PŪRVĀPARAPRAJÑĀBHINANDANAM EAST AND WEST, PAST AND PRESENT

Indological and Other Essays in Honour of Klaus Karttunen

EDITED BY

BERTIL TIKKANEN & ALBION M. BUTTERS

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THE MACEDONIAN MONTH XANDIKOS IN GANDHĀRAN INSCRIPTIONS

Richard Salomon

ABSTRACT

The Macedonian month Xandikos ($\Xi\alpha\nu\delta\iota\kappa\acute{o}\varsigma$), one of eight Macedonian months attested in Indian inscriptions, has previously been noted in only one Gandhāran inscription. However, it also occurs in an inscription on an incense burner dated in the year 24 of the era of Kaniṣka, though it was not hitherto recognized as such.

1. MACEDONIAN MONTHS IN GANDHĀRAN INSCRIPTIONS

It is by now well-known that the Macedonian calendar was in wide use in the northwestern borderlands of the Indian subcontinent, known in antiquity as Gandhāra, between approximately the first century BC and second century AD. By now eight different Macedonian months¹ have been identified in Buddhist inscriptions in Kharoṣṭhī script and Gāndhārī language from this region and period. Among them, the month Xandikos ($\Xi \alpha \nu \delta \iota \kappa \acute{o}\varsigma$) has hitherto been known only from one such inscription, namely the reliquary inscription of the [Azes?] year 60 (Salomon 2000: 55–59). But it is the contention of this article that Xandikos also occurs in a Kharoṣṭhī inscription on an incense burner dated in the [Kaniṣka] year 24, although it was not recognized as such by the editor (Falk 2006: 402–406).

2. THE INCENSE BURNER INSCRIPTION OF THE YEAR 24

The inscription in question is written on the underside of the base of a brass incense-burner, about 50 cm in length, which is reported to have come from

¹ Artemisios, Daisios, Panemos, Loios/Oloios, Gorpaios, Apellaios, Audunaios, and Xandikos; see Salomon (2000: 57), Salomon (2003: 77), and Falk & Bennett (2009: 210). Another inscription dated in Gorpaios, not included in the preceding lists, has now been published in Falk (2010: 17–10).

"somewhere near Jalalabad in Nangahar, East Afghanistan" (Falk 2006: 403), a region which is (or at least was) extremely rich in Buddhist antiquities. Falk (2006: 404) read and translated the inscription as follows:

saṃ 20 4 khaṃtikaśaṃtigathubaṃmi bautaaṇami acaryaṇa dharmagutakaṇa parigrahami

(Given) in the year 24, in the Kṣāntika-śāntika-Śtūpa at Bahutapana(?), into the care of the teachers of the Dharmaguptakas.

Thus according to Falk, the phrase which follows "the year 24", *khamtikaśamtiga*-, was the name of the stūpa to which the incense burner was donated. However, this is the portion of the inscription where, according to the usual dating formula of inscriptions recording donations to Gandhāran Buddhist monasteries, we would expect to find the specification of the month and day. And indeed, on the basis of the eye-copy² of the inscription (reproduced here as Fig. 1) provided by the editor (Falk 2006: 405), the correct reading of this phrase seems rather to be *khsamdikasa di* [2], that is, "day 2 of Khsandika". This date is thus comparable with that on the aforementioned reliquary of the year 60, which reads *sam 20 20 20 khsamdikasa 10 4 1*, "Year 60, [day] 15 of [the month] Khsamdika."

The first syllable of the phrase in question, read by Falk as *kha*, actually seems to consist of a large superscript *kh* with a smaller *saṃ* below. It is thus similar to the first syllable of the reliquary inscription of the year 60, except that there the proportions are reversed, with the superscript *kh* smaller than the *saṃ* below it (see Salomon 2000: 58, Figs 2 and 3). The next syllable as represented in the eye copy looks like *ti*, as read by Falk, but the parallel in the other inscription leads us to expect *di*. Moreover, the third following syllable is virtually identical in form, and there the context virtually demands the reading *di*, as will be explained below. Since *ti* and *di* are very similar in many Kharoṣṭhī hands, I think that both here and in the following instance we are justified in reading *di*.³

The third syllable of the word in question is clearly ka, as read by Falk. The following character was read by him as śaṃ, but I think it must rather be sa, that is, the genitive ending of the name of the month which is expected on the basis

² As explained in Falk (2006: 403–404), due to technical difficulties in photographing the inscription a complete reproduction could not be published, and only a portion of the text – the part immediately preceding the one under discussion here – is shown in the photograph in fig. 8 at the bottom of p. 404.

³ It is theoretically conceivable that the correct reading of the second syllable is in fact ti rather than di, representing the otherwise unattested Indianized equivalent of an alternate form of the name of the month in Greek, namely $\Xi \alpha \nu \theta \nu \kappa \dot{\phi}$. However, the expected Gāndhārī equivalent of this form would rather be khsathika-, so this alternative is unlikely at best.

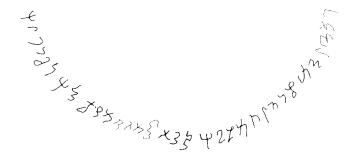


Figure 1 Eye-copy of the inscription of the year 24 on an incense burner (from Falk 2006: 405)

of the context and of the parallel inscription. The eye copy shows a diagonal line running down toward the left from the head of the *s*, which would suggest the reading *so*. But again on the grounds of context and numerous formulaic parallels in the dates of Kharoṣṭhā inscriptions, I am inclined to provisionally dismiss this unexpected stroke as an engraver's error or a crack in the metallic surface, though only a direct examination of the object itself could confirm this.

The next letter, like the second one discussed above, looks in the eye-copy like ti, but here the context virtually demands that it be read as di, that is, the abbreviation for divase 'on the day', which regularly follows the name of the month in inscriptional dates of this type. This, as noted above, justifies reading the earlier occurrence of the same syllable as di rather than ti.

The last letter of the sequence in question, which was read by Falk as *ga*, should, according to the interpretation being proposed here, be the numeral for the day of the month. As shown in the eye-copy, the character has a peculiar form which does not correspond exactly to any normal numerical character of Kharoṣṭhī script, nor to the normal shape of *ga* or any other letter, but it could be a cursively written form of *2*, or conceivably a miswritten or badly preserved *20*. Once again, the correct reading could only be established by an examination of the original inscription – if then.

According to Falk's interpretation (2006: 405), the name of the monastery to which the incense burner was dedicated was *khamtikaśamtiga*, equivalent to Sanskrit *kṣāntika-śāntika*, whereas the following word *baütaaṇami*, which he hesitatingly equates with Sanskrit *bahutapana 'much heat/much penance', refers to its location. According to the reinterpretation being proposed here, baütaaṇami alone describes the stūpa, referring either to its name or its loca-

tion (if the two were different). I will not, however, venture an identification or interpretation of this proper name.

I therefore propose the following reinterpretation of the inscription as a whole:

saṃ 20 4 khsaṃdikas[a] di [2] thubaṃmi baütaaṇami acaryaṇa dharmagutakaṇa parigrahami

(Given in) the year 24, day 2 (?) of Khsaṃdika (Xandikos) to the stūpa at Baütaaṇa, in the possession of the Dharmaguptaka masters.

3. DATE OF THE INSCRIPTION

As to the absolute date of the object and accompanying inscription, according to Falk (2006: 405) its palaeographic features indicate that the year 24 of the unspecified era should be attributed to "the first Kuṣāṇa century, resulting in a date 127 + 24 = AD 151". He thinks (p. 404) that the year 24 "cannot be an Azes date", which would correspond to *c.*34 BC. This would seem to be the correct conclusion, but it raises a problem. For the reliquary of the year 60 has more archaic palaeographic features which led me to conclude that it could not be dated in the Kaniṣka era (Salomon 2000: 57), so that I attributed it to the Azes era, equivalent to about AD 2. These two conclusions are not in and of themselves incompatible, but the very close similarities in the dating formulae suggest that they could be closer to each other in date than a century and a half. This point is not sufficiently persuasive to overrule the proposed datings, but it provides yet another reason to feel less than confident about the reliability of the methods commonly followed in the palaeographic dating of Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions, as of Indian inscriptions generally (Salomon 1998: 168–170).

4. DISPOSITION OF THE INCENSE BURNER

According to Falk (2006: 406), "The burner never made it to the *gandhakuṭ*ī, since it was meant from the start to be given into a newly built or enlarged stūpa in the year Kuṣāṇa 24, just like the 'perfume box', *gandhakaraṇḍa*, which likewise was made to be deposited inside the enlargement section of the so-called Kaniṣka-stūpa at Peshawar." Here the implication seems to be that since the inscription refers to the receiving stūpa in the locative case (*thubami bautaaṇami*), the inscribed object was intended to be permanently interred "in" the stūpa as a supplemental offering together with the relics which the stūpa must have contained. However, I do not think that this conclusion is warranted by the text of the inscription. For other inscriptions on portable objects such as vases,

bowls, and lamps sometimes similarly include the word $st\bar{u}pa$ in the locative case together with a toponym, as in the following cases:

- 1. Utmanzai lamp inscription [CKI 175]: thuvami danamukhe gramathuvami sagaraksidasa danamukhe.
- 2. Butkara earthenware vase [CKI 218]: thubami dhamaraïami da(*namukhe)...
- 3. Inscribed stone bowl from Bajaur (?) [CKI 404]: ... daṇamuhe io vajrakuḍae ṇiyatati thubami ...

In these cases, it is clear that the locative form does not mean literally "in" the stūpa, but rather refers metonymically to the monastic institution associated with it. In grammatical terms, it can be understand as a referential rather than a spatial locative, corresponding to English "to" and specifying the stūpa, or rather its monastery, as the recipient of the donation.

Since no information as to the circumstances of the discovery of the incense burner is available, we cannot be sure about its disposition, but, pace Falk, the inscription does not imply that the object was never put to practical use in the monastery affiliated with the Bautaaṇa stūpa. It is true that the inscription on it does not include the word *daṇamukha* which is normally used in donative inscriptions on utensils and portable objects, but there are other instances where this term is omitted from inscriptions of this type (see Salomon 1999: 241). In the case of the famous "perfume box" from the Peshawar stūpa referred to by Falk, a donated utensil was apparently reused as a reliquary or supplemental offering, just as water-pots were sometimes recycled to serve as containers for the ritual interment of bodily relics and/or manuscripts (Salomon 1999: 80, 152, 246; 2009: 20). But I think we can be fairly sure that neither that perfume box nor the incense burner in question here was originally donated with the intention that they be interred in a stūpa, although the former, at least, eventually was.

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