



CHINESE-IRANIAN RELATIONS VIII. PERSIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN CHINA

1. Language and literature

The earliest Persian inscription in China is the tombstone of the Zoroastrian Ma (Pahl. *Māhnūš), wife of General Su-liang (Pahl. Farroxxād; Humbach), inscribed in both Pahlavi and Chinese and dated 874, has been discovered at Xi-an, the capital of Shan-xi province.

During the Yuan (Mongol) period (1260-1368) Persian was the primary language in much of Central Asia (Barthold, *Turkestan*³, pp. 1-2; see [central asia xiv. turkish-iranian language contacts](#)), and a great many people from that area had settled in China. In addition, the Yuan dynasty enjoyed close relations with the Il-khanid rulers of Persia, and the Muslim communities in China also included large numbers of Persians and Persian speakers from western Asia (see iii, vii, above). The three officially recognized languages of Yuan administration and education were thus Chinese, Mongolian, and Persian; the terms *hui-hui-wen* (lit. “language of the *hui-hui*,” the term referring to Muslims of Central and western Asia), *pu-su-lu-man-zi* (Muslim language), and *yi-si-ti-fei-wen* (chosen language, possibly < Ar. *eṣṭefā* “choosing, selecting,” referring to the “chosen,” or “Islamic,” language; *Yuan-shi* LXXXVII, p. 2190; Huang, pp. 85-86) found in the documents of the period probably all refer to



Persian. On some preserved tablets (*pai-zi* “label, trademark”) and copper weights issued by the Mongol government four parallel inscriptions occurred, in Persian, Chinese, Uighur-Mongolian, and Chinese in the hPhags-pa alphabet (derived from the Tibetan alphabet but adapted to the sound system of Chinese) respectively. Among contemporary tombstones discovered in Quanzhou, Hangzhou, and Yangzhou and inscribed in Arabic many are identifiable from *nesbas* (attributive names) as belonging to Persians; see vii, above, with Table 38). Table 38. Persian and Central Asian Nesbas found in funerary inscriptions in China.

In 1289 the Mongol Qubilai (Hu-bi-lie) Khan (1260-94), on the recommendation of the department of state affairs (Shang-shu Sheng), established a Muslim national university in Da-du (modern Beijing) for “the sons of officials and the rich” (*gong-qing dai-fu ji fu-min zhi zi*); a scholar from the elite Hanlin academy, Yi-fu-de-ha-lu-ding (probably Efteḵār-al-Dīn), who knew *yi-si-ti-fei* (Mathews, nos. 3021, 5580, 6257, 1819; Ma Ru-ling, pp. 14-22; Huang, *passim*), was charged with responsibility for teaching it (*Yuan-shi* LXXXI, p. 2028; Huang, p. 86). After learning the language the students were assigned to various government offices to work as interpreters. Translations of Persian books into Chinese must also have been in demand in the Yuan period. A book entitled *Hui-hui yao-fang* (Muslim herbal prescriptions), compiled and translated from Persian sources by Chinese Muslims, contains names of numerous plants, some in Persian script, some transliterated, and some translated; four extant volumes of this work are kept in the library of Peking University.

Under the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) the Si-yi-guan (Office for the four barbarian [nations]) was established to provide official translations and to train translators; Persian was apparently required only occasionally for translation of books and diplomatic documents. The first Ming emperor, Tai-zu (r. 1368-97), ordered a group headed by Ma-sha-yi-hei (probably Mašāyeh, from Shaikh) to translate several Persian books, including one on astronomy, into Chinese as *Tian-wen-jin*, and in 1407 Ming Cheng-zu (r. 1403-25) issued an edict in Chinese, Mongolian, and Persian for the protection of Islamic minorities. *Hui-hui guan yi yu* (Textbook for translation from Muslim), compiled by the Si-yi-guan, was a textbook for teachers and translators; one extant copy includes a “Muslim”-Chinese vocabulary of 1,010 words. Other Chinese Muslim scholars of the Ming period who taught Persian, translated Persian works into Chinese, or integrated material from Persian works into their own



books in Chinese were Chang Zhi-mei (1610-70) and Liu Zhi (ca. 1660-1730). Already by the middle of the Ming period, however, contacts with Islamic countries had begun to decline, and very few in the Si-yi-guan knew Persian. In the mid-16th century *madrasas* (schools of Islamic law, *jing-tang*, lit. “hall of doctrinal texts”) were established in China. Some Muslim scholars taught Islamic books in Persian in their homes, but, as time went on, only Arabic was used in religious education, though in a few mosques there was instruction in both languages. Persian continued to be spoken and read among the Muslim minorities throughout the period, but by that time Chinese had become the primary spoken language. Two 15th-century Persian inscriptions are extant in Beijing, one in the mosque on Niu street, the other on the mosque in San-li He. Unfortunately, they have been severely damaged by the elements over the years, and the writing has become difficult to decipher.

After the rise of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), and especially after the Muslim calendar was abandoned in 1669, almost no one at court knew Persian well. In the *madrasas* fourteen “classics” were studied, including the five-volume *Lian wu-ben* (The five principles). The first volume, entitled, *Şarf* (“inflection”; *su-er-fu*; Mathews, nos. 5490, 1754, 1908), contained notes on Arabic morphology written in Persian. The remaining thirteen texts, most written between the 6th/12th and 9th/15th centuries and probably disseminated in China from Central and western Asia, included *Ḳoṭab* (*hu-to-bu*; Mathews, nos. 2161, 6460, 5364), lit. “sermons,” actually a commentary on a selection of forty *ḥadīṡs* by one Ebn Waṭʿān; *Arbaʿūn* (*ai-er-bai-ou*, Mathews, nos. 19, 1754, 4976, 4817), lit. “forty,” another annotated selection of *ḥadīṡs*, by Ḥosām-al-Dīn; *Golestān* (*gu-li-si-tan*, Mathews, nos. 3447, 3920, 5574, 6057), the famous work by the poet Saʿdī (580-691/1184-1292); *Merşād* (*mi-er-sa-de*, Mathews, nos. 4446, 1754, 5410, 6162), lit. “observation post,” by ʿAbd-Allāh Abū Bāker (sic), translated into Chinese by Wu Zun-qi (17th century); *Ḥosaynī* (*hou-sai-ni*, Mathews, nos. 2136, 5414, 4654), which may have been a work by the celebrated mystic Ḥosayn b. ʿĀlem Ḥosaynī (d. 729/1328); and *Ašeʿat al-lamaʿāt* (a commentary on the *Ketāb al-lamaʿāt* of ʿErāqī) by ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān Jāmī (817-98/1414-92), rendered into Chinese by Po Na-chi. In the late 17th century Chinese Muslim scholars began to produce works in Persian; one of them was a Persian-language textbook *Hawwāʾ-ye menhāj* (*he-wa-yi mi-no-ha-ji*, Mathews, nos. 4446, 4747, 2003, 1006), compiled by Chang Zhi-mei during the Kang-xi era (1662-1723) of the Qing dynasty and widely used by Muslim students (*ha-li fa* < *kalaf*, lit. “follower”; Mathews, nos. 2003, 3857, 1768). Ma Zhu (1640-1711), Liu Zhi (ca. 1664-ca. 1730), Ma Fu-chu (1794-1874), and Ma Lian-yuan (1841-95) also translated



Persian works under the Qing. Some Beijing Muslims still own copies of older Persian works like the anthology *Mesbāḥ* (*mi-si-ba-he*, Mathews, nos. 4446, 5574, 4826, 2091), as well as Qurʾān manuscripts, in some of which the sura (section) titles and the interlinear or marginal commentary are in Persian. A few manuscripts copied in the 17th century are also preserved in Chinese mosques; a second inscription at the mosque on Niu street is dated 1613. The Beijing National Palace Museum contains four wooden tablets inscribed in Persian (*Torābī*). They may have been inscribed by Chinese Muslim craftsmen, or they may have been presented as part of “tribute payments,” that is, diplomatic gifts, by Persians. In Li Sheng-zhen’s *Bai-xi zhu-zhi ci* (“Bamboo branches” poems for acrobatics), written during the Kang-xi era, there is a poem in which one actor in Persian costume and several others costumed as tame elephants perform *Gongbao qu* (Song of offering tribute) to the rhythm of a bronze drum (Lu Gong, p. 163).

The Persian language was taught in several Muslim schools that were established in the 1920s or later. Ha De-chen (1887-1943) and Wang Jing-zhai (1879-1948) were among the most noted Chinese translators from Persian under the National Republic of China. Wang translated Sa’dī’s *Golestān* as *Zhen-jing hua-yuan* (Ethereal garden, published by Beijing Muslim Press, 1947); another translation of the same work, by Shui Jian-fu (*Qiang-wei yuan* “the garden of red roses”), was based on an English translation of the original; it was published by People’s Literary Press as one of the world’s literary masterpieces. Because of these two translations Sa’dī’s work is well known in China, and readings from it have often been broadcast on Chinese television and radio.

In October 1982 the Islamic association of Beijing reprinted the traditional guide to Muslim customs *Da’awāt al-’ādāt wa fawā’edehā* (The requirements of customs and the benefits from them; *zhong-a-wen-ye-tie* (?), Mathews, nos. 1504, 1, 7129, 7312, 6328), in which each section is in both Chinese and Persian or Arabic (*Torābī*). In addition to incorporating a great many Persian words in their daily religious rituals, Beijing Muslims also hear sermons (*chuan-jin-ci*) in Persian, and at evening prayer during the month of Ramazān they recite poems of praise in Persian (Yu Guang-zeng, p. 9).

2. Persian words in Chinese



One result of the long history of cultural contact between Chinese and Iranian peoples is the incorporation of a number of Iranian words into Chinese. Many Buddhist, Manichean, and Christian merchants settled in China from Sogdia, as did Parthians and Persians, both Manichean and Christian (see i, above, and chinese turkestan ii; christianity).

The language of the Khotanese who lived along the Southern Silk Road is known from administrative, economic, and literary texts from the period between the 5th or 6th and late 10th centuries, just before the Muslim conquest of the area. After the Muslim conquest of Persia in 30/651 substantial communities of Persian and other Muslim merchants were also established in China; some of them have survived until today (see vii, above).

Although the Iranian languages spoken by all these peoples have left traces in Chinese, the origins and dates of the total stock of loanwords have not yet been investigated (see partial list, below). The earliest Iranian words recorded in Chinese are found in the report of the traveler Zhang Qian preserved in Si-ma Qian's *Shi-ji* (Historical records, 104-91 b.c.e.). Zhang Qian visited Iranian territories in about 126 b.c.e. and mentioned the country of An-xi (Middle Chinese **an-sik*, probably a transcription of **Aršak* [see [an-hsi](#); [arsacids](#)], that is, Parthia; he also noted that the people of (Da-)Yuan (= Farḡāna; Pelliot, 1938-39, p. 147) “have wine made of grapes (*pu-tao*) and many good horses” (Hirth, p. 95) and that they “liked to drink wine, and their horses liked Lucerne” (alfalfa, *mu-su*; Hirth, p. 108).

The Chinese word for “Persian,” *po-ši* (from *pārsī*, *fārsī*, is first found in Wei Shows *Wei-shu* (The book of the [Northern] Wei dynasty), composed in 551-54. In the 8th century the Persian names for the days were in use among Christian communities in China, according to the evidence of the Nestorian tomb inscription from Xi-an-fu dated 4 February 781; it includes reference to the great *yao-sen-wen* day, that is, Persian *yak*– “Monday” (Chavannes and Pelliot, 1913, pp. 163-65; Pelliot, 1984, p. 49). Several Chinese astronomical works, the earliest of which date from about the same period (Chavannes and Pelliot, 1913, pp. 167-69), include the Sogdian names for the days and the planets (see below).

With the establishment of Muslim communities in China, Persian words became more common in Chinese texts: histories of all kinds, travel notes, sketchbooks, pharmacopoeias, dictionaries and glossaries, encyclopedias, religious books, and inscriptions. Among the most important were Ban Gu,



Qian Han-shu (History of the Former Han dynasty, completed after 92 c.e.; see ch'ien han shu); Xuan Zang (Zhuang) and Bian Ji, *Da-tang xi-yu-ji* (Records of the western countries in the Tang dynasty, 646); Duan Cheng-shi, *You-yang za-zu* (Notes from You-yang, ca. 860); Tao Zong-yi, *Nan-cun zhuo-geng lu* (Records of nonagricultural work in Nan-cun, ca. 1366); *Hui-hui yao-fang* (Muslim herbal prescriptions, before 1368; see above); Song Li-an et al., *Yuan-shi* (History of the Yuan dynasty, 1370); Li Shi-zhen, *Ben-cao gang-mu* (A survey of native herbs, 1578); Shen Mou-shang, *Hai-guo guang ji* (Comprehensive records of the maritime countries, before 1644); and Liu Zhi, *Tian-fang zhi-shen shi-lu* (A true narration of the holy man of Arabia, 1724). With only a few exceptions the Persian words are written in Chinese characters. They include names of countries, dynasties, nations, well-known persons, mountains, rivers, localities, and products, as well as religious, scientific, and technical terms. For example, in *Da-tang xi-yu-ji* more than thirty-seven names of Iranian or Persian “countries” are recorded. The names for about 1,000 drugs, of which not a few are Persian, are mentioned in the extant portions of *Hui-hui yao-fang*; a few of them are written in Persian script. Berthold Laufer (*Sino-Iranica*) listed seventy-seven “Iranian” words for plants, textiles, minerals, metals, and jewels attested in Chinese (see below).

During the Yuan (Mongol; 1206-1341) period, when ties between China and Persia were particularly close, many new Persian foods were introduced into China, and the names of some of them are found in Chinese books like Huo-si-hui's *Yin-shan zheng-yao* (Essentials of eating and drinking, 1330) and the anonymous *Ju-jia bi-yong shi-lei quan-ji* (All you need to know about housekeeping, before 1368). Persian scientific and technical terms are also found in large numbers in documents of the Yuan and Ming (1368-1644) periods. For example, in “Tian-wen-zhi” (Annals of astronomy) in *Yuan-shi* all the names of seven instruments made by the Muslim astronomer Jamāl-al-Dīn, who traveled, probably from Marāḡa, to Beijing with drawings and models in the time of Kublai Khan (Hartner), are Chinese transliterations of Persian words. Wang Shi-dian and Shang Qi-ong recorded in *Mi-shu jian-zhi* (Annals of the department of secretaries, ca. 1350) the names of twenty-two books on astronomy, calendars, arithmetic, cosmography, geography, history, medicine, philosophy, literature, mechanics, physiognomy, alchemy, and astrology written in Persian or Arabic in Chinese characters. In the Ming period *Qi-zheng tui-bu* (Astronomical horoscope, 1382) by Bei Lin included the Persian names of the months and the days of the week in Chinese characters.



Muslim religious terminology drawn from Persian includes, for example, *mu-su-er-man* and *mu-su-lu-man* (*mosalmān*), *pi-an-ba-er* or *bie-an-bai-er* (*peyḡambar*, the Persian term for the Prophet Moḥammad; Mathews, nos. 5208, 5233, 4976, 1754), *da-shi-man* (*dā(ne)šmand* “teacher”; Mathews, nos. 5951, 5806, 434), *die-li-wei-shi* (*darvīš* “member of a Sufi order”), *na-ma-si* (*namāz* “prayer”; Mathews, nos. 4612, 4311, 6943). Many of them (e.g., *da-shi-man* and *pi-an-ba-er*) were also fashionable in the writings of Chinese literati. Words like *do-zi-hai* (*dūzak* “hell”; Mathews, nos. 6421, 6939, 2014) and *bang-da* (*bāmdād* “morning”; Mathews, nos. 4910, 5956) are still common among the Muslims of Beijing, whereas their Arabic and Chinese equivalents are rarely encountered. Inscriptions found in China contain such specifically Persian titles as *esfahsālār*, *nāv-kodā*, *k’āja*, and *yisibaxi* (< *espāh* ; Nu-er, pp. 48-52). It is also possible that many Arabic religious terms, like *ha-zhi* (*ḥājj* “one who has made the pilgrimage”) and *so-na* (*sonna* “traditional law”), as well as titles, also came into Chinese via Persian.

3. Iranian words in Chinese texts

The following incomplete list was compiled, primarily from Berthold Laufer’s *Sino-Iranica* and Édouard Chavannes’s *Documents sur les Tou-kiue (Turcs) occidentaux* by P. O. Skjærvø. When a character is not listed in Mathews’ *Chinese-English Dictionary* or the work of Bernhard Karlgren, the closest comparable characters are given and marked with asterisks, or the missing character is indicated by a hyphen. Variations in the transliterations reflect changes in pronunciation overtime. Some of the earliest attested borrowings may have been from Sogdian or Khotanese, but the relevant words have not yet been found in the extant Sogdian or Khotanese texts.

The Sogdian names for the days and the planets (Müller, p. 459):

mi “sun” (Sunday) **mjet* < Sogd. Mīr (Pers. Mehr; Mathews, nos. 4464/4465; Karlgren, nos. 405p/r)

mo “moon” (Monday) < *muo* (< **mâg*) or *mâk* < Sogd. Māx (Pers. Māh; Mathews, no. 4557; Kadgren, no. 802a)

yun-han “Mars” (Tuesday) < *jīuən-xân* < Sogd. Unxān (Pers. Bahrām; Mathews,



nos. 7750, 2039; Karlgren, nos. 460b, 144c)

tie “Mercury” (Wednesday) < *d’iet* < Sogd. Tīr (Pers. Tīr; Mathews, no. 2456 [hsi]; Karlgren, no. 413m)

wen-mo-si or *hu-wu-si* “Jupiter” (Thursday) < *.uən-muət-sie/ɣuət-m̃uət-sie* < Sogd. Urmazt (Pers. Hormozd; Mathews, nos. 7125; 4555, 5574/3489 [ku], 7208, 5574; Karlgren, nos. 426c, 492b, 869a/486b, 503a, 869a)

na-xi/xie “Venus” (Friday) < *nâ-ɣiet/xiat* < Sogd. Nāxid (Pers. [A]nāhīd; Mathews, nos. 4604, 2635/2642; Karlgren, nos. 350a, 393r/313u)

zhi/ji-huan “Saturn” (Saturday) < *tsie-ɣuân/jueu-ɣuân* < Sogd. Kēwān (Pers. Keyvān; Mathews, nos. 948, 2242/428, 2244; Karlgren, nos. 865e, 2551/876p, 140m)

Plants:

mu-su or *mo-su* “alfalfa” (Zhang Qian in Si-ma Qian, *Shi-ji*, ca. 99 b.c.e.) < *m̃iuk-s̃iuk* < Ir.? (Laufer, no. 1; Mathews, nos. 4596, 5498/5499; Karlgren, nos. 1036, 1029a; Tomaschek’s comparison with Gilakī *būso*, cited by Laufer, is highly uncertain)

pu-tao “grapevine” (Zhang Qian in Si-ma Qian, *Shi-ji*, ca. 99 b.c.e.) < *b’uo-d’âu*, cf. Pers. *bāda*? (Laufer, no. 2; Mathews, nos. 5392, 6148/5389, 6155; Karlgren, nos. 102n’, 1145u; unconvincing etymological speculations by Bailey, p. 153)

an-shi-liu “pomegranate” < *.ân-ziäk-l̃iəu* (< *-liog*) < **anārak* (Zhang-Heng, *Nan-de-fu*, ca. 100 c.e.; Laufer, no. 5; Mathews, nos. 26, 5813, 4084; Karlgren, nos. 146a, 795a, 114; Pulleyblank, 1962, pp. 119-120)

ro-liu “pomegranate” (Zhang Yi, *Guang-ya*, ca. 265) < *ñziäk-l̃iəu* (< *-liog*) < **(a)nārak*, cf. Sogd. *n’r’kh*, **nāraka* (Laufer, no. 5; Mathews, nos. 3126, 4084; Karlgren, nos. 777-114; cf. Pulleyblank, 1962, pp. 119-20)

hu-sui “coriander” (Yuan Yin, *Yi qie jin yin yi*, ca. 649) < *ɣuo-*swi* (< *-sñiwər*) < **gušñiz*, cf. Pers. *gešñiz* (Laufer, no. 8; Mathews, nos. 2167, 5521; Karlgren, nos. 49a’, *354; Pulleyblank, 1962, p. 132)

ho-li-lo “myrobalan” (*Sui-shu*, 644) < *xâ-liei-lək*, cf. Pers. *halīla* (Laufer no. 29; Mathews, nos. 2112, 3876, 3841; Karlgren, nos. 1k, 519k, 928f)



wu-shi “oak gall” (Sui-shu, 644; Duan Cheng-shi, *Yu yang za zu*, ca. 860) < *mīu-dzīak* < Ir. **māzak*, cf. Pers. *māzū*? (Laufer, no. 24; Mathews, nos. 7180, 5810 or 5813; Karlgren, nos. 103a, 921a or 795a)

jie-po-lo “manna” (Zhang Yue, *Liang si gong zi ji*, before 730, and Chen Cang-qi, early 8th century, both in Li Shi-zhen, *Ben-cao gang-mu*, 1578) < *kiet-b’uāt-lā* < **kār-e barra*, literally “lamb’s thorn”? (Laufer, no. 21; Mathews, nos. 782, 4983, 4099; Karlgren, nos. 393p, 491b, 6a; cf. Chin. *yang-ce* “lamb’s thorn,” which appears to designate the same or a similar plant [Laufer, p. 343], and Pers. *kār-e šotor*, *šotor-kār* “[camel thorn](#),”)

shi-lo “cumin” (Chen Cang-qi, early 8th century, in Li Shi-zhen, *Ben-cao gang-mu*, 1578) < *ži-lā*, cf. Pers. *zīra*, Skt. *jīra* (Laufer, no. 34; Mathews, nos. 5781, 4105; Karlgren, nos. *961z, 6b)

a-ri “fig” (Duan Cheng-shi, *Yu yang za zu*, ca. 860) < *.ânžiet* < **anjīr* (Laufer, no. 42; Mathews, nos. 1, 3125; Karlgren, nos. 1m, 404f)

a-wei “asafetida” (Duan Cheng-shi, *You-yang za-zu*, ca. 860; see Lévi, p. 89, for possible 7th-century sources) < *.â-ngiwei*, cf. Khotanese *amguṣḍa*, Pers. *angūza* (Laufer, no. 22; Mathews, nos. 1, 7104; Karlgren, nos. 1m, 569k; Pulleyblank, 1962, p. 217; Bailey, *Dictionary*, p. 1)

a-yu-jie “asafetida” (Duan Cheng-shi, *Yu yang za zu*, ca. 860 [see Lévi, pp. 83, 89, for possible 7th-century sources]) < *.â-ngīu-dziet* < *angūž(a)d*? (Laufer, no. 22; Mathews, nos. 1, 7648, 793; Karlgren, nos. 1m, 59h, 310a)

a-yue(-hun) “hazelnut” (Duan Cheng-shi, *You-yang za-zu*, ca. 860) < *.â-yīwat-yuān* < **angūz* (-*gūn* = -*bon*?; Laufer, no. 3; Mathews, nos. 1, 7696 [2366]; Karlgren, nos. 1m, 306 [458b])

dan-ro “pomegranate” (Duan Cheng-shi, *You-yang za-zu*, ca. 860) < *tân-nžíak* < Ir. ? (Laufer, no. 5; Mathews, nos. 6026, 3126; Karlgren, nos. 150a, 777; see *an-shi-liu* and *ro-liu*, above)

ku-mang “date palm” (Duan Cheng-shi, *You-yang za-zu*, ca. 860) < *k’uāt-mwang*, cf. Pers. *kormā* (Laufer, no. 35; Mathews, nos. 3503, 4354; Karlgren, nos. 496q, 709)

mo-zei “oak gall” (Duan Cheng-shi, *You-yang za-zu*, ca. 860) < *muâ-dz’ək* < Ir. **māzak*? (Laufer, no. 24; Mathews, nos. 4541, 6752; Karlgren, nos. 17c, 1013;



see *wu-shi*, above)

nai-zhi “narcissus” (Duan Cheng-shi, *You-yang za-zu*, ca. 860) < *nâi-tsí*, cf. Pers. *narges* (Laufer no. 46; Mathews, no. *4615, 952; Karlgren, nos. 318b, 590p)

pi-qi “galbanum” (Duan Cheng-shi, *You-yang za-zu*, ca. 860) < ?-*džiei* (< *džiar*) < Pers. *barīja* and *barzada* (Laufer, no. 23; for the first character see Laufer, p. 363 n. 2; for the second character, see Mathews, no. 560; Karlgren, no. 593a; Schlimmer, *Terminologie*, p. 295)

po-dan “almond” (Duan Cheng-shi, *You-yang za-zu*, ca. 860) < *b’uâ-d’âm* < *bādām* (Laufer, no. 41; Mathews, nos. 5347, 6053; Karlgren, nos. 25q, 617o)

qi-tun “olive” (Duan Cheng-shi, *You-yang za-zu*, ca. 860) < *dz’iei-tuan* < **zaytūn* (Laufer, no. 43; Mathews, no. 560, *6589; Karlgren, nos. 593a, *464)

yan-zhi “safflower” (Duan kung-lu, *Pei hu lu*, ca. 875) < *.ien-tsie* (< -*ṭieg*), cf. Pers. *kājīra* “safflower seeds”? (Laufer, no. 17; Mathews, nos. 7399, 937; Karlgren, nos. 243a, 864a; Schlimmer, *Terminologie*, p. 112, also called *kāfeša*; on the possible use of Chinese initial glottal stop to render a foreign velar, see Pulleyblank, 1962, p. 89)

ye-xi-ming “jasmine” (Duan kung-lu, *Pei hu lu*, ca. 875) < *ia-si-miäng* < *yāsaman* (Laufer, no. 18; Mathews, nos. 7307, 2506, 4525; Karlgren, nos. 47a, 1257e, 826a)

hu-mang “date palm” (*Jiu Tang-shu*, 945) < *kuət* or *yuət-mwâng*, cf. Pers. *kormā* (Laufer, no. 35; Mathews, nos. *2179, 4354; Karlgren, nos. 486b, 709)

hun-ti “shallot”? (*Tang hui yao*, compiled 961; Feng Yan, *Feng shi wen jian ji*, Tang dynasty) < *yuən-d’iei* (< -*d’ieg*), < **gandag*, cf. Persian *gandanā* “leek”? (Laufer, no. 12; Mathews, nos. 2366, 6233; Karlgren, 458b, 866n; Schlimmer, *Terminologie*, p. 27)

mo-tu “oak gall” (Zhao Rugua, fl. 1200) < *muâ-d’uo* < southwest Ir. **mādū* with *d* for *z* as in *māzū*? (Laufer, no. 24; Mathews, nos. 4541, 6526; Karlgren, nos. 17c, 82x)

sha-mu-lü “oak gall” (Zhao Rugua, fl. 1200) < *sha-muət-lüet*, cf. Pers. *šāhbalūt* (Laufer, no. 24; Mathews, nos. 5606, 4555, 4297; Karlgren, nos. 16a, 492b, 502c)

ha/ka-xi-ni (Mong.) “asafetida” (*Yin shan ceng yao*, 1331, in Li Shi-zhen, *Ben-cao*



gang-mu, 1578) < ? –*sĭäk-niei* (< –*niär*), cf. Pers. *kasnī* (Laufer, no. 22; Mathews, nos. 2003, 2493, 4660; Karlgren, nos. -, 798a, 563d)

ku-lu-ma “date” (*Cho keng lu*, 1366) < *k’uo-luo-ma*, cf. Pers. *kormā* (Laufer, no. 35; Mathews, nos. 3493, 4176, 4303; Karlgren, nos. 49u, 70a, 17a)

jun-ta “sugar beet” (Li Shi-zhen, *Ben-cao gang-mu*, 1578) < *kĭuān-t’ât*, cf. Pers. *čogondar* (Laufer, no. 37; Mathews, nos. 1722, *5980; Karlgren, nos. 458a, *271; See beet)

ying-ri “fig” (Li Shi-zhen, *Ben-cao gang-mu*, 1578) < *.iang-nĭĭet*, cf. Pers. *anjīr* (Laufer, no. 42; Mathews, nos. 7488, 3124; Karlgren, nos. 718, 404f)

yu-jin “saffron” (Li Shi-zhen, *Ben-cao gang-mu*, 1578) < *.iuāt-kĭim*, cf. Pers. *korkom* (Laufer, no. 13; Mathews, nos. 7692, 1057; Karlgren, nos. 495, 652; Pulleyblank, 1962, p. 89)

**za fu-lan* and *sa-fa-*lang* “saffron” (Li Shi-zhen, *Ben-cao gang-mu*, 1578) < Ar.-Pers. *za’farān* (Laufer, no. 16; Mathews, nos. 6645, 1908, 3802/5406, 1762, 3820; see also Pulleyblank, 1962, p. 89)

bi-si-tan “pistachio” (*Ta ming e tung chi*, Ming dynasty) < *pĭet-si-d’ân*, cf. Pers. *pestān* (Laufer, no. 3; Mathews, nos. 5112, 5580, 6060; Karlgren, nos. 405g, 973a, 748e)

Textiles:

ta-deng “woolen rug” (*Wei lio*, 3rd century c.e.) < *t’âptāng* < Ir. **tāftan* “to twist,” lit. “spun cloth”? Cf. also Khotanese *thauna*– “cloth” < **taf(ta)na*? (Laufer, no. 70; Mathews, nos. 5970, 6168; Karlgren, *628, *883; cf. Bailey, *Dictionary*, p. 149)

die “brocade” (*Sui-shu*, 644) < *d’iep*, cf. Pers. *dībā* (Laufer, no. 69; Mathews, no. 6325; Karlgren, no. 1255a)

hu-na, Persian textile, possibly coarse sacking (*Sui-shu*, 644) < *yuo-nâ* < Ir. **gūna*, cf. Pers. *gūnī* “sack(cloth)” (Laufer, no. 73; Mathews, nos. 2190, 4604; Karlgren, 784k, 350)

tan, a kind of textile, possibly a small rug (*Sui-shu*, 644) < *d’ân* < Ir. **tana*, cf. *tanīdan* “to spin”? (Laufer, no. 74; cf. Mathews, no. 6060; Karlgren, no. 148e)



sa-ha-la, sou-ha-la, a soft woolen textile (*Ming-shi*, 1736) < *saq[qlalāt* (Laufer, no. 75; Mathews, nos. 6834 [for 5406?], 2003, 3757/5468, 2003, 3758; Karlgren, nos. -, 798x, 868d)

Minerals and mineral products:

mi-to-seng or *mu-duo-seng* “litharge,” a form of lead oxide (Jiong-xiu Zheng, *Cheng lei ben-cao*, mid-7th century) < *mīēt-t’â/d’â(?)*– **səng* or *muət-tâ*– **səng*, cf. Pers. *merdāsang* and *mordāsang* (Laufer, no. 80; Mathews, nos. 4464, 6447, 5453; Karlgren, nos. 405p-*4f-?; or 4555, 6416, 5453; Karlgren, nos. 492b-3a-?)

bin (tie) “iron” (lit. “the metal bin”; *Sui-shu*, 644) < *b’ien* < *(a)*spēn* (Laufer, no. 85; Mathews, no. 5270; Karlgren, no. *389)

nao-sha “sal ammoniac” (*Sui-shu*, 644) < *n’au-ša*, cf. Pers. *nūšāder* (Laufer, no. 79; Mathews, nos. 4641, 5606; Karlgren, nos. 1164r, 16a)

tou shi “tutty,” a form of zinc oxide (*Sui-shu*, 644) < *t’au-žīāk* (< *dīāk*), cf. Pers. *tūtīā* (Laufer, no. 84; Mathews, nos. *6488, 5813; Karlgren, nos. *125t/u, 795a)

Titles of officials:

di-bei-po official in charge of documents (*Wei-shou, Wei-shu*, 551-54) < *d’i-pjje-b’uət* < *dibīrbad* (Laufer, no. 99; Mathews, nos. 6198, 4993, 4983; Karlgren, 4b’, 874a, 491b)

fang-bu-shuai the queen of Persia (*Wei-shou, Wei-shu*, 551-54) < *bīwang-b’uo-šīuet* < *bāmbušt* (Laufer, no. 96; Mathews, nos. 1817, 9363, 5910; Karlgren, 740z, 73, 498a)

mo-hu-tan legal official (*Wei-shou, Wei-shu*, 551-54) < **mâk-yuo-d’ân* < *magustān* (Laufer, no. 97; Mathews nos. 4560, 2167, 6059; Karlgren, nos. *802, 49a’, 148d; cf. Schafer, 1951, pp. 408-09 and n. 48)

ni-hu-han treasury official (*Wei-shou, Wei-shu*, 551-54) < *nī-xuət-yân* (< *nīər-xmwət-g’ân*) < **ahmārkār?* (Laufer, no. 98; Mathews, nos. 4654, 2194, 2028; Karlgren, nos. 563a, 5031, 139t)

o-lo-ho-di officer in charge of inner quarters (*Wei-shou, Wei-shu*, 551-54) < *ât-lâ-xâ-d’i* < *hargbad* (Laufer, no. 100; *Mathews, nos. 4812, 4099, 2112, 3131; Karlgren, nos. 3131, 6a, 1k, 4b’)



sha-ye title of Persian prince (Wei-shou, *Wei-shu*, 551-54) < *shat-ya* < *šāh* (Laufer, no. 94; Mathews, nos. 5615, 7314; Karlgren, nos. 319d, 831n)

xie-bo-po/bo “general” (Wei-shou, *Wei-shu*, 551-54) < *siät puâ-b’uät* < **s(i)pāhbad* (Laufer, no. 101; Mathews, nos. 2653, 5314, 4983 Karlgren, nos. 289d, 251, 491b)

yi-zan, title of the Persian king (Wei-shou, *Wei-shu*, 551-54) < *.i-tsân/dz’ân* < Ir. ? (Laufer, no. 95; Mathews, nos. 2978, *6677; Karlgren, nos. 958a, *153)

sa-bao official in charge of religion in Si-nang in the Tang period (Pelliot, 1903, pp. 665-71) < *sât-pâu* (<-*pôg*), cf. Khot. *spāta* “general” < OIr. **spāda-pati* (Laufer, no. 92; Mathews, nos. 5410, 4956; Karlgren, nos. -, 1059; Bailey, *Dictionary*, p. 436)

ku-sa-he title of Persian kings (*Sui-shu*, 644) < *k’uo-sât-yuâ* < Ir. ? (Laufer, no. 93; Mathews, nos. 3496, 5410, 2115; Karlgren, nos. 74e, -, 8g)

zhe-jie “warrior” (*Tang-shu*, 1060) < *tšia-kiät* < *čākar*? (Chavannes, 1903, p. 366; Mathews, nos. 266, 779; Karlgren, nos. 7951, *313)

wu-si-da rabbi (Jewish; inscription dated 1489 from Kai-fong; see Tobar, p. 44) < *nguo-si-d’ât* < *ustād* (Laufer, no. 102; Mathews, nos. 7187, 5580, 5956; Karlgren, nos. 58e, 973a, 271b)

Geographical names:

an-si “Parthia” (Zhang Qian in Si-ma Qian, *Shi-ji*, ca. 99 B.C.E.) > Middle Chinese **an-sâik*, probably < **Aršak er-shi* “Nesef/Naḳšab” (Si-ma Qian, *Shi-ji*, ca. 99 b.c.e.) < **nīi-ṣīi* (Mathews, nos. 1752, 5760; Karlgren, nos. 564g, 559a; Pulleyblank, 1962, pp. 120, 128)

huan-qian “K̲vārazm” (Si-ma Qian, *Shi-ji*, ca. 99 b.c.e.) < *xuân-dzīām* < *em*; Mathews, nos. 2269, 918; Karlgren, nos. 1581, 660n; Pelliot, 1938-39)

am/jian “K̲olm” (Si-ma Qian, *Shi-ji*, ca. 99 b.c.e.) < **lam* < *(*g*)*lām/kam* < **klam* (Mathews, nos. 3802, 839; Karlgren, nos. 609k/368c; Pulleyblank, 1962, p. 122)

sa-ge, *xue-ge*, *so-ge* (Si-ma Qian, *Shi-ji*, ca. 99 b.c.e.) < *sât-kât*, *siät-kât*, *sâk-kât* all probably = Sogd. **Soyo’* (Pulleyblank, 1952, pp. 343-44; idem, 1962, p. 219)

yu-tian “Khotan” (Si-ma Qian, *Shi-ji*, ca. 99 b.c.e.) < **yiou-den* (Mathews, nos. 7592, 6374; Pulleyblank, 1962, p. 213)



dun-huang Gk. “Throana” (*Qian Han-shu*, compiled after 36 c.e.) < **tuən-ɣwang* < Sogd. *drw*’*n* (Mathews, nos. 6571, 2290; Karlgren, nos. 464n/p, 708g; Pulleyblank, 1962, pp. 228/230)

a-man “Hamadān” (Fan-ye, *Hou Han-shu*, before 445; tr. Chavannes, 1907, p. 179) < *â-mwan* (< **mwlan* (Mathews, nos. 1, 4343; Karlgren, nos. 1m, 178p)

du-lai “Talas” (*Han-shu*, 90) < **tou-lai* (Mathews, nos. 6500, 3776; Karlgren, nos. 45e’, 272e; Pulleyblank, 1962, pp. 213, 218)

gao-fu “Kabul” (Fan-ye, *Hou Han-shu*, before 445; Chavannes, 1907, p. 192) < **kau-bj̥ou* < **kauy-bōh* (Mathews, nos. 3290, 1924; Karlgren, nos. 1129a, 136k; Pulleyblank, 1962, p. 223)

gui-shuang “Kushan” (Fan-ye, *Hou Han-shu*, before 445; Chavannes, 1907, p. 192) < **kj̥wəi-ʃjaŋ* (Mathews, nos. 3636, 5919; Karlgren, nos. 540b, 731g; Pulleyblank, 1962, pp. 128, 218, 230)

he-du capital of An-si (Parthia; Fan-ye, *Hou Han-shu*, before 445; tr. Chavannes, 1907, p. 177) < *yuâ-d’uk* (Mathews, nos. 2115, 6516; Karlgren, nos. 8e, 1023h)

hu-zao “Vakšab” (Fan-ye, *Hou Han-shu*, before 445; *Han-shu*, 90) < **you-tsau* < **ɣwax-tsau* (Mathews, nos. 2190, 6726; Karlgren, nos. 784k, 1134g; Pulleyblank, 1962, p. 222)

mu-lu “Mary” (Fan-ye, *Hou Han-shu*, before 445; tr. Chavannes, 1907, p. 177) < *muk-luk* (Mathews, nos. 4593, 4203; Karlgren, nos. 1212a, 1209a)

bo-zhi “Bactria” (Wei-shou, *Wei-shu*, 551-54) < *b’âk-ʈie* (Mathews, nos. 5326, 932; Karlgren, nos. 771p, 863a)

fan-yang “Bāmīān” (Wei-shou, *Wei-shu*, 551-54) < *b’j̥wam-jaŋ* (Mathews, nos. 1778, 7265; Karlgren, nos. 626e, 720e; Markwart, p. 214)

chi-o-yan-na “Čaġānīān” (Xuan-zang, *Da-tang xiyu ji*, before 646; Markwart, p. 226).

huo-li-xi-mi “Kvārazm” (Xuan-zang, *Da-tang xiyu-jī*, 646) < *xuâ-lji-zj̥əp-mjie* (Mathews, nos. 2398, 3867, 2499, 4459; Karlgren, nos. 19c, 519a, 690a, 359m; Chavannes, 1903, p. 145; Pelliot, 1938-39, p. 148).

wu-hu “Wakhāb” (Xuan-zang, *Da-tang xiyu-jī*, 646; Chavannes, 1903, pp. 137,



145; Markwart, p. 224) < *uo-xuo* (Mathews, nos. 7166, 2188; Karlgren, nos. 61a, 60k).

bo-he “Wakhan” (before 661; Markwart, pp. 223-24; *Jiu Tang shu*, ca. 945; Chavannes, 1903, p. 164) < **pat-yuâ* (Mathews, nos. 5333, 2115; Karlgren, nos. -, 8a)

bo-si “Persia” (*Jiu Tang-shu*, 945) < *puâ-sie* (Mathews, nos. 5314, 5574; Karlgren, nos. 251, 869a; Chavannes, 1903, pp. 170-74)

du/tu-huo-le “Tokārestān” (*Jiu Tang-shu*, 945), < *tuo-xuâ-lâ* (Mathews, nos. 6498, 2398, 4099; Karlgren, nos. 45c'/d', 19c, 6a; Chavannes, 1903, pp. 155, 160)

ba-te-shan “Badakṣān” (*Tang-shu*, 1060) < *b'wat-d'əkṣan* (Mathews, nos. 4848, 6165, 5630; Karlgren, nos. 276h, 961h', 193a; Chavannes, 1903, p. 275)

bu-huo/he “Bukhara” (*Tang-shu*, 1060) < *puo-xuât* or *b'uo-xât* (Mathews, nos. 5364, 2404 or 5370, 2123; Karlgren, nos. 102j, 314g or 102j', 313k; Chavannes, 1903, p. 136)

da-shi “Persian” (lit. “big eater”; *Tang-shu*, 1060) < *d'âi-dz'ïək* < *Tājīk* (Mathews, nos. 5943, 5810; Karlgren, nos. 317a, 921a; Chavannes, 1903, index, p. 361)

fan-yan “Bāmīān” (*Tang-shu*, 1060) < *b'ïwam-ïän* (Mathews, nos. 1772, 7342; Karlgren, nos. 625d, 203a; Chavannes, 1903, pp. 160-62)

fan-yan-na “Bāmīān” (*Tang-shu*, 1060) < *b'ïwam-ïän-nâ* (Mathews, nos. 1774, 7402, 4604; Karlgren, nos. *625, 197a, 350a; Chavannes, 1903, pp. 160-62)

hun-mo “Kolm” (*Tang-shu*, 1060) < *xuən-muâ* (Mathews, nos. 2359, 4542; Karlgren, nos. 457j/k, 17e/f; Chavannes, p. 275)

hu/huo-kan “Wakhan” (*Tang-shu*, 1060) < *γuo/γwâk*– **k'an* (Mathews, nos. 2209, -; Karlgren, nos. 784i, -; Chavannes, 1903, p. 164).

huo-xun “Kvārazm” (*Tang-shu*, 1060) < *xuən-zïəm* (Mathews, nos. 2395, 2744; Karlgren, nos. 457j/k, 662; Chavannes, 1903, pp. 134, 145)

lan “Baḡlān” (*Tang-shu*, 1060) < *(*g*)*lân* (Mathews, no. 3795; Karlgren, no. 185n; Chavannes, 1903, p. 275)

na-so-bo “Nesef/Nakṣab” (*Tang-shu*, 1060; Chavannes, 1903, pp. 146-47)



sa-mo-jian “Samarkand” (*Tang-shu*, 1060; Chavannes, 1903, p. 132) < *suât-muât-kian* (Mathews, nos. 5410, 4546, *859 or 5405, 4550, 853; Karlgren, nos. -, 277a, 249c or 680, 277c, 249a).

sai-jia-shen “Iškāšem” (*Tang-shu*, 1060; Chavannes, 1903, p. 356) < *sâi/sāk-ka-šiam* (Mathews, nos. 5414, 590, 5729; Karlgren, nos. 908a, *15, 665a; Markwart, p. 224)

shi-qi-ni “Šeġnān” (*Tang-shu*, 1060; Chavannes, 1903, p. 162) < *ši-k’ji-ni* (Mathews, nos. 5756, 550, 4654; Karlgren, nos. 561a, 535a, 563a)

shi/se-ni “Šeġnān” (*Tang-shu*, 1060; Chavannes, 1903, p. 162) < *šiak/šī-niāk* (Mathews, nos. 5825/5451, 4678; Karlgren, nos. 920k/411, 7771)

wang-yan “Bāmīān” (*Tang-shu*, 1060; Chavannes, 1903, pp. 160-62) < *mīwang-ian* (Mathews, nos. 7043, 7402; Karlgren, nos. 742m/743d, 197a)

xi-wan-jin “Samarkand” (*Tang-shu*, 1060; Chavannes, 1903, p. 133) < *si* (<**siet*)-*mīwan-kian* (Mathews, nos. 2506, 7030, 1059; K. nos. 1257e, 267a, 443)

4. Chinese loanwords in Persian

There are relatively few Chinese loanwords in Persian, most of them incorporated during the Mongol period. They include *cha* “tea” > Pers. *čāy*, *chao* > Pers. *čāv*, a kind of paper used for money; *pāyza* “permit, warrant, badge” < *pai-zi* (Mathews, nos. 4871-6939); *čīnk-sānk* “minister of state” < *cheng-xiang* (Mathews, nos. 386-2562); and *čang* “harpsichord with twelve brass strings” < *zheng* (Mathews, no. 369).

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