



The new Visitors' Centre at Dunhuang, September 2014. Courtesy of the Dunhuang Academy. Photographer: Sun Zhijun.

2014 marked the 70th anniversary of the Dunhuang Academy (founded in 1944 as the Dunhuang Research Centre and renamed in 1987 when it became a UNESCO World Heritage site) and also saw the official opening of the Visitors' Centre. The former was marked with a special edition of the Academy's journal with articles by leading scholars in the field (p. 3). The Centre was opened on 10 September 2014.

Visitors are now taken to the Centre en route to the Mogao Caves. The Centre is outside the town on the turn off to the caves and near the railway station and the airport. Here visitors watch a 20 minute film giving a brief historical introduction to the region and then move into a domed amphitheatre for a digital presentation on the caves and their art. Both have interpretation into English. Visitors then go on shuttle buses to visit the caves themselves.

The lead architect was Cui Kai of the China Architecture Design and Research Group (<http://en.cadreg.com/>), who also designed Dunhuang City Museum. The film and digital dome projection were directed by Chen Jianjun.

The Visitors' Centre was largely funded by the Chinese government with additional support from various public and private funders in China and worldwide, including the Dunhuang Foundation US.

The Visitors' Centre at Dunhuang



Conservation and Research on Excavated Textiles from Mogao

Zhou Yajuan



Dunhuang, an important Silk Road town, bears witness to the cultural diversity, the exchange of ideas and the vibrant trade in ancient times. Among its outstanding artefacts are a great number of textiles showing an incredible breadth of colours and textures. The textile legacy of Dunhuang, in particular the silk paintings, banners, sutra wrappers and other silk-made works of art, are an inexhaustible treasure-house yet to be fully explored. However, due to their extreme vulnerability, little research interest and attention has been given to the conservation of textiles from Dunhuang.

As the largest state-level specialised museum on textiles, China National Silk Museum, with government-authorized conservation qualifications for movable cultural relics, has always taken the textile identification and conservation as its duty-bound mission and responsibility. For years, the Museum has trained a professional conservation team and provided conservation treatments on more than 500 ancient textiles for museums and research institutions nationwide.

In 2013, Dunhuang Academy and China National Silk Museum co-launched a conservation and research project

on textiles from the Dunhuang Mogao caves. Recently 58 pieces (sets) of Dunhuang textiles lent to China National Silk Museum for the exhibition ‘Thousands of Threads and Hundreds of Patchworks: Conservation and Research on Excavated Textiles from Mogao Grottoes at Dunhuang’ were displayed in the Textile Conservation Exhibition Hall of the Museum in Hangzhou. The specialized exhibition not only gave the public unprecedented access to the textiles – displayed outside Dunhuang on such a grand scale for the first time – but also highlighted the achievements made in their conservation. The exhibition closed on 15 March 2014.

The exhibition consisted mainly of archaeological discoveries from Dunhuang, revealing the dedication of archaeologists during the excavation of Dunhuang textiles in the form of photographs and texts; the conservation and research on Dunhuang textiles from the Northern, Tang and Yuan dynasties, in particular the process and the results achieved by curators in China National Silk Museum; as well as worldwide collections of Dunhuang textiles in UK, India, Russia, Japan and other countries.

敦煌研究

Dunhuang Yanjiu
[Dunhuang Research]

Issue 145, 2014/3

ISSN: 10004016

This special issue is devoted to the 70th anniversary of the Dunhuang Academy and includes articles by the leading Chinese and Japanese scholars in the field.

Opposite, top: The film theatre in the Visitors' Centre.

Bottom: the digital dome projection in the Visitors' Centre.

Photographs courtesy of the Dunhuang Academy.

Photographer: Sun Zhijun.

Desmond Parsons in Chinese Archives

Luo Huaqing

The Briton, Desmond Parsons, is considered to be the last foreigner to steal Dunhuang relics. Previously the official documents relating to his case had not been available to scholars, but there are five files of Republican era records in the Gansu Provincial Archives that record the whole story, making them a first-hand historical account of unquestionable significance.

According to these files, we learn that Parsons was a Special Correspondent for the *The Peiping Chronicle* when he left in 1935 for his tour of Dunhuang. This was a Party newspaper that was established under the name *The Peking Leader* and published from 1917 to 1931 by the Central Committee of the Kuomintang before being renamed. Parsons was travelling on a British passport validated for travel in China by the Chinese Consulate in London. Two people accompanied him, an interpreter from Jilin, Wang Mingzhou, and a servant from Beijing, Mao Dianrong. They arrived in Lanzhou from Xi'an on 12 March 1935, staying at the Jiangsu Hotel. They remained there for ten days, leaving for Dunhuang on 22 March.

After arriving at Dunhuang, they were assigned police 'protection' by the Magistrate Yang Can and proceeded on their tour of the Mogao Caves. We do not know Parsons's motives for his actions, whether it was because of his admiration of the exquisite murals and statues, the thrill of following others in the 'hunt' for antiquities, or perhaps another reason. In brief, he managed to give everyone the slip and use tools to remove a beautiful image from a cave and then conceal it within his vehicle in an attempt to take it away with him. Fortunately his theft was exposed and ultimately prevented. It could be said that his actions bore a striking resemblance to those carried out by Langdon Warner and others.

Parsons was subsequently taken to Anxi County Government offices and then, on 9 May, to Jiuquan via Yumen. His situation after this is not recorded in these archives.

File 1

Gansu Provincial Capital Public Security Bureau Petition 143 (16 March 1935)

The report of the Chief Qiu Jianmin of Public Security Bureau First Precinct, states: 'The three men in question, the British reporter for the English-language *The Peiping Chronicle*, Desmond Parsons, his interpreter from Jilin, Wang Mingzhou, and a servant from Beijing, Mao Dianrong, arrived in Lanzhou from Xian on the 12th of this month and are staying at the Jiangsu Hotel. The Briton holds a British passport validated for travel by the Chinese Consulate in London, and further endorsed by the Beiping Municipal Government and the Hubei Provincial Public Security Bureau. They intend to travel on to Dunhuang. I hereby submit this report for examination [etc.]' In view of the above, this office reviewed [the documents] and found no discrepancies, I hereby respectfully submit this humble petition via telegram to your ministry, in addition to the provincial government, for future reference.

Respectfully presented to Mr Wang, Head of the Gansu Provincial Government Civil Affairs Dept.

Bai Wei, Gansu Provincial Public Security Bureau Chief
[seal] 16 March 1935

甘肃省会公安局呈（1935年3月16日）

原文：呈字第143号

案据公安第一分局局长丘键民报称：“查有英文《北平时事日报》记者英人巴慎思随带翻译吉林人汪铭洲，夫役北平人毛殿荣共三名，于本月十二日由西安来兰，住江苏旅馆。该英人携有英国政府发给游历护照一件，曾经中国驻伦敦总领事馆验证，并经北平市政府及河北省会公安局加签。拟前往敦煌游历，理合报请鉴核。”等情；据此，职局复查无异，除分呈省政府外，理合具文呈报钧厅电鉴备查。

谨呈甘肃省民政厅厅长王

甘肃省会公安局局长拜伟（印）

中华民国二十四年三月十六日

File 2

Gansu Provincial Public Security Bureau Petition 166 (27 March 1935)

The date of arrival in Lanzhou of *The Peiping Chronicle* reporter, the Briton Parsons, and others has already been respectfully submitted to your ministry. The report by Chief Qiu Jianmin of Public Security Bureau First Precinct states: 'The three men who were previously reported as arriving in Lanzhou, namely Parsons, the British reporter for *The Peiping Chronicle*, the interpreter Wang Mingzhou, and the servant, Mao Dianrong, left Lanzhou on 22nd of this month for their tour of Dunhuang [etc.]. I hereby respectfully submit this humble petition via telegram to your ministry for future reference.

Respectfully presented to Mr Wang, Head of the Gansu Provincial Government Civil Affairs Dept.

Bai Wei, Gansu Provincial Public Security Bureau Chief
[seal] 27 March 1935

甘肃省会公安局呈（1935年3月27日）

原文：呈字第166号

案查《北平时事日报》记者英人巴慎思等到兰日期，业经呈报钧厅在案。此据第一分局局长丘键民报称：“查前来兰之《北平时事日报》记者英人巴慎思，及翻译汪铭洲，夫役毛殿荣等三名，于本月二十二日离兰，前往敦煌游历。理合报请鉴核。”等情；据此，理合具文呈报钧厅电鉴备查。

谨呈甘肃省民政厅厅长王

甘肃省会公安局局长拜伟（印）

中华民国二十四年三月二十七日

File 3

Telegram from Dunhuang County Magistrate, Yang Can (22 April 1935)

For the attention of Lanzhou Provincial Chairman, Mr Zhu, and the Minister of Civil Affairs, Mr Wang: Regarding the travel of the Briton Parsons, special correspondent for *The Peiping Chronicle*, to the Thousand Buddha Caves, the County Magistrate assigned a police escort both for his protection

and to monitor his actions. According to the investigation, Parsons violated the conditions for this visit, secretly using tools to remove a fine image from a cave and then hiding it in his vehicle, at which point he was discovered. I respectfully await your immediate telegraphic instructions whether to send him under escort to the government seat of Anxi County, deport him or release him.

Dunhuang County Magistrate, Yang Can
Respectfully yours.

敦煌县长杨灿电呈（1935年4月22日）

原文：分送兰州省政府主席朱、民政厅厅长王钧鉴：英人巴慎思系英文《北平时事日报》特约记者，游千佛洞，县长派警保护，并加注意，巴氏违背条约，暗用铁器，抱取洞内佳像，窃装车中，当被查觉，押送安西县府，或递解或放行，立候电示祇遵。敦煌县长杨灿。叩。养。

File 4

Telegram from Gansu Provincial Minister of Civil Affairs, Wang Yingyu (27 April 1935)

From Anxi to Dunhuang, for the attention of County Magistrate Yang: Telegram received and understood. Await result of Provincial Government investigation. Minister Wang. Much obliged. [seal]

甘肃省民政厅厅长王应榆电令（1935年4月27日）

原文：安西转敦煌杨县长鉴：养电悉。仰候省府核示。厅长王。感。叩。

File 5

Yumen County Government Express Mail (8 May 1935)

Lanzhou. For the attention of Minister of Civil Affairs, Mr Wang: In consultation with Anxi County Government, it is understood that today the Briton Parsons is being transported under guard to [Yumen] county I hereby enclose details of his onward journey and report to you his date of departure from the county via telegram for future reference. [etc.]. Such are my reasons [for writing]. In view of the arrival this morning of the aforementioned Briton Parsons in the county, police officers have already been selected to escort him under close guard to Jiuquan county on the 9th. In view of the above, I hereby report the departure date to your ministry for future reference. Yumen County Magistrate Wang Bingxin. Respectfully.

五、玉门县政府快邮代电（1935年5月8日）

原文：兰州。民政厅厅长王钧鉴：本日淮安西县府咨，解英人巴慎思一名到县，嘱即查收转解前途，并将出境日期电报备查。等由。查该英人巴慎思今晨抵县，已于九日选派干警小心解送酒泉县府转解矣。兹准前由，谨将出境日期代电呈报钧厅鉴核备查。玉门县长汪秉信。叩。庚。

Sourced from Gansu Archives Information Network website: 陈乐道, ‘敦煌文物盗掠者英人巴慎思档案秘’
http://www.cngsda.net/art/2012/11/14/art_21_7748.html

Prospects for the Study of Dunhuang Manuscripts: The Next 20 Years



Delegates at the Princeton Conference. Photographer: Frank Wojciechowski

The conference, held at Princeton University from 6–8 September 2014, was co-organised by Professors Stephen F. Teiser (Princeton University) and Takata Tokio (Kyoto University). The conference covered research in all disciplines of Dunhuang manuscript studies, including religious studies, literature, history, linguistics, and palaeography. Twenty-nine papers were presented by scholars involved in the International Liaison Committee for Dunhuang Studies from greater China, Japan, Europe and the US. The conference was co-sponsored by Princeton University Buddhist Studies Workshop and the International Liaison Committee for Dunhuang Studies, with Major Funding from The Henry Luce Foundation. Audio files of the keynotes are available at: <https://csr.princeton.edu/dunhuangmanuscripts/audio-files/>

Our Favourite Items



LOAN:STEIN.344 (T.VI.b.i.009) — Helen Persson

Well, I do like shoes and this peculiar looking and old shoe is very special. Although the shoe's original functions were practical and protective, there is a clear design element to it. The utilitarian everyday object has decorative features as well, showing human desire to embellish even the simplest of artefacts. The entire sole is covered with tight knots of string, which would have the effect of the hob-nailed military sandals of the Romans or the climbing nails in a modern boot. The knots would have made walking on the sand in the Taklamakan Desert much easier. This type of sole can also be seen in the footwear of the terracotta soldiers from Xi'an, showing that this sort of footwear is not a single occurrence but most likely had a long tradition. It would most likely have been worn as an outer shoe, i.e. over a thinner cloth shoe.



1919,0101,0.6 — Fan Jinshi

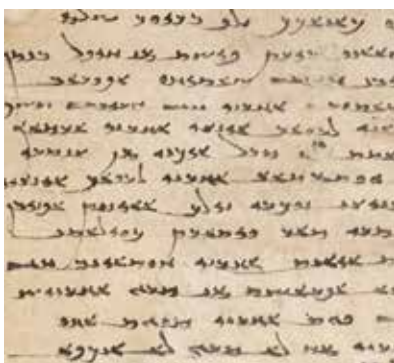
The painting has several interesting features. Firstly, the heads of the three younger disciples are very round with cute expressions. Second, the painting is very similar to murals found in Dunhuang Mogao Caves dating from the early Tang period. For example, the complex *lingzhi* mushroom (灵芝) design depicted on the canopy and the lotus seat is identical to that shown in the preaching scene on the east wall of Mogao Cave 329, dating to the early Tang. Third, the composition is very similar to the Pure Land and preaching scenes depicted in early Tang caves such as Mogao 321 and 329. This type of composition is thought to have originated from the preaching scene in the Sui-period Mogao Cave 390. These similarities indicate a close relationship between this piece and the murals of the same period at Dunhuang Mogao.



Pelliot chinois 2583 — Stephen Teiser

This scroll is composed of thirteen sheets of paper originally written one at a time. Each sheet was a liturgy accompanying a single ritual act of donation on behalf of Dunhuang's nuns, monks, and laypeople. Some of the rites were intended for healing sickness; others were documents used in memorial observances or the distribution of nuns' clothing after death. Most of the prayers are short, occupying less than half a sheet.

The ensemble of the scroll's two sides makes this my favorite manuscript in the Dunhuang collection. The texts offer elaborations of core Buddhist teachings plus hemerological calculation of lucky and unlucky days, all constructed on the back side of humble liturgies transferring merit to nuns, monks, and laypeople.



Or.8212/95 — Nicholas Sims-Williams

While the main importance of this letter lies in the historical data it contains, what I find particularly affecting are the paragraphs with which it ends, a poignant last will and testament. Nanai-vandak regards the events described as bringing to an end the world as he knows it and foresees nothing but ruin and death for himself and the other Sogdian merchants in China. Since he does not expect to return home, he asks his correspondents in Samarkand to look after a large sum of money which he had left on deposit there, to invest it on behalf of the orphan Taksich-vandak, presumably his son, who is still a minor, and to find him a wife when he comes of age. But of course his letter never reached its destination, so it is unlikely that its provisions were ever carried out.



MIK III 8426 — Hans-Ulrich Seidt

The object I have chosen for the webpage of the International Dunhuang Project is not from the area of the former Soviet Union. It comes from China and is today part of the collections of the Museum of Asian Art in Berlin-Dahlem. The mural was brought to Berlin during the first decade of the twentieth century by the German expedition to Turfan. In my eyes this unique piece of art not only demonstrates the general wealth and prosperity along the ancient silk roads but also the multi-ethnic character of their urban trade centres.

For the complete series of blog posts see <http://idpuk.blogspot.co.uk/search/label/20%20things>

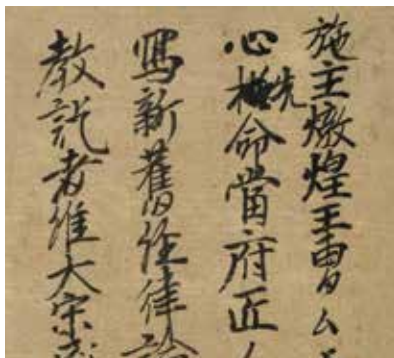
Excerpts from the IDP20 Blog Posts



IOL Khot W 1 — Oktor Skjaervø

This records a legal case dated in year one of ‘the gracious lord, great king of kings of Khotan, Viśya Sihya’, formerly unknown. The case concerns the sale (lease) of a man’s brother to do state work on behalf of the villagers of Birgamdara to help pay their debt. The cover contains a summary of the legal decision, as the complete decision could only be read by breaking the seal. This tablet was reused, however, to record another legal decision on its underside.

A number of such tablets have recently come to light in China which are shedding welcome new light on the history of Khotan in the late seventh to early eighth centuries. To me, however, it seems like IOL Khot W 1 was what started this new spate of discoveries. That is why I choose it as my favourite object.



F-32/4 — Irina Popova

The text states that the ruler of Dunhuang Cao Zongshou and his wife Lady Fan issued an order to make cloth wrappers for Buddhist sutras and to supplement the lacunae in the library of Baoen Monastery. The document was dated the 15th day under the sign *renyin* of the 7th month of the 5th year under the reign of Universal Peace (*Xianping*) of the Song dynasty, which corresponds to 25 August 1002.

In the course of the research, printing and on-line publication of the Dunhuang collections from all over the world no other document with a full date from later than this has come to light, even if there is circumstantial evidence that such documents may exist. So then, this unpretentious short manuscript F-32/4 retains its complete timeless value.



1919,0101,0.139 — Dan Waugh

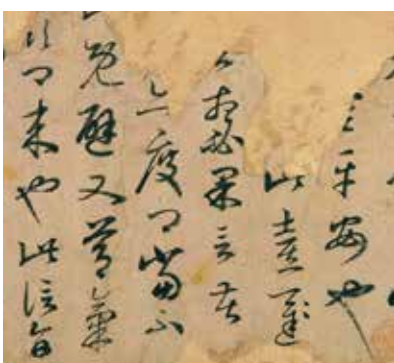
Why this painting? In the first instance for the bowl, which to my mind embodies much of what the ‘Silk Roads’ are all about. It is one of the Middle Eastern cut glass bowls (numerous in the Sassanian period) which traveled along the Silk Roads all the way to Japan. But this banner evokes memories. When at the Mogao Caves for the first time in 1998, I was particularly struck by Cave 196, dated to 893–4, approximately the same time as the banner. Cave 196 is distinctive in that, unlike most of the other Mogao caves, it has preserved its original entrance hall and also some of its statues in their original position on the large U-shaped altar platform of the main hall. The best known of these is a bodhisattva of great beauty in the position of ‘royal ease’, whose features remind us of the bodhisattva depicted on the banner.



Neg 1240(90) — John Falconer

In the decade before his untimely death in the early days of the Second World War, Robert Byron (1905–41) established an enduring reputation as an art and architectural historian. His extensive collection of photographs (British Library shelfmark: Neg 1240) is among the most enduring and valuable of his legacies, providing a unique record of the buildings encountered and described on his travels, many of them now inaccessible, altered or entirely destroyed. The image selected here is rare in including a human presence.

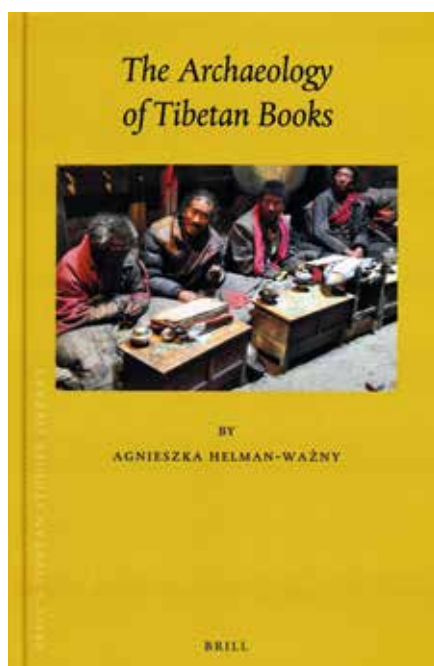
In his wanderings around the monuments of Herat, a city that has seen massive damage to its historic fabric in recent decades, he writes of feeling as one ‘who has lighted on the lost books of Livy, or an unknown Botticelli’.



Or.8210/S.3753 — John Cayley

In the Chinese cultural sphere, practices of ‘copying’ calligraphy are understood as authentic and generative, and many of them are able to preserve, more or less intact, the aesthetic and cultural value of fine artistic works. In all their instantiations and despite their variously mediated transmission, such works of aesthetic writing may be definitively associated with a first author, with a single, named and often famous calligrapher. Or.8210/S.3753 is a freehand copy of a piece written by Wang Xizhi (303–361), China’s most famous calligrapher. Once his calligraphy had achieved the status of fine art treasure — within his lifetime — rare originals and more widely disseminated copies immediately became models for all calligraphy students and remain so right down to the present day.

Publications



Huastuanift: Manihaist Uygurlarin Tövbe Duasi
[Xuastvanift — a confession book of the Manichaean Uygurs]

Betül Özbay

Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları:

Ankara 2014

PB, 256 pp., colour and B&W ills., 14TL

ISBN: 9789751628985

**Buddhism Across Asia
Networks of Material,
Intellectual and Cultural
Exchange, vol. 1**

Tansen Sen (ed.)

Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian
Studies/Manohar Publishers &

Distributors 2014

HB, 483 pp., US\$55.90

ISBN: 9789814519328

<http://tinyurl.com/opjugmz>

**Translating Buddhist Medicine
in Medieval China**

C. Pierce Salguero

Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania
Press 2014

HB, E, 272 pp., 1 ills., US\$55.00 | £36.00

ISBN 9780812246117 (HB)

9780812209693 (E)

<http://tinyurl.com/pjlucha>

**Family Matters in Indian
Buddhist Monasticism**

Shayne Clarke

Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press 2013

HB, 296 pp., US\$52

ISBN: 9780824836474

<http://tinyurl.com/nk9tzsr>

**India in the Chinese
Imagination
Myth, Religion, and Thought**
John Kieschnick and Meir Shahar
(eds.)

Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania
Press 2013

HB, E., 352 pp., 20 ills., US\$65.00 | £42.50

ISBN: 9780812245608 (HB)

9780812208924 (E)

[http://www.upenn.edu/pennpress/
book/15158.html](http://www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/15158.html)

**The Archaeology of Tibetan
Books**

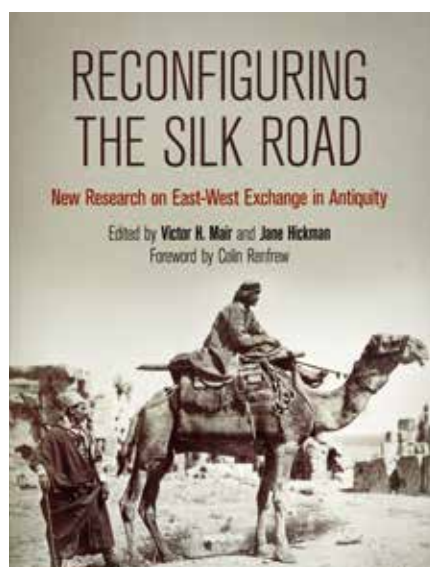
Agnieszka Helman-Wazny

Leiden: E. J. Brill 2014

HB, 311 pp., colour and B&W ills., €103

ISBN: 9789004275041

<http://tinyurl.com/m5wuzfx>



**Reconfiguring the Silk Road
New Research on East-West
Exchange in Antiquity**

Victor Mair and Jane Hickman (eds.)

Philadelphia: University of
Pennsylvania Press 2014

HB, E., 136 pp., 31 colour, 9 b/w ills.,
\$59.95 | £39.00

ISBN 9781934536681 (HB)

9781934536698 (E)

<http://tinyurl.com/puf86yh>

**Building a Sacred Mountain
The Buddhist Architecture of
China's Mount Wutai**

Wei-Cheng Lin

Seattle: University of Washington 2014

HB., 344 pp., 61 ills., US\$60.00

ISBN: 9780295993522

<http://tinyurl.com/kwyjm9j>

敦煌写本文献学
**Studies on Dunhuang
Manuscripts**

张涌泉

Zhang Yongquan

Lanzhou: Gansu Educational Press 2014

PB, 744 pp., CNY98

ISBN: 9787542324146

唐后期五代宋初敦煌僧寺研究

**The Study of Buddhist
Monasteries in Dunhuang the
Post Tang, Five Dynasties and
Early Song Period**

陈大为

Chen Dawei

Shanghai: Ancient Books Press 2014

HB, 375 pp., CNY88

ISBN: 9787532571765

<http://www.guji.com.cn/gj>

敦煌遺珍

Treasures of Dunhuang

林世田, 楊學勇, 劉波

Lin Shitian, Yang Xueyong, and Liu Bo

Beijing: NLC Press 2014.

PB, 226 pp., 149 colour ills., CNY58

ISBN: 9787501352746

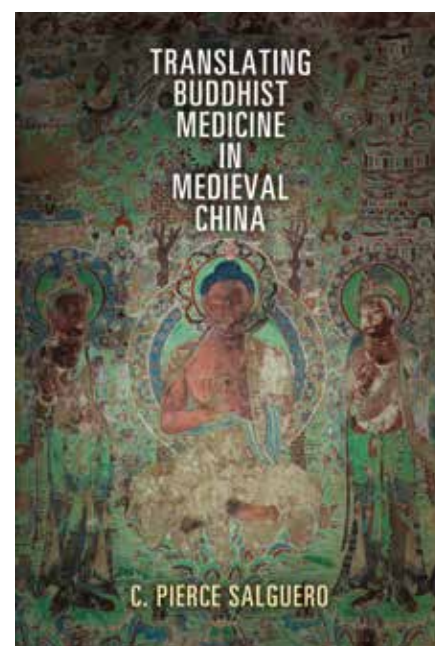
**Writing, Painting and Sketching
at Dunhuang**

Sam van Schaik, Agnieszka Helman-
Wazny and Renate Noller.

Journal of Archaeological Science 53
(2015): 110-132.

Link valid till 27/12/14:

[http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/
article/pii/S0305440314003537](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0305440314003537)



Exhibitions

Splendeurs des Han, essor de l'empire Céleste

Musée Guimet, Paris

22 October 2014 – 1 March 2015

This exhibition marks 50 years of diplomatic ties between China and France. Over 450 artefacts dating from the Han dynasty were loaned by 27 Chinese museums.

Buddha's Word: The Life of Books in Tibet and Beyond

Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge, UK

28 May 2014 – 17 January 2015

Buddha's Word is the first museum exhibition of Tibetan material in Cambridge. It is also the first time in the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology's history that its Buddhist collections will be showcased in an exhibition.

Dunhuang Culture and Art

Hong Kong Heritage Museum

28 November 2014 – 16 March 2015

With 120 exhibits, the exhibition will introduce the origin, development, prosperity and decline of the Dunhuang Buddhist caves. The exhibits will include replicas of caves, copies of murals and sculptures, along with original Buddhist paintings and scriptures, other manuscripts and decorated tiles.

Travelling the Silk Road

Denver Museum of Nature & Science

21 November 2014–3 March 2015

The exhibition focusses on five sites along the Silk Roads, Xi'an, Turfan, Samarkand, Baghdad and Constantinople. It is accompanied by an educational interactive role-playing game and a programme of lectures and other events.

Luoyang and the Silk Road

Swedish Museum of World Culture, Stockholm

September 2015–February 2016

This exhibition, in cooperation with the Henan Provincial Administration of Cultural Heritage and Archaeology, will display over 150 objects excavated from Luoyang and surrounding areas.

Critical Silk Road Seminar

Georgetown University

2014–2015

This is a year-long series of workshops funded by the John E. Sawyer Seminars program of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. These workshops are focused upon a critical examination of the Silk Road.

Forthcoming seminars include:

Silk Road Manuscripts and Antiquities: Collecting and Transmission (11 Dec.)

Dr Sam van Schaik (IDP) and Tamara Chin

Institutional Settings (9 April 2015)

Susan Whitfield (IDP) and Roland Lin

Chih-Hung

<http://silkroadseminar.georgetown.edu/>

Merits of the Book: Buddhist Manuscript Traditions across Asia

University of Chicago

February 2015

For details contact Matthew Kapstein:

m-kapstein@uchicago.edu

Conference on M. Aurel Stein

Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi

24–26 March 2015

For details contact Radha Banerjee Sarkar:

rbsarkar18@gmail.com

Conferences

Early Islamic Balkh History, Landscape and Material Culture

16–17 January 2015

Wolfson College, Oxford, UK

The Balkh Art and Cultural Heritage Project (2011–2015) has been investigating the early Islamic history and archaeology of the city of Balkh, in Northern Afghanistan. This conference presents the interdisciplinary research of the Project's international collaborative team, and hosts a discussion of the state of research on Balkh in the seventh to twelfth centuries AD.

Places are limited so please register early:

balkh.conference@orinst.ox.ac.uk

Symposia Iranica The Second Biennial Graduate Conference on Iranian Studies

Cambridge University, UK

8–9 April 2015

Established as the first student and early career scholar-focused forum in the field, Symposia Iranica is an unthemed, biennial international graduate conference that brings together both groups to celebrate, encourage and stimulate their interest and engagement with Iranian studies. <https://www.facebook.com/SymposiaIranica>

Tour: Following Stein's Footsteps in Kashmir

Indus Experiences UK is organising a special tour to Kashmir in August 2015 following in Stein's footsteps. The tour will stay for a few days in Srinagar visiting sites frequented by Stein, before travelling to Mohand Marg, north of Srinagar, the alpine meadows where Stein spent his summers. Further details will be given in the next issue but places are limited and if interested contact:

+44 208 901 7320

yasin@indusexperience.co.uk

For more information on Stein in Kashmir:

S. N. Pandita. *Aurel Stein in Kashmir: The Sanskritist of Mohand Marg*. New Delhi: Om Publications 2004.



Stein's writing table on Mohand Marg, with Dash. Courtesy of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Stein Photo 3/3(37).

Kashmir Bhawan Centre, UK:

<http://www.siraurelstein.org.uk/preamble.html>

IDP Worldwide

IDP Sweden

The Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul (SRII) hosted a symposium entitled 'Cultural Treasures From the Silk Road in Swedish Archives' from 11–14 October. The symposium brought together scholars from Sweden, Turkey, Germany, and the UK to discuss the work being done on the Hedin and Jarring collections.

The symposium was organised by Birgit Schylter, Director of the SRII and Professor of Central Asian Studies at Stockholm University, and Håkan Wahlquist, Keeper of the Sven Hedin Foundation and former Curator for the Asian Collections at the Museum of Ethnography, and both spoke about their work on the collections. Several other Swedish scholars also talked about the digitisation of the Jarring Library, the Hedin photographs and other parts of the archives.

Scholars from Germany and Sweden included papers on other explorers, including Otani, Mannerheim and Renat.

The symposium was followed by the annual Gunner Jarring lecture, held for the first time in Istanbul, and given by Susan Whitfield of IDP.

Plans were also discussed for activities in 2015 to mark the 150th anniversary of Hedin's birth, and it was agreed that the next issue of *IDP News* will be devoted to Hedin and Swedish collections. Participants were also told of the planned exhibition on Luoyang and the Silk Road, from September 2015 and an accompanying conference (see p. 9, full details in next issue).

The SRII, along with sister institutes in Rome and Athens, is now under threat. More details are given on the Institute website: <http://www.srii.org/>

IDP Germany

Members of IDP-Berlin, Simone-Christiane Raschmann, Abdurishid Yakup and Desmond Durkin-Meisterernst visited Turfan on the occasion of the conference 'Turfan and Silk Road Economic Belt Forum. The Fifth International Conference on Turfan Studies' from the 19–22 October 2014. The meeting was held under the very positive impression of the UNESCO World Heritage status recently conferred on Kocho and Yarkhoto, two of the oldest cities of the Turfan oasis, recognising the Chinese work of conservation and care of these sites and their more than two thousand years of settled cultures. The title of the meeting refers to the Chinese promotion since 2013 of a



Delegates at the symposium in Istanbul. From l to r: Lars Larsson, Erdal Küçükyalçın, Simone-Christiane Raschmann, Håkan Wahlquist, Göran Bäärnhielm, Ann Olsén Ehrnstén, Susan Whitfield, Eva Myrdal, Birgit Schylter, Yukiyo Kasai, Emine Gürsoy Naskali, Patrick Hällzon.

Photographer: Jonas Lindh.

Central Asian trade network named 'The Silk Road Economic Belt'.

The conference offered a broad range of excellent papers on economic, archaeological, historical and linguistic topics in a tightly packed programme. The simultaneous translation by two competent translators helped to make exchange fruitful.

The members of IDP Berlin all presented papers, on manuscripts in the Aratestate in Istanbul, on old Uygur astrological treaties and on the contribution of Iranian speakers to cultural transfer. Three other lectures may suffice to give an impression of the variety: Susan Whitfield (IDP UK) demonstrated how greatly religious communities were interested in trade and that a great deal of economic activity was involved in the construction of stupas and Buddhist monasteries in eastern Central Asia; Zulipiya Maimaiti (Turfan Museum) gave an impression of the leather garments and other leather objects preserved from the Turfan region; the paper by Kharjaubai Jantegin (Kazakhstan) on a subterranean chamber grave with ramp in Mongolia gave rise to a lively and friendly discussion about the origins of this kind of structure.

Yukiyo Kasai and Simone-Christiane Raschmann also gave a presentation at the Silk Road conference in Istanbul (see above).

IDP France

Romain Lefebvre, associate researcher at the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF)

since 2013, has successfully completed the description of the Library's Tangut (Xixia) fragments (<http://tinyurl.com/oupkot2>). Some of the fragments have been newly conserved by Françoise Cuisance. The conservation improved the decyphering and identification to reveal new content. The description of these fragments will soon be available on BnF Archives et Manuscrits, the online catalogue of the BnF manuscripts. Romain Lefebvre has also been awarded the Pasteur Vallery-Radot prize (€10,000) to research the Pelliot collections at the BnF. He visited IDP colleagues at the British Library in September to discuss potential collaboration and to attend the Tangut Day in Cambridge (<http://tinyurl.com/l8gplp6>).

On the occasion of the visit of Melanie Malzhan to the BnF, it has been agreed that the description of the Tocharian fragments prepared by the CeTOM (A Comprehensive Edition of Tocharian Manuscripts) team will soon be available on BnF Archives et Manuscrits (<http://tinyurl.com/q6rqgxl>).

The Musée Guimet opened a major exhibition on the Han Dynasty (see p.9). A workshop will take place on 4 December with the collaboration of CRAO (Centre de Recherche sur les Civilisations de l'Asie Orientale – <http://tinyurl.com/mallblg>) at which Chinese and French archaeologists will present their research (see <http://tinyurl.com/ncyyvac>).

IDP Russia

On 21 September 2014, Professor Dr. Serguei G. Klyashtornyj, the eminent Russian Turcologist, honoured professor of several foreign universities, who headed the IOM Department of Central and South Asian Studies for many years (up to 2013), died after an extended illness. The administration and researchers of the Institute bewail his death.

Obituaries are given by Dr Raschmann (right), and on the IOM website (<http://tinyurl.com/kprldtj>).

The IOM RAS was represented at the Princeton University International Conference 'Prospects for the Study of Dunhuang Manuscripts: The Next 20 Years' (see p. 5) by its Director, Prof. Irina F. Popova, who gave the paper 'A Fragment of Political Treatise in Dunhuang School Manual', and who moderated Panel 5, 'Networks and Communication' and the Concluding Keynote Lecture. Dr A. Zorin who gave the paper, 'Fragments of Tibetan Texts Found at the Dunhuang Collection Kept at the IOM RAS: Eight Identified Fragments of Buddhist Canonical Texts.'

IDP Beijing

IDP NLC colleagues finished marking up a bibliography entitled *An Index for the Reference of Dunhuang Manuscripts in NLC Collections: 1900-2001* 《國家圖書館藏敦煌遺書研究論著目錄索引:1900-2001》. This bibliography is very helpful for understanding the research history of each item in the NLC Dunhuang manuscript collections. It was compiled by Mrs Shen Guomei, a

librarian at NLC, and was published by NLC Press in 2001.

Mr Lin Shitian, Yang Xueyong and Liu Bo published their new book *Treasures from Dunhuang* 《敦煌遺珍》 in June 2014. Two of the authors, Lin and Liu, are IDP NLC staff. This book is included in the series on Chinese Rare Books by NLC Press (p. 8).

Liu Bo attended the *International Academic Conference on Chinese Palaeography*, which was held at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences on 30-31 October 2014. He gave a talk on Dunhuang manuscripts that are copies of printed books.

Ms Luo Weiyan resigned in July after three years of service because of health reasons and Ms Zhao Qing was hired as the new imaging assistant. She began work on 1 August.

Mr Liu Bo returned to Beijing from Boston at the end of August. He had been working at Harvard-Yenching Library for a year as a visiting fellow, and completed an annotated catalogue of the rare Chinese local gazetteers held there.

IDP Dunhuang

Details of Dunhuang celebrations are given on pp. 1-2.

Hangzhou

An exhibition of Dunhuang textiles was held at the China National Silk Museum, Hangzhou (see p. 3).

The Museum Director, Dr Zhao Feng, visited IDP UK in April 2014 and gave a paper at the event, 'Silk on the Silk Road' (see p. 12).

Serguei Grigoryevich Klyashtornyj
1928-2014



On 21 September 2014 our esteemed colleague, the Russian scholar Professor Dr. Serguei Grigoryevich Klyashtornyj died at the age of 87 years after a severe illness. S. G. Klyashtornyj was one of the leading Russian Turcologists, the head of the Department of Central and South Asian Studies at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts for many years, vice chairman of the Russian committee of Turcologists at the Russian Academy of Sciences, honorary member of the Turkish Language Association and the Academy of Sciences of Kirgizistan and honoured professor of several foreign universities.

Publishing more than 300 books and articles, the main subject of his research which he continued almost to his death was the history of Central Asia focused on the Turkic peoples. He was highly regarded worldwide as a historian, archaeologist and philologist who made a significant contribution to the discovery and study of the Old Turkic epigraphic monuments.

Between 1960 and 1990 he was a member or the head of numerous archaeological expeditions in Kirgizistan, Siberia and Mongolia. He acted as editor or member of the editorial staff of numerous publications as well as Russian or international scientific periodicals and journals. He always took care of the following generation of Turcologists as a university teacher and as an academic supervisor of the doctoral theses of numerous students from Russia, Kirgizistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Mongolia, not a few of them are now regarded as excellent local specialists in this field.

In 2005 he was awarded the Gold Medal of the Permanent International Altaistic Conference for his outstanding results in the study of the Old Turkic runic inscriptions.

S. G. Klyashtornyj will be sorely missed.

Simone-Christiane Raschmann



IDP UK



Silk on the Silk Road

An afternoon of lectures followed by a reception was the final event marking the year of celebrations for the 20th anniversary of IDP. Lectures were given by Susan Whitfield, Helen Wang (British Museum), Helen Persson (Victoria and Albert Museum) and Zhao Feng (Director, National Silk Museum, China, pictured above).

People

We were sorry to say goodbye to Paschalia Terzi and Stephanie Santayana. Paschalia finished her research on Stein archives on an Erasmus studentship. She is planning to publish the results. Stephanie, who worked as a volunteer while completing her MA at UCL, finished her checking of the catalogue of the Stein paintings in the British Museum.

We welcomed four MA students from UCL in May and June on internships. Meghan Butt, Shaochen Wang, Tingting Wang and Na Zhang, helped with the sorting and cataloguing of photographic collections for IDP, along with translations and transcriptions.

Visitors to IDP over the past six months to discuss collaboration, ongoing and potential, have included Harlan Wallach (Northwestern University, USA), Zhao Feng (National Silk Museum, China), Susan Huntington (Ohio State University, USA), Lew Lancaster and Wayne de Fremery (University of

California, Berkeley), Mimi Gates (Dunhuang Foundation US), Ian Johnson (Australia National University), Matthew Kapstein (University of Chicago), Charles Manson (SOAS), William McGrath (University of Virginia), Agnieszka Helman-Wazny (University of Hamburg), Daniel Waugh (Washington University), Matthew Ciolek (Australia), Maria Menshikova (The State Hermitage, St Petersburg), and Lilla Russell-Smith (Museum for Asian Art, Berlin).

In addition, IDP welcomed several groups of students and scholars to view manuscripts, including from the Getty Research Institute (for potential loans for their 2016 exhibition), supporters from the Dunhuang Foundation US, students from the University of Heidelberg, French archaeologists and students at the Pratt summer school.

It continued to be a busy period for scholars viewing manuscripts in the Reading Rooms, with 24 readers viewing 444 manuscripts over this period.

Conferences and Papers

Sam van Schaik spoke on Tangut translations of Tibetan Buddhist manuscripts at the annual Tangut workshop in Cambridge, with Emma Goodliffe of IDP also attending (<http://tinyurl.com/l8gplp6>).

Susan Whitfield (SW) gave lectures on IDP and Silk Road research at the following events.

- * ECAI Workshop, held as part of the *Computer Applications in Archaeology Conference*, Paris.
- * *Connecting the Silk Road: Trade, People & Social Networks (ca. 400-1300 AD)*, conference held with the exhibition *Expeditie Zijderoute, schatten uit de Hermitage*, Hermitage Amsterdam.
- * *Prospects for the Study of Dunhuang Manuscripts: The Next 20 Years*. Closing keynote at Princeton University.
- * American Trust for the British Library, Cos Club, New York.
- * IFA-China Workshop, New York University.
- * *The Annual Gunnar Jarring Lecture* (p.10).
- * *The Fifth International Conference on Turfan Studies* (p. 10).

IDP Patrons Meeting

The annual IDP Patrons Meeting was held in London on 11 June and followed by a tea for friends and supporters.

SBFT

The Sino-British Fellowship Trust (SBFT) held its annual reception and certificate presentation at The Royal Society on 26 June. Members of IDP attended and IDP also prepared a poster exhibition celebrating over two decades of collaboration between SBFT and the British Library.



Debbie Haine and Anne Ely of SBFT at the IDP Patrons Meeting.

Collaborations

Susan Whitfield and Vic Swift met with colleagues from IDP Paris in April to discuss ongoing collaboration.

During her visit to Istanbul, Susan Whitfield met with colleagues from Sweden to discuss ongoing collaboration, including on activities next year to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Sven Hedin's birth (see next issue of *IDP News*). Subsequently, Michel Lee, Director, Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm, visited London to discuss their forthcoming exhibition on Luoyang and the Silk Road (see p.9)

In Istanbul Susan Whitfield also met with scholars and cultural organisations in Turkey to discuss potential collaboration and the organisation of the next IDP business meeting, planned for Istanbul in April 2015.

Susan Whitfield travelled with Simone-Christiane Raschmann (IDP Germany) to Urumqi and Dunhuang, where they met with IDP partners, before attending and speaking at the Fifth International Conference on Turfan Studies.

IDP News appears twice a year. It is also available online.

Editor: Susan Whitfield; Picture Editor: Josef Konczak

For further details about IDP or to be added to the free mailing list contact:

The International Dunhuang Project, The British Library, 96 Euston Road, LONDON NW1 2DB, UK

tel: +44 20 7412 7685 fax: +44 20 7412 7136 email: idp@bl.uk

<http://idp.bl.uk> <http://idpuk.blogspot.co.uk/> twitter @idp-uk facebook international-dunhuang-project

IDP relies on your help: you can make a donation on <https://support.bl.uk/Donate> (select IDP from dropdown menu on 2nd page)
