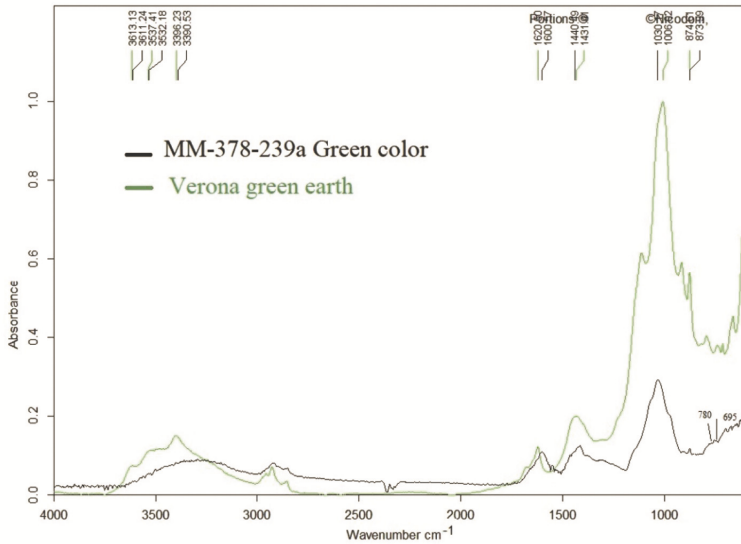
Green Pigment

The green pigment Verona green earth, with the chemical formula $\{K(Al,Fe^{3+})(Fe^{2+},Mg)(AlSi_3Si_4)O_{10}(OH)_2\}$, was analyzed using spectroscopic techniques⁵⁷ (Pl. 9).



Pl. 9: MM-378-005a

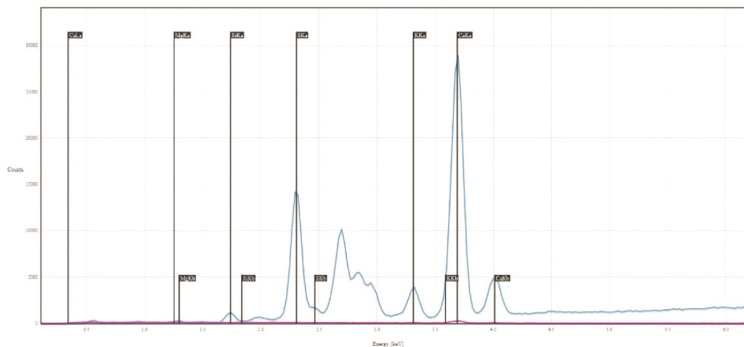
⁵⁷ OSPITALI & BERSANI & DI LONARDO & LOTTICI 2008: 1066–1073.



Pl. 10: IR spectrum Verona green earth

Infrared (IR) Spectrum Analysis (Pl. 10):

- Hydroxyl groups: Peaks at 3613 cm^{-1} and 3390 cm^{-1} (stretching vibrations) and 1600 cm^{-1} (bending vibrations).
- Silicate structure: Strong Si-O stretching bands at 1108 cm^{-1} , 1030 cm^{-1} , and 980 cm^{-1} .
- Additional vibrations: R-O-H bending modes at 780 cm^{-1} , 751 cm^{-1} , and 695 cm^{-1} .



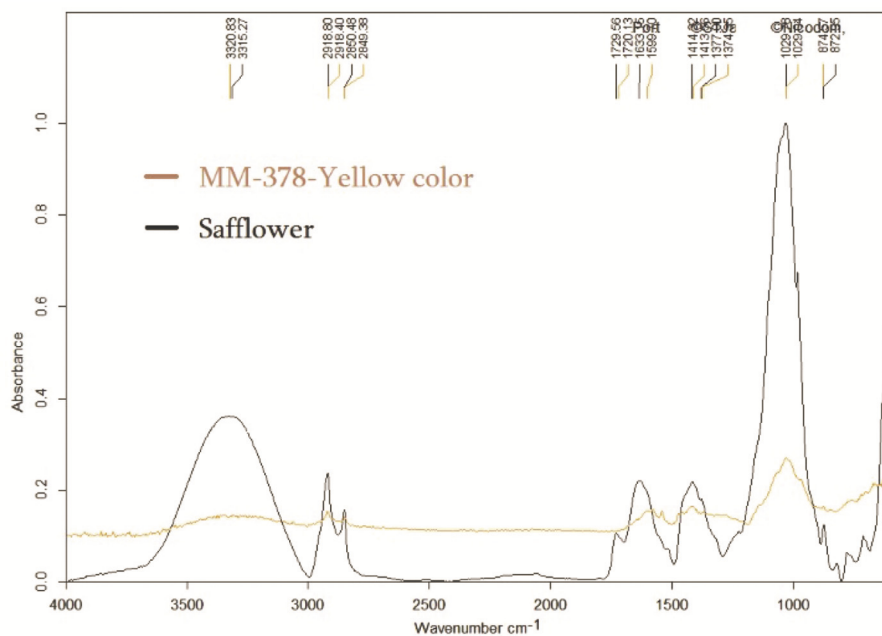
Pl. 11: XRF spectrum MM-378-239a Green color

XRF Analysis (Pl. 11)

The XRF spectrum confirmed the presence of **Mg**, **Si**, and **K** elements, aligning with the compositional formula of Verona green earth.

Yellow Pigment: Safflower (*Carthamus tinctorius*) – $C_{43}H_{44}O_{24}$ 

Pl. 12: MM-378-259a



Pl. 13: IR Spectrum of Safflower

The spectral analysis yielded the following results:

- **1029 cm⁻¹**: Stretching vibrations of C-O groups.
- **1413 cm⁻¹**: Deformation vibrations of CH₂ and CH₃ groups.
- **1599 cm⁻¹**: Bending mode of H-O-H in water molecules.
- **2849–2918 cm⁻¹**: C-H stretching vibrations of hydrocarbon bonds.
- **3500–3200 cm⁻¹**: Stretching vibrations of hydroxyl (OH) groups in water and other compounds (as shown in Figure 13).

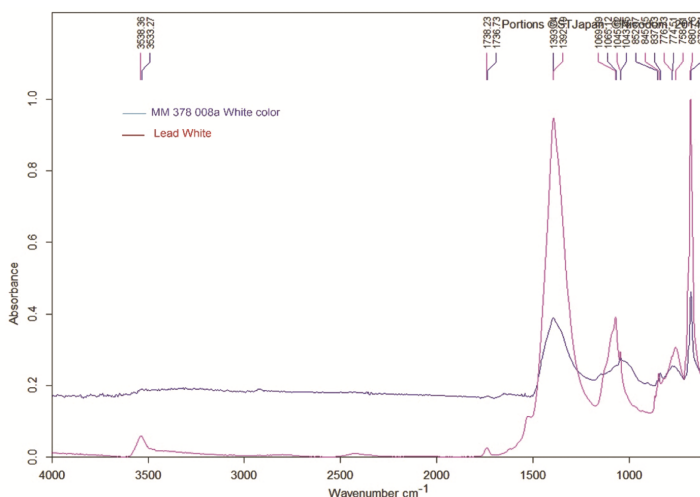
White Pigment (Lead White)

The examined white pigment was identified as lead white, with the chemical formula⁵⁸ $\{2\text{PbCO}_3 \cdot \text{Pb(OH)}_2\}$

⁵⁸ WHITE 1974: 227–284.



Pl. 14: MM-378-008a

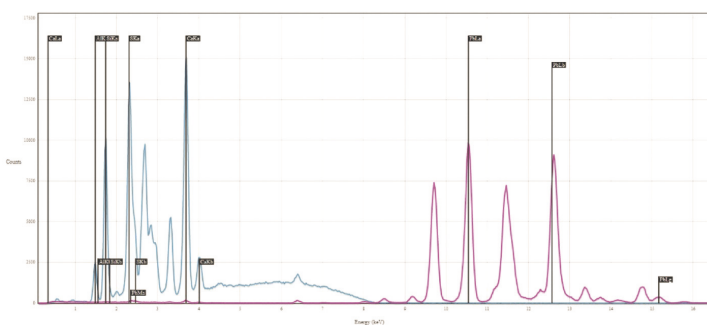


Pl. 15: IR spectrum Lead white MM-378-008a

Infrared (IR) Spectroscopy Results

The IR spectrum (Pl. 15) revealed characteristic bands associated with lead white:

- A strong absorption band at **1393 cm⁻¹**, attributed to the asymmetric stretching vibration of the carbonate (CO₃²⁻) group.
- Additional carbonate-related bands at **678 cm⁻¹** and **1043 cm⁻¹**.
- A hydroxyl (O-H) stretching band at **3533 cm⁻¹**, consistent with the presence of hydroxide groups in the compound.⁵⁹



Pl. 16: XRF spectrum MM-378-008a White color

⁵⁹ CENTENO & GUZMAN & KLEPS & DELLA DELLA VÉDOVA 2004, 139–150; GETTENS & KUHN & CHASE 1993, 67–81.

X-ray Fluorescence (XRF) Analysis

XRF data (Pl. 16) confirmed the presence of **lead (Pb)** as the primary elemental component, aligning with the chemical composition of lead white. These findings substantiate the identification of the pigment as lead white based on its spectral and elemental characteristics.

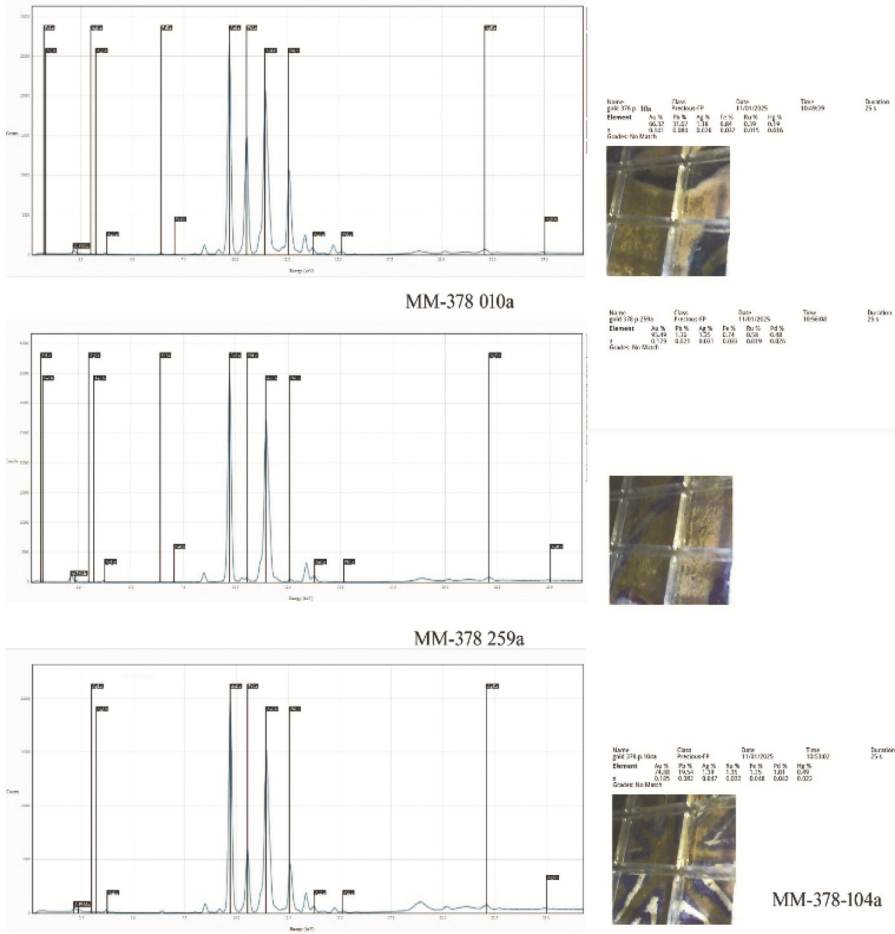
Gold Analysis across Three Pages

The gold content was examined using XRF (X-ray fluorescence) across the following manuscript pages:

- **Pages:** MM-378-010a, MM-378-259a, MM-378-104a



Pl. 17: MM-378-010a, 259a, 104a



Pl. 18: XRF results for MM-378-010a, 259a, 104a

XRF Analysis Results:

- **Page 010a:** 60% gold
- **Page 259a:** 95.5% gold
- **Page 104a:** 74.8% gold

Conclusion

The study of Ms. 378 confirms it as a valuable example of interdisciplinary analysis. Codicological observations reveal the high-quality material structure of the manuscript, while iconographic and stylistic studies reveal the symbolic layers of the miniature system. Source studies interpretations facilitate the reconstruction of the historical circumstances surrounding the creation and circulation of the manuscript.

The chemical and material analyses (XRF and FT-IR) indicate that the manuscript is written on high-quality parchment. The scribe used walnut ink and local pigments, as well as imported ingredients.⁶⁰ The use of miniature decorations made from high-purity gold suggests interaction of both local and international material environments.

The integration of codicological, iconographic, source and material analyses of Ms. 378 facilitates a comprehensive evaluation of the manuscript, which unveils both the characteristics of the artistic system and the scientific data concerning the material composition.

In this study Ms. 378 is examined as a comprehensive system for the first time. The innovative approach, which involves the utilisation of non-harmful chemical methods in conjunction with historical and artistic analyses, unveils hitherto concealed layers of the manuscript's material and artistic merits. This approach facilitates the placement of the manuscript not only within the Armenian medieval manuscript studies, but also within the broader context of international medieval manuscript studies.

The Gandzasar construction inscription and the Ms. 378 colophons concurrently function as complementary documents. The first concerns the construction process of the monastery and the self-awareness of the princely house, while the second presents the conditions of the manuscript's creation and the role of the recipients. Collectively, these elements constitute a comprehensive representation of the spiritual, political and cultural realities of Artsakh in the 13th c.

⁶⁰ KHOROZIAN & ELIAZIAN 2021: 421–533.

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Ivan V. Bogdanov

On Birds and Beasts in the Donation Formula on the Satrap Stela (URK. II: 20.13)

DOI: 10.55512/wmo708205

Submitted: January 30, 2026.

Accepted: April 07, 2026.

Abstract: The subject of this lexicological study is one of the final sections of the Satrap Stela (lines 15–16; URK. II: 20.9–16) with a list of goods received by the Temple of Horus the Lord of Pe and the goddess *w3djt* from the region *p3-t3-n-w3djt* “the land of the goddess *w3djt*”. This list is a part of the decree of satrap Ptolemy to the temple of Buto. The second part of the donation formula contains a list of goods: wild birds, beasts and field crops. The meanings of the following phrases are clarified: 1. *3pdw n(w) hrj-jb 3ht* “birds of the mid-flood season”; 2. *ntj ʿnh m znf* “those who feed on blood” = “beasts of prey” (URK. II: 20.13). It is concluded that the compiler of the Satrap Stela text altered the usual edict standards to impart a poetic quality by mixing phrases from different contexts. Following the principles of poets and theologians of Egyptian temples, he imbued it with multiple layers of meaning.

Key words: Satrap Stela, ancient Egyptian phraseology, Egypt in the late 4th c. BC, ancient Egyptian epigraphy, Egyptian language

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One of the final parts of the Satrap Stela¹ (lines 15–16; URK. II: 20.9–16) contains a list of goods received by the temple of Horus, the Lord of Pe, and the goddess *w3djt*, the Lady of Pe-Dep, from the region of *p3-t3-n-w3djt*, “the

¹ Cairo CG 22182: PM IV: 49, 73; KAMAL 1905: 168–171, pl. 56; URK. II: 11–22; SCHÄFER 2011: 31–203; JWIS V.2: 568–570.

Despite the fact that this section has been repeatedly translated and commented on, a number of passages still require clarification or revision. The subject of this study is the second part of the list of goods delivered from the donated lands upon the altar of Horus, the Lord of the city of Pe, and *w3djt*, the Cobra of Ra-Horakhty (line 16 of the Satrap Stela: URK. II: 20.13).

Transcription



RITNER 2003: 396: “its birds for the one residing in Khemmis, who lives on blood, with everything that derives from its arable land being on the offering table of Horus himself, the Lord of Pe, and Edjo, the serpent who is on the brow of Re-Horachty, forever”.

My translation

3p_{dw}=f n(w) hr_j-jb 3ht ntj ⁵nh m znf (j)ht nb(t) pr(t) m 3h(t)=f hr wdh_w n(j)
hr d_s=f nb p w3d_{jt} hrjt-tp n(j) r^c-hr-3htj d_t “its birds of the mid-flood season,
(and) those who feed on blood, (and also) everything that comes forth from

its field (are to be placed) upon the altar of Horus himself, the Lord of Pe, and *w3djt*, the Cobra² of Ra-Horakhty, forever”.

The following commentary deals with the phrase *3pdw n(w) hrj-jb 3ht* “birds of the mid-flood season” and the expression *ntj ʿnh m znf* “those who feed on blood”.

Commentary

1. Birds of the mid-flood season

The first difficulty is related to the interpretation of the phrase *hrj-jb 3ht* “middle of the flood season” or, more precisely, its last element — the word , which I read as *3ht* “the flood season”. Ivan Ladynin, following Donata Schäfer,³ reads this word as “marsh”-š3, thus inventing a certain deity named “one who is located in the middle of the marsh and feeds (literally, “lives”) on blood”.⁴ Maxim Panov gives a similar translation.⁵ It is also commonly believed that the word *3ht* in this case is a truncated form of the toponym *3h-bjt* “Khemmis”.⁶ Interpreting this word, read *š3t*, as a toponym goes as far back as Henri Gauthier.⁷ In reality, however, it has nothing to do with a city, still less with a bloodthirsty marsh dweller. Moreover, *hrj-jb 3ht* is not a deity’s name at all, but a modifier to the word “birds”. This is how Ursula Kaplony-Heckel understood the word, taking *3ht* to mean “field”,⁸ although

² *hrjt-tp* “she who is upon the head” or “chieftainess” (with the cobra determinative) is a name of the *uraeus* attested in various combinations in numerous sources (LGG 5: 443–457). The goddess’s name “Cobra of Ra-Horakhty” appears in at least eight texts, among which the Satrap Stela is the earliest. In this case, the name “Cobra of Ra-Horakhty” belongs specifically to the *uraeus*-goddess *w3djt*, although different goddesses could have it (LGG 5: 452–453; add: a name of the goddess *rpjt* (ATHRIBIS IV: 85, Taf. 68, 214, Taf. 157; ATHRIBIS VII: 700 (L 1, 68.4), 797 (L 3, 18.4). Dating: Tiberius); a name of the goddess Great Tefnut (Médamoud I: 52.11: VALBELLE 2023: I, 153, 155; II, 100–101, pls. 52a-b. Dating: Tiberius).

³ SCHÄFER 2011: 164, 174 (q).

⁴ LADYNIN 2022: 134, 141–142 (o).

⁵ PANOV 2020: 289.

⁶ GOEDICKE 1984: 50; RITNER 2003: 396; SCHÄFER 2011: 174; ENGSHEDEN 2021: 110.

⁷ GAUTHIER 1928: 110.

⁸ KAPLONY-HECKEL 2005: 618. The phrase *hrj-jb 3ht* “in the middle of the field” is attested in Dendara XIII: 335.15: *dj=j n=k rd m hrj-jb 3ht wnt nb(t) jm=s* “I give you what grows in the middle of the field, and everything that is on it”.

the word *3ht* “field” is not attested in this written form. Finally, Edda Bresciani translated the phrase strictly following its spelling: “i suoi volatili (che arrivano) a metà della primavera”.⁹

Indeed, an exact analogue to the example from the Satrap Stela — the phrase $\overline{\text{𓂏𓂏𓂏}} \text{ hrj-jb-n-3ht}$, “in the mid-flood season” — is found in the Chronicle of Osorkon.¹⁰ Thus, the word $\overline{\text{𓂏𓂏}}$ in combination with *n(w) hrj-jb* should be read strictly as written, without any corrections: *3ht*, “flood season”. “Birds of the mid-flood season” (*3pdw n(w) hrj-jb 3ht*) come first in the list of foodstuffs that are to be delivered upon the altar of Horus and *w3djt* — the *uraeus* of Ra-Horakhty. Putting aside all the debatable points, I conclude that “birds of the mid-flood season” refer to bird species that were hunted in marshlands¹¹ primarily from September to early October, since they were especially numerous precisely during the flood season (*3ht*). This clarification of the word “birds” can be explained by the author’s penchant for lyricism.

2. Those who feed on blood

The phrase (*ntj*) *ḥnh m znf* “those who feed on blood” or “which feeds on blood”¹² is attested as the name of various deities (in the *sḏm=f* form as well).¹³ The epithet (*ntj*) *ḥnh m znf* “those who feed on blood” also appears in various religious texts referring to animals considered divine beings: lions, rams, and baboons.¹⁴ However, the question of the association of this name on the Satrap Stela with any god, for example, Horus, is pointless: this

⁹ BRESCIANI 2007: 640.

¹⁰ JWIS II: 192.4; CAMINOS 1958: 117, § 183 (n).

¹¹ SEYFRIED 2019: 85–88.

¹² Some researchers, following the transcription by Ahmed Kamal (KAMAL 1905: 170), read the final word *mw* ‘water’ rather than *znf* ‘blood’, smoothly attaching this phrase as a subordinate attributive clause to the sentence with the subject “birds”: “living in the flowing water” (Goedicke), “che vivono nelle sue acque” (Bresciani), “das in seinen Gewässern lebt” (Kaplony-Heckel); criticism of this interpretation: SCHÄFER 2011: 174–175.

¹³ The phrase occurs primarily in later sources: LGG 2: 159, 389, 672; LGG 3: 12; LGG 4: 380; LEITZ 2009: 292–293, 305; LEITZ 2011: 423, 437; SCHMIDT 2022: 424–426, 431. It is first mentioned in Amduat 413, 685 (HORNUNG 1963: 83, 163; HORNUNG, ABT 2007: 151 (413), 291 (685)).

¹⁴ SCHMIDT 2022: 431.

expression is not at all a reference “to Horus’s stay at Khemmis in the marshes near Buto”.¹⁵ Likewise, I will not consider here the corpus of sources for the epithets *wnm/ḥnh/ḥm/sḥm/zwrj/shb* — (*m*) *znf/wtr/dšrw/ṯr* “who consume/drink blood, blood-eater”, as they are irrelevant to the question at hand, although they demonstrate the complexity of these epithets’ interpretation in different contexts.¹⁶

The most important parallel for understanding the phrase (*ntj*) *ḥnh m znf* “those who feed on blood” on the Satrap Stela is the complex description of the category of all mammalian predators: *ntj wnm m jwf zwrj (m) znf* “those who eat flesh and drink blood”. This concept appears twice in the Magical Papyrus Harris 501 = pBM EA 10042, vso (variants are highlighted in bold):

1. P. Harris 501, vso 1.3–4 (Spell X):¹⁷ *ḥtm r3 n m3jw ḥtjw tp-n-j3wt nb k3-sd zp-sn ntj wnm.w m jwf zwrj.w m znf* “May the mouths of lions and hyenas, and any wild beasts that have a long tail, **namely**, those who eat flesh and drink blood, be **stopped**”.

2. P. Harris 501, vso 2.3–5 (Spell Y):¹⁸ *štb r3 n m3jw ḥtjw wnšw tp-n-j3wt nb k3-sd ntj wnm.w m jwf zwrj.w znf* “May the mouths of lions, hyenas, and **wolves**, any wild beasts with a long tail, those who eat flesh and drink blood, be **closed**”.¹⁹

¹⁵ LADYNIN 2022: 118, 141–142 (o).

¹⁶ VUILLEUMIER 2019: 281–290; SCHMIDT 2022: 426–431.

¹⁷ BOMMAS 1998: 38–39, 52; LEITZ 1999: 47, pl. 21; STADLER 2003: 103; GUTH 2018: 187.

¹⁸ BOMMAS 1998: 44, 53; LEITZ 1999: 49, pl. 22; STADLER 2003: 103; GUTH 2018: 191.

¹⁹ On the contamination of the Ramesside verb *štb* ‘to shut in, to enclose’ (WB. IV: 557.8–9) with the earlier and more universal *ḥtm* ‘to seal’, see MUELLER 1975: 225–226. On the still later derivative *štb* meaning ‘to destroy’, see WILSON 1997: 1039. The existence of the verb *štb* ‘to enclose’ before the Ramessides is doubtful, since the term, written  *štb*, from the Annals of Thutmose III, Part 1, col. 90 (URK. IV: 660.7; REDFORD 2003: fig. 4), which is sometimes referred to (WB. Belegstellen IV: 84; see also BLUMENTHAL & MÜLLER & REINEKE 1984: 194: “sind... eingeschlossen”, etc.), should be regarded as the result of the metathesis *bšt* > *šbt* and read as *bštw* “rebellious”. This lexeme underwent the same metathesis in the forms  *štb* < *bšt* “to rebel” *ibid.*, col. 13 (URK. IV: 648.7; REDFORD 2003: fig. 1) and  *šbtw* < *bštw* “those who rebelled” *ibid.*, Part 2, col. 3 (URK. IV: 685.5; REDFORD 2003: fig. 6). M. Omar reads all these three words as *bšt(w)* “rebellious, rebellion” (OMAR 2008: 19–21), and D. Redford translates them the same way (REDFORD 2003: 9, 31, 62). And this is correct.

The concept of *tp-n-j3wt nb* lit. “any head of small cattle”²⁰ is an extended version of the term *j3wt* < *wt*, which denoted “small cattle, a flock” in contrast to *jhw* “large cattle”. The category *wt* “small cattle” in Old and Middle Egyptian included goats, sheep, pigs, and donkeys; in particular, the concept *tp-n-j3wt* < *tp-n-wt* “various small cattle”²¹ corresponded to Napatan *dbn* and Coptic **ⲧⲉⲛⲏⲓ** “(domestic) animal”.²² However, in the Late Egyptian, the word *j3wt* “small cattle” also began to be used to mean “wild animals”.²³ Likewise, the phrase *tp-n-j3wt nb n h3st* “any desert cattle” could also refer to beasts, for example, in P. Harris 500 = pBM 10060, vso, 5.2–3: *jw nḥ = f m tp-n-j3wt nb n h3st* “he ate all kinds of desert game”.²⁴ Judging by the context, the evidence of P. Harris 501 also refers to beasts, or more precisely, as follows from further explanations, to predators.²⁵

To paint a more vivid image, the epithet *k3-sd* “one who has a raised tail” was added in P. Harris 501 to the generalization *tp-n-j3wt nb* “any of the wild animals”,²⁶ but even this seemed insufficient, and then, using the explanatory conjunction *zp-sn* “namely” (lit. “twice, twofold”),²⁷ it was further specified as a group of predators by a combination of two epithets: *ntj wnm.w m jwf zwrj.w (m) znf* “eating flesh, drinking blood”. Variations of

²⁰ For an interpretation of the element *tp* “head/first/main/best” in this phrase, see: GARDINER 1952: 30–31. Probably, *tp* here means “various, any” < “exemplar”. Cf. the translations by BOMMAS 1998: 39, 44: “der Erste aller Tiere” and LEITZ 1999: 47, 49: “first of all animals”.

²¹ Cf. WB. V: 267.4: “das Beste an Tieren”.

²² WASSELL 1991: I, 10; ČERNÝ 1976: 182; VYČIHL 1983: 211b; WERNING 2004: 199.

²³ WB. I: 29.16; LESKO, SWITLASKI LESKO 2002–2004: II, 205; MEEKS 2012: 527, note 91–92.

²⁴ GARDINER 1932: 3.2–3.

²⁵ GUTH 2018: 189–190, Anm. G.

²⁶ Cf. BOMMAS 1998: 41, Anm. 92: „Bei den Tieren „mit erhobenem Schwanz“ handelt es sich zweifellos um Skorpione“. However, in fact, *k3-sd* “one with a raised tail” is an epithet of a lion and other predators; for example, in P. Anastasi IV, 13.3–4 (GARDINER 1937: 49.4–5) the epithet *k3-sd* “whose tail is raised” is applied to red jackal (*wns dšr*, *Canis simensis*) (MCDONALD 2000: 78). An analogy with Seth’s animal, depicted with a raised tail, also suggests itself here.

²⁷ Cf. WINAND & GOHY 2011: 39; SCHMIDT 2022: 427, Anm. 167; GOLDWASSER 2023: 143–144 (all omit the element *zp-sn* “twice” in translations of pBM EA 10042, vso 1.3, since it is not in P. Harris 501 vso 2.4; Ingrid Bohms (BOHMS 2013: 119, 215) took the element *zp-sn* “twice” as a reason to repeat the entire phrase. Martin BOMMAS (1998: 39) repeats only the combination “mit erhobenem Schwanz”, similarly: LEITZ 1999: 47: “first of all animals, with raised tail (twice)” and GUTH 2018: 159. M.A. Stadler (STADLER 2003: 103–105) also saw in this list “all predatory mammals” with the following explanation: “alle Tiere erhobenen Schwanzes (zweimal)”.

this combination of epithets are attributed to the divine lion in late texts, for example, in EDFOU IV: 107.7–8: *wnm m jwf s^cm m znf* “eating flesh, drinking blood”; EDFOU IV: 117.9, 262.15: *nh m shb znf* “who feeds himself by sucking blood”; in a *snq-n-* hymn from the time of Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysos in Kom Ombo, line 2: *wnm h^cw=sn shb wtr* “who is eating their flesh, who is sucking blood”;²⁸ Dendara XII: 341.3–4: *nh=j m stpt s^cm=j m znf m=n btwww nw hprt* “I eat choice pieces of flesh, I drink the blood of those who rebel against Dendara”, and others, including those with rearranged elements of this combination.²⁹ This phrase used to classify animals is included in its short form *ntj nh m znf* “which feeds on blood” in the list of donations from the granted lands on the Satrap Stela.

Thus, *ntj nh m znf* “those who feed on blood” is not an epithet of a deity, an object of dedication, but a phrase describing predators obtained by hunting. The set of donated game *3pdw=f n hrj-jb 3ht* and *ntj nh m znf* in URK. II: 20.13 is divided into two parts: “its birds of the mid-flood season” and “those who feed on blood (i.e., beasts)”. The expression (*jht nb(t) pr(t) m 3ht(t)=f* “everything that comes from its field”, i.e., the harvest, completes the list of goods brought upon the altar of the gods. This list is structured as follows: 1. birds — 2. beasts — 3. harvest. The former interpretation that the birds were intended for some bloodthirsty deity living either in the marshes or in the city of Khemmis should be rejected as untenable.

Ultimately, instead of several deities in the line 16 of the Satrap Stela (URK. II: 20.13–16) there remain only two, whose names appear after the list of donations: Horus, the Lord of Pe, and *w3djt*, the Cobra of Ra-Horakhty. The bloodthirsty marsh-dweller turns out to be a fiction created by Egyptologists.

Thus, precise names of goods from the granted lands are replaced on the Satrap Stela with general or figurative descriptions: game (= *birds of the mid-flood season*), meat of wild animals (= *those who feed on blood*), and harvest (= *everything that comes from the fields*). Standard offering lists were not compiled in this way; therefore, they could not have been simply transferred from royal decrees. On the contrary, the compiler of the Satrap Stela modified the standards of donation lists, borrowing expressions from poets and theologians from among local priests of the Buto temple.³⁰

²⁸ EICKE 2021: 160.

²⁹ VENTKER 2012: 91, 163, 168, 234; EICKE 2021: 162, Anm. j-k; SCHMIDT 2022: 430–431.

³⁰ I am grateful to Alexander Ilin-Tomich, Alexander Safronov, and Dmitry Sychev for their assistance in preparing this article. The article was submitted to the editors on April 13, 2026.

Abbreviations

Athribis IV — Leitz & Mendel 2017
Athribis VII — Leitz 2022
Dendara XII — Cauville 2007
Dendara XIII — Cauville 2020
Edfou IV — Chassinat 2009
JWIS II — Jansen-Winkel 2007
JWIS V — Jansen-Winkel 2023
LGG 1–7 — Leitz 2002
PM IV — Porter & Moss 1934
Urk. II — Sethe 1904–1916
Urk. IV — Sethe 1906/1927–1909
Wb. — Erman & Grapow 1982

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A Sabaean Goddess in Ḥaḍramawt and Some Peculiarities of Her Cult at the Temple Raḥbān (Site Raybūn)¹

DOI: 10.55512/wmo713498

Submitted: March 16, 2026.

Accepted: April 10, 2026.

Abstract: In the present article the author examines some distinctive features of the veneration of the Sabaean goddess Dhāt Ḥimyam in the temple Raḥbān located at the site Raybūn in the western part of inland Hadramawt. The article is based on a selection of inscriptions discovered during the excavations of the above-mentioned sanctuary by the Soviet-Yemenite Complex Expedition in 1984, 1988–1990. Special attention is given to: the syncretism of Dhāt Ḥimyam and the Qatabanian goddess Dhāt Ṣahrān, some of the functions of secondary deities subjugated to Dhāt Ḥimyam, a re-interpretation of a votive object called *bḥt* dedicated to her, and the connection of this goddess with land property.

Key words: Ancient Yemen, South Arabian epigraphic documentation, Hadramitic and Sabaic languages, site Raybun in inland Hadramawt, Soviet excavations of Raybun in the eighties, inscription from the temple Rahban (Raybun I).

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Among the five supreme deities of Saba' usually enumerated in final invocations of Sabaic inscriptions, viz. 'Athtar, Hawbas, Almaqah, Dāt Ḥimyam and Dāt Ba'dān,² only Dāt Ḥimyam³ was incorporated in the pantheon

¹ Supported by the research grant of the Russian Science Foundation, project No. 25-28-01820 "Epigraphy of Ancient Hadramawt according to the Documentation of the Soviet-Yemeni Joint Complex Expedition: the Rahban Temple in the Raybun Oasis", carried out in 2026–2027 at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

² See, e.g.: ROBIN 1996: col. 1156–1157.

³ Main conclusions about the cult of this goddess based on the materials of the present article are included in: FRANTSOUZOFF & ROSSI 2023.

of another cultural-political area of ancient Yemen, following the terminology elaborated by Andrey Korotayev.⁴ I mean the pantheon of ancient Ḥaḍramawt, more precisely that of Raybūn, where two temples of considerable size dedicated to this goddess were excavated in 1984–1991 by the Soviet Yemenite Complex (i.e. multidisciplinary) Expedition (SOYCE): Raḥbān (site Raybūn I, bld. 2–4, 7) and Na‘mān which in the 1st half of the 1st millennium BC bore the name of Kafas (site Raybūn V). In this paper a detailed analysis of several fragmentary and complete inscriptions from Raḥbān, which, with a rare exception, have not been published yet, is given in order to throw light upon new aspects of the cult of Dāt Ḥimyam.

It should be noted that Ḥaḍramawt until its conquest by the Ḥimyarite kingdom in the beginning of the 4th c. AD had never been subjugated to direct political control of Saba’, nor had it borrowed principal components of the Sabaeen culture in contrast to Da‘mat, the earliest state (or rather proto-state) on the Horn of Africa, which adopted the political system of Saba’ as well as its pantheon.⁵ It was from the official religious cult reflected in Ethio-Sabaic monumental texts that the veneration of Dāt Ḥimyam spread among the indigenous population of pre-Axumite Ethiopia who transformed its name into Dāt Ḥamān.⁶ The situation in ancient Ḥaḍramawt proved to be quite different. There is almost no evidence of the worship of Dāt Ḥimyam in Shabwa and in the central provinces of this kingdom.⁷ However, its cult became very popular in inland Ḥaḍramawt situated on the periphery of the Ḥaḍramite cultural-political area. The existence of its temples is attested not only at Raybūn but also at Bi’r Ḥamad.⁸

It seems that at the dawn of South Arabian civilization Sabaeen merchants and craftsmen, who were entering the local society of inland Ḥaḍramawt, brought their own deities with them. In contrast to Almaqah, the so-called ‘national’ god of Saba’, the goddess Dāt Ḥimyam was not directly associated with Sabaeen political dominance. Certainly, there were other decisive factors, probably connected with her functions, which contributed to the adop-

⁴ KOROTAYEV 1995: passim.

⁵ ROBIN 1996: col. 1123–1124, 1157.

⁶ In all probability, local centres of the worship of Dāt Ḥimyam are situated at the site of Feqya and in Dakhanamo (FRANTSOUZOFF 2006: 576, note 22–23).

⁷ In the epigraphic documentation originating from these regions its name occurs only once: *[D]T/[Ḥ]MY[M]* is restored with certainty in the final invocation of Hamilton 2 A & B + Shabwa S/75/128, l. 2.

⁸ SEDOV 1995: 105; FRANTSOUZOFF 2001c: 167, note 24.

tion of her cult in inland Ḥaḍramawt, especially in Raybūn, but they remain obscure.

Analysis of epigraphic documentation originating from Kafas/Na‘mān (Raybūn V) demonstrates that the percentage of personal names attested both in Old Sabaic texts and in this temple’s inscriptions dated from the so-called “ancient” palaeographic period (An.), i.e. approximately from the 8th–3rd cc. BC⁹, is rather high.¹⁰

However, the most convincing argument in favour of the Sabaeen presence in Raybūn at the beginning of its history was found in the temple Raḥbān. The complete dedicatory inscription SOYCE 673a-b (Appendix, No. 1; pl. 1) dated from An. 1, which consists of two blocks re-used in the south-eastern corner of the so-called ‘new altar’ of building 3, was undoubtedly compiled by a Sabaeen. First of all, this inscription is dedicated to Almaqah; second, its author bears the personal name *YBḤR’L* and the patronymic *MḤQM-m*, both typical for Old Sabaic,¹¹ and has a lineage name (*ḡ-GNZ-n*),¹² while in the onomasticon of Raybūn references to clans or lineages occur extremely seldom. Finally, the character *z*, which disappeared in Hadramitic monumental epigraphy,¹³ is attested twice in this short text.¹⁴ The discovery of SOYCE 673a-b does not necessarily imply the existence of a temple of Almaqah in early Raybūn, since some dedications to other deities occur, although rather seldom, in the epigraphy of Raḥbān. Among them there is an inscription dedicated to Sīn (Siyān or Sayīn),¹⁵ which also goes back to An. 1 (SOYCE 1799 = Rb I/89 bld. 4, lev. I no. 225; Appendix, No. 2). It must be noted that this ‘national’ god of Ḥaḍramawt corresponds in the Sabaeen pantheon to Almaqah.

In addition, eight dedications to Dāt Ṣahrān (one of them on palm-leaf stalk) were discovered in Raḥbān (SOYCE 520; SOYCE 635 = Rb I/84 bld. 3, lev. I

⁹ On dividing the history of Raybūn into periods and stages based on palaeographic and linguistic criteria see: FRANTSOUZOFF 2001d: 32–48; FRANTSOUZOFF 2007: 22–34.

¹⁰ Among 69 anthroponyms of this temple, which go back to An., 12 (i.e. 17,4%) are also found in the Old Sabaic onomasticon (FRANTSOUZOFF 2007: 55, 57, note 93).

¹¹ TAIRAN 1992: 209, 234–235.

¹² This proper noun and even this root are attested for the first time in the onomasticon of ancient South Arabia.

¹³ FRANTSOUZOFF 2001d: 50. However, this character was sometimes used instead of the *ḡ* in Hadramitic documents written on wood (see note 17 below).

¹⁴ For the second time it appears in the name of the dedicated person *’L’Z* which in Hadramitic is always spelt as *’L’D* (see, e.g.: BEESTON 1984: 68: § H 2:2).

¹⁵ On the transliteration of this deity’s name see: FRANTSOUZOFF 1997: 123–124, note 2.

no. 116; SOYCE 636+637 = Rb I/84 bld. 3, lev. I no. 112a-e + no. 113a-c; SOYCE 777 = Rb I/84 bld. 2, lev. I no. 104a-c; SOYCE 1700 = Rb I/88 passage, lev. I no. 94; SOYCE 1868 = Rb I/89 bld. 4, lev. I no. 299; SOYCE 2203 = Rb I/90 bld. 4 note 39 — see Appendix, No. 3–9; X.Rb-89 no. 7).¹⁶ Under this local spelling (with *ṣ* instead of *ṣ̣*)¹⁷ was mentioned one of the main goddesses of the Qatabānian pantheon *Ḍāt Ṣahrān*, whose temple existed in Shabwa in the 1st c. AD (Hamilton 8).¹⁸ This deity was usually considered a Qatabānian counterpart of *Ḍāt Ḥimyam*.¹⁹ Although this identification was based on the famous concept of the Divine Triad advanced by D. Nielsen which is now completely rejected,²⁰ the epigraphic documents cited above confirm such syncretism. From the chronological point of view, the texts from Raḥbān dedicated to *Ḍāt Ṣahrān* are distributed between the initial and final periods in the history of Raybūn: according to palaeographic criteria (see pl. 3–9) six monumental inscriptions go back to An. 1 and one to R. (Recent), i.e. to the 3rd–1st cc. BC (SOYCE 635). As for the document on palm-leaf stalk X.Rb-89 no. 7, the *terminus ante quem* for the level it originates in is the 6th c. BC. This dating ascertained on the basis of radiocarbon analysis corresponds well with the quasi-monumental nature of its script which represents the first step in the evolution towards minuscule writing. For the most part, these texts are fragmentary (SOYCE 520, 635, 1700, 2203) or very brief (X.Rb-89 no. 7) and contain no names, except that of *Ḍāt Ṣahrān* and probably that of ‘Amm, the ‘national’ god of Qatabān.²¹ Only in the following three cases the authors’ personal names as well as their patronymics are extant: *YHR-m[/bn/]MLKKRB* (SOYCE 636+637/1–2), *MS²HR-m/bn/YRBḤ’L* (SOYCE 777/1–2) and *ḤṢBT/bn/HḌM-m* (SOYCE 1868). It is worth noting that among these proper nouns *YHR-m*

¹⁶ The document on wood X.Rb-89 note 7 appeared first in: BAUER & AKOPIAN & LUNDIN 1990: 168–173. It was reinterpreted in: FRANTSOUZOFF 1999b: 55–56, 62–63, note 6–10.

¹⁷ Besides that, in X.Rb-89 note 7/1 *ḌT* is rendered as *ZT* (FRANTSOUZOFF 1999b: 55, 62–63, note 7).

¹⁸ Although short preliminary editions of SOYCE 636+637 and 777 were published by Gleb M. Bauer (see Appendix, No. 5–6), he did not succeed in identifying *ḌT/ṢHR-n* with the Qatabanian goddess *ḌT/ZHR-n*. Moreover, he and his colleague Avraam G. Lundin considered *Ḍāt Ṣahrān* to be simply one of the names of *Ḍāt Ḥimyam* (BAUER & AKOPIAN & LUNDIN 1990: 172, note 9).

¹⁹ See, e.g.: JAMME 1947: 107.

²⁰ ROBIN 1996: col. 1163.

²¹ In X.Rb-89 note 7/1 (FRANTSOUZOFF 199b: 55).

occurs in Sabaic²² and Qatabanic,²³ *MLKKRB* — in Sabaic,²⁴ Minaic²⁵ and Hadramitic (RES 3869/2), *MS²HR-m* — in Sabaic²⁶ and Hadramitic (Raybūn-Kafas/Na‘mān 20/1), *HDM-m*, — only in Hadramitic (CaTh 42; Raybūn-Kafas/Na‘mān 14/1, 184, 238, 244), while *YRBḤ'L* and *ḤṢBT* are attested here for the first time. Lower percentage of Qatabanian names is also typical for dedications to Sīn and ‘Amm discovered in a private house at Raybūn (Raybūn I, building 6). As Abraham Lundin has already remarked, the people who left these inscriptions did not appear to be of Qatabanian origin, but were undoubtedly influenced by the culture of Qatabān.²⁷ This conclusion also applies to the texts of Raḥbān dedicated to Dāt Ṣahrān. In all probability, at Raybūn, from the beginning of its written history until the definitive destruction of the settlement, there existed a group of residents involved in commercial contacts with the Qatabanian cultural-political area who were worshipping at least two supreme deities of Qatabān side by side with their local divinities.

One of the most interesting features of the cult of Dāt Ḥimyam at Raybūn consists in the existence of a kind of secondary deities subordinate to her. Of course, references to these genii are known outside Raybūn, but not in connection with this goddess.²⁸ However, the interpretation of the term *r'bt* attested in two complete dedicatory inscriptions from Raḥbān as “healing spirit”, which was established on a meaning of derivatives from the same root in Mehri and Jibbali,²⁹ is to be reconsidered, since the epigraphic material testifies that the function of divine healer was peculiar to Sīn, not to Dāt Ḥimyam to whom no request for recovery from illness had been addressed.³⁰

In the complete large inscription SOYCE 708 dated to R. (Appendix, No. 10), an allusion to mourning rites permits to assume that *r'bt* played a

²² HARDING 1971: 689; TAIRAN 1992: 254–255.

²³ HAYAJNEH 1998: 355.

²⁴ HARDING 1971: 569.

²⁵ ARBACH 1993: I, 86.

²⁶ HARDING 1971: 548.

²⁷ LUNDIN 1996: 91–92.

²⁸ On the contrary, in the expressions, such as *DT/ḤMYM/'TTR/YĠL* or *DT/ḤMYM/'TTR/BS³R-m* in Qatabanic and *DT/ḤMYM/'TTR-YGR* in Sabaic (Ja 618/35–36), Dāt Ḥimyam herself is reduced to the status of a secondary deity submitted to ‘Athtar (FRANTSOUZOFF 2007: 65; cf. an alternative attempt to interpret them as arguments in favour of the existence of “sacred marriage” in ancient South Arabia in: MÜLLER 1993).

²⁹ FRANTSOUZOFF 1995: 19.

³⁰ FRANTSOUZOFF 1997: 122; FRANTSOUZOFF 2001a: 60.

certain part in funeral ceremonies. In the Hadramitic epigraphy the terms *rys*³ and *s^lwḏ'* (SOYCE 708/4), which appear to be crucial for a new understanding of this text, are attested once more only in the funerary inscription of ar-Rukba (SOYCE 903).³¹ In the expression [*w-gr*](*b*)/*g*<*r*>*bt-s^l/rys³-m* (SOYCE 903/3) the first of these terms was translated “in order”,³² but in contexts such as these it appears to designate different kinds of arrangements connected with funeral rites, from construction of someone’s tomb to mourning over his death. In all probability, the occurrence of the causative stem derived from the root *WD'* — *s^lwḏ'* both in SOYCE 903/3 and SOYCE 708/4 can not be explained by a simple coincidence, albeit the relationship between a burial and a procedure of leading canals or drawing off water remains enigmatic. It should be emphasized that, in contrast to the obscure context of *w-{y}b{ḡ}h/s^lwḏ'-s³* “and Her (i.e. Dāt Ḥimyam’s) procedure of drawing off water was accomplished(?)” (SOYCE 708/4),³³ the expression *w-s^lwḏ'/s^l<r>-s³y<w>* “and (the author) led its (i.e. the tomb’s) two canals” (SOYCE 903/3) was interpreted without difficulty, but this reference to irrigation works in a funerary inscription seems strange.³⁴ Perhaps the presence of running water was considered a necessary component of funeral ceremonies.

The inscription SOYCE 1898 + 1897a-b + 1833a-e, which also goes back to R. (Appendix, No. 11), probably bears a certain relation to another function of *r'bt*. At first sight it is not clear from its contents what precisely this '*hnt*' (poor or middle-aged woman) sought to ask from Dāt Ḥimyam and her genius *r'bt* through the mediation of Akraḥ son of Ḥamayhumū. The supposition proposed by Alfred Beeston “that some poor woman lacking the means for making an offering herself had asked him to do so on her behalf, and his refusal angered the goddess”³⁵ seems tempting. However, if we accept the interpretation of the expression *bn/hl/ṣḏq-m* as “because of possessions duly bestowed as alms”, it should result from this that, on the contrary, Akraḥ gave alms to this woman and such a charitable act nevertheless insulted the goddess for some obscure reasons: helping the poor in ancient Raybūn was probably linked with a complicated ritual that he unintentionally broke.

³¹ Published in: FRANTSOUZOFF 2003a: 251–265.

³² FRANTSOUZOFF 2003a: 253–255.

³³ The same meaning is attested for the substantivized infinitive *hwḏ'-m* in Sabaic, although in a fragmentary context (Ry 443/1: “écoulement”; cf. BEESTON & GHUL & MÜLLER & RYCKMANS 1982: 157: “drawing off water, prélèvement d’eau”).

³⁴ FRANTSOUZOFF 2003a: 255–257.

³⁵ BEESTON 1995.

The term *r'bt* is also restored with certainty in the fragmentary inscription SOYCE 1755 = Rb I/88 passage, lev. I no. 131 (Appendix, No. 12). In this case it occurs in a formula of absolution from sins after the verb *s³twr*. In spite of some lacunae, it follows from the context that this secondary deity subordinate to Dāt Ḥimyam claimed some property which probably ought to be delivered to the temple's treasury. This act of proprietary rights' transfer had to be commemorated in the inscription compiled by Ilra'ad, who was a priestess at Raḥbān.³⁶ It seems possible to advance a hypothesis that control over divine, or rather sacerdotal, property was one of the functions of *r'bt*.

There is at least one more fragment originating from Raḥbān which is concerned with some proprietary rights (probably in land): SOYCE 707 = Rb I/84 bld. 3, lev. I no. 199a-c (Appendix, No. 13).

However, *r'bt* is not the unique spirit or genius of Dāt Ḥimyam attested in the inscriptions of Raybūn. The expression *ṣ'y/DT-H[MYM]* in Raybūn-Kafas/Na'mān 95/2 is also connected with this phenomenon. Unfortunately, the context it occurs in is very fragmentary, but some etymological parallels, especially with *aṣ-ṣar'āni/aṣ-ṣir'āni*, synonym of *al-'aṣrānī* ("the night and the day", "the forenoon and the afternoon, from the first part of day to mid-day and from midday to sunset", "the morning, between daybreak and sunrise, and the evening, between sunset and nightfall", "the two extremities of the day"), in Arabic³⁷ seem tempting and even imply again a possibility of ascribing to the goddess an astral nature.

Finally, in the temple Raḥbān a very interesting fragment of a stele was discovered (SOYCE 2228 = Rb I/90 bld. 4 no. 64; Appendix, No. 14). It should be stressed that stelae are not typical at all for both temples of Dāt Ḥimyam at Raybūn in which inscriptions were usually engraved on slabs. On the contrary, in the temple Mayfa'ān dedications to Sīn, especially large ones, were rather often written on stelae.³⁸ Besides this peculiarity, restoring a normal dedicatory text from this fragment is completely impossible, since in the first half of l. 1 there is no space for the author's name and the verb *s¹qny*, not to mention the patronymic. To my mind, the only way of filling in the lacuna in l. 1 consists in admitting that this is a fragment of a divine decree found for the first time in Hadramitic epigraphy. Indeed, similar decrees issued by the god Ta'lab Riyām usually begin with formulae like:

³⁶ FRANSTOUZOFF 1997: 114–115, 123; FRANSTOUZOFF 1999a: 155.

³⁷ LANE 1863–1893: 4, 1679.

³⁸ FRANSTOUZOFF 1995: 17, 24, note 17.

hgn/k-wqh/T'LB/RYM-m/b'VTR'T/b-ms' 'l-hw “According to what Ta’lab Riyām^{um}, Lord of Tur’at, commanded in His oracle” (Gryaznevitch 225/1).³⁹ We do not know what might have been the exact Hadramitic equivalents of *hgn* and *wqh* in this type of texts, but with some hesitation the restoration of *dt/ks' (t)* can be proposed here. In the epigraphy of Raybūn this verb was used for describing commands given by deities to their worshippers.⁴⁰ At least in one case the orders of the goddess Dāt Ḥimyam are designated with the infinitive *ftḥ* (SOYCE 2213 = Rb I/90 bld. 4 no. 49a-b; see Appendix, No. 15). However, personal forms of the same verb are also employed for rendering the directives of the priestess Ilra’ad (SOYCE 706 = Rb I/84 bld. 3, lev. I note 198a-f/5, 6).⁴¹

However, the most exciting feature of the fragment SOYCE 2228 is the unique occurrence of the expression *[..]<m>y/<D>T/H<M>|[YM]* (ll. 2–[3]). It is obvious that it refers to some spirits of the goddess, different from *r'bt* or *ṣr'y*. Unfortunately, no reliable restoration of their name can be proposed for lack of parallels. Thus, this decree was issued not by Dāt Ḥimyam alone, but jointly by the goddess and her spirits *[..]my*.

Besides *ftḥ*, some other terms were used for designating judicial decisions taken by the priesthood of the temple Raḥbān. Among them of special interest are derivatives from *IFIS³FT*, which have been already attested in Sa'baic,⁴² more frequently in Minaic⁴³ and Qatabanic,⁴⁴ but not in Hadramitic. In the inscriptions of Raḥbān they are represented by the *t*-infix stem *s³ftḥ*, which occurs twice as a transitive verb probably meaning “to obtain a legal decision (from Dāt Ḥimyam or a priestess of hers)” and thus directly connected with the goddess (SOYCE 1674 = Rb I/88 passage, lev. I no. 66; SOYCE 2245 = Rb I/90 bld. 4 no. 81 — see Appendix, No. 16–17), as well as by the strange form *s³ftk* (SOYCE 2306 = Rb I/90 bld. 4 no. 143; Appendix, No. 18). Its final suffix *-k* can be interpreted either as a perfect termination of the 2nd or 1st person in singular or as an attached pronoun of the same persons and in the same number. A parallel with the Ge'ez enclitic par-

³⁹ Larger formulae introducing divine decrees are also attested, e.g. in RES 4176 = GI 1210/1: *b-hg/dn-mḥr-n/hḥr/T'LB/RYM/YRḥM/s²'b-hw/S¹M'Y/...* “Entsprechend diesem Erlaß, hat Ta’lab von Riyām Yurḥim seinem Stamm Sum’ay angeordnet...” (translated according to its last edition: MÜLLER 1997: 92).

⁴⁰ FRANSTOUZOFF 2003b: 43.

⁴¹ FRANSTOUZOFF 1997: 122.

⁴² BEESTON & GHUL & MÜLLER & RYCKMANS 1982: 150.

⁴³ ARBACH 1993: I, 98.

⁴⁴ RICKS 1989: 181.

ticle *-ke* “now, then, so then, thus, therefore, of course, indeed, ...”⁴⁵ is not excluded too. The 2nd person forms of both verbs and attached pronouns in monumental South Arabian inscriptions are attested with extreme rarity.⁴⁶ However, the occurrence of ...*bs^l/s^l’lk* “...a kind of food(?) that thou asked” in a fragmentary context (SOYCE 2224 = Rb I/90 bld. 4 no. 60/2)⁴⁷ represents a forceful argument in favour of the identification of *s³f^ltk* with a perfect form (2 sing.). The use of the verbal ending *-k* in *s³f^ltk* and *s^l’lk* is one of the most peculiar grammatical phenomena discovered in the epigraphy of Raybūn. Its origin seems to be connected with the influence of epistolary formulae of local documents written on wood⁴⁸ upon the style of monumental inscriptions.

The epigraphic material analyzed in this paper demonstrates that, albeit the cult of Dāt Ḥimyam was introduced at Raybūn (and probably at some other sites of inland Ḥaḍramawt, like Bi’r Ḥamad) by Sabaeans, she was undergoing in the course of centuries a considerable transformation into a local deity and, as a result, acquired some attributes which had been unknown to her Sabaean prototype: e.g. some spirits or genii, viz. *r’bt*, *sr’y* and *[..]my*, became subordinate to her. They seem to take their origin from archaic divinities worshipped by the indigenous population of the region before the beginning of the first expansion of Saba’. It is not excluded that some functions of the goddess, which she was exercising with the assistance of *r’bt*, viz. protection of funeral ceremonies or control over proprietary rights, had been initially inherent to a local independent deity which later evolved into this *r’bt*.

⁴⁵ LESLAU 1987: 271.

⁴⁶ BEESTON 1982: 14: § 5:2; BEESTON 1962: 44: § 37:2.

On the contrary, in texts on wooden sticks and palm-leaf stalks the use of the 2nd person is widespread (see, e.g.: RYCKMANS & MÜLLER & ABDALLAH 1994: 11, 29).

⁴⁷ The interpretation of *bs^l/* is here proposed with a certain hesitation by analogy with *mbs^l/* “cooking-place” in Sabaic (BEESTON & GUL & MÜLLER & RYCKMANS 1982: 32) as well as with *basal* “to be well-baked (bread), to be cooked, to cook meat, boil”, *bisil* “to be done (food)” and *bāsil* “done (food)” in Yemeni Arabic (PIAMENTA 1990: 1, 31).

Among the inscriptions of Raḥbān this term is attested once more in a similar context: ...<*b*>-<*b*>*s^l/s^l’nt/*... “...in (with or by) a kind of food(?) which she demanded as support...” (SOYCE 1600 = Rb I/88 bld. 4, lev. I no. 1/2).

⁴⁸ Although in both Hadramitic documents of this type from Raybūn published till now the 2nd person forms are not attested (X.Rb-89 no. 7 and X.Rb-87 no. 4; FRANTSOUZOFF 1999b: 55–65), there are good reasons for supposing that minuscule texts in Ḥaḍramawt were compiled in accordance with the same rules of grammar as in Naṣṣān.

Appendices.

Publication of 18 inscriptions from Raḥbān referred to in this article

No. 1 (pl. 1a-b)



a



b

Pl. 1a-b. Inscription SOYCE 673a-b

Siglum: SOYCE 673a-b

Bibliography: BAUER 1995: 138, fig. 21 (publication of block 1 excavated in 1984); 149, note 52 (a brief reference to block 2 discovered in 1988).

Dating: An. 1

Text:

block 1

YBḤR 'L/bn/MH#QM-m/d-GNZ-n/

block 2

*hqny/'LMQH/'L'Z***Translation:**Yabḥar'il son of Muhaqīm^{um} dū Ganzān dedicated Il'azz to Almaqah.**Commentary:** in this article (especially notes 11–14).

N°2 (pl. 2)



Pl. 2. Inscription SOYCE 1799 = Rb I/89 bld. 4, lev. I no. 225

Sigla: SOYCE 1799 = Rb I/89 bld. 4, lev. I no. 225**Dating:** An. 1**Text:**1. *GRWS²-m/bn/T[B'K=]*2. *<R>B/hqny/S^lYN***Translation:**1. Garwaš^{um} son of Ta[bi'ka-]

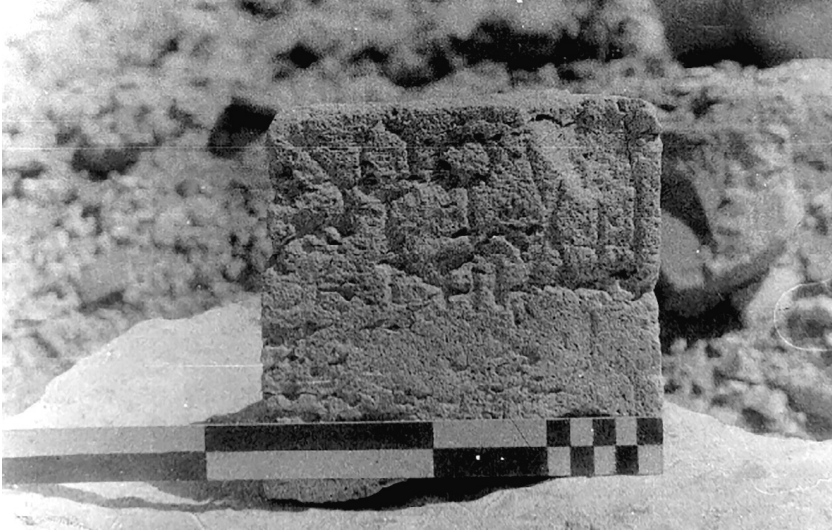
2. rib dedicated to Sīn

Commentary:1. 1, *GRWS²-m*: the first occurrence of this name in the epigraphy of ancient South Arabia.

ll. 1–2, $T[B'K]<R>B$: the restoration of this name, widespread in Sabaic,⁴⁹ Qatabanic⁵⁰ and attested once in Minaic,⁵¹ seems the most probable, though it has not occurred yet in Hadramitic.

l. 2, $S'YN$: in this article (note 15).

No. 3 (pl. 3)



Pl. 3. Inscription SOYCE 520

Siglum: SOYCE 520

Dating: An. 1

Text:

[.../bn(t)/.../hqny(t)/]<D>T-ŠHR[-n]

Translation:

[Such a one, son (or daughter) of such a one, dedicated to] Dāt Šahr[ān]

Commentary: a different restoration of the beginning of this text is also possible.

⁴⁹ HARDING 1971: 128; TAIRAN 1992: 88.

⁵⁰ HAYAJNEH 1998: 306.

⁵¹ ARBACH 1993: II, 131.

No. 4 (pl. 4)



Pl. 4. SOYCE 635 = Rb I/84 bld. 3, lev. I no. 116

Sigla: SOYCE 635 = Rb I/84 bld. 3, lev. I no. 116

Dating: R.

Text:

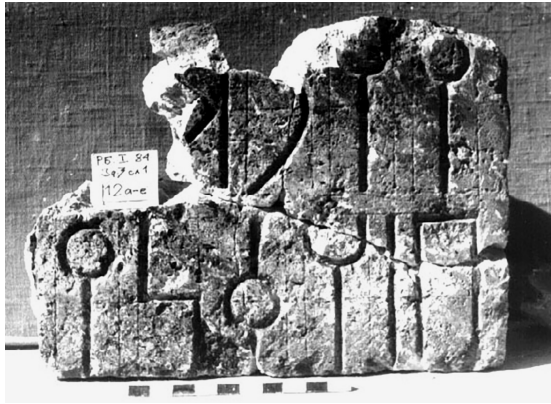
1. [.../bn/.../s^lqn]<y></> DT-Š<H>=
2. [R-n/nfs^l-s^l/w-'dn-s^l/w-]wld-s^l

Translation:

1. [Such a one, son of Such a one, dedica]ted to Dāt Šah-
2. [rān his soul and his will and] his children.

Commentary: in this article.

No. 5 (pl. 5a-b)



a



b

Pl. 5. Inscription SOYCE 636 + 637 = Rb I/84 bld. 3, lev. I no. 112a-e + no. 113a-c

Sigla: SOYCE 636+637 = Rb I/84 bld. 3, lev. I no. 112a-e + no. 113a-c

Bibliography: BAUER 1995: 120 (without photographs).

Dating: An. 1.

Text:

1. *YH<R>-<m>[/bn/]MLKKR* = *Yahr^{um}*

2. *B/hqny</>[D]T/ŠHR-n*

Translation:

1. [son of] Malkīkarib

2. dedicated to [Dā]t Šahrān.

Commentary: in this article (especially notes 18, 22–25).

No. 6 (pl. 6)



Pl. 6. SOYCE 777 = Rb I/84 bld. 2, lev. I no. 104a-c

Sigla: SOYCE 777 = Rb I/84 bld. 2, lev. I no. 104a-c

Bibliography: BAUER 1995: 120, fig. 4.

Description: complete text inscribed on the upper part of the stele broken from the bottom.

Dating: An. 1.

Text:

1. *MS²HR-m/bn/YRBḪ=*
2. *'L/hqny/DṬ/ṢHR-=*
3. *n*

Translation:

1. Mašhūr^{um} son of Yarbaḫ-
2. 'il dedicated to Dāt Ṣahr-
3. ān.

Commentary: in this article (especially notes 18, 26).

No. 7 (pl. 7)



Pl. 7. Inscription SOYCE 1700 = Rb I/88 passage, lev. I no. 94

Sigla: SOYCE 1700 = Rb I/88 passage, lev. I no. 94

Dating: An. 1

Text:

[.../bn(t)/.../hqny(t)/]<D>T-ŠHR-n

Translation:

[Such a one, son (or daughter) of Such a one, dedicated to] Dāt Šahrān.

Commentary: a different restoration of this text is also possible.

No. 8 (pl. 8a-d)

Sigla: SOYCE 1868 = Rb I/89 bld. 4, lev. I no. 299

Description: complete inscription, partly damaged, on four vertical sides of a sacrificial altar decorated with a gutter in the form of an ox head.

Dating: An. 1

Text:

lateral side front side lateral side back side

<H>ŠBT/bn/<H>|DM-*gutter*m/|<h><q><n><y></><D>T/ŠHR-n



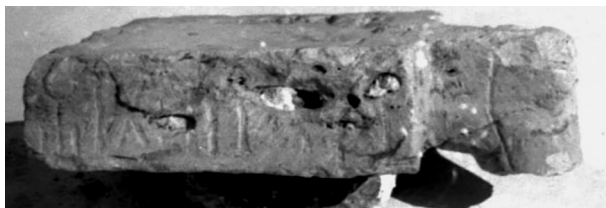
a



b



c



d

Pl. 8a-d. Inscription SOYCE 1868 = Rb I/89 bld. 4, lev. I no. 299

Translation:

Ḥaṣbat son of Ḥaḍam^{um} dedicated to Dāt Ṣahrān.

Commentary: in this article.

No. 9 (pl. 9)



Pl. 9. Inscription SOYCE 2203 = Rb I/90 bld. 4 no. 39

Sigla: SOYCE 2203 = Rb I/90 bld. 4 no. 39

Dating: An. 1

Text:

[1.] [.../bn(t)/..../hqny(t)/DT(/)]

2. ŠHR[-n]

Translation:

[1.] [Such a one, son (or daughter) of Such a one, dedicated to Dāt]

2. Šahr[ān]

Commentary: a different restoration of the beginning of this text is also possible.

No. 10 (pl. 10a-c)



a



b



c

Pl. 10a-c. Inscription SOYCE 708 = Rb I/84 bld. 3, lev. I no. 196a-d + no. 201a-b

Sigla: SOYCE 708 = Rb I/84 bld. 3, lev. I no. 196a-d + no. 01a-b

Bibliography: FRANTSOUZOFF 1995: 17–20, 25, note 24, 26; FRANTSOUZOFF 2015: 77–78, fig. 2.

Description: complete inscription on six rectangular slabs painted in red. Its left edge is slightly damaged.

Dating: R.

Text:

1. *MṢDQ-m/bn/QS³M-m#s¹qny/DT/HMY<M>/b=*
2. *ḥt-hn/dt/rḏwt/#DT/HMYM/'lh-s¹/b-='*
3. *br/dt/ynsf-m/'#b-s¹/QS³M-m/d-ynw<ḥ>-*
4. *m/b-rys³-{n}/w-{y}b{s}ḥ/s¹w#d'-s³/w-bn-m'<y>*
5. *QS³M-m/l-s³twr/d-yf'l#</>dt/ynsf/h-<r>=*
6. *'bt/DT/HMYM#w-tḏ'/MṢDQ-m/b-{'>[n]*
7. *<D>T/HMYM/b-s¹ts³#b-m(/)h-s¹/w-b/r'b-s¹/b[h]=*
8. *hty/s²t#r/w-ftqd*

Translation:

1. Muṣḏiq^{um} son of Qaṣam^{um} dedicated to Dāt Ḥimyam the expiatory act with which Dāt Ḥimyam was satisfied for his sake, be-
2. cause his father Qaṣam^{um} was performing rites, (he) who was mourning
3. according to the (funeral) arrangement, and Her procedure of drawing off water was accomplished(?). And from
4. Qaṣam^{um} may be remitted (fig.: And may Qaṣam^{um} be absolved from) that he wished ill, when he was performing rites, to the spirit
5. *r'bt* of Dāt Ḥimyam. And Muṣḏiq^{um} committed himself to the will of
6. Dāt Ḥimyam by asking reward for himself and by his reconciliation the expiatory acts(?)
7. which he accepted and perceived.

Commentary:

ll. 1, 6, *MṢDQ-m*: the first occurrence of this name in the epigraphy of ancient South Arabia.

ll. 1, 3, 5, *QS³M-m*: this proper noun has been already attested as a personal name in Hadramitic (CaTh 54/1) and as a lineage name in Sabaic and Qatabanic.⁵² Its variant without mimation occurs in the onomasticon of Raybūn as a woman's name (SOYCE 1737 = Rb I/88 passage, lev. I no. 132a-b/1, 7).⁵³

⁵² HARDING 1971: 481.

⁵³ The beginning of this text is published in: FRANTSOUZOFF 1995: 18.

ll. 1–2: FRANTSOUZOFF 1995: 17–18 (on p. 17 ‘*lhns*’ is misprinted instead of ‘*lh-s*’). Although the meaning ‘phallus’ proposed for *bḥt* first by Maḥmūd ‘Alī al-Ġūl (Ghul) mostly on etymological grounds remains dubious, researchers have failed to advance another hypothesis about the real nature of this votive object.⁵⁴ Its interpretation proposed here is founded on the final part of this text concluded with the formula “he accepted and perceived” (see below). Therefore, the term *bḥt* seems to denote in such a context some spiritual action, not a votive object of any kind.

ll. 2–4: FRANTSOUZOFF 1995: 19, 25, note 24. The translation of the passage after *b-‘br/dt* is to be changed according to the new interpretations of the terms *rys*³ and *s’wq’* given in the present article. It also seems probable that in this context the forms of imperfect with mīmatīon, which appears to play mostly a stylistic part like the energetic mood in Arabic, express the actions performed by the author’s father, while the predicate {*y*}*b{s}ḥ* without the final *-m* relates to the subject *s’wq’-s*³. It should be noted that in Ge’ez the verb *bāṣḥa* means not only “arrive, reach”, but also “happen, occur, be accomplished”.⁵⁵

Another case of offering a dedication in order to obtain an absolution for the author’s father is found in Rb V/91 note 61+52+54+62+67+60+53+57, ll. 4–5, 6–8 from Kafas/Na‘mān.⁵⁶

1. 7, *b-s’lts³#b-m(/)h-s’*: the lack of any derivative from the roots *S³BM*, *IBM* and *S’BM* in Semitic languages, which would correspond, even to a small degree, to this context, suggests the idea to consider *-m* as an ending and *h-s’* as a preposition with an attached pronoun.⁵⁷ It should be noted that the term *s³wb* “repenting of sin” (or “offering”) occurs almost in the same position in the formula after *tq’* in Rb V/91 note 61 etc. = Raybūn-Kafas/Na‘mān 148/10 (*b-s³wb-h-s’/w-r<’>-s’*).⁵⁸ The present interpretation of *s’lts³b-m* is based on the meanings of the *s’l-t*-prefix stem (stem X) from *IWB/TWB* in Arabic: *istatāba-hu* “he asked him to recompense, compensate, requite, or reward, him”,⁵⁹ *istatāba-hu* “he proposed to him that he should return [to obedience unto God], and repent of that which he had

⁵⁴ SIMA 2000: 298–299.

⁵⁵ LESLAU 1987: 111.

⁵⁶ FRANTSOUZOFF 1998a: 62–63. This text is re-edited under the siglum Raybūn-Kafas/Na‘mān 148.

⁵⁷ Omission of a separation stroke before the preposition *h-* occurs sometimes in the epigraphy of Raybūn (cf. Rb XIV/87 no. 104/3 published in: FRANTSOUZOFF 1999c: 37–42, pl. 2; FRANTSOUZOFF 2003b: 43, 53).

⁵⁸ FRANTSOUZOFF 1998a: 62, 63.

⁵⁹ LANE 1863–1893: 1, 362.

committed”, “he asked him to return from sin, or disobedience”, “he asked him to desist from his sin”.⁶⁰

ll. 7–8, *b[h]/hty/s²t#’r/w-ftqd*: previously both verbs occurred exclusively after *bhl*.⁶¹ However, this term has not been attested yet in plural. Although in Hadramitic the ending *-hty* has been attested only in forms of the external feminine plural in the construct state derived from concave roots like *bḥhty* in Raybūn-Ḥaḍrān 92/3 (from *BWH*),⁶² in Minaic nouns from “normal” trilateral roots display the same termination (e.g. *ḏbhty*, *’rḏhty*).⁶³ The use of plural probably implies other sinful actions committed by Muṣḏiq^{um} or by his father which are not mentioned in this inscription. As for the term *bhl* previously translated as “unfavourable oracle”, its interpretation must be reconsidered, since it is difficult to realize how the oracles issued by a deity could be confided to the will of the same deity. Etymological parallels are of little importance for understanding this term: the general sense of the root *BHL* is obviously connected with speech, but its derivatives are distinguished by various shades of meaning.⁶⁴ The use of the expression *w-h-ynḥ’/b-ms³nd-|hn* “and let him repent in (or by) the inscribed stele” directly after *’l|hy/bhl/s²t’r/w-<f><t>|qd* in CIAS 95.11/p1, ll. 3–6 as well as the reliable restoration of *bhl* in SOYCE 1756 = Rb I/88 passage, lev. I note 133/4 (*[b-bhl]</><f>tqd/w-s²t’r/FTḤL*) just before *w-trḏf/|w/DJ<T></>ḤMYM/ms³nd/wnḥ’-n* “and Ḍāt Ḥimyam was satisfied with (the) inscribed stele and the repentance” (ll. 4–5) permit to establish a close semantic relation between the noun *bhl* and *nḥ’* (attested both as a verb and as a noun).⁶⁵ The

⁶⁰ LANE 1863–1893: 1, 321.

⁶¹ See the examples cited in: FRANTSOUZOFF 1999c: 35–36; FRANTSOUZOFF 2003b: 48, 50.

The unique exception from this rule is found in SOYCE 1737 = Rb I/88 passage, lev. I no. 132a-b/4: *[b]-’br/ḏt/s²t’rt/w-ftqd*. However, even in such a context the term *bhl*, although omitted, appears to be implied.

⁶² Cf. FRANTSOUZOFF 1995: 24, note 13.

⁶³ ARBACH 1993: III, 13.

⁶⁴ Cf. *bahala-hu* in Arabic “he cursed him” (LANE 1863–1893: 1, 267), *bēhlā* “to say, speak” in Ge’ez (LESLAU 1987: 89) and a group of nouns formed from *BHL* in Modern South Arabian languages which mean “word” (JOHNSTONE 1977: 16; JOHNSTONE 1987: 45) or “thing” (JOHNSTONE 1981: 24; LESLAU 1938: 83).

⁶⁵ Although Maria Höfner in her commentary to CIAS 95.11/p1 correctly connected the root *NḤ’* with *NḤY*, her interpretation of the verb *nḥ’* as “gelangen”, “sich wohin begeben” founded on etymological parallels with Ugaritic and Arabic cannot be accepted. At the same time the comparison of *nḥ’* in Hadramitic with *tnḥy* “confess, admit sin” and *tnḥyt/tnḥt* “confession of sin” in Sabaic (BEESTON & GHUL & MÜLLER & RYCKMANS 1982: 95), *ntḥy*, *tnḥy* “confesser, reconnaître un pīchī” and *nḥyn-n* “confession d’un pīchī” in Minaic (ARBACH 1993: I, 67) appears to be justified.

difference between these terms is not clear for the moment, but it is possible to suppose with hesitation that *nh'* designated a rite of repentance for sins as a ritual, as a succession of some actions, while *bhl* denoted a confession of sins in the strict sense of the word, i.e. an announcement (probably public) of repentance made by the sinner himself.

It should be emphasized that the restoration *b[hl]/hty* (instead of *b[h]/hty* retained here) is not completely excluded.

No. 11 (pl. 11a-g)



a



b





g



f

Pl. 11a-f. Inscription SOYCE 1898+1897a-b+1833a-e = Rb I/89 bld. 4,
lev. I no. 291 + no. 261a-b + no. 260a-e

Sigla: SOYCE 1898 + 1897a-b + 1833a-e = Rb I/89 bld. 4, lev. I no. 291 + no. 261a-b + no. 260a-e.

Bibliography: FRANTSOUZOFF 1995: 18–20, 22, 24–25, note 23, 25; FRANTSOUZOFF 2012: 88–89, fig. 85a-g.

Description: complete inscription on seven rectangular slabs painted in red, partly damaged. There are no photographs of slab 1 bearing the beginning of the inscription.

Dating: R.

Text:

1. 'KRB#/bn/HMYHMW/s^lqn=
2. y/DT/H#MYM/dt/RHB-n/bḥ=
3. t/rḍw#t/DT/HMYM/'lh=
4. n/'KRB#b- 'br/dt/s^l 'dw-
5. s³/'KRB#/DT/HMYM/w-r 'bt-s³
6. bn/'hn#t#/s^lt 'nt-s^l/h-ḍy=

7. *s't'n-s'l#my/w-mn-mw#'KRB(/)y=*
8. *s³twr/#d-y-s'l'dw/D#T/HMYM*
9. *w-r'b#t-s³/bn/hl/s#dq-m/w-t=*
10. *d'/'K#RB/b-'dn/D#T/HMY<M>*
11. *b-r'b-#s¹/w-wl#d-s¹/r'b-s³/d-yn'='*
- [12.] [*m*]

Translation:

1. Akrab son of Ḥamayhumū dedica-
2. ted to Dāt Ḥimyam dāt Raḥbān the (votive) phal-
3. lus(?) with which Dāt Ḥimyam was satisfied for the sake
4. of Akrab, since Akrab committed a hostile action
5. against Her, i.e. Dāt Ḥimyam, and Her spirit *r'bt*
6. because of a poor (or middle-aged?) woman, who asked him for help
- in order that he should
7. ask both of them (i.e. Dāt Ḥimyam and Her spirit) for help. And from Akrab may be re-
8. mitted (fig.: And may Akrab be absolved from) that he committed a hostile action against Dāt Ḥimyam
9. and Her spirit *r'bt* because of possessions duly bestowed as alms(?). And
10. Akrab committed himself to the will of Dāt Ḥimyam
11. by his reconciliation and his children the recon-ciliation with Her which may be favou-
- [12] [*rable*].

Commentary:

ll. 1, 4, 5, 7, 10, 'KRB: this personal name is attested only in the epigraphy of Raybūn (see Raybūn-Kafas/Na'mān 180 and commentary).

l. 1, HMYHMY: the first occurrence of this name in the onomasticon of ancient South Arabia.

ll. 1–4: FRANTSOUZOFF 1995: 17–18.

ll. 4–7: FRANTSOUZOFF 1995: 19, 24–25, note 23. Similar syntactic constructions with the verb *s't'n* (*s't*-prefix stem from 'WN) are attested in the epigraphic documentation from the temples of Sīn: Alīm in Shabwa and Mayfa'ān in Raybūn.⁶⁶

ll. 7–9: FRANTSOUZOFF 1995: 19–20, 25, note 25.

⁶⁶ FRANTSOUZOFF 2001a: 61.

1. 9, *bn/ḥl/ṣdq-m*: the noun *ḥl* derived from the root *ḤLL* has been attested only in Minaic (with two forms of pl.: *'ḥll* and *'ḥl*), albeit the sense “biens” attributed to it⁶⁷ is too vague. At the same time in the expression *ywm/(w)hb/ḥl/d-GRB* “quando dette aromi a dhū-Garab” (as-Sawda 17/3) its interpretation as “aromata” seems groundless.⁶⁸ It follows from this context, however, that the term designates a kind or a category of votive objects. It is worth noting that in RES 3285 = M 291/6 *ḥl* occurs with a verbal form derived from the root *ṢDQ*: *kl/mhn/yṣdq/'ḥl-s¹m* “everybody who duly bestowed their possessions”.⁶⁹ If we take in consideration that one of the meanings of *ṣadaqa* in Arabic is “alms”, an interpretation of *ḥl/ṣdq-m* as “possessions duly bestowed (granted) as alms” is proposed with a certain hesitation.

11. 9–[12]: FRANTSOUZOFF 1995: 22.

No. 12 (pl. 12)



Pl. 12. Inscription SOYCE 1755 = Rb I/88 passage, lev. I no. 131

⁶⁷ ARBACH 1993: I, 48.

⁶⁸ In as-Sawda 39/2 the same editor (Alessandra Avanzini) translated (*'ḥl-s¹m/b-ms¹[b']*) as “le loro proprietà lungo la stra[da]” in full accordance with the opinion of M. Arbach.

⁶⁹ This meaning of the verb *ṣdq* is attested in Sabaic (BEESTON, GHUL, MÜLLER & RYCKMANS 1982: 141), Minaic (ARBACH 1993: I, 93) and Qatabanic (RICKS 1989: 133).

A parallel context *kl/qny-m/hn/mh/k-ṣdq-s¹* (Ma'in 7/8) corroborates a semantic closeness between the terms *ḥll'ḥl* and *qny* which undoubtedly means “possessions”, “property”.

Sigla: SOYCE 1755 = Rb I/88 passage, lev. I no. 131

Bibliography: FRANTSOUZOFF 2012: 107, note 63.

Dating: R.

Text:

1. *[w-bn-mw]<R>'L-m/ys³twr/d-y=*
2. *[...r']bt/D^T-HMYM/ywm*
3. *[.../qn]y-s^l/b-qny/ts^l'l-s^l*
4. *[.../]d-y^{s^l}tr/s^ltr/'L<R>=*
- [5.]/[D/...]*

Translation:

1. [And from] Ra'l^{um} may be remitted (fig.: And may Ra'l^{um} be absolved from) that he
2. [(did something towards) the spirit *r'bt* of Dāt Himyam, when
3. [he (added?)] his own [possess]ions to the pos-sessions she (i.e. *r'bt*) was asking from him
4. [...] that he engraved the inscription of Ilra-
- [5.]* ['ad...]

Commentary:

1. 1, <R>'L-m: the first occurrence of this personal name. However, without mīmat it is attested in Hadramitic (Ja 2493c) and Qatabanic.⁷⁰ The Qatabanic woman's name *R'YL-m* obviously represents a diminutive of this proper noun.⁷¹

ll. 4–[5], *d-y^{s^l}tr/s^ltr/'LR/[D]*: the first occurrence of the derivatives from the root *S^lTR* in Hadramitic. It is not excluded that Ra'l^{um} was obliged to engrave the inscription compiled by the priestess in expiation of his attempt to take possession of a sacerdotal property.

No. 13 (pl. 13a-b)

Sigla: SOYCE 707 = Rb I/84 bld. 3, lev. I no. 199a-c

Bibliography: FRANTSOUZOFF 2012: 107, no. 64.

Dating: R.

⁷⁰ HAYAJNEH 1998: 315.

⁷¹ HAYAJNEH 1998: 315; SHOLAN 1999: 39, 76, 141.



a



b

Pl. 13a-b. Inscription SOYCE 707 = Rb I/84 bld. 3, lev. I no. 199a-c

Text:

[1.] [*s*^l=]

2. *ns*^l*m*/*d*-*tb*#*n*/*'m*-*s*^l/*w*-*bn*-*m*<*w*>

3. <*D*>*ML*-*m*/*ys*³#*twr*/*d*-*ys*³{*l*}/*s*^l*n*=

4. [*s*^l*m*]</><*d*>-*y**tb*#*n*/*'m*-*s*^l/*<d>*-<*y*><*s*^l><'><*l*>

Translation:

- [1.] [(Damal^{um}) made]
 2. efforts to claim proprietary rights in his favour. And from
 3. Dāmāl^{um} may be remitted (fig.: And may Dāmāl^{um} be absolved from)
 that he continued(?) to make ef-
 4. [forts] in order to claim proprietary rights in his favour to what he was
 asking...

Commentary:

ll. [1]–2, [*sʿ*]/[*nsʿm*]; ll. 3–[4], [*sʿn*]/[*sʿm*]: the first occurrence of this verb and even of this root in Hadramitic as well as in other Epigraphic South Arabian languages. Its interpretation is proposed by analogy with the meanings of the *t*-prefix stem of this verb in Arabic: *tanassama šayʿan* “he sought, or endeavoured to get, or attain, a thing, with labour and perseverance”.⁷²

l. 2, *ḏ-ṭbn*/'*m-sʿ*; l. 4, *ḏ-yṭbn*/'*m-sʿ*: cf. *ṭbn*, *hṭbn* “to claim proprietary rights in land” in SABAIC,⁷³ *ṭbn* “propriétaire, propriété” in Minaic.⁷⁴ This specific meaning of the preposition '*m* has been already attested in SOYCE 706/6 originating from the same building of Raḥbān.⁷⁵

l. 3, <*D*>*ML-m*: the first occurrence of this name in the epigraphy of ancient South Arabia. However, the man's name *ZMLY* derived from the same root (*DML/ZML*) is attested in Hadramitic (Ja 981).

*ysʿ*³{*l*}: cf. the expression *w-wṭl/yṭl* in RF-Alīm 1/8 in which this verb was translated “to continue” with a certain hesitation.⁷⁶

No. 14 (pl. 14)

Sigla: SOYCE 2228 = Rb I/90 bld. 4 no. 64

Bibliography: FRANTSOUZOFF 2012: 105, note 51.

Description: left upper part of the stele broken from the bottom and on the right. From the top the stele is decorated with a symbol consisting of a disk and a crescent and with an ornament of denticles and horizontal stripes (on the left).

Dating: R.

⁷² Lane 1863–1893: 8, 3032.

⁷³ BEESTON & GHUL & MÜLLER & RYCKMANS 1982: 152.

⁷⁴ ARBACH 1993: I, 100.

⁷⁵ FRANTSOUZOFF 1997: 122.

⁷⁶ ROBIN & FRANTSOUZOFF 1999: 160.



Pl. 14. Inscription SOYCE 2228 = Rb I/90 bld. 4 no. 64

Text:

1. [$\underline{d}t/ks^3'(t) (?) / \underline{D}$] <T> / $\underline{H}M\{ / \} YM / \underline{d}t$
2. [$R\dot{H}B-n/w-..$] <m>y / < $\underline{D}$ > T / $\underline{H}$ <M> =
- [3.] [$YM / \dots$]

Translation:

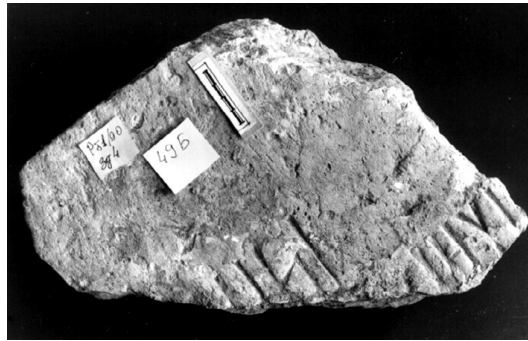
1. [That is what ordered] $\underline{D}at \dot{H}imyam \underline{d}at$
2. [$Ra\dot{h}b\ddot{a}n$ and the spirit(s)..]my of $\underline{D}at \dot{H}im-$
- [3.] [yam...]

Commentary: in this article.

No. 15 (pl. 15a-b)



a



b

Pl. 15a-b. Inscription SOYCE 2213 = Rb I/90 bld. 4 no. 49a-b

Sigla: SOYCE 2213 = Rb I/90 bld. 4 no. 49a-b**Description:** complete slab split in two adjacent fragments and damaged from all sides. Three last lines of an inscription are engraved on it.**Dating:** R.**Text:**

1. *t' dñ/w-ft h/*
2. *DT/HMYM#/d<t>*
3. *RHB-#n/*

Translation:

1. (what?) allows and commands
2. Dāt Himyam dāt
3. Raḥbān.

Commentary:

l. 1, *t'dn/w-ftḥ*: the first verb is in the imperfect (3 f. sing.), the second is represented by the infinitive which in Hadramitic is graphically indistinguishable from the basic form of the perfect (3 m. sing.). In Sabaic “in any series of two or more closely coordinated verbs, it is normal for only the first to be a finite form, while the succeeding ones are infinitives”.⁷⁷ It seems that this phenomenon was widespread in other Epigraphic South Arabian languages too, but the lack of the infinitival suffix *-n* in them presents a serious obstacle to its identification. However, in this context the series consisting of a finite verb and an infinitive is attested for the second time in Hadramitic.⁷⁸

No. 16 (pl. 16)



Pl. 16. Inscription SOYCE 1674 = Rb I/88 passage, lev. I no. 66

Sigla: SOYCE 1674 = Rb I/88 passage, lev. I no. 66

Bibliography: FRANTSOUZOFF 2012: 106, no. 57.

Dating: R.

⁷⁷ BEESTON 1984: 22: § 8:2.

⁷⁸ In the expression *[b]-'br/dt/s²t'rt/w-ftqd* (SOYCE 1737 = Rb I/88 passage, lev. I no. 132a-b/4) cited above in the commentary to No. 10/7–8 the finite verb is in the perfect (3 f. sing.).

Text:

1. ...r/k-s²tw'/S³['D'L/...]
2. ...</><s³>tf̣t-s³/'w/'mt-s³/...
3. [.../w-bn-mw/S³'D'L/(h-/l-/y)s³]<t>wr/ḡw/y²w'/'m</>...

Translation:

1. ...when Š[a'd'il] married...
2. ...he obtained a legal decision from Her or from Her servant (i.e. priestess)...
3. [...And from Ša'd'il may be remi]tted (fig.: [...And may Ša'd'il be abso]lved from) that he got married to...

Commentary:

1. 1, s²tw'; 1. 3, y²w': the translation of both verbal forms (perfect of the *t*-infix stem and imperfect of the ground stem) is based on the occurrence of the noun s²w't "spouse" in al-'Oqm/1977/2, SOYCE 706/6 and SOYCE 705 = Rb I/84 bld. 3, lev. I no. 197a-e/4-5 (FRANTSOUZOFF 1997: 116). It is ascertained that one of the functions of Dāt Himyam consisted in regulating conjugal relations.⁷⁹ However, another interpretation of these verbs connected with the meaning of s²w' "to do service, perform due service obligations for *overlord &c*" attested in Sabaic⁸⁰ and Hadramitic (in the texts of al-'Uqla) is not completely excluded.

S³['D'L]: this personal name is attested only in Hadramitic (Bāquṭfa 23, 46, 50/2). Another restoration of this lacuna is also possible.

1. 2, <s³>tf̣t-s³/'w/'mt-s³: in this article (especially notes 40-42).

1. 3, ḡw/y²w': the form ḡw of the relative pronoun of 3 m. sing. has been already attested in Hadramitic (SOYCE 705/3; SOYCE 706/5).⁸¹

No. 17 (pl. 17)

Sigla: SOYCE 2245 = Rb I/90 bld. 4 no. 81

Dating: R.

Text:

1. ...</>bn/R...
2. ...<(n)/hyf</>...
3. ...[s³]tf̣t/DT/H[MYM]...
4. ...<H>DR<M>[T]...

⁷⁹ FRANTSOUZOFF 1997: 122-123.

⁸⁰ BEESTON & GHUL & MÜLLER & RYCKMANS 1982: 135-136.

⁸¹ FRANTSOUZOFF 1997: 116.



Pl. 17. Inscription SOYCE 2245 = Rb I/90 bld. 4 no. 81

Translation:

1. (Such a one) son of R...
2. ...misfortune(?)...
3. ...[(he) o]btained a legal decision from Dāt Hī[myam]...
4. ...Ḥaḍram[awt]...

Commentary:

1. 2, *hyf*: cf. FRANTSOUZOFF 2001a: 65.
1. 3, $[s^3]t\dot{f}/DT/H[MYM]$: in this article.
1. 4, $<H>DR<M>[T]$: the first and unique occurrence of this ethnic name and toponym in the epigraphy of Raybūn.

No. 18 (pl. 18)

Sigla: SOYCE 2306 = Rb I/90 bld. 4 no. 143

Bibliography: FRANTSOUZOFF 1997: 123; FRANTSOUZOFF 1999a: 153; FRANTSOUZOFF 2000a: 309; FRANTSOUZOFF 2000b: 263.

Description: inscribed rectangular slab re-used in the pavement of building 4. Its right edge and lower left corner are slightly damaged.

Dating: R.



Pl. 18. SOYCE 2306 = Rb I/90 bld. 4 no. 143

Text:

1. $s^3\dot{f}k/b-$ 'mr/h- 'hhy/'=
2. $s^3t-n/w-$ 'l/ṣdq/S²RĤ'L/m=
3. 'mrt/'mrt-s¹/'LF'L/w-
4. *tnw* '-s¹/DT/ḤMYM/b-m '<d>
- [5.] [DT/ḤMYM/...]

Translation:

1. thou took a legal decision on account of construction works(?) for the brothers of
2. the wife. And Sharaḥ'il did not fulfill the or-
3. ders that Ilfa'al gave to him. And
4. Dāt Ḥimyam demanded from him on the festival
- [5.] [of Dāt Ḥimyam...]

Commentary:

1. 1, $s^3\dot{f}k$: in this article.
- 'mr: this interpretation proposed on the basis of two derivatives from 'MR in an inscription originating from the same building (SOYCE 1850+1866+1895 = Rb I/89 bld. 4, lev. I no. 279 + no. 297 + no. 306a-b/6, 9)⁸² remains dubious because of this root's polysemy.

⁸² FRANTSOUZOFF 2001b: 130, 131.

ll. 1–2, 'l^{s3}t-n: this noun is attested in SOYCE 705/4 (FRANTSOUZOFF 1997: 116).

l. 2, *ṣdq*: cf. one of the meanings of this verb in the ground, causative and *t*-infix stems in Sabaic.⁸³

S²RḤ'L: this personal name occurs in inscriptions written in all Epigraphic South Arabian languages.⁸⁴

ll. 2–3, *m|'mrt/'mrt-s/'LF'L*: this passage is interpreted in: FRANTSOUZOFF 1997: 123. Ilfa'al was a priestess of Dāt Ḥimyam, like Ilra'ad.⁸⁵

ll. 3–4, *w-|tnw'-s/'DT/HMYM*: cf. commentary to Raybūn-Ḥaḍrān 213/5–6.

ll. 4–[5], *b-m'<d>|[DT/HMYM]*: cf. *ywm/m'd/[<S^l><Y>N* “on the day of the festival of Sīn” (SOYCE 2075 = Rb XIV/89 no. 221/2).⁸⁶

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⁸³ BEESTON & GHUL & MÜLLER & RYCKMANS 1982: 141.

⁸⁴ HARDING 1971: 345.

⁸⁵ FRANTSOUZOFF 2001b: 131.

⁸⁶ In its first edition this expression was misinterpreted as “when Sīn gave promise” (FRANTSOUZOFF 1998b: 134, 136–137).

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Raybūn-Ḥaḍrān — FRANTSOUZOFF 2001(d);

Raybūn-Kafas/Na'mān — FRANTSOUZOFF 2007;

RF-Alīm 1 — ROBIN & FRANTSOUZOFF 1999.

As for the texts from Raybūn designated with SOYCE and Rb, their editions (if any) are referred to in the present paper or in its enclosed Appendices.

Artiom V. Mesheznikov, Tatiana V. Klementeva

**Sanskrit Fragments of Hīnayāna Sūtras
(SI 3332/20, SI 3333/1)
in the Serindia Collection of the IOM RAS**

DOI: 10.55512/wmo695850

Submitted: April 30, 2026.

Accepted: May 07, 2026.

Abstract. The article deals with two unpublished Sanskrit fragments of Hīnayāna sūtras (SI 3332/20, SI 3333/1) from Central Asia kept at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Serindia Collection, IOM RAS). The M.I. Lavrov's subcollection of the Serindia Collection contains 18 Sanskrit fragments (under the pressmarks SI 3332/2, SI 3332/12–24, SI 3333/1–2, SI 3334 and SI 3335), which academician S.F. Oldenburg (1863–1934) identified with the help of the Pāli Canon as “Cakravartī-sūtra” (Pāli: “Cakkavatti-sīhanāda-sutta”) and “Payasvī-sūtra” (Pāli: “Pāyāsi-sutta”). Apparently, S.F. Oldenburg intended to publish them, since the Serindia Collection holds his partial transliterations (several lines) of the fragments, but for some reason he was unable to carry out his plan and to introduce into scientific circulation these unique manuscripts containing rare Sanskrit examples of Hīnayāna sūtras. One of these sūtras (i.e. “Payasvī”), to our knowledge, is not represented in any other Sanskrit manuscript collection. The two fragments under study come from the Kucha oasis city-state of the Tarim Basin, are written in the North Turkestan Brāhmī script on paper, and can be conventionally dated to the 8th–9th cc. Based on their external features and content analysis, we found out that these fragments form two almost conjoining parts of a single folio, which contains the final part of “Cakravartī-sūtra” and the opening lines of “Payasvī-sūtra”. The article offers a description of the fragments, transliteration, comparison with Pāli and Chinese versions of the sūtras, translation and facsimile reproduction.

Key words: Buddhist canons, Hīnayāna, manuscripts, Sanskrit, Sergei F. Oldenburg, Serindia Collection

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Introduction

In the late 19th and early 20th cc. Buddhist manuscripts in various Asian languages were discovered on the Great Silk Road in the subregions of Serindia (Xinjiang, China). Serindia covered a vast region of the eastern part of Central Asia and included oasis city-states of the Tarim Basin, which encircled the Taklamakan Desert and became major trade and transit points for caravans along the Silk Road. Due to their advantageous geographical location, at the beginning of the 1st millennium AD these oasis-cities attracted religious preachers from India and Central Asia and became sites for advancement of Northern Buddhism and dissemination of Buddhist manuscripts in Sanskrit and Prakrit languages. For almost a whole millennium such oases of the Tarim Basin as Turfan, Kucha, Kashgar and Khotan were mainstays of Buddhist culture outside India, functioning as centers of copying, distribution and translation of manuscripts, which circulated throughout the region from the time of transmission of Buddhism into Serindia in the first centuries AD until the spread of Islam in Serindia in the 9th–10th cc.

Discovery of Buddhist written monuments in Serindia has a colossal significance for the study of historical and cultural processes in Central Asia in the 1st millennium AD. Among the Serindian finds, written monuments in Sanskrit are of particular importance, since they contain originals of many Hīnayāna¹ and Mahāyāna texts, lost in India and once known to scholars only in their Pāli, Tibetan and Chinese versions. Finds of this kind, namely, rare manuscript fragments of canonical works in Sanskrit (and some Prakrit languages), provided important evidence about the historical process of development of Buddhist literature in ancient and early medieval times and made scholars aware of the existence of other versions of the Buddhist corpus of canonical texts which developed in parallel with the Pāli Canon.

In contrast to the history of Southern Buddhism, which has been thoroughly studied from Pāli manuscripts well-preserved in South and Southeast

¹ The term Hīnayāna (Skt. ‘lesser vehicle’) is common in reference to the non-Mahāyāna Early Buddhist schools, texts and practitioners, although it is a subjective biased term, since it was applied within Mahāyāna texts and was not used by those Buddhists who rejected Mahāyāna. Sanskrit sūtras also retain the names “vehicle of Śrāvakas (listeners, disciples)” and “vehicle of Pratyekabuddhas (solitary buddhas)” to refer to adherents of the “Lesser Vehicle”, so it is possible to designate the Northern Hīnayāna as “Śrāvakayāna” and “Pratyekabuddhayāna”. The southern (Pāli) branch of Buddhism is known as the tradition of one school and is therefore called the Theravāda (“Way of the Elders”) tradition.

Asia, the history of Northern Buddhism represented by schools of three directions (Northern Hīnayāna, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna), due to shortage of published written sources or their fragmentary state, still requires serious study based on the material of Sanskrit manuscripts from the Tarim Basin oases. In this regard, the St. Petersburg collection of written monuments from Central Asia, the Serindia Collection of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences, provides rich research materials. This extensive collection, formed as a result of activities of Russian travelers, researchers and diplomats, contains about 7,000 items in 12 languages, and its Sanskrit part contains about 700 items.²

It is particularly noteworthy that a catalogue of the Sanskrit part of the Serindia Collection is yet to be published, and a bulk of Sanskrit manuscripts still remains unknown to scholars. Only about 100 items in the Sanskrit segment of the Serindia Collection have been introduced into scientific circulation. Some fragments cannot easily be read due to their poor condition, and their textual attribution, namely, identification with specific known Buddhist works, does not seem possible. Nevertheless, these Sanskrit manuscripts constitute a comprehensive resource with a vast array of information for research on the history of Northern Buddhism, and even a single fragment can reveal a whole complex of new data for studying the original Sanskrit canon.

The above applies in full to the two manuscript fragments published in this article (SI 3332/20, SI 3333/1). The fragments under study present rare Sanskrit examples of works created within the Hīnayāna tradition, namely basic texts included in the Sanskrit Sūtrapīṭaka. Unlike the definitive canonical collection of Southern (Theravāda) Buddhism, which has come down to us in Pāli works, the Sanskrit text of the Northern Hīnayāna canon has not

² According to current data, Sanskrit manuscripts kept in the Serindia Collection come from the following subcollections named after their compilers: subcollection of the Russian Consul General in Kashgar N.F. Petrovsky (1837–1908) — 417 items; subcollection of the traveler and naturalist M.M. Berezovsky (1848–1912) — 76; subcollection of the academician S.F. Oldenburg (1863–1934) — 57; subcollection of the Consul General in Urumqi N.N. Krotkov (1869–1919) — 46; subcollection of the secretary of the consulate in Kashgar M.I. Lavrov (1877–1934) — 38; subcollection of the Turkologist and ethnographer S.E. Malov (1880–1957) — 9; subcollections of the diplomatic officials S.A. Kolokolov (1868–1921) — 3, and A.I. Kokhanovsky (years of life unknown) — 1. It is worth noting that, in addition to the exact number of items recorded in the inventory books, the Sanskrit part of the Serindia Collection includes a large number of manuscripts that have not yet been inventoried: mostly small scraps or scatterings of tiny fragments on paper, birch bark and palm leaves.

survived in its entirety and is known only from separate incomplete manuscripts and small fragments from Central Asia. In this regard, the newly found fragments of Hīnayāna sūtras from the Serindia Collection make it possible to discover further information about the spread of Northern Hīnayāna and supplement existing knowledge about the structure and composition of the corpus of canonical texts in Sanskrit.

Sanskrit manuscripts from Serindia, written in the Brāhmī script, attest to three varieties: the Indian subtypes of Brāhmī, the North Turkestan³ subtypes (according to the area of their use in the manuscripts of the northern oases — Turfan and Kucha), and the South Turkestan ones (for recording texts in the southern oases with the center in Khotan). Classification of the Sanskrit manuscripts from the Serindia Collection according to paleographic features and content, as well as their comparison with the materials of the Berlin Turfan Collection,⁴ allow us to make some generalizations regarding the variety of genres of Buddhist literature and the popularity of specific sūtras and schools of Buddhism in various subregions of Serindia. A comparison of the manuscripts brought from the northern oases of the Tarim Basin with fragments from the southern oases showed that the set of works in the North and South of Serindia differs significantly. Characterizing the contents of Khotanese manuscripts, it can be confidently stated that the southern oases were Mahāyāna strongholds. Mahāyāna literature prevailed and Mahāyāna sūtras were actively copied in Khotanese scriptoria. At the same time, in contrast to Khotan, the northern oases were centers of Hīnayāna. Thus, in the Turfan Collection, Mahāyāna sūtras are represented only by few manuscripts, and the main body of texts consists of Hīnayāna sūtras from the Āgamas, which indicate the predominant distribution of Hīnayāna in the northern part of Serindia.⁵ Manuscripts written in the South Turkestan (Khotanese) graphic variations of the Brāhmī script widely dominate (more than 300 units) in the

³ The use of the name “Turkestan” is explained by the fact that for a long time the term “Eastern Turkestan” was used to designate the oases of Serindia in Russian and foreign historiography.

⁴ The manuscripts, obtained during the German Turfan expeditions between 1902 and 1914 under the direction of A. Grünwedel (1856–1935) and A. Le Coq (1860–1930), formed the extensive Turfan Collection housed in Berlin. Description of the German collection of Sanskrit manuscripts has now been fully completed. Full details of the collection are contained in 12 volumes (issues) of the catalogue “Sanskriithandschriften aus den Turfanfunden” (1965–2017). For an index of the titles of identified Sanskrit texts from the Turfan Collection, see WILLE 2014.

⁵ *Pamiatniki indiiskoi pis'mennosti* 2004: 86.

Sanskrit part of the Serindia Collection, therefore, Mahāyāna sūtras form the core of this collection. At the same time, some rare published and identified North Turkestan Brāhmī texts in the Serindia Collection,⁶ as well as materials from the German collection, contain mainly excerpts of Āgama sūtras and allow us to confirm the conclusion about the dominance of Hīnayāna in the northern oases.

The fragments examined in this article belong to a highly valuable segment of the M.I. Lavrov collection (18 fragments with pressmarks SI 3332/2, SI 3332/12–24, SI 3333/1–2, SI 3334 and SI 3335) that S.F. Oldenburg intended to publish. Based on the texts of the Pāli Tipiṭaka, he succeeded in identifying fragments with two sūtras from the Sūtrapiṭaka — “Cakravartī-sūtra” (Pāli: “Cakkavatti-sīhanāda-sutta”) and “Payasvī-sūtra” (Pāli: “Pāyāsī-sutta”). S.F. Oldenburg partially transliterated the fragments, briefly described them, designating the type of script as “Central Asian Brāhmī”⁷, but the publication of these rare fragments was never carried out. Moreover, according to the data from the catalogues of the Berlin Turfan Collection — the world’s largest collection of Sanskrit manuscripts from the northern oases of the Tarim Basin — “Cakravartī-sūtra” is represented by only two items, and manuscripts of “Payasvī-sūtra” are completely absent.⁸

Description of fragments SI 3332/20 and SI 3333/1

Evaluation of the fragments’ external characteristics and analysis of their contents (see below) make it possible to assume that they not only constitute a single copy of Hīnayāna works, but also present two almost conjoining parts of the same manuscript folio (Pl. 1a–b), written in the same type of Brāhmī script (North Turkestan Brāhmī (type ab), ca. 8th–9th cc. AD), presumably in Kucha.

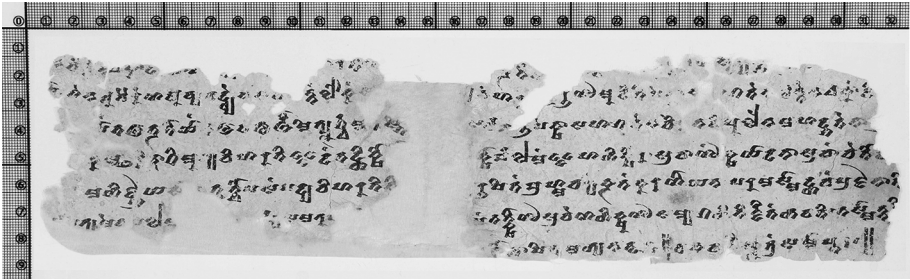
⁶ For example, Sanskrit excerpts from Āgama sūtras in North Turkestan Brāhmī were published in the second issue of “Indian Texts from Central Asia” (1990): Mahāvādāna-sūtra, Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra, Bodhirājakumāra-sūtra (all under the pressmark SI 2939), the Naga-ropama-sūtra (SI 2041/3, 6), see: *Pamiatniki indijskoi pis’mennosti* 1990: 208–254. Among other Hīnayāna sūtras, the Serindia Collection contains Sanskrit fragments of Āṭānāṭika-sūtra (SI 4576, SI 5526), Hastaka-Āṭavaka-sūtra, Catuspariṣat-sūtra (both under SI 5524).

⁷ There is an inscription made by S.F. Oldenburg on the envelope for the fragments, in which, in addition to the textual identification and characteristics of the script, it was noted that the manuscripts came from Kucha and were sent by M.I. Lavrov.

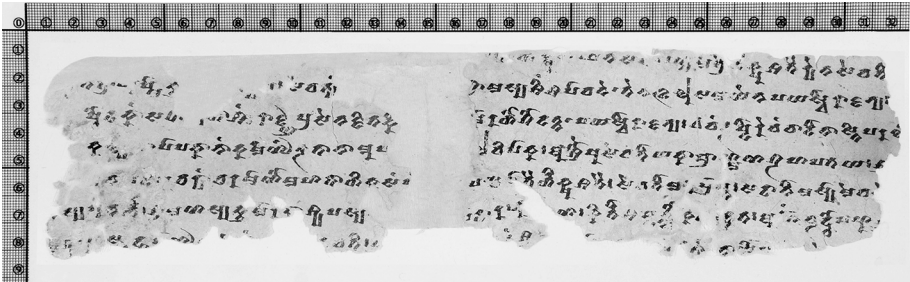
⁸ WILLE 2014: 195–203.

Fragment SI 3332/20 measures 6.9×13.4 cm and belongs to the central part of the folio. The text is copied in black ink on very pale brown paper. The upper and lower edges are missing, so that the fragment bears only 6 lines of writing with the line-spacing of 1.1–1.2 cm.

Fragment SI 3333/1 is 8.1×16.2 cm in size and belongs to the right part of the folio. 7 lines of writing are preserved on each side of the folio. Its other external characteristics are similar to those of the fragment SI 3332/20: very pale brown paper, the same distance between lines (1.1–1.2 cm), the upper and lower edges are damaged, and the margins are missing.



Pl. 1a: SI 3332/20 + SI 3333/1 (recto),
Serindia Collection, Lavrov Subcollection, IOM, RAS.



Pl. 1b: SI 3332/20 + SI 3333/1 (verso),
Serindia Collection, Lavrov Subcollection, IOM, RAS.

Contents of the fragments

Many of the Sanskrit fragments found in the northern oases of Serindia were classified as Hinayāna texts, since they had parallels in the Theravāda Canon and, apparently, were editions of Pāli sūtras in the canons of other

Early Buddhist schools. Various schools had different versions of Vinaya, as well as different editions of dogmatic texts, which formed the Sanskrit Sūtra-piṭaka. The discovery of Sanskrit originals of Āgama sūtras in Central Asia and their introduction into scientific circulation made it possible to raise the question about the existence of Sanskrit canonical collections, in particular the Sūtrapiṭaka, their composition and parallel development with the Pāli version.

The Sūtrapiṭaka of the Sanskrit canon is classified by scholars according to the structure of the Theravāda canon, consisting of Nikāyas (groups of instructions).⁹ The analogues of the Pāli Nikāyas were Āgamas — collections of Early Buddhist scriptures in the Chinese Tripiṭaka, which originated from various schools.¹⁰ For a long time, the composition of the Sūtrapiṭaka was known from indirect data, mainly from translations of Sanskrit and Prakrit texts into Chinese. The Chinese Tripiṭaka contains four Āgamas, which generally correspond in terms of composition to the four Nikāyas of the Pāli Suttapiṭaka. Despite the general correspondence between the Pāli Nikāyas and Chinese/Sanskrit Āgamas (Dīrghāgama corresponds to the Pāli Dīghanikāya; Madhyamāgama corresponds to the Majjhimanikāya; Saṃyuktāgama corresponds to Saṃyuttanikāya; Ekottarāgama corresponds to Aṅguttaranikāya), the number of sūtras and their order of distribution into sections vary significantly [Ibid.: 114]. This is confirmed in particular by the fragments SI 3332/20 and SI 3333/1, which belong to the same folio. The recto side of this folio includes the ending of the “Cakravarti-sūtra”, and the verso side contains the beginning of the “Payasvī-sūtra”. In the Pāli Canon these sūtras are arranged in different sequences and places within Dīghanikāya, being parts of Mahāvagga (XXIII, “Pāyāsi-sutta”) and Pāṭikavagga (XXVI, “Cakkavatti-sīhanāda-sutta”) sections. The order of these sūtras in the Chinese Tripiṭaka is identical to the Sanskrit one, however, in the Chinese version both sūtras are placed within Madhyamāgama,¹¹ which, in terms of the original school tradition, belonged to the Sarvāstivāda school.¹²

⁹ VOROB'EVA-DESIATOVSKAIA 2006: 112.

¹⁰ Until now, scholars have no direct evidence regarding the order of the Āgamas in the Sanskrit Sūtrapiṭaka in the traditions of various Early Buddhist schools, and no exact school affiliation of the Āgamas has been precisely established.

¹¹ BUCKNELL 2014: 66.

¹² The four Āgamas, translated from Sanskrit (and Prakrit) into Chinese, presumably originate from the traditions of different Buddhist schools: 1) “Dīrghāgama” belongs to the Dharmaguptaka school; 2) “Madhyamāgama” and “Saṃyuktāgama” belong to the Sarvāstivāda school; 3) “Ekottarāgama” belongs to the Mahāsaṅghika school. See: VOROB'EVA-DESIATOVSKAIA 2006: 112.

In private Western and Japanese collections there is an incomplete birch bark manuscript of the Sanskrit *Dirghāgama* from Pakistan,¹³ which has been relatively recently studied by Sanskrit scholars J.-U. Hartmann, K. Wille, Kazunobu Matsuda. Using the summaries available in the text (*uddāna*-verses containing lists of sūtra titles or key words from them), J.-U. Hartmann managed to reconstruct the order of the texts and compile a table with the titles of 47 sūtras, which form the tripartite structure of the Sanskrit *Dirghāgama* of Sarvāstivāda.¹⁴ 34 sūtras show close correspondences with the Pāli texts from the *Dīghanikāya* and *Majjhimanikāya*, but “Cakravartī-sūtra” and “Payasvī-sūtra” are absent in this list. It is quite possible that, like the Chinese version, these two sūtras could have been part of the Sanskrit *Madhyamāgama* of Sarvāstivāda. At the same time, different arrangement of the material in the Pāli and Sanskrit versions of the *Sūtrapīṭaka* indicates that the Early Buddhist schools could have formed their canons in parallel, using the sermons of Buddha Śākyamuni stored in the memory of his disciples and subjecting the sūtras to numerous editing changes.¹⁵

Although there were textual differences, the contents of the Sanskrit passages and the Pāli version of “Cakravartī-sūtra” and “Payasvī-sūtra” was apparently similar. “Cakravartī-sūtra” delineates the ideal of a righteous universal monarch (or ‘wheel-turning’ king) and the decline of humanity when the principles of Dharma are abandoned. The core concept revolves around the ideal ruler, a figure whose righteous and expansive reign is characterized by justice, prosperity, and the upholding of Dharma. This concept often serves as a parallel to the Buddha’s turning of the wheel of Dharma (‘Dharma-cakravartin’). The sūtra explores the characteristics of such a king, the seven treasures associated with him, and the decline of society when righteous rule based on Dharma is neglected. The text also contains lessons for monks regarding cultivation of wholesome states, relying on Dharma as their sole refuge, avoiding Mara’s influence, instructions on growth in lifespan, beauty, happiness, wealth, and power.

“Payasvī-sūtra” recounts a detailed debate between one of Buddha’s closest disciples Kumāra-Kassapa (Skt. Kāśyapa) and Prince Pāyāsi (Skt. Pa-

¹³ The manuscript contains large gaps: approximately half of the original 454 folios have been preserved. Most were bought by a private collector in Virginia (USA), the remainder was distributed between Schøyen Collection in Oslo (Norway), Hirayama Collection in Kamakura (Japan) and Bukkyo University in Kyoto (Japan). See: HARTMANN & WILLE 2014: 138.

¹⁴ HARTMANN 2004: 125–128.

¹⁵ VOROB’EVA-DESIATOVSKAIA 2006: 114.

yasvī — “abounding in sap or milk”), a skeptical ruler who held materialistic views, denying the existence of afterlife, rebirth, and karmic consequences of actions. The sūtra is notable for the parables, or elaborate analogies used by Kassapa to persuade Pāyāsi of these principles, such as the analogy of a hot iron ball to demonstrate the existence of human being’s immaterial qualities (life-force, body-heat and consciousness), which have neither form nor weight, or the analogy of a conch-blower to illustrate the interconnectedness of all phenomena and to explain that vital force (soul or self) is not a separate entity that escapes after death. The sūtra concludes with Pāyāsi’s conversion to Buddhism and his subsequent practice of generosity. This text provides valuable insight into Early Buddhist apologetics and philosophical debates of the time.

Conclusion

Publication of newly found fragments of Hīnayāna sūtras from the Serindia Collection is still a subject of great scientific interest related to aspects of textual criticism, comparative analysis of various editions of Buddhist canonical collections and restoration of Sanskrit canons of Hīnayāna schools. In this regard, a pioneering figure explicitly acknowledging high scholarly significance of Sanskrit Hīnayāna manuscripts in the Serindia Collection was S.F. Oldenburg, who first drew attention to a group of fragments of the Sanskrit Sūtrapīṭaka from the M.I. Lavrov’s collection and, apparently, planned to publish them.

Comprehensive study of the newly found manuscript fragments SI 3332/20 and SI 3333/1, including the analysis of their content and external features (in terms of codicology and paleography) allowed us to establish that both fragments are written in North Turkestan Brāhmī, presumably in Kucha, can be tentatively dated to the 8th–9th cc. and belong to the same pothi-folio containing the final lines of “Cakravartī-sūtra” and the initial lines of “Payasvī-sūtra” (two canonical sūtras of the Sūtrapīṭaka). In terms of content, it can be summarized that the published fragments clearly belong to a handwritten canonical collection of various Buddhist sūtras. Comparison with the Pāli Dīghanikāya and the Chinese Tripiṭaka showed that the new fragments contain Āgama sūtras: they probably refer to Madhyamāgama of the Sarvāstivāda school, as indicated by the identical order of the text in the fragments under study and in the Chinese Tripiṭaka, as well as the absence of

“Cakravartī-sūtra” and “Payasvī-sūtra” in the recently discovered Sanskrit Dīrghāgama manuscript from Pakistan.

In addition, identification of such fragments in the Serindia Collection further supports the important conclusion about the dominance of Hīnayāna in the northern oases of the Tarim Basin, which appear to have been a much more “conservative” region relying on the early teachings in contrast to the southern oases where Mahāyāna prevailed.

Transliteration of the fragments, English translation, comparison with Pāli and Chinese versions, and facsimile of manuscripts are provided below.

Transliteration, correspondences, and English translation

Symbols used

- () — restored akṣara(s) in the parts lost or utterly illegible
- [] — damaged akṣara(s) or uncertain readings
- + — a lost akṣara
- .. — an illegible akṣara
- . — a single element of an illegible akṣara
- /// — beginning or end of a fragment when broken off
- | ; || • — punctuation marks

SI 3332/20 (*in italics*) + SI 3333/1

Recto

1. /// [n](a) citt[e][n](a) [e]k[ā](m) d(i) + .. /// - /// .[r](a)[t](i) /// - /// [t]rt[ī][y]. /// - /// sya || .. ///
2. /// ..tena avaireṇa avyavaddhyena sa(r)[v]a+ntaṃ lokaṃ s /// - /// ..[y].¹⁶ viha[r](ati) (ka)ruṇāmuditiṇe[kṣ]ā[s](a)[h](a)gatena cittena ekāṃ di ///
3. /// yāṃ tathā tṛtīyāṃ tathā caturthīm ity ūrddham a[dh](a)s ti /// - /// sarva(antaṃ) [u]pekṣāsahagatena ci[tt](e)na vipulena mahadgatenā(p)r(a) ///
4. /// ka[m] spharit[v]ādhimucya viharati idaṃ tad bhikṣo(r) (bh)[o] /// - ///¹⁷ kṣor balaṃ iha bhikṣor āsraṇāṃ kṣayād anāsravāṃ ceto[v] ///

¹⁶ The lost section of text can be restored based on a similar one from the 4th line: ...[lo]kaṃ spharitvādhimucya...

¹⁷ The following passage from the Pāli version allows us to reconstruct the gap between the fragments: ...idaṃ tad bhikṣor bhogaṃ. Kiñca bhikṣor balaṃ...

5. /// *m abhijñāya s[ā](kṣ)[ā]t[k](r)tvopasaṃpadya viharati k(ṣ)[ī]* /// - ///¹⁸
 r uṣitaṃ brahmacaryaṃ kṛtaṃ karaṇīya n[ā]param asmād bhavaṃ prajānāti ///

6. /// *(a)n[y]am ekabala[m]* /// - /// .. *samanu[p]* /// - /// maṃ tat
 kṣīṇāsraveṇa bhikṣuṇā samyagabhiniṛjitaṃ bhavati • tasmāt ta[r](h)i ///

7. /// to bhāṣitāṃ abhyananda[n*] || cak[r]avar(t)isūtraṃ samāptaḥ • ||

DN III 78.13–79.4¹⁹: ‘Kiñ ca bhikkhave bhikkhuno bhogasmim? Idha bhikkhave bhikkhu mettā-sahagate(1)**na²⁰ cetasā ekaṃ disaṃ** pharitvā viharati, tathā dutiyaṃ, tathā **tatiyaṃ**, tathā catutthaṃ. Iti uddham adho tiriyaṃ sabbadhi sabbattatāya (2) **sabbāvantam lokam** mettā-sahagatena cetasā vipulena mahaggatena appamāṇena **averena avyāpajjhena** pharitvā **viharati**. **Karuṇā**-sahagatenā cetasā... **muditā**-sahagatena cetasā... **upekhā**-sahagatena cetasā (3) **vipulena mahaggatena appamāṇena** averena avyāpajjhena (4) **pharitvā viharati**. **Idaṃ** kho bhikkhave **bhikkhuno bhogasmim**.

‘Kiñ ca bhikkhave **bhikkhuno balasmim**. Idha bhikkhave **bhikkhu āsavānaṃ khayā anāsavaṃ ceto-vimuttiṃ paññā-vimuttiṃ diṭṭhe va** dhamme (5) **sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharati**. **Idaṃ** kho bhikkhave bhikkhuno balasmim.

‘Nāhaṃ bhikkhave (6) **aññaṃ eka-balam** pi **samanupassāmi** evaṃ duppasahaṃ yathayaidaṃ bhikkhave Māra-balaṃ, kusalānaṃ bhikkhave dhammānaṃ samādāna-hetu evaṃ idaṃ puññaṃ pavaḍḍhatīti.’

Idam avoca Bhagavā. Attamanā te bhikkhū (7) **Bhagavato bhāsitam abhinandun ti**.

大正新脩大藏經 第 1 冊 No. 26 中阿含經卷第十五 (70)²¹: 云何比丘樂。此比丘離欲離惡不善之法。乃至得第四禪成就遊，是謂比丘樂²²

¹⁸ This passage is missing from the Pāli version of the sūtra, but can be reconstructed from similar passages in other Buddhist texts (see for example: “Daśabala-sūtra”): “...svayaṃ **abhijñāya sākṣikṛtvopasaṃpadya** pravedayati **kṣīṇā** me jātir **uṣitaṃ brahmacaryaṃ kṛtaṃ karaṇīyaṃ nāparam asmād bhavaṃ prajānāmi**”. Based on the verbatim coincidence with the given passage, it can be calculated that the gap between the fragments on the 5th line is approximately equal to 4 syllables (i.e. graphemic symbols — *akṣaras*).

¹⁹ The Pāli text is given according to the edition in the Pāli Text Society series. See: *The Dīgha Nikāya* 1903, 1911.

²⁰ The places coinciding with the published fragments in the Pāli text are marked in bold and by the numbers of lines. The same applies to translation.

²¹ *The Tripitaka in Chinese* 1990–1998: 524–525.

²² First three sentences are absent in the Sanskrit and Pāli versions of this sūtra: they are given here because they belong to the same passage as the following sentences.

。云何比丘力。此比丘諸漏已盡得無漏。心解脫慧解脫。於現法中自知自覺自作證成就遊。生已盡梵行已立所作已辦不更受有知如真。是謂比丘力。比丘我不更見有力不可降伏如魔王力。彼漏盡比丘。則以無上聖慧之力而能降伏。佛說如是。彼諸比丘聞佛所說歡喜奉行。²³

Translation

And what is wealth for a monk? Here, monks, it's when a monk dwells spreading his (1) **mind** full of loving-kindness **to one direction**, and to the second, and **to the third**, and to the fourth. In the same way above, below, across, everywhere, in all directions he spreads (2) **to the entire world** his mind, which is full of loving-kindness, abundant, exalted, boundless, **free of hostility and ill-will**. He dwells spreading his **mind full of compassion, rejoicing, equanimity to one direction**, and to the second, and (3) **to the third, and to the fourth**. In the same way **above, below, across**, everywhere, in all directions he spreads to the entire world his **mind, which is imbued with equanimity, abundant, exalted, boundless**, free of hostility and ill-will. (4–5) **This is wealth for a monk.**²⁴

And what is **power for a monk**? Here, monks, it's when **by the destruction of the defilements** a monk, in this very life **having directly known and realized** by himself **the taintless liberation of mind** and of insight, **enters upon, abides therein**, [and proclaims]²⁵: “**Birth is exhausted for me, the religious life has been fulfilled, what had to be done has been done, I see no other existence for myself.**”²⁶ This is power for a monk.

²³ For a translation of this sūtra's Chinese version into Russian see: KRAVTSOVA 2001.

²⁴ The whole passage is not found in the Chinese version of this sūtra, but is used almost verbatim in chapter 35 (*juan* 卷) of the collection of texts called “Zeng yi Ahan jing” 增壹阿含經 (“Ekottarāgama” or “Gradual Sayings”). It is found in the section (p0745b10-b13) that discusses the seven virtues in which a monk should perfect himself: 以慈心遍滿一方、二方、三方、四方，四維上下，亦復如是，盡於世間以慈心遍滿其中。悲、喜、護心，空，無相、願，亦復如是。[Zeng yi Ahan jing *juan di san shi wu*].

²⁵ The context has been restored from another Buddhist text (cf. “Daśabala-sūtra” above).

²⁶ The Sanskrit phrase “*kṣiṇā me jātir uṣitam brahmacaryam kṛtaṃ karaṇīyaṃ nāparam asmād bhavaṃ prajānāmi*” is a classical declaration of an Arhat, one who has achieved liberation from the cycle of rebirth. This statement encapsulates the core tenets of the Buddhist path: the cessation of future rebirths, the successful completion of spiritual practice, the fulfillment of all necessary tasks, and the complete understanding that there is no further existence beyond this liberated state. Though this phrase is missing in the Pāli version of “Cakravartī-sūtra”, it appears consistently across various Buddhist texts in Sanskrit, Pāli, and Chinese, highlighting its canonical importance as a marker of ultimate spiritual attainment.

Monks, I do not (6) **perceive any other single** force so hard to defeat as the power of Māra. [And that power] **is utterly conquered by a monk who has extinguished the defilements. Therefore**, monks, it is because of the undertaking of wholesome qualities that this merit increases.

That is what the Blessed One said. Satisfied, those monks (7) **rejoiced in the Blessed One's words. This is the end of "Cakravartī-sūtra"**.

Verso

1. /// [t](ā) [bh](i)kṣu[s](a)mgh(e)na sa(r)[dh](a)m [p]añcam[ā]tr(ai)[r] bhikṣuśatair yena sevati ///

2. /// t(a)[t]r[ā][y]uṣmā k(umārakāś)[y](a)[pa]h sevaty(ā)m /// - /// [g](r)āmasya śiṃśapāvane • tena khalu samayena payasvī²⁷ rājanya[h] ///

3. /// ṣ[t]odakāṃ sadh[ā] + .. [bh](o)gyaṃ rājñā prasenajita k(o) /// - /// [m]āra bhogo datta • payasvī rājanyaḥ evaṃ dṛṣṭīr evaṃ vādīnāsti para[l](o) ///

4. /// ka[ly](ā)[n]apāpakānāṃ karmaṇāṃ kṛtānāṃ upa /// - /// lavipākāḥ aśrauṣu sevatiṣyakā brāhmāṇagrhapatayaḥ ś[r] ///

5. /// ja[n]apad[e]ṣ[u] caryāṃ caramāṇo mahatā bhik(ṣu)saṃ(gh) /// - /// pañca[m]āt(r)air bhikṣuśataiḥ sevatiṃ a[n](u)prā[p]taḥ sadātim asyāṃ eva .[e] ///

6. /// sya puna[r] bh[o]h śramaṇasya kumāra(k)āśyapasya /// - /// .ādāraḥ ka(lyā)ṇaḥ kirtīśab[d]a [ś]lok. (abhyu)[dg]ataḥ arhāṃ vṛddho bahu[ś](r) ///

7. /// .. punas [t]ad (rū)[p]ā[n]ā /// - /// ..vati | .. /// - /// .aṃ ūra.. /// - /// .. rūa [t]b yo .. ///

DN II 316.1–317.14: Evaṃ me sutāṃ. Ekaṃ samayaṃ ayasmā Kumāra-kassapo Kosalesu cārikaṃ caramāṇo maha(1)tā **bhikkhu-saṃghena saddhiṃ pañca-mattehi bhikkhu-satehi yena Setavyā** nāma Kosalānaṃ nagaraṃ tad avasari. (2) **Tatra** sudāṃ āyasmā **Kumāra-kassapo Setavyāyaṃ** viharati uttarena Setavyā **Siṃsapā-vane. Tena kho pana samayena Pāyāsi rājañño** Setavyaṃ ajjhāvasati sattussadaṃ satīṇaka(3)**ttḥodakam sadhaññaṃ rāja-bhoggaṃ rañña Pasenadi-Kosalena** dinnaṃ rāja-dāyaṃ brahma-deyyaṃ.

²⁷ The name of the chieftain Pāyāsi from the Pāli version is given in the Sanskrit text as Payasvī (nominative case from the Sanskrit word 'Payasvin'). Other proper names also differ: for example, Setavyā (Skt. Sevati), Pasenadi (Skt. Prasenajita).

Tena kho pana samayena **Pāyāsi-rājaññassa evarūpaṃ pāpakaṃ dīṭṭhi-gataṃ uppannaṃ hoti**: Iti pi **n’atthi paraloko**, n’atthi sattā **opapātikā**, n’atthi sukaṭadukkaṭāṇaṃ (4) **kammānaṃ phalaṃ vipāko** ti. **Assosum** kho **Setavyakā brāhmaṇa-gahapatikā**: ‘Samaṇo khalu bho Kumāra-kassapo samaṇassa Gotamassa Sāvako Kosalesu (5) **cārikaṃ caramāno mahatā bhikkhu-saṃghena saddhiṃ pañca-mattehi bhikkhu-satehi Setavyaṃ anuppatto Setavyāyaṃ** viharati uttarena Setavyā **Siṃsapā-vane**. Taṃ kho pana bhavantaṃ (6) **Kumāra-kassapaṃ** evaṃ **kalyāṇo kittisaddo** abbhug-gato: “Paṇḍito vyatto medhāvī **bahussuto citta-kathī kalyāṇa-paṭibhāno vuḍḍho** c’eva **arahā** ca. Sādhū kho (7) **pana tathārūpānaṃ** arahataṃ dassaṇaṃ **hotīti**.” ’ Atha kho Setavyakā brāhmaṇa-gahapatikā Setavyāya nikkhamitvā saṃghā saṃghī gaṇībhūtā uttarena-mukhā gacchanti yena **Siṃsapā-vanaṃ ten’ upasaṃkamanti**.

大正新脩大藏經 第 1 冊 No. 26 中阿含經卷第十六 (71)²⁸: 我聞如是。一時尊者鳩摩羅迦葉。遊拘薩羅國與大比丘眾。俱往詣斯毖提住彼村北尸攝毖林。爾時斯毖提中有王名蟬肆。極大豐樂資財無量。畜牧產業不可稱計。封戶、食邑種種具足。斯毖提邑泉池草木一切屬王。從拘薩羅王波斯匿之所封授。於是斯毖提梵志居士聞。有沙門名鳩摩羅迦葉遊拘薩羅國與大比丘眾俱。來至此斯毖提住彼村北尸攝毖林。彼沙門鳩摩羅迦葉。有大名稱周聞十方。鳩摩羅迦葉。才辯無礙。所說微妙。彼是多聞阿羅訶也。若有見此阿羅訶恭敬禮事者快得善利。我等可往見彼沙門鳩摩羅迦葉²⁹。斯毖提梵志居士。各與等類相隨而行。從斯毖提並共北出至尸攝毖林。

Translation

Thus I have heard. Once, the venerable Kumāra-Kāśyapa, while wandering in the Kosala land (1) **together with a large sangha of about five hundred monks**, arrived at a Kosalan town named **Sevati**. (2) **At that time, the venerable Kumāra-Kāśyapa** was dwelling in the **Śiṃśapā-grove** (*Rose-*

²⁸ *The Tripitaka in Chinese* 1990–1998: 525.

²⁹ Two sentences above are not found in Sanskrit and Pāli versions, they could be translated as: “If someone sees this arhat and zealously pays respects and honors him, he will soon attain grace and benefit. We should go and meet this monk Kumāra-Kāśyapa”.

wood) to the north of **Sevati**. And at that time, the chieftain **Payasvī** was living in **Sevati**, a populous place, full of grass, (3) **timber, water, and grain, a king's estate**, which was granted by **King Prasenajita of Kosala** as a royal gift or a brahminical grant.

And at that time, the chieftain **Payasvī** had such views and such assertions: “Truly, there is no **afterlife**, no beings are **born spontaneously**, and there is no (4) **fruit or result of good and evil actions**.”³⁰ The **brahmins and householders of Sevati** heard: “It seems the ascetic **Kumāra-Kāśyapa** — a disciple of the ascetic **Gotama** — (5) **while wandering** in **Kosala-kingdom with a large sangha of about five hundred monks**, has **arrived at Sevati** and is staying to the north of **Sevati** in the **Śimśapā-grove**.” That (6) **good report** spread about **Kumāra-Kāśyapa**: “He is wise, competent, intelligent, **greatly learned**, with excellent presence of mind, auspiciously eloquent, **elder**, and also **an Arhat**. (7) Indeed, it is good to see **such Arhats**.” Then, the brahmins and householders of **Sevati**, having left **Sevati**, went forth in groups, in crowds, heading north, to the **Śimśapā-grove**, and approached it.

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³⁰ The direct speech of the chieftain **Payasvī** and the words preceding it from the beginning of this paragraph are not found in the Chinese version of this *sūtra*.

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Ceylonese Buddhist Priest Subhuti's Letters to I.P. Minayev:

Preface, publication, commentaries

DOI: 10.55512/wmo713499

Submitted: December 20, 2025.

Accepted: April 07, 2026.

Abstract: Letters of the 19th c. famous Ceylonese Buddhist priest Subhuti to the Indologist I.P. Minayev are a valuable historical source. Addressed to the Russian scholar, these relatively brief messages touch on a range of topics essential for understanding both I.P. Minayev's scholarly interests and the state of Buddhist manuscript culture and Buddhism in Ceylon in the 1870s. Subhuti's letters are kept in I.P. Minaev's personal collection at the Archives of the Orientalists at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences. This is the first time they have been published with commentary.

Key words: I.P. Minayev, Buddhist priest Subhuti, Archives of the Orientalists IOM RAS, Buddhism at Ceylon, manuscript culture of Ceylon.

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This paper aims to explicate one item from the archival heritage of the father of Russian Hindu studies I.P. Minayev (1840–1890). Letters from the Ceylonese Buddhist priest Subhuti reveal concrete circumstances of Minayev's scientific work during his stay at Ceylon.

I.P. Minaev's trip to India in 1874–1875 was initiated by the Russian Geographical Society in the hope that a qualified Indologist would be able to form an informed opinion on the religions of India and the current state of affairs in Hindustan. The scholar also had his own research plans: to collect original manuscripts unknown in Europe for his research, and this could be accomplished by establishing contacts in manuscript storage and copying cen-

ters. It is worth noting that in Buddhist cultural regions, manuscript production was largely supported by pious practices: personally copying a manuscript or paying a copyist of the Word of Buddha was considered a meritorious deed. Undoubtedly, the official status of Buddhism in Ceylon influenced the opportunities for increasing the number of manuscript copies of the Buddhist canon and commentaries. Freedom of preaching was accompanied by the growth of monasteries as centers of education and written culture.

Minayev's stay in Ceylon (1874–1875) coincided with a period of active collecting of canonical and commentarial literature, as well as works on grammar, medicine, and other fields of traditional knowledge. Active interest of enlightened Buddhist monks in preserving the written heritage stemmed from the need to consolidate the Buddhist community — the sangha — in the face of Christian missionary activity, too. An important source for exploring this topic is the section “Colombo and Buddhist Monks” in I.P. Minayev's extensive survey of Ceylon published in 1878.¹

I.P. Minayev noted this circumstance in the section of his essay “In Ceylon” describing the religious situation on the island.

Minayev wrote: “I had special purposes during my stay in Colombo <...>. Soon after arriving in Colombo, I had to find the Government's Oriental Library. About this library people widely discussed with me in London, <...> but in Colombo itself no one suspected its existence”.² As a result, the Russian traveller could see manuscripts.

Minayev's interest in manuscripts naturally led to contacts with Buddhist monks. “They are very much accessible: They do not avoid the European, they do not hide from him, neither their sacred things, nor their books, they are very kind and helpful; willingly and even with pleasure and with some pride show all that is remarkable in their monasteries”.³

These contacts were very beneficial to traveler. For example, he wrote: “...I kept an acquaintance with many monks and loved to visit them. From them I learned many things that could not be learned by other means or from other persons”.⁴

The letters mention manuscripts copied at Minayev's request. Predominant among them are works on Pāli grammar. This peculiarity may be explained by the Russian Orientalist's previous academic career. By the time

¹ MINAYEV 1878.

² MINAYEV 2020: 44–45. First publ. in Russian see: MINAYEV 1878.

³ Op. cit.: 46.

⁴ Op. cit.: 44–45.

of his stay in Ceylon, I.P. Minayev was already an expert in the Pali language. His doctoral dissertation analyzing Pāli morphology and phonetics was based on works of Indian and Ceylonese grammarians.

Minayev's contribution to the study of Pali grammar has been analyzed by V.G. Erman. Minayev used the traditional grammars of Kaccayana and Rupasiddhi, manuscripts of which are mentioned in the letters, in his work. Shortly after its publication it was translated into French. An English translation was made from the French edition and published in Burma in 1875.⁵ Therefore, Minayev knew exactly what he was looking for in libraries of Buddhist temples and among monks.

A valuable source clarifying the results of Minayev's stay in Ceylon is a catalogue of the Pāli part of the scholar's manuscript collection in the Russian National (formerly State Public) Library in St. Petersburg, published by Sri Lankan researcher Ratna Handurukande.⁶ Value information about Minayev's contacts at Ceylon consists in publication by Ceylonese scholar R. Senasinghe.⁷

Several details about the sender — venerable Subhuti (1835–1917) — according to his published biography. The novice Subhūti took a keen interest in the study of the Dhamma as well as Pali. As books were difficult to come by at that time scholars were reluctant to lend the few ola leaf books they had. Subhuti was not the person to get discouraged by such set-backs. He undertook the task of copying hundreds of literary and religious works all by himself and with undaunted courage and perseverance achieved his goal.⁸

As a prior of Abhinavaramaya Temple at Waskaduwa Ven. Śrī Subhūti became a Pali scholar of great distinction and compiled the Pali Niganduwa with English and Sinhalese equivalents. It was printed at the Government Printing Press in 1864. The "Nāmamāla", a work of considerable size, was also written by him. It was published in 1876.⁹

Ven. Subhuti carried on a long and persistent effort to get a share of the relics discovered in the stupas of India. He was equally keen to get a cutting of the Bo-tree at Buddha Gaya for his temple.¹⁰ He raised this issue in letters addressed to Minayev, too.

⁵ ERMAN 1967.

⁶ HANDURUKANDE 1990.

⁷ SENASINGHE 2019.

⁸ GURUGE 1984: 20.

⁹ Op. cit: 22.

¹⁰ Op. cit.: 25.

His *Abhidhānappadīpikā*, which was published by the Government Press in 1865 on the orders of Governor Sir Charles Justin McCarthy, had amply compensated for the absence of a Pali dictionary.

Amidst these face-to-face interactions, Ven. Subhūti had to cope with a sizeable international mail. The requests that were directed to him were many: he was asked for information on manuscripts; he had to engage copyists to make paper transcripts of various palm-leaf manuscripts for scholars engaged in editing them for publication in the West; in several cases, his aid was sought in collating manuscripts and for this purpose he had to read and compare Sinhala, Burmese, Thai and Cambodian scripts. Little is known of the system he adopted to keep himself informed of the mass of palm-leaf manuscripts scattered in different temple libraries.¹¹

Subhuti's letters to Minayev are kept in I.P. Minayev's personal collection at the Archives of the Orientalists at the IOM RAS (F. 39, inv. 2, unit 117, ff. 1–9). Most probably they were written down 'by ear' and by different hands. Subhuti signed his letters by personal name in devanagari script (ff. 2, 3 verso) or stamped them (ff. 7, 9). Peculiarities of the letters' texts are preserved since they reflect the English language used at Ceylon in 1870s.

Two letters are dated 1875 and two are dated 1888 and 1889. There is only one envelop. This is the first time they have been published with commentary.

All of the letters were written at Waskaduwa — small town at seashore, where Subhuti's temple was situated. Now it is popular sea resort. Subhuti's temple is included in the list of sights.

1

[F. 1]

Waskaduwa
4th April/75

My dear Sir,

I posted to you three parts of *Rupa Siddhitika*¹² at the immediate arrival of your books and also a letter previously. Two parts of it are herewith sent, and I shall send you the last part of it in the course of eight days. I was much gratified by reading your letter, and especially to hear of the wonderful dis-

¹¹ Op. cit.: 32.

¹² *Rupa Siddhitika* — *Rupasiddhitika* — Pali Grammar.

coveries of General Cunningham¹³ in details, [F. 1 recto] which I hope your goodness would inform him, and also that I have sent him 9 Jatakas.¹⁴

I will be much pleased to comply any of your other necessities. I possess in form of books at your informing me. After you proceeded to Burma and are that I beg you to write me. I shall be thankful if you can transmit me a copy of the new edition of “*Susruta*”.¹⁵ It is with inquiring whether the commentaries for the last portion of that book can be procured from that part of the country. A German Scholar¹⁶ has lakely reached here at the [F. 2] request of the governor for inquiring into the ancient inscriptions found on Stone.

I will be much glad to receive the Jataka at Bharhut in its original Asoka.¹⁷

I remain, Sir,

yours very truly

W. Subhuti

2

[F. 3]

Ceilon

Kalutara

Waskaduwa 30th June 1875

Dear Sir,

I acknowledge the receipt of your letter as well as the books. Is there a commentary to the book called *Wartikapitaya*?¹⁸ Is the other portion of *Kaccathraya*¹⁹ finished? I have forwarded three copies of *Rahulawada Sutta*²⁰

¹³ *Cunningham* — Alexander Cunningham (1814–1893), famous archeologist, discovered numerous ancient inscriptions and monuments, including the Stupa of Bharhut.

¹⁴ *sent him 9 Jatakas* — Subhuti was mentioned by Cunningham in his monograph “The Stupa of Bharhut” as “my good friend Subhuti, the learned Buddhist priest of Ceylon”. See CUNNINGHAM 1879: 58.

¹⁵ *Susruta* — *Suśruta Samhitā* (Suśruta’s Compendium) — medical treatise by Suśruta, ancient Indian physician and surgeon.

¹⁶ *A German Scholar* — Paul Goldschmidt (1850–1877) held the post of Archeological Commissioner of the Government of Ceylon in 1874 and in 1875 started to explore ancient inscriptions in North Central provinces, especially at Anurodhapura. See MULLER 1883: 3.

¹⁷ *original Asoka* — so-called Asokan script, i.e. brāhmī script.

¹⁸ *Wartikapitaya* — *Vartika Pitaka* (A Basket of Commentaries). The titles of this manuscript, *Rupa-Lekawa* and *Kaccayana-traya* were identified and explained by the Indologist E.A. Desnitskaya, and I am thankful to her for collegial help.

¹⁹ *Kaccatharaya* — *Kaccayna-traya*. A treatise on Pali grammar.

²⁰ *Rahulawada Sutta* — *Rahulavada Sutta* — Buddha’s admonition to his son Rahula.

and a Commentary. The other portion will be forwarded soon. The book called *Sesanawansa*²¹ is written in Burmese characters, so I have ordred three Sinhalese copies to be written, but it is very difficult to get it done even for payment; however, I shall forward the same to you with the least possible delay. The parcel and the letter sent to the address of Louis Da Soysa Modliar²² were duly received. Please to send me two of the best quality of the pattern rent, for [F. 3 recto] the purpose of making a present of tham to the person who copied the book *Roopasse Le Kawa*.²³ The other part of the book called “*Karika*” alluded to in the last portion of *Rupasse Le Kawa* will be sent soon. Am I do forward them to the very same place where I have last addressed? I did not get the list of books printed at Benares. I am also anquious to know what the Pali books you published are. I have inserted your name in the book which I am about to publish.

In what month are you going to Birmah?²⁴ Do you intend to go back from Birmah to Russia throwgh Galle, or through some ather route?

With ... respect

I remain,

Sir, Yours obediently

<signature Subhuti in devanagari script >

P.S. I shall also thank you to send me “*Grammatikas*” *Wachaspatya*.²⁵

postscript: I <...> the portions now in print.

²¹ *Sesanawansa* (Sasanavamsa) — this manuscript was written by Pannasami in 1861 in Burmese characters. It concerns the history of Buddhism. Two palm-leaf manuscripts in Sinhalese script are kept in the British Museum collection. Subhuti’s manuscript after Minayev’s death was sent by S. Oldenburg to Mabel Bode who produced a critical edition of the text. See: SASANAVAMSA 1897.

²² *Louis Da Soysa Modliar* — Louis Da Zoysa. *Modliar* — (Mudaliyar) in Ceylon — a position in local administration. L. Da Zoysa was involved in the search and description of Buddhist manuscripts. He played an important role in inspecting collections of manuscripts kept at Buddhist temples.

²³ *Roopasse Le Kawa* (Sinhalese) — Rupa-Lekhawa. Title of the grammatical treatise.

²⁴ Minayev visited Burma only in 1885–1886.

²⁵ *Wachaspatya* — Vachaspatya. A Comprehensive Sanskrit-Sanskrit dictionary. See: *Vachaspatya* 1873.

3

[F. 4]

9th April 1888
Waskaduwa, Kalutara
Ceylon

Dear Sir,

I am delighted to have heard from after a very long time and much more to have read the book that accompanied your letter. I am anxious to know as to how you came to get it as also its authorship. I intend to publish about the same in the leading newspapers of this Island²⁶. I will try my best to procure you a revised copy of the book "Sesanawanse" by comparing all the existing manuscripts, and taking a reliable and authoritative version written either in paper or in olas. I think the work will rather be delayed owing [F. 4 recto] to my ill-health, but notwithstanding that I will endeavour to the best of my ability to hasten it. I am further anxious to know whether you framed the index or whether it was in the original book.

If you require any books from the Island I will be glad to send you on your informing me. Please be good enough to let me know whether you have seen or come to be in possession of any relics of "Buddha" or of the "Arahats" during your tour in India whilst engaged in antiquarian researches.

[F. 6] I am, Sir,
Yours truly
W. Subhuti

[F. 5]

Envelope
Prof. I.P. Minayeff
University of St. Petersburg
Russia
Galernaya 56
Kalutara

²⁶ *Island* — refers to Ceylon.

(ff. 7, 9 are stamped²⁷)

[F. 7]

To prof. Minayeef

11th February 1889

Waskaduwa

Kalutara

Ceylon

Dear Sir,

The book “Sasanawamsa” which you requested of me delayed so long owing to its existence in Burmese characters; for copyists who have a knowledge of Burmese letters are scarce among Singhalese.

After a long inquiry I found a copyist who holds a governmental post, but as it seemed to me, that on account of his governmental business he would perhaps [F. 7 recto] require a period not less than year to produce a complete copy of the work. I was obliged to get another copyist who completed the manuscript copy for me. I ask you not to think that this delay was on the part of my carelessness of your request. Although I required this marvellous delay to draw a single copy of this work. I could get drawn more than eight copies, within a month, if it was in Singhalese characters.

I am sorry to say that I received no answer to the letter I wrote you acknowledging of the [F. 8] book you sent me. The three papers that you sent me, which are monthly publications, proved very excellent, and I wish for more numbers of the same publication.

I wrote an article, expressing gratitude for the book you sent, to one of the vernacular leading newspapers in the Island. Please be good enough to send me another copy of the book. I am always willing to render you my aid in sending you books <...> which are procurable in Ceylon [F. 8 recto] when I am informed with the least delay as possible.

Several Pāli have been published at present in Ceylon, and if you want I can send them.

Have you found out “Buddha’s Relics” in Buddhistical (sic!) monuments in India, during your long journey through the continent. Some years ago I read in an English newspaper, that a European scholar found out some of the

²⁷ “P.N.M.W. Subhuti Thero”. Pavara Neruttikācariya Mahavibhāvi Waskaduwa. It is Subhuti’s full title. At the bottom — “Buddhist Priest”. At the centre — “Abhinava Rama” — Temple’s name.

bone relics of Buddha [F. 9] at Sicriguli in the neighbourhood of the Ganges in India.

I can partly attribute the delay of the manuscript copy to my own refering through the book. My late confinement to bed made a somewhat delay to this manuscript.

I was very ill during several months,
But hope that you are in good health
and sound.

I am yours <...> truly

W. Subhuti.

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Written Monuments of the Orient
Scientific biannual journal

Founder: Institute of Oriental Manuscripts RAS (Asiatic Museum)
Address: Dvortsovaya Emb., 18, Lit. A, Saint-Petersburg, 191186, Russia
Chief editor: Corresponding member of the RAS Irina Fedorovna Popova

Submitted to print 08.06.2026
Date of issue 29.06.2026
Print run: 500 copies

The price is free.

Editorial Office address: Dvortsovaya Emb., 18, Lit. A, Saint Petersburg, 191186, Russia,
www.orientalstudies.ru

Printing address: LLC « Litografiya ». Dnepropetrovskaya st., 8, Lit. A, office 14, 191119, Saint-Petersburg,
Russia www.litobook.ru, e-mail info@litobook.ru, tel. +7(812) 712-02-08

