



中国人民大学“一带一路”经济研究院
中国人民大学经济学院
中国人民大学国学院

编

丝绸之路研究

Journal of the International Silk Roads Studies

第一辑

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《丝绸之路研究》发刊词

以国家“一带一路”倡议为研究主题的首部综合性刊物《丝绸之路研究》即将面世，这不仅是相关学术领域里的一个重大标志性事件，也为“一带一路”沿线国家提供了一个展示跨文化及多元文明交流互动的窗口。

在漫长的历史时期，亚欧大陆，甚至包括非洲的部分地区，被以丝绸之路冠名的各种商贸及文化交流的通道所串联，诸如陶瓷之路、茶叶之路、香料之路、玉石之路、朝圣之路等，为古典时期不同文明之间的交流互通建立了桥梁。因此，丝绸之路也等同于文明交流之路、政治交流之路、经济交流之路。

曾几何时，单一文明的价值观、行为规范成为了其他文明强制接受的普遍价值，研究领域也不例外，那些曾经创建高度文明且对其他文明产生重大影响的文化被边缘化、低矮化，某一文化、某一阶段的繁荣与发展被当成永远不变的世界规律，强权与武力扩张被看作文明之间交往的常态，这与今天以全球视野的角度来分析问题的方法相比已经非常落伍。

丝绸之路或“一带一路”既是对历史的回顾，也是对未来的展望；既是对传统“丝绸之路经济带”沿线国家政治经济发展的希望，也是对构架全球化的“丝绸之路经济带”的运行指南。

《丝绸之路研究》是中国人民大学“一带一路”经济研究院、经济学院、国学院与生活·读书·新知三联书店合办的综合性学术刊物。本刊以沟通古代东西方文明交流的丝绸之路为支点，秉承“一带一路”倡议，挖掘丝路沿线历史文化、探索“丝绸之路经济带”的内在动力，致力于打造跨学科、多领域、高水平的国际学术平台，为全球文化交流与共同发展提供学术支撑。

张骞西行，玄奘寻法，梯山悬度成就沟通中西之壮举；粟特驼旅，天方牵星，西域南海始聚异域遗珍。秉承丝绸之路之勇于进取、和平致远的伟大精神，本刊有信心在中外编委和热心于丝绸之路的广大读者们的支持下，办成一本高质量的学术期刊。

李肖

2017年5月

学人寄语

丝绸之路是前近代亚欧大陆的最大通道。大航海之后，世界一体化进程加速，而前近代的世界，亚欧大陆是人类活动的主要舞台。丝绸之路联结着当时各重要文明地区，为世界一体化打下坚实的历史基础。

文明之间的交往，是文明进步的重要方式。各个文明区与文化主体，就文化要素而言，无不你中有我，我中有你。互通有无，彼此促进，共同提高，从来就是文化交流的华美乐章。今天，人类享受世界一体化带来的便利、快捷和多元，是历史长期积累的结果，人类为此不仅付出辛劳，也付出沉重的代价，包括流血牺牲。吸取历史经验，总结失败教训，是今人的义务，也是获取未来幸福的权利。通过历史研究获得启示，是专业工作者责无旁贷的神圣使命。

文化交流一直是丝绸之路上的主旋律。因为环境不同，丝绸之路可以划分为陆上丝绸之路和海上丝绸之路。因为强调的对象不同，也有陶瓷之路、茶叶之路、香料之路、玉石之路、朝圣之路等冠名，两千年间，有多少有形无形的“物品”在丝绸之路上往来，就有多少种认定丝绸之路的方法。把探索世界一体化进程的目光扩展到丝绸之路的世界，就会被人类曾经拥有的和平牧歌所感动，对于未来世界的同样渴望，就可能感动人类世界。

多年以来，丝绸之路沿线的考古学进步，为丝绸之路研究提供了极其重要的第一手资料。丝绸之路历史学的研究，从来没有今天这样的优厚条件。如今的世界，一体化的进程还在经受种种考验，但不能否认的是这一进程正在深化发展。就中国学者而言，中国提出“一带一路”的倡议，不仅给世界带来憧憬，也给学术研究带来动力。“一带一路”的建设可以是经济的、政治的，但对于完整和成功的“一带一路”建设来说，历史与文化学术研究的缺席，是完全不能想象的。

丝绸之路的历史，是文化多样性、观念多元性的大舞台。如果这可以看作丝绸之路固有精神的话，那么《丝绸之路研究》也应当继承这种精神。《丝绸之路研究》是一部以丝路历史与文化研究为主体的连续学术出版物，为了对丝绸之路的整体性有充分体现，我们也会关注丝绸之路经济和政治的研究课题。《丝绸之路研究》的第一原则是学术性，严肃的学术、求实的理念会贯彻始终。

中国人民大学是以文科为主的综合型大学，《丝绸之路研究》是“一带一路”经济研究院、经济学院、国学院与生活·读书·新知三联书店合办的综合性学术刊物，我们希望《丝绸之路研究》在未来成为探索丝绸之路的历史与文化的重要学术平台。丝绸之路涉及文化与历史的多种面向，研究焦点不胜枚举，广邀学界朋友，共襄盛举。

孟宪实

2017年5月

《丝绸之路研究》办刊宗旨与稿约

《丝绸之路研究》是由中国人民大学“一带一路”经济研究院、经济学院、国学院与生活·读书·新知三联书店合办的综合性学术刊物。中国是丝绸之路的起点，在前近代是亚欧大陆文明的中心之一。“一带一路”的倡议不仅给沿线国家的共同发展带来巨大的契机，也给相关的学术研究注入了新的活力。本刊以沟通东西方文明交流的丝绸之路为支点，秉承“一带一路”倡议，挖掘丝路沿线历史文化，探索“一带一路”的内在动力，致力于打造跨学科、多领域、高水平的国际学术平台。

《丝绸之路研究》以“一带一路”的历史、文化、经济和当代政治为主要研究对象，主要栏目包括人文、社科、学术通讯、札记等部分。欢迎海内外学者惠赠佳作（外文稿件请给予本刊首发授权，本刊编辑部负责翻译发表）。

《丝绸之路研究》诚邀中外人士赐稿，同时依托主办单位适时召开相关研究领域的学术研讨会，邀请专家、学者参会讨论，出版专辑。

作者投稿一经采纳发表，即赠样书2册、电子抽印本1份，稿酬酌付。《丝绸之路研究》为半年刊，来稿请参照所附“《丝绸之路研究》用稿声明及引文规范”，以电子版形式发至本刊编辑部。来稿请附作者简历与详细通信地址、邮编、电子信箱等联系方式，赐寄至以下地址（收到稿件后即自动发送回执）：

邮编：100872

地址：北京市海淀区中关村大街59号中国人民大学国学馆234室

李肖 收

邮箱：haidaoqi@ruc.edu.cn

电话：010-62515747 15001371119

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Journal of the International Silk Roads Studies, co-hosted by School of Economics and Chinese Classics in Renmin University of China, is a comprehensive academic journal.

The journal is based on the Silk Roads that communicated the ancient eastern and western civilization and supported by the Belt and Road Initiative. The journal aims to build up an interdisciplinary, multi-field, high-level international academic platform for exploring the historical culture along the Silk Roads and internal dynamics of “the Belt and Road”. China is the starting point of the Silk Roads and one of the centres of the Eurasian civilizations in pre-modern times. The Belt and Road Initiative not only offers great opportunities for the international politics and economics, but also adds new vitality to relevant academic researches.

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For contributions and further information, please contact:

Editor in Chief: Dr. Li Xiao
School of Chinese Classics
Renmin University of China
Beijing 100872
P. R. China

Tel: (+86) 010-62515747
(+86) 15001371119
E-mail: haidaoqi@ruc.edu.cn

山普鲁氍毹上的希腊神话、苏美尔神话

——见于 6 世纪的毛毯 段 晴 / 1

希腊化埃及的“末日审判”观念

颜海英 / 17

“逾界”与“求诉”

——从《伊施塔入冥府》神话的两大主题看古代两河流域伊施塔崇拜的一些特质 贾 妍 / 26

“生命树”与古埃及来世信仰

张悠然 / 41

《王叔和脉诀》在伊朗

时 光 / 51

欧亚大陆视野下的汉唐丝绸之路

荣新江 / 59

“西夷”“西夷西”疑问与汉武帝“指求身毒国”探索

王子今 / 69

粟特语的再发现

[英] 辛维廉 撰 付马 译 / 86

从出土汉简看敦煌太守在两汉丝绸之路上的特殊作用

张德芳 / 95

玄奘《大唐西域记》中所见锡尔河的汉文名称

[日] 高田时雄 撰 尤小羽 译 王丁 校 / 109

粟特语摩尼教文献所反映的 10 至 11 世纪河中与吐鲁番关系

[日] 吉田 豊 / 113

玄奘之媲摩与马可波罗之培因再研究

罗 帅 / 126

新疆早期印欧人溯源

[保加利亚] 玛利亚·玛利诺娃 / 147

新疆出土圆锥体耳坠的研究

林铃梅 / 166

于阗佛教壁画中的非佛教神祇及相关问题

[意] 康马泰 撰 李思飞 译 / 187

入华粟特人葬具上的狩猎图

[德] 魏骏骁 / 207

库木吐喇第 75 窟数码复原及相关壁画题材及题记研究

[日] 山部能宜 赵 莉 谢倩倩 / 225

唐代汉传佛教在龟兹地区的传播及其影响——以佛陀观为中心

苗利辉 / 251

中国伊斯兰经学派在明末清初的创立和发展

沈一鸣 / 265

明清时期广州口岸望远镜传用考述

黄佳欣 / 276

在喀什开展巴基斯坦研究的必要性和可行性分析

姑丽娜尔·吾甫力 王晓东 / 291

Greek Gods and Traces of the Sumerian Mythology

- In Carpets from the 6th Century Duan Qing / 1
- The Hellenized Egyptian Concept of “Judgement of the Dead” Yan Haiying / 17
- “Trespassing” and “Pursuing”: Some Characteristics of Ishtar Worship in Ancient Mesopotamia
through the Two Major Themes of the Myth *Ishtar's Descent to the Nether World* Jia Yan / 26
- The “Tree of Life” and Belief in Afterlife in Ancient Egypt Zhang Youran / 41
- Impulse Formula of Wang Shube* in Iran Shi Guang / 51
- Han and Tang Dynasties Silk Roads from a Eurasian perspective Rong Xinjiang / 59
- The Problem of “Xi Yi” or the “West of Xi Yi” and the Exploration of Han Wudi's Search
for a Way to India Wang Zijin / 69
- The Rediscovery of Sogdian Texts by Sims-Williams, tr. FuMa / 86
- The Special Role of Dunhuang Prefecture on the Han Dynasty Silk Roads Based on
Unearthed Bamboo Slips Zhang Defang / 95
- The Chinese Name for Syr Darya in Xuanzang's *Account of Western Regions*
by Takata Tokio, tr. You Xiaoyu, Proof read. Wang Ding / 109
- Relationship between Sogdiana and Turfan During the 10th - 11th Centuries as Reflected in
Manichaean Sogdian Texts Yutaka Yoshida / 113
- Restudy on Xuanzang's Phema and Marco Polo's Pein Luo Shuai / 126
- Retracing the Roots of the Early Indo-European Population in Xinjiang Maria Marinova / 147
- Study of Earrings with Cone-Shape Pendent Found in Xinjiang Lin Lingmei / 166
- The Representation of non-Buddhist Deities in Khotanses Paintings and Some Related
Problems by Matteo Compareti, tr. Li Sifei / 187
- The Hunting Scenes on Funerary Furniture of Sogdian in China Patrick Wertmann / 207
- A Digital Restoration of the Paintings in Qumtura Cave 75 and an Examination of Relevant Motifs and
Inscriptions Nobuyoshi Yamabe Zhao Li Xie Qianqian / 225
- The Spread and Influence of Central Plain Buddhism in Kucha in Tang Dynasty
—— Focus on the Buddha Concept Miao Lihui / 251
- The Development of the School of Islamic *Jingxue* in China Proper during the Late Ming and
Early Qing Dynasties Shen Yiming / 265
- The Spread and Use of Telescopes in Canton Port during Ming and Qing Dynasty Huang Jiaxin / 276
- An Analysis on the Necessity and Feasibility of Carrying out Pakistan Studies in Kashgar
Gulinaer · Wupuli Wang Xiaodong / 291

Greek Gods and Traces of the Sumerian Mythology

In Carpets from the 6th Century

Duan Qing (Peking University)

Abstract: This paper will describe the characters within the figures of the recently discovered carpets from Ancient Khotan, which may date back to the end of the 6th and the beginning of the 7th century. It will correlate the findings to demonstrate the inherited tradition of Greek mythology and ancient Sumerian civilizations.

Keywords: Greek gods; Sumerian Innana; carpets from Lop museum; Khotan; Gilgamesh epic; pukku and mekku

I. Introduction

I would like to introduce briefly some places, which are connected with the discovery of the carpets. I began with the area of Shampul, the name denotes a barren place where the carpets were found (Fig. 1). Shampul is a desert district of Lop County. In the center of Lop, a new museum has been opened, where the carpets are now preserved. Lop is about one hour and a half drive way from the city of Khotan.

The city of modern Khotan is the administrative center of nine counties, but the name Khotan designates a historical kingdom located on the southern edge of the Taklamakan desert. The modern Khotan area, with its counties, covers approximately the area of the former kingdom of Khotan, which, however, a thousand years ago had extended much more to the south, where today the desert extends. About 97 percent of the modern population of Khotan are Islamic Uyghurs who speak Uyghur. But in the past history, before the time of the first millennium, —the kingdom of Khotan was a famous center of Buddhism, in particular for the Mahāyāna-Buddhism. Most of the population of ancient Khotan spoke Khotanese—a language, which belongs to the medieval East-Iranian language group. About in the 6th century, Khotanese became the official Language and Brāhmī, the official script. It is easy to deduce from this that the former population of Khotan would have Iranian origin, and their culture may be bearing influence of the ancient Iranian religion, which was supposedly Zoroastrian. Local tradition of Khotan do not seem to have changed from the old days to the present, to which we may



Fig. 1, the place after the archaeological exploration where the carpets have been found. Courtesy to Xinjiang Institute of cultural relics and Archaeology.

mention jade, silk and carpets.

In particular, today the price of jade has been driven so high to an unreal level that the search for Jade has almost become a business. If one travels to Khotan, he will see everywhere on riverbeds excavators busy at work. In the year 2007, some people trying their luck with the search for jade in a former tributary in the area of Shampul, instead of jade, they found carpets, which, according to the description, lay in a pit built with stones.

II. Findings

It was said that originally seven carpets were found, two of which were sold abroad, while the police later confiscated the other five. They are now preserved in the Lop Museum. Among the five carpets, three carpets are of square format measuring 1.18 by 1.18 meters. They have the same pattern and differ from each other only by colors. Of the two large carpets, the larger one (hereafter called the carpet No. 1) is 2.56 meters high and 1.50 meters wide, and the other measures 2.2 meters high and 1.19 meters wide, which will be called carpet No. 2.

In the 3 square ones, one line of Brāhmī script is woven. It contains the same text though a few characters seem a little different:

Spāvatā meri sūmā hoḍā

“The spāvatā-official Meri gave (this) to Sūma”.

Both Khotanese and Tibetan sources, we have learned about a Buddhist saint who sacrificed his life to save the small river from drying out. He is still remembered through a toponymical name. The aforementioned place name Shampul, where the carpets were found, is most likely named after him.^① *Spāvatā*, however, is an earlier phase of *spāta*, which comes from Old-Iranian *spāda-pati* and means army leader. Before this form appears in the carpets, experts of Khotanese have suspected that *spāta* should have an earlier form like *spāvatā*, but the idea never has been proven until the discovery of the carpets. Now the presumption is confirmed. This older form, however, indicates that the carpets must be products from the 6th century, because Khotanese was written in Brāhmī script most likely not until the 6th century. Before Khotanese came to its official stage, Kharoṣṭhī had been used as official script, and Gandhārī as the official language, followed by Sanskrit/Brāhmī which was introduced in Khotan approximately in later 5th and early 6th century, for a short period of a maximum of fifty years in the scope of the secular world.^②

Tablet 1, changing of official languages and scripts in ancient Khotan:

Gandhārī / Kharoṣṭhī to 5 th century	Sanskrit/Brāhmī 5 th and early 6 th century for a short period	Khotanese/ Brāhmī From the 6 th century on → disappearance of the ancient Khotan kingdom.
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III. The motivation of design of carpets No. 1 and 2

The main topic of today is to give a rather outlined explanation of the illustrations in carpets No. 1 and 2 (Plate I and II). I am more or less trained in Iranian Studies and Indology. That means that I am more able to deal with texts in languages like Khotanese and Sanskrit than with pictures. The carpet No. 1 has 3 Brāhmī signs, and for many years nobody knew what they meant. In order to find out which context the 3 characters stand, in 2013 I began to research more than 20 figures on this carpet.

① I have published an article discussing the script and about the saint in detail, see: Duan Qing, “The inscription on the Shampul Carpets”, *the Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology*, Vol.5, 2012, Brepols, pp. 95-100.

② Two Sanskrit documents have been read and published, in which a Khotanese king of the early 6th century is mentioned. The two documents offer the evidence that Sanskrit was used as official language in ancient Khotan. About the two documents, see: Duan Qing, “Deed, Coins and King’s Title as Revealed in a Sanskrit Cloth Document from the 6 Century”, *Eurasian Studies*, English Version IV, edited by Yu Taishan and Li Jinxiu, Asia Publishing Nexus, 2016, pp. 265-283.

While observing the carpets No. 1 and 2, it is easy to have the impression that a whole story about a journey of a hero is displayed on them. The story must start from below and develops in zigzag-direction to the top. Let us take the carpet No. 1 (Plate I) as an example: At the beginning, the hero is shown in the middle in the first row (counted from the bottom). In the second row he occurs on the left, in the third row on the right and then on the left in the fourth row, in order to return to the middle in the fifth row, which represents the happy end of the story.

In the first row of Carpet No. 1, conspicuously illustrated is a small male figure in dark blue color, who stands a little behind on the right side of the hero. His hands and feet, however, are in skin color. The small figure is holding something in yellow in his right hand and he is looking towards the hero. Above the head of the dark blue figure is some drawing, which consists of vertical strokes in dark blue color and cross strokes in earth color. Perceiving this as a symbolic drawing of the surface of the earth, it becomes clear that the little dark blue figure is displayed just underneath the earth while he is still alive because his hands and feet are deliberately shown in skin color. The attitude, how he is looking at the hero, conveys his strong desire to seek help. He wants to get out of the underworld (Fig. 2).

The motif will be clearer when the figure of a boy in the fifth row is taken into a comparison (Fig. 3). Here the boy no longer looks at the hero, but towards another direction. His front leg is slightly bent, and his back foot is not flat on the ground—all these details indicate that the boy is running with outstretched arms towards a cheerful woman. The boy in the fifth row is depicted in a returning scene that is for certain the same one who is displayed in the first row in dark blue color for showing that he is underneath the earth. At this stage, a conclusive point can be marked. It is a story which inevitably involves life and death. The key to disclose the secret of the story is the dark blue figure.

Looking again closer at the details in the fifth row, it is noticed that the hero now is holding a club with both hands (also in Fig. 3). Sequencing the three themes, firstly, the club of the hero, secondly the yellow object of the dark blue figure in his hand while he is illustrated underneath the earth, and thirdly an old man in the third row—all these details hint at an epic, which was circulated in Mesopotamia around 2000 before Christ. The epic has been preserved in cuneiform on the twelfth clay tablet of the Akkadian Gilgamesh epic, but then remained hidden from the world for thousand years. It was not until the end of the 19th century that the whole Gilgamesh epic had been reconstructed from thousands of tiny little pieces of clay. Today we know that the Gilgamesh epic consists of about 3600 lines of text, which is written in 12 clay tablets.^① The 12th clay tablet of the Gilgamesh epic is of unique character, which is telling the story of Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the underworld. This implies to me that the 12th tablet is referencing the illustrations of the two carpets from Khotan.

The Gilgamesh epic is well known having the reputation of the first great epic in the world literature.



Fig. 2, a figure under earth with a yellow object (*pukku*) in his right hand.



Fig. 3, the returning scene and the hero with a club (*mekku*).

① I noticed this information through browsing literatures on *Gilgamesh* online from a German author, W Röllig by name, whose book is entitled *das Gilgamesch Epos*, published in Reclam, Ditzingen, 2009. It is certainly due to century long efforts that now a bounty of literature on *Gilgamesh* epic is offered. George has noted main scholars and their contributions in the preface of his volumes on the subject, see: R.A. George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic: introduction, critical edition and Cuneiform texts*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003.

Most scholars who deal with the Babylonian epic are of the opinion that the complete epic end with the 11th tablet, while the 12th tablet has a new story which is the narration of Enkidu going to the underworld for picking *pukku*. In Babylonian, the word *pukku* is signifying a wooden ball, which is a play toy. *Pukku* is to be hit by a tool called *mekku*.^① A Sumerian myth narrates that it was Gilgamesh who created the pair of the toys and invented the play. He drew all young men into the day-long game so that their wives complained about it to the gods. As the consequence, the gods let the ball disappear in the underworld. Gilgamesh was sad about it. Enkidu agreed to go to the underworld to fetch the ball. Gilgamesh explained to Enkidu in detail how he should behave in the underworld, for example, that he should go barefoot and not wear new clothes. Despite all the warnings, Enkidu was caught by the earth and could not get out of the underworld. Gilgamesh sought help from the gods. Finally, a god opened a hole in the earth, which released the spirit of Enkidu. Gilgamesh inquired about Enkidu's deceased relatives. Earlier scholars have pointed out that there are many comparable references between the Gilgamesh epic and the Greek Odyssey. Especially on the 12th tablet of the Gilgamesh epic, Enkidu comes from the underworld and reports about the situation there. The 24th chapter of the Odyssey tells about the hero going into the underworld and reporting about the deceased being there.^②

Hints like two play objects illustrated in carpets lead to the story of Gilgamesh epic. They are the club in the hand of the hero in the 5th row and the yellow object in the hand of the dark blue figure in the first row. The yellow object is supposed to display the ball—the *pukku* in Babylonian Gilgamesh epic, while the club is *mekku*. Because of the depiction of the *pukku* and *mekku* in the carpets a link to the myth of the Sumerian origin is established. The mythic story tells that the toys *pukku* and *mekku* are made of the crown and the root of a willow tree. It was a special willow tree which had been carefully nurtured by Goddess Inanna for many years in her garden in expectation that it would yield wood for a throne and bed. But when the tree had grown up, it was occupied by three evil creatures. Thanks to Gilgamesh, the goddess could finally make use of the tree for her own purpose.^③ For the reward, Gilgamesh received the necessary material for creating the toys *pukku* and *mekku*.

Even more evidence to support the possible link between the illustrative narration of the carpets and the remnant of Sumerian myth: The two words *pukku* and *mekku* are surprisingly not only preserved in Khotanese, but also in Pāli, and even in Chinese transliterations. They occur in the parallel versions of *Mūgapakkha-jātaka*—a tale about one of the former lives of Buddha. In Khotanese, *pukku* and *mekku* appear as *mukā-pamka*, in Pāli *mūgapakkha*, and in Chinese *mu po* (慕魄). Since a paper discussing the specific topic is published^④, it is not necessary here to go to details about the evolution and variation of these two words. Mentioning the two words in Khotanese is aiming to emphasize that it is not an unfounded coincidence to find the illustration of *pukku* and *mekku* in the carpets.

Until now what attempted in the above discussion, is to find out accordance between the illustrations of the carpets with the Gilgamesh epic. However, after analyzing the all images, my conclusion is that the carpets do not offer a parallel visual version of the Gilgamesh epic. It is only the frame of the story of the 12th clay tablet of the Gilgamesh epic that is taken over, and borrowed for the narration of the illustrative carpets. As related in the 12th tablet, the story of the carpets starts with the scene that the ball is fallen into the underworld, but why it is fallen and why a boy is in the underworld for picking it up, —that is not important, what matters is to get the boy out of the underworld.

① R.A. George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic: introduction, critical edition and Cuneiform texts*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 899.

② Hans Ulrich Steymans, *Gilgamesh, Ikonographie eines Helden*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 245, Academic Press Fribourg, 2010, pp. 331-332.

③ For the whole story translated from Sumerian language, see: Samuel Noah Kramer, *Gilgamesh and the Huluppu-Tree: A reconstructed Sumerian Text*, the University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, 1938; for analysis of the story, see: Diane Walkstein and Samuel Noah Kramer, *Inanna, Queen of Heaven and Earth: her stories and hymns from Sumer*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1983, p. 140.

④ I have published a paper in Chinese discussing the two words and their variation, see: Duang Qing, "Metaphor of the wooden ball", *A Collection of the Sino-Iranica Cultural Exchange on the Silk Road International Conference*, Shanghai, ZhongXi Book Company, 2016, pp. 31-40.

Equally as to the 12th tablet, the hero in the illustration of the carpets starts on a journey for seeking help. However, the deities he turns to, are total different than those in the Akkadian epic of Gilgamesh. The end of the story is totally different as is the goal of the narrations. In the following, I will refer to the dark little figure as Enkidu and the hero Gilgamesh. Whether the two figures actually did so in Khotanese is not discussed at this time.

It is said that an epic is always the story of a hero. The depictions of the carpets, however, do not transmit the impression of any combat scene. The attitude of the hero in the first row of the two carpets looks more like help-seeking. Now Gilgamesh is seeking help, because as a human being he is not able to get a man out of the underworld. Consequently, he is a hero seeking help. In this sense, his action – to seek for help – will determine the course of the story. To realize the identity of the hero as a human being and his role as help-seeking one is necessary. It gives a starting point for the orientation of the further research for, the figures to which Gilgamesh turns on his journey for seeking help must be deities who, according to myth or legends, do not only possess superhuman abilities but also are endowed with responsibility of ruling over the spiritual world. The logic of seeking help determines the end of the story; as soon as the hero reaches his goal, and in this case, as soon as Enkidu is out of the underworld, the story is over. Nevertheless, a fact is hidden behind the logic. For those who are not able to grant the final rescue to the hero are degraded whereas the one who does give the last rescue wins the most worship amongst the people. Following the course of the representation of the carpets, it is a goddess who rescues Enkidu from the underworld. Hence, the goddess is the highest deity among all the illustrated divine beings on the carpets. This conclusion leads to the real motif of the carpets No. 1 and 2; they are dedicated to the goddess. In other words, the illustration of the carpets is as good as the manifestation of the goddess. They are remnants of the local cult of the ancient Kingdom of Khotan.

IV. Identity of the Greek Gods

Who are the divine beings to whom the hero turns? First, a consideration of Hindu deities can be ruled out^①, for, as revealed through the Brāhmī script, the carpets are most likely products made in the 6th century, and by this time the important Hindu gods are fully developed to their maturity. This means that they are already fixed in terms of their typical attributes, mounts and weapons. No single aspect of the figures points to Hinduism. Since Sumerian and Akkadian traces are disclosed, the search field must be wide enough including ancient Mesopotamian and Iranian pantheons which are as huge as an ocean.^②

Hermes

In the first row on both carpets on the far right is the first deity the hero visits. The deity has two serpents lying on his side, one is colored symbolizing life of this world, and the other black symbolizing death (Fig. 4). Searching in the area of the Indo-European pantheon, only the Greek deity Hermes appears on the surface. Frothingham, the former professor of art history and archaeology of Princeton University, called it ‘the Snake-god’.^③ Hermes is always given two snakes as attribute who also bears the surname psychopompos. The Greek myth tells that Hermes is the one who sends the deceased through the Lethe into the underworld, and who has the ability to go back and forth between the worlds of the living and the dead. Hermes was the one who had brought back Persephone from the underworld from the side of Hades. The role of Hermes fits well into the context of the representations of both carpets. If

① That the figures on the carpets should be the unexpected representations of the Hindu god Krishna, is supposed by Zhang He. See: Zhang He, “Figurative and Inscribed Carpets from Shanpula, Khotan: Unexpected Representations of the Hindu God Krishna”, *the Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology*, Vol. 5, 2012, Brepols, pp. 59-79.

② However, Greek deities are well known while fortunately, the book of Shenkar provides the basic references for the Iranian deities. See: Michael Shenkar, *Intangible Spirits and Graven Images: The Iconography of Deities in the Pre-Islamic Iranian World*, Leiden, 2014. For Sumerian and Akkadian literature sources I benefit from broad knowledge of my colleague professor Gong Yushu at Peking University.

③ L. A. Frothingham, “Babylonian Origin of Hermes the Snake-God, and of the Caduceus I”, *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 20, No. 2, Apr.-Jun., 1916, published by Archaeological Institute of America, p. 175.



Fig. 4, Hermes with two snakes of carpet No. 1 and 2.

the hero is looking for some divine beings who consorts with both worlds, he should first turn to the one who had access to both worlds.

Evidently Hermes could not help him, otherwise the visual story would come to an end. It seems however that Hermes was helpful and gave hints for further orientation. Persephone was the next goddess whom the hero visited. This brings us to the second row of figures on the two carpets.

Persephone

Having found the first deity to be of Greek origin, the gods in the second row should also be of Greek origin. This is confirmed. There are three reasons to identify the female figure as Persephone. Firstly, Persephone is always shown in a skirt and holds in her hand a bunch of grain. Here I took pictures of a publication by Paul Carus from 1900. The representation of the cereal bundle in Persephone's hand is similar to that in the carpets, in which the stem of grain is particularly depicted as a long staff (Fig. 5).

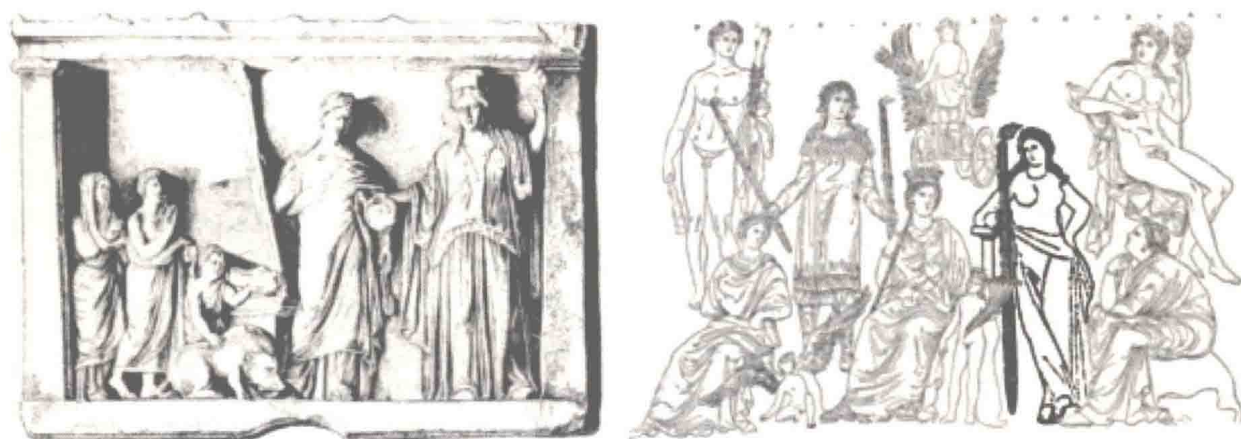


Fig. 5, Persephone with a long staff of grains. Pictures are copied from Carus 1900, (98-100), which are redrawn and processed by my colleague Ye Shaoyong.

Secondly, Greek mythology tells of Persephone as the daughter of Zeus and Demeter. When, following the scent of Narcissus, she came to the earth to pick this flower, Hades climbed out of the underworld and kidnapped Persephone. She became the wife of Hades and Queen of the Underworld. In this myth of Persephone, the Narcissus flower plays an important role, as it was the favorite flower of Persephone. Depicted in the hand of the hero is a dark blue flower, which must be a Narcissus



Fig. 6, Narcissus in the right hand of the hero. Persephone with a long staff of grains as depicted in carpets No. 1 and 2.

(Fig. 6). The dark blue color, which is identical with that of Enkidu in the underworld, stands for the color of the underworld. Since Narcissus did not grow in ancient Khotan, this type of flower would only exist in the imagination of the narrators when talking about Persephone. Very likely, Narcissus were thought as an important instrument, should a visit to Persephone been made possible. In the representation on the carpets, the flower in the hand of the hero is obviously intended as a springboard. This is a creative development based on Greek mythology. Such creative applying of Greek mythology for the purpose of the narrative can only be possible for those who were very familiar with Greek mythology.

The third point for supporting that the female main figure in the 2nd series is Persephone comes from the text, which consists of 3 Brāhmī characters (Fig. 7), which, dark-colored between the heads of the figures, can be clearly read. These three signs are *ha di vā*, of which *divā*, a loan word from Sanskrit *dvīpa* - the 'island; Continent'. This meaning has been tested several times in Khotan texts, as, for example, in chapter 16 of the Book of Zambasta. There the verse 38 contains *tcūratasā divā uttarāvā*, which Emmerick reproduced in his English translation of "the four-cornered Uttara-dvīpa". The first part *hadi*, however, originates from the Greek Hades, meaning underworld, and at the same time god of the underworld. Thus 'hadivā' is a composite, composed of Greek Hades and Khotanese *divā*, under which, in the context of the representation of the carpets, the 'Greek underworld' is to be understood.



Fig. 7, 3 Brāhmī characters which read *ha di vā*.

At this point one has to ask why a composite is necessary of a Greek and a Khotan word, since the word for hell exists in the Khotan vocabulary. As well known, in ancient Khotan the main religion was Buddhism. In the Buddhist theory, *naraka* 'hell' is an important concept of religious significance. The fact that a special composite for the underworld in the term of the Greek religion was created clearly shows that various religious concepts and cults were popular in old Khotan. The historical Khotanese were very aware of the diversity of the religious concepts and they knew how to differentiate them in a philosophical sense. For them *naraka* is certainly a Buddhist concept of a *karma* term which is imbedded in the existential causal law of Buddhist philosophy. From this aspect, a hell is not understood as the final destiny of every human being. Falling into a hell is only the result of evil deeds. Many, however, will be reborn in another better or worse existence, depending on how many good deeds they have achieved during their existence. In contrast to the concept of the Greeks, the underworld is a place where everyone goes after death. Since the religious connotations of the Greek underworld on the one hand and a Buddhist hell on the other totally differ, it is compelling to create the new word—the composite *hadivā* to express Hades. Persephone is the goddess of the Greek underworld.

Hephaestus, Aphrodite und Ares

The third row of carpets No.1 and 2 does not look identical. While carpet No. 1 shows two groups of figures in