

## Foreword

My primary intention in compiling this small volume is to provide a first reader for those who have already obtained a basic knowledge of Old Khotanese, for instance from the ‘Introduction to Khotanese’ which forms the first part of R. E. Emmerick’s *Handbook of Khotanese* (2024). However, since the present book includes a morphological summary and a glossary in which all inflected forms are fully parsed, it should also be usable by complete beginners (so long as they possess a general familiarity with the standard grammatical terminology used in the fields of Indo-Iranian and Indo-European languages). Some details, especially in the commentary and the etymological notes in the glossary, may also be of interest even to specialists.

Users of Emmerick’s ‘Introduction’ will be aware that, for didactic purposes, it presents an idealized and rather artificial form of the language, far more regular in its orthography and morphology than that of any surviving manuscript. Only in the penultimate Chapter 29, written by Mauro Maggi, does it offer a taste of ‘real’ Old Khotanese, exemplified by a passage from the principal manuscript of the *Book of Zambasta* (followed in Chapter 30 by a sample of Late Khotanese as found in the *Mañjuśrī-nairātmyāvatāra-sūtra*). As a comparatively long and well-preserved narrative, the ‘Tale of Bhadra’, Chapter 2 of the *Book of Zambasta*, seems particularly suitable to provide a more substantial sample of Old Khotanese as it is actually attested in the surviving manuscripts.

On the assumption that most users of this *Reader* are likely to come to it after learning Khotanese from Emmerick’s ‘Introduction to Khotanese’, many references to that work are included, in particular regarding points of grammar and Buddhist technical terms. Where the grammatical interpretation given here differs from that in Emmerick’s ‘Introduction’, this is generally pointed out explicitly. Some differences, however, are merely terminological. For example, the cases which Emmerick calls ‘genitive-dative’ and ‘instrumental-ablative’ are here described by the simpler terms ‘genitive’ and ‘ablative’.

Some learners of Khotanese will come to it with a knowledge of other Iranian or more generally Indo-European languages, others with a background in Indian and Buddhist studies. Since no prior knowledge of Iranian languages, or of Sanskrit and Buddhist terminology, is required, it is to be hoped that both groups will find that this *Reader* fulfils their needs.

Finally, I would like to thank Ruixuan Chen, Alessandro Del Tomba, Marco Fattori and Agnes Korn, whose many excellent suggestions have greatly improved both the content and the presentation of this book, and above all Jonathan Silk, who has kindly acted as my adviser in matters of Buddhist doctrine and terminology and has contributed most of the notes on such topics in addition to §2 of the Introduction.

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