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## The Golden *Poluo* in Sogdiana: an In-depth Analysis of the *Suishu* and *Tongdian* Passages

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**Abstract:** This paper is based on our preparation of the seminar ‘Nouvelle approche des sources chinoises (principalement le *Tongdian*) sur l’Asie centrale à l’ouest des Pamirs’ at the Collège de France since autumn 2020. We assume that the ‘golden *poluo*’ (ultimately from Sanskrit *pātra*- ?) mentioned in the entry on Cao (Ishtīkhan) in the *Suishu* was a huge container of *sharbat* or another beverage or soup, serving the poor people and worshippers around the temple of Takhsīch. The big cauldron at Khodja Akhmed Yasawi (Kazakhstan) may be a continuation of this Zoroastrian practice, of which evidence in the *Anthologie de Zādspram* is detectable. As to the gold *poluo* presented by the Tsenpo of Tubo to the Tang court in 658 and the silver one by the king of Qiuci in 675, they were both likely wine drinking vessels carefully chosen for celebrating the restoration of the Tang power in the Tarim Basin after the turbulence in the middle 650s and in the late 660s, respectively.

**Key words:** Central Asia, Sogdiana, Tarim Basin, Kucha, Tibet, Middle Iranian Epigraphy, wine drinking vessels, cauldron.

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## 1. Introduction: Tributes of gold and silver *poluos* to the Tang Emperor

Among the tributes sent to the Tang court in January 658 from the Tubo (Tibet) was something called a golden *poluo* 頗羅, which is described as a ‘mystery’ in Edward H. Schafer’s *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand*.<sup>1</sup> Given the timing of this event, these tributes might have been presented to the Emperor Gaozong as a gift for the coming Chinese New Year (CFYG 2006: 11232)<sup>2</sup>:

十二月，吐蕃贊普遣使獻金城，城上有獅子、象、駝、馬、原(for 羴)、羴等，並有人騎；並獻金瓮、金頗羅等。

In the 12th month of [of Xianqing] (10 Jan. — 7 Feb. 658), the Tsenpo of Tubo dispatched an embassy to present a [miniature of] golden city; on the city there are [reliefs or statuettes of] lion(s), elephant(s), camel(s), horse(s), ibex(es), goat(s), etc., as well as horsemen; together with [this item], a (?) gold jar, a (?) gold *poluo* and other things were also presented.

Later, in 675, a silver *poluo* was presented to Gaozong from Bai Suji 白素稽, king of Qiuci (Kucha).<sup>3</sup> The description in the *New book of Tang* was translated by Sylvain Lévi. Here we quote his French translation by converting the Wade-Gile transcription into *pinyin* (Lévi 1913: 370, cf. XTS 1975: 6232):

Pendant la période Shangyuan (674–675) [The *Cefuyuangui* spécifie: la 1re année (674), le 12e mois]<sup>4</sup>, *Suji* offrit à la Cour un *poluo* d’argent et des chevaux renommés.

In fact, the very passage in the *Cefuyuangui* (CFYG 2006: 11233) had been translated by Chavannes: the event is dated the 1st month of the 2nd year of Shangyuan (1 Feb.–1 March 675), not the 12th month of the 1st year of it as given by Lévi. The precise date is important to detect the meaning of Bai Suji’s gift, so by providing *pinyin* as well, we give Chavannes’ French translation (Chavanne 1904: 23) of the *Cefuyuangui* as follows:

上元二年正月，右驍衛大將軍龜茲王白素稽獻銀頗羅，賜帛以答之；拔汗那王獻碧頗黎及蛇黃。十二月丁亥，龜茲王白素稽獻名馬。

La deuxième année Shangyuan, le premier mois, le roi de Qiuci, Bai Suji, qui avait le titre de grand général des gardes vaillants de droite, offrit un *poluo* d’argent; on lui fit présent en retour d’étoffes de soie. Le roi du Bahanna (Ferghânah) offrit du *poli*

<sup>1</sup> See the note 81 (p. 339) for the Chapter 15, p. 256 in (Schafer 1963: 256). Unfortunately, he gave the year of the tribute of a silver *poluo* from Kucha (see *infra*) as 761 CE, obviously because he confused the Shangyuan 上元 reign period of Gaozong (674–677) with that of Suzong (760–761).

<sup>2</sup> It goes without saying that in Medieval Chinese, the grammatical gender and number of nouns are unmarked and are to be defined by the context. In this paper, this kind of alternative interpretations is explicitly stated only when it involves with our main topic.

<sup>3</sup> On the chronology of Bai Suji (r. 658 – at least 675) and other Kuchean kings in the 7th–8th cc. (Ching 2013).

<sup>4</sup> A similar passage is found in the *Taiping yulan*, *juan* 808, which is discussed by Yu Xin (Yu Xin 2012: 541–542), but he also confused the two reign periods identically called Shangyuan (Yu Xin 2021: 125). In our opinion, one cannot exclude the possibility that Bai Suji additionally presented *jin poli* 金頗黎 (lit. ‘golden glass; gold-glass’ (Chavannes 1904: 23 n. 5) on *poli* = Skt. *sphaṭika*) to Gaozong in the 12th month of the 2nd year of Shangyuan (22 Dec. 675 – 20 Jan. 676), but the whole sentence found in the *Taiping yulan* is more likely a corrupted one, possibly due to a scribal error that *zhengyue* 正月 ‘the first month’ was wrongly copied as *shier yue* 十二月 ‘the 12th month’.

verdâtre et du bézoard. Le douzième mois, le jour *dinghai*, le roi de Qiuci, Bai Suji, offrit des chevaux renommés.

A more precise record is found in the section of the annals of the Shangyuan reign period of Gaozong in the *Old book of Tang* (JTS 1975: 99–100):

二年春正月甲寅，熒惑犯房。壬戌，支汗郡王獻碧玻瓈。丙寅，以于闐為昆沙都督府，以尉遲伏闐雄為昆沙都督，分其境內為十州，以伏闐雄有擊吐蕃功故也。庚午，龜茲王白素稽獻銀頗羅。

In the 2nd year: In spring, on the *jiayin* day of the 1st month (9 Feb. 675), Mars intruded the Room mansion. On *renxu* (17 Feb.), the king of *zhihanjun* presented blue-green glass (*boli* 玻瓈).<sup>5</sup> On *bingyin* (21 Feb.), Yutian (Khotan) was [transformed] to the Pisha Area Command, and Yuchi Fushexiong was nominated as the Governor (*Dudu*) of Pisha.<sup>6</sup> His territory was divided into ten prefectures, [being still under his command,] because Fushexiong performed meritorious service when attacking the Tubo. On *gengwu* (25 Feb.), Bai Suji, king of Qiuci, presented (a?) *silver poluo*.

Very likely, the silver *poluo* was a special gift for celebrating the foundation of the Pisha Area Command.<sup>7</sup> It is known that during the Tubo expansion into the Tarim Basin, it once allied with Yutian to attack the Bohuan City of Qiuci on 25 April 670. The fall of Bohuan (approx. today's Aksu) made the Tang abandon their four garrisons in Qiuci (Kucha), Yanqi (Karashahr), Yutian (Khotan) and Shule (Kashgar), but after a successful mission to Shule around 673 (Rong Xinjiang 1987: 53–54), the king of Shule came to Chang'an in complete surrender in January 674, then Fushexiong also bowed to Gaozong on 14th January 675. It was exactly in 675 that in addition to the foundation of the Pisha Area Command, the Shule and Yanqi Area Commands were founded in the respective territories, so that the Tang rule in the basin was re-organized by conferring the military position of Governor to the kings in Khotan, Kashgar and Karashahr in the same year.<sup>8</sup> It is unclear whether Bai Suji also went to Chang'an in spring 675, bringing himself the silver *poluo*. In any case, his tribute was most probably a symbol of the revival of his kingdom as the Western headquarters of Tang in 675, although two years later, he and the Anxi Protectorate General were again attacked by the ally of the Tubo and the Tujishi (Turgesh).

As early as in 1903, the enigmatic silver *poluo* had caught Chavannes' attention (Chavannes 1903: 119, n. 2); our quotation is provided with *pinyin*:

銀頗羅。Je n'ai pas pu déterminer quelle sorte d'objet était le *poluo*. Il semble qu'on puisse l'identifier avec le *boluo* d'or 金波羅 qui était une distinction honorifique dans le royaume de Nanzhao; le *Jinshicuibian* (chap. CLX, p. 17 r<sup>o</sup>), qui en parle à la fin de ses notes sur l'inscription érigée en 766 à *Dali fu*, dit que, suivant certains auteurs, le *boluo* serait une peau de tigre; il rejette cette explication pour en adopter une autre (encore moins admissible selon nous) d'après laquelle le *boluo* serait un arbre de l'intérieur duquel les gens des pays d'Occident extrayaient une sorte de filasse qu'on pouvait filer et

<sup>5</sup> Obviously *zhihanjun* 支汗郡 is a scribal error for Bahanna 拔汗那 (Ferghana).

<sup>6</sup> See Chavannes 1904: 23 on this event in the *Cefuyuangui*. On *dudufu*, see Inaba (Inaba 2015: 107–110).

<sup>7</sup> *Pisha* (LMC pñji-ša:) possibly stands for the *Viśa*, name of Khotanese royal house.

<sup>8</sup> The foundation of *dudufu* in Kashgar, Khotan and Karashahr came later than the foundation of the sixteen *dudufus* in the west of Pamirs in 661. This phenomenon not only reveals the threat of the Tubo but also an important change of Tang's administrative strategy in the middle of the 670s. Since then, the status of the kings of Shule, Yutian and Yanqi were promoted to the same rank as Bai Suji, king of Qiuci, who had received the position of Governor in 658 precisely when he assumed the throne.

tisser (l'arbre *boluo* est cité dans la notice sur le Magadha, *Tangshu*, chap. CCXXI, p. 11 v<sup>o</sup>). Nous trouverons plus loin, dans une des notes de l'article consacré à la Sogdiane, un *poluo* d'or 金破羅 qui paraît être identique à l'objet énigmatique dont il est question ici.

The first candidate indicated by Chavannes, the golden *boluo* in Nanzhao (around today's Yunnan Province, China), was a kind of attire. In addition to the *Jinshicuibian* 金石萃編, it is found in the *New Book of Tang*, in the notice on this kingdom situated in subtropical jungles. The second one is resulted from his hypothetical equation of *boluo* 波羅 tree in the entry on Magadha with a tree transcribed by the same characters in the entry on Nanzhao:

*New Book of Tang*, *juan* 221a, on Magadha (XTS 1975: 6239)

貞觀二十一年，始遣使者自通于天子，獻波羅樹，樹類白楊。

In the 21st year of Zhenguan (647), [the king] automatically dispatched envoys to the Emperor for the first time and sent a (?) *boluo* tree as tribute; the tree is similar to poplar.

*New Book of Tang*, *juan* 222a, on Nanzhao (XTS 1975: 6269)

大和、祁鮮而西，人不蠶，剖波羅樹實，狀若絮，紐縷而幅之。

To the east of Dahe and Qixian [toponyms around Nanzhao], people do not rear silkworms but cut the fruits of *boluo* trees; [the hair] looks like silk flocculent; people twist it into thread and make fabric of it.

In other words, in the very same entry on Nanzhao in the *New Book of Tang*, there are two terms — one for an attire and the other for a tree — invariably given as *boluo* 波羅, so that Chavannes doubted if either of them could be identified with the silver *poluo*. Concerning the tree, Pelliot's identification of it with Skt. *śālmali* 'cotton trees' (*Bombax ceiba*) is generally correct (Pelliot 1904: 483, n. 1).<sup>9</sup> For this usage, one may assume two alternative ways of text corruption with regard to this uncommon form of *śālmali* (usually *shelamoli* 設拉末梨, etc.):

*boluo* 波羅 ← *poluo* 婆羅 ← *suoluo* 娑羅 (conjectured by Pelliot in 1904)

*boluo* 波羅 ← *shaluo* 沙羅 ← *suoluo* 娑羅

In any case, Chavannes' second candidate can be ruled out. Being so cautious with this problem, he did not treat his third candidate from Sogdiana any further but left the silver *poluo* untranslated in 1904, yet he expressed his doubt on Pelliot's solution of other *poluo* 婆羅 in Chinese texts with Skt. *bhāra* (unit of weight) based on the records of Funan (Indochina) in the *Nan Qishu* (Chavannes 1904: 23 n. 4; see also NQS 1972: 1016; Pelliot 1903: 259 n. 2; Pelliot 1904: 483).

## 2. Pelliot's further note on *poluo*

In order to facilitate our following discussion, we number the various forms in question as follows:

*poluo*<sup>1</sup> = *pōluó* 頗羅 (EMC p<sup>h</sup>a'-la, LMC phua'-la)

A gold one as a tribute from Tibet; a silver one as a tribute from Kucha.

<sup>9</sup> Modern Chinese *mumianshu* 木棉樹, also known as *panzhihua* 攀枝花. Other popular names are 'red silk-cotton tree', 'Malabar silk-cotton tree', etc.

*poluo*<sup>II</sup> = *pólúo* 婆羅 (EMC ba-la, LMC p<sup>h</sup>ua-la)

① [in Nanzhao] attire made of tiger skin (conjectured by Pelliot in 1904)

② [in Funan] unit of weight ?

*poluo*<sup>III</sup> = *pólúo* 破羅 (EMC p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>h</sup>-la, LMC p<sup>h</sup>ua<sup>h</sup>-la)

An enigmatic object in Chinese sources about Sogdiana.

This list was enlarged by E. von Zach, who declared in his *Lexicographische Beiträge*. Fascicule IV (Beijing, 1906) that *poluo*<sup>II</sup> with regard to Funan is identical with *pólúo* 叵羅 (EMC p<sup>h</sup>a<sup>h</sup>-la, LMC pha<sup>h</sup>-la) ‘ein Becher’ — let us number it as *poluo*<sup>IV</sup> — as well as *poluo*<sup>I</sup> in Chinese poems and other literature. By commenting Maybon’s review of this fascicule (Maybon 1907: 123), Pelliot (Pelliot 1909: 159) enforced his opinion that the *jin wu poluo*<sup>II</sup> 金五婆羅 as a tribute from Funan to the Southern Qi Dynasty hardly mean anything other than ‘five *bhāras* of gold’. Nevertheless, he agreed with some of von Zach’s arguments and further equated *poluo*<sup>I</sup>, *poluo*<sup>III</sup>, *poluo*<sup>IV</sup> all as the same foreign term by translating it as ‘*coupe à vin*’. This French translation is based on the meaning of *poluo*<sup>IV</sup> 叵羅 given in the *Kangxi zidian*: in this imperial dictionary compiled in 1716, *poluo*<sup>IV</sup> is explained as a traditional drinking vessel for alcoholic drinks *jiuzhi* 酒卮 (KXZD 1958: 173–174).

Among the attestations of *poluo* as a kind of drinking vessel mentioned by von Zach and Pelliot, there are famous poems by Li Bai 李白 and Cen Shen 岑參 in the Tang period, as well as the biography of Zu Ting 祖珽 in the Northern Qi Dynasty (BS 1974: 1737; KXZD 1958: 173–174). Zu Ting was a talented officer with sticky fingers, an extract of whose biography is tentatively translated here:<sup>10</sup>

神武宴僚屬，於坐失金叵羅，竇泰令飲酒者皆脫帽，於珽髻上得之，神武不能罪也。

The Shenwu [Emperor] held a banquet for officials in his camp, then a gold *poluo*<sup>IV</sup> was lost among [their] seats; Dou Tai made all the ones who drank ale/wine take off their hats and found it on the hair bun/coil of [Zu] Ting, but Shenwu was unable to blame him [because of Zu was known for his uninhibited and indulgent personality].

As to the usage by Cen Shen (ca. 715–770 CE), it was found in his poem ‘made after getting drunk on the feast of Prefect of Jiuquan’ (CJZ 2004: 427):<sup>11</sup>

琵琶長笛曲相和，羌兒胡雛齊唱歌。  
渾炙犁牛烹野駝，交河美酒金叵羅。

With the harmony of the melodies by lutes and flutes,  
*Qiang* boys and *Hu* girls sang in chorus.  
Roast whole of yak, stew of wild camel,  
excellent wine of Jiaohe [in] gold poluo(s).

In this poem composed in Jiuquan (east of Dunhuang), the gold *poluo*<sup>IV</sup> is juxtaposed with the excellent alcoholic drink (*jiu* 酒) from Jiaohe (Turfan). It no doubt means grape wine, as Li Bai’s usage in a phrase ‘Grape wine, gold *poluo*<sup>IV</sup>, a *Wu* girl aged 15 years was carried by a fine horse’ 葡萄酒，金叵羅，吳姬十五細馬馱 (LTB 1977: 1179).<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Translated by Ching. The Shenwu Emperor is a posthumous title given to Gao Huan (496–547), founder of the Northern Qi Dynasty.

<sup>11</sup> Translated by Ching. Cf. Yu 2021: 138.

<sup>12</sup> Translated by Ching. Cf. Yu 2021: 138.

In the late 20th c., quite independently from the early discussion of European Sinologists, Cai Hongsheng again identified *poluo*<sup>I/III/IV</sup> (頗羅/破羅/叵羅) as a wine or ale drinking vessel. In addition to the above examples already mentioned by Pelliot in 1909, he pointed out a valuable attestation in a compilation of historical anecdotes in the *Tang Yulin* 唐語林, *juan* 5 (Cai Hongsheng 1998: 12, translated by Ching):

開元中，上與內臣作曆日令。  
高力士挾大截置黃幡綽口中，曰：「塞穴吉！」  
黃幡綽遽取上前叵羅納靴中，走下，曰：「內財吉！」

In the Kaiyuan period (713–741), the Emperor [Xuanzong] played a drinking game with his dignitaries; its rule [was to do a funny thing when one said a term] in calendar. Gao Lishi picked up a big piece of meat and placed it into Huang Fanchuo's mouth, saying: "[Today] it is good for blocking a hole!" [Then,] Huang Fanchuo immediately took a *poluo*<sup>IV</sup> in front of the Emperor, placed it into [Huang's own] boot, then run down away [from the table], saying: "[Today] it is good for receiving wealth!"

Together with the gold *poluo*<sup>IV</sup> stolen by Zu Ting, this is an illustrative example which implies that in most attestations in Chinese literature, *poluo* means a kind of drinking vessel that is small enough to be hidden in one's hat or in one's boot.

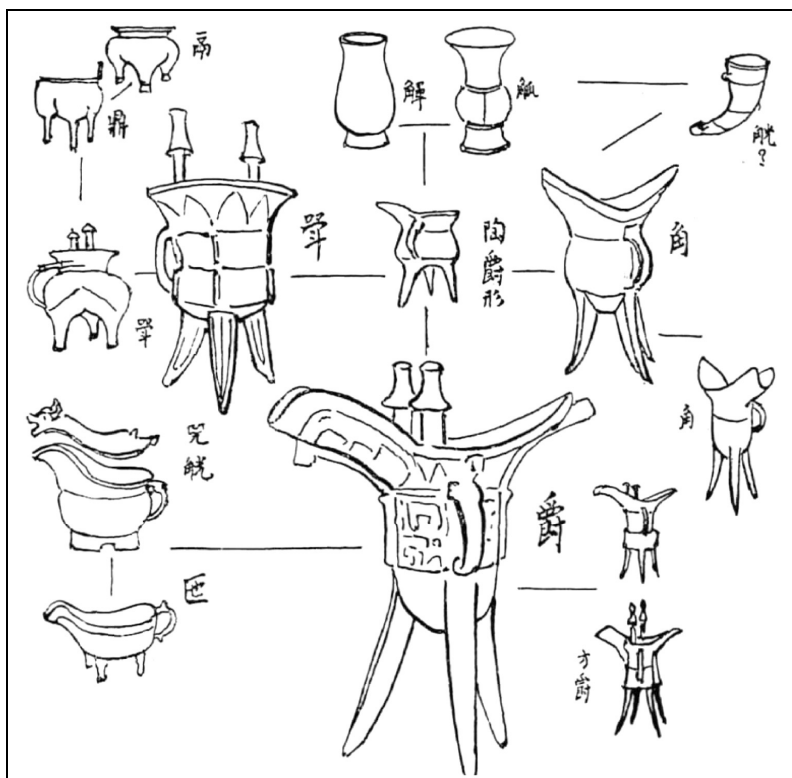


Fig. 1. The Northern tradition of ancient Chinese drinking vessels  
(Reproduced from Fig. 9 in Hamada 1933)

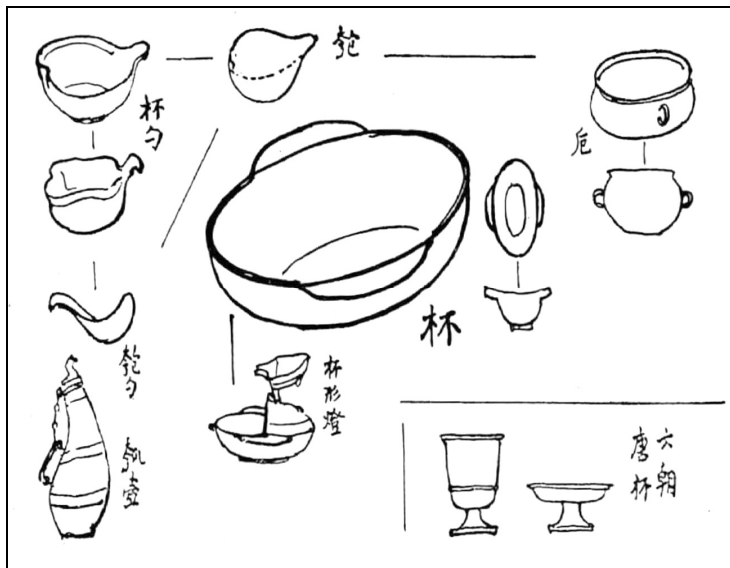


Fig. 2 The Southern tradition of ancient Chinese drinking vessels;  
[lower-right] Cups from Six Dynasties to the Tang period  
(Reproduced from Fig. 10 in Hamada 1933)

In fact, K. Hamada (1933) had pointed out that among the drinking vessels in Ancient China, there were two traditions: the one developed in Northern China (represented by the tripod *jue* 爵) (Fig. 1) and the other in Southern China (represented by the flat-bottomed *bei* 杯) (Fig. 2). The former, usually made of bronze, resulted from the habit of warming alcohol before drinking; as to the latter, it reflected the custom of drinking from lacquerware. Even though his terminological study was improved in the last century, he aptly remarked that in the Tang period, the design of drinking vessels became highly variable. In his opinion, the round ones in the form of Western “cup” (usually with a ringfoot, i.e. the lower-right corner in Fig. 2) and made more variously of pottery, silver, glass, etc., no doubt reflect fashions from the West (Hamada 1933: 1064–1066). Today, we know that cultural trends from Central Asia, Iran and India had been popular in the Northern Wei Dynasty (Watt 2004: 17–24), so it is time to reconsider the third candidate assumed by Chavannes.

### 3. The golden *poluo* in Sogdiana in the *Suishu* and the *Tongdian*

In his famous paper on Sogdian deities, Henning (Henning 1965: 253, n. 70) intuitively explained the third candidate *poluo*<sup>III</sup> as ‘a golden banner (*palā*)’ by referring to Chavannes’ translation of the entry on the state of Cao (Ishtīkhan) in the *Suishu* (Chavannes 1903: 139, n. 3; *idem.*, p. 312). In the same paper, he wisely matched Dexi 得悉 in the *Suishu* with Takhsīch which he analyzed from the personal name *Txs’yc-βntk* in Ancient Letter II (Lurje 2010: § 436, 1274).

Recently it became evident that Takhsīch is a goddess (Grenet 2020: 30; Sims-Williams and Grenet forthcoming), so we have to re-examine the full context of the enigmatic candi-



date.<sup>13</sup> We give our English translation of the *Suishu*, updated and improved from Chavannes' French one:<sup>14</sup>

The state of Cao: its capital is several *li* to the south of the Nami River (Zarafshan). Formerly, it was [in] the territory of Kangju. There is no ruler in the state, so the king of the state of Kang charges his son Wujian with governing it. [Its] capital is three *li* square. Elite soldiers: more than one thousand men. In this state, there is the deity Dexi. Various states east of the Western Sea all worship her. This deity has (a?) golden statue (?);<sup>15</sup> a golden *poluo* of which the diameter is 1 *zhang* and 5 *chi* (ca. 3.5~4.5 m),<sup>16</sup> the higher [statue] and the lower [*poluo*] are in proportion(?). (Or: the height [of *poluo*] is in proportion of [its diameter]?)<sup>17</sup> Everyday five camels, ten horses, and one hundred sheep/goats are sacrificed to the [deity]. Usually there are a few/several thousand persons, eating those [foods] but never being able of finishing [their eating].

The entry in the *Tongdian* on the state of Cao (TD 1988: 5256–5257) is a quotation from the *Suishu* (whose information was gathered by envoys in the early 7th c.), although a few details deviate from it. Generally, the text of the *Tongdian* look more practical, such as to give the frequency of 'every month' (*mei yue* 每月) instead of 'everyday' (*mei ri* 每日) and to give 'one thousand persons' (*qian ren* 千人) rather than 'a few/several thousands persons' (*shu-qian ren* 數千人). Therefore, it is not necessary to see Takhsīch as a 'rapacious god' as Henning (Henning 1965: 253, n. 71) supposed. Furthermore, the *Tongdian* did not reproduce the sentence '[Its] capital is three *li* square', very probably according to Du You's knowledge the state of Cao had expanded from Ishitīkhan eastward to Kabūdhan and Ustrushana during the Tang period. Consequently, he could not give too precise an information on the capital.<sup>18</sup>

By trying to elucidate *poluo* from Khot. *palā* 'banner', Henning did not fully accept or realize the meaning of *kuo* 闊 'wide, large; width, largeness' in Chavannes' translation (Chavannes 1903: 139, n. 3): '... il y a l'homme d'or; son *p'o-lo* d'or est large de quinze pieds; la hauteur (de la statue) est proportionnée (à cette dimension)'. He is not the only scholar who ignored or rejected this important hint, perhaps because this scale of width seems too unrealistic in their eyes. For example, Shiratori (Shiratori 1924: 499) explained the passage as: 'the length (長) of the metallic *poluo* is 1 *zhang* and 5 *chi*, therefore it would be a colossal as huge as the Buddha statue of 1 *zhang* and 6 *chi* high in our country', while Wakeman (Wakeman 1990: 680–682) took *poluokuo* 破羅闊 as one obscure word designating the golden statues or images. Shiratori's view and Cai's theory were combined by Yu Taishan (Yu Taishan 2014: 753), so that to his mind, there were golden or metallic wine vessels as high as 15 feet for the worship of Takhsīch. However, in our opinion, to take *kuo* as

<sup>13</sup> We treat the Chinese sources about the Goddess in another forthcoming paper.

<sup>14</sup> Various translations including Yu Taishan 2014: 753 (mainly adapted from Wakeman's translation of the *Tongdian*); Yu Xin 2018: 276; Huber 2020: 35–36; etc.

<sup>15</sup> Lit. 'gold-human'. See the additional note in Chavannes 1903: 312.

<sup>16</sup> 1 *zhang* and 5 *chi* = 15 *chi* = 367.5~369 cm (by counting with the smaller *chi* = 24.5~24.6 cm) or 442.5~444 cm (by the larger *chi* = 29.5~29.6 cm) (Guo Zhengzhong 2008: 191). Since *chi* 尺 generally means the length of human's ulna, the length might be resulted from an approximate estimation by an informant who measured it by his own arm.

<sup>17</sup> Chavannes' translation of *gaoxia* 高下 (lit. as 'high-low; up-down') as 'hauteur' is supported by a passage on the design of a celestial globe in the *Suishu* (SS 1973: 517). Prof. Yu Xin (p.c. e-mail on 14 May 2021) kindly informed us that now in his view, it most probably means that the upper opening diameter of the *poluo* is 15 *chi*, and the size of its lower bottom is proportional to it.

<sup>18</sup> On Western Cao, Central Cao and Eastern Cao in the Tang period, see Chavannes 1903: 138–140.

‘width’ or even ‘diameter’ is theoretically workable, since a similar usage is found in a commentary on the *Hou Hanshu*<sup>19</sup>:

俚獠鑄銅為鼓，鼓唯高大為貴，面闊丈餘。

The barbarian people called *Li* 俚 [in SW China] cast bronze for making drums. The drums are the higher, the bigger and the more prestigious, [so that their drum] head can be more than one zhang wide.

Interestingly, in the parallel text on the state of Cao in the *Tang Huiyao* 唐會要, the golden object is transcribed not as *poluo*<sup>III</sup> 破羅 but as *poluo*<sup>I</sup> 頗羅, which links together the tributes from Tibet, from Kucha and the enigmatic object in Sogdiana, and all of them were no doubt metallic ones. With regard to this variant in the *Tang Huiyao*, it is taken by Sören Stark (Stark 2009: 22) again as ‘banner’ (*palā*) based on Henning’s idea.

The Khotanese word *palā* was noticed by T. Burrow (Burrow 1937: § 18) among the Niya-Prākṛit loanwords in Khotanese together with other examples such as Khot. *nālai* = Skt. *nātaka*. By translating *palā* as ‘banner’, he obviously followed É. Benveniste (Benveniste 1933: 224) who joined Sogd. *pr*” ‘bannière’ to Khot. *palā* ‘idem.’ and attached them to Prākṛit *paḍāā*, Sanskrit *paṭāka* ‘flag, banner’. H.W. Bailey (Bailey 1967: 170–171) further reconstructed its Gāndhārī form as *\*paḍāga* and indicated other related forms including Agnean (Tocharian A) *pattākās* (obl. pl.) and Sogdian *pr* [ʔ]t’, *pr*’kh in Buddhist texts. This view is adopted by Y. Yoshida (Yoshida 1998: 43) who counted *poluo*<sup>III</sup> in the *Suishu* and the *Tongdian* on Cao as the transcription of Sogd. *pr*’kh ‘banner’ by simply referring to Henning (Henning 1965: 253 n. 70).

#### 4. *Poluo* = Sogdian *patγōd* ?

##### The terminology of Iranian drinking vessels

In fact, in 1981, in the Russian version of *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand*, V.A. Livshits commented on the note 81 of Chapter 15 (Shefer [Schafer] 1981: 459–460):

Транскрипция, происходящая от иранского \*paḍγōd ‘чаша’(?) ср. согдийское patγōd, в том числе в надписях на серебряных чашах типа пиал. На западе, в греческом, это слово отразилось в форме φιάλη «чаша», «фиал», в тюркских на востоке в *piālā/φιαλā*; в китайском в *поло* (\*p’uālā).<sup>20</sup>

Based on this key notice, Cai Hongsheng (Cai 1998: 12, 17 n. 30) identified *poluo*<sup>I/III/IV</sup> 頗羅/破羅/巨羅 all as transcriptions of Sogd. *patγōd* ‘cup’ by equating them with Greek φιάλη.<sup>21</sup> Since then, Chinese scholars have been pursuing the images of “*poluo* = *patγōd*”

<sup>19</sup> This commentary is quoted from a record written in the Jin or Southern Dynasties (HHS 1965: 840).

<sup>20</sup> This comment may be rendered in English as follows: “Transcription from Iranian \**paḍγōd* ‘cup’(?). Cf. Sogdian *patγōd*, including in inscriptions on silver bowls/cups of the type called *piāl* [in Persian]. In the West, in Greek, this word was reflected in the form φιάλη (in Russian чаша, фиал); in the East, in Turkic *piālā* / *phialā* [and] in Chinese *poluo* (\*p’uālā).” We thank Étienne de la Vaissière who found the Russian book for us.

<sup>21</sup> Cai Hongsheng (Cai 1998: 12) provided a rough digest of Livshits’ comment. Afterwards, the equation ‘*poluo* = *patγōd* = φιάλη’ greatly influenced many scholars (Rong Xinjiang 2005, Yu Taishan 2005: 580; 2014: 753 Commentary No. 225, Yu Xin 2012: 543; 2021: 128; Huber 2020: 36 n. 139), so that a typo *patrōd* for Livshits’ “*patγōd*” (sic!) in (Cai Hongsheng 1998) was inherited by a number of his followers.

in the new data from Sogdian tombs in China and other collections.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, according to the opinion expressed by Yang Junkai (Yang Junkai 2014: 238–239) in his report of Shi Jun (Wirkak) tomb, current theories in China on the shape of “*poluo* = *patyād*” are so highly variable that one should refrain from describing any specific kind of drinking vessels — such as elongated cups (*changbei* 長杯) or bowls (*wan* 碗) — as ‘*poluo*’ in the description of the finds from the tomb.

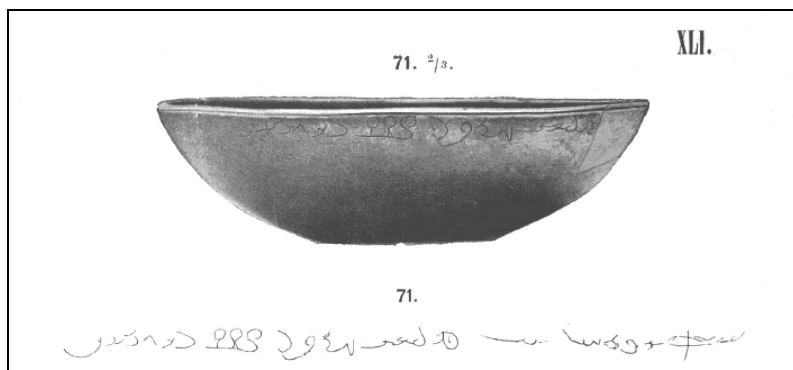


Fig. 3 Bowl with Sogdian inscription, 7th–8th cc.  
Diameter of mouth = 6.5 cm  
(reproduced from Plate XLI in Smirnov 1909)



Fig. 4 Relief and inscription on the Stroganoff Bowl, 5th c., inscribed later.  
Diameter of mouth = 14.5 cm  
(reproduced from Fig. 10 in Weitzmann 1943)

<sup>22</sup> For example, see AJ 2003: 36, 82; Zhang Guangda 2003: 13; Jiang Boqin 2004: 157–158; Rong Xin-jiang 2005.

The silver bowls or cups (чашах) with epigraphical attestations of *patyād* are no doubt Nos. 19 and 20 published by Livshits and Lukonin (Livshits, Lukonin 1964: 172).<sup>23</sup> They had been published as No. 71 and No. 67 by Smirnov in 1909, respectively. The former was received in 1894 from the Russian Imperial Archaeological Commission among other objects found in Perm in 1886, now in the permanent exhibition in the State Hermitage Museum (Fig. 3). The latter is the famous ‘Stroganoff bowl’ also in the same museum. (Fig. 4). The reading of Sogdian inscriptions on these silverwares by Livshits and Lukonin have since been improved by Lurje (Lurie 2010), but both attestations of *patyād* are safe.

Given that both Nos. 19 and 20 published by Livshits and Lukonin are round bowls with a rounded bottom, one may doubt whether it is possible to identify *patyād* ‘cup’ with other types of vessels such as elongated cups. In particular, given that these two firm specimens of *patyād* are both without ringfoot or any evidence of a stand, we think the basic function is not to share drinks among many people nor to be placed on a flat surface for long. We would rather assume its function as a wine drinking vessel to be held in one’s hand for individual usage, or to be circulated among a few guests who are not supposed to put it down until it is empty. If this is the case, *patyād* is to be distinguished from other three types of drinking vessels in Iranian cultures, enumerated by Grenet as follows:

**(1) Pahlavi *makōg* ‘elongated cup; boat-cup’,** lit. ‘boat’ (< *mak-* ‘to plunge, wash’): an attestation is found on the Pahlavi inscription on a cup in the Ancient Orient Museum, Japan (Gignoux 1990: 72). It is borrowed into Arabic and Armenian as *makkūk* and *makoik*, respectively, but their meanings are not restricted to this type of cup. In Persian, *makū* simply means ‘boat’, and Pahlavi *makōg* ‘elongated cup’ is translated into Persian as *kaštī-e mey* (lit. ‘boat of wine’), *kaštī-e bāde* (*idem.*) or simply *kaštī* ‘boat’.<sup>24</sup> The Sogdian form is not attested, but semantically this kind of cup could have been designated by *naw* ‘boat’.

**(2) Pahlavi *jām* / *jāmag* (Sogd. *y’mk* [*\*jāme*]):** usually translated as ‘cup’, but these words seem to be generic terms which lack clear definition and may designate round pottery or metallic containers of various size, either with ringfoot or without it.<sup>25</sup> Epigraphic attestations are only found on Sogdian inscriptions. One is on a silverware collected around Shikshin (Yanqi, China) initially published by Lin Meicun (Lin 1997),<sup>26</sup> and the latest reading and translation by Sims-Williams is: ZNH ZY y’mk ZKwy txs’yeyh γδρ’nynyh xr’ryh ZKwyh δrs-m’tyh xypδ 20-10 s n’rkrk ‘This cup (is) the property of the guardian of the throne of Takhsīch, Kharar the (daughter of) Zhemat. 30 staters of silver.’ (Sims-Williams and Grenet, forthcoming) The other is on a silver cup of Hephthalite style from Chilek near

<sup>23</sup> See also Gignoux 1990: 77, 84 n. 57. We owe much to Nicholas Sims-Williams (p.c. 17 Dec. 2020) who kindly helped us to check Livshits and Lukonin (1964) in time just before Christmas holidays and during Covid-19 conditions.

<sup>24</sup> According to Mélikian-Chirvani (Mélikian-Chirvani 1991: 9–10), the ‘boat-cup’ (or ‘crescent-shaped cups’ in his terms) is to be filled with wine when the new moon signals Nauruz.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Gignoux 1990: 75. We gratefully received a comment from Samra Azarnouche (p.c. e-mail to F. Grenet, 4 May 2021): ‘Encore aujourd’hui *piyāle* désigne le bol (sans pied) et *jām* la coupe (plus haute, et/ou avec pied)’.

<sup>26</sup> In the *Silu guibao* (2011), the size of this highly broken piece is: height = 7.2 cm, opening diameter = 16.2 cm; diameter of ringfoot = 6.5 cm; weight = 534 g. We thank Bi Bo who checked the catalogue for us (p.c. e-mail on 14 May 2021). Grenet notes that this piece as it appears after restoration is possibly a combination of two different silverwares.

Samarkand (Gignoux 1990: 75).<sup>27</sup> Another attestation from Munchak-tepe mentioned by Gignoux (Gignoux 1990: 75) is doubtful.

(3) **Rhyton:** No epigraphic attestations in Iranian languages. According to Mélikian-Chirvani (Mélikian-Chirvani 1982), the corpus of Iranian texts gives two different terms with regard to this type of vessel:

① *takōg* (< *tak-* ‘to pour’): a word attested in Pahlavi texts as ‘drinking vessel’ without specific definition (MacKenzie 1971, s.v.); in Persian it designates an animal-shaped rhyton.

② *bālogh*: This word is not attested in Pahlavi, only in Persian, where it designates a ‘rhyton-horn’ cup. In Gignoux’s opinion (Gignoux 1990: 75), it might be of Arabic origin, while Mélikian-Chirvani (Mélikian-Chirvani 1982: 287) suggested that the form *pālogh* would be preferable and that it might be derived from *pālāy-/pālūdan* ‘to filter, clarify’. Mélikian’s suggestion looks plausible, and in any case, the function of rhyton prevents it from being the etymological origin of *poluo* in our question.

## 5. Towards a new etymological solution for *poluo*

Nowadays, Sogdian *patyād* and Greek *φιάλη* are no more recognized as cognates.<sup>28</sup> The latter as the word for ‘basin (shallow, with a very large opening and fitted with two vertical handles): used to head a liquid’ in Homer and ‘broad, flat vessel; bowl’ in later texts is attested in Mycenaean (Chantraine 1968: 1203). On the other hand, Sogd. *patyād* is cognate with Pahl. *paygāl* (archaic Persian *paiyāla*) and etymologically from OIr. *\*pati-gāla-ka* (Benveniste 1936: 233–234; Gignoux 1990: 77; Gharib 2004 § 7660). According to N. Sims-Williams, there is no Bactrian form attested of either *pty’δ* or *φιάλη*. In his opinion, Benveniste (Benveniste 1936: 233–234) was certainly right when assuming that these words are unconnected and that NP *piyāla* belongs to the former. Historically or phonologically, *poluo* can hardly be from either of them.<sup>29</sup>

Since *poluo* as a vessel usually occurs in Chinese texts together with exotic drinks and foods, we assume that it transcribes a loanword from an Iranian and/or a Central Asian language. Its ultimate origin may be Skt. *pātra-* ‘a drinking vessel, goblet, bowl, cup, dish, pot, plate, utensil, &c., any vessel or receptacle’ (Monier-Williams 1899: 612).<sup>30</sup> It is well known that in Buddhist literature, Skt. *pātra-* (Pāli *patta*; Gāndhārī *patra*, *pate*, *patre*)<sup>31</sup> commonly means the alms-bowl used by the Buddha or Buddhist monks. In fact, for this specific usage, ancient Chinese created special characters *bo* 鉢/鉢 (EMC p<sup>h</sup>at), and the fullest transcription of this Buddhist utensil is *boduo* 鉢多羅/鉢多羅 (EMC p<sup>h</sup>at-ta-la). *Poluo* was so transcribed in a different way, probably because it meant to designate various vessels of pan-Indian style in the context of non-Buddhist usage in its strict sense.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Its photograph and sketch are found in Marshak 2017: 520, Figs. 36, 36a, where he gives the opening diameter as 16 cm.

<sup>28</sup> We thank Anca Dan for checking several Greek dictionaries for us (e-mail on 10 October 2020).

<sup>29</sup> N. Sims-Williams, e-mail to Grenet, Dan and Ching on 11 Oct. 2020.

<sup>30</sup> During the e-mail discussion on 10–11 Oct. 2020 with our colleagues, Skt. *pātra-* initially assumed by Ching was taken as a solution more viable than *patyād* and *φιάλη*.

<sup>31</sup> See <https://gandhari.org/patra>.

<sup>32</sup> As Falk (Falk 2013) elucidates, wine production and consumption are found in Gandhāran Art. Nevertheless, these activities were not conceived as good Buddhist manners in China, so it would be necessary to render the begging-bowls and the utensils for luxurious feasts differently.

Concerning the borrowing of Skt. *pātra*- or one of its Middle Indic forms into China in non-Buddhist contexts, an immediate intermediary in Kuchean (Tocharian B) or Agnean (Tocharian A) languages seem less likely and demands more philological evidence, because so far all the attestations of the respective forms — Kuchean *pātro* (obl. *pātrai*) — invariably designate Buddhist alms-bowls or begging-bowls. The situation of Khot. *pāttāru/pāttro/pātro* ‘alms-bowl’ is similar: all the attestations from the *Book of Zambasta* mean the bowl kept by the Buddha (Bailey 1967: 179, Emmerick 1968: 22–23, 38–39).<sup>33</sup> While the Iranian loanwords in Kuchean and Agnean is a crucial issue to be explored (Peyrot 2015; Ching 2021),<sup>34</sup> Bailey’s notice is at any rate remarkable: two Indian words are found with Chinese *l* in place of Indian *tr*, namely *Maitreya* (Chin. *Mile* 彌勒, EMC *mjiǎ/mji-lək*) and *Trāyastrīṃśa* (Chin. *Daoli* 忒利, EMC *taw-li<sup>h</sup>*), so that he considered a change of *tr > dr > l* during the spread of the two words from India to China (Bailey 1946: 779–780).<sup>35</sup> In our view, a comparable example is *Wuyishanli* 烏弋山離, Chinese transcription of Alexandria (of Arachosia) in the Han period (ou-yək-šaən-ljē in Karlgren’s system, Pulleyblank 1962: 116). Regarding Greek *dr ~ MC l* and Greek *l ~ MC y<sup>36</sup>* in this toponym for today’s Qandahar, one of the intermediary languages could be Iranian.<sup>37</sup> In this sense, it will be very interesting to assume an Iranian language which intervened the borrowing of Skt. *pātra*- into Middle Chinese. After all, Burrow (op. cit.) has collected more examples concerning the phenomenon Khot. *l ~ Pkt./Skt. d/ṭ* (see *supra* on Khot. *palā* ‘banner’).<sup>38</sup> For instance, as long as one may assume intervocalic *tr > ṭ* or *d* in Niya-Prākṛit or another language around the basin (e.g. Kucha-Prākṛit, etc.), it is fully possible to suggest that Skt. *pātra*- became EMC *p<sup>h</sup>a-la*. If so, it is a parallel example of Skt. *Maitreya*- or Bactr. *μητραγο* which finally became EMC *mjiǎ/mji-lək*.<sup>39</sup>

This solution agrees with the only epigraphically confirmed specimen of *poluo*<sup>III</sup>: a ceramic bowl lent to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston by Charles B. Hoyt in 1946. This Chinese bowl is dated by the museum to the early 7th c. and is arranged with a ceramic stand of unknown date as a set.<sup>40</sup> On the base of the bowl there is an inscription: *poluo pen yi he* 破羅盆一合 ‘a piece of *poluo* bowl’. (Figs. 5, 6)

<sup>33</sup> We thank Ogihara Hirotoshi who checked the Khotanese context of *pāttāru* for us on 20 May 2021.

<sup>34</sup> Mr. Athanaric Huard (doctoral student of EPHE), after our seminar on 28 May, kindly mentioned that a few other Tocharian words are assumed to be Iranian loanwords by F. Dragoni, Ch. Bernard and R. Chen in Leiden. We look forward to seeing the result of their analysis.

<sup>35</sup> See Maue’s discussion (Maue 2013) on further reflection on the various forms of *Maitreya*.

<sup>36</sup> Or \**z* as Pulleyblank (op.cit) assumed for the transition period from Old Chinese to Middle Chinese.

<sup>37</sup> On the sound of *l* in Iranian languages, see (Benveniste 1936: 234; Lurje and Yakubovich 2017).

<sup>38</sup> Accordingly, *boli* 玻璃/*poli* 頗黎 ‘glass’ as established transcriptions of Skt. *sphaṭika*- imply an intervention of Khotanese (\**sphāliā*-, see Skjærvø 2004: 357) and/or other local languages (e.g. Kuchean *spharir*).

<sup>39</sup> We do not exclude the possibility that Khot. *phara*- (corresponding to Skt. *ghaṭa*- ‘pot’ in Khotanese *Sudhanāvādāna* fragments, Bailey 1979: 260) might be involved in this issue. The word is translated by De Chiara (De Chiara 2013: 149, 153, etc.) as ‘jar’ since it designates a water container carried upon a woman’s shoulders, being large enough to hide one’s ring. In this sense, it is not exactly the same as the *poluo* revealed in the texts about Zu Ting and Huang Fanchuo, so we are looking for more attestations of the word.

<sup>40</sup> On the image of the bowl and the stand as a whole set, see

<https://collections.mfa.org/objects/21245/polou-bowl-and-stand-with-inscription-on-base-of-bowl-polou>.

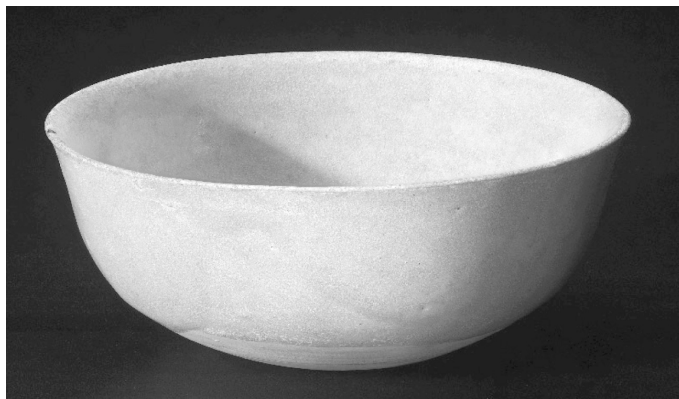


Fig. 5 A Chinese ceramic *poluo*, early 7th c. A.D.  
h. = 4.8 cm;  $\varnothing$  = 12 cm. Accession Number: 50.1963a.  
Bequest of Charles Bain Hoyt—Charles Bain Hoyt Collection  
Photograph © [28 Sept. 2021] Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



Fig. 6 The inscription on the base of the ceramic bowl 50.1963a  
Bequest of Charles Bain Hoyt—Charles Bain Hoyt Collection  
Photograph © [28 Sept. 2021] Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

By pointing out this ceramic item in a catalogue published in 1964, Yang Zhishui (Yang 2008) identifies a set of ten little *poluos* (*poluozi* 破羅子) among numerous relics excavated from the hoard of the Famen Temple (Shaanxi Province, China), and her theory is adopted by Yu Xin (Yu 2012: 544; 2018: 274 Fig. 1; 2021: 129–130). The key is a list of the donated objects around the late 9th c. inscribed on a stele and buried at the same site. We transcribe and translate a part of ll. 11–12 based on a rubbing published by Han Sheng (Han 2009: 30–31):

銀金花供養器物共卅件、枚、隻、對，<sup>內</sup>壘子一十枚，破[羅]子一十枚、壘子一十枚、…

Silver utensils for worshipping [the Buddha's *śarīra*] bearing with flowery gilt of gold: 40 items/pieces/units/pairs in total: <sup>Including</sup> ten pieces of *leizi*, ten pieces of *po[luo]zi*, ten pieces of *diezi*, …

Following Yang's argumentation, *leizi* 壘子 (lit. 'little one that can be piled up'), *poluozi* 破羅子 and *diezi* 疊子 (lit. 'little one that can be stacked up') are respectively shallow dishes with four compartments and equally wide ringfoot with ornamental apertures, shallow dishes with ringfoot, and shallow dishes without ringfoot.<sup>41</sup> This shows that *poluo*<sup>I/III/IV</sup> in Medieval China was, as Yu Xin (Yu 2021: 131) supposes, a generic term designating various exotic vessels including cups, bowls and shallow dishes. In this sense, an appropriate match of *poluo* in Iranian terminology appears to be *jām/jāmag* (Sogd. *y'mk*) rather than *paygāl* (Sogd. *patyāḏ*), as *jām/jāmag*, like *poluo*, can designate vessels of very various sizes and often provided with a foot or a stand.

## 6. A gigantic *Poluo* in the temple of Takhsīch?

Now, according to the *Suishu* and the *Tongdian*, inside (or in front of?) the temple of Takhsīch, there was a gigantic *poluo*<sup>III</sup> 破羅 (*poluo*<sup>I</sup> 頗羅 in the *Tang Huiyao*) of which the outer diameter of the mouth would be as large as approximately 4 m. Even though this scale sounds exaggerated, Grenet notes an interesting parallel in the Middle Persian Zoroastrian text *Anthology of Zādspram* 16.3 (Gignoux and Tafazzoli 1993: 74–75):<sup>42</sup>

Everyday he (= the son of the hero Tūr) gives to the poor (the content of) an iron *jāmag* high like a horse, filled up with bread, milk and other foods.

This way of nourishing poor people by a huge container seems to be a Zoroastrian tradition. The “golden” (or brass) *poluo* in Takhsīch's temple was hardly used for cooking, but might have been used to serve an accompaniment to the meat mentioned in the *Suishu*, either a kind of soup (Persian *āsh*), like in the *Zādspram* passage text just quoted, or *shorbat*, a sweet drink. Both are served still today in big containers to pilgrims in Iranian mosques.<sup>43</sup> Interestingly, there is an old cauldron (diameter = 2.2m, weight = 2 tons) placed in the center of *Jamaatkhana* among the Timurid architectural complex of Khodja Ahmad Yasawi in the town of Yasi (now the city of Turkestan, Kazakhstan), allegedly casted from the alloy of seven metals, formed as an incomplete hemisphere and attached on a foot. Donated by Tamerlane in 1399, it is perceived as a symbol of hospitality and unity.<sup>44</sup> There is another apparently smaller, hemispherical cauldron, set on a stand, dating from the Kart period (14th c.), at the Masjid-i Jameh at Herat.<sup>45</sup> Therefore, by taking the passage in the *Anthology*

<sup>41</sup> The image of *poluozi* according to her identification is reproduced by Yu Xin (Yu 2018: 274, Fig. 1; 2021: 129, Fig. 3). They are FD5: 079–1~10 in the Famen Report 2007: 115, Fig. 52–3; Plate 51 and Plate 52. Size: h. 1.9 cm; diameter of mouth: 11.1 cm; height of ringfoot: 0.7 cm; diameter of ringfoot: 7.5 cm; average weight: 118.5 g. Their photograph is also available in Han Sheng 2009: 225.

<sup>42</sup> Translated into English by Grenet. Actually horses depicted in Sasanian art are quite small, hardly more than 1.50 cm at the saddle.

<sup>43</sup> We thank Samra Azarnouche for this information (p.c. e-mail on 30 July 2021).

<sup>44</sup> Grube 1966: 134, plate 73. See also [http://www.natcom.unesco.kz/turkestan/e10\\_mausoleum.htm](http://www.natcom.unesco.kz/turkestan/e10_mausoleum.htm).

<sup>45</sup> Mélikian-Chirvani 1969. A photograph taken by Oskar von Niedermayer, published in 1924, is available on [https://archnet.org/sites/3931/media\\_contents/41831](https://archnet.org/sites/3931/media_contents/41831).



into consideration, the gigantic “golden *poluo*” in Sogdiana — perhaps made of brass — was probably installed for serving poor people as well as worshippers from ‘all the countries to the east of the Western Sea’. Nevertheless, we do not much expect its shape to be exactly a hemisphere (capacity = 16,755 L, assuming a diameter of 4 m). It could look like a shallow round container of shorter diameter, either with flat bottom, being footed or being supported, so that its capacity would be significantly less than the aforementioned capacity but still large enough to serve a large number of guests at once.

## 7. Conclusion

We assume that the golden (brass?) *poluo* mentioned in the entry on the state of Cao (Ishtīkhan) in the *Suishu* was a huge container of *sharbat* (or another beverage or soup), being situated inside (or in front of?) the temple of Takhsīch and serving the poor people and worshippers around it. The container might have looked like a round shallow cauldron, either with or without ringfoot. The big cauldron preserved at the Khodja Akhmed Yasawi may be a continuation of this ancient practice. The one in the state of Cao was described as a *poluo* (ultimately from Sanskrit *pātra*-?) very likely because it looked or sounded exotic to an unknown informant in the Sui period (581–619), but in traditional Iranian terminology, this kind of container is preferably to be described as a *jām/jāmag*, as there is evidence of this kind of usage in the *Anthologie de Zādspram*.

On the other hand, the silver *poluo* presented by the king of Qiuci to the Tang court, as well as the gold one by the Tsenpo of Tubo, were both likely to be wine cups or bowls made of genuine silver and gold, respectively. Although the etymological origin of *poluo* seems most likely an Indic and non-Buddhist one, with the intervention of one or more languages in Central Asia, it is possible that these carefully chosen tributes were Iranian fine arts such as the silverwares unearthed from Yanqi (Karashahr) with Sogdian and Middle Persian inscriptions.

The gold *poluo*(s) and gold jar(s) sent by the Tsenpo probably formed a set of wine drinking utensils. The presentation of this tribute was dated in the 12th month of the 2nd year of Xianqing in the *Cefuyuangui* but in the 3rd year of the same reign (8 Feb. 658 – 28 Jan. 659) in the *New Book of Tang* (XTS 1974: 6075).<sup>46</sup> They seem to have been selected around 658 by the Tibetan court, very likely a token of celebration for the shift of the Anxi Protectorate from Turfan to Kucha in 658. Together with the sophisticate miniature of a ‘gold city’, the Tibetan tribute in this year might be a political metaphor of recognizing the Tang rule in the Tarim Basin. In this case, it would be interesting to pursue the respective symbols of lions, elephants and other animals which appeared in miniature form, since they might represent various peoples and countries in pre-Islamic Central Asia in its broad sense.

## Abbreviations

EMC — Early Middle Chinese (cf. Pulleyblank 1991)

Khot. — Khotanese

LMC — Late Middle Chinese (cf. Pulleyblank 1991)

OIr. — Old Iranian

Pahl. — Pahlavi

Skt. — Sanskrit

<sup>46</sup> The third (*san* 三) could be a scribal error of the second (*er* 二).

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After reading our final draft, Dr. Yury Karev kindly reminded us a brief conference abstract by Aleksandr Naymark, “Giant cauldrons of Central Asia: The symbolism of an art form”, *The Sixth Annual Central Eurasian Studies Conference. Abstracts of Papers*. Bloomington: Indiana University, 1999, pp. 29–30 (p.c. email, 9 Aug. 2021). We are grateful for his information.

## **Золотой *poluo* в Согдии: подробный анализ отрывков из «Суйшу» и «Тундянь»**

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Статья поступила в редакцию 03.07.2021.

Аннотация: Эта статья основана на наших исследованиях в рамках семинара «Новый подход к китайским источникам (в основном *Тундянь*) по Центральной Азии восточнее Памира» ('Nouvelle approche des sources chinoises (principalement le *Tongdian*) sur l'Asie centrale à l'ouest des Pamirs'), проводимого в Коллеж де Франс с осени 2020 г. Мы считаем, что «золотой *poluo*» (от санскритского *pātra*- ?), упоминаемый в разделе о государстве Цао (Ishtikhan) в «Суйшу», является большим контейнером для шербета или других напитков либо супа, из которого поили простолюдинов и паломников в храме Таксих. Использование большого котла у хаджи Ахмеда Ясави (Казахстан), вероятно, является продолжением этой зороастрийской практики, о чем есть упоминание в *Anthologie de Zādspram*. Что касается золотого *poluo*, преподнесенного Цзенпо из Тубо танскому двору в 658 г., и серебряного *poluo* от короля Цюцы в 675 г., то, скорее всего, это были сосуды для вина, специально подобранные для празднования реставрации власти Тан в Таримском бассейне после волнений в середине 650-х и конце 660-х годов соответственно.

Ключевые слова: Центральная Азия, Согдия, Таримский бассейн, куча, Тибет, Среднеиранская эпиграфика, сосуды для вина, котел.

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