Hossein Sheikh. *Studies of Bactrian Legal Documents*

Nicholas Sims-Williams

Electronic version
URL: https://journals.openedition.org/abstractairanica/55979
DOI: 10.4000/abstractairanica.55979
ISSN: 1961-960X

Publisher:
CNRS (UMR 7528 Mondes iraniens et indiens), Éditions de l'IFRI

Electronic reference
Nicholas Sims-Williams, "Hossein Sheikh. *Studies of Bactrian Legal Documents*", Abstracta Iranica [Online], Volume 45 | 2023, document 1, Online since 30 May 2023, connection on 03 June 2023. URL: http://journals.openedition.org/abstractairanica/55979 ; DOI: https://doi.org/10.4000/abstractairanica.55979

This text was automatically generated on 3 June 2023.

All rights reserved
Hossein Sheikh. *Studies of Bactrian Legal Documents*

Nicholas Sims-Williams

REFERENCES


This is a revised and expanded version of the author’s Göttingen PhD dissertation. The Bactrian documents which have come to light since the early 1990s include at least 35 contracts and receipts dating from the 4th to the 8th century CE. Sheikh analyses both the external format (e.g. single and double documents, use of sealings) and the internal content and structure (e.g. dating, witness lists, warranty clause) of the Bactrian legal documents. He shows that the Bactrian contracts attest a well-established though gradually evolving tradition and compares each aspect with earlier and contemporary legal documents in other languages of the surrounding area. Some features of the Bactrian documents can be traced back to the Aramaic documents of the Achaemenian period or even earlier Mesopotamian traditions; others must have been introduced in Hellenistic, Kushan or Sasanian times. The Islamic conquest of Afghanistan in the 8th century led to significant changes in legal norms, though Bactrian was not immediately replaced by Arabic as the language of legal contracts. Altogether this is a careful and well-researched study, which will be found useful by both historians and philologists.
AUTHORS

NICHOLAS SIMS-WILLIAMS

SOAS, Royaume-Uni