



BALYSA-

BALYSA- (Khotan Saka), *bārza-* (Tumšūq Saka), a word adapted to Buddhist use for the transcendental Buddha. In pronunciation, *b* was bilabial *v* and *ys* was voiced sibilant *z*, for which Tumšūq Saka had a new sign *za*. The Tumšūq Saka, older *bārsa-* and later *bārza-*, has kept the older *rz*, replaced in Khotan Saka by *lys /lz/*.

The base alternates in ablaut *barz-: braz-*. In Old Persian *braz-* is represented by *brazmaniya* of which the precise meaning is not assured (see [AŠA](#)). Outside Iranian, Old Indian has *brah-* alternating with *br̥h-* (with *h* from IE. *gh*) in the words *brahmán* (masc.), *bráhman* (neut.), *brāhmaṇa-*, *br̥h-*, *br̥has-pati-* with still unsettled meaning. The later Buddhist Sanskrit has *brahma-* in a good sense (as in *brahma-svara-* of the Buddha's voice) and the name of a supernatural being *mahā-brahmāṇa-*.

In Khotan Saka texts *balysa-* translates Buddhist Sanskrit *buddha-* (often *gyasta- balysa-* “deva Buddha” or *gyastānu gyasta- balysa-* “Buddha, deva of devas”), but *balysa-* also renders *brahman-*, *bhagavant-* “lord,” *tathāgata*, *sarvajña-* “omniscient,” epithets of the Buddha. The compound *balysa-bajāṣṣa-* translates *brahma-svara-* “the Buddha voice.” To *balysa-* the adjectives are *balysāna-* and *balysūña-*. The abstract *balysūsti-* renders *bodhi-* “transcendental knowledge” and *sarvajña-tattva-* “the essence of all knowledge.” The compound *balysūñāvūysaa-* “seeker after bodhi” renders the Buddhist *bodhisattva*.

The religion of Khotan was therefore Barzaic (as Zoroastrian *mazdayazna-*



was Mazdaic). The word *balysa-* was not an isolated relic from the Old Iranian Mazdaic religion. Other older Iranian religious terms were carried over into the Buddhist vocabulary of Khotan as well. Thus the Zoroastrian Avestan *spəntaĀrmaitiš* was kept in the dialectal *śśandrāmatā-*, but equated with Buddhist *śrī-* “fortune” and the goddess Śrī. The world mountain Buddhist *Sumeru* is replaced by *ttaira haraysa* near to the Avestan *taēra-* “peak” and *harā bərəz* “lofty Harā,” modern *Alborz*. The word *phārra-*, older *farnah-* (Av. *xʷarnah-*, So. *prn-*), is used of the stages of the Buddhist religious career. (From Sogdian it was borrowed into Tokhara of Kuci as *perne*, rendering Buddhist Sanskrit *lakṣmī* “fortune.”) Further *urmaysdān-*, nom. *urmaysde*, from older *ahura-mazdān-* is used for the sun. The old *daiva-* “demon” and *yazata-* “worshipped being” became *dyūva-* and *gyasta-* (Tumšuq *jezda-*) “god,” with *balysa-* as title of the Buddha.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

H. W. Bailey, *Khotanese Texts VI*, Cambridge, 1967, pp. 225-30.

Idem, *Dictionary of Khotan Saka*, 1978, pp. 133, 272, 467.

Search terms:

□□□□ balyse