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SAKA STUDIES: THE ANCIENT KINGDOM OF KHOTAN

By H. W. Bailey

To understand and to interpret according to the meaning of the composers, hence in historical wise, the many ancient documents in languages which we conventionally call Iranian (or Eranian or Iranic, from the name of Erānshahr or Iran, one of the ancient centres of the region where these languages have been recorded for over 2500 years), intense research has been necessary. So much has been lost, not only from the ancient vocabulary of the texts themselves, but also from the vocabularies of modern dialects, such as those archaic ones in Afghanistan, particularly in the Pamir mountains, and in Ossetic of the Caucasus, for here vestiges of the old language survive. But larger help can be found also in the words borrowed or quoted by peoples adjacent to Iran as foreign words (often proper names): in the Akkadian of ancient later Babylon; in the Elamite of Persepolis; in ancient Egyptian; in Greek and Latin abundantly; in Armenian from Arsacid times; in the Georgian, Abkhazian and Daghestanian languages of the Caucasus; in the Aramaic and Syriac of Syria; in early Arab poems and later Muslim books; and further east, in the languages of Kuci (Kucha) and Agni (Qara-shahr) (languages frequently called Tokharian, from a widely extended and imprecisely geographical use of the name), and in Chinese and Tibetan. The reliability in turn of these various sources of information depends upon the scientific level of their publication, and here much remains to be done.

The oldest consecutive Iranian texts for which dates are certain are in the Hakhāmanishiya or Achaemenid inscriptions. To the texts in Old Persian in C. Bartholomae's dictionary of 1904, the *Altiranisches Wörterbuch* and its supplement, and in R. G. Kent's *Old Persian*, some new recently-discovered inscriptions are now to be added, including one of Xerxes still only incompletely published by B. Qarīb, a text similar to that of Dareios at Naqsh-i Rostam (DNb). Many names evidently of Persian origin have been found in Elamite tablets from Persepolis, for a definitive edition of which we still wait upon R. T. Hallock. It is fascinating to have Yamakhshaita (written *yamakshedda*), the later Jamshīd, from one of the Elamite tablets, with Yama in a spelling older than the Yima of the Avesta. A new study of all the Old Persian texts is expected shortly from the pen of E. Benveniste.

Next in time, though we have no external dates, the earliest part of the sacred books of the Zardushtī of Iran and the Parsis of India, the Gāthās, has the marks of great age, and is placed (although the evidence is not decisive) at various dates between times from 1000 to 550 B.C. The Avesta itself is a small part of a large collection of texts which were extant till the end of the Sāsānid period. The name Avesta, in older spelling **pst'k *apastāk* or **apistāk*, has been traced to **upastāvaka*- "praise" or *apastāyaka* "commandment", without final decision. The Avestan texts have excited great interest in Europe for two hundred years. Intense application has been devoted to their study and in general lines the understanding of these Avestan texts is assured. But in many details further insights are necessary. Apart from the religious aspect, some of the ancient poetry of the Avesta is admirable and there are in it many ingredients of the later epic.

Another less ancient study which made some progress last century is that of the Zoroastrian or Zardushtī Pahlavi texts of the Sāsānid period, which were later transmitted in Iran and among the Parsis who emigrated to India. Here work had advanced slowly, the tradition was insecure, and the highly-developed script, which kept only fourteen signs distinct out of an original twenty-two, seems to have been satisfactory only while the language was current in Sāsānid times. We should, however, note that in Arabic script *krd* suffices for five different spellings in Sāsānid words, where *krt*, *kwrt*, *grt*, *gwrt* represent in Fārsī *kard*, *-gird* (as in *Yazdgird*), *kurd*, *gard*, *gird* and *gurd*.

This state of near-defeat was suddenly transformed by the unexpected discovery of many manuscripts written in clear scripts in Central Asia, that is, in Chinese Turkestan, from Kashghar in the west, eastwards to Shachou, and from Kucha in the north, south to Khotan, at the end of last century and

the beginning of this century. The story of these investigations and discoveries is told in J. A. Dabbs, *History of the Discovery and Exploration of Chinese Turkestan* (1963). The famous names here were M. Aurel Stein, A. Grünwedel, A. von le Coq, Sven Hedin, P. K. Kozlov and P. Pelliot. Sven Hedin, in a preface to a book of 1931, reported the discovery of heaps of manuscripts in six languages, one probably unknown, from Qara-Khoto; these are still stored away and likely to delight a later generation of scholars. But much was also brought to the museums of Peking, Tokyo, Kyoto, Delhi, Stockholm, St. Petersburg (Leningrad), Paris, Berlin, London and the universities of Harvard and Yale in the United States. A great part of these texts, an astonishing number in relation to the experts in the field, has now been brought out in numerous publications.

From western Iran, the religious books of the Manicheans in Persian and Pahlavānīg (so the eastern language is named in the texts themselves, for which we may say Pahlavī or "later Parthian"), were found, though often in disappointingly broken pieces. The script was a clear form of the west Asian Syrian alphabet where each letter was distinct. It had, however, no consistent means to indicate all vowels, so that a fully vocalized text is partly conjectural. Some of these texts were written also in Sogdian script and other words and titles have been found written in the Chinese syllabary. Mani himself was said to have written only one book in Iranian, the *Shāhpūrakān* for Shāhpuhr I (who died in 273), and the rest of his scriptures in eastern Aramaic. But he encouraged translation, and among other languages, a great part of his writings has been found in the Coptic language of Egypt. The two dialects of Sāsānid Persian and Parthian are easily distinguished by phonetic differences, though the vocabularies are basically the same. The Central Asian texts proved invaluable in the interpretation of Zoroastrian Pahlavī texts, with their ambiguous written forms.

A part of the Hebrew Psalter was discovered in a Christian Persian translation from Syriac, in a more archaic Syrian script and full of heterograms of Aramaic words as in Pahlavī texts. With excellent facsimiles, it was interpreted by Kaj Barr. The same scholar also edited a fragment of a glossary of Aramaic verbs explained in Sāsānid Iranian, of the type of the Zardushtī *frahang* or glossarial text, the *Frahang ī pahlavik*. An unknown quantity of these Central Asian western Iranian texts remains unpublished more than half a century after their discovery.

Of great importance for western Iranian are all the Sāsānid inscriptions, for which the *Corpus inscriptionum iranicarum* will eventually be a complete repository. But progress there has been slow since the Council was inaugurated in 1954.

From Central Asia, and more recently also from a castle, Mug in the Zarafshan valley near Samarkand, have come many manuscripts in the Sogdian language, which has ceased to be spoken except in the one valley of Yaghnāb in ancient Sogdiana (Sugda, Sughd). Ancient letters, not yet satisfactorily interpreted in full, were discovered by Aurel Stein and published by H. Reichelt. They date from around 312–313 A.D. Manuscripts from the scriptoria of the three communities of Buddhists (the most archaic dialect of the three), Manichaeans and Christians, are fairly abundant. They have been partly published, many with facsimile plates. A Sogdian inscription on a *pts'k* or monument of the Uigur Turkish emperor Ai tāngridā qut bulmiš alpu bilgā βayī Uigur qayan (ruled 808–821 A.D.) was found with Chinese and Turkish parallel texts in Qara-Balgasun. The Buddhist Sogdian is particularly valuable for its early spelling, where the words have largely forms equivalent to the Achaemenid period in west Iran.

A smaller amount of Iranian dialectal material belongs to the Kušān period of Afghanistan from about 100 B.C. to about 400 A.D. Here there are coins with Greek writing, and there is the recent discovery of inscriptions in Greek script which have perhaps too confidently been called Bactrian from the ancient name of the region. The Tokhari people had come to the west by 100 B.C., and the ancient Bactria eventually received the new name of Tokhāristān. On Hüan Tsang's visit in 641 A.D. he spoke of Tokhāristān and the local language written in Greek script. Inscriptions found in ancient Bactria could easily be in Tokhārī.

A new source of eleventh-century Iranian was first made known in the twenties of this century from the ancient Chorasmia, later Khvārazm and modern Khiva, in the language called in Arabic *khuwārizmī*. This new material is in manuscripts in Arabic script and is of Muslim origin. The famous lexical work of Zamakhsharī, the *Muqaddimat al-adab*, was glossed in Chorasmian. A vocabulary of Chorasmian

technical terms with Persian and Arabic equivalents has also been found. Al-Bairūnī was from Khvārazm and his own name is explained by al-Samʿānī as the Persian *bērūn* for Chorasmian *anbēžak* “outside (the city)”, a connexion of Sogdian *bēk* “outside”. Much remains to be published before this Chorasmian dialect will be fully understood. A recent work of J. Benzing (1968), offering the transcription of the Chorasmian glosses and a translation of the Arabic text, will greatly assist towards its interpretation. The frequent absence of diacritic dots at times makes the Chorasmian uncertain. Earlier (1951) a facsimile volume of the *Muqaddima* was printed in Istanbul. A book by A. Freiman called *Khorezmijskij jazyk* “Chorasmian language”, also published in 1951, discussed many problems. Otherwise we depend on a number of articles on special points in periodicals.

Less copious materials are also preserved as loan-words in Central Asian languages. In the kharoṣṭrī or kharosthī script (a name in which I have been inclined to see *khshathra-* (*xšaθra*) “empire” and *pishtra-* (*pištra-*) “writing”) the Prakrit and Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts of Kroraina (modern Lou-lan) which can be dated about 300 A.D., contain many Iranian names, as *Tiravhara*, like *Tiravharna* in a Kābul inscription, and *Livirazma*, *Lyiparasma*, but also such common words as *divira* “writer, secretary”, the *dpywr* of Sāsānid inscriptions; *āspista* “lucerne”, Akkadian *aspastu*, Fārsī *aspast*; *načira* (*č = śc*) “hunt”, Sāsānid inscription *nhšyrpty* “hunt-master”, Sanskrit *naścīrapati-*; *aviṇdhama* “penalty”, Sogdian *βndʹm* **vindām*; *nok-sari* “new year”, Armenian loan-word *nava-sard*, where *nok* “new” is like Pahlavi *nwk*, Ossetic *nāuäg*, *nog*; *cozbo* “an official title”, Tumshuq Saka *cazbā-*; *gamñi*, *gamñavara* “treasure, treasury”, Old Persian *ganja-*.

Among the Yueh-chih (Üe-tši) in 90 A.D. we hear in a Chinese book of a title *ža* or *ša* for their subordinate ruler, the same word with the same meaning as the Khotan Saka *šau*. This people was identified by Kumārajīva of Kuci, who lived 344–413 A.D., with the Tokhāra of Buddhist Sanskrit texts, and, since there is no evidence of this *ša* being a loan-word here, the Tokhāra of Buddhist texts were likely to be Iranian-speaking, which is supported by the presence of the sound fricative *kh* (as in Arabic *khā*), attested by the various spellings of the name, a sound absent from the languages of Kuci and Agni. Tokhāristān replacing the ancient name of Bactria, had in al-Bairūnī’s time a language cited as *tukhāri*, but the few words quoted are plant names and do not suffice to assert that this was an Iranian dialect. The fragments of Buddhist literature found in Central Asia in Greek script of about Hüan Tsang’s time would seem to belong to Tokhāristān.

In the languages of ancient Kuci (Kucha) and Agni (Qara-shahr), some Iranian words have been noted. The word *amok* “art” is not found in the Saka of Khotan (it is in Pahlavi *āmōk* “learning”), but other words indicate a Saka dialect. There occur Kuci *ašām* (pronounced *ashān*), Agni *āšām* “worthy”, the Khotan Saka *āšana-* and Kuci *ašanike*, Agni *āšānik* “the *arhant*, the worthy monk” is from Khotan with the suffix *-ik*. Kuci *perne*, Agni *parn-* “fortune”, translating Sanskrit *lakṣmī*, is nearer to Sogdian *farn-* than to Khotan *phārra-*. Kuci *añkwaš* is the Khotan *amgušda-* “assa fetida”.

Central Asian Turkish texts also show many Iranian words. Here we have *ančman* “meeting”, Pahlavi *hanjaman*; *anwant* “cause”, Sogdian *nβnt*; *možag* “teacher”, from *ā-mōč-* “to teach”; *ton* “garment”, Khotan *thauna-*, Ossetic *tunä*; *vakšik* “spirit”, Pahlavi *vaxš*; and others.

In the book of Maḥmūd al-Kāshgharī, the *Dīwān lughāt al-turk*, sixteen words are quoted from a dialect spoken in villages around Kashghar which he called *kančakī*. This name is in Tibetan Ga-hjag (pronounced Ganjag, from Kančak), a name for Kashghar. An obscure context in a fragment from Murtuq, near Qara-Khoja, has the word (edited Sten Konow 8, 3) *kāncake*, which seems likely to be this same name. From Ga-hjag came a princess to marry the king Vijaya Siṃha of Khotan, as we read in the Annals of Li (Khotan). Among these sixteen words of Kančakī only one, the word *kānbā* “name of a plant”, can be traced. In Sogdian *kenba*, and in Khotan, *kumbā* means “flax”.

Saka has been mentioned several times above. It now demands attention. It is a field in which alone I can speak with confidence since it has from 1934 kept me busy for thirty-six years. Here too the documents belong to Central Asia, from two regions, Khotan (though many of the manuscripts were found in Tun-huang), and Tumshuq, a ruined site near Maralbashi, formerly Barčuq. In the many texts the language is called *hvatānau*, *hvatānau*, *hvatano* in the older language of Khotan, and later *hvanau*, *hvaṃnau*, *hvaṃno* “the language of Khotan”, with the suffix *-āva-*, and in the phrase *hvaṃnye phari jsa* “in the Khotanese language” with suffix *-aka-*. The name of the kingdom is Khotana in the

kharoṣṭrī document (No. 661) dated in the reign (*kṣuṇa*) of the *khotana maharaya rayatiraya hinaza dheva vij'ida simhasya* "the great king of Khotan, the king above kings, the army commander, the god, Vijita Simha". In the local texts, the older ones of about 500 A.D. or earlier have the spelling *Hvatana*, which later is replaced by *Hvamna* and *Hvam*. This later form is known from the *Huanna* of Hüan Tsang on his visit in 641 A.D., which he reported as the indigenous pronunciation of his time. In Chinese we find *Yü-t'ien* (whence the Khotan writers also took *Yüttinā*) and in Tibetan *Yvu-then* and *Hu-then*. Here the older *-t-* has been kept as in Fārsī Khotan. In Buddhist Sanskrit texts this *Hvatana* was given an archaic Indianized form *Gostana*. This was then etymologized as a Sanskrit word with *go-* "earth" and *stana-* "breast". Then this *gostana* in the Tibetan Annals of Li (Khotan) was rendered by *Sa-nu* as the name of a boy destined to be a king of Khotan. A tale was then constructed how the boy was suckled by a breast arisen out of the earth. In the Buddhist Sanskrit of Kuci the name was written *Korttana*. In western Iran the name Khotan is known to all readers of Firdōsī's *Shāhnāma* through the legends of Siyāvash, though these stories are not known to the documents from Khotan. The Persian Geography of the tenth century, the *Hudūd al-'Ālam*, knew the region of Khotan and the regions beyond with accuracy. A tale, however, of Rustam has been found in a Sogdian manuscript.

In the writing of the documents of Khotan and Tumshuq the script employed was the Indian variety of north-west India, a form of syllabary which we call the Brāhmī (a name taken from an ancient Indian text). It expresses all the vowels, and these texts are the earliest Iranian texts fully vocalized. The Brāhmī syllabary, however, was inadequate in consonant symbols. Eventually, twelve new signs were invented. But in Khotanese a system of conjunct signs was used, so that, for example, they wrote *ys* for *z*, and *js* for *dz*, making a writing of great complexity.

The two dialects of Khotan and Tumshuq are clearly of one language but have striking differences. Such a word as *fra-* "forward" is replaced in Khotan by *ha-*, but in Tumshuq by *ra-*; hence the difference of Khotan *hūda-* "given" and Tumshuq *rorda-*, from an older *fra-* with the base *bar-* "to bear". Other differences are evident in Khotan *śśūdasu* "eleven" and Tumshuq *śowarsana* and Khotan *paṃjsāsā* "fifty" and Tumshuq *patsasu*.

The nearest living dialects to these Saka languages are those still spoken in the Pamir mountains, particularly the Wakhī of Wakhān. The Greek writer Ktésias in the time of Artaxerxes II (404–358 B.C.) is quoted as stating that Rōxanakē was the name of a *polis* "town" (as distinct from an unfortified *kōmē* "village") where the Saka had a royal seat, a *basileion*. This name is still known in the Pamir in the region Rōshnān, Rōshān, where the language is one of the large Shughnī group in the Vakṣu (Oxus) region.

Though direct contemporary statement is not found, it is likely that the two languages of Khotan and Tumshuq were spoken by two tribes of the Saka who about 200 B.C. or earlier settled with a monarchical or oecarchical system in this region of the Taklamakan. From the second century B.C. there is Chinese information on Khotan: no major invasion is recorded.

The Saka are named in the Achaemenid inscriptions. Darius (Persepolis h 5–6) stated *hačā sakaibiš tayaiy para Sugdam* "from the Saka who are beyond Sugda". He listed also (Pers. 18) Gandāra Sakā Makā; similarly Xerxes (Pers. h 26) cited Dahā Sakā, where the Dahā belong to the east of the Caspian Sea, in a district later called Dihistān. They are an ancient people already named in the Zardushtī text, the Avesta. Herodotos (vii 64) wrote of γάρ Πέρσαι πάντας τοὺς Σκούθας καλέουσι Σάκαζ "for the Persians call all the Skuthai Sakai". From Chinese Annals we hear of the Sak (later pronunciation Sō and Sai) who had a kingdom in the second century B.C. north-west of Kashghar. The Saka people penetrated into ancient Drangiana (Zranka) and their name has remained attached to the land ever since. It is known to Isidoros Kharakenos (in the time of Augustus) as Σακαστανή, and later in Shāhpuhr I's inscription at Naqsh-i Rustam (Parth. 2) *skstn*, Greek Σεγιστανή; Agathias (third century A.D.) used Σεγεστανών of the people and of their king, which gave in Latin Segestani. But on the Roman map the Tabula Peutingeriana, Saga was written. In the kharoṣṭrī inscription on the Mathurā Lion Capital, *sakastana* (*k = gh*) has *s-*, but Sanskrit writers replaced this by *ś-* in Śakasthāna and Śaka and knew also *śakāni lipi* "writing of the Śaka". In Prakrit we find Saka and Saga.

In Iran itself, Zardushtī Pahlavī had (Greater Bundahishn 78, 15) *sgst'n*, or one may read the later

syst'n; the Sāsānid inscriptions have *sk'n MLKA sakān-šāh*, *sk'n MLKTA sakān bānbišn*, Persian of Turfan *sg'n b'nbyšn*, Greek Σεραβ σαα; Sogdian Christian *sgst'n*, Syriac *sgstn*, with adjective *sgzyq-*, Arab *sajastān*, *siḡistān*, *sagān šāh*, Fārsī *seistān*, with adjective *sagzi*. Armenian has kept the older Sakastan, Sakstan and Sagastan, with adjective *sagčik* and *sačik*.

The local texts of Khotan and Tumshuq do not use the name Saka of themselves. But in Central Asian Buddhist Sanskrit a Saka-rāja “a king of Saka” is named which was perhaps the king of Yarkand, of which place the ancient name was something like Saka, preserved only in Chinese syllables and a corrupted Greek text. In Khotan texts an adjective *sakāna-* occurs in personal names as in Sakāña Šanīrā, that is, “Šanīra of Sakāna” and Sakām hīvi “belonging to Sakāna”.

The Brāhmaṇas of India wrote of a northern *dvīpa-* “continent, region” which they called Śāka-dvīpa, from which they reported two immigrations into north-west India, some 2000 years ago, of sun-worshippers. The former group, worshippers of Mihira (a later Iranian form of Mithra), had a famous temple in Mūlasthāna (Multan) with a golden statue described by Hūan Tsang at his visit in 641 A.D. The *maga*, their priests, named from the ancient title *magu-*, were admitted among the Brāhmaṇas as Maga-brāhmaṇas, the highest intellectual class. The second group, who revered a teacher Jaraśastra, a Sanskrit form of Zardusht, had priests called *bhojaka* “ministrants of the god”, and they, being unable to accept the Vedas, were not admitted among the Brāhmaṇas.

Sakastān, Seistān, became famous in the Iranian epic as the home of the hero Rustam (older form Rōtastahm, meaning probably “strong in body”). He is called *sagzi* “of the Saka” and in Armenian Rostom sagčik. He belongs to Zābul, which is named in Sanskrit Jāguda.

There seems little doubt that a wide-ranging tribe of the Saka came to Central Asia, and that the language of Khotan is a Saka dialect. I have adopted that view here.

This wide-ranging of the speakers of Iranian languages is vividly shown in the period of European migrations in the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. Two tribes known to the Greeks and Romans, the Sarmatae and the Alani, penetrated to France and Portugal. The Sarmatae occur first in the name Sairima in the Avesta, whence it came into Pahlavi as *slm*, that is, Sarm or Salm, and into the Arabic books and the Fārsī epic in the person of Frētōn's first son. These Sarmatae from the region to the north of the Black Sea drove their cousins the Scythians westwards and southwards. Then in the year 173 A.D., the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius (161–180 A.D.) defeated the Sarmatae and took the epithet, as victor, of Sarmaticus. Of these Sarmatae, 8000 were taken into the Roman army and from them 5500 cavalry were sent to the Roman province of Britannia as *veterani*. An inscription put up by them in northern Britain can now be seen in St. John's College, Cambridge. In France too the road through the city of Rheims was once called the *via Sarmatarum* “the road of the Sarmatae”.

Yet another and still more important tribe, called Alani by the Greeks and Romans, maintained a great state north of the Black Sea and the Caucasus till the eleventh century. As Christians they were welcomed in Byzantion (Istanbul); an archbishop is mentioned, and the emperor Konstantinos Porphyrogenetos laid down a protocol for the reception of the *exousiastēs* “ruler” of Alania at his Court. The Alani who went west in the fourth century were allotted Lusitania (modern Portugal) by the Roman emperor of the West, Honorius, in 409 A.D.

From the north of the Caucasus, the Alani intermarried with the rulers of Sarīr, and in the twelfth century one of them, David Soslan, became the consort of the Georgian Queen Tamar during the Georgians' golden age. The name Soslan is later found as the name of a famous hero in the Ossetic Nart epic. The Mongol invasion destroyed the Alan state. Some of the Alan tribe called As were taken by the Mongols in the reign of Qubilai Khan to the imperial capital city Khan-baliq, modern Pekin, to serve as a palace guard. They are called Asutai in the Mongol Chronicle.

The Alan were for centuries familiar to the Greeks and Romans and also to the Muslim historians. The name was given to the Caspian Sea, the *baḥr al-Lān*. Princes of the Arani, another form of the name, are mentioned in a letter of as late as 1459 A.D. In the Caucasus the name is not yet quite forgotten. The Megrel of Mingrelia in modern western Georgia call a brave youth an *alani k'o'i* “an Alan man”. A tournament is called *alanuroba* “a festival of the Alans” (*-oba* is a suffix to name festivals). They use also the name Alan of the Qaračai Turks, their neighbours. As a family name, Alan has survived in Abkhazian.

The Chinese also have preserved the name A-lan. It seems too that the Alan name was taken far to the east. According to a Chinese document dated 886 A.D., a god A-lan was honoured in the non-Chinese city of Qomul (Qamul, Khamil) beyond Turfan. There also it was reported that amongst the inhabitants was a temple of the Mazdeans, the worshippers of Hormizd.

It seems desirable to adduce here a feature of the phonetic system of Saka dialects. In Qomul the final syllable *-ul* recalls also the tribe in the Kanchou region named Cimuḍa, Cumuḍa, according to Khotanese Saka documents, who were named also by Al-Kāshgharī Āumul; he stated that in the eleventh century they spoke Turkish but had also a language of their own. Now in the west, also, where we know Saka people lived, we find names ending in *-ul* in Zābul, Sanskrit Jāguḍa, and Kābul, Greek Καβουρα. To interpret an ending *-ul* we have to note also the Hūna royal name Mihirakula, with Mihira as an older Mithra; and this *-kula-* can be compared with the *kert* of the west Iranian name Yazdkert, in Armenian Yazkert, Turfan Persian *γζdygyrd*, Fārsī Yazdgird. Further, a common noun must be cited. This is a word for “basket”, showing two forms **kamṛta-* and **čamṛta-*, in Khotan Saka *khamūda-*, Pamir Yidgha *kūmio*, Shughnī *cemūd*, Orošorī *camūg* (here *c = ts*) and Sanglēcī *čumoł*. The various spellings here with *-l*, *-d* and *-l* show an unusual replacement of older *-ṛta-*. I am inclined to connect all these names and words as Saka dialect forms containing *-ṛta-*, although as always, where names are concerned certainty cannot be reached. Note that in Khotan Saka *-d-* and *-l-* alternate in the foreign word *hūḍūka-*, *hūlūka-* “drum” from Sanskrit *huḍukka-*, and a local word *šade* “goodness” is once written *šalai*. For older **kṛta-* (as in Old Persian; Avestan *kərta-*) Khotan Saka has *kiḍa-*, *guḍa-*, *yida-*, *yuda-*.

The language of Khotan is attested over a period of some centuries and great changes can be observed. The older type from 300 A.D. or earlier is particularly employed in religious translations. It has kept syllables which later are absent. Thus the Greeks cited Median *ἑταρος*, which is older Khotan *ttatara-*, but later *ttara-* “partridge”, Fārsī *tadharv*; similarly the older *satā* “hundred” occurs as *se*, *sse*, *sa*, *ssa*, but the numerals *tcahora* “four”, *paṃjsa* “five” and *hašta* “eight” are not changed.

At the time we first meet the Saka of Khotan and Tumshuq, it is still a highly-inflected language. The noun has seven cases. The differences of the two dialects can at once be seen: Khotan has nom. sing. and gen. sing. *-ā* and *-i*, gen. plur. *-ānu*, but Tumshuq has nom. sing. *-i*, gen. sing. *-ā*, gen. plur. *-anā*, *-enu*. A trace of the old dual survives in *duve sate* “two hundred”. The verb has an inherited present indicative, conjunctive and optative; there are a few survivals of a preterite; but the past is expressed by the use of the participle *-ta-* with the verb “to be”, as in *ātū mā* “I came” from older **āgatah ahmi*. The transitive active has a participle form *-tānt-* as in *yudāndi sta* “you made”. The full details of these inflections can now be read in R. E. Emmerick, *Saka Grammatical Studies* (1968).

The Saka languages retained some of the archaic Iranian religious vocabulary even after the Saka had become Buddhists. It is used with new meanings. The old religious word **śyanta-* gave *ysama-śśandai* “world” from *zam-* “earth”; without *zam-* the word *śśandā* was used for “earth”, and *śśandrāmata* renders the Buddhist *śrī* “goddess of fortune”. In Avestan the word was *spānta ārmaitiš* “the beneficent earth”. Tumshuq *bārza-*, Khotan *balysa-* served to translate *tathāgata*, and *buddha-*. The *ttaira harāysa* “the peak of Harābrz” corresponds to Buddhist *Sumeru* the world mountain, in Avestan *harā bərəz*, Fārsī *alburz*. The Khotan *urmaysdān-* means “sun”, but is connected with *Ahura-mazdāh*. So too *gyasta-*, Tumshuq *jezda-* is the old *yazata-* “a being to receive worship”, and *gyaysna-* is the act of worship. Khotan *phārra-*, Sogdian *farn*, correspond to Avestan *xvarnah-* and mean “fortune”. The epithet of kings and learned men *kavi-* occurs as Khotan *kai*, plural *kā*, used of the *ārya-* “monks” and the *rrispūra* “princes”. The full phrase *zāy spandārmāt* for “earth” occurs in Sogdian, where Khotan has only the double phrases *ysama-śśandai* and *śśandrāmata*.

The contents of the texts from Khotan are of many kinds. The *vihāras* (Sogdian *brx'r*, Fārsī *buxār*) or monasteries as centres of literary activity produced the translations of the Buddhist texts from Prakrit or Buddhist Sanskrit. But it is clear that the royal court of Khotan encouraged the development of literature. The poem called *Jātakastava* “praise of the Buddha’s births”, originally in Buddhist Sanskrit, was rendered into Khotan Saka verse at the behest of the great king Viśā Sūra; he and his family are praised in the introduction. The prince Tcūṃ-ttehi composed a *deśanā* or profession text in verse.

The Annals of Li (Khotan), preserved in a Tibetan translation, record that there were sixteen *vihāras* of the Mahāsāṅghika Buddhist school in Khotan. It gives also a statistical statement of the sixty-eight larger *vihāras*, ninety-five of middle size and 148 smaller *vihāras* to be found in Khotan itself; there were others in the adjacent towns and districts.

The literature of Buddhism translated in Khotan covered most of the genres familiar in Buddhist use elsewhere. There is mention of the various ritual and philosophic treatises. In translation we find sometimes whole texts and sometimes fragmentary remains of large books. They were fortunate to have behind them the long tradition of Indian book-making. Each folio was numbered and in the religious poems the verses are also numbered throughout. Large books existed. A solitary folio numbered 611 has survived. Other folios have numbers 255, 134-148, 152 and one text, the Book of Zambasta, has about 4000 lines of verse on 440 folios.

Religious texts attested in Khotan are the well-known Buddhist Sanskrit *Vajracchedikā-sūtra*, *Bhadracaryā-deśanā*, *Bhaiṣajyaguru-vaidūryaprabhā-rāja-sūtra*, *Saddharmapūṇḍarīka-sūtra*, *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, *Sumukha-sūtra*, *Suvarṇabhāsa-sūtra*, *Samghāta-sūtra*, two *Avalokiteśvara* texts, an *Amitāyuh* poem, a kind of *Karma-vibhanga* text on the penalties for actions. Tales exist of Aśoka and Kaniṣka, the two imperial patrons of Buddhism, giving in brief form the tale of Aśoka and Yaśas and of Aśoka and Kunāla. Of Kaniṣka, we have the tale of his *vihāra* and *stūpa*, and the tale of Kaniṣka and Aśvaghōṣa. *Jātaka* tales were as popular here as elsewhere in the Buddhist world. The *Jātakastava* relates fifty stories of the Buddha's powers of endurance. The tale of Sudhana and Manoharā is told in three manuscripts in verse. Rāma and Sītā are transferred to the Buddhist world by the claim that Rāma was Buddha in a previous *jātaka*.

The Book of Zambasta is a miscellany of philosophy and tales of the Bodhisattva. The ascent to Tuṣita and the descent at Sāṃkāsya make a colourful tale. The *citta-mātra* idealist philosophy of the Vijñānavāda is boldly thrust forward in strong assertions. No reference to Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* has been noticed, in contrast to Kuci, where portions in translation have been found. The *Dharmapada* type of *subhāṣita* "moral saying" is represented by only two verses in Khotanese, which are also cited in *avadāna* tales. But in Kuci both the *Udānavarga* and a commentary are known. The kharoṣṭrī *Dharmapada* was found in Khotan. The Sanskrit text has now been edited from parts of two hundred different manuscripts.

A text named after Manjuśrī is peculiar in that it contains later versions of some part of the Book of Zambasta. The text has not been found in Sanskrit.

But a taste for literature existed outside the *vihāras*, though we are indebted to them for the written traces which have reached us. In several manuscripts there are lyrical verses. The monkish scribe tended to end the lyrical passages with a denunciation of *kāmaguṇa* "amorousness". These verses, though not yet fully interpreted, show a delightful pleasure in gardens with flowering trees and crystal fountains. The lovers drink the *durausū* drink, in which we see the old name of the ritual drink of the Avesta, the *dūraośa*. In the Staël-Holstein miscellany also we have a love poem copied into the manuscript at the end of an official report.

A traveller's diary of a visit from Vi (probably Khotan) to the Adhiṣṭhana capital city of Kashmir, the modern Srinagar on the Vitastā river, shows that this type of record was known in Khotanese. To have a report dated to the reign of the Kashmir king Abhimanyugupta, who ruled 958-972 A.D., is a striking historical trouvaille.

On the technical side we find medical texts. At first, Buddhists were adverse to medical studies, as P. Demiéville has pointed out in the Buddhist Encyclopedia Hōbōgirin (under *byō* "illness"), but eventually they ascribed medical teaching to the Buddha. In one text, a bilingual Buddhist Sanskrit text with Khotan translation, which, to provide a title, I called *Jivaka-pustaka* "the Book of Jivaka", represents the Buddha teaching Jivaka, the personal physician of the Buddha in the tales. A further medical text translated into Khotanese with an indigenous introduction is the *Siddhasāra* of Ravigupta, of which the original Sanskrit and a Tibetan version are also known, and some part also in Turkish. Other anonymous medical texts have been printed.

Most interesting historically are the many reports called *haṣḍa aurāsa* "reports of information" sent by *haḍa*- "messengers, envoys" to the Court of Khotan. They report the activities of potentially

dangerous enemies, the Turks and their allies, between the cities of Chinese Turkestan Si-chou, Sha-chou and Kan-chou.

One text (P 5538a) is a message from the court of Khotan from King Viśā Śūra to his mother's brother, the Chinese ruler at Sha-chou, the Ta-uang "great king", Sha-chou being at that time in the tenth century an independent Chinese state.

In these documents, jade has an honoured place as a gift for kings. It was the supreme export of Khotan.

Many documents dated in the regnal years of Khotan kings have given us the names of kings of Khotan otherwise known only in the Tibetan Annals of Li or hidden under Chinese names in the Chinese dynastic records. Here we see the kings of the Viśā (Vijita, Vijaya) family called Siṃha, Sambhava, Vāhaṃ, Dharma, Kīrti, Śūra, Saṃgrāma, Vikraṃ. The Annals of Li mention other names. In these same Annals we even learn that Hphrom Gesar's daughter Huronga had married a King Vijaya Saṃgrāma of Khotan. This Frōm Kēsar has his name from the Kaisar of Rome (Byzantium), a name which later plays a great part in the Gesariad of Tibet and Mongolia. The Sogdians and the Parthian used *Frōm* beside the Persian *Hrōm* to refer to Rome in Byzantium.

A document with signatures called a *khala-vi* "inventory", probably a Tibetan compound *skal-bye*, contains a list of gifts made to Ārya-Ratanavarakṣa and Praketu and to be taken to Sha-chou. Here our interpretation is at a low ebb since many of the things presented are given unknown names.

Private letters form another section. The letter of an anonymous person to his old teachers resident in a monastery in Phema (in Marco Polo's description called Pem) is an eloquent expression of gratitude.

A fine panegyric to one of the kings called Viśā Saṃgrāma is the most eloquent of Khotanese texts. The writer heaps upon him all the epithets of majesty, secular and religious, and calls him as a climax a fifth world-regent.

In one Buddhist Sanskrit text, the *Sitātapatrā-dhāraṇī* "the formula of the lady with the white umbrella" the scribe has according to custom inserted his patron's name, and one is suddenly confronted with *raksa raksa mama rājñā vijitti sambhavasya*, that is, "protection, protection be mine, the king Vijita Sambhava". It is a usual formula in these prayers. Here Vijita Saṃbhava has, as it were, come to life before our eyes—a king of the tenth century, whose very name was unknown to historians before this present century.

Later when all the texts have been printed and translated, we may hope that a fully-qualified historian will relate the history of the Sakas of Chinese Turkestan from their own documents, their struggles with many enemies, with Chinese, Tibetans, and last and most deadly, the Turks of Kashghar, who by 1000 A.D. had put an end to the Buddhist kingdom of Khotan after it had had a duration of some 1200 years.

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