

RUSSIAN ACADEMY
OF SCIENCES

Institute of Oriental
Manuscripts
(Asiatic Museum)

Founded in 2014
Issued biannually

Published with the support
of St. Petersburg State
University Alumni Association
and
Irina and Yuri Vasilyev
Foundation



Nauka
Vostochnaya Literatura
2017

WRITTEN MONUMENTS OF THE ORIENT

2017 (2)

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IN THIS ISSUE

Li Jingrong

The Scribal Hands of the *Er nian lü ling* Manuscript Unearthed from Zhangjiashan Han Tomb No. 247 3

Ching Chao-jung 慶昭蓉

SI 3662 and SI 3663 — two wedge-shaped Kharoṣṭhī documents from Niya in the Petrovsky Collection 17

Olga Chunakova

A Sogdian Manichaean Parable 35

Kōichi Kitsudō and Peter Zieme

The *Jin'gangjing zuan* 金剛經纂 in Old Uighur with Parallels in Tangut and Chinese 43

Tatiana Pang and Nicholay Pchelin

Portraits of Qing meritorious officers in the collection of the State Hermitage: scroll restoration and revised reading of the texts 88

Dmitrii Nosov

A Manuscript of the Mongolian Folk Tale “About old Borontai” from the IOM, RAS Collection 111

Reviews

Zare Yusupova. *The Kurdish Dialect Gorani. A Grammatical Description*. Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2017, by **Youli A. Ioannesyan** 119

Mitteliranische Handschriften. Teil 2: Berliner Turfanfragmente buddhistischen Inhalts in soghdischer Schrift, beschrieben von Christiane Reck. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2016 (VOHD; XVIII, 2), 473 S., by **Olga M. Chunakova** 122

Tatiana Pang and Nicholay Pchelin

**Portraits of Qing meritorious officers
in the collection of the State Hermitage:
scroll restoration and revised reading of the texts**

Abstract: The finished restoration of the portraits representing prominent Qing officers kept in the collection of the State Hermitage resulted in a possibility to not only prove their artistic value, but also to read the eulogies written by Emperor Qianlong in Manchu and Chinese. As a follow-up of our previous paper¹ we are presently able to become certain that the State Hermitage has five portraits (of Yeotun, Fusil, Cebdenjab, Bolbunca and Guwandase), originally from the Ziguang-ge Pavilion (Hall of Purple Glaze), which made it to Germany in the early 20th c., and then, after 1945, to Russia. The analysis of the texts has revealed the peculiarities of Manchu and Chinese poetry at the same time proving that both versions of the eulogies were written in accordance with corresponding poetic rules thus becoming variations of the same topic.

Key words: portraits of Qianlong meritorious officers, Qianlong's poems, the State Hermitage, the Manchu language, the Chinese language

Our paper “Portraits of meritorious officers from the collection of the State Hermitage museum” published in “Pis'mennye pamiatniki Vostoka”, issue 2(15), 2011² contained the first ever presentation of four portraits representing four heroes of the Eastern Turkestan raid and painted in 1760 for the Ziguang-ge Pavilion (Hall of Purple Glaze) of the Imperial Palace in Peking. The State Hermitage received these portraits after WWII from the Ethnological Museum in Berlin; for a long time they were kept in a secret storage. The scrolls had been badly damaged during the Berlin battles of 1945, and it was not before 2007 that they got delivered to the Hermitage

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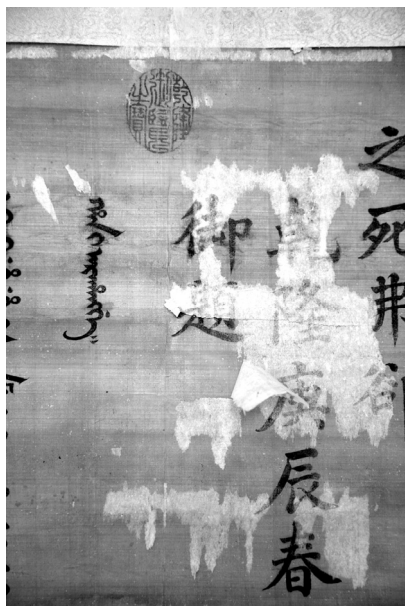
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¹ PANG, PCHELIN 2011: 262–278.

² PANG, PCHELIN 2011: 262–278.



Figs. 1 and 2. Scrolls delivered to the Hermitage laboratory of scholarly restoration of fabrics and watercolors
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Figs. 3 and 4. The fabric and paper were coated with a layer of starch-based glue, the silk and paper having been strongly destructured and soiled with dust, soot, and ash
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Fig. 5. The process of restoration
© State Hermitage Museum

Laboratory of scholarly restoration of fabrics and water colors. At that moment, their condition was described by the experts as follows: the previously restored scrolls had been completely pasted over paper; both the fabric and paper were coated with a layer of starch-based glue, the silk and paper having been strongly destructured and soiled with dust, soot, and ash; their surfaces displayed multiple brown spots and dense rust. The paint was peeling off the over-dry and deformed, partly destroyed silk base; the remaining parts were frayed and torn. The edges were burnt and threadbare.

The complicated and time-consuming restoration of these four scrolls had been conducted in 2007 through 2014 by artists A.F. Alexandrova, L.E. Kovaleva, and N.Yu. Liakina who described the process in the following way: the layer of paint was fixed; the spots of rust were softened with chemicals; all fragments were cleansed with water solvents. After that, all parts of the scrolls got joined anew over a dubbing silk basis, the dirt and pasted-over paper having been removed. The complexity of this work resulted from the fact that the fragments were to be joined from the front side; that required immense care and accuracy, ruling out any possibility of the glue soiling the neighboring parts of painting. The work was considered finished when the

scrolls were cleaned and dubbed, their deformation removed, and the whole of the original basis, restored.

Yet before the end of restoration works, motivated by the chance to introduce the exhibits from the former German collection, in 2011 we attempted publishing four of these portraits as they were at that time. Then, the Laboratory had seven scrolls, but only five among them portrayed Manchu meritorious officers, and at that moment only four could be unfolded without fear of damaging them. Our reports on the restoration and the value of these portraits have been presented at several international conferences.³

Once published, our paper and the work over the portraits caused significant interest of our German colleagues,⁴ which attested of the importance of the artifacts for learning the original compound of the Hall of Purple Glaze, as its collection has by now been scattered all over the world. Meanwhile, the work went on, and the restoration conducted at the State Hermitage resulted in our having not solely the portraits themselves, but also the significantly damaged texts of the eulogies in Manchu and Chinese. Our first paper already contained detailed descriptions of the portraits painted on these four scrolls; we provided information about clothes and uniforms, and attempted to read and interpret legible words and phrases.⁵ Thanks to the restoration, we have managed to read the Manchu and Chinese texts anew, to correct previously made mistakes and to correctly split Manchu lines in accordance with the alliteration of Manchu poetry.⁶

In that, we were assisted by the paper “Die ehemalige Sammlung von Porträts verdienter Offiziere der Feldzüge des Qianlong-Kaisers (China, 18. Jahrhundert)” by Hartmuth Walravens,⁷ providing descriptions of the scrolls containing the portraits and prior to WWII kept in Berlin, at the Königliches Museum für Völkerkunde, presently the Ethnological Museum and deemed irretrievably lost. That publication is highly valuable, also because it presented archival photographs of 15 portraits (out of 16), among which there are also those presently kept at the State Hermitage.

All portraits are uniformly shaped as vertical scrolls with eulogies in Manchu and Chinese written over them in black ink; between the dates, each one displays a red oval seal reading *Qianlong yulan zhi bao* 乾隆御覽之寶

³ PANG 2015: 180–181.

⁴ WALRAVENS 2013: 125–166; BÜGENER 2015.

⁵ PANG, PCHELIN 2011: 267–276.

⁶ PANG, PCHELIN 2016: 74–90.

⁷ WALRAVENS 2013: 125–166.

“A treasure having the highest approval of Qianlong”. The previously published four portraits display dates in Manchu: *Abkai wehiyehe-i šanyan muduri aniyai niyengniyeri* (the spring of the White Dragon year of Abkai wehiyehe) and Chinese: *Qianlong gengchen chun* 乾隆庚辰春 (the spring of the *gengchen* year of Qianlong) which corresponds the year of 1760. The fifth portrait bears a later date: *Abkai wehiyehe-i fulgiyan bonio aniyai niyengniyeri* (the spring of the reddish monkey year of Abkai wehiyehe), in Chinese *Qianlong bingjia chun* 乾隆丙甲春 (the spring of the *bingjia* year of Qianlong) or 1776. Below the texts, every scroll has the full-length portrait of a chieftain.

Presently we can introduce the texts in full along with their translations.⁸

The eulogy on the first scroll (ref. No. VF 2801) is dedicated to *keterkei baturu* (outstanding hero)⁹ Yeotun who belonged to the Pure Yellow banner and served in Butha. He is known to have been a marksman who killed a tiger during an Imperial hunting in Mulan. In 1755, he participated in the Eastern Turkestan raid after which was appointed the commanding officer of the Mongolian Boarded White banner in Qiqihar.¹⁰

The Manchu eulogy is written as two stanzas with initial alliteration, the first one beginning with *i*, the second with *e*. Noteworthy is the fact that the Manchu text provides more information than its Chinese counterpart: it indicates Yeotun’s origin in Manchuria, “he hunted near the river Ula”. Each line of the Chinese version has four characters with a caesure in the middle;

⁸ We made our first attempt to analyze poetic peculiarities of Manchurian and Chinese eulogies accompanying these four portraits in our report during the 7th International scholarly conference “Problems of literatures of the Far East” in 2016 (PANG 2016: 473–481).

⁹ Hartmuth Walravens suggested translating *keterkei baturu* as “der Haervorragende Held” (WALRAVENS 2013: 142).

William F. Mayers in his manual of Chinese titles “The Chinese Government” suggests the following explanation of *baturu*: “The military distinction called in Chinese *Pa-t’u-lu* (a representation of the Manchu word *baturu*, signifying ‘brave’) is an institution dating from the early years of the present dynasty, and is conferred solely for active service in the field. It constitutes an order of merit partaking of some characteristics of the French *Légion d’honneur*; but its special feature of difference from a European order consists in the fact that it has no outward mark of decoration to be worn by its possessor, in the place of which there can only be reckoned the distinguishing word (or title) which is assigned to each recipient on the bestowal of the order. These specific titles may be either Manchu, Mongolian, or Chinese, the Manchu being considered the most honourable. Under this system an officer upon whom the distinction is conferred might receive the designation *Yih Yung Pa-t’u-lu* 毅勇巴圖魯, or “Bat’uru with the title Magnanimous Brave”, and so forth. The title carries with it the right to wear the peacock-feather.” (MAYERS 1886: 67).

¹⁰ WALRAVENS 2013: 142–144; BÜGENER 2015: 350–352.



Figs. 6 and 7. Yeotun's portrait before and after the restoration
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the eulogy contains references to Chinese classics. For instance, *shenshou* 生手 “with bare hands” can be found in the “Tang Anthology” — “Quan Tang shi” 全唐诗 (QTSh, j. 23) and the Song collection “Detailed Chronicles of the Taiping Years” — “Taiping guangji” 太平廣記 (TPGJ, section *jing cha* 精察, chapter Wei-Xiansheng); the expression *tang nang qui* 探囊取 “to get into a sack and produce easily” is encountered in the novel “Journey to the West” (XYuJ, ch. 8) and history of “Three Kingdoms” (SGZh, ch. 23); the

verb *yueli* 閱歷 “to learn from one’s own experience” is there in the “Detailed Chronicles of the Taiping Years” (TPGJ, j. 4); the word *shizhi* 世職 “a hereditary title” can be found in the Song encyclopedia “Highly Approved Collection of the Taiping Years” “Taiping yuelan” 太平御覽 (TPYL, j. 430).

Transliteration of the Manchu text:

Meiren-i janggin keterkei baturu Yeotun:
ulai ba-i gurgu buthašara mergen bihe.
umesi koimali niohe be jabduburakû wambihe
ubašsaha hülha sabe warangge.
uthai fulhû de jaka gaire gese ja bihe:
emu ikiri kejine ferguwecuke gungge ilibuha
ere imu ambula dulembuhe ci banjinaha
ede sirara hafan šangnafi ambakan tušan de
isibuhangge.
erei faššaha gungge de karulaha
Abkai wehiyehe-i šanyan muduri aniyai
niyengniyeri han-i arahangge

Chinese text:

副都統克特爾客巴圖魯由屯
 本射生手
 狼不暇走
 以之殺賊
 如探囊取
 奇功屢建
 亦因閱歷
 世職崇階
 酬其勞動
 乾隆庚辰春御題

Translation from Manchu:

Flank chieftain keterkei baturu Yeotun expertly hunted wild animals in the Ula, he never got tired of killing ferocious wolves.
 He killed traitors and rebels with an equal ease, as if he put animals into a sack.
 He incessantly performed surprising deeds.
 He stayed alive after great [trials].
 For all that he received a hereditary title and achieved high ranks.
 His merits and deeds were rewarded.
 Written by the Emperor in the spring of the White Dragon year of Abkai wehiyehe.

Translation from Chinese:

Futudun keterkei baturu Yeotun He hunted with bare hands, A wolf could not escape [him].
 He also killed traitors,
 As if putting them into a sack.
 He frequently performed outstanding deeds
 And he learned everything from his own experience.
 He glorified his clan with a hereditary title,
 And his merits and deeds were rewarded.
 Written by the Emperor in the spring of the *gengchen* year of Qianlong.



Figs. 8 and 9. Fusil's portrait before and after the restoration
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Qianlong's eulogy on the second scroll (ref. No. VF 2819) is dedicated to *habtai baturu* (skilled warrior)¹¹ Fusil (Chinese *habutai batulu Fusier*) of the Manchu Boarded Yellow Banner.¹²

The two stanzas of the Manchu text have initial alliteration, the first one beginning with *h*, the second with *e*.

¹¹ Hartmuth Walravens suggested translating *habtai baturu* as "der Fähige Bogenschütze" (WALRAVENS 2013: 150).

¹² WALRAVENS 2013: 150–151; BÜGENER 2015: 360–362.

The Chinese text is written in four-syllable lines with caesuras in their middle and contains expressions borrowed from classical writings. For example, *baidao* 白刃 “white blade” is common in the novel “Three Kingdoms” (SGYYi, ch.6), the Song poems and the “Tang Anthology (QTSh, j.866); *huihuo* 揮霍 “to fly up- and downwards (about a sword)” can be found in the Song encyclopedia “Taiping yuelan”, in “Taiping guangji” and “Tang Anthology”; *fuque* 弗卻 “to keep one’s ground”, in “Meng-zi” (MZ, ch. 13).

Transliteration of the Manchu text:

jai jergi hiya bihe habtai baturu Fusil.
horonggo ilan baturu-i dorgi de
hoo hio serengge ere emke be dabuha
holo kûmali šereng be tosome gidanaki serede.
hono terei hûbin de dosinaha
ede gabtame jabdurakû ofi.
ebšeme loho-i sacirahai birenehe
ehe hûlha be hono kejine wafi.
ergen jocitala sosoroko ba akû bihe.
Abkai wehiyehe-i šanyan muduri aniyai
niyengniyeri han-i arahangge

Chinese text:

原二等侍衛哈布泰巴圖魯福錫爾
 三巴圖魯
 於中之一
 要遮色楞
 忽墮其術
 不及彎弓
 白刃揮霍
 猶斬數人
 之死弗卻
 乾隆庚辰春御題

Translation from Manchu:

Second-rank Imperial bodyguard habtai-
 baturu Fusil
 Of the three experienced warriors
 he is considered the bravest.
 When he was about to attack treacherous
 Sheren,
 he was ambushed.
 Having no time to use his bow,
 he fearlessly attacked (the enemy) with
 his sword,
 it took him long to fight the evil enemy,
 but he killed him.
 Not even once did he retreat.
 Written by the Emperor in the spring
 of the White Dragon year of Abkai
 wehiyehe.

Translation from Chinese:

Second-rank Imperial bodyguard habtai-
 baturu Fusil
 Three brave warriors,
 He was one of them.
 When Seren was to be stopped in his
 path,
 That one suddenly crushed his plans.
 He had no time to use his bow,
 And his naked blade started flying up-
 and downwards.
 Chopping, he killed many people
 And did not retreat while he stayed alive.
 Written by the Emperor in the spring of
 the *gengchen* year of Qianlong.



Figs. 10 and 11. Cebdenjab's portrait before and after the restoration
© State Hermitage Museum

Qianlong's eulogy on the third scroll (ref. No. VF 2820) is dedicated to General Cebdenjab (Chinese Cebudengzhabu) (1705–1782), Khalkha-Mongol of the Bordjigit clan. His father had been married to a Qing princess. In 1755, he won his spoors during the Davatchi and Amursana crackdown, and in 1758, took part in the battle of Horgos. In 1771–1773, he remained the ruler of Khalkha.¹³

¹³ WALRAVENS 2013: 136–137; BÜGENER 2015: 332–335.



Figs. 12 and 13. A fragment of Cebdenjab's portrait before and after the restoration
© State Hermitage Museum

The two stanzas of the Manchu text have initial alliteration, the first one beginning with *ya*, the second with *e*.

The Chinese text written in four-character lines with caesuras in their middle contains the following expressions borrowed from classical writings: *yuzhan* 猶斬 “to chop” encountered in the Song encyclopedia “Taiping yue-lan” (TPYL, section *bubo*, ch. 6); *fuque* 弗卻 “to keep one’s ground”, in “Meng-zi”; *paima* 拍馬 “to hit a horse with a whip” is common in the novel “Three Kingdoms” 三国演义; expressions *suoxiang* 所向 “on his way”, *guming jiang* 古名將 “great General of the ancient times”; *chaoyong* 超勇 “exceptional courage”, in “History of Three Kingdoms” 三国志. The Chinese text also clearly indicates Cebedenjab’s relation with the Royal family: his father was an *efu*, i.e. the husband of the Emperor's seventh daughter.

Transliteration of the Manchu text:

*Jecen be toktobure ici ergi aisilara jiyanggiyûn
cin wang-ni jergi colgoroko baturu giyûn
wang Cebedenjab:*

yaluha morin be dabkifi gabtame dosici

yaya bade afara de bakcilarangge akû

yargiyan-i bihe hûlahakû niyalma bime.

yala julgei gebungge jiyanggiyûn sa ci eberi akû

ebšeme horgos sere bade hûlha be ucarafi

emu gargan-i coohai hûlha be etehe bihe kai.

ere gese sain haha ini ama we seci.

efu colgoroko baturu cing wang-ni jui ka

*Abkai wehiyehe-i šanyan muduri aniyai
niyengniyeri han-i arahangge*

Chinese text:

定邊右副將軍親王品級超勇郡
王策卜登扎卜

拍馬彎弓

無敵所向

不曾讀書

如古名將

和洛霍斯

少勝眾彼

超勇親王

額駙之子

乾隆庚辰春御題

Translation from Manchu:

Right-flank General of the qingwang
rank, a prominent hero, junwang
Cebedenjab

He had no equals in various battles
when he advanced shooting from
his horse on the move.

He was not someone reading true
histories,

Translation from Chinese:

Vice-General of the established borders
bearing the qingwang rank, a prominent
hero, junwang Cebedenjab

He rode his horse and drew his bow, and
there were no enemies on his path.

He never read books,

Really, he was comparable with Generals of the past.	Like Generals of the past.
During a forced [march] he met robbers at a place called Horgos.	In Horgos,
When he attacked, shooting while riding his horse, he defeated a gang of armed bandits.	He defeated enemies having small forces.
If this worthy man were asked, who his father was,	For his heroics, he was granted the title of tzinvan.
He would reply: “I am a son of the Emperor’s son-in-law, a prominent qinwang’s hero”.	He was the son of an <i>efu</i> .
Written by the Emperor in the spring of the White Dragon year of Abkai wehiyehe.	Written by the Emperor in the spring of the <i>gengchen</i> year of Qianlong.

Qianlong’s eulogy on the fourth scroll (ref. No. VF 2821) dated of 1760 is dedicated to General Bolbunca of the Aola clan, serving with the Manchu-Solon Blue Boarded Banner.¹⁴

The two stanzas, four lines in each, of the Manchurian text have initial alliteration, the first one beginning with *u*, the second with *d*.

The Chinese text written in four-character lines with caesuras following the second character follows the regular Chinese model. While the Manchu text is devoid of any hidden meanings and perfectly clear, its Chinese counterpart contains a few allusions to classical writings. For instance, *jueshuo* 矍鑠 “vivid (strong) in old age” can be found in the Tang dynasty “Yi wen lei jui” — “Collection of diverse from art and literature” (YWLJ, j. 18, section “About men”) and in Ma Yuan’s biography (14 BC–AD 49); he lived in the time of the Han dynasty and was a famous military chieftain revered by the Manchus for his fidelity to the throne and care about his soldiers in the field. The word *jubuo* 巨擘 “leader” was first used by Zhu Xi in his commentary upon “Meng-zi” (MZZZh, ch.10), while *wan wu shi li gong* 輓五石力弓 is often there in the Song encyclopedia “Taiping yuelan” 太平御覽. The expression *shazei* 殺賊 “to kill bandits” is common in the novel “Three Kingdoms” 三國演義.

¹⁴ WALRAVENS 2013: 138–140; BÜGENER 2015: 339–341.



Figs. 14 and 15. Bolbunca's portrait before and after the restoration
© State Hermitage Museum

Transliteration of the Manchu text:

*Meyen-i amban dorgi amban Bolbunca
udu bahacibe cooha de faššabureo seme wesimbuhe
umesi kiyangkiyan solon-i dorgi bolgo deci ombi
udu uheken beri be daraŋi gabtacibe
utala hūlha be fuhali wame mutehebi:
debsitere giyahūn-i gasha be dasihire gese
der seme burulaha hūlha be funceburakū waha.
derengge darangga Ma Yuwan-i adali amasi marifi.
desereke kesi isibume saktaka seme dosholome
tuwaha:
Abkai wehiyehe-i sanyan muduri anyai niyengniyeri
han-i arahangge*

Chinese text:

領隊大臣內大臣博而奔察
嬰鑠請行索倫巨
輓五石弓尚能
殺賊如鷲之擊不
留飛鳥馬援來歸
殊恩榮老
乾隆庚辰春御題



Figs. 16 and 17. A fragment of Bolbunca's portrait before and after the restoration
© State Hermitage Museum



Figs. 18 and 19. A fragment of Bolbunca's portrait before and after the restoration
© State Hermitage Museum

Translation from Manchu:

Brigade General Bolbunca commanding
the palace bodyguards.
Whenever there was an occasion,
he desired to fight.
He was the bravest leader of the Solons.
He could, shooting from a poorly drawn
bow,
kill a lot of bandits.
Like a bird waving its wings,
He spared no effort killing bandits about
to run.
Like Ma Yuan, he returned home in
respect and glory,
His old age was marked with limitless
gratitude and honor.
Written by the Emperor in the spring
of the White Dragon year of Abkai
wehiyehe.

Translation from Chinese:

Brigade General Bolbunca commanding
the palace bodyguards.
Vivid in his old age, he looked for fight.
He was the leader of the Solons.
Using five heavy bows one after another,
He could kill bandits.
Attacking like a bird of prey,
He left no [other] flying birds alive.
[He] returned home like Ma Yuan.
And deserved respect and honor in his
old age.
Written by the Emperor in the spring of
the *gengchen* year of Qianlong.

The fifth scroll from the State Hermitage collection presently undergoes restoration, but we have gained access to this portrait (according to WALRAVENS 2013: 135, its old ref. No. I D 22221). It represents a warrior wearing a winter yellowish-brown robe and a checkered green apron over it. Over the apron, on the waist level, there is a lily bandolier with ten sections and a brown powder flask. Behind his back, there is a saber, its sheath fixed to his belt. His footwear consists of winter boots with thick soles. On his head, he wears a round uniform hat with sable edging and rank distinctions: a coral sphere on its top and a peacock feather with one eye (*kongqiaoling*). With both hands, he is holding a musket on his left shoulder. The badly damaged text reads that the portrait depicts the commandant of town Datong in the Shangxi province, Second-rank General *bardan baturu* (proud hero)¹⁵ Guwandase (Chinese Guandase). The publication of an archival German photo and the full text of the eulogy made it possible to restore the fragments missing from the scroll.¹⁶

¹⁵ Hartmuth Walravens suggested translating *bardan baturu* as “der Stolz Held” (WALRAVENS 2013: 157).

¹⁶ WALRAVENS 2013: 157–158.

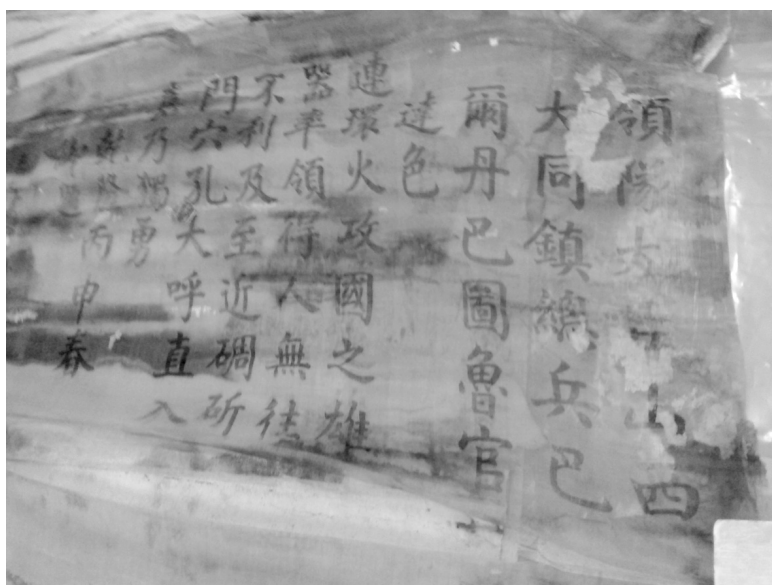
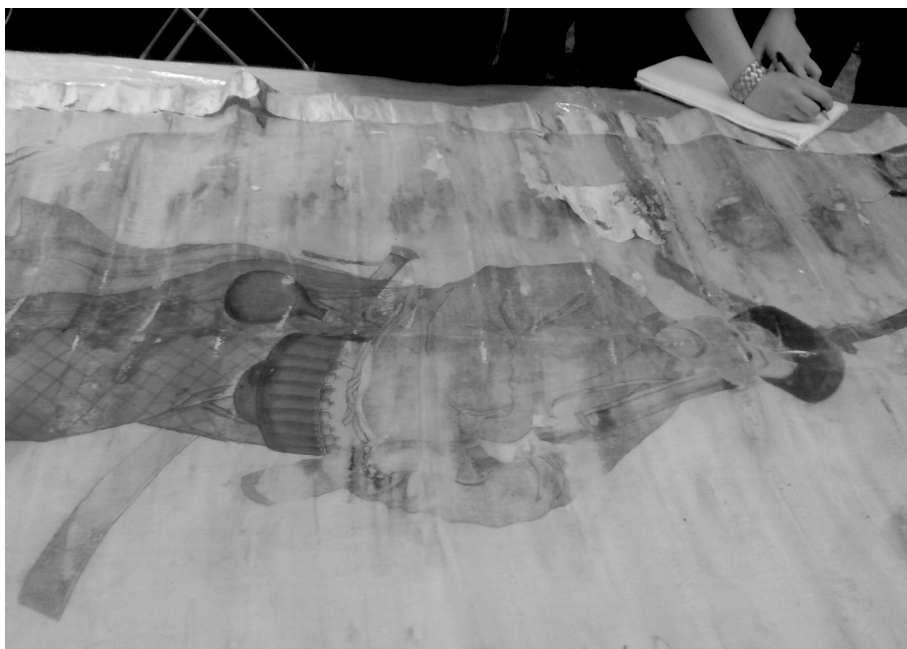


Fig. 20. Guwandase's portrait on the restoration table.

Fig. 21. A fragment of the Chinese text dedicated to Guwandase prior to its restoration

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The Manchu text is split into two stanzas with the first line starting with *i*, the second one, with *t*. The Chinese text contains words and expressions borrowed from classical compositions, e.g. *lianhuan* 連環 “inseparable unity, chain” frequent in the novel “Voyage to the West”; *huogong* 火攻 “attack with fire, shelling” can be found in “Collection of diverse from art and literature” (YWLJ, j. 80) and is common in the novel “Three Kingdoms”; *shuailing* 率領 “to lead, to head” can be encountered in the novels “Journey to the West”, “Three Kingdoms”, and “Jin ping mei”; *xuekong* 穴孔 “hole” was used in “Taiping yuelan” (TPYL, j. 17); *duyong* 獨勇 “lonesome hero” — in “Taiping yuelan” (TPYL, j. 75).

Transliteration of the Manchu text:

*meyen-i amban Šansi-i Datung-ni uheri kadalara
da bardan baturu Guwandase*

iberelime miyoocalame afarangge.

inu musei ferguwecuke agūra seci ombi.

imbe meyen gaiḟi yabubuhangge acanaha ofi

isinaha bade gemu tusa arahabi.

tereci yerutu de hanci latunafi.

tere duka be sacime sangga araha.

tede den jilgan-i kaicame dosika ofi.

terei emhuleme baturulaha be saišaha:

Abkai wehiyehe-i fulgiyan bonio aniya niyengniyeri

Han-i arahangge

Chinese text:

領隊大臣山西大同鎮總兵
把爾丹巴圖魯官達色

連環火攻

國之雄器

率領得人

無往不利

及至近礮

斫門穴孔

大呼真人

喜乃獨勇

乾隆丙申春

御題

Translation from Manchu:

Brigade General, Second-rank General
bardan baturu Guwandase of [town]
Datong, [province] of Shangxi

The one who attacked and advanced,
shot his rifle,

That one truly was our great weapon.

Leading his troops, he was dispatched
to follow [the enemy]

Wherever he was, he always helped,

Translation from Chinese:

Brigade General military commandant
of [town] Datong, [province] of
Shangxi *bardan batulu* Guandase

He advanced and attacked, and shot his
rifle.

He was called the great weapon of our
country.

He led his troops and successfully
attacked.

In all places, he was successful.

When he approached and stormed
a stone house,
He chopped a hole in the door with his
ax making a passage,
He burst inside with a loud shriek.
[His] bravery is praiseworthy.

Written by the Emperor in the spring
of the Red Monkey year of Abkai
wehiyehehe.

When he approached and attacked a
tower,
He chopped the door and made a hole,
and burst inside with a loud shriek.
This is why his surprising courage should
be celebrated.

Written by the Emperor in the spring of
the *bingjia* year of Qianlong.

Unlike the eulogies accompanying the previous four portraits, this text is dated of 1776. It was written after the second Jinchuan campaign (i.e. suppressing the Sichuan rebellion of 1771–1776) which attributes the Guwandase portrait to the second series of those intended for the Ziguang’ge Hall of Purple Glaze. Military chieftains Yeotun, Fusil, Cebdenjab, and Bolbunca had fought in the first campaign against Eastern Turkestan (in 1755–1757), so their portraits belonged to the first series of portrait scrolls with the eulogies dated of 1760.

The analysis of the eulogies by Emperor Qianlong shows that they reflected the poetical rules of their corresponding languages. Manchu texts followed the Manchu canon presuming initial alliteration, while those written in Chinese observed the rule requiring a four-syllable line with a caesure following the second word. They are written in accordance with the rules of Chinese classical ode. However, the most essential feature of the eulogies in Chinese is Qianlong’s allusions to Chinese classics, which was typical for Chinese traditional poetry. The eulogies accompanying the five portraits kept in the State Hermitage make it possible to define those literary and historical sources which were used by Qianlong. Among them, there were the Song encyclopedia “Taiping yuelan” 太平御覽, the Song collection of stories “Taiping guangji” 太平廣記, “History of Three Kingdoms” 三国志, “Collection of commentaries to Meng-zi” 孟子集注, and the “Tang Anthology” 全唐詩, novels “Three Kingdoms” 三國演義, “Journey to the West” 西游記, i.e. compositions of the Ming and Song periods well known at the Manchu court.¹⁷ No hints at Chinese texts have been traced in the Manchu version, which leads to the conclusion that Manchu eulogies were not straightforward translations from Chinese (or vice versa): these versions

¹⁷ DURRANT 1979.

strictly followed the poetic rules of their languages thus actually becoming two variants of the same topic.

The restoration and conservation of the portrait scrolls conducted at the State Hermitage Laboratory for scholarly restoration of fabrics and watercolors yielded fantastic results: there have been revealed artistic peculiarities of the portraits and identified the people represented in them. It is therefore possible to say that presently the State Hermitage has five portraits (of military chieftains Yeotun, Fusil, Cebdenjab, Bolbunca and Guwandase), originally from the Peking Hall of Purple Glaze Ziguang-ge which had been brought to Germany in the early 20th c., and later, after 1945, — over to the USSR.

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