
BOOK REVIEWS

Mauro Maggi. *Pelliot Chinois 2928. A Khotanese Love Story*. Roma: 1997, 88 pp., 4 Plates. — Istituto Italiano per l’Africa e l’Oriente, LXXX.

The book under review here is dedicated to the memory of Sir Harold Walter Bailey (1899–1996). Not only Mauro Maggi, but also all those working with Khotanese texts are indebted to Sir Harold for his investigations in this field. He was one of the firsts to undertake the study of the Eastern Iranian Khotanese language in which texts, discovered at the close of the nineteenth century in East Turkestan, were written. This outstanding scholar has published, in addition to his numerous philological and historical studies, transliterated editions of nearly all Khotanese surviving texts from manuscript collections in England, France, Sweden and America. That were, first, Bailey’s students who continued the study of these texts. Now, a third generation of scholars has appeared — the students of Prof. R. E. Emmerick. To this group belongs Dr. Mauro Maggi.

In recent years, Mauro Maggi has shown himself to be a well-trained scholar in the field of Khotanese literature. In 1995, in addition to the book under consideration here, he published in the same series “The Khotanese *Karmavighaṅga*”. Maggi’s work on two manuscripts first introduced to the scholarly community by Bailey has provided an important source for enriching dictionaries of the Khotanese language. This quickly bore fruit: in the third volume of “Studies in the Vocabulary of Khotanese” (Vienna, 1997) a great deal of the entries (76 out of 209) belongs to Dr. Maggi. Many of these entries were drawn from “A Khotanese Love Story”.

The book under review presents two texts written on the reverse of a Chinese scroll. One of them, consisting of three incomplete lines, is the opening formula of an official letter and represents an example of Khotanese epistolary style from the tenth century A.D. The second is an untitled *avadāna*, hitherto unidentified, which follows the formula in lines 4–41 of the same manuscript. The Khotanese text is unfinished — half of the final folio of the scroll contains no text. The unsure hand and large number of errors and corrections led Maggi to believe that the scroll was used for pedagogical purposes.

The first to turn his attention to this text was Bailey, who published a transliteration in “Khotanese Texts”, 3, pp. 105–6. A facsimile was published in 1985 (Huang Yongwu, *Dunhuang baozang*, 125, Taipei). In his book, Maggi has republished the facsimile on the basis of photographs he received from the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Paris).

The writing — Brāhmī cursive of the Khotanese variety — offers significant difficulties. Despite Bailey’s presenting the transliteration of the text and his including some words from it in the “Dictionary of Khotan Saka” (Cambridge, 1979) and in a number of his articles, many obscure passages still remain. Maggi overcame these independently. The language of the Khotanese text under discussion also presents difficulties, many of the words being *hapax legomena*. The division of the text into words and sentences, ambivalence of many Khotanese words required deep immersion in the context and a profound knowledge of the historical phonetics of Iranian languages. It appears that Maggi has dealt successfully with all difficulties. The interpretation of the text he presents, the grammatical commentary which demonstrates the correctness of his views, and the glossary are on a high level. The work of the scholar is worthy of great respect. It should be added that the 122 titles cited by the author do not simply demonstrate Maggi’s familiarity with the literature — the book’s pages provide extensive lists of matching contexts from the sources cited. See, for example, the commentaries to 3b (p. 42): *haryauna varaṣṭe* (“he experienced ... pleasures”) and Old Khotanese (henceforth, OKh.) *biśśunye hayirūṇe varāśāre* (*Suvarṇaprabhāsa*, 10, 50).

In order to prove the correctness of his derivations for a number of words, Maggi provides lists of all attested grammatical forms of the given word from other texts. Thus, in commentary 3d (p. 44) he lists all grammatical forms of the word *maṇḍai* (“woman”) to prove that his reconstruction of its root is correct. In commentary 9d (pp. 53–4), he cites all contexts in which the word *ttuka* is used: *ttuka* > **ttaunaka* > *ttaunāka* > **ttumka* > *ttuka* (“fat”, “strong”; a variant interpretation is proposed by R. E. Emmerick). Moreover, with the aid of complex textual analyses, Maggi has succeeded in reconstructing the meanings of such *hapax legomena* as *baysānyā* (“splendid”) and *brrūka* > **brrūnaka* > *brrūna* (“splendid”). In many cases, the commentaries provide corrections to the textual divisions proposed by Bailey: for example, 19d (p. 74), instead of *īrauda* (“drunken”, “intoxicated”) Maggi reads *ī rauda* (“by the king”). In commentary 21a (pp. 75–9), with the aid of contextual references the scholar proves *vachauste* to stand for “he wished” and not “let fall” or “threw down” as was proposed by Bailey. Also, Maggi offers his interpretation of text P 2958.117, which differs from that of Bailey in his “Khotanese Buddhist Texts”, p. 42.

Bailey’s readings are revised in many instances, yet doubt must persist in two cases. My knowledge of Buddhist Sanskrit texts does not permit me to support Maggi’s read-