

Bactria and Tukharistan in Chinese Buddhist scriptures: A case study of three *Vibhāṣā* texts*

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This article analyzes the occurrences of the **Tukhāraka* language in the earliest Chinese translation of *Vibhāṣā* texts, T.1547 *Biposha lun* 鞞婆沙論 (tr. 383 CE), through a comparison with its counterparts in two later versions, T.1546 *Apitan piposha lun* 阿毘曇毘婆沙論 (tr. 437–439) and T.1545 *Apidamo da piposha lun* 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論 (tr. 656–659). After an overview of the usage of “Bactria” and “Tukharistan” in Iranian studies and their known transcriptions in Chinese literature (§1), I go back to a note by Watters (1904), who connected Skt. *tukhāra-* with *Dōuqūluó* 兜咭羅¹ in T.1509 *Da zhidu lun* 大智度論 (tr. 402–405/406, see §2). The discussion by Lévi (1897), Müller (1918), and Pelliot (1934) about this enigmatic language is then introduced, followed by a closer look at the translation process of T.1547 and the biography of Saṅghabhūti, the reciter of the Indic original (§3). In Section 4, the life of Dharmanandin from Tukharistan are reviewed, and in Section 5 I suggest, based on woodblock prints variations, which script and language he would most likely have used for noting down Saṅghabhūti’s recitation, i.e. Brāhmī and Buddhist Sanskrit. The scholastic debate on the Buddha’s language proficiency in T.1547 as the immediate context of the **Tukhāraka* language is then compared with the parallel exegesis in T.1546 and T.1545 (§6). Moreover, two Mahāyānic texts that mention the “language of Yuezhi” are reconsidered (§7). As a result, several hapaxes such as *Póqūlí* 婆佉梨 (EMC *ba-k^hia-li*) in T.1547 and *Bóhēluó* 博喝羅 (EMC/LMC *pak-xat-la*) in T.1545 are proposed to be related to Balkh or Bactria, which seems to be geolinguistically distinguishable from Tukharistan in T.1547 and T.1545.

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¹ In this article, tone marks are in principle given only for transcriptions that are relevant to my main topic. Pulleyblank’s EMC or LMC reconstruction is provided according to his periodisation (Pulleyblank 1991: 1–2) that the two are to be approximately divided by 601 CE, the year of completion of the dictionary *Qieyun* 切韻. Although his theory does have minor problems (for instance, see Sims-Williams 2016: 276 on EMC *tr* ~ Sogd. *č*), these do not affect my central arguments here.

1. Introduction

There have been differing views on the cultural and geographical distinction between Bactria and Tukharistan. The recent discovery of the ancient form $\tau\omicron\chi\omicron\alpha\rho\sigma\tau\alpha\nu\omicron$ ‘Tokhwarstan’ in Bactrian, from the year 10 of Kanishka I (Sims-Williams 2015), has prompted scholars to explore the issue anew and in more detail.

Previously, in an historical map of Central Asia, de la Vaissière (2004: *Carte 2*) labeled the vast land between the Hissar Range and the Hindukush with the general term “*Bactriane-Tokharestan*”. While archaeologists working on prehistory and the Hellenistic world usually see the drainage basin of the Amu Darya as Bactria and Northeast Afghanistan as “*Bactriane orientale*”,² historians more often say “Tukharistan”, following Chinese and Islamic Classics (Bactr. $\tau\omicron\chi\omicron\alpha\rho\sigma\tau\alpha\nu\omicron$, NP Ṭuxāristān , etc., BD II: 270; the spellings in English vary).³ For example, the *Ḥudūd al-‘Ālam* says that Khulm “lies between Balkh and Ṭuxāristān ” and that Tukharistan was “a pleasant province consisting mostly of mountains” (Minorsky 1970: 108).⁴ Therefore, Kuwayama is of the opinion that “Balkh was never included all the time in Tokharestan which only covers the modern Katagan (ancient Kadagstan) in the Surkhab valley and the Takkar area including Qal‘a-ye Zal on the Khanabad-Kunduz rivers” (p.c., email on 31 Aug. 2022).⁵ Similarly, Inaba (2022: 38) states that seventh-century Tukharistan *sensu stricto* was between Balkh and Badakhshan. In one of his latest maps, de la Vaissière also separates the two regions (de la Vaissière 2024: *Carte 2*).

In Chinese chronicles, Tukharistan as a state or country (*guo* 國) appears in the *Weishu* 魏書 and the *Suishu* 隋書 as *Tūhūluóguó* 吐呼羅國 and *Tūhuǒluóguó* 吐火羅國, respectively (Ching & Galambos 2020: 40–42, 59–60). When Xuanzang passed there around 630, he found that Tukharistan (*Dūhuǒluó* 覩貨邏 / LMC *tuǎ'-xua'-la*, as he transcribed Skt. *Tukhāra-*) was no longer unified but divided into 27 regions or polities (T.2087[LI]872a5–10). While Xuanzang considered Balkh (*Fúhè* 縛喝)⁶ to be one of these, considerable discussion on the geographical extent of Tukharistan has arisen from

² Francfort 2022: 97. See also Bernard 2002, esp. p. 1289, fig. 1.

³ For instance, see Shiio 1912, Kuwayama 1989, Arakawa 1997 (esp. p. 631, n. 4), Inaba 2022.

⁴ See also Y. Yoshida’s remark on *Fúdiyē* 縛底耶, the capital city of Tukharistan (*Tūhuǒluóguó* 吐火羅國) in the travelogue of Hyecho (Chin. Huichao 慧超, 704–787) from Korea as Commentary No. 145 in Kuwayama 1992: 146.

⁵ Kuwayama’s “Tokharestan” is narrower than Xuanzang’s. In his view, the *Tūhuǒluóguó* in the *Suishu* (SS, j. 83, 1853–1854) refers to the land in its strictest sense, namely the area of Qal‘a-ye Zal, known as Warwāliz or Valvālīj in Islamic sources (Minorsky 1970: 109). See also Kuwayama 1992: 146, Commentary No. 144; Kuwayama 2020: 125–127; Kuwayama 2022b: 330.

⁶ LMC *ffijyak/ffhak-xat*, which can present Bactr. $\beta\alpha\chi\lambda\omicron$ (Sims-Williams 2016: 279). See the attestations in T.2053[L]228a22–c1; T.2087[LI]872b29–873a24.

the fact that Termez had no king in his record (cf. de la Vaissière 2010a: 522), along with the problem that the polities he actually lists have been calculated to be 29 instead of 27 (cf. Kuwayama 2020: 124–125).

As for Balkh and Bactria, Enoki has largely complemented Bailey's list of their different transcriptions by providing the ones in Chinese.⁷ In addition to *Fúhè*, he pointed out more variants in the Chinese *Tripiṭaka*, e.g. *Póqūluó* 婆伽羅,⁸ *Bóqūluó* 薄伽羅,⁹ *Fúkēluó* 縛渴羅,¹⁰ and *Fúdīyē* 縛底耶.¹¹ He further argued that the three foreign city names *Bótí* 薄提,¹² *Bózhī* 薄知,¹³ and *Bóluó* 薄羅¹⁴ in the *Weishu* all denote Bactra, capital city of Bactria, during the Northern Wei 魏 period (386–535).¹⁵

⁷ Bailey 1942: 22; Enoki 1958: 9–11; Enoki 1998: 63–66.

⁸ EMC *ba-k^hia-la*. The example in T.721[XVII]411a15–16 given by Enoki is wrong: It actually refers to a kind of flower and is given as *suōqūluó* 娑伽羅 in the Pilu canon preserved in the Library of Japanese Imperial Court. It either presents Skt. *bakula*-/vakula- (*Mimusops elengi*, MW: 719b; if the attested *poquluo* is correct) or a text corruption for Skt. *sakha*- (*Mimosa catechu*, MW: 1130b, in case the reading should be corrected to *suoquluo*). To my knowledge, *Póqūluó* as a state or polity is attested only in the Mahāyānic *Yuezang fen* 月藏分 (**Candragarbha-sūtra*) translated by Dharmakṣema (385–433, from India) *et al.*, see T.397[XIII]371c1, 374a25. At the time, Lévi (1905: 271, 283) restored *Póqūluó* as Skt. *vakhara- “(?)”.

⁹ EMC *bak-k^hia-la*, LMC *phak-k^hia-la*. It is collected by Enoki from the biography of late sixth-century Dharmagupta (Damojiduo 達摩笈多) in T.2060[L]435a29. Incidentally, in the works of ZHU Fonian 竺佛念 (?–at least 413, see §3), this transcription is reserved for the Venerable Bakkula/Vak(k)ula.

¹⁰ LMC *fhjyak/fhak-k^hat-la*, see T.2066[LI]2a11, 3b14. It is to be noted that *kē* 渴 (LMC *k^hat*) can match the [x] in Bactr. Βαχλο [vaxl] or an Indic form of it, where the plosive *t*, due to the logographic nature of Chinese writing, can theoretically present a vowel's shortness, unaccentedness or even unvoicedness. An example of *-t* rendering a relatively shorter or unaccented vowel is Dharmakṣema's rendition of Skt. *Darada*- (*Dáluótuó* 達羅陀, EMC *dat-la-da*, see Lévi 1905: 263). As for EMC/LMC *-t* used for rendering foreign consonant clusters, it is seen, for instance, in *shījī* 失雞 (LMC *ṣit-kjiaj*), the typical transcription of the Kuchean (Tocharian B) suffix *-śke* in anthroponyms (Ching 2011: 66 n. 12; Ching 2016: 42).

¹¹ LMC *fhjyak/fhak-tiaj'-jia*, in Hyecho's travelogue (Kuwayama 1992: 146–147).

¹² EMC *bak-dej*; a city in the state of Tuhuluo, cf. WS, j. 102, 2471; Ching & Galambos 2020: 40–42.

¹³ EMC *bak-triä/tri*, cf. WS, j. 102, 2465. Concerning the city and the kingdom with the same name, Sims-Williams (2016: 276–277) supports Marquart's proposal (1901: 214) of linking it with Balkh/Bactria. As the direct source, he suggests Sogd. *vāxč or a gentilic derivation *vāxčī. The kingdom is termed *Baiti* 白題 by the Southern Dynasties in China, cf. de la Vaissière 2010a: 522; Yu 2012: 160–161; Ching & Galambos 2020: 42, 73, 85.

¹⁴ EMC *bak-la*, i.e. the Kidarites' capital city after their westward migration, cf. WS, j. 102, 2468; Pelliot 1934: 42; Ching & Galambos 2020: 26–29.

¹⁵ See also Tremblay 2004: 137 fn. 87, de la Vaissière 2010b: 215–216. However, Kuwayama (1985: 147–149) expresses his counterargument concerning *Bótí* and *Fúdīyē*.

Interestingly, a Khotanese-Sanskrit text written on the verso of Pelliot Chinois 2787, a fragmentary scroll from Dunhuang containing the Chinese *Nyāyānusāriṇī* translated by Xuanzang in 653–654 (T.1582, j. 5), says that the family of Kanishka the Great originated “in the kingdom of Bāhlaka (Balkh), in Tokhāristān” (Khot. *bāhulaka-vaṣayā ttahvārasthaima* in Bailey’s segmentation in 1942, §§158–159).¹⁶ Since the Sanskrit counterpart *bāhulaka-vaṣāye* (§§156–157) is in the locative singular, Bailey re-translated the Khotanese passage as “in the Bāhulaka-vaṣaya Tahvārasthāna” (1965: 107), maintaining his interpretation of the Khotanese form of Tukharistan (**Tahvārasthāna*) as an explanation of the kingdom of Bactria (Skt. *Bāhulaka-*, cf. Bailey 1942: 22–23). No matter whether Khotanese Buddhists fully equated the **Tahvārasthāna* restored by Bailey with the kingdom of Balkh or not,¹⁷ in their eyes these two terms could clarify each other (see Fig. 1). However, this could be due to Khotanese folk knowledge after the 7th century, and earlier Chinese Buddhist texts are to be re-examined.

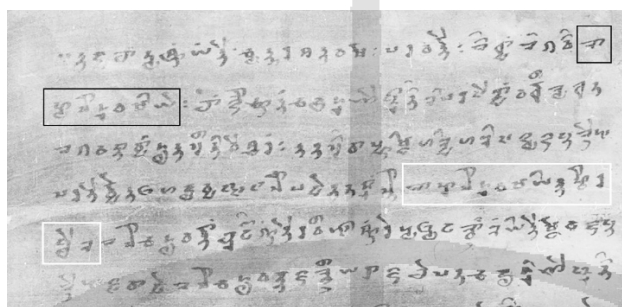


Fig. 1. Part of the Khotanese-Sanskrit text on the verso of Pelliot Chinois 2787.
Black frame: *bāhulaka-vaṣāye* / White frame: *bāhulaka-vaṣayā ttahvārasthaima*
Microfilm image © Bibliothèque nationale de France; photoshopped by the author.

2. Tukharistan in T.1509 **Mahāprajñāpāramitā-upadeśa*

In his translation of Xuanzang’s travelogue, T.2087 *Da Tang Xiyu ji* 大唐西域記, Watters (1904: 103) noted that Tukharistan is further found in T.1509 *Da zhidu lun* 大智度論 **Mahāprajñāpāramitā-upadeśa* (tr. 402–405/406), the *Treatise on the Great Virtue of*

¹⁶ Bailey 1942: 18–19. See also Bailey 1969: 107, with slight changes of segmentation.

¹⁷ Juxtaposition of Khotanese locative forms is uncommon. Another example is in Or.11252/2, a1: *cira kṣvā auvā* ‘In Cira in the Six Villages’ (Skjærvø 2003: 85–86), and Cira is known to be one of the six. The example shows that in Khotanese official documents an administratively inferior district (Cira, a village or town) appears before the prefecture or region (the “Six Villages”) in which it was located. If this custom is applicable to the passage about Kanishka, then the kingdom of Balkh was a polity in Tukharistan as described by Xuanzang. Incidentally, the order is inverted in the Chinese documents issued there, e.g. *Liucheng Zhiluo* 六城質邏 ‘[in the] Six Villages, [at] Cira’. On the administrative system in the kingdom of Khotan, see Rong & Wen 2009: 106–107.

Wisdom believed to be composed by the great Mahāyāna master Nāgārjuna (ca. 2nd cent. CE?), as well as in T.1547 *Biposha lun* 鞞婆沙論 **Vibhāṣā(-śāstra)*, a Sarvāstivāda compendium on doctrinal issues by an Arhat called *Sita- or *Śītapāṇi (Shituopanni 尸陀槃尼).¹⁸ The transcription of Tukharistan in the former text is *Dōuqūluó* 兜咭羅 (EMC *taw-k^hiā^h-la*), which is glossed by the main translator Kumārajīva (?–413) and his team as “Small/Lesser Yuezhi” (*Xiao Yuezhi* 小月氏) in small characters (in English translation placed in curly brackets):¹⁹

(1) *Da zhidu lun*, j. 25

弊生處者，安陀羅、舍婆羅裸國也、兜咭羅小月氏、修利、安息、大秦國等。在此邊國中生，若在大眾中，則多怖畏。佛在迦毘羅婆中國生故無所畏。(cf. T.1509[XXV] 243a9–12)

‘Inferior locations of one’s birth: The states of Andhra, Śābara {the country of the naked}, **Tukhāra {Small/Lesser Yuezhi}**, Sogdiana (Xiuli 修利), Arsacid Parthia/Sassanid Iran (Anxi 安息), [and] Roman Orient (Daqin 大秦), etc. One who was born in such a country on the frontier would have a lot of terrible fears when being in the mass [of non-Buddhists]. The Buddha was born in Kapilavastu [in/of?] **Madhyadeśa*,²⁰ so he had no fear.’ (tr. mine)

Born in the kingdom of Kucha and trained abroad – notably in Shale 沙勒 (Kashgar) and Jibin 罽賓 (Kashmir?)²¹ – Kumārajīva no doubt knew the meaning of Tukhāra and its neighbouring countries. For this reason, the above passage was taken by Lévi (1933: 25–

¹⁸ Berchert 1987: 314. On the legends about the origin and initial redaction of *Vibhāṣā* texts in Chinese and Tibetan sources, see Funayama 2021, esp. 89, 97–99, 102–104. On its school affiliation from a philosophical perspective, see the latest work by Fujimoto 2022. Sanskrit personal names reconstructed from Chinese transcriptions are asterisked when they are highly uncertain.

¹⁹ Lévi 1933: 24–25; Pelliot 1934: 36; Lamotte 1970: 1584–1585; Ching & Galambos 2020: 19. I cite Chinese Buddhist texts with my own punctuation, segmentation, and slight revision of the Taishō edition by taking the general text structure and woodblock print variations into consideration.

²⁰ If *Jia-pi-luo-po-zhong-guo-sheng* 迦毘羅婆中國生 is not a mistake for *Jiapiluopoguo zhong sheng* 迦毘羅婆國中生 ‘born in the state of Kapilavastu’, then the order of Kapilavastu (*Jiapiluopo* 迦毘羅婆) and *Zhongguo* 中國 ‘Middle land/country’ reveals non-Chinese syntax (cf. fn. 17). On the range of *Zhongguo* as Central India, see Funayama 2013: fig. 2.

²¹ Kumārajīva’s early education is hidden behind legendary narratives. Pelliot (2002: 9) surmised that he studied abroad twice, during his childhood and during his adolescence. Jibin is Kashmir according to Zürcher (2007: 202, 226) and several other scholars, but it has been shown by Kuwayama (1990: 43–59) to be a typical name for Gandhāra even in the 4th–5th centuries on several occasions, cf. Funayama 2013: 4, 50. In the context of Kumārajīva’s biography, I follow Yoshikawa and Funayama (2009: 147) in identifying Jibin more probably as Kashmir. Incidentally, the Bactrian form of Kashmir, *κασπιρο*, was recently discovered in a text dated to the late 4th century (Sims-Williams & Grenet 2023: 136, 141).

26) to show that Kuchean (Tocharian B) is distinct from the autochthonous language of Tukharistan. Likewise, he took it to prove that the Tikhāra people in Sanskrit texts are to be identified with the Yuezhi people who migrated westward from the Ordus Plateau or Hexi Corridor at the turn of the 2nd century BCE. As a result, von Richthofen's theory (1877: 439 fn. 5) that "Yuezhi = *Tóχaroi*" became widely accepted (see §7).

Enoki (1958: 20–22; 1998: 83–85) re-examined the passage critically in his study on the Kidarites. Pointing out the corresponding lemma in the *Fan Fanyu* 翻梵語, a Sanskrit-Chinese dictionary compiled in six-century southern China (T.2130 [LIV]1034 b16), he noticed a curious phenomenon: For Kumārajīva's translation team and their followers, Gandhāra proper and the Swat region (Uḍḍiyāna), both to the south of the Hindukush, were "Great(er) Yuezhi" (*Da Yuezhi* 大月氏 as name of country) or simply Yuezhi, whereas Tukharistan (= Bactria in Enoki's view) to the north of the Hindukush was "Small/Lesser Yuezhi".²² This is markedly opposite to the traditional and official view since the compilation of the *Shiji* 史記 (written in the 2nd–1st cent. BCE) and the *Hanshu* 漢書 (written in the 1st–2nd cent. CE), which use "Yuezhi" not only to denote the nomads defeated by the Xiongnu but also to designate the Oxus plain and a part of the western Pamirs as the name of the people's new territory since the 130s BCE. In other words, after the decline of the Kushan Empire, Chinese official historians and some Buddhists living in China – including Kumārajīva and his team – had conflicting views on the relative mightiness, prosperity, or historicity with regard to the status of Gandhāra-Uḍḍiyāna and Bactria-Tukharistan.²³

How to understand this discrepancy? First of all, one should note that in Kumārajīva's understanding *Dōuqūluó* is syntactically a realm or country, i.e. Tukharistan, rather than a people or tribe, although this is not so explicit due to his strategy of producing a concise translation: He would very likely refrain from adding *guo* 國 'state (in ancient Chinese feudalism); region, realm, polity, nation' to all the geographical names in the series.²⁴ Therefore, one may interpret "Tukhāra" in his source text – even though it no doubt comes from an earlier Indic tradition in which it usually designates a people – as a land that was formerly settled by the Tikhāras (or Tokharoi as they were called by the Greeks) and (afterwards?) ruled by the Yuezhi (as they were called by the Chinese). Before the

²² Not to be confused with the Yuezhi's smaller branch remaining around Qinghai (China), cf. Pelliot 1934: 43. Nevertheless, Pelliot (1934: 44–45) was incorrect in identifying Kumārajīva's "Tukhāra / Small(er) Yuezhi" with Gandhāra or Northwest India.

²³ See Enoki 1958, Enoki 1998, and Ching & Galambos 2020: 26–31 on the phenomenon that Bactria-Tukharistan was termed "Great Yuezhi" and Gandhāra "Smaller Yuezhi" by Northern Wei historians. As set out by Enoki (1958: 47–48, fn. 48, 49; 1998: 82–83, fn. 99, 100), that Gandhāra was a colony of the Kidarites is not relevant for the identification of the branch of Yuezhi in Qinghai in the remote past.

²⁴ See Funayama 2013: 99–100 on a general evaluation of Kumārajīva's strategy.

Kidarites, it was Kujula Kadphises and his successors who assumed *Da Yuezhi* as the official Chinese name of their kingdom for conducting diplomatic and trading affairs with Eastern Han (25–220) and CAO Wei (220–265) dynasties.

Whether Kushan and Kidarite rulers were genealogically of Yuezhi stock or not is a question without final answer for the time being, but in the case of Imperial Iran, Chinese were used to call it Anxi 安息 as late as more than one century after the Sassanids overturned the Arsacids. It is according to the diplomatic protocol in the Han court that the Kushan Empire and its citizens were often called “Yuezhi 月氏” by Chinese. Accordingly, a number of immigrants from the empire’s territory in the 2nd–3rd centuries CE chose ZHI 支 (for Yuezhi 月支 as a transcription variant) as their new surname.²⁵ This custom was observed by early Buddhists, including Dharmarakṣa, born in Dunhuang from a “Yuezhi” family (active in 266–306).²⁶ Nonetheless, Dharmakṣema (385–433) from India, who founded his famous school in the same city, used (or created?) a specific name for Balkh or Bactra, i.e. *Póqūluó* 婆伽羅 (see *supra*, fn. 8).

When the young Kumārajīva crossed the Pamirs and then a “mountain to the north of Yuezhi” (*Yuezhi beishan* 月氏北山, the Hindukush according to Enoki 1998: 85) before the 380s, Bactria-Tukharistan had been invaded by the Chionites and threatened by Shapur II approximately from the 350s onwards (Grenet 2002: 220; Sims-Williams & Grenet 2023: 136; de la Vaissière 2024: 693–694). Even though it is generally assumed that Sasanian overlordship ceased there in 375–379 (Sims-Williams & Grenet 2023: 142), it is possible that the vast region known to the pious Buddhist Kumārajīva was culturally or economically inferior than Gandhāra, despite the fact that the latter was also obliged to accept the suzerainty of the Sassanids. Nevertheless, Buddhism existed in 4th-century Bactria-Tukharistan, as one can observe from the translation forum of T.1547 *Biposha lun* in China.

3. Tukharistan in T.1547 *Biposha lun* and its translation process

T.1547 *Biposha lun* was first referenced in a footnote about the ancient Sakas by Lévi (1897: 10–11, fn. 1), where he translated a passage from it:

Le Bhagavat connaît la langue *Tchen-tan* mieux que les hommes du *Tchen-tan* ; le Bhagavat connaît la langue *Teou-k'iu-le* mieux que les hommes du *Teou-k'iu-le*.

²⁵ Umehara 2001: 288. See also Falk 2015: 126, Text 115; Ching & Galambos 2000: 14–15. In fact, there is no firm textual evidence to prove or reject the widespread assumption that Kujula was a Yuezhi prince by descent. Concerning the negative arguments among Sinologists, see Yu 2012: 6–9; Kuwayama 2017: 79–80; Kuwayama 2022a.

²⁶ Zürcher 2007: 65–70, but to say that his family is “Indo-scythian” (p. 65) is obsolete.

Confirming that this was the earliest mention of “Tukhāra” from the textual sources available then, Müller (1918: 575) retranslated it into German as follows:

Der Buddha versteht die Sprache von Tšin-tan (= China) besser als ein geborener Chinese, und ebenso versteht er die Sprache von Tukharak besser als ein Eingeborener von Tukharak.

In the context of von Richthofen’s theory, the initial motive of Lévi and his contemporaries was to identify the language of the Tokharoi, the invaders of the Graeco-Bactrian kingdom, also termed “the Indo-Scythians” in their discourse. Pelliot (1934: 34) supposed that the word in question, in pinyin *Dōuqūlē* 兜佉勒 (EMC *təw-k^hia-lək*), represents **Tukhāraka* or “une forme iranisante **Tukhāraga* [> *Tukhārag*]”. In my opinion, although *Dōuqūlē* is in this passage again used for a realm (cf. *Zhēndàn* 真旦 for Skt. *Cīnasthāna*–; full text in §6.1), we may also consider a source form suffixed with *°ika*: Cf. Sogd. *swydyk* ‘Sogdian’ transcribed as *Sūtē* 粟特, EMC *suawk-dək* (Tremblay 2004: 133); Sogd. *βtyk/βxtyk* ‘Bactrian’ (de la Vaissière 2010b); Bactr. *Βαμοιαντιγο/Βαμοιανυο* adj. or noun ‘(inhabitant) of Bamiyan’ (BD II: 201a); Skt. *Bāhlika*–, *Bāhlīka*–, etc. ‘Bactrian’ (MW: 729c; see also Gandh. *Bahaliēṇa* in CKI 60, instrumental singular of **Bahaliga* [<https://gandhari.org/dictionary/bahaliga>, access on 4 Oct. 2024]). In Section 5 I shall argue that the source text taught by Saṅghabhūti (Sengqiebacheng 僧伽跋澄)²⁷ was most probably in Sanskrit, but nevertheless the transcription of *Dōuqūlē* may reveal traces of the accent of his or Dharmanandin’s native language. Until the discovery of an Indic version of T.1547, I tentatively keep to Pelliot’s restoration **Tukhāraka* and flexibly use it as an adjective or noun.

The homeland of Saṅghabhūti, Jibin, again leads to ambiguity for scholars,²⁸ but Dharmanandin (Tanmonanti 曇摩難提)²⁹ was surely from Tukharistan (§4). Their collaboration in translating T.1547 is described in the biography of Saṅghabhūti in the *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 “*Biographies of eminent monks*”:

(2) Biography of Saṅghabhūti (GSZ, j. 1)³⁰

先是大乘之典未廣，禪數之學甚盛，既至長安，咸稱法匠焉。符(for 苻)堅祕書郎趙正崇仰大法，嘗聞外國宗習《阿毘曇婆沙》而跋澄諷誦，乃四事禮供，請譯梵文①。遂共

²⁷ Scholarly opinions differ on reconstructing Saṅghabhūti (adopted by Radich 2010: 122 and Fujimoto 2022: 23, etc.) or Saṅghabhadra (Zürcher 2007: 202, etc.). Here the former option is adopted. See also Yoshikawa & Funayama 2009: 110.

²⁸ CSZJJ, j. 10, T.2145[LV]73c3–8. I follow Funayama (2013: 74) in taking Jibin in his biography as “Gandhāra and/or Kashmir”.

²⁹ It is also possible to reconstruct **Dharmanandika* (Pkt. *°diya*) or **Dharmananda* (Yoshikawa & Funayama 2009: 115).

³⁰ See also its earlier version in CSZJJ, j. 3, T.2145[LV]99a19–b9.

名德法師釋道安等集僧宣譯。跋澄口誦經本，外國沙門曇摩難提筆受為梵(?)文②，佛圖羅刹宣譯，秦沙門敏智筆受為晉本。以偽秦建元十九年譯出，自孟夏至仲秋方訖。(cf. T.2059[L]328b3–b10)

‘Previously, the Mahāyāna scriptures were not widespread, and the studies on meditation and numerical [groups and categories of concepts]³¹ were popular. After [Saṅghabhūti’s] arrival in Chang’an, all the people praised him [as a] professional master of the Law. ZHAO Zheng 趙正, Assistant in the Palace Library of FU Jian 苻堅 (338–385),³² worshipped the Great Law faithfully. Having heard that [Buddhists in] foreign countries venerated and studied the **Abhidharmavibhāṣā* and that [Saṅgha]bhūti recited it, he offered him four things³³ and invited him to make a translation/transliteration/interpretation³⁴ [of/into/from?] the *fan* 梵 text/script/literature (*fanwen* 梵文①; Table 1). Therefore, he and the eminent master SHI Dao’an 釋道安 (312–385) convened the Buddhist community and translated [it] in front of them. [Saṅgha]bhūti recited the original/body (*ben* 本) of the scripture;³⁵ a foreign *śramaṇa* named Dharmanandin wrote it down³⁶ in the script/text of *fan* 梵(?) (*fanwen* 梵文, var. *huwen* 胡文②; Table 2); Buddharakṣa translated it aloud [into Chinese];³⁷ a *śramaṇa* named Minzhi 敏智 of Qin 秦 wrote down [the result] as the version of Jin 晉 (sic!).³⁸ It was translated in the 19th year of the Jianyuan reign era of the illegal Qin [dynasty] (383), from the early summer to the middle of the autumn (i.e. from the 4th to the 8th Chinese month), until it was fully done. [...]’ (tr. mine)

In other words, Saṅghabhūti recited the source text aloud; Dharmanandin noted down his recitation into a non-Chinese (*hu* 胡 or *fan* 梵) script or text (*wen* 文); Buddharakṣa (Fotuluocha 佛圖羅刹) played the key role of orally translating Saṅghabhūti’s speech into Chinese; and Minzhi produced a Chinese text as their final result. Conceivably, Dharmanandin’s task was to prepare the first Indic manuscript of the treatise in China, for religious purposes and also for future examination of the translation. As for

³¹ *shu* 數, lit. ‘number’, cf. Zürcher 2007: 203–204; Yoshikawa & Funayama 2009: 110–112.

³² The 3rd emperor the FU Qin 苻秦 dynasty (350–394, also known as the Former Qin 前秦).

³³ These are: (1) drinks and foods, (2) clothing, (3) bedding, (4) hot water and medicines.

³⁴ The primary meaning of *yi* 譯 in pre-Han times is “official interpreter”, who supported the communication with northern barbarians (Ching 2025). On the multivalent usage of this character by Buddhist translators as a verb ‘translate; transliterate; do interpreting’, see Funayama 2013, esp. pp. 75–77.

³⁵ *kou song jing ben* 口誦經本. The expression *kou song* 口誦 ‘recite orally’ was confirmed by the postscript of T.194 written by a colleague of Dao’an in CSZJJ, j. 10, cf. T.2145[LV]71b26–27.

³⁶ *bi shou* 筆受, lit. ‘received with the brush’.

³⁷ *xuan yi* 宣譯 (*yi chuan* 譯傳 in Dao’an’s preface).

³⁸ *bi shou wei Jinben* 筆受為晉本. Dao’an’s preface to T.1547 gives *bi shou wei ci Qinyan* 筆受為此秦言, lit. ‘received with the brush in the language of this/our Qin’.

Buddharakṣa, this interpreter from an unknown country in the west had “widely read [Buddhist] scriptures” (*gai lan jingdian* 該覽經典) and “travelled in mainland [China] for a long time, being fluent in Han’s language” (*jiu you zhongtu, shan xian Hanyan* 久遊中土, 善閑漢言), to the extent that “through his loud-voiced translation the *fan* 梵 text was greatly valued during the FU Qin dynasty”.³⁹

Usually, the character *fàn* 梵 (EMC *buam^h*) was reserved to render Skt. *brahman*- and *brāhmaṇa*- in Chinese Buddhist scriptures, but when denoting a script it means Brāhmī (Funayama 2013: 182; 2022: 117–124). However, due to the double meaning of *song* 誦 ‘to recite (from one’s memory); to read (a text) aloud’ and the polysemy of *wen* 文 ‘text, script, writing, literature, etc.’ and *ben* 本 ‘(primary meaning) the lower trunk/stalk or root of a plant; (n.) body, base, essence, origin, version. etc.; (adj.) original, etc.; (adv.) originally’, in addition to unsystematic revisions by later Buddhists based on their political and cultural ideology,⁴⁰ the above description is not crystal clear. Did Saṅghabhūti recite thoroughly from his memory or use a crib sheet with him? In the case of T.194 *Sengqieluocha suo ji jing* 僧伽羅剎所集經, it was indeed based on a manuscript brought to China himself (*ji ci jing ben* 齋此經本); the polyglot ZHU Fonian 竺佛念 was the interpreter⁴¹ and Huisong 慧嵩 wrote the translation down in Chinese, but no one was responsible for recording his recitation in an Indic script. In the case of T.1549 *Zun Poxumi pusa suo ji lun* 尊婆須蜜菩薩所集論, a manuscript was provided by Saṅghabhūti as well, which was then held by him, Dharmanandin, and Saṅghadeva (Sengqietipo 僧伽提婆, from Jibin) together during the translation teamwork.⁴² As for our T.1547 *Biposha lun*, Dao’an’s preface states that *jing ben shen duo, qi ren wang shi* 經本甚多, 其人忘失 (CSZJJ, j. 10, cf. T.2145[LV]73c11) in order to explain the situation that only forty chapters were successfully translated into Chinese. If we take *ben* 本 in this sentence as a noun rather than an adverb, then it means “the original of the scripture was of a big number (of stanzas or folios?), [but] this man (= Saṅghabhūti) forgot [and] lost [a part of it]”, so the situation is obscure. In Section 5 I shall return to this problem.

³⁹ *Qi xuanyi fanwen, jian zhong Fu shi* 其宣譯梵文, 見重符(苻)世 in GSZ, j. 1, T.2059[L]326b16–18. The slight difference in CSZJJ, j. 13 (T.2145[LV]99b7–9) can be ignored.

⁴⁰ For example, the above paragraph demonstrates an overt inconsistency on the legitimacy of FU Jian’s reign in Northern China. Likewise, the Chinese language appears variously as *Qinyan* 秦言, *Jinyan* 晉言, and *Hanyan* 漢言 in CSZJJ and GSZ.

⁴¹ See CSZJJ, j. 10, T.2145[LV]71b16–23. Born in Liangzhou, ZHU Fonian was of obscure ethnicity. He was skilled in intertranslating non-Chinese and Chinese languages (*jiao yi Rong Hua* 交譯戎華), see CSZJJ, j. 13, T.2145[LV]99b26.

⁴² See GSZ, j. 1 (T.2059[L]328b10–13), with text variants of *hu* and *fan* in CSZJJ, j. 10 and 13 (cf. T.2145[LV]72a2, 99b3). A detailed comparison is not attempted here.