

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION: *MAKTAB, MADRASA, SCIENCE AND PEDAGOGY*

A. K. Mirbabaev, P. Zieme and Wang Furen

Contents

THE ISLAMIC LANDS AND THEIR CULTURE	32
The <i>dabīristāns</i> , or higher secular schools	32
Mosques	34
The <i>maktabs</i> , or elementary schools	35
The profession of Qur'an-reciter	37
The <i>madrasas</i> , or colleges for higher religious and other studies	37
THE SEARCH FOR KNOWLEDGE THROUGH TRANSLATION: TRANSLATIONS OF MANICHAEAN, CHRISTIAN AND BUDDHIST LITERATURE INTO CHI- NESE, TURKIC, MONGOLIAN, TIBETAN AND OTHER LANGUAGES	45
General remarks	45
Manichaean literature	45
Christian texts	46
Buddhist translations	47
Sogdian translations	49
Khotanese translations	49
Tokharian translations	49
Turkic translations	50
General remarks	51
Hsi Hsia translations	52
Mongol Buddhism of the first period	52

EARLY BUDDHISM IN TIBET AND THE EDUCATIONAL ROLE OF THE MONAS- TERIES	54
The appearance of Buddhism in Tibet	54
The struggle between Buddhism and Bon	54
The struggle within Buddhism between Ston-min-pa and Tshen-min-pa	55
The learning and teaching of the Buddhist scriptures in early monasteries (mid-eighth century)	55
The setback to Buddhism (mid-ninth century)	56
Revived Buddhism (latter half of the tenth century)	57
The construction of monasteries of different sects of Tibetan Buddhism (eleventh- fifteenth century)	57
The establishment of the Dge-lugs-pa, or Yellow Sect, of Tibetan Buddhism	59
The propagation of Tibetan Buddhism at the Mongol court (mid-thirteenth century) .	61

Part One

THE ISLAMIC LANDS AND THEIR CULTURE

(A. K. Mirbabaev)

The *dabīristāns*, or higher secular schools

Naturally, literacy was concentrated in the cities, and the immediate needs of the rulers ensured that *dabīristāns* were established primarily in urban areas. These were a special kind of higher secular school for the graded and non-compulsory education of servants in the courtly administration. The *dabīristāns* of Iran and Transoxania incorporated many aspects of the early medieval academies and colleges of the Near and Middle East, which flourished under the Sasanians and subsequently under the Arab caliphs. Worthy of particular attention is the treatise that has come down to us under the title *Anūshirwān and His Servant*, in which a young *dabīr* (scribe) of noble origin lists for Khusraw I (531–79) the subjects in which he has received instruction in the *dabīristān*. He reports that, at a given age, his parents sent him to the *dabīristān*, where, under the guidance of a tutor, he learnt

the *Avesta* by heart. Thereupon, he began studying the temporal subjects of history, literature and philosophy and subsequently went on to master the skills of horse riding, archery, javelin throwing and *chawgān* (polo). This was followed by music, for which he learned to play the lute, the drum and the stringed instrument called the *qānūn*. Furthermore, he learned to compete in *jang-i laghatak* (upright wrestling), backgammon and chess, was skilled in the art of cookery and was well acquainted with the varieties of garden flowers and the means of extracting various perfumes from them.

As may be seen from this incomplete list, the range of knowledge dispensed in the *dabīristāns* was fairly wide. Their curriculum under Islam in the ninth and tenth centuries was probably little different from the usual curriculum in the Sasanian period. Thus the theologian and philosopher Muhammad al-Ghazālī (1058–1111) advised the would-be secretary to study the arts of drafting administrative documents and stylistics; indeed, in medieval Islam the ability to draft administrative documents and letters remained one of the most important attributes of the well-educated person. Al-Ghazālī further exhorted the young secretary to make a thorough study of geography, mathematics, geometry, astronomy, medicine, *‘arūd* (metrics, prosody), the classification of medicinal plants and the systems of underground irrigation.

Nizāmī *‘Arūdī* Samarqandī (twelfth century) was of the view that ‘the *dabīr* shall not be deemed to have reached the proper level until he has gained some knowledge of every science, memorized at least one erudite phrase from every master, heard at least one aphorism from every sage, and borrowed at least one uncommon device from every writer’.¹ According to Firdawsī’s *Shāh-nāma* [Book of Kings], the role of the *dabīr* in pre-Islamic courts had often been performed by *mōbads* (high priests), who were versed in secular as well as religious knowledge. Upon completion of their studies, young *dabīrs* took up service in the offices of provincial governors, district judges, merchants and traders carrying on business with neighbouring countries; they drafted agreements and administrative correspondence. Unusually able scribes could attain the position of *wazīr* (vizier, or chief minister).² The Ghaznavid court spent over 70,000 dirhams each month on the salaries of the court *dabīrs*, according to the historian Abu ‘l-Fadl Bayhaqī.³

Special rules were established for the selection and training of *dabīrs*, whose position at court was defined by Kay Kāwūs b. Iskandar, the author of the *Qābūs-nāma* [Book for Qābūs] (eleventh century), and by Nizāmī *‘Arūdī* Samarqandī. The scribes and secretaries enjoyed an elevated position in the social hierarchy, being employed in the *Dīwān al-Inshā’*

¹ Nizāmī *‘Arūdī* Samarqandī, 1921, Discourse 1.

² Kay Kāwūs b. Iskandar, 1951.

³ Bayhaqī, 1324/1945, p. 146.

(Department of Correspondence), which directed the civil administration and diplomacy. With the advent of the Arabs, the Persian term *dabīr* was supplemented by the Arabic equivalents *munshi'*, *kātib*, etc.

Mosques

Under Islam, mosques became the centres of religious worship and public meetings. The first mosque in Bukhara was built by Qutayba b. Muslim within the citadel, on the site of the fire temple. In the *Kitāb al-Qand fī tārikh Samarqand* [Book of the Sugar-loaf Concerning the History of Samarkand], a local history of his city, Abū Hafs Samarqandī wrote that 'in the days of the infidels, the Jawziyya great mosque in Samarkand was the heathen temple of their idol and their place of worship'. According to the same source, the Jawziyya mosque soon became the centre of learning for the whole of Transoxania, and the Imam Abū Hafs Bukhārā'ī lectured in the first mosque of Bukhara, surrounded by his students.

mosques of that period were divided into two types: smaller, local mosques and larger, Friday, or congregational mosques. The latter were built on the main market squares and at important crossroads and acted as nuclei in the formation of towns. The number of mosques was an indication of the dynamism and growth of towns and of their populations. For instance, the geographer al-Maqdisī counted some 40 great mosques in Ferghana in the tenth century. For al-Maqdisī, a great mosque was one of the criteria in the definition of a town. The architecture of the early mosques was characterized by a sweeping use of space and by the use of decoration. For example, it is reported that the great mosque of Kath in Khwarazm contained a large number of carved wooden columns resting on pedestals of black stone. The first great mosque of Nishapur was built under °Abd Allāh b. °Umar, who directed the siege of Nishapur at the time of the Arab conquest. He demolished the fire temple located in the citadel and built in its place the first great mosque. The Samanid great mosque of the ancient city of Afrasiab, in Samarkand, and the Ghaznavid great mosque of Ghazna were exquisitely decorated, and are in part known through the efforts of modern archaeologists. Remains of early mosques from the tenth to the twelfth century have been uncovered in Ghazna and Ushrushana. The remains of a tenth-century mosque have also been found next to the cemetery of Talkhatan at Merv, and the remains of two tenth-century mosques at the site of Mashhad-i Misriyan. In the early period of Islam, mosques also played an important politico-social role as well as a cultural-religious one: they housed the treasuries and government offices of the first Arab settlers.⁴

⁴ Bartol'd, 1966, p. 112.

The *maktabs*, or elementary schools

A decree making Arabic the language of all official business in Khurasan and Transoxania and forbidding non-Muslims to work in government offices was issued in 741. This date may tentatively be taken as the starting-point for the history of the *maktab* in the region. The sources have not yielded any direct information concerning the architecture or curricula of early *madrasas* (colleges for higher religious studies) and *maktabs*. There are references to *maktab-khānas* (i.e. school buildings) in several legal documents from the tenth to the fifteenth century, however, and useful visual evidence for the interiors, teaching materials and code of conduct for students and teachers (*maktabdārs*) may be gathered from miniatures of the Shiraz and Herat schools of the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, for which school settings were a favourite subject, but all this evidence is from later times.

As a rule, the *maktab* was attached to the local mosque and was often located in the teacher's house, where he and his wife looked after boys and girls separately. The basic methods of teaching and education in the *maktab* are methodically and thoroughly described in one of the works of Abū °Alī Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna, c. 980–1037), in a chapter entitled 'The Role of the Teacher in the Training and Upbringing of Children'; in the *Kīmiyā-yi sa°ādat* [The Alchemy of Happiness] by al-Ghazālī; in the *Ta°līm al-muta°allim tarīq al-ta°allum* [Teaching the Student the Method of Study] by Burhān al-Dīn Zarnūjī (twelfth century); in the *Akhlāq-i Nāsirī* [Nasirean Ethics] by Nasīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī (thirteenth century); in the *Akhlāq-i Jalālī* [Jalalian Ethics] by Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī (fifteenth century); and in the exhortations of such classical poets of Persian literature as Rūdakī, Firdawsī, Nāsir-i Khusraw, Sa°dī, Hāfiz, Jāmī and others. For instance, the programme of education and training proposed by Ibn Sīnā involved sending children to school from the age of 6. He believed that when a child reached that age, it was the duty of the parents to look for a good teacher and tutor, who should be wise, devout, perspicacious and knowledgeable about the methods of moral and intellectual schooling. Ibn Sīnā attached great importance to the method of study and held that the child ought not to be immediately tied down to books; teaching should be a gradual process.⁵

From the tenth to the twelfth century and later, notwithstanding the well-developed network of *maktabs*, teaching was often informal and amateurish. A significant proportion of families remained content to teach their children at home. The more well-to-do families, such as Ibn Sīnā's own parents, hired tutors for that purpose, although Ibn Sīnā himself was not in favour of individual tutoring, feeling that teaching in isolation from a school was tiresome for both pupil and tutor alike. He put forward a number of ideas on the

⁵ For the *maktab*, see *EP*², 'Kuttāb' (J. M. Landau).

advantages of teaching pupils together, citing the value of competitiveness and emulation among pupils and the usefulness of group discussions and debates.

In his curriculum for children between the ages of 6 and 14, Ibn Sīnā included study of the Qur'an, metaphysics, language, *adab* (belles-lettres), ethics and manual skills. Al-Ghazālī, however, was strongly opposed to the teaching in school of *adab*, which he considered more suited to women. He recommended that children be taught the writings of wise men and that they be introduced to the lives of the main figures in the foundation of Islam, the Companions of the Prophet. He also advised schoolteachers and parents to nurture all the good traits that appear at a youthful age in the behaviour and character of children and, if necessary, to praise children in front of other people and reward them with presents.

In the second stage of schooling, which Ibn Sīnā called the period of specialization, pupils should, in his view, begin to acquire manual skills, irrespective of their social status. He advised teachers and tutors to show the utmost attention and prudence in this transitional stage, making allowances both for the age of their pupils and for their emotional development, since children differ naturally from one another. For instance, some pupils have a flair for reading, others for manual skills, yet others for literature, while some are destined to be preachers; and pupils are drawn to these subjects according to their interests. 'And moving away from the multifarious domain of language,' Ibn Sīnā wrote, 'one observes that some choose medicine, others geometry; and thus various groups of people specialize in professions that are closest to their hearts.' Ibn Sīnā's own preference was for the teaching of crafts, rather than the more risky trade and commerce, since 'the master of a craft, no matter what the circumstances, will always find a use for his skills'. The teaching of such crafts should begin immediately after completion of the study of the Qur'an and basic Arabic grammar. He advised parents not to be over-protective of their children and not to smother them with attention while they were being trained in a craft; rather, they should be given encouragement, and an interest should be taken in the final result of their efforts.

In the pedagogical systems of al-Ghazālī, Nasīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī, Dawānī and others, little attention was devoted to the education and schooling of girls; indeed, this was positively discouraged. Those moral philosophers forbade girls to learn to read. Dawānī thought that girls did not need an intellectual training, and wrote: 'With regard to the education of girls, care should be taken to teach them housekeeping, modesty, piety, demureness and other qualities and skills necessary to women.'⁶

⁶ Mirbabaev, 1992, p. 85.

The profession of Qur'an-reciter

Recitation of the Qur'an by professionals, called *qārī* or *hāfiz*, provided employment for many people, especially as *waqfs* (charitable endowments) were frequently set up to provide such a service in the form of *qārī-khānas* and *dalāyil-khānas*. The *qārī-khānas* provided a link between the *maktab* and the *madrasa*. Entrants to them were principally orphans and blind children. In the towns there was always a great demand for reciters of the Qur'an. For instance, in Khujand (in Ferghana) in the nineteenth century there were as many as 70 *waqfs* for Qur'an recitation, and according to Russian statistics from 1892, some 40 *qārī-khānas* were in operation there. In the region as a whole, with the exception of the Bukhara amirate, there were over 333 *qārī-khānas*. By applying such figures retrospectively to the period under consideration, it is possible to gain some idea of the significance of the *qārī-khānas* for urban cultural life at that time. As a rule, each *qārī-khāna* had from 5 to 10 pupils. There was no fixed period of study, but a successful pupil had to be able to chant from memory the entire Qur'an, which was divided into 30 sections. From the ranks of professional reciters of the Qur'an came a good number of poets and cultural figures in Islam, such as the classical Persian poet Hāfiz Shīrāzī, who received his pen-name ('One who has Memorized the Whole Qur'an Text') from his skill here.

The *madrasas*, or colleges for higher religious and other studies

The first educational institution in the Muslim world was the mosque built at Medina early in the seventh century by the Prophet Muhammad and his Companions.⁷ From then on, mosques were used for teaching purposes, especially for the teaching of law and theology, but as society developed, study circles were held not only in the mosques but also in the palaces, in the streets and even in the market-places. Nevertheless, the mosque remained pre-eminent for the teaching of theology and jurisprudence, where students sat in a circle at the teacher's feet. A training in religious law could provide a livelihood and was accordingly popular. For instance, one day in 997 the most illustrious teacher of law in Nishapur drew a crowd of over 500 students, and the successor to the celebrated Imām al-Haramayn Abu 'l-Ma'ālī Juwaynī daily attracted classes of over 300.⁸ These classes and study groups constituted a kind of 'free university', for the teachers were not subject to any particular

⁷ Arodaky, 1977, p. 35. For the institution in general, see Makdisi, 1981.

⁸ Mez, 1937, p. 178.

restrictions or obligations and students were free to choose among the available classes, discussion groups and study circles.

During the ^cAbbasid period (from 750 to the middle of the thirteenth century) religious education became a branch of learning in its own right, with some teachers specializing in the Qur'an, theology and jurisprudence, while others studied Arabic language, literature and history. The study circles also grew in number and quality during this period, forming the nuclei of what were to become the *madrasas*, colleges intended for adults who had already received their primary education in private schools or mosques. In the tenth century the *madrasa* emerged as an independent institution distinct from the mosque, although *madrasas* – at least in the early days – were set up either for a single jurist or to teach the tenets of a particular legal school. Thus was born a new kind of educational institution, destined in future to become a centre of religious and secular learning in the Islamic world and a place where the representatives of the official class were educated in the spirit of Muslim orthodoxy.

On the eastern fringes of the caliphate, in particular in northern Iran, Khurasan and Transoxania, the first *madrasas* appeared also at the turn of the tenth century. A question that is intimately connected with the origin of the architecture of *madrasas* concerns the historical and cultural aspects of their emergence in Khurasan and Transoxania. Here the Russian orientalist Bartol'd was a proponent of the 'eastern' school. He wrote that 'notwithstanding the Aryan origin of the word *khānaqāh* (hospice), and the Semitic origin of the word *madrasa*, *khānaqāhs* spread in Muslim Asia from west to east, while *madrasas* spread from east to west'. Bartol'd linked the gradual spread of *khānaqāhs* into Mesopotamia, Syria and North Africa to the Seljuq expansion, which, in his view, contributed to the dissemination of aspects of eastern Iranian culture in those countries.⁹ Indeed, the cultural mission of the Seljuqs, whose intellectuals and officials came from among the Iranian inhabitants of western and northern Iran, Khurasan and Transoxania, was considerable and it seems that the Transoxanian model provided the basis for the 'Seljuq type' of *madrasa*. The Seljuqs borrowed and took westwards a mature, fully developed style of architecture and academic system for these institutions. It seems likely that when the great Seljuq vizier Nizām al-Mulk founded the celebrated Nizāmiyya in Baghdad in 1065, he simply copied the Bukharan and Khurasanian models for *madrasas*. The sources mention as many as 33 *madrasas* in the East before the appearance of the first *madrasa* in Baghdad. The Seljuqs established further *madrasas* in Khurasan and Transoxania. Thus, after he came to Samarkand in 1130, Sanjar ordered the Quthamiyya *madrasa* to be built next to the shrine of the local hero Qutham b. ^cAbbās, nothing of which, however, remains today.

⁹ Bartol'd, 1964, pp. 430–1; 1966, p. 288.

With a view to the dissemination of the ideas of the Ash^carite theological school, Nizām al-Mulk also had *madrasas* built at Isfahan, Nishapur, Herat, Merv and other cities where adherents of the school were concentrated.¹⁰ According to the later historian Hāfiz-i Abrū, the Seljuqs founded over 70 *madrasas* in Khurasan. Thus the evidence of written sources and the architectural remains of *madrasas* tends to indicate that the birthplace of the *madrasa* was indeed Khurasan and Transoxania.

The attention of specialists has also focused on the historical prerequisites for the emergence of the *madrasa*. The Swiss orientalist Adam Mez held that the primary reason was the change in teaching methods. ‘In the tenth century,’ he wrote, ‘philologists rejected dictation and confined themselves to *tadrīs* (interpretation of works). The change in teaching methods in turn gave rise to a new type of educational institution: the predominance of *tadrīs* at that time brought the *madrasas* into existence.’¹¹ In any event, the emergence of the *madrasa* gave rise to a certain stratification of education: higher religious and also secular education was provided by the *madrasas*, and elementary education by the *maktabs*. It is apparently in this period that the term *madrasa*-mosque, prevalent in the Middle Ages, came into use – confirmation of the fact that mosques, especially great or congregational mosques, remained important social, educational and cultural centres of the cities.

From the tenth to the fifteenth century, *madrasas* spread throughout the eastern caliphate as the highest form of educational institution. Between the tenth and the twelfth century, there were numerous *madrasas* containing libraries in Bukhara, Khwarazm, Merv, Nishapur, Balkh, Ghazna and Khuttalan. According to Abu ’l-Fadl Bayhaqī, there were over 20 *madrasas* in the region of Khuttalan, and large numbers in the region of Balkh and in Ghazna. Today, of the *madrasas* of the Khuttalan region, only the Khoja Mashhad *madrasa*, in Sayyad Shartuz district, has survived. Contemporary historians, almost certainly exaggerating, mention the *madrasas* of Balkh as running into hundreds; thus, according to Muhammad Sālih, the city had 400 *madrasas* before it was captured by the Mongols in 1220. When describing the *madrasas* of Merv, al-Maqdisī noted that ‘each person who delivered lectures there received a salary’; at that time there were some two dozen *madrasas* in the city. *Madrasas* were especially concentrated in Nishapur, the capital of Khurasan and one of the great centres of learning in the East. Many of them held large collections of books. When the city was taken by the Oghuz in 1153, most of these collections were burnt, and the remainder were sold for the price of the paper. The Nizāmiyya *madrasa* of Nishapur was a stronghold of Ash^carite theology. One of the professors there was the Imām al-Haramayn Juwaynī, and al-Ghazālī also taught there. Another teacher at

¹⁰ *EP*², ‘Madrasa’ (J. Pedersen and G. Makdisi); ‘Nizām al-Mulk’ (H. Bowen and C. E. Bosworth).

¹¹ Mez, 1937, p. 179; Makdisi, 1981, p. 174.

the Nizāmiyya was the son of Nizām al-Mulk, Fakhr al-Mulk. However, there were many other *madrasas* at that time at Nishapur, such as the Sā^cidiyya and the Sābūniyya.¹² In Khwarazm, one of the teachers at the *madrasa* of Kath, the ancient capital of Khwarazm, was the famous mathematician-scholar Abū Nasr Mansūr b. ^cIrāq, tutor to al-Bīrūnī.

The Mongol invasion dealt a temporary blow to learning, severing links between creative intellectuals and for a time disrupting the continuity of culture, but after the successful monetary reform introduced by the first Mongols, Möngke Khan and his minister Mas^cūd Beg, economic life soon revived in the cities of Iran and Transoxania. These same rulers encouraged the exact sciences, which, as noted by Bartol'd, they perceived to be of practical use. In this cultural renaissance, particular preference was given to the organizational role of the *madrasa* as the promoter of literary and scientific thought. Under Mas^cūd Beg twin *madrasas* were built in Bukhara, in each of which, according to al-Juwaynī, 1,000 students could study. However, during the civil wars of the 1270s, when Bukhara was laid waste for seven years, the *madrasas* and their libraries were burnt down.

At this time, the public education functions of the *madrasas*, which distinguished them from other urban foundations such as mausoleums, *khānaqāhs*, *musallās* (oratories), etc., underwent substantial changes. By the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, there were moves towards integration and specialization, and individual *madrasas* in Samarkand and Herat, under the influence of the scientific circles that had formed there, now acquired a more clearly defined and well-developed structure as centres of scientific education, with inquiries into such sciences as mathematics, astronomy, medicine, philosophy, theology, languages, literature and music. For example, at the *madrasa* of Nasīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī, which was attached to the observatory at Maragha in Il Khanid Azerbaijan, there was a large teaching staff of astronomers headed by al-Tūsī himself, and the *madrasa* had a huge collection of books, allegedly totalling over 400,000 manuscripts, although this must be a vast exaggeration.

The development of science and education in the realm of Hülegü and his Il Khanid successors was inseparably linked with the figures of Rashīd al-Dīn and Nasīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī. In 1236 the latter wrote in Persian his *Akhlāq-i Nāsirī* on ethics and education. In 1259, on the instructions of Hülegü, he began to build and equip an observatory on an elevated site to the north of Maragha, at a cost of 20,000 dinars. On the orders of the Il Khan, a portion of the state's *waqf* income was allocated to the observatory. The Maragha observatory became a focus of scientific activity. Under the leadership of al-Tūsī, over 100 scientists worked and wrote there, and astronomical observations were carried out there for a period of over 15 years. Attached to the observatory was a *madrasa*, and lectures there

¹² Bulliet, 1972, pp. 249–55, listing the *madrasas* at Nishapur as known from the sources.

were closely connected to the activities of the observatory. Its teaching covered philosophy, medicine, theology and *handasa* (technology). Al-Tūsī applied a variable grant-scale, under which philosophy students received 3 dirhams per day, medical students 2, theology students 1 and engineering students 0.5. Apart from al-Tūsī, other scientific figures who taught at the *madrasa* were ^cAllāma Qutb al-Dīn Shīrāzī (1236–1311) and Najm al-Dīn Kātībī Qazwīnī (d. 1277).

Under the Mongols, and later under the Timurids, there was a growing tendency to build at major urban sites architectural ensembles that often included a mosque, a *madrasa*, a mausoleum and public *garmābs* (baths), and we have valuable accounts of the construction of *madrasas* undertaken by Mongol rulers and members of their families in Shiraz, Isfahan, Tabriz, Kirman, Gurganj and other cities in Iran and Central Asia. One of the most important buildings of the late fourteenth century in Samarkand was the Khanum *madrasa* opposite the famous great mosque of Timur, built in honour of his mother and his wife, Sarāy-i Mulk Khānum. According to the fifteenth-century historian Fasīhī Khwāfī, the construction of the great mosque of Samarkand (begun in 1398–9), which Timur intended to pay for out of what he had plundered from Persia and brought back from Hindustan, took a very long time and a vast amount of money; the amir eventually had the two architect-builders executed.¹³

In the fifteenth century there was a veritable explosion in the rate of construction of *madrasas* and under Timur's descendants, Shāh Rukh, Ulugh Beg, Sultān Husayn Bayqara and others, Samarkand and Herat, two cities with ancient cultural and literary traditions, once again became centres of lively internal and external trade, crafts, science, literature and art. One of the foremost building projects in Samarkand at the turn of the fifteenth century was the *madrasa* of Timur's favourite grandson, Muhammad Sultān, occupying the eastern part of the Gur Amir square, built in tandem with a mausoleum. In the *madrasa* were buried not only Muhammad Sultān, his wife and daughter, but many other members of the Timurid dynasty. The most imposing structure in Samarkand in the fifteenth century was, however, the Ulugh Beg *madrasa* in the Registan square. Building started in 1417 and was completed in 1420. Fasīhī noted that the edifice consisted of a *madrasa* and a *khānaqāh* facing each other. According to Ulugh Beg's contemporary, Dawlatshāh Samarqandī, the *madrasa* was unequalled in its beauty and harmonious proportions; over 100 students received instruction there and the teachers included such leading scholars as Mawlānā Khwāfī, Qādīzāda Rūmī, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Jamshīd, Mu^cīn al-Dīn Kāshī and others. With respect to the scientific environment at Samarkand in the 1420s, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Jamshīd wrote that:

¹³ Fasihi Khwāfī, 1980, p. 120.

in Samarkand are now to be found the most illustrious scientists and a great many professors teaching all the sciences. Most of them are concerned with mathematics. Four of these people have at present managed to complete only half of a commentary on *Comparisons Regarding Arithmetic*, another has written a treatise on the geometric proof of the question of the two errors. Qādīzāda Rūmī, who is the most knowledgeable among them, has composed a commentary on [the astronomer] Chaghmīnī, and others on *Well-founded Propositions*. Many astronomers and experts in computation have also gathered there.

Ghiyāth al-Dīn Jamshīd further remarked on the learnedness of Ulugh Beg in the fields of jurisprudence, mathematics, Arabic, literary theory and style, and theory of music. As a young man, the Amir Ulugh Beg received an excellent education from the poet Hamza b. °Alī Malik al-Tūsī of Bayhaq and from Qādīzāda Rūmī; later, in his mature years, when he had come to power, he again surrounded himself with learned and educated people. The poet Jāmī came twice to Samarkand to attend the lectures of the celebrated Qādīzādā Rūmī and then returned in the 1450s as a *mudarris* (lecturer) at the Ulugh Beg *madrasa*, establishing close links with Samarkand's leading poets and scholars of the day.

At the end of the fifteenth century there were also many *madrasas* in operation in Herat. The Timurid rulers Shāh Rukh and Sultān Husayn Bayqara, and the minister °Alīshīr Nawā'ī himself, were zealous advocates of the founding of *madrasas* and other cultural institutions. Among the buildings of Sultān Husayn Bayqara, of particular beauty and elegant composition were the *khānaqāh* and *madrasa* built by him on the Khiyaban thoroughfare on the south bank of the Injil canal. The city's leading professors were invited to deliver lectures there, including Husayn Wā'iz Kāshifī (d. 1504), the author of the ethical treatise, the *Akhlāq-i Muhsinī* [Muhsinian Ethics] and a total of eight professors taught there. Among the architectural monuments of Herat, the buildings of °Alīshīr Nawā'ī occupied a prominent place. The *waqfiyya* (deed of endowment) drawn up by him in 1481 states that in 1476 Sultān Husayn Bayqara granted him land to the north of Herat, near the village of Gazurgah (see Chapter 18 below). This was a well-irrigated plot of land covering an area of 30 *jarībs*, which Nawā'ī enclosed with a wall and planted with trees. In the centre of the grounds he had an architectural ensemble built consisting of the Khalasiyya *khānaqāh*, the Ikhlesiyya *madrasa*, the Shifā'īyya hospital and a school for Qur'an-reciters called the Dār al-Huffāz (House of the Reciters). It also contained a mosque and the Qudsiyya mausoleum, together with a number of secular buildings, including baths, a residential hall and so on. Apart from this ensemble, Nawā'ī also built the Khusrawiyya *madrasa* in Merv and restored the Nizāmiyya *madrasa* in Herat.

By the end of the fifteenth century, there were over 30 *madrasas* in operation in Herat. The Chinese ambassador Zhen Zheng, who visited the city in 1414, wrote in his travel account: 'In the capital there is a large mud-brick building called a *mā-de-r-se* [*madrasa*].

On all four sides it has broad, spacious galleries. In the centre of the courtyard stands a copper vessel, rather like a large cauldron . . .’ For the students studying in his *madrasas*, Nawā’ī engaged the most celebrated scholars of Herat. For example, at the Ikh̄lāsīyya, lectures were given by Mawlānā Ghiyāth al-Dīn Khayrābādī, Mawlānā Muhammad Khwāfī, Mawlānā Muhammad Tabrīzī, Mawlānā Mas‘ūd Shīrwakī, Amir Burhān al-Dīn ‘Atā ‘Allāh Nīshāpūrī and others, all prolific authors in various branches of the traditional sciences during the fifteenth century.

It was in this period, too, that specialized *madrasas* began to be established for the teaching of medicine and Herat came to have five hospital- *madrasas*. One of the first had been founded by the widow of Timur’s son, ‘Umar Shaykh Malikat Agha, who subsequently became the wife of Shāh Rukh, and a second hospital was founded by the grandson of Shāh Rukh, Mīrzā Walī al-Dawla; these were now refounded by Nawā’ī. According to Hāfiz-i Abrū, to the south of the great mosque of Herat stood another hospital-*madrasa* called the Dār al-Shifā’ (House of Treatment or Curing), while another one, known as the Shifā’iyya, stood beside the Injil canal, just west of the Ikh̄lāsīyya *madrasa*; it was still functioning when Bābur was in Herat. Yet another hospital was situated in the quarter of the Gawhar Shād *madrasa* and *musallā* and is thought to have been established by Shāh Rukh. Other hospital-*madrasas* are known in Rayy, Merv and Samarkand at this time.

The institution of the *madrasa* was also well known in the Indian subcontinent, where the first *madrasas* appeared as early as the thirteenth century. For instance, when Jūzjānī arrived in Sind in 1227, the local ruler Nāsir al-Dīn Qabācha put him in charge of the Fīrūziyya *madrasa* there, and when he went to Delhi in 1236 he was appointed a judge and head of the Nāsiriyya *madrasa*. Bābur wrote in his memoirs, the *Bābur-nāma*, that there were no baths, *madrasas* or lamps in India (perhaps meaning here, the essentially Hindu parts of the subcontinent), but elsewhere he wrote that one Rahīm Dād had established a *madrasa* at Gwalior and he remarked on the architectural similarity between *madrasas* and Buddhist *vihāras* (monasteries). ‘The rooms in these heathen temples’, he wrote, ‘are just like the *hujras* [rooms or cells] of a *madrasa*: each is crowned with a narrow stone cupola.’¹⁴

Thus in medieval Islamic times, *madrasas* were the main centres of what had begun as religious education, but where scientific research also came to be conducted. At the same time, the *madrasas* served as a refuge for poor, wandering students (*mustahiqqs*), who for the duration of their studies received bed and board paid for out of the *waqf* income of the *madrasa* and might study there for years. In a word, the *madrasa* was a universal centre

¹⁴ Bābur, 1922, pp. 610, 613.

of culture and education from which each individual took away for himself, and hence for culture in general, something useful and necessary.

In the history of *madrasas* there were inevitably periods of both growth and decline. Many teachers, often the leading scholars of their day, fully recognized that it was the secular sciences that could ensure the dynamic development of society. In his treatise entitled the *Ihsā' al-^culūm* [Enumeration of the Sciences], which was used as a manual in the *madrasas*, al-Fārābī (d. 950) deliberately assigned one of the lowest ranks to metaphysics, or the study of the general principles concerning the existence of God. The tenth-century scholar Maysarī, a physician by profession, maintained that there were four basic sciences, one of which was medicine, and that the science of medicine was necessary for the science of religion, since it was impossible for a person to study religion if he was ill.

Much attention was also devoted in the *madrasa*, curricula to the teaching of *adab*, or polite culture, which encompassed a number of disciplines of rational knowledge, such as philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, chemistry and medicine, but, above all, involved the study of history, poetry and philology. For instance, the *waqf-nāma* (deed of endowment) of the Karakhanid ruler Tamghach Khan Ibrāhīm (1040–68), regarding the *madrasa* he established in Samarkand, stated that the building should contain a number of premises for the teaching of *adab*; it further stated that the yearly salary of a teacher of *adab* was to be 1,200 dirhams. The concept of *adab* accurately reflected the philosophical views and moral standards of intellectuals during our period. In later medieval times, however, teachers of the rational sciences became increasingly narrow and scholastic, and submissive to the authority of those who adhered rigorously to Islamic theologico-legal traditions.

Part Two

THE SEARCH FOR KNOWLEDGE THROUGH TRANSLATION: TRANSLATIONS OF MANICHAEAN, CHRISTIAN AND BUDDHIST LITERATURE INTO CHINESE, TURKIC, MONGOLIAN, TIBETAN AND OTHER LANGUAGES

(P. Zieme)

General remarks

Some observations will be made here on the process of translation in the region of Central Asia, mainly in the oasis towns along the Silk Route. It is quite clear that general conclusions cannot easily be drawn because the number and scope of the texts, and the differences in space and time between them, vary greatly. The earliest texts are probably from the third century A.D., while the latest were copied in the eighteenth century. Thus we are dealing with a period which is apparently beyond the scope of 750 to the fifteenth century, but in fact, most of the Central Asian texts fall precisely within the narrower time range; there are only a very few earlier and later examples.

We have mainly to consider religious literature because other genres are only rarely recorded, or, in other words, most of the non-religious literature was not translated. The religious literature in Central Asia is of three main types: Manichaean, Christian and Buddhist.

Manichaean literature

Central Asia is of great importance for the history of our knowledge of Manichaeism, as here were found the first original writings of Manichaean communities established in many oases within as well as beyond Central Asia from the fourth century onwards. Central Asian Manichaean communities used Middle Persian and Parthian, as well as Sogdian, for

translating canonical works or for composing new Manichaean scriptures in these languages. Existing word lists, sometimes bilingual ones such as Parthian/Middle Persian–Sogdian, or Sogdian–Turkic, reveal a little of the work of translators to us, but usually the only traces of their works are surviving fragments. In general, we have no information on the actual persons who did the work of composition and/or translation, because in the case of Iranian texts there are very few colophons. There are, however, a few names of authors of Manichaean–Turkic texts. (On the languages to be found in the key area here, Xinjiang, see Table 1, p. 60.)

The Manichaean scriptures were transmitted by missions into the settlements of Central Asia. Translations were made for the purpose of further missions, and new scriptures were also composed. Several Middle Iranian languages were in use in these regions, including Bactrian, Khotanese, Tumshuqese, Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian and, later, New Persian (see Chapters 13 and 14 below), but the Manichaean scriptures were composed only in Bactrian, Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian and New Persian. While Middle Persian and Parthian tended to be used for religious purposes, Sogdian was not only a literary language but also a vernacular, a lingua franca for merchants and their communities. Unfortunately, the translation techniques are difficult to detect, since no colophons with relevant information have been found in the manuscripts. Confessional texts were important for the Manichaean communities, and here Sogdian was the predominant language, at least in the case of the text for the ‘elect’, the higher level of religious adherents. Manichaean texts in Chinese followed mainly Parthian predecessors. In some cases they were even phonetically recorded in Chinese.¹⁵

Christian texts

According to J. P. Asmussen, in Iran, translations from Syriac into Middle Persian were already made to a considerable extent. This process continued in Central Asia and China and extended to other Central Asian languages, mainly into Sogdian and to a small extent into New Persian also. Much less is known about translations into Old Turkic. Among the very few remnants there is one fragment which contains a slightly altered version of the Adoration of the Three Magi: after Jesus accepted the three presents, he gave the Magi a piece of rock that they could not carry; finally, they threw it into a well and fire arose from it. The Christian texts come mostly from Kocho itself as well as from Bulayik and Kumtura, two small villages north of Turfan. So far, it is not very clear from which language Turkic texts were translated. There is a complete Sogdian version of the creed, but only a small

¹⁵ Bryder, 1985; Yoshida, *EIr*, Suppl.

fragment in Turkic; the latter may be a rather free rendering of the text. A fairly large number of bilingual Christian texts exists. They were mainly written by the Sogdians, interpreting the original Syriac works. Thus the Christian literature of the Sogdians, using mostly the Nestorian script, consists mainly of liturgical and hagiographic works translated from Syriac.

Buddhist translations

The question of the transmission of Buddhism via Central Asia to China is still debated. We have to admit the existence of very different traditions and thus also manifold ways of translation. The early Buddhist works and translations in the Kushan empire have already been discussed by J. Harmatta.¹⁶ Gāndhārī slowly lost its importance for Buddhist literature and it was now in Sanskrit, from the first century A.D. onwards, that texts were composed. Such scriptures were brought to China via Central Asia, where they were translated into Chinese. Much information is available on the ways and techniques of translating Buddhist texts from the Indian languages into the languages of China and Tibet, but our knowledge of the translations into the Central Asian languages such as Tokharian A and B, Khotanese, Tumshuqese, Sogdian, Bactrian, Old Turkic, Mongolian and so on is rather meagre.

The Chinese sources also contain some information on the process of translating. Generally speaking, translating in ancient China was the result of teamwork and for the most part it was done in public. The history of translating Buddhist texts into Chinese begins with the famous Parthian An Shih Kao, who worked in the second century.¹⁷ Kumārajīva's translations are famous for their style and were preferred on this account to the more accurate later translations. When from the sixth century onwards the work of translating fell increasingly into the hands of specialists, the translations became much better. A very distinguished and highly respected translator in the seventh century was Hsüan-tsang (Xuanzang), who is well known for his journey to India as well for his translation work. Translations were made either in a literal fashion or in a freer style. While An Shih Kao and others followed the first approach, monks like Chih Ch'ien and Dharmarakṣa preferred a more beautiful and readable style. Tao-an (312–85) tried to combine a faithful translation with an exact rendering of the ideas. He organized translation bureaux under the auspices of ruling emperors or princes. Yen Ts'ong (557–610) engaged in reflections on the way of translating Buddhist Sutras. Finally, it was Kumārajīva who developed firm principles regarding the art of

¹⁶ See Vol. II of the *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, pp. 433 et seq.

¹⁷ Forte, 1995.

translation, for which he enjoyed high prestige. As reported by his collaborator Seng-chao (fifth century), Kumārajīva took great pains when translating a text from the Indian original into Chinese.

Later, in the Sui and T'ang dynasties, the translation bureaux had specialists: a head, a translator who recited the foreign text, a verifier of the meaning, a scribe, a verifier of the written Chinese text, a polisher of style, a proof-reader and a corrector of the Chinese. Hsüan-tsang and Yi-ching now became the great masters of translation. Hsüan-tsang, for example, was well versed in both Sanskrit and Chinese and his translations were accordingly of a high standard. Although Hsüan-tsang's translations are superior to those made by Kumārajīva, the latter's versions continued to be held in high esteem and it was often these versions that were used for further translations into Central Asian languages such as Sogdian and Old Turkic. After the translation periods of An Shih Kao, Lokaksema, Dharmarakṣa, Kumārajīva and Hsüan-tsang (second–seventh century), the last great figure was Yi-ching, who left China in 671 for India. He studied at the great university of Nalanda and returned to China in 695 with nearly 400 Sutras, commentaries and other works. Between 700 and 712 he translated 56 works (230 volumes).

In general terms, there are four different ways of utilizing a religious text: citing the text in the original language; translating the text word by word, whether or not the original text is also given; free translation; and a self-conscious adaptation of the text by using formal characteristics other than those of the original (e.g. versification of a prose text). A special case is known from the time of the Northern Sung dynasty. In 980 an order was given to open an Institute for Sutra Translation in Kaifeng. Two years later, the buildings were ready, and in 983 the name was changed to the Institute for Transmission of the Dharma. The translations were made in order to present them to the emperor. This and other internal factors, as well as external ones such as the shift from mainstream to sectarian Buddhism, led to a general decline in the intellectual side of Buddhism during the Sung dynasty. To a certain degree, a new interest in Buddhism was in vogue when the translation of the *Jātakamālā* was made.

As an example of Buddhist translations and their development through the ages, we may recall here the history of the *Suvarṇaprabhāsūtra* [Sutra of Golden Light], which gained wide acceptance in all Buddhist countries. The original text was composed during the fourth and fifth centuries in India. According to J. Nobel, who devoted much effort to the study of this text, the entire Sutra is a collection of several text pieces which as a whole were a very useful and informative book for Buddhists, whether monks or laymen. In Nepal the Sutra was counted among the nine dharmas, and there are traces of early translations

into all major languages. The Chinese and Tibetan translations are a particularly useful guide to the dates of the text transmission.

The first Chinese translation was made by Dharmakṣema between 414 and 421 and consists of only 18 chapters (T. 663). Paramārtha (sixth century) subsequently made a new translation in 22 chapters, but actually added only 4 chapters. In the course of the sixth century two other translators, Yaśogupta and Jñānagupta, worked on the translation of some other parts, making a text of 20 chapters. Their results do not survive, but they were used by Pao-Kuei, who compiled a compact edition in 597 (T. 664). The famous monk Yi-ching, who travelled to India between 671 and 695, translated this Sutra entirely anew (T. 665) and it was mainly this version which spread to other regions.

Of the Tibetan translations which can be found in the Kanjur, the oldest version was called Tibetan I by Nobel. Tibetan III is a word-by-word translation of Yi-ching's Chinese version, while Tibetan II is based on the Sanskrit text. There are also translations into the Hsi Hsia language made from Chinese.

Sogdian translations

Many of the existing Sogdian Buddhist texts are translations from Chinese, but it is also true that there were at least two other channels through which the Sogdians were influenced, namely Kuchean (Tokharian B) and Sanskrit. In the case of *jātaka* (stories of one of the previous births of the Buddha) and similar texts, one may observe that they were original compositions.

Khotanese translations

Khotan, in the southern part of the Tarim basin, was an important centre of Buddhism. The existing literature is thus mainly Buddhist. The majority of the texts identified so far depend more or less on Sanskrit versions; some of them are close translations, others are paraphrases and a few are original compositions. As an example, the Khotanese version of the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśasūtra* should be mentioned, since this text is known in Sanskrit only from citations.

Tokharian translations

Among the Central Asian discoveries by such scholars as Sven Hedin, Sir Aurel Stein and A. von Le Coq, from the end of the nineteenth century onwards, it was the texts in an unknown language that attracted lively interest. According to the colophons to the Uighur

version of the *Maitrisimit nom bitig*, its name could be established as Tokharian, although this name is not accepted by all scholars. A close relationship to Sanskrit Buddhism can be made out for most of the Tokharian Buddhist texts, although exhaustive comparisons between the two languages are still rare.¹⁸

Turkic translations

As is known from Chinese sources as well as from the Bugut inscription, the Kaghans of the First Türk empire had contacts with Chinese Buddhists, but there is only one record of a translation of a Buddhist work – the *Nirvānasūtra* – into Turkic and there is now no trace of it.¹⁹ The Uighurs took up the Buddhist traditions in Central Asia. Four different traditions in Uighur Buddhism can be identified, as specified below.

THE CENTRAL ASIAN TRADITION

There are two major works here, the *Maitrisimit nom bitig* and the *Daśakarmapathā vadānamālā*. In the colophons to the first, it is written that the work in question has been translated from Sanskrit into a language called *toxri* and from that into Turkic. This is why the ‘unknown’ language was called Tokharian, because a comparison of the *Maitreya-samitinātaka* in that language and the *Maitrisimit* shows a clear dependence. The other work has colophons according to which the *Daśakarmapathā vadānamālā* was translated from the Kucha language (Tokharian B) into *toxri* (Tokharian A), and then from Tokharian A into Turkic. It is very important that a Sogdian *Kāñcanasāra* fragment is located in the fifth book of a work called *The Ten Good Deeds*. This makes it probable that, besides the above-mentioned versions, there was also a Sogdian one not mentioned in the Turkic colophons, i.e. one that existed independently. Both Turkic scriptures may have been translated in the ninth century, the manuscripts stemming from different sites in the Turfan oasis, Hami and Dunhuang.

THE CHINESE TRADITION

As in Sogdian Buddhism, many works were translated into Uighur (Turkic) from Chinese. This tradition continued up to the end of Buddhist culture in the Turfan area in the fifteenth century. A central place in Mahāyāna (The Greater Vehicle) Buddhism is occupied by the *Saddharmapundarikasūtra*. It was the *Avalokiteśvara* chapter which especially gained wide acceptance among Uighur-speaking Buddhists. As in China and elsewhere,

¹⁸ Schmidt, 1983.

¹⁹ Klimkeit, 1990, p. 55.

this chapter developed into a scripture of its own. Colophons sometimes contain the name of the translator. For the Uighurs, it was Shingqo Shāli Tutung who ranked first among the translators, but we have on him only the scanty information contained in these colophons. According to them, he came from Beshbalik, one of the capitals of the Uighur kingdom. He translated several Buddhist scriptures from Chinese into the *türk* language. New activities arose in the Yüan or Mongol period, when Uighurs and other Central Asian people served the emperor and the religious leaders, many being employed as officials.²⁰

THE TIBETAN TRADITION

Translations from Tibetan were apparently made only in the Yuan period. There are several works with colophons confirming this assumption as, for example, the *Rājāvavādakasūtra*. Other texts have been influenced by Tibetan versions, as has already been assumed for at least one version of the Uighur *Altun yarok* [Golden Light].

THE 'INDIAN' TRADITION

The use of Indian words and scripts became fashionable during the Yüan period, to such an extent that some texts have a very mixed appearance. Some colophons claim that the respective scriptures were translated from the Indian language (*äntkäk tili*), but investigation has shown that such assertions are doubtful; Indian origin may have been inserted in order to convey a higher relevance to the texts.

General remarks

In contradiction to the orthodox translation practice in Tibet, for example (*pāda* to *pāda* translation, strictly following the style of the original; prose to prose, stanza to stanza, etc.), in Central Asia we can sometimes observe a rather unorthodox style in the methods of translating the holy Buddhist texts. On the one hand, there is a kind of interlinear translation; on the other hand, texts were translated in abridged form, in amplified form or in a different style. Thus we know of prose texts translated as verse and vice versa. A good example is the case of the Uighur rendering of a Chinese prose text of Pure Land Buddhism, the *Guanwuliangshoujing*, of which there exists a Uighur version in alliterative verses typical of the later period of Uighur literature. The poet, whose name was Kki-kki, was compelled to shorten some passages and transpose certain others, or to insert additional words and phrases, all in order to obey the rules of strict strophic alliteration.

²⁰ Franke, 1996.

Another feature of Uighur translations is the use of alternative translations. In some cases, phrases of the Indian or Chinese originals were translated twice without eliminating one of the two versions.

The reasons for the translations' deviating from their originals are manifold, but a detailed analysis of them helps us to understand the peculiarities of Uighur Buddhism. If we exclude translated works, we obtain a corpus of texts which may be regarded as original writings, naturally composed within the usual religious framework.

Hsi Hsia translations

As Buddhism was the state religion, the translation work and compiling of a canon here was under imperial control.

Mongol Buddhism of the first period

The first propagation of Buddhism among the Mongols of the Yüan period (thirteenth–fourteenth century) was strongly connected with Uighur Buddhism, in other words, the first Mongolian translations were made from Uighur texts; but very soon the influence from the Tibetan side became stronger. In some cases, like that of Čosgi 'odzer, we do not even know whether he was a Tibetan or a Mongol.

Table 1. Languages and scripts of Xinjiang in the Middle Ages

<i>Languages</i>	
Semitic	1 Syriac
Indo-European	2 Greek
Tokharian	3 A
	4 B
Indic	5 Sanskrit
	6 Gāndhārī
Iranian	7 Middle Persian
	8 Parthian
	9 Khotanese
	10 Tumshuqese
	11 Sogdian
	12 Bactrian
	13 New Persian
Turkic	14 Old Turkic
Mongolian	15 Mongol
Manchu	16 Manchu
Sino-Tibetan	17 Chinese
	18 Tibetan
	19 Tangut

<i>Scripts</i>	
Greek 2	> Bactrian 12
Syriac-Nestorian 1, 11, 13, 14	
Manichaean 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14	
Pahlavī 7	
Sogdian 7, 8, 11, 14	> Uighur 14 > Mongolian 15 > Manchu 16
Brāhmī 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15	
Kharosthī 6	
Devanāgarī 5	
Runic script 7, 14	
Tibetan 18, 14	
Chinese 17	
Hsi Hsia 19	
'Phags-pa 14, 15	

Part Three

EARLY BUDDHISM IN TIBET AND THE EDUCATIONAL ROLE OF THE MONASTERIES

(*Wang Furen*)

The appearance of Buddhism in Tibet

In the seventh century, Buddhism formally entered Tibet, which was called Bod at the time. Many countries and regions around Tibet had already become Buddhist by the fifth century, but since the Tibetan writing system had not yet been formulated, no one in Tibet was knowledgeable about the contents of the scriptures, the incantations and some of the instruments of Buddhism. At the time of its appearance in Tibet, Srong-btsan sgam-po was king (*btsan-po* in the Tibetan language). He first married Princess Khri-btsun of Nepal and then Princess Wencheng of the T'ang dynasty of China. Both were committed Buddhists and each brought a statue of Sakyamuni, the founder of Buddhism, to Tibet; until modern times, these two statues were preserved intact in two temples in Lhasa. Though the statues themselves are not intrinsically important, they have historical significance as signs that Buddhism entered Tibet from India, Nepal and China.

The struggle between Buddhism and Bon

Before the arrival of Buddhism, Tibetan society, from the palace down to the common people, universally believed in the religion of Bon, which stemmed from the Zhang-zhung region in western Tibet. It was a primitive shamanist religion, but with a solid social base in Tibet (see further on Bon in Chapter 2, Part One, below). It is recorded that 'from Gnyav-khri btsan-po (the first ruler in popular legend) onwards, 26 generations of *btsan-pos* ruled his country under the Bon religion'. Once Buddhism entered Tibet, sharp contradictions and conflicts arose between Buddhism and Bon. At the time, the royal family of Bod, with Srong-btsan sgam-po as leader, did its utmost to support Buddhism. In the meantime, despotic chiefs in various regions of Tibet upheld Bon in order to buttress their own power.

This struggle between Buddhism and Bon during the period of the royal court of Bod (from the seventh to the middle of the ninth century) was intermittent but continuous.

Buddhism gained unprecedented power in Tibet when Khri-srong lde-btsan (755–97) became ruler. He ordered representative figures of Buddhism and Bon to engage in a public debate, with himself serving as judge; at the end, he decided that the Buddhists had won the argument.

The struggle within Buddhism between Ston-min-pa and Tshen-min-pa

Soon after this triumph of Buddhism, the struggle between Ston-min-pa and Tshen-min-pa took place. Ston-min-pa supported the belief advocated by the Buddhism which came from the Chinese region. It maintained the idea of ‘sudden consciousness’, i.e. entering consciousness through the absence of thought and thus reaching the highest realm, nearly becoming Buddha himself. Tshen-min-pa, on the other hand, was of the belief advocated by the Buddhism which came from India, which held that one could only obtain one’s goal step by step, through practice and learning. His followers were hence called the Tshen sect (‘the sect of gradualism’). The dispute between the two varieties of Buddhism was also settled in public, and once again under Khri-srong lde-btsan. At first, Ston-mm-pa took precedence, but in the end Tshen-min-pa triumphed. Allegedly, the outcome was determined over a three-year period (792–4). Henceforth, the Buddhism which had entered Tibet from India occupied a dominant position; yet although the Buddhism which had entered Tibet from China lost power and influence, it had a certain influence on individual sects of Tibetan Buddhism which arose in later periods.

The learning and teaching of the Buddhist scriptures in early monasteries (mid-eighth century)

The first monastery in which the monks learned the Buddhist scriptures appeared a century after Buddhism entered Tibet. Prior to this, a number of halls of worship had been built, but they were only used to worship the image of Buddha; no monastery had been created where the scriptures were learned and the monks tonsured. In the middle of the eighth century, Khri-srong lde-btsan invited the Indian Buddhist monks Santaraksita and Padmasambhava to come to Tibet for missionary work. They constructed the first monastery in which monks learned the Buddhist scriptures and were tonsured, the Bsam-yas monastery, on the northern bank of the Yarlung tsangpo river in Brag-nang. Santaraksita became the *mkhan-po*

(abbot) and seven children of the Tibetan nobles followed his footsteps and became the first group of Buddhist monks in Tibet.

Khri-srong lde-btsan soon invited Buddhist monks to Tibet to do missionary work and to translate the Buddhist scriptures; the most famous of them were Vimalamitra and Anānda. He also sent monks to study in India, where they learned the *rdo-rje theg-pa* of Indian Buddhism and Indian languages and writings. The first group of monks included Rnam-par-srang-mdzd-srung, called Verotsanaraksita by the Indians.

The setback to Buddhism (mid-ninth century)

KHRI-GTSUG LDE-BTSAN AND HIS ADHERENCE TO BUDDHISM

Following Khri-srong lde-btsan, several generations of *btsan-pos* adhered to Buddhism. At the time that his grandson Khri-gtsug lde-btsan (also known as Ral-pa-can) (815–38) ascended the throne, Buddhist culture was highly developed. Arising from the need to translate the Buddhist scriptures, the standardization of Tibetan writing began: the rules of spelling became more uniform, some useless morphemes were cut out, agreement was reached on the translation of terms and it was stipulated that a private individual could not create new words without the approval of the royal court. Those Buddhist scriptures already translated were compiled, over a period of time, into three catalogues: *ldan-dkar*, *mtshims-phu* and *vphang-thang*, the last being completed during Khri-gtsug lde-btsan's reign. During the period of his reign, the Buddhist monks had also secured power at the royal court; in 822 the chief Tibetan representative who signed the peace treaty with the T'ang dynasty was the monk and prime minister Bande chen-po Bran-ka Dpal-yon.

DAR-MA'S SUPPRESSION OF BUDDHISM

Khri-gtsug lde-btsan's adherence to Buddhism led to a sense of grievance among the supporters of the Bon religion. Accordingly, the nobles who favoured Bon killed him, and his brother Dar-ma, who was supported by these nobles, became *btsan-po* (838–42). As soon as he ascended the throne, Dar-ma launched a movement to suppress Buddhism. The monasteries were pillaged, the scriptures burned and the monks persecuted; thus the 'three treasures' – the Buddha, the doctrines and the monks – were destroyed. In the history of Tibetan Buddhism, the period prior to Dar-ma's suppression, i.e. the early phase of development of Buddhism in Tibet, is accordingly called 'the *former* magnificent stage'. In 842 Dar-ma was assassinated by a Buddhist monk, bringing the royal line of Bod to an end.

Revived Buddhism (latter half of the tenth century)

SMAD-BRGYUD-KYI VDUL-BA'S ARRIVAL FROM THE A-MDO REGION

In the latter half of the tenth century, Tibetan society was already characterized by a hierarchical form of rule. South of Lhasa, in the vicinity of the Bsam-yas monastery, there arose a local movement led by a descendant of Dar-ma btsan po called Yes-shes rgyal-mtshan, a local feudal lord and the master of the Bsam-yas monastery. In 978 he dispatched a delegation of 10 members, with Klu-mes Tshul-khrims shes-rab as leader, to the A-mdo region (the modern Xining and its vicinity) to learn the Buddhist scriptures. The region had originally been an outlying district ruled by the Bod court, but when Dar-ma suppressed Buddhism, some monks escaped thither and propagated Buddhism, so that a comparatively well-known centre of Buddhist culture had arisen in A-mdo.

Klu-mes Tshul-khrims shes-rab and the others brought back Buddhism from the Xining region to Tibet and propagated it; this movement is historically known as Smad-brgyud-kyi Vdul-ba, i.e. the force of developing Buddhism coming from the east. Hence 978 is considered the first year of the '*later magnificent stage*', i.e. the later development of Buddhism in Tibet.

STOD-BRGYUD-KYI VDUL-BA'S ARRIVAL FROM THE MNGAV-RIS REGION

At the same time, the monk-king Yes-shes-vod (another descendant of Dar-ma btsan-po), from the small kingdom of Gu-ge, did his utmost to develop Buddhism in his region of Mngav-ris; he dispatched students to India to learn Buddhism and had them transcribe many of the Buddhist scriptures into Tibetan script on their return. In 1042 Vbrom-ston-pa (1005–64), a rich Buddhist from Lhasa, invited Atiśa to come to Lhasa to preach Buddhism; this movement is historically known as Stod-brgyud-kyi Vdul-ba, i.e. the force of developing Buddhism coming from the west. Scholars of Tibetan culture hold that the Buddhism which developed through Smad-brgyud-kyi Vdul-ba and Stod-brgyud-kyi Vdul-ba, after the '*later magnificent stage*', may be termed Tibetan Buddhism, i.e. Buddhism mixed together with some elements of Bon so that it became a new sect of Buddhism.

The construction of monasteries of different sects of Tibetan Buddhism (eleventh-fifteenth century)

DISTINCTIVE ASPECTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL MONASTERIES

Through the activities of the revived Buddhist force in the tenth century, Buddhism once again flourished in Tibet, in a context within which local lords of various regions often

allied closely themselves with the faith, out of which different sects gradually formed. Hence from the middle of the eleventh century, the sects of Bkav-gdams-pa, Sa-skyapa, Bkav-brgyud-pa, Rnying-ma-pa, etc. took shape, with further sub-sects within the third of these. Each sect had its own monastery and its own distinct emphasis and characteristics regarding methods of teaching and imparting knowledge. Meanwhile, most of the sects became integrated with local lords in order to form alliances, which became the most outstanding feature of Tibetan Buddhism.

BUDDHIST MONASTERIES AS CENTRES OF SCIENCE, CULTURE AND RELIGION

Since the monks, with their command of written language, science and culture, formed an intellectual stratum, the monasteries had a distinctive position in Tibetan society; they were not only centres of religious activity but also of culture and the sciences. Since they were often built in regions where agriculture and stock-raising were practised, and where communications were convenient, they were often near the local markets where farm products were exchanged, and thus themselves might grow into local economic centres. Furthermore, the Buddhist monks' knowledge of the calendar and astronomical terms gave them an authoritative position, and altogether, the monasteries of the sects had a wide influence.

TIBETAN BUDDHIST MONKS AS ADVOCATES OF THE SCIENCE OF THE 'FIVE BRILLIANCES'

The monks believed that the 'Five Brilliances' (i.e. a good command of five different sciences) were the yardstick of knowledge; according to Indian custom, a man proficient in the 'Five Brilliances' was called *pandita* (scholar). The 'Five Brilliances' were divided into the large and the small. The former were Buddhist philosophy, Buddhist logic, the knowledge of critical interpretation of ancient texts (including Sanskrit grammar), technology and medicine. In the past, some people considered the small 'Five Brilliances' to be contained within the large one of knowledge of the critical interpretation of ancient texts. They included astrology, poetry, phonology, vocabulary (including the wide variety of definitions of single words, and the variety of words for single concepts), song and dance. From the enumeration of the large and the small 'Five Brilliances', one can see the many fields of knowledge that a Buddhist monk was expected to master.

THE SYSTEM OF INTEGRATING GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION WITH RELIGION

As early as the tenth century, Yes-shes rgyal-mtshan and Yes-shes-vod, with their double status as monks and feudal lords of the region, had already brought together government

administration and religion. After the middle of the eleventh century, with the gradual formation of different sects of Tibetan Buddhism, this process accelerated. From the middle of the thirteenth century, because of support from the Mongol Khans who came to rule in northern China as the Yüan, the power of the Sa-skya sect considerably exceeded that of the others and it favoured the integration of government administration with religion in Tibet. In the middle of the fourteenth century, the process, continued by the Phag-gru branch of the Bkav-brgyud sect, was extended further.

The establishment of the Dge-lugs-pa, or Yellow Sect, of Tibetan Buddhism

TSONG-KHA-PA'S FOUNDATION OF THE YELLOW SECT

In 1409 Tsong-kha-pa (1357–1419), the monk of A-mdo, with the support of the leader of the Phag-gru branch of the Bkav-brgyud sect, founded a new sect of Tibetan Buddhism: the Dge-lugs-pa, popularly known as the Yellow Sect. Tsong-kha-pa gained much prestige from his erudition and advocated that the Buddhists should observe special commandments. After the establishment of the Yellow Sect, its power began to surpass that of the older ones and it eventually became the strongest sect, with the greatest number of monks.

THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE MONASTERIES OF THE YELLOW SECT

The most typical monasteries were Dgav-ldan, Vbras-spungs and Se-ra, established in the early years of the fifteenth century. They were organized on three levels, with the middle level called *grwa-tshang*, meaning 'the house of monks'. Each monastery consisted of more than two *grwa-tshangs*, a large and a small. Each *grwa-tshang* had an abbot, the *mkhan-po*, whose subordinates comprised the members of a small committee, responsible for learning and reading the scriptures and for discipline and financial affairs. Individual monks specialized in exoteric or esoteric sciences, medicine or astrology.

The lower grade of *grwa-tshang* was called *khams-tshan* and was divided according to districts. It was also the basic unit for the monks who learned the scriptures, headed by the *spyi-rgan*. His subordinates formed part of a committee responsible for the conduct of the general affairs of the *khams-tshan*. Above the *grwa-tshang*, the unit called *bla-spyi*, in charge of the entire monastery, formed the highest committee. There were also several committee members who were in charge of discipline, the financial affairs of the entire monastery and reading the monks' scriptures. The committee system was especially

characteristic of the Yellow Sect, having the aim of counteracting local lords' intervention in the running of the monastery and thus preserving its independence.

LEARNING THE SCRIPTURES AND THE RANKS OF ACADEMIC DEGREES IN THE YELLOW SECT

The monks of the Yellow Sect studying the scriptures under the *grwa-tshang* of exoteric sciences had to learn five main works, all written by Indians. The first work, the *Tshed-ma-rgyan*, written by Chos-grags, explained Buddhist logic and required two years of study. The second, Byams-pa's *Mngon-par-rtogs-pavi-rgyan*, examined the doctrine of *prajñā* (wisdom, insight into the true nature of things) and also required two years of study. The third work, the *Dbu-ma-vjug-pa*, which was written by Zla-grags and also required two years of study, explained the *Dbu-ma* written by the Indian philosopher Klu-sgrub. The fourth work, Yon-tan-vod's *Vdul-ba*, examined discipline and required five years of study. The fifth and final work, the *Mngon-pavi-mdzod*, written by Dbyig-gnyen, examined perceptions of the earth and life; the period of study was unlimited.

The method of learning emphasized recitation and argument. In order to obtain the academic degrees, called *dge-bshes*, denoting the man whose knowledge is broad and profound, the monks had to reply to questions concerning the five main works. According to their success in the examinations, the monks were awarded different levels of *dge-bshes*.

In addition, there were two senior esoteric colleges in Lhasa, Rgyud-smad Grwa-tshang and Rgyud-stod Grwa-tshang, both established in the fifteenth century. A monk who had finished the study of the five main works and had received the first level of *dge-bshe* could enter one of the two esoteric colleges in order to learn advanced esoteric doctrines. Through progressive upwards movement, he might become Dgav-ldan khri-pa, the master of the Dgav-ldan monastery, and thus the successor to the throne of the Tsong-kha-pa Buddhist doctrine, the purely religious leader of the Yellow Sect.

In order to learn all the scriptures, from the study of the five great works of exoteric learning, through the examinations and the *dge-bshe* diplomas, to the final ascension to the position of Dgav-ldan khri-pa, a monk had to spend at least 50 years of his life in study.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POWER OF THE MONASTERIES OF THE YELLOW SECT

Most of the monasteries of the Yellow Sect had been constructed before the fifteenth century. After the sixteenth century, their power developed and extended further, so that the system of reincarnation began. The Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama were the two living

Buddhas who had the greatest power; both were figures in the system of reincarnation, successively established from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century.

The propagation of Tibetan Buddhism at the Mongol court (mid-thirteenth century)

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SA-SKYA-PA AND THE MONGOLS

In 1224 Go-dan, the grandson of Chinggis Khan, invited Sa-pan (1182–1251), abbot of the Sa-skya sect of Tibetan Buddhism, to Liangzhou (now Wuwei county in Gansu province) to discuss Tibet's submission to the Mongols. In 1247 the first direct contact between the Mongol ruling family and the Tibetan Buddhist leaders took place, when after discussion on both sides, Sa-pan sent an open letter to the Tibetan spiritual and secular leaders in the various localities in order to persuade them to submit to the Mongols. Thus Tibet was peacefully incorporated into the Mongol empire. In 1260 Qubilay Khan unified the whole of China, including Tibet. He continued Go-dan's policy of favouring the Sa-skya sect of Tibetan Buddhism and granted the title of 'State Tutor' to its new leader, Vphags-pa (1265) (the nephew of Sa-pan), who was ordered to administer Buddhism throughout the country and the general affairs of the whole Tibetan region.

THE INFLUENCE OF TIBETAN BUDDHISM ON THE POLITICS OF THE YÜAN DYNASTY

In the early stage of the Mongol empire, the government adopted a policy of conciliation towards the religions of the conquered regions. No religion was favoured, and even within the Mongol royal family, beliefs varied. Though shamanism clearly dominated, others adopted Nestorian Christianity. When Chinggis Khan embarked on his conquest of Central Asia, he appointed the leader of Taoism, Qiu Chuji, as 'State Tutor'.

Since Qubilay Khan only esteemed the Sa-skya sect of Tibetan Buddhism, other religions became less important. He appointed the leader of that sect first as 'State Tutor' (1260) and then as 'Imperial Tutor' (1270). Before the end of the Yüan dynasty, 14 leaders of the Sa-skya sect had held the post of 'Imperial Tutor', thereby enjoying special power. However, Tibetan Buddhism was only favoured at the Mongol court, i.e. the Yüan dynasty; within Mongol society as a whole, shamanism remained dominant.