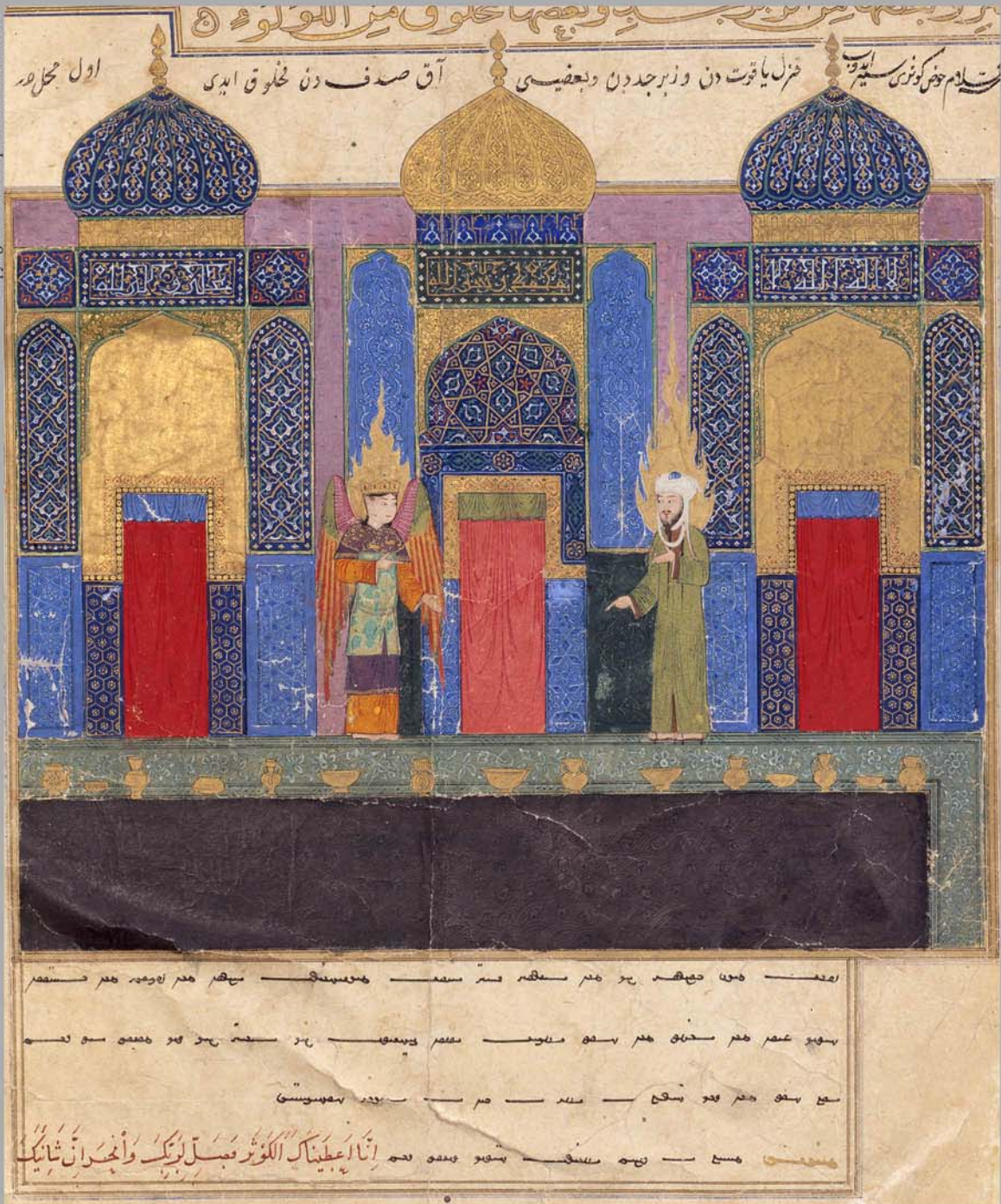


The

Silk Road

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Volume 10

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The Silk Road

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Editor: Daniel C. Waugh
dwaugh@u.washington.edu

All mailings concerning the journal (this includes books for review) should be sent to the editor at his postal address: Daniel Waugh, Department of History, Box 353560, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195 USA. It is advisable to send him an e-mail as well, informing him of any postings to that address.

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Tjalling H. F. Halbertsma. *Early Christian Remains of Inner Mongolia. Discovery, Reconstruction and Appropriation*. Sinica Leidensia, Vol. 88. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008. xxix + 356 pp. + ill. ISBN 978 90 04 16708 7.

Serendipity may contribute more to the initiation of worthwhile research projects than academia often cares to admit. As Dr. Halbertsma readily confesses a third of the way into this important book, he “stumbled upon the Nestorian heritage in Inner Mongolia by accident” when he came across one of the rare early publications about it in a Beijing antiquarian bookshop. His initial forays into Inner Mongolia were more with journalistic intent than scholarly, but then this became the subject of his doctoral research. The present book is a revised version of his dissertation, a major appendix to which appeared in *Monumenta Serica* in 2005. Readers may still wish to consult the Leiden dissertation for images which could not be included in this already richly illustrated book.

His goal in this work is to document before it is too late the rapidly vanishing but once significant Christian remains in areas of Inner Mongolia occupied historically by the Turkic Öngüt. Without really explaining clearly enough for uninitiated readers what exactly was the “Church of the East,” as its preferred name is today, he opens with an explanatory justification for using instead the more familiar (but problematic) designation, “Nestorian.” He proceeds to some contextualizing background, first regarding the evidence of medieval travel accounts, and then concerning the history of “Nestorian” Christianity in East Asia. While the Church first was established in China in the 7th century, its flourishing period at least in “greater” Mongolia, was under the Mongols. After them it quickly disappeared.

The real meat of the discussion begins in Part 2 (pp. 71 ff), where he systematically explores the modern discovery and documentation of the Nestorian remains. Despite the incompleteness and misunderstandings of those early efforts, what records they left are invaluable, given the fact that so much of the material has now been displaced or vanished entirely. In many ways this is a familiar story for any interested in the early history of Eurasia: settlement remains and cemeteries once found but not securely mapped have then been confused with others, relatively rich groupings of artifacts *in situ* were no longer there by the time serious efforts at excavation and systematic recording finally were undertaken, and even today depredations are destroying cultural heritage. Colonization, local economic development,

looting and other kinds of “appropriation” (including that carried out with academic intent) have all played a significant role in this.

This lengthy “historiographical” section behind him, Halbertsma then provides a descriptive catalogue of sites, which enables him to incorporate fully the results of his field work. Over and over again he has to conclude that little if anything is now left at the locations where significant Christian remains had earlier been documented, though he holds out the hope that additional archaeological work might turn up new material. To date the most serious archaeology and scientific survey of key sites is that by Gai Shanlin, available only in Chinese and extensively quoted here.

Halbertsma’s synthesizing analysis of the evidence focuses in particular on grave markers, since it is these, with their inscriptions (in Syriac script, even if in the Uighur language) and images that include crosses which provide unequivocal proof of Christian provenance. Some aspects of the remains though point to varying degrees of cultural syncretism, the emphasis in the first instance being on Turkic and steppe traditions, even if some Islamic and Chinese influence then seems to grow. Some of the distinctive features of the burials and their monuments can best be explained by the looseness of the organization of the Church and the distance of its congregations in Mongolia from the center of Church administration in Baghdad. He is selective in discussing inscriptions and artistic motifs, since in the case of the former, many still need to be deciphered and analyzed by philologists, and in the case of the latter, to do a full analysis of possible sources would require massive additional comparative study. Perhaps the most interesting of the concluding sections of the book regarding “appropriation” of the Nestorian remains in Inner Mongolia is his record of the oral traditions about some of the sites, much of this based on interviews with local farmers and herders. The book is valuable for reproducing some key images of grave markers and sites published in rare early accounts about the discoveries and for more than 120 excellent color photos taken by the author and an assistant during field work between 2001 and 2005.

While this may seem like carping, I would wish that a stern editorial hand had taken the manuscript in hand and excised a substantial amount of verbal excess (“dissertationese,” if you wish) and repetition, not all of which really can be justified by the choices made in blocking out the otherwise logical organization of the material.

All in all the book is inspiring, for Halbertsma has documented thoroughly valuable material that was disappearing as he wrote. His record of it will make

possible the still necessary deeper study which he hopes may follow. The book is in the same breath depressing, for the inexorable march of destruction has already taken a huge toll, and there is no reason to be optimistic that it will end any time soon. Indeed, those whom he interviewed (many of them directly or indirectly involved in “appropriating” the remains to sell or use for construction material) almost unanimously reported that there was nothing of value left to take.

Daniel C. Waugh
Professor Emeritus of History
University of Washington

The Search for Immortality: Tomb Treasures of Han China. Ed. James C. S. Lin. Cambridge: The Fitzwilliam Museum; New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2012. xviii + 356 pp. ISBN 978-0-300-18434-1.

Reviews — be they of musical performances, museum exhibitions, or books — often tell a reader more about the reviewer’s limitations than about the subject being reviewed. Back in June of this year, *The New York Times* published a review of the exhibition represented in this catalogue, an exhibition which, according to the headline, “rewrites the history of Han Civilization in China.”¹ The reviewer, Souren Melikian, spared no hyperbole: “one of those landmark shows,” “tour de force,” “startling revelation,” “the most intelligently conceived exhibition of ancient Chinese art within living memory.” Well, even if the review could be faulted for exaggeration and inaccuracy, all that enthusiasm did get me to order a copy of the book. After reading through it, I do still hope to catch the exhibit before it closes at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge on November 11.² While it certainly is true that we are continually being firehosed with new, spectacular and revelatory archaeological finds from China, and one can always welcome the opportunity to see (or re-visit) their artefacts, a little perspective is in order.

The exhibition includes objects from the tombs of the Chu kings in the region around today’s Xuzhou (central China, roughly midway between the Yellow and Yangze Rivers), which is the ancestral home of the Han Dynasty emperors. So the Chu kings were royal relatives, and their tombs have to be of some interest in part because the Imperial Han tombs have yet to be scientifically excavated. The second major

section of the exhibition highlights one tomb, from the distant, southern kingdom of Nanyue in Guangdong Province. Unlike the Chu kings' tombs, this one has the rare distinction that it was not looted. While some of the artefacts in these tombs are "heirloom" pieces dating to an earlier period, the burials represented here all seem to date from the second century BCE.

As curator James C. S. Lin writes (p. xv), "This exhibition is the first time that such a large number of precious Han materials has been exhibited in Britain," and, as Timothy Potts, The Fitzwilliam's Director, adds (ix), "This is the most ambitious exhibition mounted to date on the treasures discovered in the tombs of the Han royal family at Xuzhou and the first time that this material has been brought together with the spectacular finds from the tomb of a contemporary King of Nanyue discovered in Guangzhou in 1983." Indeed, the excavations began back in the 1980s, some three decades ago, and the interest of the Nanyue king's tomb was such that a selection of some of the same objects now on display in Cambridge was in an exhibition shown in three locations in the United States more than a decade ago. Oddly, I cannot seem to find a reference here to its catalogue, where the object descriptions (by Jessica Rawson) are more informative than the short ones in the book under review.³

The objects include tomb figurines, bronze vessels, and a great deal of jade, most spectacularly two complete burial suits and a coffin. I see little evidence of real surprises in the material from Xuzhou, although the artifacts demonstrate clearly enough the traditions and prestige we associate with the Imperial elite were shared by a regional kingdom (granted, ruled by relatives of the Imperial family). As various catalogue entries point out, objects analogous to those in the Xuzhou tombs have been found elsewhere, in some cases being of "higher quality." What is important here is that at least there is an archaeological context for the Xuzhou finds, even if precise locations within the tombs were not always recorded. Too often the really spectacular Han period artefacts displayed in museums around the world are of unknown provenance. One of the most interesting aspects of the Xuzhou burials is the tombs themselves, horizontally cut into hillsides and containing complex architecture replicating, it would seem, something like palace interiors. Quite apart from the inclusion of all the supplies and attendants needed for the afterlife, some even came equipped with latrines. One of the nice features of the catalogue is to provide perspective drawings and plans of a number of the tombs; the exhibition itself in the museum apparently leads the visitor from room to room, viewing the artefacts found in each.

In many ways, the Nanyue tomb is the most important one, given the fact that it dates from the period before the final Han conquest of the region, when the kingdom retained its autonomy. In fact, one of the striking things is the local ruler's claim (as reflected on a seal shown here) of the imperial title. There seems to be a much more eclectic cultural mix in Nanyue than we see in Xuzhou, which makes perfect sense, given the distance from the imperial capital, the fact that the rulers were a local dynasty, and the opportunities they had to connect with the wider world of Southeast Asia via (as is argued here) the beginnings of the "Maritime Silk Route."

In this connection, the essays in the catalogue which will be of greatest interest for students of the larger patterns of cultural interactions across Eurasia are those by Hong Quan ("Archaeological Discoveries Relating to the Maritime Trade of the Kingdom of Nanyue," pp. 37-41) and Jessica Rawson ("The Han Empire and Its Northern Neighbours: the Fascination of the Exotic," pp. 23-35). Readers should be warned though that there are some far-reaching claims here, especially by Hong – e.g., regarding possible architectural influences from the West. There is a long history of hypothesis regarding the migration of artistic motifs (one focus of Dame Jessica's essay, which, one assumes, anticipates what we may hope to see from the larger project for which she has received major funding). But, as she surely appreciates, we still are a long way from understanding the processes of cultural exchange. At very least, common perceptions about "borrowing" may need to be re-considered.

The book contains a usual array of other essays for such a catalogue – those by Michael Loewe providing some historical context, others describing the tombs and the relationship between funereal customs and beliefs about the afterlife. The illustrations are excellent – often multiple photographs of individual objects and (somewhat unusual and most welcome) line drawings so that one can see clearly the detail of decoration. It does seem a bit odd that the material for the Xuzhou tombs is organized thematically ("Guardians of the Afterlife," "Defence," "Social Status," "Luxury Burial Objects," etc.), where the categories overlap and intersect in such obvious ways. This organization then challenges the reader who wishes to understand the objects in their original burial context, but perhaps was unavoidable given the impact of looting and the perceived need to group analogous materials from several tombs. For the Nanyue tomb, there is an opening "tour" with excavation photos showing each room with the objects still *in situ*. Of course even there, one has to recognize that "undisturbed" is a relative term, as the tomb

was flooded, causing most of the wood (and other organic materials) in to disintegrate. To exhibit certain of the artefacts thus, inevitably, has involved some substantial restoration: e.g., the thousands of jade plaques in the burial suits having to be reconnected with new gold or silk threads and silk backing. It is too bad that we don't learn more about the restoration process. One of the most interesting finds in the Nanyue tomb was the remains of a lacquered screen, whose original bronze fittings can be seen here along with a modern reconstruction of what the whole screen would have looked like in its pristine glory.

It would be a leap of faith to argue that this one exhibition enables us to "rewrite the history of Han Civilization in China," however much that makes for good press. The objects are certainly worth seeing, the book is splendid, and, as with any good exhibition, it all raises important questions about which we should be eager to learn more.

Daniel C. Waugh

Notes

1. Souren Melikian, "Exhibition Rewrites the History of Han Civilization in China," *The New York Times*, 6 June 2012, online at <<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/09/arts/09iht-melikian09.html>>, accessed 26 August 2012.

2. For those who cannot make it, assuming the museum does not remove the web pages, there is a nicely conceived, if limited, online introduction at: <<http://www.tombtreasuresofhanchina.org/>>, accessed 26 August 2012.

3. *The Golden Age of Chinese Archaeology: Celebrated Discoveries from the People's Republic of China*. Ed. Xiaoneng Yang (Washington, D. C.: National Gallery of Art; New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1999). The exhibition was shown in Washington, Houston and Los Angeles between September 1999 and September 2000. The section of the catalogue containing the Nanyue material is pp. 410-37.

Shipwrecked. Tang Treasures and Monsoon Winds, ed. Regina Krahl, John Guy, J. Keith Wilson and Julian Raby. Washington, D. C.: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; Singapore: National Heritage Board and Singapore Tourism Board, 2010. 307 pp. ISBN 978-0-934686-18-1 (pb); 978-1-58834-305-5 (cloth).

As the map on pp. 3-4 of *Shipwrecked* vividly illustrates, its perspective being the view to the northwest from over the Indian Ocean, with the historic overland Silk Roads relegated to the background of the maritime routes, the history of Eurasian trade must give due

weight to its maritime component, something that is too often ignored in treatments of the "Silk Roads." For those who have not followed the story since its discovery in 1998, the Belitung shipwreck, found off an island east of Sumatra, provides some of the most remarkable evidence to date with regard to the Asian maritime trade in the 9th century CE. The vessel itself, even in its fragmentary state of preservation, is the earliest documented ship from the Middle East (its hull was sewn together using wood that apparently originated in East Africa). The cargo includes the largest collection of Tang Chinese ceramics ever found in one location (an estimated 70,000 items) and contains as well superb examples of Chinese metalwork. While dating is somewhat uncertain, it is definitely after the year 826 (a date inscribed on one of the dishes) and most likely some time in the 840s. Now, finally, there is concrete material evidence to document a trade previously known from written sources and from archaeological finds at various destination points on land (among them Siraf, on the Iranian shore of the Persian Gulf, and Samarra, which served as the Abbassid capital upriver from Baghdad for a time in the 9th century).

Apart from its superb illustrations, the book is of value for some substantial essays, the most of important of which include Michael Flecker's chapter on the ship itself and its excavation, and the several essays on the ceramics contributed by one of the great experts, Regina Krahl. There are other good contributions, e.g., on the ceramics, on the metalwork and, interestingly, on the reconstruction of a full-sized replica of the ship which was carried out in Oman. We now can be sure that ships from the Islamic world were traveling all the way to China in the Tang period. We have now a huge amount of new material for analyzing the interconnection between Chinese and Middle Eastern ceramic production – already this early, it seems, production in China was aimed at satisfying significant demand and meeting the special requirements of customers in the Islamic world. Some preliminary results of chemical analysis of the ceramics demonstrate the possibility of being able to determine exactly which kilns produced the wares.

The story of the Belitung wreck and the recovery of its objects is fraught with controversy.¹ Originally the intent had been that the Smithsonian, which was involved in the production of this book, would host a traveling exhibition of the artefacts. But protests on the part of some scholars who objected to the way the excavation had been carried out under the auspices of a commercial company and to the possibly commercial intent underlying a traveling exhibition led to that show's being cancelled. The catalogue is for the exhibit as it was mounted in Singapore, where most of the

collection is now permanently housed. How much data might have been lost before archaeologists were brought in on the recovery operation is impossible to determine. Those who defend what was done suggest that quick recovery was essential to avoid losses to looting (some of which occurred anyway); there is something to be said for the fact that much of the material has been preserved in one major collection, rather than scattered around the world through random sales. Threats to the integrity of archaeological sites are everywhere, with the oceans being particularly vulnerable in this era of commercial treasure hunting. Indeed it is rare that shipwrecks have been subject to carefully controlled archaeological investigation.² While there are legitimate ethical concerns and lessons here for the future, we cannot now re-wind the tape to the moment when sponge divers first came across the wreck. We can, however, revel in the evidence which has been preserved, stunning in its scope and its historical importance.

Daniel C. Waugh

Notes

1. On the controversy, see Kate Taylor, "Treasures Pose Ethics Issues for Smithsonian," *The New York Times*, April 24, 2011 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/25/arts/design/smithsonian-sunken-treasure-show-poses-ethics-questions.html?pagewanted=1&r=2>>, accessed 29 July 2012.

2. For examples reported in this journal, see Xu Yongjie, "The Dream and the Glory: Integral Salvage of the Nanhai No. 1 Shipwreck and Its Significance," *The Silk Road* 5/2 (2008): 16-19; Michèle Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens, "The Brunei Shipwreck: A Witness to the International Trade in the China Sea around 1500," *The Silk Road* 9 (2011): 5-17.

Jonathan Karam Skaff. *Sui-Tang China and Its Turco-Mongol Neighbors. Culture, Power and Connections, 580-800*. Oxford, etc.: Oxford University Press, 2012. xx + 400 pp. ISBN 978-0-19-973413-9.

Historians of China (who will need to provide a proper, detailed review of this book) have in recent years increasingly been moving away from China-centered approaches to their subject, those heavily influenced by the Confucian perceptions enshrined in most of the dynastic annals. We can no longer talk about a monolithic, Middle Kingdom which was the font of all civilization, and around which was a barbarian world that could only pay tribute to the imperial center. Of course a lot of this history

has always been obvious, given the foreign origin of so many of the Chinese dynasties and the changing borders which have at times encompassed a huge and varied swatch of East Asia and at other times shrunk to an agricultural heartland that fits more within the traditional perceptions about Chinese ethnicity and culture. What has been needed is to tease out the details in many of the traditional sources, bring to bear newly discovered materials, many from the "borderlands," and take the history of those borderlands and what lay beyond them seriously. Jonathan Karam Skaff's book does all this in impressive ways.

While he is very much concerned here with the ecology and control of borderlands, his analytical emphasis is on politics, in which he applies Max Weber's ideas about patrimonialism as a framework for understanding the complexities of elite interaction between the Sui and Tang rulers and their Turco-Mongol subjects and neighbors. His is an "integrationist" perspective, contrasting with the traditional approach of suggesting that there were impenetrable cultural barriers separating two worlds. What integrates those worlds is shared elements of Eurasian political culture that can be documented everywhere from the Byzantine West to the Chinese East. He deliberately avoids trying to explore the origins of this shared culture (that would be another big book), but rather elicits systematically from the extensive written records of the Sui and especially the Tang periods the evidence which can document the way in which it provided the basis for strategies of political integration and the mechanisms to achieve it. A lot of this evidence is to be found in the biographies of key political and military leaders, which show how important were individuals in Tang service of Turco-Mongolian origin or mixed ethnicity. The greatest successes in integration, from the standpoint of the Chinese rulers, were when China controlled the borderlands, the areas suitable to a mixed or pastoral economy. The failures, with consequent political weakness or chaos, were related to loss of control of those borderlands, which then invited encroachment by the external Turco-Mongolian polities.

The patrimonial and thus personal nature of politics might be expressed in many different ways. Diplomatic protocol in this regard is very revealing, as one can discern from a close examination of the contemporary descriptions a refined understanding of the hierarchy of relationships. Both at the Chinese court and the courts of the various Turco-Mongol rulers there was a clear understanding of the values and protocols of the opposite side. There are noteworthy examples of how the Tang might adapt and incorporate rituals that were not indigenous to China, even over the protests

of Confucian-educated bureaucrats. Rituals involving investiture were very important, with concomitant ceremonial hospitality and gift exchange. Among the more interesting kinds of evidence explored here is that concerning color coding of clothing and the nature of the garments themselves. The evidence for cultural sharing goes well beyond just superficial taste for luxuries and exotica.

Skaff devotes considerable attention to titlature, which reflected views about the place of the respective rulers in the larger political (and heavenly) universe. Of particular interest here is when in the 7th century the Tang Emperor Taizong adopted the syncretic title (drawing on the political ideologies of both worlds) of “Heavenly Qaghan.” Changes in political pretensions and titlature were closely related to changes in political realities and the balance of power.

In a number of places, Skaff conveniently tabulates the kind of data he has extracted from the Chinese records. So we have tables of royal marriages and marriage proposals that may have been refused. There are tables listing exchanges of embassies, summaries of gifts exchanged. The appendices include a tabulation of attacks on northern prefectures, population statistics for North China, and a long and detailed table identifying the northern administrative units and the nature of their economies as reflected in such evidence as tribute payments. It is on the basis of this last table that Skaff is able to construct his map of the northern administrative districts, showing how much of the borderlands were in fact under Imperial control at the height of the Tang.

Control of those borderlands had an important economic dimension. In contrast to those who have previously studied the trade which provided the Chinese with cavalry horses, where the emphasis has been on purchases or tribute from the northern nomads outside the boundaries of Chinese political control, Skaff emphasizes that for much of the period he is covering the more important sources of horses were the government-supported stud farms in the grasslands of the borderlands. It was only when control of those grasslands was lost that the government had to resort to the major and costly purchases, as, for example, was the case following the An Lushan rebellion in the middle of the 8th century.

His source base goes well beyond just the Chinese records — he has used the evidence from Turkic inscriptions; for comparative purposes draws upon some of the Arabic histories and Byzantine records. So there is much here to stimulate thinking about other parts of Eurasia. I, for one, began to imagine how one might apply this kind of analysis about borderland politics and culture to re-frame the history of relations

between the East European Rus’ princes and their steppe neighbors to the southeast.

In his conclusion, Skaff invokes a somewhat limited definition of how the concept of the “Silk Roads” has been employed to discuss trans-Asian exchange, arguing that instead of some concept of east–west trade routes, we need to look at north–south interactions and discuss among other things, the impact of political culture, especially in situations where there is political competition. It is precisely in such circumstances that he sees some of the most fruitful exchanges of ideas and norms of conduct occurring. To locate this history firmly in the physical landscape and regional ecologies is critically important if we are to achieve a real understanding of political events and shared experiences.

Daniel C. Waugh

Rashmita Jadav. *Understanding the Morphology of Leh Town*. Ahmedabad: CEPT University Press, 2012. 117 pp. ISBN 978-81-920187-3-7. To purchase the book, contact <publications@cept.ac.in>.

It would be a shame if this gem of a book went unnoticed. Rashmita Jadav, who is now an architect at HCP Design and Project Management Pvt. Ltd., in Ahmedabad, India, submitted the work as her Bachelor of Architecture thesis at CEPT (Center for Environmental Planning and Technology) University in Ahmedabad in 2008. The work was supervised by Prof. Pratyush Shankar. Lest one think that bachelor degree theses are not to be taken seriously, here is what the CEPT Faculty of Architecture website says about them:

The final semester for all programmes at CEPT University is the dissertation semester where students undertake a time bound independent research study/project-oriented work leading to a thesis/dissertation. A Faculty Member or External Guide approved by the institution takes the student through the process. A carefully selected evaluating committee called a jury is constituted for this purpose, before whom the thesis is presented and defended. Successful completion of the dissertation is integral to all programs as it is in lieu of a final examination. The students are encouraged to explore multi-disciplinary issues helping them to develop analytical skills, critical thinking while contributing to the knowledge base.

Judging from the thesis synopses, also on the website,¹ many of them would be of considerable value for scholars interested in the history of India.

Leh, the subject of Ms. Jadav's thesis, located in Ladakh in northern India, has a long and interesting history. The town lies on historic trade routes, one, leading north over a series of high mountain passes, being the most important route connecting northern India with western Xinjiang, another, heading northeast into Tibet.² The caravans between Leh and Yarkand ceased only with the closing of the borders following the establishment of the Communist regime in China. Ladakh is home to important Buddhist monasteries, the one at Hemis housing a significant and little-known library, the one at Alchi famous for its remarkable 12th-13th-century murals and sculpture.³ The artistic legacy of Tibetan Buddhism in Ladakh is badly in need of recording and conservation.

As one's plane descends to the small airport at Leh, one is struck by the lush barley fields lining the upper Indus, highlighted in relief against the grays and browns of the surrounding mountain desert. Leh itself is set against a dramatic backdrop of mountains (see the picture below) — one of the routes north lays claim to being the highest vehicular road in the world, crossing an 18,000 ft. pass. The town spreads below the imposing palace of the last independent rulers of Ladakh, above which on the same rocky spur is the monastic complex of Namgyal Tsemo.

Ms. Jadav began her work on Leh while documenting the traditional architecture there for a German NGO, The Tibet Heritage Fund.⁴ Given the pace of modern development in the town, which in the summer is overrun with tourists and is home to military bases, the historic environment is threatened. Her book, which presumably draws heavily on some of the resources of the THF project, thus represents a valuable contribution to our understanding of traditional urban configurations, their growth and functions. She is not concerned with architectural details, but rather with development over time (even if it was unplanned) and interrelationships of the buildings and their surrounding streets and spaces.

The text here in many ways is quite basic — starting with general information on the history, culture and environment, and then proceeding to description of the component parts of the town. She delineates clearly the various factors which influenced the urban development. What really stands out is the illustrations. There are dozens of quality, if somewhat small color photos, some of the more interesting being panoramic composite images. More significant are the maps and diagrams, often spread across the full page in large format (in two cases, fold-outs), which highlight with crystal clarity the features being discussed. There

are detailed plans of small blocks, vertical section drawings of some of the buildings, maps illustrating the hierarchy of streets and the relationship of major public buildings to surrounding residences. This is a tour de force of visual documentation.

Daniel C. Waugh

Notes

1. At <http://www.cept.ac.in/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=117&Itemid=245>, accessed 31 August 2012.

2. For the history of Ladakh and its trade, see Janet Rizvi, *Ladakh: Crossroads of High Asia*, 2nd ed. (Delhi: Oxford Univ. Pr., 1998) and especially idem, *Trans-Himalayan Caravans: Merchant Princes and Peasant Traders in Ladakh* (Delhi: Oxford Univ. Pr., 1999).

3. While there is still much to be done, especially in regards to conservation, at least some of the important Buddhist sites in Northern India have been properly photographed and published. For Alchi, there is the magnificent record of the Sumtsek temple: Roger Goepper, *Alchi: Ladakh's Hidden Buddhist Sanctuary*. *The Sumtsek*. Photography by Jaroslav Poncar with contributions by Robert Linrothe and Karl Dasser (Boston: Shambhala, 1996). Just south of Ladakh in the Spiti Valley is the "oldest continuously functioning Buddhist monastery in India and the Himalayas with its original decoration and iconographic program intact," which is the subject of Deborah E. Klimburg-Salter, *Tabo: a Lamp for the Kingdom. Early Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Art in the Western Himalaya* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1998 [first ed., Milan: Skira, 1997]). The paintings at Tabo date between the late 10th and mid-11th centuries. These two sites are among those discussed in the broader geographic area by Christian Luczanits, *Buddhist Sculpture in Clay: Early Western Himalayan Art, late 10th to early 13th centuries* (Chicago: Serindia, 2004).

4. For a report on some of the work of the International Tibet Heritage Fund in Leh, see André Alexander, "Leh Old Town, Ladakh — A Participatory Approach to Urban Conservation, Community-based Upgrading and Capacity-building [2005]" <http://www.tibetheritagefund.org/media/download/leh05_sml.pdf>, accessed 31 August 2012.

View north across Leh toward the palace.



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