

BOOK NOTICES

Written/compiled by
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Two Arabic Travel Books: Abū Zayd al-Sīrāfī. Accounts of China and India. Ed. and tr. by Tim Mackintosh-Smith; Aḥmad ibn Faḍlān. *Mission to the Volga.* Ed. and tr. by James E. Montgomery. Volume editors Philip F. Kennedy; Shawkat M. Toorawa. New York; London: New York Univ. Pr., 2014 x + 312 pp. ISBN 978-1-4798-0350-7 (cloth); 978-1-4798-4452-4 and -0028-5 (e-book).

This welcome volume is one of the first in a new series that will be of inestimable value to both scholars and general readers. NYU's *Library of Arabic Literature* publishes both the original Arabic texts and on facing pages their English translations. Each text is prefaced by a brief introduction; there are notes, selected bibliography, indexes and glossaries.

The texts chosen for this volume are the earliest extant Arab travel narratives. Abū Zayd's compendium from various accounts by merchants is important evidence regarding the Indian Ocean trade connecting China with the Middle East in the 9th-10th centuries CE. Ibn Faḍlān's narrative concerns the embassy sent by the Caliph to the Bulgars on the Volga in 921 CE, from which the lurid description of a Viking funeral has inspired both fiction and film.

The editor/translators bring to their task what I assume are impeccable credentials for translation of the Arabic. Mackintosh-Smith, long resident in Yemen, is best known as a travel writer, with several books following in the footsteps of the 14th-century traveler-extraordinaire Ibn Battuta. Montgomery holds a name professorship at Cambridge. Their different profiles are reflected in the apparatus here, Mackintosh-Smith somewhat chattier and less scholarly, Montgomery more inclined to analytical detail and with deeper annotation. Montgomery does include references to important literature in Russian, though he admits it is not in his arsenal of scholarly languages. Both editor/translators have admirably fulfilled the goals of the series in making their commentary and translations accessible, and the selected bibliographies offer plenty of guidance for those wishing to explore more deeply each of the texts.

Mackintosh-Smith has had the easier task in editing his Arabic text, in that there is a single manuscript. Montgomery has had to make some harder editorial decisions in coordinating the witnesses of the separate Mashhad manuscript of Ibn Faḍlān and passages not always replicated in it which are quoted by the noted geographer Yāqūt. The result is a kind of hybrid edition. For specialists, he is providing an alternate edition of the Mashhad manuscript and additional annotations, to be posted to the website for the Library of Arabic Literature <<http://www.libraryofarabicliterature.org/>>, although at this writing apparently not yet available.

Uighurskie delovye dokumenty X-XIV vv. iz Vostochnogo Turkestana [Uighur civil documents of the 10th-14th centuries from Eastern Turkestan]. Predislovie, transkriptsiia, perevod s drevneugurskogo L. Iu. Tugushevoi. Faksimile rukopisei. Pamiatniki pis'mennosti Vostoka, CXXXVIII. Moskva: Nauka—Vostochnaia literatura, 2013. 326 pp. ISBN 978-5-02-036525-4.

This annotated edition and translation of 97 Uighur documents housed either in the original manuscripts or in photocopies in the Russian Academy of Sciences Institute of Oriental Studies (St. Petersburg) was issued to mark the 85th anniversary of V. V. Radloff's pioneering publication of many of these same texts (*Uighurische Sprachdenkmäler*, Leningrad, 1928). Radloff's edition and that by Yamada (*Sammlung uigurischer Kontrakte*, 3 vols., Osaka, 1993), contain most of the texts, a few having been published separately, a number by Tugusheva, whose work on this material goes back over nearly half a century. Her new edition organizes the material under the rubrics of "Sale documents," "Loan documents," "Economic records" and a large miscellaneous category. She provides new Romanized transcriptions, modern Russian translations and philological commentary. There are name and word indexes. Serviceable photo facsimiles are included for all the instances where the original manuscripts have been preserved. Since some of those used by Radloff are no longer extant, those texts are reproduced from his edition.

"Novye zakony" Tangutskogo gosudarstva (pervaia chetvert' XIII v.) [The "New Laws" of the Tangut state (first quarter of the 13th century)]. Izdanie teksta, perevod s tangutskogo, vvedenie i kommentarii E. I. Kychanova. Pamiatniki pis'mennosti Vostoka CXL. Moskva: Nauka—Vostochnaia literatura, 2013. 501 pp. ISBN 978-5-02-036544-5.

In 1987-1989, the noted specialist on the Tanguts, E. I. Kychanov, published in four volumes in this venerable series an edition, translation and commentary of the 12th-century Tangut Code which is part of the Khara-Khoto collection in the St. Petersburg Institute of Oriental Studies. This new volume contains supplements to the earlier code, compiled in the second decade of the 13th century at a time when there were still positive economic and political developments in the Tangut state which required additional legislation. He hypothesizes that the intent had been to publish a supplement to the earlier code, but the destruction of the Tangut state by the Mongols within the next decade prevented that publication from having been issued.

While he notes that most of the manuscript pieces which he has brought together here have been published in facsimile in a Chinese edition of the Khara-Khoto material (Shanghai, 1999), he has now attempted to provide the fullest reconstruction of this set of laws, with a photo facsimile of the manuscripts, his Russian translation and extensive commentaries that indicate the relationship of the supplements to the laws in the earlier code and explain specific references. He considered the options of providing the facsimile only on a disk as an electronic file or simply referring the reader to the Chinese publication, but, thankfully, he decided on this hard-copy publication to make the material more readily accessible in a form that might outlive inevitable changes in technology which might eventually render a digital disk undecipherable. For all his great expertise on the Tangut material, he admits to not being able to read the texts copied in “rapid cursive.” Chapter 5 of this set of the laws is entirely in that cursive; so he has not attempted to translate it here. He also readily admits that further study may require some revision of his translations.

Dokumenty i materialy po istorii bashkirskogo naroda (s drevneishikh vremen do serediny XVI v.) [Documents and Materials on the History of the Bashkirs (from ancient times to the mid-16th century)]. [Comp. F. G. Khisametdinova et al.] Ufa: IIIaL UNTs RAN, 2012. 340 pp. ISBN 978-5-916-08095-7.

The genre of collected materials on the history of a “people” is common, if obviously problematic for the attempt to shoehorn materials from a time when the current ethnic identity did not exist into a modern interpretive framework. How much of what is here really relates to the Bashkirs, except by virtue of having been found on their territory or of imagining a past that serves to buttress the notions of the present? That said, the collection can be useful for its various sections with specific commentaries on passages (rendered into Russian) from historic written sources, folklore and evidence from archaeology. There are chapters on epos, on ancient Iranian sources for the Southern Urals, on Greek sources, on “small cult objects,” on medieval sources, on representations on historic maps and on traditions that have been preserved about the spread of Bashkir settlement. The black-and-white drawings range over petroglyphs, man-made structures, artefacts (including Central Asian silver found in the Urals forests; Achaemenid wares). There are distribution maps and tabulations of features of kurgans and menhirs. The volume was published as a supplement to a recent two-volume history of the Bashkirs.

A[leksandr] M[ikhailovich] Leskov, E[lena] A[lekseevna] Beglova, I[rina] V[asil'evna] Ksenofontova, V[ladimir] R[oal'dovich] Erlikh. *Meoty Zakuban'ia IV–III vv. do n. e. Nekropoli u aula Uliap. Sviatilishcha i ritual'nye komplekсы / Maeotians of the Trans-Kuban region in the 4th–3rd centuries BC. The Necropoleis near the aul of Ulyap. Shrines and Ritual Places*. 184 pp. + color insert (23 photos). Moskva: Gosudarstvennyi muzei Vostoka, 2013. ISBN 978-5-903417-35-3.

The second of a projected three volume publication of the excavations of the Ulyap necropolis carried out in 1981–1983, this beautifully-produced volume is a fitting tribute to Aleksandr Leskov, who directed the excavation, on the occasion of his 80th birthday. The first volume, on the burial complexes, appeared in 2005. A third volume will discuss all of the material artefacts found at the site.

As Aleksandr Naymark wrote of his mentor and colleague on the pages of this journal (Vol. 2/2, December 2004, pp. 12–16), Leskov's career in the former Soviet Union was marked by spectacular discoveries as well as entanglements with politicized bureaucracies which ultimately compelled him to emigrate to the United States at the stage in life when many would look to a comfortable retirement. Once here, he worked productively on the complicated history of the “Maikop Treasure” (now scattered in several museums), and published the authoritative catalog and study of it in 2008 (see the book notice in *The Silk Road* 6/1 [2008], p. 72). As he notes in his introduction to the volume reviewed here (p. 14), while many of the spectacular finds from Ulyap were shown in various exhibitions and an album published by Hirmer in Munich in 1990, a publication of the details of the archaeological context was still needed. Hence the current three volumes, the contents of volume 2 but briefly described in what follows.

As Leskov points out in his introductory essay, the discoveries at Ulyap had a major impact on re-thinking the connection between the richest kurgan burials (previously known from the southern steppes, the Crimea and the Taman' peninsula) and the Greek colonies on the Black Sea littoral. It now became clear that the Kuban was a major center of Maeotian culture. After his brief history of the surveys and excavations in the region and at the site, the book contains descriptions of the excavation results for each of barrows Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 14, seen to be a single ritual complex, in which the density of finds was often breath-taking. The particularly rich barrow No. 5 included a wooden (partially roofed?) structure. Apart from the abundance of objects made of precious metals and Classical amphorae and wide range of less spectacular artefacts, there were horse sacrifices. After the description of the excavation of each barrow and the detailed inventory of its artefacts, there is a substantial essay by V. R. Erlikh on shrines in Maeotian culture, starting in the “proto-Maeotian” period in the 8th century BCE and coming down to the 3rd century. His concluding section discusses the problems of reconstructing the rituals performed at the shrines. Results of the ongoing work at other sites is revising some of the initial conclusions that had been based on the Ulyap excavations. Arguably the

Ulyap complex began as a ritual site, with the burials then occurring in proximity to it.

Half of this large format volume is illustrations – many historic photos taken during the excavations, 23 excellent color photos of artefacts (yes, the famous rhyton with the protome of Pegasus unearthed in barrow No. 4 is here).

Materialy Tokharistanskoj ekspeditsii, Vyp. 9. Poselenie Dabil'kurgan v Severnoi Baktrii. [Materials of the Tokharistan Expedition, Vyp. 9. The settlement of Dabil'kurgan in Northern Bactria]. Elets: EGU im. I. A. Bunina, 2013. 120 pp. ISBN 978-5-94809-657-5.

Obtaining older archaeological reports concerning Central Asia can be a challenge. Even in the recent era of better distribution and, thanks to the Internet, easier purchase, keeping track of all the regional publications can be well nigh impossible. The publications of the Tokharistan Expedition have been appearing in Tashkent and Elets since 2000, covering work done in the Pashkhurd Valley in southern Uzbekistan in which a key role was played by Edvard V. Rtveladze. The major site in the region and apparently the focus of the first volumes in the series is Kampyrtepa on the Amu-Darya. This volume deals with excavations in 2010-2013 at Dabil'kurgan, the administrative town away from the river in the center of the region. The authors are to be commended for getting at least preliminary results out relatively quickly. The three articles which constitute this slim, small format, but well-illustrated volume are:

- E. V. Rtveladze. "Istoriko-geograficheskii i arkhologicheskii obzor Pashkhurdskoj doliny" [Historical-geographical and archaeological survey of the Pashkhurd Valley], which provides a good overview and explanation of its importance especially as a transit zone on the Central Asian routes leading north from the Amu Darya.
- V. S. Solov'ev. "Raskopki na ob'ekte V Dabil'kurgana v 2010–2013 gg." [Excavations on Object V of Dabil'kurgan in 2010–2013], which details a relatively small but fruitful excavation that uncovered five rooms and, despite some later pits through the four strata, enabled the team to determine a fairly precise chronology that is very useful for comparison with other sites in this region. The strata date between the 5th and 9th century; of particular importance was the evidence in the 5th–early 6th century layer. Solov'ev brings to bear a lot of comparative material in discussing the artefacts and chronology.
- R. V. Tikhonov. "Arkheologicheskii kompleks kushano-sasanidskogo perioda po materialam ob'ekta V" [The archaeological complex of the Kushano-Sasanian period based on the materials of Object V], which discusses material excavated in 2012 along one edge of the larger excavation. Among the finds are some interesting terracottas.

K. M. Baipakov. *Drevniaia i srednevekovaiia urbanizatsiia Kazakhstana (po materialam issledovaniu Iuzhno-Kazakhstanskoi kompleksnoi arkhologicheskoi ekspeditsii).* Kn. 1. *Urbanizatsiia Kazakhstana v epokhu bronzy-rannem srednevekov'e.* Kn. 2. *Urbanizatsiia Kazakhstana v IX–nachale XIII v.* [Ancient and medieval urbanization of Kazakhstan (according to materials from the research by the Southern Kazakhstan Complex Archaeological Expedition. Book 1. Urbanization of Kazakhstan from the Bronze Age to the Early Middle Ages; Book 2. Urbanization of Kazakhstan from the 9th to the beginning of the 13th centuries] Almaty, 2012-2013. 390 pp. + 76 color plates; 516 pp. + 76 color plates. ISBN 978-601-210-062-4; 978-601-7312-25-1.

Karl M. Baipakov is one of the most prominent archaeologists in Kazakhstan; his work is at least to some degree known to those who cannot read it in Russian. He has published extensively, including volumes on the Silk Road and on urban culture in early Kazakhstan. To a degree the current volumes can be seen as an update and expansion of that earlier work. Published on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the beginning of the Southern Kazakhstan Expedition, these very useful thick volumes pull together much of what that ongoing project has accomplished in both broadly based archaeological survey and excavation of specific sites. While at the outset Baipakov emphasizes quite properly that traditional ideas of "nomadism" as just pastoralism need to be discarded in favor of the idea that nomadic society and economy was complex, readers may come away wondering whether the emphasis here on "urbanization" is always an appropriate read of what the archaeological record reveals. There is some attention early in the going to definitions of a city and the delineation of stages in a progression toward urbanization. However, a good deal of the material here, which incorporates but does not always update earlier excavation reports, is presented in a somewhat dated interpretive framework or at very least not re-examined in ways that would help to build a coherent argument.

The books in fact are very much a mixture of the new and old, with the review of "New Methods of Documentation" (Ch. 3) highlighting the GIS-based survey work of recent years that has resulted in the publication of archaeological atlas volumes illustrated extensively with new maps (a few of which are reproduced in the color inserts here). For sites whose excavation began years ago, new material has been added if there has been recent resumption of the work. But to a considerable degree, as near as I can tell, what we have is sometimes condensed replication of the earlier published reports, often extensively quoted, where, unfortunately, no effort has been made to coordinate the labeling on the numerous site plans with the references to those same plans in the current text. As a collection of materials then, where one cannot easily obtain the earlier reports, these volumes are valuable, but they also are somewhat frustrating. Furthermore, it is clear that in many instances newer work published in languages other than Russian by international scholars too rarely has been taken into account. For example, much more could have been done in the discussions regarding the Sogdians.

The books are well illustrated with many black-and-white photos and diagrams and very generous and good quality color inserts. Each volume has a conclusion/summary in both Kazakh and in English. Book 1 was published in 300 copies, Book 2 in only 200. Be sure your library obtains copies before they disappear.

A third volume has been promised, but apparently its publication date is as yet uncertain. That volume is one to anticipate, since the excavations of sites in Kazakhstan dating to the Mongol period seem to be raising so many doubts about how destructive the Mongol invasions of Central Asia actually were.

K[imal'] A[kishevich] Akishev. *Drevnie i srednevekovye gosudarstva na territorii Kazakhstana (Etiudy issledovaniia)* [Ancient and Medieval State on the Territory of Kazakhstan (Interpretive Essays)]. Almaty: [Institut arkheologii im. Margulana], 2013. 192 pp. ISBN 978-601-7312-28-2.

One can but wonder whether the decision to publish posthumously this volume left behind by the noted Kazakh archaeologist K. A. Akishev (1924–2003) was an appropriate tribute to his memory. For decades he was involved in important excavations and was most famous for unearthing the Issyk “golden man.” He was in charge of Kazakh archaeology from 1955 to 1989.

The current volume contains a rather loose discussion of evidence for economic, social and political change, framed explicitly in the kind of Marxist interpretive scheme which was expected in Soviet-era scholarship half a century ago. While his chronology may differ from that in some of the older publications, his scheme of the inevitable progression to class society and state formation is liberally sprinkled with quotations from Marx and Engels which are not merely here as window-dressing. The longest and arguably the most interesting section of the book concerns the Wusun polity, which in this telling achieved the status of a true state. He draws frequently on the Chinese sources (in Russian translation), for want of other textual evidence, and does incorporate a lot of general information drawn from archaeology. However, the archaeology by Chinese scholars is not included. He argues quite reasonably that tomb size and inventories point to developing social and economic differentiation. However, one comes away with the distinct sense that the real rationale for the publication of the book was that it will guide Kazakhs seeking their roots in a somewhat invented version of the early history of the Eurasian steppe.

Readers will appreciate the well-printed archaeological drawings and starkly rendered archival photos from some of the excavations in which Akishev played a key role. I am particularly fond of the one (p. 49) showing the bulldozer climbing the Besshatyr *kurgan*, prior to participating in its disembowling. The photos of the log burial chambers that were down under the huge stone mounds are striking.

Catrin Kost. *The Practice of Imagery in the Northern Chinese Steppe (5th – 1st Centuries BCE)*. Bonn Contributions to Asian Archaeology, Vol. 6. Bonn: Vor- und Frühgeschichtliche Archäologie Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, 2014. 401 pp. ISBN 978-3-936490-32-9.

Since I am listed as co-editor of this volume (with Güde Bemann, who in fact deserves the lion's share of the credit), it would be inappropriate for me to attempt to review it. Suffice it to say that the book's production values, including abundant high-quality illustrations, are up to the standard of the other volumes in this series. The book is a much revised translation into English of the author's German dissertation. Her introductory chapters explore the cultural contexts and meaning of the belt plaque images that she then presents in a systematic catalogue. The emphasis here is on the plaques for which a documented archaeological context is known and whose distribution then is indicated on the 30 excellent maps. However, to provide the fullest possible coverage of the different motifs, she includes as well ones whose precise provenance is unknown. Much of this material is familiar, especially through the publications of Emma Bunker, who has written a brief preface. However, Kost's is the first attempt to systematize the various types and designs in a manner that can provide a basic reference point for further discoveries and their analysis.

A[leksandr] G[avrilovich] Grushevoi. *Ocherki ekonomicheskoi istorii Sirii in Palestiny v drevnosti (I v. do n.e. – VI v. n.e.) / Essays on Economic History of Ancient Syria and Palestine (1st c. BC – 6th c. AD)*. Sankt-Peterburg: Nestor-Istoriia, 2013. 380 pp. + 8 color plates. ISBN 978-5-90598-803-5.

While one might think there is plenty written already on the economy of the Roman East up to the rise of Islam, this book by A. G. Grushevoi, a senior scholar in the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences, demonstrates that there is still much of value to be learned. In particular, he draws on evidence from epigraphy and papyri to supplement the generally well known from the narrative and descriptive texts. He has a particular interest in the patterns of land ownership and exploitation, arguing that the hinterlands of urban areas formed long-standing economic units that require we look closely at regionalism if we are to understand the larger area's economic history. He is interested in the social organization of local craft production and trade, where possible focusing on particular families. There is a section on the spice trade, where his focus is specifically on what can be learned about prices and the market (referring readers to J. I. Miller's book for a details on the products themselves and their sources). One of the values of the book is his transcriptions and translations of texts. Included are a section of nice color plates of famous sites, some decent maps, a bibliography and several indexes.

Articulating Indic Ideas in Sixth and Seventh Century Chinese Buddhism, ed. Chen-kuo Lin and Michael Radich. Hamburg Buddhist Studies, Vol. 3. Hamburg: Hamburg University Press, 2014. 565 pp. ISBN 978-3-943423-19-8.

The description from the publisher's website, where one can see the table of contents and either download the entire book for free in a pdf <http://hup.sub.uni-hamburg.de/volltexte/2014/146/pdf/HamburgUP_HBS03_LinRadich_Mirror.pdf> or order a hard copy print version <<http://blogs.sub.uni-hamburg.de/hup/products-page/publikationen/125/>>:

In this book, an international team of fourteen scholars investigates the Chinese reception of Indian Buddhist ideas, especially in the sixth and seventh centuries. Topics include Buddhist logic and epistemology (pramāṇa, yinming); commentaries on Indian Buddhist texts; Chinese readings of systems as diverse as Madhyamaka, Yogācāra and tathāgatagarbha; the working out of Indian concepts and problematics in new Chinese works; and previously under-studied Chinese evidence for developments in India. The authors aim to consider the ways that these Chinese materials might furnish evidence of broader Buddhist trends, thereby problematizing a prevalent notion of "sinification", which has led scholars to consider such materials predominantly in terms of trends ostensibly distinctive to China. The volume also tries to go beyond seeing sixth- and seventh-century China primarily as the age of the formation and establishment of the Chinese Buddhist "schools". The authors attempt to view the ideas under study on their own terms, as valid Buddhist ideas engendered in a rich, "liminal" space of interchange between two large traditions.

Timothy Brook. *Mr. Selden's Map of China. Decoding the Secrets of a Vanished Cartographer*. New York, etc.: Bloomsbury Press, 2013. xxiv + 211 pp. ISBN 978-1-62040-143-9.

Readers of this appealingly written volume by a distinguished historian of China can expect to be taken on a wild ride, starting with the author's having had a map confiscated at the Chinese border in 1976 and the incident in 2001 where Chinese interceptors forced down an American reconnaissance plane over the South China Sea, before finally reaching in the final chapter the substantive analysis of the map of its title. Brook admits he had never expected to be exploring some of the byways here. He consciously is using the map as a way to provide broad insights into the world in which it was produced and through which it then traveled to be deposited and forgotten in the Bodleian Library until dusted off in 2008 by David Helliwell, who brought it to Brook's attention. Along the way we learn about its owner, the 17th-century English lawyer John Selden, and the context of debates over the law of the sea within which his inter-

est in the map would have been sparked. We learn about traders and routes in the Far East, Chinese navigation and cartography, western mapping of China, and much more.

"The most important Chinese map of the last seven centuries" (p. xx), it is, of course, the star of the show, even if it walks offstage to wait in the wings after but a brief initial bow (in a discussion of what is "wrong" with it at first blush, that being primarily its not really focusing on China but rather on the southeast Asian seas). As the analysis of the final chapter eventually reveals, there is every reason to believe it was a navigator's rendering of the seas through which he moved, but only peripherally the adjoining land areas, and as such, its perspective is unique and hugely important. The work done for Brook by Martha Lee (and generously acknowledged here) in geo-referencing the map and then analyzing the techniques of its construction was crucial to understanding that it is: "a commercial navigation chart devoid of imperial designs or claims. Political nations, Ming China included, did not interest our cartographer..." (p. 167).

Anyone interested in the history of pre-modern European intellectual and commercial engagement with the wider world, the maritime history of southeast Asia, the cartography of China and the era of the late Ming (to name but a few topics) will find a great deal in Brook's book to stimulate further inquiry. Brook emphasizes that there is no rational way the map could be used to buttress current Chinese attempts to claim sovereignty over disputed islands way out in the South China Sea, but then he seems to be enough of a realist to appreciate they may well try.

Note: A review in *The Economist* (Jan. 18, 2014), which focuses on Brook's book, briefly describes another recent book drawing on Selden's map: Robert Batchelor, *London: The Selden Map and the Making of a Global City, 1549-1689* (Chicago; London: Univ. of Chicago Pr., 2013).

Cities of the Dead. The Ancestral Cemeteries of Kyrgyzstan. Photographs by Margaret Morton. Text by Nasser Rabbat, Elmira Köchümkulova, and Altyn Kapalova. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2014. xviii + 107 pp. ISBN 978-0-295-99398-0.

With its artfully subdued black-and-white images, this picture book is a pleasure to peruse. Margaret Morton is known for her other work photographing "alternative built environments"; her pictures here deliberately blend the cemeteries into the extraordinary natural environment of Kyrgyzstan. Beyond the photos, there is but limited introductory captioning; the only substantial essay is that by Elmira Köchümkulova, which in a few pages situates the cemeteries in the context of Kyrgyz culture, including religious beliefs and practice. To a considerable degree the essay draws on material both from her personal experience and from her University of Washington Ph.D. dissertation. The essay whets one's appetite for seeing the full publication of her research as a monograph.

Ming: 50 Years that changed China. Ed. Craig Clunas; Jessica Harrison-Hall. London: The British Museum Press; Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014. 312 pp. ISBN 978-0-295-99450-5.

This elegantly produced, large format volume accompanies the current exhibition (which closes 5 January 2015) at the British Museum and makes me wish I could be there to visit it. The exhibition is noteworthy for its emphasis on the connections between the early Ming and the previous Yuan Dynasty. That the Ming rulers were busy fighting the Mongols in order to solidify their own power did not mean that cross-cultural fertilization was dead. On the contrary, there were still plenty of non-Chinese employed by the new regime, Mongol fashions appropriate for hunting or military affairs were still in vogue, the kind of expansiveness to places far beyond the borders of China which we associate with the "Pax Mongolica" was still very much in evidence. Of course, all that did not last, as is well known, but the first half of the 15th century was a vibrant period which witnessed a significant impact of Chinese culture on other peoples and had a long-lasting impact in China itself. For this exhibition, the British Museum drew extensively on British collections but also imported a great many treasures. To my mind, most noteworthy are paintings loaned from collections in China (and Taiwan); for example the "Miracles of the Mass of Universal Salvation Conducted by the Fifth Karmapa for the Yongle Emperor" with its text in Chinese, Persian, Tay, Tibetan and Mongolian, on loan from the Tibet Museum, and the "Assembly of Artists and Scholars of Various Talents and Schools of Former Times," from the Shanxi Museum. As with other paintings, in both cases the catalog shows a number of close-up details. The acknowledged focus here is the arts and projects of the court and imperial family. Some of the most impressive pieces are ones excavated from tombs of the numerous dynastic progeny who were farmed out to administer the provinces.

The material is grouped around several long essays which do quite a good job of contextualizing the objects. Craig Clunas sets the stage in "A Second Founding: Ming China 1400-1450." Jessica Harrison-Hall writes about "Courts: Palaces, People and Objects"; David Robinson about "*Wu*: The Arts of War"; Clunas about "*Wen*: The Arts of Peace"; Marsha Haufler about "Beliefs: Miracles and Salvation"; and Timothy Brook concludes with "Commerce: The Ming in the World." While some parts of the story are well known — Zheng He's voyages, blue-and-white export porcelain, diplomatic and economic relations with the Timurids, to name a few — there is also much here which may be new to those who are not specialists on the Ming. I learned a lot about official writing projects, about the patronage of painters, about Zheng He's multi-faith patronage, about the fact that the Xuande Emperor (1426-1435) was himself a noted artist (some of whose work can be seen here)... While there have been many illustrations of the relationship between Chinese and Middle Eastern arts in this period, the juxtapositions here and the introduction of other kinds of comparative ma-

terial are well chosen. It is nice to see Korean and Japanese paintings which were created following Chinese examples.

Adam T. Kessler. *Song Blue and White Porcelain on the Silk Road*. Studies in Asian Art and Archaeology, Vol. XXVII. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2012. XVI + 587 pp. + 76 illustrations. ISBN 978-90-04-21859-8 (hardback); 978-90-04-23127-6 (e-book).

Those who have the intestinal fortitude to chew on this large volume will find the main arguments in it familiar from Kessler's 1993 catalog of the exhibition *Empires Beyond the Great Wall: The Heritage of Genghis Khan*. He included in that exhibition a few pieces of Chinese underglaze blue-and-white porcelain which had been found in the northern borderlands and argued that they should be dated prior to the Mongol (Yuan) period, even though the consensus of scholarly opinion has always favored a Yuan (1279-1368) date for the real beginning of the production of the underglaze blue-and-white. At least one reviewer (Suzanne Valenstein) jumped on this claim, declaring it to be "outrageous," and subsequently scholars have either dismissed or ignored Kessler's idea. He has spent the last two decades assembling this overblown response to the slight.

His main contentions include the following:

- The dating of "pre-Ming" (the term he uses to avoid calling it "Yuan"; I will call it simply "early") blue-and-white porcelain to the late Yuan period by stylistic comparisons, as has been done by most art historians, is wrong.
- The Yuan rulers (the Mongols) in fact did not value porcelain and never seriously backed its production. Kessler even casts doubt on the key *point d'appui* for standard comparisons, the dated vases in the Percival David Collection ("even were it to be assumed they are authentic... [they] were not made for the Yuan imperial court, but dedicated to a Daoist temple" [p. 255]) [see photo next page].
- What has been termed Yuan-period blue-and-white was developed under the Song (960-1127 and 1127-1279).
- Unlike the Mongols, the Jin (Jurchen) rulers of north China (1115-1234) greatly admired all things Song, including the porcelain, and thus obtained lots of it and were involved in trading it to others (notably the Xi Xia).
- Where that early blue-and-white has been found in archaeological contexts in the North (and also at kiln sites), it is in Jin, Xi Xia, or Song contexts; the wares so found are to be attributed to the Song.
- The finds of early blue-and-white in Southeast Asia and at sites around the Indian Ocean all must be dated to the Song period, when the state was involved in promoting the maritime trade.
- Supporting evidence for the argument about the Song dating is provided by a more accurate reading (at odds with currently accepted interpretations) of key terms for certain kinds of wares (e.g., *qingbai*; those marked *shufu* and *taixi*).

- Technical analysis suggests there is little if any evidence to support the idea the cobalt used in pre-Ming blue-and-white was imported from the West, nor is there reason to think the Chinese technique of underglaze painting of pottery came from there.
- The early blue-and-white wares in Ming burials are from the Song, since the Ming despised everything connected with the Yuan and hence valued that of their predecessors; blue-and-white production under the Ming could only have been a “revival” of the Song traditions.

Should any of the real specialists on Chinese ceramics and archaeology invest the time it may take to review all this, “outrageous” is likely to be one of the milder epithets they will use. Kessler has a talent for undermining the reader’s confidence at every turn. A good half of his text is undigested and repetitive quotations, intended to impugn the credibility of all who have argued for the traditional dating and attributions. In the process he finds petty reasons to snipe at their work (John Carswell, of course, comes in for special treatment). On the other side, he seems to think repeated quotations of vague doubts and unproven assumptions

by the few such as the art dealer Sammy Yukuan Lee, whose views he wholeheartedly endorses, somehow serve as proof. Suppositions easily morph into certainties. His archaeology in the first instance consists of walking around some sites and picking up shards. In spite of the fact that there are serious concerns that have been raised about the degree to which Chinese coin finds can be used for dating (given the long circulation of many issues), he is comfortable citing such evidence to prove an early date for sites where early blue-and-white has been found.

At very least this is a book crying out for an editor, since all that he has to say could have been more effectively presented in short of half the space. So far I have found one review of it, by the respected scholar of early architecture in China, Nancy Schatzman Steinhardt (*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 25/1 (2015): 184-87). She is open-minded about what the specialists ultimately may conclude concerning Kessler’s in-your-face assertions.



One of the blue-and-white porcelain temple vases in the Percival David Collection, dated 1351. British Museum, PDF,B.614. Photograph by Daniel C. Waugh.

Publications of the M. A. Usmanov Center for Studies of the History of the Golden Horde

I[I’nur] M[idkhatovich] Mirgaleev. *Zolotaia Orda: bibliograficheskii ukazatel’*. Seriiia “Istoriia i kul’tura Zolotoi Ordy,” vyp. 18. Kazan’: Institut istorii im. Sh. Mardzhani AN RT, 2013. 412 pp. ISBN 978-5-94981-180-1.

Zolotoordynskaia tsivilizatsiia. Nauchnyi Ezhegodnik. 6 vols. to date. Kazan’, 2008-. ISSN 2308-1856

The study of Tatar history has blossomed since the emergence of a meaningfully autonomous Tatar Republic more than two decades ago. Anyone studying seriously the Golden Horde (Ulus Jöchi) and many related topics pertaining to the history of Eurasia in the Mongol period probably is well aware of the prolific output of the Usmanov Center, which is under the aegis of the Sh. Mardzhani Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan. While most of the Mardazhani Institute’s website <<http://www.tataroved.ru/institut/>> is (as yet) only in Russian, it is an important resource for keeping up on the publications, which are not always readily available in libraries around the world.

The director of the Usmanov Center, I. M. Mirgaleev, has compiled a very extensive bibliography of publications about the Golden Horde, while admitting that it will need to be supplemented and even for the period it covers cannot be considered complete. To a degree he has had to rely on material sent him by colleagues; so not everything has been checked *de visu*, page numbers and some publication details may be missing, and so on. My sense is that publications outside of Tatarstan and Russia are less well represented here than they should be. The entries are organized by year of publication, starting in 1726 and coming down through 2012 (though clearly for the last year, what is here is just a beginning). Under each year one first gets publications in Cyrillic, followed by those with Romanized titles. Looking beyond this volume, in his introduction Mirgaleev lays out the exciting prospect that eventually we will have an electronic corpus of publications about the Golden Horde, work on which is progressing. His Center is also in the process of preparing editions of previously unused sources and/or new editions of some of the well-known sources.

Of particular interest for the publication of ongoing research is the Center’s annual, *Golden Horde Civilization*, which has been publishing a wide array of valuable scholarly articles in large format and with decent illustrations. While in the most recent number there is one article in English, the rest so far is in Russian. Clearly though there is a serious attempt being made to include publications by scholars outside of Russia and Tatarstan. Both Russian and English tables of contents and English resumés of the articles are provided. One can access the table of contents for each volume from the link <<http://www.tataroved.ru/institut/cizc/sb/>>, where the English titles of the articles follow upon the listing of them in Russian. The translations are sometimes a bit awkward, but it should be easy enough to figure out whether the content may be worth your trying to

obtain a copy and have it translated (if you do not read Russian). I think anyone working on the Mongols would ignore this annual at his or her peril. I just discovered in fact that I should have cited one of the articles in something I had recently submitted for publication.

Gorod i step' v kontaktnoi Evro-Aziatskoi zone. Materialy III mezhdunarodnoi nauchnoi konferentsii, posviatshchenoi 75-letiiu so dnia rozhdeniia professora G. A. Fëdorova-Davydova (1931–2000) [City and steppe in the Eurasian contact zone. Materials of the 3rd international scientific conference dedicated to the 75th anniversary of the birth of Professor G. A. Fëdorov-Davydov (1931–2000)]. Otv. red. V. G. Rudakov. Trudy Gosudarstvennogo istoricheskogo muzeia, Vyp. 184. Moskva, 2013. 200 pp. ISBN 978-5-89076-168-2.

Honoring the memory of the important archaeologist and art historian G. A. Fëdorov-Davydov, who wrote significant works on the history of the Qipchaq steppe and especially the Golden Horde (Ulus Jöchi). Large format with many illustrations. The table of contents:

V. M. Kishliaruk. "Vliianie klimata na zemledelie poselenii Nizhnego Pridnestrov'ia vo vtoroi polovine I tysiacheletii do n. e." [The influence of climate on the agriculture of the settlements of the Lower Dnieper region in the 2nd half of the 1st millennium BCE] (7–16)

E. A. Kudriavtsev. "Transformatsiia pogrebal'nykh sooruzhenii naseleniia Tsentral'nogo Predkavkaz'ia v skifskoe vremia v kontekste vzaimodeistviia i vzaimovliianiia osedlo-zemledel'cheskikh i kochevykh kul'tur (po materialam Tatarskogo gorodishcha)" [The transformation of mortuary constructions of the population of Central Ciscaucasia in Scythian times in the context of the interaction and mutual influence of the settled agricultural and nomadic cultures (based on the materials of the Tatar settlement site)] (17–23)

D. A. Stashenkov. "Pamiatniki skifskogo kruga v Srednem Povolzh'e" [Monuments of the Scythian sphere in the Middle Volga region] (24–36)

V. I. Mamontov. "K voprosu o sarmatskikh plemenakh volgogradskogo levoberezh'ia Dona" [On the Sarmatian tribes of the Volgograd left bank of the Don] (37–43)

L. N. Plekhanova. "Izmenchivost' klimata stepnogo Zaural'ia na rubezhe pozdnesarmatskogo i gunnskogo vremeni (IV v. n.e.)" [Climate change of the steppe region beyond the Urals at the boundary between the late Sarmatian and Hunnic times (4th century CE)] (44–52)

B. B. Dashibalov. "Ob osedlosti rannikh mongolov" [On the sedentarism of the early Mongols] (53–57)

M. S. Gadzhiev. "Gradostroitel'naia i fortifikatsionnaia deiatel'nost' Sasanidov na Vostochnom Kavkaze" [Sasanian city building and fortification activity in the Eastern Caucasus] (58–64)

V. I. Zav'ialov, L. S. Rozanova, and N. N. Terekhova. "Etnokul'turnye vzaimodeistviia v epokhu Velikogo pere-

seleniia narodov v svete arkheometallograficheskikh dannykh (po materialam pamiatnikov Volgo-Kam'ia i Pooch'ia)" [Ethno-cultural interactions in the era of the Great Migrations in the light of archaeometallographic data (based on the materials of monuments of the Volga-Kama and Oka river regions)] (65–73)

E. V. Kruglov. "O 'kurganakh s rovikami', pogrebeniiakh tipa 'Sokolovskoi balki' i nekotorykh inykh drevnostiakh khazarskogo vremeni (k postanovke problemy)" [On the "barrows with moats," burials of the "Sokolovskaia balka" type, and several other antiquities of the Khazar period (towards the formulation of the problem)] (74–83)

M. S. Gatin. "'Ostforschung' i izuchenie Zolotoi Ordy v Germanii v gody natsizma (1933–1945)" ["Ostforschung" and the study of the Golden Horde in Germany in the Nazi years (1933–1945)] (84–91)

Kh. Iu. Minnegulov. "O literature Zolotoi Ordy" [On the literature of the Golden Horde] (92–97)

T. M. Dostiev. "Goroda i gorodskaia kul'tura Azerbaidzhana v epokhu Il'kanidov" [Cities and urban culture of Azerbaijan in the Ilkhanid period] (98–101)

A. A. Kudriavtsev. "Srednevekovyi severokavkazskii gorod v istorii Zolotoi Ordy (po materialam Derbenta XIII–XV vv.)" [The medieval North Caucasus city in the history of the Golden Horde (based on the materials of Derbent in the 13th–15th centuries)] (102–09)

M.-Sh. Kdymiazov. "Khorezm v epokhu Zolotoi Ordy" [Khorezm in the era of the Golden Horde] (110–14)

D. N. Masliuzhenko. "K probleme khronologii nasledovaniia ulusa Shibana v sostave Zolotoi Ordy (seredina XIII–seredina XIV v.)" [On the problem of the chronology of the succession in the *ulus* of Shibani as a component of the Golden Horde (mid-13th–mid-14th centuries)] (115–20)

A. N. Maslovskii. "Kochevniki v zolotoordynskom Azake" [Nomads in Golden Horde Azak] (121–27)

V. M. Dëmkin, A. O. Alekseev, A. S. Iakimov, T. S. Dëmkina. "Paleoekologicheskie usloviia nizhnevolzhskikh stepei v XIII–XIV vv." [Palaeoecological conditions of the lower Volga steppes in the 13th–14th centuries] (128–32)

Iu. A. Zeleneev. "Etnokul'turnye osobennosti gorodskogo i kochevogo naseleniia zolotoordynskogo Povolzh'ia" [Ethno-cultural features of the urban and nomadic population of the Golden Horde Volga region] (133–35)

S. A. Koten'kov and O. Iu. Koten'kova. "Novye dannye po istorii zolotoordynskikh gorodov v Astrakhanskom krae" [New data on the history of Golden Horde cities in the Astrakhan' District] (136–41)

L. F. Nedashkovskii. "Selitrennoe gorodishche i poseleniia ego periferii" [The Selitrennoe settlement site and the settlements of its periphery] (142–44)

E. M. Pigarëv. "Issledovaniia Selitrennogo gorodishcha v 2006 g." [Studies of the Selitrennoe settlement site in 2006] (145–46)

R. A. Singatulin. "Uvekskoe gorodishche: nekotorye itogi kompleksnykh geologo-arkheologicheskikh issledovani-

2001–2006 gg.” [The Uvekskoe settlement site: some results of the complex geo-archaeological studies of 2001–2006] (147–50)

O. V. Orfinskaia, V. P. Golikov, O. B. Lantratova, V. G. Rudakov. “Tekstil’ iz zakhroneniia zolotoordynskogo perioda na mogil’nike Maiachnyi bugor-I” [Textiles from Golden Horde period burials in the Maiachnyi-bugor I cemetery] (151–62)

N. F. Lisova. “Zoomorfnyi ornament na zolotoordynskoi bytovoi polivnoi keramike” [Zoomorphic ornament on ordinary Golden Horde glazed ceramics] (163–72)

V. Iu. Koval’. “Faiansy ‘minei’ (k diskussii bez temy)” [“*Minai*”-wares (toward a discussion without a theme)] (173–82)

E. A. Begovatov and A. V. Pachkalov. “Novye nakhodki dzhuchidskikh monet v Respublike Tatarstan” [New discoveries of Jöchid coins in the Republic of Tatarstan] (183–96)

G. Iu. Starodubtsev. “Nakhodki monet Zolotoi Ordy na Gochevskom arkheologicheskom komplekse” [Finds of Golden Horde coins in the Gochevsk archaeological complex] (197–98)

Ermitazhnye chteniia pamiati V. G. Lukonina (21.01.1932–10.09.1984). K 80-letiiu so dnia rozhdeniia. 2007–2012 / In Memoriam V. G. Lukonin (21.01.1932–10.09.1984). To Mark the 80th Anniversary. 2007–2012. Trudy Gosudarstvennogo Ermitazha, LXXII. Sankt-Peterburg: Izd-vo. Gos. Ermitazha, 2014. 242 pp. + 20 color plates. ISBN 978-5-93572-540-2.

The latest in an ongoing irregular series of volumes with papers honoring the late head of the Oriental Division of the Hermitage Museum, the ancient and medieval Iran specialist Vladimir Grigor’evich Lukonin. There is a table of contents and summaries in English. A list of the papers given at the Lukonin “readings” for 2007–2012 is appended, with citations of where some of them have already been published. The table of contents:

V. K. Afanas’eva. “Pechati vremeni Enkheduany i skul’pturnaia golova ‘Sargona Akkadskogo’” [Seals from the time of Enheduanna and a sculpted head of ‘Sargon of Akkad’] (7–11).

V. K. Afanas’eva. “Pechat’-amulet DV-15774, Ili kto takaia Tsarevna-Liagushka” [The amulet-seal DV-15774, or Who is the Frog-Princess] (12–15).

V. K. Afanas’eva. “Bulava ili zhezl? Problemy atributsii i interpretatsii” [A mace or a scepter. Challenges of attribution and interpretation] (16–18).

N. V. Kozlova. “Chinovnik Luginizal’ – nachal’nik chetvertoi brigady v dokumente DV-15267. Otmena voprositel’nogo znaka” [The official Luginizal, a foreman of the fourth working team in document DV-15267. A question mark removed] (19–32).

A. B. Nikitin. “O proiskhozhdenii dinastii sasanidov” [On the origin of the Sasanian dynasty] (34–36).

A. Ia. Kakovkin. “Koptskaia tkan’ V v. s izobrazheniem redkogo fantasticheskogo sushchestva” [A Coptic textile of the 5th century depicting a rare fantastic creature] (37–42).

A. Ia. Kakovkin. “Patriarkh Iosif – ‘otrasl’ plodonosnogo dereva...” [Joseph the Patriarch, “a branch of a fruitful tree...”] (43–52).

A. Ia. Kakovkin. “Identifikatsiia epizodov na koptskikh fragmentirovannykh tkanykh klavakh VIII–IX vv. iz muzeev Lunda, L’vova i N’iu-Iorka” [Identification of scenes on Coptic textile clavi fragments of the 8th and 9th centuries from Museums of Lund, L’vov and New York] (53–57).

O. V. Osharina. “Izobrazhenie ‘Poleta Aleksandra Makedonskogo’ na koptskoi tkani iz sobraniia Ermitazha” [A depiction of the “Flight of Alexander of Macedon” on a Coptic textile from the Hermitage collection] (58–66).

A. A. Ierusalimskaia. “O simbolike sasanidskogo medal’ona s bordiurom iz tak nazyvaemykh perlov” [On the symbolism of the Sasanian medallion with the so-called pearl border] (67–75).

A. N. Tepliakova. “Redkii golovnoi ubor s Severnogo Kavkaza” [A rare headdress from the North Caucasus] (76–83).

A. A. Ivanov. “Drakon v iskusstve Kubachi” [The Dragon in Kubachi art] (84–94).

P. B. Lur’e. “K tolkovaniiu siuzhetov i nadpisei pendzhikentskogo zala s Rustamom” [On the interpretation of the subjects and inscriptions of the Panjikent Rustam hall] (95–102).

K. F. Samosiuk. “Rekonstruktsiia siuzheta fragmenta svitka Vimalakirti iz Khara-Khoto” [Reconstruction of the subject of a scroll fragment of Vimalakirti from Khara-Khoto] (103–14).

M. G. Kramarovskii. “Dva tipa rannei mongol’ski filigrani XIII v. po nakhodkam v Mongolii i Kitae” [Two types of early Mongolian filigree of the 13th century, based on finds in Mongolia and China] (115–20).

M. L. Men’shikova. “Novye atributsii kitaiskikh reznykh lakov” [New attributions of carved Chinese lacquerware] (121–28).

M. L. Men’shikova. “Russkii mongol ili frantsuzskii ki-taets?” [A Russian Mongol or a French Chinese?] (129–35).

Iu. I. Elikhina. “Tibetskaia bronzovaia statuetka Vairochany XV v. K voprosu ob avtorstve pamiatnika” [A 15th-century Tibetan bronze statue of Vairochana. On the question of the piece’s maker] (136–42).

Iu. I. Elikhina. “Tangka s izobrazheniem gor Utaishan” [A tangka depicting Mt. Wutaishan] (143–51).

A. A. Egorova. “Inozemnaia keramika v Iaponii kontsa XVII–nachala XVIII v. i slozhenie stilia Ogata Kendzana (1663–1743)” [Foreign ceramics in Japan at the end of the 17th-beginning of the 18th centuries and the formation of Ogata Kenzan’s (1663–1743) style] (152–60).

A. M. Bogoliubov. “Karta Iaponii Daikokuia Kodaiu” [The *Daikokuya Kodayu* map of Japan] (161–65).

A. M. Bogoliubov. “Svitok s izobrazheniem ostrova Desima” [A scroll depicting Dejima Island] (166–71).

A. M. Bogoliubov. “Iaponskii svitok s izobrazheniem ev-

ropeitsev" [A Japanese scroll depicting Europeans] (172–75).

A. V. Savel'eva. "'Strannye kartiny'. Dukh sorevnovaniia" ["Strange pictures". The competitive spirit] (176–84).

O. P. Deshpande. "Dereviannye monastyri Pagana i Mandalaia" [The wooden monasteries of Pagan and Mandalay] (185–214).

M. G. Kramarovskii. "A. Diurer: Braslet s kitaiskim drakonom (zametki o iuvelirnom prototipe)" [Albrecht Dürer's drawing of a bracelet with a Chinese dragon (notes on a jewelry prototype)] [pre-publication of paper for the 2014 Lukonin readings] (215–20).

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Articles are in Chinese, with abstracts in English. Content listings and abstracts (in Chinese and, for the most recent decade in most cases also in English) may be accessed in the China Academic Journals Full-text Database <http://en.oversea.cnki.net/kns55/oldnavi/n_item.aspx?NaviID=48&Flg=local&BaseID=XYJ&NaviLink=China+Chronicles+of+Nationalities+and+Local+Chronicles-%2Fkns55%2Foldnavi%2Fn_list.aspx%3FNaviID%3D48%26Flg%3Dlocal%26Field%3D168%25E4%25B8%2593%25E9%25A2%2598%25E4%25B-B%25A3%25E7%25A0%2581%26Value%3DF094%253F%26OrderBy%3Didno%7CThe+Western+Regions+Studies>. Subscribers may access full text of the articles.