Buddhism in Central Asia 1

Patronage, Legitimation, Sacred Space,
and Pilgrimage

EDITED BY

Carmen Meinert and Henrik H. Sørensen

BRILL

Buddhism in Central Asia I

Dynamics in the History of Religions

VOLUME 11

Buddhism in Central Asia I

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Cover illustration: Official seal of the Saṃgha Overseer's Office in Dunhuang. 10th Century.

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Foreword

The ERC funded project *Dynamics in Buddhist Network in Eastern Central Asia 6th to 14th Centuries* (short: *BuddhistRoad*) aims to create a new framework to enable understanding of the complexities in the dynamics of cultural encounter and religious transfer in premodern Eastern Central Asia—the vast area extending from the Taklamakan Desert to North-east China. This region was the crossroads of ancient civilisations. Its uniqueness was determined by the complex dynamics of religious and cultural exchanges gravitating around an ancient communication artery known as the Silk Road. Buddhism was one major factor in this exchange; its transfer predetermined the transfer of adjacent aspects of culture, and, as such, the religious exchanges involved a variety of cultures and civilisations. These, in turn, were modified and shaped by their adoption of Buddhism. In many cases the spread of Buddhism overrode ethnic and linguistic boundaries in Eastern Central Asia creating a civilisational whole, which, despite its diversity, shared a set of common ideas originating from Buddhism. One specific aspect of this process in Eastern Central Asia was the rise of local forms of Buddhism. This project intends to investigate such Buddhist localisations and developments that took place between the 6th and the 14th centuries. At the core of the *BuddhistRoad* investigation are the areas of Khotan, Kucha, Turfan, Dunhuang, Ganzhou, as well as the territories of the Tangut and Khitan empires. The analysis will revolve around thematic clusters pertaining to doctrines, rituals and practices, the impact of non-Buddhist influences, patronage and legitimation strategies, sacred spaces and pilgrimages, and visual and material transfers.

The PI of the project, Carmen Meinert, and the project coordinator, Henrik H. Sørensen, are pleased that the editors-in-chief of the book series *Dynamics in the History of Religions*, Volkhard Krech and Licia Di Giacinto (both at CERES, Ruhr-Universität Bochum), kindly accepted to publish the following expected outcomes of the *BuddhistRoad* project in the series:

Three conference proceedings,
- *Buddhism in Central Asia I: Patronage, Legitimation, Sacred Space, and Pilgrimage*, edited by Carmen Meinert and Henrik H. Sørensen, 2020.
- *Buddhism in Central Asia II: Practice and Rituals, Visual and Material Transfer*, edited by Yukiyo Kasai and Haoran Hou, forthcoming.
- *Buddhism in Central Asia III: Doctrine, Exchanges with Non-Buddhist Traditions*, forthcoming.

Two volumes co-authored by all *BuddhistRoad* team members and a mono-
graph by Carmen Meinert on the History of Central Asian Buddhism.

Carmen Meinert
Henrik H. Sørensen

Acknowledgments

We hope that this book contributes to the understanding of how Buddhist patronage takes place between the three societal fields of politics, economics, and religion and thereby enables the emergence of a network of sacred sites and pilgrimage routes contributing to thoroughly transforming the multi-cultural region of Eastern Central Asia into a religious-cultural entity.

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Abbreviations

Arab.	Arabic
BCE	Before Common Era
c.	century
ca.	circa
CE	Common Era
CERES	Center for Religious Studies (Centrum für Religionswissenschaftliche Studien), Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany
cf.	confer
Chin.	Chinese
CHIS	Cultural History Information System
d.	died
d.u.	dates unknown
e.g.	*exempli gratia*
ERC	European Resuscitation Council
etc.	*et cetera*
FWF	Austrian Science Fund
i.e.	*id est*
Germ.	German
fl.	flourished
ibid.	*ibidem*
IDP	International Dunhuang Project at the British Library in London
Kh.	Khotanese
Kor.	Korean
Mong.	Mongolian
ms(s).	manuscript(s)
Mt.	Mount
NIT	National Institute of Technology Sikkim
OU	Old Uyghur
PI	Principal Investigator
pl.	plate
P. no.	numbering of caves in Dunhuang according to Paul Pelliot
r.	reign
Skt.	Sanskrit
Tang.	Tangut
Tib.	Tibetan
tr.	translated by
U.K.	United Kingdom

YDA   Garash Young Drugkpa Association

Symbols

<	borrowed from
<<	indirectly borrowed from
>	borrowed into
[ ]	gaps in the fragments
(ä)	unwritten vowels and consonants
{ä}	deleted against the fragment
[…]	omission
²	hendiadys
*	reconstructed titles or terminologies
□	illegible character

Notes on Contributors

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Preserved in the Sven Hedin Collection, Stockholm, ed. Yukiyo Kasai et al., 177–196 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017).

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Piety, Power, and Place in Central and East Asian Buddhism

Carmen Meinert and Henrik H. Sørensen

The present volume is the proceedings of the start-up conference "Establishing of Buddhist Nodes in Eastern Central Asia 6th to 14th C. Part I: Sacred Space, Pilgrimage, Patronage, Legitimation Strategies" of the *BuddhistRoad* project, which was held at Ruhr-Universität Bochum on 23–25 May, 2018.[1] The themes chosen for this volume are similar to those that constitute the research clusters of the *BuddhistRoad* project, and are thus part of an attempt at encompassing the salient and observable features that manifested in the Buddhist centres along the networks of the Silk Road and beyond.[2] At the same time, these themes reflect the research interests and competences of the project's participants. It goes without saying that a volume such as the present one cannot cover all relevant topics pertaining to Silk Road studies. The present volume is not intended to do so. Nor does this collection of articles deal with all of the many linguistic fields of Central Asia. What we seek to do here is to provide a series of case studies, each of which highlights specific aspects of the history of Buddhism along the Silk Road.

Even though there are numerous articles and historical studies on selected aspects of Buddhism at various sites, there is not a single, book-length recent study of Buddhism on the Silk Road in any Western language. Given the great interest that Central Asia has had in scholarly circles for more than a century, one expects that at least one monograph on the region's most influential and major religion would have been written by now. However, this unfortunate state of affairs underscores the difficulties of coming to terms with the Silk Road and Buddhism in Eastern Central Asia under the cover of a single study. Surely there are enough primary source materials and archaeological data

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1 The conference programme is available on the *BuddhistRoad* website: <https://buddhistroad.ceres.rub.de/en/activities/organised-conferences/>.

2 A project report sketching the overall research agenda of the project was recently published in the open access article: BuddhistRoad Team, "Dynamics in Buddhist Transfer in Eastern Central Asia 6th–14th Centuries: A Project Report by BuddhistRoad Team," *Medieval Worlds* 8 (2018): 126–134. The article is available here: <https://doi.org/10.1553/medievalworlds_no8_2018s126>. The reader interested in the overall research agenda and design of the project may kindly be referred to this article.

available by now to at least produce an introductory study of Buddhism on the Silk Road, even if it requires a potential author to be able to cover several linguistic fields.[3]

With this background in mind, the present volume, broadly conceptualised, deals with the construction of power, secular as well as religious, expressed through processes of legitimation, including patronage and donations, the establishment of so-called sacred spaces, and the associated practice of pilgrimage. However, while the issues of legitimation and patronage play directly into questions of power and its preservation, the issues concerning sacred space and pilgrimage are only related to them in a secondary manner. Politically, legitimation strategies involve religious piety, genuine and pretended, a high degree of social and cultural positioning, and a seemingly strong desire to present oneself as a paragon of civilising qualities.

The interplay between religion and secular power, as it played out in the Buddhist centres located along the Silk Road during the 6th to 14th century, often followed a model where mutual benefit played a crucial role. The Buddhist religion was dependent upon benevolent rulers, who extended their graces and economic muscle to sustain religious establishments, sponsor

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3   For a general overview of Central Asian history see Christopher I. Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road. A History of Central Eurasia from the Bronze age to the Present* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); and for a survey of the history of Buddhism and its contact with Islam in Central Asia see Johan Elverskog, *Buddhism and Islam on the Silk Road* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010). It should be noted, however, that the latter book is not a result of studying primary sources *per se*. An important resource on Buddhism's material culture in Central Asia up to and slightly after 600, mainly dealing with the westernmost sites is: Marylin Martin Rhie, *Early Buddhist Art of China and Central Asia*, vol. 2 (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2002). A useful discussion of the Silk Road as an artery for diplomacy, much of it relevant to the history of Buddhism in the region, is found in: Tansen Sen, *Buddhism, Diplomacy, and Trade: The Realignment of India–China Relations, 600–1400* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003). An example of a collection of Chinese articles on the economic aspects of the Silk Road presenting modern editions of recovered Chinese documents with primary sources relevant to our understanding of life in Dunhuang and Turfan up to the beginning of the 9th century is: Han Guopan 韩国磐, ed., *Dunhuang Tulufan chutu jing jiwen shu yanjiu* 敦煌吐鲁番出土经济文书研究 [Studies on the Documents Related to Economy Unearthed from Dunhuang and Turfan] (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 1986). A thoughtful overview that discusses trade, history, transmission of aspects of material culture, networks and the overall realities of the Silk Road in medieval times, i.e. in the timeframe of our project, is: David Summers, "Epilogue: The Silk Road as Real Space," in *China and Beyond in the Medieval Period: Cultural Crossings and Inter-Regional Connections*, ed. Dorothy C. Wong and Gustav Heldt (New Delhi: Manohar, Cambria Press, and NSC ISEAS, 2014), 421–425. Last but not least, an overview of the history of the Silk Road from Samarkand to Chang'an, but one which addresses the ubiquitous importance of Buddhism in most of the important cultural nodes along the Silk Road, especially its central and eastern parts, with a rudimentary introduction to the Buddhist history of the Eastern Central Asia, is: Valerie Hansen, *The Silk Road: A New History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

rituals and the production of holy scriptures, and additionally promote religious leaders, while Buddhism on its part lent its prestige, salvific promises (including divine protection), and its role as a shared, stabilising factor to the glory of the various rulers. This was particularly important in the multi-cultural setting of the area we are dealing with, where Buddhism's role as a unifying factor also involved identity politics and negotiating among competing ethnic and/or religious groups.[4]

Therefore, the dynamics of religious patronage operated between the three societal fields of politics, economics, and religion.[5] However, not all patronage activities that took place at the interface of these three fields necessarily entailed religious results. Here, one may define religious patronage as motivated by, on the one hand, good (karmic) results, and on the other, a need to underline one's own position—either as a ruler or as a leading figure in society. In other words, patronage is a concern with achievements that were either purely religious (in the sense of attainment of Buddhist merit, enlightenment, etc.), or more politically motivated as a means of promoting one's own power. The latter may also enhance divine legitimation of a local ruler, and as such function as one aspect of a broader legitimation strategy. It is only through long-term institutional patronage, supported by private donations, that a cultural region is gradually and thoroughly transformed into a religious-cultural entity—as seen in the lands in Eastern Central Asia, which eventually developed a plethora of Buddhist sacred sites and routes of pilgrimage. In short, there was hardly a kingdom, empire, or domain in Eastern Central Asia (see map 0.1) where Buddhism thrived, in which these factors did not play out to greater or lesser extents.

The emergence of Buddhist sites or 'sacred spaces' along the Silk Road may, of course, be seen as simply a reflection of the steady eastward expansion of the religion across Eastern Central Asia towards China, and a counter-wave

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4 Relational definitions of identity presuppose the (ethnic/religious) 'other.' For further reference, see among many others, Siniša Malešević, *Identity as Ideology. Understanding Ethnicity and Nationalism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

5 Our analysis of religious patronage at the intersection of the three societal fields of religion, politics, and economics is inspired by the CERES research programme. The interplay between religious semantics and social structures in the emergence of a religious field is described by our colleague Volkhard Krech, "Dynamics in the History of Religions—Preliminary Considerations on Aspects of a Research Programme," in *Dynamics in the History of Religions between Asia and Europe. Encounters, Notions, and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Volkhard Krech and Marion Steinicke (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2012), 15–70. For a further discussion of contemporary scholarship which tends to assume that the term 'religion,' if conceived as a social field distinct from politics and economy, is a product of the Western history of religions see Jonathan Z. Smith, "Religion, Religions, Religious," in *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*, ed. Mark C. Taylor (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 269–284.

MAP 0.1   Network of Buddhist nodes in Eastern Central Asia.
             © ERC PROJECT *BUDDHISTROAD*. THE MAP WAS PREPARED BY JÜRGEN
             SCHÖRFLINGER.

reflecting Sinitic cultural expansion westward. Even so, the manner in which these sites developed followed a particular mode of formation, which to a large extent depended upon the special religious, political, economic, and geographic factors that prevailed in the region for more than a millennium. Therefore, one can talk about these sacred spaces as emerging through a series of more or less conscious, cultural processes adapted to a specific geographical reality.

One may also observe how the interplay between the religious and secular spheres played out on the ground, i.e. among a given population at large. In the context of the concept of sacred space, this involves the production of Buddhist scriptures, education for monastics and commoners, and Buddhist participation in the local economy, which includes the operation of agricultural enterprises, pawnshops, loan businesses, etc. In short, in the sites where Buddhism thrived, the religion was essentially a civilising force, and as such a conveyor of traditional science and developer of material culture. Moreover, Buddhist societies served as a link between monastics and the general population at large.

The process of gradually developing and strengthening a network of sacred sites along pilgrimage routes (most often following established trade routes) tends to accelerate in times of peace and stability, which was the case for lengthy periods of time in Eastern Central Asia between the 6th and the 14th centuries.[6] Due to strong patronage systems, sacred sites were maintained, cave sanctuaries were created, and old caves were renovated—e.g. such as we see in the proliferation of newly excavated family caves under the Zhang and Cao clans in Dunhuang during the 9th and 10th centuries, or in the imperially sponsored renovations of caves and monasteries by the Tanguts at the height of their Empire in the 12th century.[7] Workshops creating religious art and scriptoriums producing texts were professionalised—e.g. as visible in 10th century Dunhuang, with the establishment of artisan workshops, or with the institutionalisation of translation processes of Buddhist scriptures in the Tangut Empire during the 11th century.[8] As these and similar activities intensified, specific

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6   For a further discussion of sacred sites and the emerging of pilgrimage routes along such sites see: Philippe Forêt and Andreas Kaplony, eds., *The Journey of Maps and Images on the Silk Road* (Leiden: Brill, 2008); particularly the following article in the volume: Natasha Heller, "Visualizing Pilgrimages and Mapping Experience," in *The Journey of Maps and Images on the Silk Road,* ed. Philippe Forêt and Andreas Kaplony (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 29–50; Dorothy C. Wong, "A Reassessment of the Representation of Mt. Wutai from Dunhuang Cave 61," *Archives of Asian Art* 46 (1993): 27–52.

7   For the Tangut example see Chapter 10 by Carmen Meinert in this volume.

8   For the professionalisation of art workshops in 10th century Dunhuang see Sarah E. Fraser, *Performing the Visual: The Practice of Buddhist Wall Painting in China and Central Asia, 618–960*

sacred sites gained in attraction, which, in turn, increased the production of new religious materials and led to a need for more pilgrimage to take place. In other words, this was a mutually reinforcing process.

Broadly speaking, sacred space may be defined as a place where religious activity occurs on the part of religious agents. Such a place may be gradually perceived as sacred, and over the course of time, additional elements of sacredness may emerge, e.g. myths or charismatic leaders become associated with a given site, holy monuments are built, etc. Moreover, the sanctity of one site may be established or enhanced through exchange between two (or more) sacred sites at different locations, e.g. what is depicted in a given temple in Khotan may well be related to a wall painting in a cave in Dunhuang.

Pilgrimage, as it unfolded on the Silk Road, took on a variety of forms, exemplified by both those pilgrims who came from afar, such as from India, Khotan, or Tibet, and also those who came from the vicinity of the holy sites themselves, such as was the case with Dunhuang and a city like Kočo in the Turfan region, where the main cultural centres were a mere twenty-five to thirty kilometres away from the sacred sites. Pilgrims were, therefore, a motley crowd, representing a variety of cultures and from all kinds of social and religious backgrounds. This was the case even though the sacred sites that interest us here were all representative of the Buddhist religion.

The breadth of the topics sketched here and the variety of approaches to them are reflected in the range of contributions to the present volume. The group of contributors hail from diverse research fields and have an equally diverse range of philological capacities. This has produced a volume whose contents bridge the artificial boundaries between the various linguistic and cultural spheres presented here, and as such addresses many of the religious complexities of Eastern Central Asia between the 6th to 14th centuries. Moreover, scholars dealing with the themes of the conference, but not necessarily focusing on the project's main region, were also invited for the purpose of comparison.

The volume is made up of two parts: A part on patronage and legitimation and a part on sacred space and pilgrimage. In a general introductory chapter to the volume, Sem Vermeersch's "Who Is Legitimising Whom? On Justifying

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(Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004). When the Tanguts ordered between 1031–1073 six copies of the Chinese Buddhist canon from the imperially established Office for the Translation of Buddhist Scriptures (Chin. *yijing yuan* 譯經院) by the Song Dynasty (960–1279, 宋), the Tanguts even copied that institutional model for the translation of the Buddhist canon from Chinese into Tangut in their capital. See Ruth W. Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High. Buddhism and State Formation in Eleventh-Century Xia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), 36–49.

Buddhism's Place in the Body Politic" investigates the concept of legitimation in East Asian Buddhism. He does so by questioning whether it was the religion that actually legitimatised the rulers or *vice versa*, or whether something else entirely was at play. He argues that often we cannot find well-defined and clear-cut sources underpinning Buddhist legitimation in the East Asian sources, but rather that historical precedent and local cultural and social factors were at play. He points out how recent innovative studies of personal devotion and related practices, based on archeological evidence, and neglected genres of texts, add new dimensions to the existing discours on legitimation. He then makes a critical re-evaluation of the concept of legitimation based on the application of a series of theorists, including Weber, Habermas, Moin, Foucault, etc., which leads Vermeersch to come up with a three-fold definition of power. Finally, the author concludes his excursus in 20th century Western philosophy, ending with Ann Blackburn's theoretical musings on Buddhism and state-craft in East Asia. From this point onwards, Vermeersch's arguments increasingly focus on East Asian cases, elucidating the relationship between Buddhism and rulers in the form of a veritable tour de force from Tang (618–907, 唐) China over Nara (710–794, 奈良) Japan to Koryŏ (936–1392, 高麗國) Korea. Among other examples, he gives special attention to the *Renwang jing* 仁王經 [Scripture on the Humane Kings], a major scripture in traditional Buddhist legitimation discours. As a self-professed Wheel-Turning King (Skt. *cakravartin*) Empress Wu (r. 685–704, 武后) stands as a classical example of a Chinese ruler, who played on the supplied by Buddhism. The author concludes that although it is evident that the Buddhists sought to render legitimation to the Chinese emperor(s) through this apocrypha, in reality it could very well be a case of mutual legitimation. Ending his investigation in Korea, Vermeersch makes a detailed review of the case of King Hyŏnjong (r. 1009–1031, 顯宗), who used Buddhist texts and rituals based on the *Scripture on the Humane Kings* to strengthen his own legitimacy in times of crisis, and later extended his graces to Buddhist establishments, even sponsoring the carving of the first Korean *tripiṭaka*.

Moving to Eastern Central Asia, Chapter 2 "Images of Patronage in Khotan" by Erika Forte focuses on how patronage was expressed in the Buddhist-dominated Kingdom of Khotan (ca. 1st c.?–1006) mainly on the basis of archaeological discoveries. Forte shows that patronage—as expressed through material and visual culture by the Khotanese—made use of mythological imagery and certain cultural markers that were deeply steeped in Buddhist lore and belief, rather than presenting the local rulers as patrons of Buddhism or as integral parts of the religious iconography, as we see elsewhere. The author explores two important foundation myths that exemplify this mythological

overlay and indirect patronage, namely the Silk Princess and the founding of the Gomatī Monastery. Forte highlights how these myths play out in relation to existing archaeology by identifing archaeological sites with the transmitted legends/myths, addressing Mt. Gautośan/Gośṛṅga and Kohmārī Hill in the process.

Next follows "Uyghur Legitimation and the Role of Buddhism." Chapter 3 by Yukio Kasai is devoted to a discussion of the question of legitimation and patronage in the West Uyghur Kingdom, which flourished from the mid-9th century onwards in the Turfan oasis. Kasai shows that initially the Manichaean religion provided spiritual legitimation for the shifting Uyghur rulers, and was therefore favoured by them. However, the Uyghur rulers gradually changed their adherence away from Manichaeism towards Buddhism, a development that may have come about due to the increasing internationalisation of the Uyghurs themselves, fostered through their sustained contact with neighbouring cultures where Buddhism was the primary religious factor. Kasai explains that the transition from Manichaeanism to Buddhism did not happen overnight or through an immediate and calculated political process, but was a protracted affair that did not involve any overt forms of persecution. This is clear from the fact that both religions co-existed in the Uyghur Kingdom before Buddhism eventually became the dominant religious force. It appears that the decline of Manichaeism was to a large extent caused by the loss of patronage of the rulers and members of the upper echelons of Uyghur society. With this loss of influence, Manichaeism declined, and ruler's legitimation strategy shifted to the Buddhist model of the enlightened ruler, even though the sources do not allow us to conceptualise this as similar to the *cakravartin*-type of ruler imagery that we find in the Dunhuang material.

In Chapter 4 "Donors and Esoteric Buddhism in Dunhuang during the Reign of the Guiyijun" Henrik H. Sørensen looks at the relationship between secular power and Buddhism expressed in Esoteric Buddhist votive paintings produced as offerings for important local temples by rulers and families occupying the higher echelons of society in Dunhuang. These religious paintings, which were presented as gifts to various local temples, were partly used by their donors to highlight their status at the same time as they addressed various religious needs, including the desire to extend the religious merit thought to derive from such offerings to deceased relatives. These paintings—all of which reflect the popularity of certain Esoteric Buddhist cults, chiefly those associated with the all-important Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara in his many forms—attest to the increasing significance of Esoteric Buddhism as a dominant tradition within Mahāyāna Buddhism, a tradition that took on a special significance in the Dunhuang Kingdom, due to its integration of several waves

of transmission that represented virtually all the cultures in the region. Therefore, this form of Buddhism, which obviously enjoyed both an inter-cultural and also an international appeal in the region, was well-suited to function as a common denominator for believers inhabiting wide swaths of Eastern Central Asia. In Dunhuang, situated at a strategic point on the eastern stretches of the Silk Road, the ruling Cao clan (曹氏) was obviously part of this trend. It is, therefore, no coincidence that its members sought to capitalise politically as well as religiously on this commonality in their self-representation as Buddhist devotees and donors.

The final chapter in the part on patronage and legitimation by Kirill Solonin, "Formation of Tangut Ideology: Buddhism and Confucianism," is devoted to a discussion and presentation of the legitimation strategies that unfolded in the Tangut Empire (ca. 1038–1227, in Chinese sources known as Xixia 西夏) through the utilisation of what the author sees as a conscious cultural and civilising approach to nation-building. The Tanguts, a relatively new nation and a self-conscious one at that, while on the one hand wishing to appear both civilised and as equals in cultural terms *vis-à-vis* its Chinese and sinicised neighbours, were quite willing to adopt salient features of Chinese political and civil culture; on the other hand, they were equally concerned with the preservation of what they saw as their own cultural roots. This two-pronged strategy appears to have been quite successful. The Tanguts never abandoned their deep-felt attachment to Buddhism but instead sought to integrate and develop said strategy under the aegis of Buddhism. They did this in such a manner that the other civilising forces represented by their native literature (mainly in the form of a song or hymn-tradition) and Confucianism-based education (chiefly meant for its civil servants) continued to be fully functional and operative. In the course of his discussion, Solonin presents a series of representative and central primary sources with which he underscores his arguments and findings.

Moving to the part on sacred space and pilgrimage, Chapter 6 "From Padmasambhava to Gö Tsangpa: Rethinking Religious Patronage in the Indian Himalayas between the 8th and 13th Centuries" by Verena Widorn treats the interactions between (semi-)historical human agents, physical spaces, and monuments in the creation of sacred landscape of in the Western Himalayan regions of Kinnaur and Lahul (part of the contemporary Indian state Himachal Pradesh and on the former Tibetan periphery). Widorn relates how hagiographic narratives of three important Buddhist agents are employed in order to sanctify religious sites—namely the semi-historical, pivotal figure for the Nyingma School (Tib. *rnying ma pa*), Padmasambhava (8th c.), Rinchen Zangpo (ca. 985–1055, Tib. Rin chen bzang po), a central figure during the

post-imperial restoration of Buddhism in the Western Tibetan Kingdom of Purang-Guge, and the yogi and pilgrim of the Drukpa Kagyü School (Tib. *'brug pa bka' brgyud pa*), Gö Tsangpa (ca. 1189–1258, Tib. rGod tshang pa), all three of whom have been—and still function as—patrons in the Western Himalayas. Through trans-regional exchanges, the legacies of all three have contributed to the construction of a Tibetan Buddhist artistic heritage in the region, as well as to the development of a regional network of sacred sites, in certain cases still extant.

With Chapter 7 "Sacred Space in Uyghur Buddhism" by Jens Wilkens and Chapter 8 "Pilgrims in Old Uyghur Inscriptions: A Glimpse behind Their Records" by Simone-Christiane Raschmann, the volume moves again to the core region of the *BuddhistRoad* project, the Tarim Basin. Both chapters focus on the Old Uyghur materials in order to elucidate how concepts of sanctity and pilgrimage were understood and played out among the multi-religious Uyghurs.

Wilkens shows how Uyghurs, upon their migration into the Turfan region, positioned themselves in a Buddhist environment, partly adapting and reformulating Buddhist concepts of holiness. However, other terminologies tended to mirror the Uyghurs' self-perception as a distinct cultural group. Attributes of holiness appear in royal titles and are also attributed to physical space (e.g. to the winter capital of Kočo). The old sacred centre of the Turkic peoples in the region of Ötükän shifted with the migration to the Turfan region in the vicinity of the new summer capital Beš Balık. The Uyghurs' understanding of sacred space can thus be analysed through their original compositions, such as poems and inscriptions.

Raschmann's investigation of the records of Uyghur pilgrims proves the extent to which Uyghurs participated in the larger Buddhist network of sacred sites through pilgrimages in the region, e.g. as visible in Old Uyghur inscriptions in the Mogao and Yulin Caves (as evidence for regional pilgrimage) and in an eulogy of Mt. Wutai (as a proof for trans-regional pilgrimage). Moreover, her case study on inscriptions from ruin Q in Kočo shows that it was originally a *stūpa*, and as such was upheld as an extraordinary and sacred site in Kočo, worthy of receiving pilgrims from near and far.

Chapter 9 "Looking from the Periphery: Some Additional Thoughts on Yulin Cave 3" by Max Deeg was originally a response to a conference paper by Michelle McCoy. From the perspective of a textual scholar, Deeg analyses the main figures in a diptych of Samantabhadra and Mañjuśrī, and the pan-Buddhist narrative background of Yulin Cave 3, which was produced during the Tangut Empire (ca. 1038–1227). The Tangut patrons successfully reformulated and intertwinted the concepts, elements, and narratives of e.g. a proto-*Xiyou ji* 西遊記 [Record of the Journey to the West] context, originally a Nepalese

narrative about Mañjuśrī, who cuts a hole into the mountains with his sword to release the water from the primordial lake in the Kathmandu Basin. By weaving narrative ingredients and motifs into a dense patchwork, they created a Tangut Buddhist identity of their own.

In the final chapter, Chapter 10 "Creation of Tantric Sacred Spaces in Eastern Central Asia," Carmen Meinert explores the relationship between Tangut imperial patronage of Tibetan Tantric masters, the teachings and related religious art, and the deliberate construction of a network of Tantric Buddhist sites throughout the Tangut Empire during the late 12th century. She draws on visual and material evidence to demonstrate that the Tangut Emperor Renzong (r. 1139–1193, 仁宗) acted as a patron of Buddhism not only in his capacity as a Buddhist ruler of the Tanguts but also as an expression of his personal desire to show himself as a Buddhist initiate. As part of this process, he produced a new visual imagery in the major nodes of his empire, a trend that was reproduced in minor nodes. Meinert's discussion moves from the micro-level of analysis of specific art objects, to the relation of those objects with similar ones found at other sites, thereby creating a network of sacred sites related to Tantric Buddhism within the Tangut territory at large.

PART 1

Patronage and Legitimation

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Who Is Legitimating Whom? On Justifying Buddhism's Place in the Body Politic

Sem Vermeersch

1 Introduction

In this chapter I revisit the idea of legitimacy and question whether or not it is really a useful concept. Insofar as possible, I take a broad look across East Asian states in order to see how well the concept can be applied across various times and dynasties. However, for practical reasons I restrict myself mostly to medieval China and medieval Korea (Koryŏ (918–1392, 高麗國)), the areas I am most familiar with.

Following the publication of *The Power of the Buddhas*,[1] there have not been many studies that attempt a conceptual analysis of power relations between the state and religious communities in pre-modern East Asian (or Central Asian) societies.[2] Valuable work has, of course, been done, and I will turn to some of it later. However, what strikes me is that the most innovative research in terms of Buddhism's working at the level of the seats of power, has been done in the fields of art and archeology—or perhaps better, the material culture of Buddhism. I refer especially to the richly challenging work by Eugene Wang, as well as the many studies of relics, *dhāraṇīs*, and other material remnants, tangible reminders of what has been termed 'Buddhist on the ground' (or perhaps 'in the ground').

Of course, texts are ultimately also material, but they have been largely treated in a disembodied way, as ideas rather than practices. Thus, we seem to

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1 Sem Vermeersch, *The Power of the Buddhas: The Politics of Buddhist During the Koryŏ Dynasty*, 918–1392 (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008).

2 I am fully aware of the potential pitfalls of designating Buddhism, Daoism, or other traditions in premodern East Asia as "religious," which would imply the recognition of the secular-religious dichotomy. Although what we would now designate "religious" structures or ideas were subsumed by the state in imperial China, Buddhism nevertheless became at times almost regarded as an entity separate from the state and always retained some of that "otherness." See Robert F. Campany, "Chinese History and Writing about 'Religion(s)': Reflections at a Crossroad," in *Dynamics in the History of Religions between Asia and Europe: Encounters, Notions, and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Volkhard Krech and Marion Steinicke (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), 273–294. I am indebted to one of the anonymous reviewers for pointing me to this work.

have quite different streams of scholarship dealing with Buddhist legitimation in East Asia: with more traditional legitimation studies based on texts on the one hand, and more innovative studies dealing with personal devotion, practice, and aspiration based on archeological evidence, or on hitherto neglected genres of text, on the other. So, one of the main purposes of this chapter is to connect these two streams and see whether we are really dealing with mutually exclusive universes of meaning, or whether there is a common ground, an overlap, and hopefully a synergy between the two that may lead to new insights.

I start by revisiting Max Weber (1864–1920) and his concept of legitimation, and elucidate how it has evolved over time, and add some reflections on more recent theories of power. Then, considering some of these reflections on the concept of legitimation, I take a broad overview of the state of scholarship on the problem of legitimation in East Asia. Following that, I move back to my own area of expertise, i.e. Korean Buddhism, and revise some of my own conclusions regarding the legitimating role of Buddhism, taking into account recent research on Chinese Buddhism, but also research on religion and power in other contexts.

2   Critical Re-evaluation of the Concept of Legitimation

Let us start by recalling in brief how Weber conceived of legitimation and how it became one of his most well-known theories. Regrettably, we can only give a very succinct overview, one that does not really do him justice. Weber is not exactly easy to pin down or summarize. Moreover, his last work, the "Theory of Social and Economic Organization (Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft)," was not finalized at the time of his death. It is precisely this work that contains his most developed ideas on the subject.

As is well known, his is a theory of political authority, one that seeks to explain how authority is established and maintained. While many may consider coercion and military power to be crucial, according to Weber, to maintain authority, those who are governed must accept that it is right and proper that they are ruled by those in authority; in other words, authority is much more effective when it is generally accepted rather than resisted. In that case, we can say that an authority or government is considered 'legitimate.' Weber famously distinguished three kinds of rationalizations on the basis of which power can be accepted as legitimate:

1. Power can be accepted on rational grounds, resting on the belief that patterns of normative rules are 'legal' and that those in authority have the right to enforce those rules;

2. it can be accepted on traditional grounds, i.e. an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of the status of those exercising authority under them; and

3. it can be accepted on charismatic grounds, or devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism, or exceptional character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him.[3]

Since Weber is speaking universally, i.e. not limited to the modern or premodern era, nor to democratic or autocratic systems, his theory is still eminently applicable and attractive. Yet at the same time, its general nature covers over many lacunae. I will cite two critics in particular who have laid bare the limitations of Weber. The first, José Merquior (1941–1991), is arguably among the sharpest critics. He points out that Weber's theory is subjectivist, in that it searches for the psychological motivations for accepting authority. In this sense, it is really about the individual's belief in the rightness to rule of those in authority. Weber's theory is based on the assumption that certain beliefs exist among both rulers and ruled.[4] However, Merquior points out that Weber neglects the view from below. In other words, he is too ruler-centered.

Jürgen Habermas, however, points to other passages in Weber's work that show his awareness of this problem. From a Marxist (class analysis) point of view, class societies are based on the "privileged appropriation of socially produced wealth."[5] In other words, 'legitimate' authorities use their position of authority to appropriate resources from others, or to assert power over them. Even though those who are thereby disadvantaged may acquiesce to the norms that justify this, this is by no means a case of blind faith.

The factual recognition of such norms does not, of course, rest solely on belief in their legitimacy by those affected. It is also based on fear of, and submission to, indirectly threatened sanctions, as well as on simple compliance engendered by the individual's perception of his own powerlessness and the lack of alternatives open to him (that is, by his own fettered imagination).[6]

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3   Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1947), 328.

4   José Merquior, *Rousseau and Weber: Two Studies in the Theory of Legitimacy* (London: Kegan Paul, 1980), 6–7.

5   Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), 96.

6   Ibid.

Weber's own words are, if anything, even more laconic:

> It is by no means true that every case of submissiveness to persons in
> positions of power is primarily (or even at all) oriented to this belief [in
> the legitimacy of the system]. Loyalty may be hypocritically simulated by
> individuals or by whole groups on purely opportunistic grounds, or car-
> ried out in practice for reasons of material self-interest. Or people may
> submit from individual weakness and helplessness because there is no
> acceptable alternative.[7]

Still, to him this does not diminish the fact that legitimacy is still to a large de-
gree 'valid.' Habermas points out, however, that this validity is not undisputed.
Legitimation should still bear a relation to truth, but how to define 'truth' and
how it disrupts the legitimation system is not so clearly explained.[8] The impor-
tant point to take away from this is that what may appear to be legitimation
may, in fact, simply be a set of conventions to which both rulers and ruled ad-
here but not necessarily with much conviction or substance; paraphrasing We-
ber's theory of the routinization of charisma, it may be that legitimation may
also be routinized, ergo gradually losing its 'vitality.'[9]

Arguably the biggest challenge to the ideas of Weber, and the biggest shift
in looking at power relations, is the French philosophical school of the 1960s
and 1970s, usually labelled 'postmodern.' According to most postmodern theo-
rists, power derives neither from military might nor from a legitimating ide-
ology, but is constructed impersonally through discourse. In other words, it
works through the persuasive force of language. As such, this conception of
power might be seen as a refinement of Weber's ideas (legitimation through
the manipulation of language), but importantly it eschews (even destroys)
the notion of 'ideology.' In this sense it corresponds with Merquior's critique,
even though he is known to have distanced himself vociferously from Michel
Foucault (1926–1984).[10] According to Foucault and others of the postmodern
school, there is no core set of ideas or norms that radiate outwards, but rather

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7   Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, 96; quoting from Max Weber, "The Types of Legitimate
     Domination," in *Economy and Society. An Outline of Interpretative Sociology Volume 1*, ed.
     Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (New York: Bedminster Society, 1968), 214.
8   See Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, 9. His work was meant as a kind of template for a larg-
     er project, and hence some parts appear underdeveloped. However, in its brevity, it is
     eminently accessible.
9   I must confess that this is by no means a comprehensive study of legitimation. In so far as
     I have managed to survey the field, however, it appears that Weber's ideas are generally
     held to be valid among sociologists.
10   See José Merquior, *Foucault* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

a manipulation of narratives and images that are largely shared (from a common language until a paradigm shift erupts).

However, the problem for me lies in making sense of what Foucault is exactly trying to argue. One important problem is that he seems to be making the case (very simply put) that biopolitics and self-surveillance (or other forms of surveillance) are modern constructs, replacing older forms of coercion that are violent (torture, incarceration, killing, etc.). Whereas self-discipline was used in antiquity by elites who wanted to set themselves apart from those considered inferior, in the modern period universalised self-discipline makes the individual susceptible to being controlled. As many have pointed out, however, it is dangerous to apply what are essentially European categories to other contexts; in his study of courtly culture in early medieval India, for example, Daud Ali points to the fact that Foucalt's method is not well suited to normative historical and sociological enquiry, and cannot simply be applied to the Indian context.[11]

Moreover, applying Foucault's ideas without excessive use of jargon and passive voice constructions is not easy. Still, the fact that this legacy can be useful for refining the question of religious legitimation is made clear in a short essay by Anne Blackburn, a review of Azfar Moin's *The Millenial Sovereign*. Reflecting on this book, she identifies the most nefarious preconceptions that emerged in the fields of comparative theology and religion during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: "The heart of 'religion' is 'doctrine.' 'Religion' is not-politics and private."[12] Indeed, our tendency to apply the modern state-religion model can lead to many distortions, and it is worth spelling out the two fallacies still haunting many studies that she identifies here so succinctly. The first is the supposition that there is a direct link between doctrine and legitimation, i.e. that there is an ideological program that is somehow put into effect. While this may not be ruled out, as I hope to make clear in this chapter, legitimation strategies are in most cases not based on specific doctrinal texts. The second fallacy concerns the assumption that 'religion' and 'state' were mostly clearly delineated, the one concerning private affairs and the other political affairs. Again, while in East Asia the state, often identified with Confucianism, in its turn tried to keep Buddhism to the domestic realm, the boundaries were constantly in flux, with private religious beliefs often taking center stage in political discussions.

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11   Daud Ali, *Courtly Culture and Political Life in Early Medieval India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 9–11.

12   Ann, Blackburn, "Buddhist Technologies of Statecraft and Millenial Moments," *History and Theory* 56.1 (2017): 72.

In her essay-review, Blackburn tries to show how the end-of-dharma soteriology in the Asian subcontinent spurred rulers to act in often very different ways, depending on local factors, circumstances, and personalities. The point appears to be that the model of the Wheel-Turning King (Skt. *cakravartin*, Chin. *zhuanlun wang* 轉輪王) as an ideal of rulership was employed creatively in ad-hoc texts; one of her arguments concerns the need to look beyond standard texts and include a wide variety of texts circulating among the people. However, the conclusions are actually rather conventional and coincide remarkably well with what we see in East Asia, where the end of the *dharma* is often invoked by rulers to strengthen their hold over Buddhism. Still, Azfar Moin's own arguments about sacred kingship among the Mughals seem to be relevant for my own project and should help us towards a broader and more flexible understanding of legitimation: "The dominant experience of sacred authority for most people—elite or common—was concrete and embodied rather than abstract and textual."[13]

3   Legitimation across the Asian Continent

In his introduction to *The Middle Kingdom and the Dharma Wheel: Aspects of the Relationship Between the Buddhist Saṃgha and the State in Chinese History*, Thomas Jülch has already provided an admirable digest of relevant research of the past decades on the question of how Buddhism may or may not have helped to legitimate temporal power in Chinese dynasties. However, his focus is somewhat wider than the concept of legitimation, since he looks at the whole spectrum of relations between the Buddhist state and various Chinese polities, including negative aspects such as state repression of Buddhism. In the second section of this introduction, then, he gives an overview of how "Buddhism [is used to] ideologically strengthen the emperor."[14] Here Jülch looks at six ways of making the emperor "soteriologically significant" by giving him a place in the Buddhist pantheon of world saviors:

1.   the ruler could be hailed as a Buddha;
2.   he could be identified as a *cakravartin*, the Wheel-Turning King who based his legitimacy on the fact that he spread the dharma;

13   Azfar Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign. Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 8.
14   Thomas Jülch, "Introduction," in *The Middle Kingdom and the Dharma Wheel: Aspects of the Relationship between the Buddhist Saṃgha and the State in Chinese History*, ed. Thomas Jülch (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 7–14.

3. in the context of end-of-*dharma* soteriology, the king could also be pre-
    sented as savior and guardian of the *dharma* at a time when monks were
    becoming inevitably corrupt;

4. he could be associated or identified with the future Buddha Maitreya;

5. emperors could be identified as reincarnations of the bodhisattva
    Mañjuśrī, which happened mainly in the Yuan (1279–1368, 元) and Qing
    (1644–1912, 清) dynasties; and

6. emperors, or in this case empress dowager Cixi (1835–1905, 慈禧), could
    be identifed with other bodhisattvas, in this case Avalokiteśvara.[15]

Besides the fact that legitimation does not only take place through the eleva-
tion/deification of the ruler (*pace* Weber, this is only the charismatic aspect,
but there are also the rational and traditional aspects of legitimation, which do
not necessarily focus on the ruler alone), one might object that the division is
somewhat arbitrary, since some of the categories are only variations of the sort
'identifying with a Buddha/bodhisattva.' Another problem is that many of the
cases given are unique examples, such as the identification with Maitreya,
which only happened under the Tuoba rulers of the Northern Wei (386–535,
北魏); later rulers seem to have shunned such identification because of its as-
sociation with millenarian cults and hence disorder.[16] But a more fundamental
problem is that even for individual rulers, it is difficult to put them in any par-
ticular category. For example, Jülch identifies Sui Wendi (r. 581–604, 隋文帝) as
belonging to the *cakravartin* model, but as Chen Jinhua has shown, Emperor
Wen identified himself both as bodhisattva and as *cakravartin*.[17]

This should prompt us to reflect on whether there is really an ideological
template that was followed. Recent research by Antonello Palumbo points to
the difficulty in locating such models; as he points out, the Indian texts about
Buddhist monarchs are "contextless," so that we do not know if they were fol-
lowed, while on the Chinese side, rulers

> fashion their own experiments of Buddhist statecraft in ways that it may
> be tempting to explain as sheer bricolage [...] We would have then,

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15 Thomas Julch, "Introduction." It is somewhat disappointing that, apart from the introduc-
    tion, none of the chapters in this edited volume attempt any more systematic or theo-
    retically grounded analysis of the legitimation problem.

16 Antonino Forte, *Political Propaganda and Ideology in China at the End of the Seventh Cen-
    tury: Inquiry into the Nature, Author, and Function of the Tunhuang Document S. 6502,
    Followed by an Annotated Translation* (Kyoto: Scuola Italiana di studi sull'Asia orientale,
    2005), 223–242 (esp. 225).

17 Jinhua Chen, *Monks and Monarchs, Kinship and Kingship. Tanqian in Sui Buddhism and
    Politics* (Kyoto: Scuola Italiana di Studi sull'Asia Orientale, 2002), 114.

models without real rulers to follow them on one side, and rulers without models on the other.[18]

Nevertheless, Palumbo shows how Indian sources did in fact inspire at least the Chinese *saṃgha* to change its attitudes towards kingship. How far kings themselves were influenced is a question he leaves unanswered, but points to the introduction of *sūtra*s featuring King Aśoka (r. ca. 268–232 BCE) in the late fourth century as a body of work that deserves more attention (more on this below) in the quest for the ideological foundations of Buddhist kingship.

Leaving aside the question of which texts were crucial and how they inspired Chinese rulers, it is clear that the image of the *cakravartin* had a strong appeal. However, Palumbo notes that the *cakravartin* in fact initially served to emphasize the distance between the Buddha (and by extension monks) and such grand mythical rulers of the past, and did not serve as a model to be imitated. He is of course talking about the early phase of Buddhism in China (up to ca. 400 CE). In later periods, the *cakravartin* was invoked by Chinese rulers (and those of Silla (57 BCE–668 CE, 新羅) as well), but Palumbo's work does point to the fact that a term like '*cakravartin*' was not well understood, or was understood very differently depending on time and place. Thus, while the image of the *cakravartin*'s power may be inspiring, it is hardly an ideological statement. There are certainly elements in *cakravartin* stories that can be attractive to rulers, but we should be careful in assuming any *a priori* ideology resting there. Unfortunately, all too often a direct link has been assumed between certain ideas in Buddhist texts and political reality. This is clear from the following quotation:

> The cosmic Buddha Vairochana was the focus of Chinese tantric devotions in the Tang dynasty. He dominates the *Avatamsaka Sutra* (Ch. *Hwayan jing*) and many of the major esoteric texts […].
>
> The benefits Vairochana promised were both spiritual and political, and his usefulness in preserving imperial legitimacy was quickly recognized.

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18   Antonello Palumbo, "Models of Buddhist Kingship in Early Medieval China," in *Zhonggu shidai de liyi, zongjiao yu zhidu* 中古時代的禮儀、宗教與制度 [Ritual, Religion, and Institutions in the Mid-ancient Period], ed. Yu Xin 余欣 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2012), 288. Jülch ("Introduction," 11) cites exactly this same page but concludes from it that "[…] in the Indian Tradition the cakravartin ideal was not meant to be a tool in the legitimation of a ruler, […]." This does not seem to be what Palumbo is arguing; rather, he concludes that there is not sufficient evidence on the Indian side to conclude whether Buddhist legitimation was actually employed by Indian rulers.

> Symbolized by the sun [...], Vairochana is the chakravartin (C. lun-
> wang), the Wheel-turning King or Universal World Ruler, a role that had
> great appeal for the emperors of China from the Tang dynasty onward.
> Aside from the spiritual legitimacy the title chakravartin provided, it sug-
> gested an era of universal peace with the Chinese emperor at the heart of
> it.[19]

Among the many problematic statements in this passage, the most glaring is
arguably that Vairocana (Chin. *Piluzhenafo* 毘盧遮那佛) is also a *cakravartin*.
While it is not appropriate to dismiss such evidence out of hand,[20] it is poten-
tially misleading, most of all because it is representative of a trend to point to
Vairocana as a kind of unifying paradigm; the reasoning is that since Vairocana
is the cosmic Buddha from which all other buddhas and bodhisattvas emanate,
he would be attractive to rulers keen on implementing centralisation of their
states. Especially in general overviews or works of a more popular nature, this
view is often encountered. For example, in relation to the famous Vairocana
statue in the Tōdai Monastery (東大寺) in the city of Nara, Richard Bowring
writes:

> The central figure of this vast text [i.e. the *Avataṃsaka sūtra*] is Vairoca-
> na, who was the outcome of a movement to unify all buddhas under a
> single entity; as the ultimate transcendent buddha of Mahāyāna [...] he
> was a natural symbol for rulers to adopt.[21]

Arguably such views may have been influenced by the role Vairocana played in
other Buddhisms. Notably in Tibet, Matthew Kapstein notes, "[...] the Tibetan
imperial state came to be constituted, through a principle of homology, as the

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19   Patricia Berger, "Preserving the Nation: The Political Uses of Tantric Art in China," in *Lat-*
      ter Days of the Law. Images of Chinese Buddhism 850–1850, ed. Marsha Weidner (Lawrence:
      Spencer Museum of Art, 1994), 91.
20   Charles Orzech, for example, argues for the interchangeability of categories such as bod-
      hisattva or *cakravartin*. He argues that key texts, such as the *Scripture of the Humane*
      Kings, embrace different temporal and spatial frameworks, which he calls *dharmic* and
      rupic; the former refers to the positional visionary apprehension of reality in trance, the
      latter to the personal idiom of inborn substances and their interaction. Thus, what may
      appear different from one perspective is the same from another perspective. Charles
      Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom. The Scripture for Humane Kings in the Creation*
      of Chinese Buddhism (University Park, Pa.: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 42.
21   Richard Bowring, *The Religious Traditions of Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University
      Press, 2005), 85.

body and maṇḍala of the Buddha Vairocana."[22] He also notes the spread of Indian-influenced imperial cults throughout Asia, mentioning especially Japanese Shingon (真言) Buddhism. However, while the *Avataṃsaka sūtra* and belief centered on Vairocana were indeed influential in China and Japan in the eighth century, it should not automatically be assumed that there was a direct parallel between text and practice. Although Shōmu Tennō (r. 701–756, 聖武天皇), who initiated the construction of Tōdai Monastery and its Vairocana statue, seems to have been identified with Vairocana,[23] this seems to have depended on the context. Elsewhere the emperor refers to himself as a servant of the Buddha and seems to treat Vairocana merely as a kind of deity.[24] In any case, there is no evidence that Huayan (華嚴) ideology was specifically employed to identify the ruler with Vairocana. This is even more conspicuous in the case of Wu Zetian (625–705, 武則天). Though we know that she was a fervent supporter of Huayan Buddhism (the Huayan patriarch Fazang (643–712, 法藏) is even said to have written the *Jin shizi zhang* 金師子章 [Treatise on the Golden Lion] (T. 1880.45) especially for her), and though her legitimating strategies are very well documented, nowhere is there any hint of association with Vairocana.[25]

That does not mean that we can rule out the possibility altogether. There have indeed been cases where Buddhist monks advocated doctrinal tenets as panacea for unification; this was the case, for example, in late Koryŏ, where Ch'ŏnt'ae (天台) monks wanted to advocate the Three in One (Chin. *huisan guiyi* 回三歸一) doctrine attributed to Zhiyi (538–597, 智顗) as conducive to political unification.[26] But those claims were made *ex post facto*, and there is no evidence that they were ever propagated by emperors or kings in their quest for unification.

One of the works that has the best potential to be called a "fundamental political text" of Buddhism[27] is the already-mentioned *Scripture on the*

22　　Matthew T. Kapstein, *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism. Conversion, Contestation, and Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 60.

23　　See Serge Elisséeff, "The Bommōkyō and the Great Buddha of the Tōdaiji," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 1.1 (1936): 88. Strictly speaking the statue is not of Vairocana but of Rocana (Chin. Lushena 盧舍那).

24　　Bowring, *Religious Traditions*, 91–92.

25　　Aside from a statue of Vairocana at the Longmen (龍門) Caves believed to have been dedicated by her, there is absolutely no textual reference to Vairocana when it comes to legitimating issues. Fazang himself resorted to *cakravartin* imagery in praise of Wu Zetian. See Forte, *Political Propaganda and Ideology*, 212–213.

26　　Sem Vermeersch, "Buddhism and Political Integration: Reflections on the Buddhist Summa of Wŏnhyo and Political Power," *Acta Koreana* 18.1 (2015): 96–117.

27　　Here I borrow the expression from Berger, who calls *the Scripture on the Humane Kings* a "fundamental political text of Tantrism." Berger, "Preserving the Nation," 91.

Humane Kings. Research shows that it is an apocryphal *sūtra* fabricated in China in the second half of the fifth century, more specifically, after 477 under the Northern Wei Dynasty. According to research by Charles Orzech, the *Scripture on the Humane Kings* emerged in the aftermath of the persecutions of Buddhism that took place around 445. As the Northern Wei ruling elites sinified, Buddhism was marked as 'foreign,' and therefore to cleanse the body politic of its allegedly corrupt influence, it was proscribed. Influential monks such as Tanyao (fl. ca. 460–480, 曇曜) managed to allay traditional fears of Buddhism as inimical to the state by turning it into 'an arm of the state.' Tanyao became the head of a *saṃgha* bureaucracy subservient to the state, while 'Buddha households' of slaves and forcefully relocated citizens showed that Buddhism could make an economic contribution to the state.[28] The *Scripture on Humane Kings*, Orzech argues, emerged in reaction to this. It advocates the fundamental independence of the *saṃgha* by criticizing the establishment of registration of monks, the fact that they served as officials, and the fact that slaves and soldiers were treated as monks. However, while thus arguing for the independence of the *saṃgha*, at the same time it proposes the usefulness of Buddhism to the state by describing state-protective rites and prescribing how kings can be identified as *cakravartin* or bodhisattva. Also, and very importantly, it defuses the charge of the 'foreignness' of Buddhism by collapsing the boundaries between 'foreign' and 'native' by making key concepts exchangeable. Most crucially, there is the fundamental identification between the Chinese/Confucian concept of humanity (Chin. *ren* 仁) and the foreign/Buddhist concept of forbearance (Chin. *ren* 忍), which are also homonymous in Chinese.[29]

Orzech's work remains the most important text for the study of Buddhist legitimation strategies in East Asia and deserves better recognition.[30] Nevertheless, to carry the debate forward, it should also be recognized that his work is limited to the intellectual universe presented by the text itself; it is an exemplary study of the text in its intellectual context, yet it is not a historical study of how the text was put into practice. In other words, no matter how brilliant and revolutionary the text may be, if it does not inspire or inform actual legiti-

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28   Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*, 113, 120.

29   Ibid. Here, I summarise his work, mainly with reference to Chapter 4, "The End of the Teaching and the Creation of Chinese Buddhism," 112–121, 124.

30   Jülch, "Introduction," for example, does not even mention him. Note also some of the reviews, which seem puzzled by the theoretical framework: see notably those by John McRae, "Politics and Transcendent Wisdom: The Scripture for Humane Kings in the Creation of Chinese Buddhism," *Journal of Chinese Religions* 27.1 (1999): 113–121, notably p. 116; and Steven Collins, "Orzech, Charles D. Politics and Transcendent Wisdom: The Scripture for Humane Kings in the Creation of Chinese Buddhism." *The Journal of Religion* 79.4 (1999): 698–700.

mation strategies, then it becomes irrelevant. Whether or not this is the case is, however, difficult to ascertain; it remained relevant, and the very fact that it was 'retranslated' by Amoghavajra (705–774, Chin. *Bukong* 不空), who reinvented the scripture as an Esoteric Buddhist text, in 765, shows that it mattered. However, we do not really know where the wishes of the monks behind the texts end and the reality of courtly politics took over. Was it the monks who deemed it relevant for their agenda or the kings? Or a combination? We know that Tang Daizong (r. 762–779, 唐代宗) ordered the *Baigaozuohui* 百高座會 [Hundred Seat Ritual] (the nation-protecting rite outlined in the scripture) held so as to repel invaders and obtain rainfall, and at this occasion also ordered the retranslation of the scripture.[31] But it is also well known that Tang emperors favored Daoism over Buddhism, and a lot of the documents quoted by Orzech are, as he admits, a kind of Esoteric Buddhist apologia to convince Emperor Dezong (r. 779–805, 唐德宗; more lukewarm to Buddhism than his predecessor) to continue his sponsorship of Buddhism.[32]

Orzech's interpretation of the scripture seems to hinge on a blurring of boundaries between kings and buddhas; especially in the Esoteric Buddhist retranslation, the monk holding the ritual and the king were almost exchangeable; the Esoteric master was both "world renouncer" and "world conqueror."[33] This would however imply that the monk could appropriate secular authority, for the world conqueror epithet is usually reserved for a king. However, elsewhere he notes that:

> At once the servant of the imperial court and a cosmic sovereign, Pu-k'ung skillfully applied the recursive vision of the cosmos to the role of the *ācārya*. As we shall see from his correspondence, Pu-k'ung regarded himself as a servant to the Confucian sage-king. Yet he also considered himself the counterpart to the *cakravartin*, and in his ritual roles, he often functioned not only as Prajñāpāramitā bodhisattva, the Teacher, but also as Acalavajra, the protector. Thus while serving the transformative ends of the sage king, Pu-k'ung was in some sense the manipulator of and even the origin of those transformations.[34]

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31   Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*, 160.

32   Ibid., 202–203; See Stanley Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T'ang* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 57–59 and 77–99 for a good overview of the position of the late Tang emperors Suzong (r. 756–762, 唐肅宗), Daizong, and Dezong. Weinstein notes that esoteric monks like Amoghavajra did play a key part in the latter years of Tang Xuanzong's (r. 712–756, 唐玄宗) reign and during the reigns of Suzong and Daizong.

33   Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*, 167, 194.

34   Ibid., 191.

I would characterize this as a model of mutual dependence, not one where differences are suspended. Indeed, some emperors seem to have even rejected the *sūtra* altogether, probably because it collapses the boundaries between king and teacher. Liang Wudi (r. 502–549, 梁武帝) rejected the scripture as spurious, and Orzech dedicates a whole section of Chapter 3 to address his doubts, as if he has taken upon himself the task of convincing the emperor of the value of the scripture. But as the author admits, "He may also have balked at the status and role assigned by the scripture to kings."[35] Indeed! As one of the most famous Buddhist monarchs in history, Liang Wudi pretty much decided for himself how he could arrogate Buddhism, and did not see any need for an *ācārya* (preceptor) or any other counterpart to validate his authority. This appears to be what Orzech calls a continuous cosmology, where buddhas and kings are of the same lineage, and hence a *cakravartin* will either become Buddha, or the *cakravartin* simply is the Buddha; in a discontinuous cosmology, *cakravartin* and Buddha are of different lineages.[36] However, as some critics have pointed out, this is very much Orzech's theory,[37] and it is not clear how kings appropriated this discourse or whether they understood it at all. Also, despite rejecting facile categorizations, he simply proposes a more sophisticated organization scheme. As I argue in my book, in the case of Koryŏ, kings seem to have depended much more on Buddhism than Chinese emperors.[38] Even so, it is important to note that they invoked the *Scripture on the Humane Kings* mainly for its Entrustment (Chin. *fuzhu* 付囑) Chapter, i.e. the final chapter that entrusts the teaching to the king, because in the final age of the dharma monks can no longer be trusted to uphold it. This chapter thus can justify royal assertion of power or control over Buddhism.[39]

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35   Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*, 83. Liang Wudi's doubts are noted simply in one line in the Buddhist catalogue *Chu sanzang jiji* 出三藏記集 [Collection of Notes Concerning the Provenance of the [Chinese] *tripiṭaka*], T. 2145.55, 54b. Tom De Rauw points out, however, that it was the passage that blames the demise of Buddhism on too much government control that was the main reason for his rejection of the *sūtra*. See, Tom De Rauw, "Beyond Buddhist Apology. The Political Use of Buddhism by Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty (r. 502–549)" (PhD diss., Ghent University, 2008), 88.

36   Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*, 63.

37   See e.g. the review of Orzech's *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom* by McRae, "Politics and Transcendent Wisdom," 116.

38   Vermeersh, *Power of the Buddhas*, 144–145.

39   In China it was often invoked for this very reason. See e.g. the edict by Emperor Wen of Sui from 585, quoted by Falin 法琳 (572–640) in his *Bian zheng lun* 辯正論 [On adjudicating what is correct], T. 2110.52.509.a17–18. I am grateful to an anomymous reviewer for pointing me to this source. Although Koryŏ kings may have had the same ambition of subordinating Buddhism, this partial reading of the text never seems to have been

Most poignantly, when it comes to the question of the relationship between *dharma* and kings, precedent is more important than scripture or doctrine. This is made abundantly clear in an important stele inscription dedicated to the first Koryŏ royal preceptor, Iŏm (870–936, 利嚴). In a dialogue with the Koryŏ founder, King T'aejo (r. 918–943, 太祖), he explains the categorical difference between kings and monks:

> [T'aejo]: '[…] I learned about the Buddha's admonition [not to kill] a long time ago, and secretly embraced compassion. I am afraid that to deal with the remaining bandits, I will endanger many lives. You, master, did not regard 10,000 miles too much in order to convert the Three Han; to save the country, I hope for some good words.'
>
> [Iŏm replied]: 'The Way is in the mind, not in external affairs. Dharma comes from oneself, not from others. Moreover, what the emperor practices and what the people practice are different. Although you raise an army and go on a campaign, it is for the benefit of the people. What is the reason [for saying] this? The royal sway takes [the area within] the four seas as his home, the myriad people as his children, and does not kill those who are innocent. As for punishing the evil in order to uphold good, this is universal salvation.'[40]

Carved on a stele erected in 937, one year after the re-unification of the Korean peninsula by Koryŏ, and the first of eight remaining stele from T'aejo's reign, this is clearly a significant statement on the relation between king and others (including monks), where the king is clearly put in a category that is not directly beholden to Buddhism. Moreover, Iŏm's reply is also lifted verbatim from the biography of the Buddhist monk Guṇavarman (367–431, 求那跋摩), from his encounter with Song Wendi (r. 424–452, 宋文帝) in 431, as described in the *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 [Biographies of Eminent Monks (of the Liang Dynasty)].[41] Despite the availability of many Buddhist canonical texts to justify

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successful in Koryŏ. See Sem Vermeersch, "Representation of the Ruler in Buddhist Inscriptions of Early Koryŏ" *Korean Studies* 26.2 (2002): 216–250.

40 "Kwangjo-sa Chinch'ŏl taesa pimyŏng 廣照寺眞澈大師碑銘 [Stele for the Great Master Chinch'ŏl from Kwangjo Temple]," by Ch'oe Ŏnwi 崔彦撝, *Kyogam yŏkchu yŏktae kosŭng pimun* 校勘譯註歷代高僧碑文 [Epigraphs of Eminent Monks, Edited with an Annotated Translation] 2, ed. Yi Chigwan 李智冠 (Seoul: Kasan mun'go, 1994), 21–22.

41 *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 [Biographies of Eminent Monks (of the Liang Dynasty)], T. 2059.50, 341a1–7.

the relation between ruler and monk, we thus see that an idealised encounter from Chinese history is the main inspiration.[42]

Thus, when we talk about 'Buddhist ideology,' in so far as it exists at all, it is important to acknowledge that we are talking about a sinified tradition that rested on precedent as much as on canonicity. Orzech in fact acknowledges the fact that Chinese models had a big impact on how Buddhism was conceived,[43] but focuses mostly on "the clever use of linguistic similarity to underscore soteriological links."[44] When the *Scripture on the Humane Kings* was retranslated in 765, however, Amoghavajra got rid of some of the most obvious signs of its Chinese manufacture. For example, the mention of astral phenomena that were only relevant to the Chinese, such as lunar mansions, stars of the Three Dukes, the Southern and Northern Dipper, etc.[45] In doing so, he accidentally highlighted the role that these played in the scripture's popularity. We still tend to focus too much on ideological schemes, whereas divination, sorcery, manipulation of omens, etc. may well have played a more important part in convincing people of the legitimacy of a ruler's reign.[46]

Nowhere is this better documented than in the case of Wu Zetian. Indeed, while her recourse to Buddhism to shore up her legitimacy as a female ruler has been well established, it has been too much seen as an exception to traditional patterns. Perhaps her biggest 'crime' is that the manipulation of signs and portents too clearly showed her hand. At least it left traces in the historic record, and this is our good fortune; more than for any other ruler in premodern East Asia, we have rich veins of documents that show various strategies and phases of the legitimation process. Perhaps it is true that as the first woman to reign in her own right as emperor, she went further than others, but still I do not think that any of her strategies were so exceptional after all.

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42   Also, within China proper the conversion of Emperor Wen of Song was considered important enough to be taken up by the Buddhist apologete Falin (572–640, 法琳). See, Thomas Jülch, "In Defense of the Saṃgha: The Buddhist Apologetic Mission of the Early Tang Monk Falin," in *The Middle Kingdom and the Dharma Wheel: Aspects of the Relationship between the Buddhist Saṃgha and the State in Chinese History*, ed. Thomas Jülch (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 49.

43   See Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*, 68: "[…] rather than being simply a reiteration of Buddhist ideas, the scripture represents a complex process of adaptation which resulted in a new 'Chinese' form of Buddhism." The best work on how Chinese models of thinking and reasoning reshaped Buddhism in China is still Robert Sharf, *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism. A Reading of the Treasure Store Treatise* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012).

44   Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*, 161.

45   Ibid., 162–163.

46   As Moin points out, "astrology was as 'political' a science as history." Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign*, 11.

Antonino Forte's study of one of the key documents in Wu Zetian's attempt to justify taking the throne remains the best starting point of any discussion of this problem. As is well known, the *Mahāmeghasūtra* ("The Great Cloud Sūtra," *Dayun jing* 大雲經, T. 387.12) contains a passage predicting the emergence of a female *cakravartin*. While this has long been regarded as an interpolation, i.e. a manipulation of the original text by inserting a passage tailor-made to an ideological program, Forte shows that this was in the original *sūtra*, which can hence be regarded as a genuine translation produced in the fifth century. By contrast, he identifies the Dunhuang manuscript S. 6502, the *Dayun jing Shenhuang shouji yishu* 大雲經神皇授記義疏 [Commentary on the Meaning of the Prophecy about Shenhuang in the Great Cloud *sūtra*], as a commentary on the *Mahāmeghasūtra*,[47] which makes it explicit that the female *cakravartin* referred to in the *sūtra* is in fact Wu Zetian. What is particularly fascinating is that Forte can show who was involved in the process and contrast the cryptic and terse statements from official history with other documents that correct these often-misleading statements. The *sūtra* shows a broad consensus among the elite Buddhist *saṃgha* to push her as a legitimate thearch of a new dynasty, the Zhou Dynasty (690–705, 周), though with some restraint as well, for example in the identification with Maitreya.[48]

For the benefit of my own discussion of the general mechanisms of Buddhist legitimation in East Asia, I extract four points that are evident in Forte's work and backed up by other studies:

1. the active collaboration of the monastic community;
2. the all-out push to make the gold-wheel *cakravartin* the dominant mode of rulership, which was ultimately doomed;
3. the impact of the legitimation push outside the capital;
4. the use of symbols, relics, and portents, often borrowed from Daoism rather than Buddhism.

Regarding the first point, of course it should also be kept in mind that Wu Zetian herself had Buddhist grounding; she was also well-read, and may well have initiated some of the legitimating strategies. However, it is clear that many monks, even the ones we know as philosophers, such as Fazang or Wŏnch'ŭk (613–696, 圓測),[49] were fully behind the project, and indeed, helped to shape it. As Chen Jinhua points out, in legitimation discourse it is often overlooked that the process benefits both sides: "[…] Buddhist monks adroitly availed

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47   Forte, *Political Propaganda*, 69.

48   Summarizing from Forte, *Political Propaganda*, 189–243. Though the analysis is incisive and convincing, the way the argument is structured makes it difficult to extract anything like a clear-cut conclusion; it is simply too spread out to pinpoint precise page references.

49   Ibid., 203.

themselves of political power in promoting their religion."[50] In other words, in return for their efforts at enhancing the position of the ruler, they fully expected their own legitimacy to be enhanced. In the volume *The Middle Kingdom and the Dharma Wheel*, chapters by Max Deeg and Albert Welter make clear the proactive approach taken by monks to mold the political actors to their agenda. Deeg shows how Xuanzang (600/602–664, 玄奘) seeks to influence Tang Taizong (r. 626–649, 唐太宗) by crafting stories in the record of his visit to India, the *Datang xiyu ji* 大唐西域記 [Records of the Western Regions of the Great Tang Dynasty],[51] that are meant as a 'mirror' for him. Welter for his part shows how the monk Zanning (919–1001, 贊寧) sought to convince the court of Song Taizu (r. 960–976, 宋太祖) that Buddhism was fully part of Chinese civilisation, and hence also part of the regular officialdom.[52]

This brings us to the second point, namely the *cakravartin* ideal as the type of rulership most heavily pushed by the Buddhist community. Of course, this was not always successful, given that rulers may have preferred to remain aloof of Buddhism, or may have preferred other types of Buddhist legitimation. While at times, and this appears to have been the case in later dynasties such as Ming (1368–1644, 明) and Qing, the *cakravartin* ideal is simply paid lip service, at other times it was pushed as the main type of legitimation. This is notably the case under Wu Zetian, who was ascribed the position of a wheel turning king with the authority to rule not just China, but the whole of Jambudvīpa. Indeed, her authority would put to shame even Chinese emperors of the Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE, 漢).[53] However, though during her reign many officials seem to have submitted to the discourse that made her into a *cakravartin*, "the conservative wing of Confucianism [...] reacted violently" during the last years of her reign, and thus "China did not become a theocracy of the Tibetan type."[54] Despite the regular occurrence of references to the

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50 Chen, *Monks and Monarchs*, 5.

51 Max Deeg, "The Didactic Creation of an Indian Dynasty in the *Xiyu ji*," in *The Middle Kingdom and the Dharma Wheel: Aspects of the Relationship between the Buddhist Sangha and the State in Chinese History*, ed. Thomas Jülch (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 94–139.

52 Albert Welter, "Confucian Monks and Buddhist Junzi: Zanning's Topical Compendium of the Buddhist Clergy and the Politics of Buddhist Accommodation at the Song Court," in *The Middle Kingdom and the Dharma Wheel: Aspects of the Relationship between the Buddhist Sangha and the State in Chinese History*, ed. Thomas Jülch (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 222–277.

53 Eugene Y. Wang, *Shaping the Lotus Sutra. Buddhist Visual Culture in Medieval China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 125; also Forte, *Political Propaganda*, ch. 4, esp. 207.

54 Forte, *Political Propaganda*, 207. Presumably he refers to the fact that undue emphasis on the ruler as *cakravartin* would lead to a commensurate increase in the power of monks, who would be seen in the same lineage as kings.

cakravartin, with the exception of Wu Zetian's Zhou dynasty, it would never be the mainstay of official legitimation discourse. Still, even if the Confucian literati were not convinced, that does not mean that the *cakravartin* rhetoric did not have an impact. Eugene Wang's study of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra* [Lotus *sūtra*] imagery shows how Wu Zetians's imagery spread to Dunhuang, where a 698 memorial stela speaks of "the thousand spokes of the golden wheel rolling on, as the Great Zhou [ruler] steers the cosmos."[55] This and other examples show that the rhetoric was picked up across the empire, most likely because of the spread of key texts such as the *Mahāmeghasūtra* and its commentary, which was retrieved from Mogao Cave 17, a vast repository of manuscripts, books, and paintings all dating to before 1000. This means that it must have been copied in Buddhist scriptoria in large numbers; but the Empress also seems to have taken to the new medium of printing to spread the message. The *Raśmivimalaviśuddhaprabhānāmadhāraṇī* (Chin. *Wugou jingguang da tuoluoni jing* 無垢淨光大陀羅尼經 [Immaculate Pure Light *dhāraṇī sūtra*, T. 1024]) was 'translated' in the waning years of her reign and spread through the medium of printing; it was already known in Korea in 706, i.e. the year of her death, yet probably came too late to shore up her authority.[56]

A fourth and final point to make is that, despite the preponderance of *cakravartin* rhetoric, ultimately what was most important was not so much a well-defined vision of authority as the manipulation of symbols. Long before she became empress, Wu Zetian was already working through various schemes to further her power. Thus in 652, her first son was named Li Hong (652–675, 李弘), the name of a messianic ruler from Celestial Master Daoism (Chin. *tianshidao* 天師道), who was believed to emerge in times of chaos to save the world.[57] Eugene Wang calls this "apocryphal prognostication,"[58] and whether Daoist or Buddhist in nature, this appears to have been the overriding mechanism to convince the empire that it was her destiny to rule. Even the adoption of the famous 'Empress Wu characters' can be seen as an attempt to manipulate the cosmic order. Besides symbols, tactile expressions, especially relics, could also be used and manipulated as signs of 'divine' power to rule. Relics played a part as symbols of Buddhist power from the beginning, but were first rallied on an empire-wide scale under Sui Wendi, i.e. the famous *renshou* (仁壽) distribution of relics that took place from 601 to 604.[59] The act of large-scale distribution

55   Wang, *Shaping the Lotus Sutra*, 126.
56   See T.H. Barrett, "Stūpa, Sūtra and Śarīra in China, C. 656–706 CE," *Buddhist Studies Review* 18.1 (2001): 1–64.
57   Wang, *Shaping the Lotus Sutra*, 233.
58   Ibid.
59   See Chen, *Monks and Monarchs*, 51–87.

of relics is redolent of King Asoka, and as such can also be associated with *cakravartin* kingship. However, the physicality of relics, the miraculous properties invested in them, and their association with the 'true, uncorrupted body' of the Buddha are arguably more important than their association with the ideology of kingship.[60]

4   Legitimation in Koryŏ

In the case of Koryŏ, unfortunately we do not have such a rich body of primary sources to work from; in my 2008 study I therefore rely heavily on stele inscriptions, since they are practically the only contemporary sources. One of the key conclusions regarding the way they portray the king-Buddhism interface is that the former is almost never explicitly identified as either bodhisattva or *cakravartin*. The Entrustment Chapter of the *Scripture on the Humane Kings* is often invoked, with the king pledging 'outer protection' for monks, who are then entrusted with the 'inner protection' through mastery of Buddhist ritual and meditation.[61] In other words, in Korea we seem to find a better realisation of what the *Scripture on the Humane Kings* sets out to achieve, a kind of balanced system of mutual dependence between king and high-ranking monks.

Given the hermeneutics of suspicion outlined in the previous sections, it would perhaps be best to see if we should not also subject this conclusion to more critical scrutiny. To try and achieve that I focus on a crisis-episode, because it throws up a lot of the issues and strategies discussed in the previous section. While the foundation of Koryŏ in 918 may have been the most crucial event in the creation of what I have termed a 'state Buddhist system,' the whole Koryŏ dynastic system was thrown into crisis with the enthronement of King Hyŏnjong (r. 1009–1031, 顯宗) in 1009. His predecessor Mokchong (r. 997–1009, 穆宗) had been removed and killed because of allegations that his mother had a relationship with someone else and wanted to create a new dynastic line through the child she had with him. Mokchong's removal was taken as a pretext by Koryŏ's suzerain, the Khitan Empire (907–1125, in Chinese sources known as Liao 遼), to launch a punitive expedition. The young king had to flee the capital, and to make matters worse, met with great enmity while making

60   See Eugene Y. Wang, "Of the True Body: The Famen Monastery Relics and Corporeal Transformation in Sui-Tang China," in *Body and Face in Chinese Visual Culture*, ed. Wu Hung and Katherine Tsiang (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 79–118.

61   Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddhas*, 141–142.

his way to the southern part of the country. There were even attempts on his life.

Thanks to a small group of loyal retainers, the country just barely survived, although it had to be practically rebuilt after the Khitan retreated, not so much because of economic damage, but because the dynastic system had been shaken to its core. Hyŏnjong had to accept greater influence from in-law families—some of whom had assisted him during his flight—and moreover had to contend with continuing invasions from the Khitan.

While it is well known that Buddhist rituals, including *Hundred Seat Rituals*, were held during his reign to rally divine support against the invaders, I would like to focus on how the king used Buddhism to rally internal support. A key piece of direct evidence for events of the period is a colophon on an illuminated *sūtra* dated 1006; it is signed by Queen Dowager Hŏnae (964–1029, 獻哀, here identified with her honorific title Ŭngch'ŏn kyesŏng chŏngdŏk wangt'aehu 應天啓聖靜德王太后), Mokchong's mother, yet next to her name is that of Kim Ch'iyang (d. 1009, 金致陽), known as her 'lover' with whom she had an illegitimate child. One year later, in 1007, a print was made of the *Aryatathāgatādhiṣṭānahṛdayaguhyadhātukaraṇḍamudrādhāraṇisūtra* (T. 1022A.19, 1022B.19). However, the colophon simply notes that it was made by a monk at Ch'ongji Temple (摠持寺), an important temple in the Koryŏ capital Kaesŏng that belonged to the Esoteric Ch'ongji School (摠持宗). Some have argued that the printing of this *dhāraṇī sūtra* was undertaken by those opposing the usurpation of power by the queen, but this is mere speculaton.[62] We may just as well speculate that some of the same factors were at play here as in the case of Empress Wu, namely the rallying of various Buddhist scriptural resources to prop up a female ruler. However, with much more modest aspirations than in China, Queen Hŏnae simply takes the title of 'disciple who has taken the bodhisattva precepts' (Posalgye cheja 菩薩戒弟子).[63]

Having gained the throne, Hyŏnjong seems to have done much the same thing, i.e. used Buddhist texts to strengthen his own legitimacy. It is even possible that his decision to start carving the blocks of what is now called the

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62 Kwak Sŭnghun 郭丞勳, "Koryŏ chŏn'gi 'Ilch'e yŏrae sim pimil chŏnsin sari pohyŏb'in t'aranigyŏng' ŭi kanhaeng 고려전기 '一切如來心秘密全身舍利寶篋印陀羅尼經' 의 간행 [Publication of the *Precious Casket Seal dhāraṇī sūtra of the Secret Whole Body Relics of all tathāgatha Minds* in Early Koryŏ], *Asia munhwa* 아시아문화 [Asian Culture] 12 (1996): 134–135. For more on the background of this text, see Sem Vermeersch, "Beyond Printing: Looking at the Use and East Asian Context of Dhāraṇī Sūtras in Medieval Korea," *Chonggyohak yŏn'gu* 宗教學研究 [Journal of religious studies] 34 (2016): 1–33.

63 *Han'guk sangdae komunsŏ charyo chipsŏng* 韓國上代古文書資料集成 [Collection of Documents from Korea's Earliest History], ed. Yi Kibaek 李基白 (Seoul: Ilchisa, 1993), 43.

Koryŏ Taejanggyŏng 高麗大藏經 [*tripiṭaka* Koreana] was part of this under-taking. While conventional wisdom insists that it was done as part of a vow to drive away the Khitan invasions, as I tried to show previously,[64] surely the pro-ject may have given him the chance to assert his authority across the country. Thus, the fact that a rare remaining print of the first Tripiṭaka (the blocks of which were burnt during the Mongol invasions of 1232) carries a handwritten vow for the long life of the king, may be taken as an indication that this strat-egy worked.[65] The best window into the project of how he rebuilt his legiti-macy remains, however, the stele of Hyŏnhwa Temple (玄化寺).

Hyŏnhwa Temple was built in 1021–1022 as a memorial temple to Hyŏnjong's parents, who had died in tragic circumstances. His mother, widow of King Kyŏngjong (r. 975–998, 景宗), eloped with a son of the founding king; when the affair was discovered by the then-reigning King Sŏngjong (r. 981–999, 成宗), they were banished and died early. Sŏngjong took care of the infant Hyŏnjong, but when Mokchong came to the throne, he was sent away to a Bud-dhist monastery. The stele erected at Hyŏnhwa Temple still remains and shows how Hyŏnjong tried to rewrite history: his parents died of illness but were oth-erwise exemplary! The inscription focuses on filial piety, which is represented as the source of both Buddhism and Confucianism. The king (Hyŏnjong) is represented as exemplary in this regard, and as deriving his status from past *karma* and the protection of gods, but no mention is made of either *cakravar-tin* or bodhisattva status. As the result of his pious actions, Buddhist relics manifested themselves miraculously, while the Chinese emperor is moved to grant copies of the *tripiṭaka*. Once the temple is completed, the king then un-dertakes many other projects, including the carving of printing blocks for four *sūtra*s, including the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* (T. 220.5–7); this may be regarded as the beginning of the first *tripiṭaka Koreana*.

Thus, we see some of the familiar themes that were also in evidence in Chi-na, yet everything appears to be much more muted and less spectacular in our Korean case. Practically no clear reference to the *cakravartin* is made,[66] while

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64   See Sem Vermeersch, "Royal Ancestor Worship and Buddhist Politics: The Hyŏnhwa-sa Stele and the Origins of the First Koryŏ Tripitaka," *Journal of Korean Studies* 18.1 (2013): 115–146.

65   See Kwŏn Hŭigyŏng 權熹耕, "Tongjang-sa sojang ŭi kamji kŭmja 'Pulsŏl Mirŭk sŏng-bulgyŏng' e kwanhan ilkoch'al 東長寺所藏의 紺紙金字'佛說彌勒成佛經'에 관한 一考察 [A Study of the Purple-paper Gold-letter Scripture of Maitreya Becoming Buddha Kept at Tōchō Monastery]," *Kogo misul* 考古美術 [Art and Archeology] 165 (1985): 32.

66   While the term *cakravartin* occasionally occurs in the sources, mostly it is not used ex-plicitly with reference to a Koryŏ ruler. For example, the stele of the famous monk Ŭich'ŏn (1055–1101), son of King Munjong, contains the phrase "you relinquished the cakravartin throne;" however, this sentence was uttered by a Chinese monk and addressed to Ŭich'ŏn

monks are accorded the same 'honorific gap' in inscriptions as kings. Earlier I speculated that the *cakravartin* paradigm was still influential yet less explicit in official sources such as stele inscriptions.[67] However, such explanation gives too much credit to an ideological framework that may have been no longer valid. In votive inscriptions by kings, the king always self-identifies as a "disciple having received the bodhisattva precepts," starting from T'aejo's, "This bodhisattva [vows] ordainee [...] prostrates himself and seeks refuge [...]."[68] This is confirmed by some of the very rare representations of T'aejo in art. Perhaps the most famous is the representation of T'aejo in a painting by No Yŏng (d.u., 魯英) dated 1307. On the front part of this small lacquer painting is an Amitābha painting, while the back shows Kṣitigarbha in the foreground and Dharmodgata in the background. No Yŏng depicts himself prostrate as a small figure before Ksitigarbha, but on the back T'aejo (he is identified as such by a small cartouche) is seen prostrate before Dharmodgata, a bodhisattva believed to reside in Mt. Kŭmgang (金剛山). Documentary evidence shows that this is connected to a legend, wherein T'aejo seeks the deity's assistance for the complete unification of the Later Three Kingdoms.[69]

While the painting is open to many interpretations,[70] it is completely in tune with other information that shows Koryŏ kings in a subordinate position vis-à-vis monks or buddhas. One of the few other depictions of kings from the Koryŏ era shows King Kongmin (r. 1351–1374, 恭愍王) and his spouse sitting next to each other. Between them in a cartouche is written "They subordinate their

while he was travelling in China. Thus, it should be considered polite hyperbole towards someone who might have laid claim to the throne. See "Yŏngt'ongsa Taegak Kuksa pi 靈通寺大覺國師碑 [Stele for State Preceptor of Great Enlightenment [i.e. Ŭich'ŏn] at Yŏngt'ong Monastery]," by Kim Pusik 金富軾, *Kyogam yŏkchu Kosŭng pimun* 校勘譯註高僧碑文 [Epigraphs of Eminent Monks, Edited with an Annotated Translation] 4, ed. Yi Chigwan 李智冠 (Seoul: Kasan munhwa, 1996), 120.

67   Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddhas*, 139.

68   From the Prayer for the Hwaŏm *dharma* Assembly at Kaet'ae Temple. See "Sinsŏng wang ch'inje Kaet'aesa Hwaŏm pŏphoe so 神聖王親製開泰寺華嚴法會疏 [Exposition on the Hwaŏm *dharma* Assembly at Kaet'ae Monastery, Personally Authored by the Holy Sage King]," *Tong'in chi mun sa yuk* 東人之文四六 [Korean Writings in Four and Six [Character Lines]], *Koryŏ myŏnghyŏn chip* 高麗名賢集 [Collection of Eminent Scholars during the Koryŏ Dynasty] 5, ed. Ch'oe Hae 崔瀣 (Seoul: Sŏnggyungwan taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 1987), 89.

69   Kungnip chungang pangmulgwan, *Koryŏ Pulhwa taejŏn* 高麗佛畫大展 [Grand Exhibition of Koryŏ Painting] (Seoul: Kungnip chung'ang pangmulgwan, 2010), 293.

70   See, e.g, Karen Hwang, "Transgression as Heaven's Mandate: Buddhist Iconography and Political Resistance in No Yŏng's Painting of 1307," in *Transgression in Korea: Beyond Resistance and Control*, ed. Juhn Young Ahn (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2018), 21–52.

FIGURE 1.1
T'aejo worshipping Dharmodgata,
Kaesŏng (?), 1307. Treasure no. 1887,
National Museum of Korea.
PHOTO COURTESY OF THE
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF KOREA

minds." This is taken from the *Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* and is relat-
ed to the question Subhūti puts to the Buddha, namely on how to control ('sub-
jugate') the mind so as to achieve awakening.[71] While this may be taken to
indicate that the king and queen are devout followers of the Buddha, it is not
altogether clear why the phrase is placed between them. It may simply empha-
size their devotion, yet it also seems to emphasize their subordination to Bud-
dhism.[72]

While initially I thought that this was basically in tune with the scheme put
forward by the *Scripture on the Humane Kings*, i.e. that the rulers act as 'outside
protectors' (Kor. *oeho* 外護) for Buddhism by simply supporting it and taking a
symbolically subordinate position towards it, that is arguably too restrictive.
For one, the comparative subordination towards spiritual power may have its
roots in earlier conceptions of kingship in Korea; for instance, in Silla before
unification in 668, kings were mostly chosen from among a number of lineag-
es; there was no strong sense of a 'single dynastic line' superior to others, re-
ducing the authority of kingship; while this authority of course fluctuated, it
never seems to have asserted any claims to transcendent authority. More im-
portantly, however, we have to be wary of explanations that point towards an

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71   *Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* (T. 235.7,748c.28ff).
72   This edition of the *sūtra* was printed in Namwŏn in 1363. Designated National Treasure
     no. 696, it is now held at the Sung-Am Archives of Classical Literature. For an illustration,
     see Kim, Kumja Paik, *Goryeo Dynasty: Korea's Age of Enlightenment, 918–1392* (San
     Francisco: Asian Art Museum, 2003), 134.

underlying ideological program, be it Buddhist or native. As shown in the case of King Hyŏnjong, moments of crisis lead to intense outbursts of legitimating activities, where Buddhism becomes important precisely because of the external symbolics of power rather than for any ideological program that is put into practice.

5   Conclusion

Through the above discussion I hope to have made clear that there is no clearly traceable source or ideological program from which East Asian monarchs would draw to construct their image in a Buddhist fashion. Nevertheless, textual models, though often creatively interpreted, cannot be ignored altogether. Whenever an important model of Buddhist rulership is discussed, such as the *cakravartin*, it should always be analyzed in terms of not only the textual model, but also precedents, historical context, and archeological and art-historical evidence; in short, any kind of information that offers clues as to how historical actors interpreted a certain term and made it their own.

Unfortunately, this is frequently ignored; moreover, in many cases we simply lack enough data to answer these fundamental questions. Thus, we must keep going to back to the standard set by Forte's work on Empress Wu, which is exemplary in its reading of the material against the full historical and intellectual background of the time. Of course, this is also a unique case in which we are fortunate to have the right mix of sources that allow us to undertake such a fine-grained analysis. That Forte's work still stands is borne out by recent art-historical and archeological work by Eugene Wang and others.

Thus, the study of Buddhism and politics in any of the myriad kingdoms of Central and East Asia in the premodern period should be cognizant of this work, all the more so because historical actors were also aware of the model of figures such as Wu Zetian. We know this in the case of Japan, where Nara (710–794, 奈良) rulers were inspired by her in various ways.[73] For the case of Koryŏ too, although it is more difficult to discern clear influences due to the paucity of the right type of source material, Chinese historical precedent is crucial in understanding the dynamics between rulers, *saṃgha*, and religious models of kingship. The founder of the dynasty fashioned his image through a judicious selection of passages from early Chinese texts; perhaps because of this, the Koryŏ model of kingship is closer to what Palumbo describes of the period

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73   See e.g. Peter Kornicki, "The *Hyakumantō Darani* and the Origins of Printing in Eighth-century Japan," *International Journal of Asian Studies* 9.1 (2012): 59–63.

before 400 in China, where the ruler effectively leaned on Buddhist groups for ideological and symbolic support. But of course, here too, local historical factors played a part, and as the case of King Hyŏnjong shows, the trials of invasion and internal unrest forced him to strengthen this model, rallying Buddhist support (and through that popular support) through an extreme act of piety, namely the carving of the complete *tripiṭaka* on printing blocks.

Images of Patronage in Khotan

Erika Forte

1 Introduction

Patronage of Buddhism at the highest levels of Khotanese society is attested to in literary sources that stress the close ties between political sovereignty and Buddhist religious power. These sources present the history of the kingdom as continuously intermingled with accounts of Buddhist epiphanic events, which occurred in connection with actions taken by the kings. The artistic production and the richness of Buddhist archaeological remains in Khotan prove that Buddhism greatly flourished there, and confirm that this prosperity was only possible through strong political and social support. However, how, and to what extent, this support worked in practice is difficult to establish.

Two kinds of written evidence refer expressly to royal patronage: legendary accounts, which underline royal agency in the foundation of basically all the important Buddhist institutions in Khotan; and the historical accounts of Chinese pilgrims, which mention royal support and involvement in the affairs of Khotanese monasteries. Additional evidence, yet to be systematically explored, concerns indigenous manuscripts and documents, like wooden tablets, and Chinese documents found mostly in the area of the Dandān-öiliq site, northeast of Khotan (map 2.1).

Expressions of patronage are less explicit in the art historical evidence from Khotan. To my knowledge, there are no paintings or sculptures that are clearly identifiable as a depiction of a royal patron or donor, nor do the few studied inscriptions on paintings give any hint in this direction.[1] Khotanese royals are only depicted in the Mogao Caves (Chin. Mogao ku 莫高窟) at Dunhuang (敦煌) and in the Yulin Caves (Chin. Yulin ku 榆林窟), where they are identified by inscriptions (in Chinese).[2] This evidence—chronologically later (10th century) than the surviving, local Khotanese material—is related to Khotanese

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1   See Ronald E. Emmerick, "Some Khotanese Inscriptions on Objets d'Art," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 3–4 (1968): 140–143.

2   For an overview see Sha Wutian 沙武田, "Dunhuang shiku Yutian guowang huaxiang yanjiu 敦煌石窟于阗国王画像研究 [Studies in the Images of the King of Khotan at the Dunhuang Caves]," *Xinjiang shifan daxue xuebao* 新疆师范大学学报 *Journal of Xinjiang Normal University* 27.4 (2006): 22–30.

MAP 2.1   Main Buddhist sites of Khotan oasis, where depictions of legends have been
             found.
             MODIFIED AFTER STEIN, *ANCIENT KHOTAN*, "MAP OF KHOTAN AREA," BY
             J. SCHÖRFLINGER

royalty connected with the Guiyijun (851–1036?, 歸義軍, Return-to-Allegiance
Army) rulers. At that time, the Khotanese royal family chose to adopt a differ-
ent, largely Sinitic, visual language in its expression of patronage.

The content of extant Khotanese art—which is exclusively Buddhist—can
be divided into two groups: iconic depictions *per se* and depictions with narra-
tive elements. In iconic depictions, frontal static images of Buddhas and (less
frequently) *bodhisattva*s occupy the main space of the painting, with donors
usually represented in smaller scale on the lower part.[3] In the extant examples

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3 Such examples are often seen in the murals at Dandān-öiliq, compare for instance, Marc Aurel
   Stein, *Ancient Khotan, Detailed Report of Archaeological Explorations in Chinese Turkestan*
   (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), vol. 2, pls. III–V. Narrative depictions display one or more
   scenes of a story, usually visualized synoptically or in a conflated way. Narrative paintings
   found in Khotan have been described and analysed by Aurel Stein (*Ancient Khotan*, 119–122,
   253–255, 259–261), Joanna Williams ("The Iconography of Khotanese Paintings," *East and West*
   23.1–2 (1973): 147–154), Priatosh Banerjee ("Hārītī-Lakshmī from Dandan-Uiliq, Central Asia,"
   in *New Light on Central Asian Art and Iconography*, ed. Priatosh Banerjee (New Delhi: Abha
   Prakashan, 1992), 46–54) and Lokesh Chandra ("The Khotanese Mural of Hariti at Dandan-

from Khotan, donors kneel or stand, facing the central figure (normally a Buddha), with folded hands, holding incense burners, lotus flowers, or other plants, all common features of donors' portraits across Central Asian Buddhist visual evidence.

Donors often appear as family groups rather than individually. One of the best examples is shown in fig. 2.1. Here, the donors are depicted in the seat underneath the main image—an over life-sized sculpture of a Buddha in *padmāsana*.[4] A large vase with a lotus flower occupies the centre of the composition, on both sides of which are six kneeling figures (three females on the right and three males on the left of the vase). They are likely members of a family group. There is also an image of a monk, who may be related to the family represented or have taken part in the donation process.[5] There is also an inscription that runs above the heads of the donors. However, the content of the inscription does not seem to be directly related to the donor portraits.[6]

This is but one example of donors portrayed in iconic scenes. As for the other category of Khotanese painting mentioned above, i.e. depictions featuring narrative elements, it should be noted that in Khotanese Buddhist art, depictions of the Buddha's life story (Skt. *jātaka*s or *avadāna*s) are peculiarly practically absent. Instead, the surviving narrative paintings from Khotan seem to favour themes related to local legends.[7] Since legends make up the

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Uiliq," in *Purābhāratī. Studies in Early Historical Archaeology and Buddhism*, 2, ed. Buddha Rashmi Mani and Bindeshwari Prasad Sinha (Delhi: Sharada Publishing House, 2006), 243–249). See also section 2.1 in this chapter.

4   The sculpture was found by Aurel Stein in the temple Ta.i. in Tarishlak, near Mayaklik, about 30 km north of the town of Khotan. For a detailed description see Marc Aurel Stein, *Serindia. Detailed Report of Explorations in Central Asia and Westernmost China* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921), vol. 3, 1282 (inv. n. Ta.009), fig. 324 (photograph of the sculpture *in situ*), and vol. 4, plate CXXVI.

5   In this specific painting the monk seems to wear boots. Monks with boots are found occasionally in other sites from Central Asia. The interpretation of this iconography is not yet settled and may carry different meaning according to the geographical/cultural context of the findings. This topic, with regard to Khotan, certainly needs further research and will be dealt with in another article.

6   The only study of this inscription I am aware of was published by Frederick Pargiter in 1913. Pargiter writes that the inscription is in Sanskrit "of a poor quality." The content is a verse, written to honour the painting, and concludes with the wish of gaining "blessedness […] in the principle of the auspicious Law" (Frederick Pargiter, "Inscription on a Painting at Tarishlak," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1913): 400–401).

7   An exception, if the hypothetical reading by Joanna Williams is correct, is the evidence of a mural painting from the small temple D.II at Dandān-öiliq documented by Aurel Stein, which might represent a scene from the *Sudhanajātaka*. See Williams, "Khotanese Paintings," 153–154 and fig. 69.

FIGURE 2.1 Remains of a Buddha sculpture with painted base with donors. *In situ*, from the
temple Ta.i. in Tarishlak, Khotan, ca. 7th/8th c. (?).
STEIN ARCHIVE PHOTO 392/26(691), © BRITISH LIBRARY

bulk of the material related to patronage in Khotan, in what follows we shall
look at this in greater detail.

2   Khotanese Legends: Royal Patronage and Buddhist Monasteries

Khotanese legends are preserved in a variety of literary sources written in Kho-
tanese, Chinese, and Tibetan, that essentially belong to the realm of Buddhism.
The greatest documentation derives from a group of Tibetan texts, the con-
tents of which probably stem from Khotanese literary works no longer extant.
Of particular significance for the present inquiry are the *Li yul lung bstan pa*
[Prophecy of the Li Country][8] and the *Li yul chos kyi lo rgyus* [Religious Annals

8   English translation by Ronald Emmerick, *Tibetan Texts Concerning Khotan* (London: Oxford
University Press, 1967). For a recent Chinese translation see Zhu Lishuang 朱丽双, "Youguan
Yutian de zangwen wenxian: fanyi yu yanjiu 有關于闐的藏文文獻:翻譯與研究. Tibetan
Texts Concerning Khotan: Translations and Annotations" (Post-doc degree diss., Peking
University, 2011).

of the Li Country, P. T. 960].[9] In these texts, the legends are arranged according to the genealogy of Khotanese kings, who provide a historical setting and play a role in the stories. The stories are essentially Buddhist epiphanic events, meant to convey the involvement of Khotanese royalty in the establishment of monasteries.

We do have evidence of the existence of a number of monasteries mentioned in these legends, which appear in documents from Khotan and in Chinese historical literature—especially Buddhist travelogues.[10] Moreover, some of the kings mentioned therein were actually historical figures.[11] Notwithstanding their legendary and propagandistic flavour, on the whole these texts are basic chronicles concerning the founding of Buddhist temples in Khotan, and provide a valuable list of temple names and their royal patrons. The legends especially promote the connection between Buddhism and the royal lineage, and as such convey both political and religious messages.

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9   English translation is in Frederick W. Thomas, *Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents Concerning Chinese Turkestan,* vol. 1 (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1935), 303–323; transcription and Chinese translation in Zhu Lishuang, "Youguan Yutian de zangwen wenxian," 75–100.

10   Zhang Guanda and Rong Xinjiang compiled a list of the most famous monasteries that are documented in historical literature and manuscripts. In some cases, it is possible to match Tibetan, Khotanese, and Chinese names' equivalents. See Zhang Guangda 張廣達 and Rong Xinjiang 榮新江, *Yutian shi congkao (zengding ben)* 于闐史叢考(增訂本)*, Collected Inquiries on the History of Khotan. New Edition* (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 2008), 224–239. In the course of his extensive explorations in Khotan in 1900–1901, Aurel Stein tried to identify the actual location of the monasteries mentioned in the written sources. See Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, 223–235.

11   See James Hamilton, "Les règnes khotanais entre 851 et 1001," in *Contributions aux études de Touen-houang*, ed. Michel Soymié (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1979), 49–54; James Hamilton, "Sur la chronologie khotanaise au IXe-Xe siècle," in *Contributions aux études de Touen-houang, vol. III*, ed. Michel Soymié (Paris: Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1984), 47–53; John Hill, "Notes on the Dating of Khotanese History" *Indo-Iranian Journal* 31.3 (1988): 179–190; Zhang Guangda 張廣達 and Rong Xinjiang 榮新江, "Guanyu Hetian chutu Yutian wenxian de niandai ji qi xiangguan wenti 關於和田出土于闐文獻的年代及其相關的問題 [On the Dating of some Khotanese Documents Discovered in Khotan and Related Problems]," *Tōyō gakuhō* 東洋学報 [Journal of East Asian Studies] 69 (1988): 59–86; Prods Oktor Skjærvø, "Kings of Khotan in the Eighth Century," in *Histoire et cultes de l'Asie Centrale préislamique: sources écrites et documents archéologiques: actes du colloque international du CNRS, Paris, 22–28 novembre 1988*, ed. Paul Bernard and Franz Grenet (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1991), 255–278; Prods Oktor Skjærvø, "The End of Eighth-century Khotan in its Texts," *Journal of Inner Asian Art and and Archaeology*, 3.2008 (2009): 119–144; Yoshida Yutaka 吉田豊, *Kōtan shutsudo 8–9 seiki no Kōtan go sezoku bunsho ni kan suru oboegaki* コータン出土 8–9 世紀のコータン語世俗文書に関する覚え書き. *Notes on the Khotanese Documents of the 8th–9th Centuries Unearthed from Khotan* (Kobe: Kobe City University of Foreign Studies, 2006).

2.1 *The Legend of the Silk Princess*

Archaeological material provides examples of how Khotanese local legends are transposed into visual forms, particularly in wall paintings and wooden votive panels. Previous research has identified the subjects of some of these paintings, based on Buddhist literary sources from and about Khotan. A well-known example is the legend of the Silk Princess, which concerns the introduction of silk manufacture in Khotan. The legend is connected with the founding of Mashe (麻射) (or Lushe 鹿射) Monastery (Ma dza in the Tibetan sources).[12] It has been transmitted in two different versions: a Tibetan one, preserved in the *Prophecy of the Li Country*, and a Chinese one, recorded by Xuanzang (600/602–664, 玄奘).[13]

The story relates that the king of Khotan, Vijaya Jaya,[14] sought a marriage to a Chinese princess (named Puñeśvar in the Tibetan version), presumably with the intention of gaining access to the secret of silk production in China. At that time, the Chinese emperor forbade people to take silkworm eggs and mulberry tree seeds outside of the country. When it was time for the Chinese bride to leave China, the king of Khotan, through his envoy, informed his future spouse that no silk was produced in Khotan, subtly convincing her to take mulberry seeds and silkworms with her in order to provide herself with fine silk once there. The princess cunningly concealed the seeds and the silkworm eggs in her hair, and passed the Chinese borders without being checked by the guards.

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12   In Western publications this name is spelled Ma źo, Ma źa or Ma źi (see Harold Walter Bailey, *Khotanese Texts IV. Saka Texts from Khotan in the Hedin Collection* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 9.

13   For the story in the *Li yul lung bstan pa* see Emmerick, *Tibetan Texts*, 32–35. The legend reported by Xuanzang can be read in his *Da Tang xiyuji* 大唐西域記, English translation in Li, Rongxi, *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions. Translated by the Tripiṭaka-Master Xuanzang under Imperial Order. Composed by Śramaṇa Bianji of the Great Zongchi Monastery (Taishō, Volume 51, Number 2087)*, (Berkeley, California: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1996), 382–384. A synopsis of the two versions, the Tibetan and the Chinese texts, can be read in Williams, "Khotanese Paintings," 149, and in Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, 229–230.

14   He is the 14th king of Khotan in the genealogy of the Tibetan texts. According to Hill, the reign of this king (and therefore the introduction of silk technology to Khotan) should be placed in the first half of the 1st century (John E. Hill, "Appendix A: The Introduction of Silk Cultivation to Khotan in the 1st Century CE," September 2003, accessed May 02, 2018. <https://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/hhshu/appendices.html#a>). Recently Zhu Lishuang proposed dating the reign of this king to the early 3rd century CE, see Zhu Lishuang 朱丽双, "*Yutianguo Shouji* suozai zaoqi Yutian wangtong yanjiu «于阗国授记»所载早期于阗王统研究 Chronology of Early Khotan Kings According to the 'Prophecy of the Li Country'," in *Tansuo Xiyu wenming. Wang Binghua xiansheng bashi huadan zhushou lunwenji* 探索西域文明—王炳华先生八十华诞祝寿论文集, ed. Meng Xianshi 孟宪实 et al. (Shanghai: Zhongxi shuju, 2017), 199–213.

FIGURE 2.2   Painted wooden panel, 12 × 46 cm. Excavated at Dandān-öiliq, Khotan, temple
D.X, ca. 7th/8th century (?).
1907,1111.73, BRITISH MUSEUM

The place where the princess first deposited the precious silkworm eggs and
planted the mulberry tree seeds before arriving at the capital of the kingdom
of Khotan, is where the Mashe/Ma dza Monastery was later erected. Since the
monastery foundation no one in Khotan was allowed to kill silkworms, and
sericulture became a flourishing activity protected by the Khotanese kings.[15]

Eight depictions of this legend have been found in the sites of Dandān-öilïq
and Khadaliq (map 2.1), attesting to its local popularity.[16] The most famous and
best preserved depiction is on a wooden panel excavated from the temple D.X
of Dandān-öiliq (fig. 2.2), now at the British Museum.[17] It shows a female figure
on the left pointing at the headdress of another female figure at the centre of
the composition. In front of the central figure is a basket filled with cocoons
(?). On the right side, a woman is represented with a loom and holding a comb.
Behind the central figure, there is a male deity with four arms and in Central
Asian attire, who has been identified as a local god, the protector of silk manu-
facture.[18]

The same key elements appear in another wooden panel, this time arranged
vertically (fig. 2.3). It was collected in Khotan by N.F. Petrovskij, reportedly
from the site of Dandān-öiliq, and is now part of the Central Asian collection

15   The royal monastery was under the protection of the deities Ratnabala and Ratnaśūra.
16   For a list and description of these panels see Williams, "Khotanese Paintings," 147–150.
       Three of them were excavated by Stein in Dandān-öilïq from three different shrines; one
       panel was found in Khadaliq (also by Stein); four other panels were purchased by locals
       and are said to come from Dandān-öilïq, but the archaeological context remains unclear.
17   Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, plate LXVII, object D.X.4.
18   Natalia Diakonova, "A Document of Khotanese Buddhist Iconography," *Artibus Asiae*
       23.3–4 (1960): 229–232. Beside those that have a more 'narrative character' there are pan-
       els that display only this single deity. See Williams, "Khotanese Paintings," 150, figs. 59, 62
       and 63.

FIGURE 2.3
Painted wooden tablet, 49,5 × 13 cm.
Found in Dandān-öiliq, Khotan.
ГА-1125, STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM

of the State Hermitage Museum. At the top of the panel is the four-armed deity. At the bottom, a female figure points at the headdress of another figure. In the centre, there are two other female figures. The one on the left of the composition is kneeling facing the one on the right, who has her hands plunged into a large stemmed bowl, probably in the act of washing the cocoons.

We know that the Mashe/Ma dza Monastery still existed at the time of Xuanzang's sojourn in Khotan. Xuanzang visited the site of the monastery, describing its location as at a distance of five to six *li* (里, approximately 3 kilometres) south-east of the capital of the kingdom.[19] Stein identified the place where the monastery once stood with the site of the Muslim shrine of Kum-i-Shahīdān. A later hypothesis by Li Lingbing (李呤屏) favours the archaeological remains of Basai (巴塞), found near the village of Halal-bagh (Chin. Alalebage 阿拉勒巴格) as corresponding to this famous monastery.[20] Both sites are located on the western-southwestern outskirts of present city of Khotan.

The number of objects depicting this legend underscores the fact that the monastery had a special meaning for Khotanese Buddhists. It is intriguing that all of these depictions come from an area that it is quite far from the possible original locations of the monastery: Dandān-öiliq and Khadalik are located more than a hundred kilometres away from present Khotan, to the northwest and west respectively. I will return to this question below.

2.2 *The Legend of the Gomatī Monastery*

Other legends recorded in Chinese and Tibetan texts have been identified in Khotanese painting (but with less certainty than the Silk Princess case).[21] Research on visual depictions of legends in Khotan remained dormant, which is largely due to the fact that no further discoveries of Khotanese painting have

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19   A *li* at the time of Xuanzang would correspond to ca. 560 meters, therefore the distance would be approximately between ca. 2.8 and 3.3 kilometres. The site of the ancient capital has been located in Yotkan, southwest of present Khotan city (Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, 190 and 199–206).

20   Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, 230. Li Lingbing's location is based on the hypothesis that the capital of the kingdom should be located in Halal-bagh and not in Yotkan. Basai's distance from Halal-bagh would correspond to that given by Xuanzang (Li Lingbing 李呤屏, "Gudai Yutian guodu zai yanjiu 古代于阗国都再研究 [The Ancient Capital of the Kingdom of Khotan Re-considered]," *Xinjiang daxue xuebao* 新疆大学学报 *Journal of Xinjiang University* 3 (1989): 45–46. The site now called Alalebage fosi yizhi (Chin. 阿拉勒巴格佛寺遺址, remains of the Halal-bagh Buddhist Monastery) seems to be a tourist attraction in the area of Khotan.

21   See the discussion of the paintings identified by Stein in Williams, "Khotanese Paintings," 152–154, and Chandra, "The Khotanese Mural of Hariti at Dandan-Uiliq."

sustained the interest of scholars on this topic. However, in the last decade, the resumption of archaeological fieldwork in Khotan has brought to light new evidence concerning Khotanese painting. This material provides valuable and significant data to this topic.

Of particular relevance is a painting recovered from the structure known in Chinese archaeological reports as Toplukdong Site no. 1, or Toplukdong Small Temple (Chin. Topulukedong xiao fosi 托普鲁克墩小佛寺), near Domoko (Chin. Damagou 达玛沟), located in the south-eastern area of the Khotan oasis (map 2.1).[22] The painting depicts a standing male figure in Central Asian clothing, encircled by a halo, holding a halberd (?), and accompanied by a deer (fig. 2.4). The painting alludes to a scene from the legend of the origin of the Gomatī *vihāra*—another famous monastery founded by the royals of Khotan.[23]

The legend of the Gomatī Monastery (Tib. Hgum tir, Kh. Gūmattīrä)[24] is found in both the *Prophecy of the Li Country* and the *Religious Annals of the Li Country*.[25] The story describes, with some variations, that after the introduction of Buddhism to Khotan, there was a period when seven generations of kings appeared, in the course of which no monasteries were built in Khotan, that is, until we arrive at the eleventh king of Khotan, Vijaya Vīrya: One day, he saw a golden and silver light radiating from outside his castle. After pursuing the source of the light, Vijaya Vīrya discovered it was emanating from a deer, which immediately transformed itself into the deity Saṃjñāya (the

22 The site of Toplukdong was investigated from 2002 to 2010 and revealed the remains of three structural units (Site no. 1, no. 2 and no. 3) that were part of a large monastic complex in use between the 6th/7th century and 10th century. Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan kaogu yanjiusuo Xinjiang kaogudui 中国社会科学院考古研究所新疆队, "Fulu: Xinjiang Hetian diqu Celexian Damagou fosi yizhi de faxian yu yanjiu 附录:新疆和田地区策勒县达玛沟佛寺遗址的发掘与研究 [Appendix: The Excavation and Research on the Buddhist Monastery Site of Domoko, in Cele County, Khotan, Xinjiang]," in *Dandan wulike yizhi* 丹丹乌里克遗址, *Dandan Oilik Site. Report of the Sino-Japanese Joint Expedition*, ed. Zhongguo Xinjiang wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 中国新疆文物考古研究所 et al. (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2009), 293–333.

23 Erika Forte, "On a Wall Painting from Toplukdong Site no. 1 in Domoko: New Evidence of Vaiśravaṇa in Khotan?" in *Changing Forms and Cultural Identity: Religious and Secular Iconographies. Papers from the 20th Conference of the European Association for South Asian Archaeology and Art held in Vienna from 4th to 9th of July 2010, Vol. 1, South Asian Archaeology and Art*, ed. Deborah Klimburg-Salter and Linda Lojda (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 215–224.

24 Emmerick, *Tibetan Texts*, 95b.

25 For the story in the *Li yul lung bstan pa* see Emmerick, *Tibetan Texts*, 28–33 (transliteration and English translation), and Zhu Lishuang, "Youguan Yutian de zangwen wenxian," 42 (transcription and Chinese translation). For the English translation of the legend in the *Li yul chos kyi lo rgyus* see Thomas, *Tibetan Literary Texts*, 306–307; transcription and Chinese translation: Zhu Lishuang, "Youguan Yutian de zangwen wenxian," 78–79.
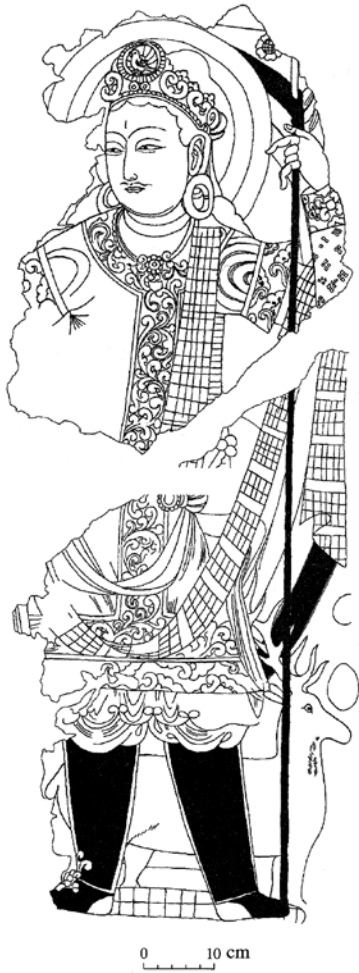
FIGURE 2.4
Line drawing of the painting found in Toplukdong
Small Temple in Domoko, Khotan, 7th/9th c. (?).
XINJIANG ARCHAEOLOGICAL TEAM, *THE
EXCAVATION ON THE BUDDHIST SITE OF
DOMOKO*, 300, FIG. 14

mahāsenāpati of the *yakṣa*s). Saṃjñāya told the king to build a *vihāra* in that
spot, so that Buddhadūta and three other *arhat*s would come there and ex-
pound the *dharma* to the king. This *vihāra* became known as Gomatī Monas-
tery.

The story of the founding of the Gomatī Monastery is linked to the legend of
the Gautośan[26] *vihāra*. Another miraculous event followed the construction of

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26   The Gautośan Hill (hgehu to śan in Emmerick, *Tibetan texts*, 30, 178a4/a) of the Tibetan
     texts is none other than Mt. Gośṛṅga (Oxhorn, Chin. Niujiaoshan 牛角山 otherwise
     known in Sanskrit as Gośīrṣa, Oxhead Mountain, Chin. Niutoushan 牛頭山), and per-
     haps the most famous place in Khotan's sacred topography, as described in ancient
     sources.

the Gomatī Monastery. A child got lost in the vicinity of the Gomatī. While searching for him, the king and his people arrived in a small valley at the foot of the Hill of Gautośan, where they found a *stūpa* containing the relics of the past Buddha Kāśyapa. Recognising the sacredness of the place, king Vijaya Vīrya ordered the construction of a monastery there. Afterwards, the child was found safe. The end of the story stresses that in these two *vihāra*s (i.e. Gautośan and Gomatī), manifestations and signs occurred, and that "they are to be considered the chief among the *vihāra*s held to exist in the Li country."[27] It is said that both monasteries are protected by Vaiśravaṇa, Saṃjñāya, and the Nāga King Gṛhāvatapta.

The painting on the southern wall of the Toplukdong temple depicts the moment in the story when the deer transforms itself into the deity Saṃjñāya. This reference is particularly significant if we consider the position of the painting itself and the layout of the temple: Saṃjñāya's depiction occupies the entire wall on the left side of the entrance, facing the main statue (fig. 2.5). On the right side of the entrance, another standing deity of similar proportions is depicted. Although this second deity cannot be identified precisely, there is little doubt that these two images served as protectors of the temple.[28] Therefore, this could be read as providing a pictorial correspondence of the vow made by the deities Saṃjñāya, the Nāga King Gṛhāvatapta, and Vaiśravaṇa, to protect the Gomatī Monastery at the conclusion of the story. Saṃjñāya, paired with another deity (Gṛhāvatapta?), might be interpreted as guarding the temple.

Three other depictions of this divinity from Khotan survive that likely allude to the same legend, in each of which a figure (with boots and wearing either Central Asian attire or armour) appears with a deer.[29] Although the surviving pictorial evidence of the legend of the Gomatī Monastery are less numerous than the depictions we have of the legend of the Silk Princess, there is no doubt that the story of the Gomatī was popular in Khotan, especially because of the importance this monastery enjoyed in the Buddhist activities of the kingdom.

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27   Emmerick, *Tibetan Texts*, 33.

28   This painting is fragmented, with only its lower portion visible. The preserved part shows only that the figure is wearing a *dhoti* tied up to the knees and has bare feet resting on a cushion. See Forte, "On a Wall Painting from Toplukdong," 217–219, figs. 2–7 and 221, note 12.

29   Williams, "Khotanese Paintings," 136–138; Forte, "On a Wall Painting from Toplukdong," 220–222, figs. 8–10.
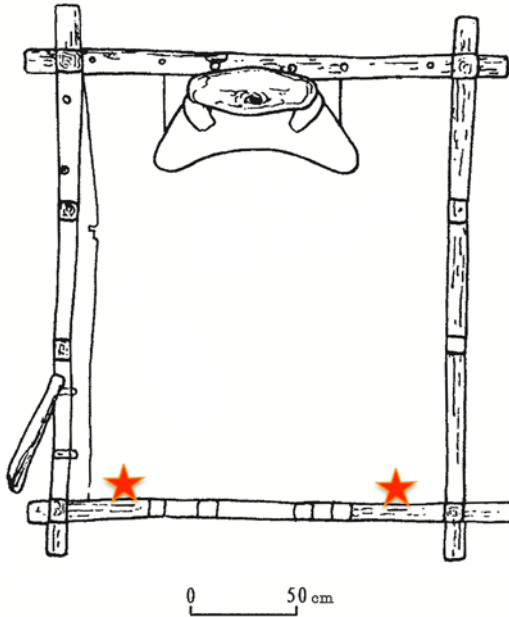
FIGURE 2.5
Plan of the Toplukdong Small
Temple showing the positions of
the paintings of Samjñāya and
another protector, Domoko,
Khotan.
MODIFIED AFTER XINJIANG
ARCHAEOLOGICAL TEAM, *THE
EXCAVATION ON THE BUDDHIST
SITE OF DOMOKO*, 294–295,
FIGS. 3 AND 4

2.2.1   Gomatī: A Great Monastery Founded by Royals for State Protection
The existence of the Gomatī Monastery was first reported by Faxian (ca. 340–
before 423, 法顯), who lodged there during his stay in Khotan at the beginning
of the 5th century. According to his account, it was one of the largest monaster-
ies in the country, hosting three thousand monks of the Mahāyāna, and was
favoured by the king. The Gomatī was one of the fourteen Great Monasteries
(Chin. *da sengjialan* 大僧伽藍) in Khotan and took part in an important local
Buddhist festival, where sacred Buddhist images were brought in procession to
the city. The images were placed on richly decorated carts (one for each mon-
astery) and carried to the city gate from a place on the outskirts from the city.
The cart from the Gomatī Monastery was the first one to set off to the city.
When the carts approached the city, the king would go, barefoot, from his pal-
ace to outside of the city gate to welcome the images and make offerings, tak-
ing off his crown while doing so. The carts would then enter the city showered
by flowers the queen and her maids scattered from the top of the gate.[30] This

30   *Gaoseng Faxian zhuan* 高僧法顯傳 [Biography of the Eminent Monk Faxian], T. 2085.51,
      857b–c. Most recent translations are: Rongxi Li, *A Biography of the Tripiṭaka Master
      of the Great Ci'en Monastery of the Great Tang Dynasty. Translated from the Chinese of
      Śramana Huili and Shi Yancong (Taishō, volume 50, Number 2053)* (Berkeley, California:
      Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1995), 155–214; Max Deeg, *Das*

festival took place in Khotan every year in spring, lasted several days, and was apparently one of the most famous yearly events in the region.

The account by Faxian is the earliest mention of the Gomatī Monastery in Chinese literary sources. Another reference—dating from the first decades of the 5th century—is found in the biography of Dharmakṣema (385–433, Chin. Tanwuchen 曇無讖), which says that the Indian monk Buddhasena resided in the Gomatī Monastery of Khotan.[31] Other mentions are found in Chinese historical literature and Buddhist literature from the Tang (618–907, 唐) period.[32] The name of the monastery also appears on wooden tablets written in Khotanese[33] and in Khotanese documents from Dunhuang, up to the 10th century. However, the date of the foundation of the Gomatī Monastery remains unknown. The period of the reign of Vijaya Vīrya—the eleventh king of Khotan said to have sponsored its foundation—is also unknown.[34] Whenever it was founded, the Gomatī Monastery institution lasted for at least five centuries (from the first dated mention at the beginning of the 5th century to the last one at the end of the 10th century).

The legend as it appears in Tibetan texts underlines the direct connection between this monastery and the royals of Khotan. Faxian's account corroborates this fact. It was also at a royal command that Faxian and his companions were lodged in this monastery. Faxian informs us that it was a "Great Monastery" (Skt. *mahāsaṃghārāma*, 大僧伽藍, a term, the meaning of which is still not entirely clear within that context, but might be an indication that monasteries

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Gaoseng-Faxian-Zhuan als religionsgeschichtliche Quelle: der älteste Bericht eines chinesischen buddhistischen Pilgermönchs über seine Reise nach Indien mit Übersetzung des Textes (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005); and Jean-Pierre Drège, tr., *Mémoire sur les pays bouddhiques* (Paris: Les belles lettres, 2013).

31 Sylvain Lévi, "Notes chinoises sur l'Inde: IV. Le pays de Kharoṣṭra et l'écriture Kharoṣṭrī," *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 4.3 (1904): 543–579, 556. The biography of Dharmakṣema is in the *Gaosengzhuan* 高僧傳 [Biographies of Eminent Monks], T. 2059.50, 335c16–337b04 (the passage on the Gomatī is at p. 337a07–09).

32 For an overview of the sources where the Gomatī Monastery is mentioned, see Zhang Guangda and Rong Xinjiang, *Yutian shi congkao*, 228–230.

33 Duan Qing 段晴 and Wang Binghua 王炳华, "Xinjiang xin chutu Yutianwen mudu wenshu yanjiu 新疆新出土于闐文木牘文書研究 [A Newly Discovered Khotanese Wooden Document from Xinjiang]," *Dunhuang Tulufan yanjiu* 敦煌吐魯番研究 [Journal of the Dunhuang and Turfan studies] 2 (1996): 1–12. This is a contract of sale written on a wooden tablet. According to Duan Qing, its redaction should be earlier than the Tang period.

34 There is still uncertainty on the chronology of Khotanese kings for the period preceding the Tang Dynasty. Thomas suggests that Vijaya Vīrya could be placed in the 1st to 2nd centuries (Thomas, *Tibetan Literary Texts*, 7). Zhu Lishuang argues that the eleventh to thirteenth kings of Khotan ruled between 133 and 200 (Zhu Lishuang, "Yutian wangtong yanjiu").

were supported economically by the state),[35] and other documents attest to its role and importance in Mahāyāna Buddhism in Asia.

The question arising from this new evidence is: what is the purpose of the Toplukdong Small Temple painting making such a strong reference to the foundation legend of the Gomatī? The possibility that the Toplukdong structure is the place where the Gomatī Monastery was has to be ruled out. The exact location of the Gomatī Monastery remains unknown, and—despite previous sustained endeavours—no archaeological remains have been found. However, there is strong evidence that it could have been situated close to Mt. Gautośan (i.e. Gośr̥ṅga), since Tibetan texts mention it in association with the Gomatī legend. According to Aurel Stein, the location of this mountain could correspond to the Hill of Kohmārī (26 kilometres southwest of modern city of Khotan), on the eastern bank of the Karakash river, close to the site of Yotkan, the ancient capital.[36] Therefore, the probable location of the Gomatī Monastery visited by Faxian is unmistakably out of the geographical range of the Toplukdong ruins in Domoko, which are roughly situated at a linear distance of about 120 kilometres east of Yotkan. This distance does not match any of the indications given in the ancient sources, which point, instead, to an area close to the capital itself.

In my view, more than indicating the identity of the monastery *per se*, the painting of the legend of the Gomatī Monastery might have indicated a direct connection between the temple in Toplukdong and the Gomatī Monastery situated near the capital. The need to communicate such a connection stems from the importance that the Gomatī Monastery had for both the religious and royal establishments in Khotan. The Gomatī, as can be deduced from legendary and historical evidence, was not only founded by Khotanese royalty, but was also guarded by very specific deities, namely by Vaiśravaṇa, Saṃjñāya, and Gr̥hāvatapta. These three form part of the so-called Eight Protectors (Kh. *haṣṭä parvālā*, Chin. *ba da shouhushen* 八大守護神)—a group of deities that were specifically nominated by the Buddha Śākyamuni to protect the Kingdom of

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35   See Antonino Forte, "Daiji (Chine)," in *Hōbōgirin: dictionnaire encyclopèdique du bouddhisme d'aprés les sources chinoises et japonaises*, ed. Paul Demièville et al. (Paris and Tokyo: Académie des inscriptions et belles lettres, Maison franco-japonaise, 1983), 682–704.

36   See details in Erika Forte, "Khotan chiku Domoko hakken Toplukdong 1-gō butsuji to Gomati-dera densetsu コータン地區ドモコ發見トプルクトン1號佛寺と瞿摩帝寺 傳説. Toplukdong Temple no. 1 in Domoko (Khotan) and the legend of Gomatī monastery," in *Takata Tokio kyōju taishoku kinen Tōhōgaku kenkyū ronshū* 高田時雄教授退職記念東方學研究論集 *East Asian Studies. Festschrift in Honor of the Retirement of Professor TAKATA Tokio*, ed. Tōhōgaku kenkyū ronshū kankōkai 東方學研究論集刊行會 (Kyoto: Rinsen Book Co., 2014), 210–227.

Khotan and ensure its sovereignty.[37] A survey in the *Prophecy of the Li Country* shows that four of these state-protecting gods (Vaiśravaṇa, Saṃjñāya, the Nāga King Gṛhāvatapta, and Aparājita) often appear among the deities who appoint themselves to protect the monasteries founded by the kings in the local legends. Vaiśravaṇa and Saṃjñāya were the most 'active' in guarding royal monasteries and seem to have been especially prominent among the other protectors.

Being guarded by one or more of the state protectors meant that the Buddhist monasteries benefited from 'extra-protection,' which at the same time recognizes a special bond between the Buddhist institution and the state, and expresses their mutual legitimation. The Gomatī Monastery—defended by three of the Eight Protectors—therefore appears to have been of particular importance, as a stronghold of Buddhism and likely directly involved in the protection of the kingdom of Khotan.

3   Conclusions: Pictorial Representations of Khotanese Legends as Expression of Patronage

The example of the Toplukdong Small Temple highlights the role pictorial representations of Buddhist legendary accounts—particularly their deliberate placement—play as conveyors of information related to the identity, origin, and function of Buddhist monasteries and temples in ancient Khotan. The painting in Toplukdong conveys the message that this institution was connected with the Gomatī Monastery. It was probably founded by members of the Khotanese royal family, and thus benefited from the same strong royal support as the Gomatī—in other words, it may have been a royal monastery itself,

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37   The group of Eight Protectors of Khotan have their origin in Mahāyāna texts that circulated in Khotan from around the 4th–5th centuries onwards, and appear, as noted by Harold Bailey, in Khotanese, Tibetan, and Chinese texts. Cf. Harold Walter Bailey, "Hvatanica IV," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 4 (1942): 912. The protectors are: Aparājita, Saṃjñāya (Sañjaya, Saṃjñin), Gaganasvara, Suvarṇa(-)māla, Gṛhāvatapta, Aṃgūśa', Sthānavatī, and Vaiśravaṇa (Vaiśramaṇa). See Rong Xinjiang 榮新江 and Zhu Lishuang 朱丽双, "Tuwen huzheng—Yutian ba da shouhushen xin tan 图文互证一于阗八大守护神新探 [Mutual Evidence in Pictures and Texts: New Research on the The Eight Great Protectors of Khotan]," in *Dunhuang wenxian, kaogu, yishu zonghe yanjiu. Jinian Xiang Da xiansheng danchen 110 zhounian guoji xueshu yantaohui lunwenji* 敦煌文献、考古、艺术综合研究.纪念向达先生诞辰110周年国际学术研讨会论文集 [Comprehensive Studies on Documents, Archaeology and Art of Dunhuang. Proceedings of the International Academic Seminar Celebrating the 110th Anniversary of Professor Xiang Da's Birthday], ed. Fan Jinshi 樊锦诗 et al. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2011), 190–218 (for the transcription of the names, I follow the list provided at p. 201).

maybe even a direct 'affiliate' of the Gomatī Monastery, acting, as the Gomatī, to protect the Buddhist Kingdom of Khotan. The depiction of the legend carries sufficient elements to communicate that the building in Toplukdong was supported by the king of Khotan, and hints at its royal patronage. Probably the kings of Khotan recognised themselves in the legends, as the legends legitimated their role through Buddhism.

This model of interpretation can be extended to other depictions of local Buddhist legends from different sites in Khotan. It is possible that depictions of the Silk Princess story and the founding of the Mashe/Ma dza Monastery, which are found at sites far distant from the probable locations of the original monasteries, were meant to declare a connection with the original monastery and its royal patronage. The historical documentation of the Mashe/Ma dza Monastery does not allow us to draw any conclusion as to its role in the political and religious agenda of Khotanese establishments. We can only speculate that it could have been important that the agent at the origin of the monastery was a Chinese bride of the king of Khotan. Was the Mashe/Ma dza Monastery connected with a Chinese community in Khotan? Or was this monastery important for its link to the economically lucrative sericulture activities in the oasis?

Depictions of Khotanese legends are also found in the Dunhuang Mogao and Yulin Caves, which are both related to the Khotanese royals and the local Khotanese community. Here the connection between direct or indirect Khotanese patronage and the legends becomes more explicit. These depictions appear at the earliest in the late-8th century and continue to be present up to the 10th century. The set of legends represented in Dunhuang are different from those found in Khotan. Recurrent themes are: The foundation legend of Khotan, which highlights the Buddhist mythological origin of the Khotanese Kingdom and kingship, particularly the scene where Śāriputra and Vaiśravaṇa dry the lake which was covering Khotan with their staffs, on the order of Śākyamuni (fig. 2.6); depictions of mount Gośīrṣa, the most sacred place of Khotan, where Śākyamuni and other *buddha*s took up residence in the past (fig. 2.7); the complete group of the Eight Protectors; and the so-called Auspicious Statues (Chin. *ruixiang* 瑞像), a number of which were believed to reside in Khotan.[38]

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38   The term *ruixiang* has also been translated into English as "auspicious images," or "famous image." For the use of the term "statues," see Michel Soymié, "Quelques représentations de statues miraculeuses dans les grottes de Touen-houang," in *Contributions aux études de Touen-huang*, ed. Michel Soymié (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1984), 77–102; Christoph Anderl and Erika Forte, "Auspicious Statues 瑞像," in *Brill's Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, ed. Jonathan Silk (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming).

FIGURE 2.6
The founding legend of
Khotan. Wall painting from the
ceiling of the main chamber
(western) niche of Mogao Cave
237, end of 8th–first half of the
9th c.
© DUNHUANG ACADEMY

FIGURE 2.8
The auspicious image of Pimo.
Wall painting from the main
chamber western niche ceiling of
Mogao Cave 231, 9th c.
ZHANG XIAOGANG, *DUNHUANG
FOJIAO GANTONGHUA YANJIU*
(2015), 128, FIG. 2-1-3.

The legends related to the 'Khotanese' Auspicious Statues are recorded in Chinese literature.[39] A well-known story is of the miraculous statue that flew through the air from India to Khotan, landing in a place known in the Chinese sources as Pimo (媲摩) or Hanmo (捍麼) (fig. 2.8). According to Xuanzang, this was the very first image of the Buddha, which the king Udayana of Kauśāmbī had carved from sandalwood while the Buddha was still alive. The king of Khotan financed the construction of a monastic complex to host the statue in Pimo, and the place became an important centre for pilgrimage.

Interestingly, the legends that are depicted in Khotan are not found in Dunhuang, and *vice versa*; none of the subjects of Khotanese imagery from Dunhuang can be clearly identified among the surviving paintings in Khotan. So far, not a single depiction of the foundation legend has been found in Khotan, nor of the complete group of the Eight Protectors, although the identification of some depictions of standing buddhas on wooden panels as Auspicious Statues remains tentative.[40] The reasons for this state of evidence are unclear. Could they be a lacuna in the documentation? The result of a specific choice? Or different attitudes in time and space? These are topics that needs further investigation.

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39   Zhang Guangda 张广达 and Rong Xinjiang 榮新江, "Dunhuang *Ruixiangji*, ruixiangtu ji qi fanyingde Yutian 敦煌瑞象记，瑞象图及其反映的于阗, The Records of Famous Images, the Painting of Famous Images from Dunhuang and Khotan as Reflected in Them," in *Yutian shi congkao* (*Zengding Ben*) 于闐史叢考(增訂本). *Collected Inquiries on the History of Khotan. New Edition*, ed. Zhang Guangda 张广达 and Rong Xinjiang 荣新江 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue chubanshe, 2008), 166–223. See also Christoph Anderl, "Linking Khotan and Dūnhuáng: Buddhist Narratives in Text and Image," *Entangled Religions* 5 (2018): 250–311, accessed June 11, 2019. doi: 10.13154/er.v5.2018.250–311.

40   Williams, "Khotanese Paintings," 125–128.

Uyghur Legitimation and the Role of Buddhism

Yukiyo Kasai

1 Introduction[1]

In the middle of the 8th century, Uyghurs, a Turkic speaking nomadic tribe, established their Empire, the East Uyghur Kaganate (ca. 744–840), in Mongolia. After the demise of this Kaganate, most of them moved into the eastern part of the Tianshan (天山) area, where they founded a new kingdom, the West Uyghur Kingdom (second half 9th c.–13th c.). This kingdom continued to exist even after the rise of Činggiz Khan (1162?–1227), to whom the Uyghur king at that time voluntarily submitted. Throughout this extended period, the Uyghurs experienced many cultural, religious, and political changes that had an impact on representations of their rulers' power. This chapter discusses how the Uyghur rulers officially tried to legitimate their power based on their different beliefs and political relationships.

2 Legitimation as Seen in the Titles of Uyghur Rulers

The Uyghur rulers' official titles are essential to their legitimation strategies because they reflect the rulers' intentions concerning how they want to formally represent themselves. In this chapter, I investigate which official titles were used by the Uyghur rulers during the above-mentioned period. However, with the establishment of the Mongol Empire (1206), the position of the Uyghur rulers shifted into a different stage, so this period will be dealt with below.

2.1 *Period of the East Uyghur Kaganate*
2.1.1 Nomadic Tradition
After its foundation, the East Uyghur Kaganate extended its influence beyond Mongolia. The Uyghurs, with their considerable military power, were one of

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the most important neighbouring states to the Tang Dynasty (618–907, 唐),
which was the greatest power in Eastern and Central Asia at that time. At
times, it even posed a threat to the Tang. Thus, the activities of the Uyghurs
were carefully monitored by the Chinese. As a result, many reports on the Uy-
ghurs and their Kaganate entered into the official chronicle of the Tang Dy-
nasty. There, the Uyghur rulers' official titles were mostly mentioned in reports
concerning the enthronement of new rulers. In addition, three official stone
monuments were established by the Uyghurs themselves, i.e. Šine-Usu, Sevrey,
and Karabalgasun.[2] While the first of these was devoted to the second ruler
(r. 747–759), the second was established during the period of the eighth ruler
(r. 808–821). Several scholars have suggested different theories regarding the
setting up of the Sevrey Inscription. According to Yukata Yoshida, it was estab-
lished by the third ruler (r. 759–779), when he came to China to help fight on
the imperial side in the rebellion of An Lushan (703–757, 安祿山).[3] The Kara-
balgasun Inscription in particular is remarkable because it is written in three

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2   For the most recent research on these inscriptions, see e.g. Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫 et al.,
    "Shineusu hibun yakuchū シネウス碑文訳注 [Šine-Usu Inscription from the Uyghur Period
    in Mongolia: Revised Text, Translation and Commentaries]," *Nairiku ajia gengo no kenkyū* 内
    陸アジア言語の研究 [Studies on the Inner Asian Languages] 24 (2009): 1–92; Moriyasu
    Takao 森安孝夫 et al., "Seburei hibun セブレイ碑文 [Sevrey Inscription]," in *Mongorukoku
    genzon iseki, hibun chōsa kenkyū hōkoku* モンゴル国現存遺蹟・碑文調査研究報告
    [Provisional Report of Researches on Historical Sites and Inscriptions in Mongolia from 1996
    to 1998], ed. Takao Moriyasu 森安孝夫 and Ayudai Ochir (Toyonaka: The Society of Central
    Eurasian Studies, 1999), 225–227; Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫 et al., "Kara = Barugasun hibun
    カラ＝バルガスン碑文 [Karabalgasun Inscription]," in *Mongorukoku genzon iseki, hibun
    chōsa kenkyū hōkoku* モンゴル国現存遺蹟・碑文調査研究報告 [Provisional Report of
    Researches on Historical Sites and Inscriptions in Mongolia from 1996 to 1998], ed. Takao
    Moriyasu 森安孝夫 and Ayudai Ochir (Toyonaka: The Society of Central Eurasian Studies,
    1999), 209–224; Yoshida Yutaka 吉田豊, "Sogudojin to kodai no Churukuzoku tono kankei ni
    kansuru mittsu no oboegaki ソグド人と古代のチュルク族との関係に関する三つの覚え
    書き [Three Philological Notes on the Sogdo-Turkish Relationship]," *Kyōto daigaku bungaku-
    bu kenkyū kiyō* 京都大學文學部研究紀要 [Memoirs of the Faculty of Letters Kyoto
    University] 50 (2011): 7–22; Yoshida Yutaka 吉田豊, "Sogudojin to torukojin no kankei nit
    suite no sogudogo shiryō 2-ken ソグド人とトルコ人の関係についてのソグド語資料2件
    [Two Sogdian materials concerning the Turco-Sogdian relationship]," *Seinan Ajia kenkyū* 西
    南アジア研究 [Middle Eastern Studies] 67 (2007): 52–54; Yutaka Yoshida, "Historical
    Backgrond of the Sevrey Inscription in Mongolia," in *Great Journeys across the Pamir
    Mountains. Festschrift in Honour of Zhang Guangda on his Eighty-fifth Birthday*, ed. Huaiyu
    Chen and Xinjiang Rong (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2018), 140–145. Also, the edited Chinese part
    of the Karabalgasun Inscription is presented as figure 1 in Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫 and
    Sakajiri Akihiro 坂尻彰宏, *Siruku rōdo to sekaishi* シルクロードと世界史 [World History
    Reconsidered through the Silk Road] (Toyonaka: Osaka University The 21st Century COE
    Program Interface Humanities Research Activities 2002, 2003).

3   Yoshida, "Two Sogdian Materials," 52–54; Yoshida, "Historical Background," 143–145.

different languages and scripts (Old Turkish in the Runic script, Chinese, and Sogdian). It features the genealogy of the Uyghur rulers up to the time of the inscription in question. This inscription is now presererved only in fragments, with the Chinese part in a better state of preservation than the other two languages. However, the original Turkish title of the rulers can be reconstructed from the Chinese ones that show the phonetic transcription. Therefore, almost all the official titles of the rulers in the East Uyghur Kaganate, except for the last one, are known (see Table 3.1).[4]

Among the many elements used in the Uyghur rulers' titles, one in particular, played a significant role, Heaven (OT *täŋri*) or heavenly Charisma (OT *kut*). Heaven was recognised as the source of the nomadic rulers' power as early as the period of the Tujue (fl. 552–742, 突厥), who also belonged to the Turkish speaking nomads and ruled Mongolia as the Uyghur's predecessors.[5] In the so-called Tonyukuk Inscription, which was established by the famous Tujue chancellor, Tonyukuk (second half of the 7th c.–first half of the 8th c.), the relationship between Heaven, the Turkish rulers, and their people is clearly described:

> However, Täŋri said: 'I gave (you) a ruler. You, however, left your ruler (and anew) submitted'. Because (you) submitted, Täŋri said 'Die!' (And) the Türk clans died, collapsed, and were killed off.[6]

The Uyghurs inherited the same idea about Heaven, evidenced in the short sentence in the Šine-Usu Inscription:

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4 The Uyghur rulers' titles are well researched. They appear in the table based on the following works, see e.g. Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫, "Uiguru = Manikyō shi no kenkyū ウイグル=マニ教史の研究 [A Study on the History of Uyghur Manichaeism—Research on Some Manichaean Materials and their Historical Background]," *Ōsaka daigaku bungakubu kiyō* 大阪大学文学部紀要 [Memoirs of the Faculty of Letters Osaka University] 31/32 (1991): 182–183; Takao Moriyasu, *Die Geschichte des uigurischen Manichäismus an der Seidenstraße. Forschungen zu manichäischen Quellen und ihrem geschichtlichen Hintergrund* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2004), 221–222. Volker Rybatzki analysed each title of the rulers in detail, see Volker Rybatzki, "Titles of Türk and Uigur Rulers in the Old Turkic Inscriptions," *Central Asiatic Journal* 44.2 (2000): 224–225, 251. Some of those titles are reconstructed based on the Chinese phonetic transcriptions.
5 This topic has been discussed by several scholars, see e.g. Masao Mori, "The T'u-Chüeh Concept of Sovereign," *Acta Asiatica* 41 (1981): 47–75; Peter B. Golden, "Imperial Ideology and the Sources of Political Unity Amongst the Pre-Činggisid Nomads of Western Eurasia," in *Nomads and Their Neighbours in the Russian Steppe, Turks, Khazars and Qipchaqs*, ed. Peter B. Golden (Burlington: Routledge, 2003), 42–50.
6 The sentence was originally translated by Volker Rybatzki into German, see Volker Rybatzki, *Die Toñuquq-Inschrift* (Szeged: University of Szeged, 1997), 79, lines 2–3.

TABLE 3.1   The titles of the rulers in the East Uyghur Kaganate

Number	Title (in Old Uyghur and Chinese)[a]	Ruling period
1	*köl bilgä kagan* 闕毗伽可汗	744–747
2	*täŋridä bolmıš el itmiš bilgä kagan* [登里]囉沒蜜施頡翳德蜜施毗伽可汗	747–759
3	*täŋridä kut bulmıš el tutmıš alp külüg bilgä kagan* 登里囉汨沒蜜施頡咄登蜜施合俱録毗伽可汗	759–779
4	*alp kutlug bilgä kagan* 合骨咄祿毗伽可汗	779–789
5	*täŋridä bolmıš külüg bilgä kagan* 登里囉沒蜜施俱録毗伽可汗	789–790
6	*kutlug bilgä kagan* 汨咄祿毗伽可汗	790–795
7	*täŋridä ülüg bulmıš alp kutlug ulug bilgä kagan* 登里囉羽録沒蜜施合汨咄祿胡祿毗伽可汗	795–808
8	*ay täŋridä kut bulmıš alp bilgä kagan* 愛登里囉汨沒蜜施合毗伽可汗	808–821
9	*kün täŋridä ülüg bulmıš alp küčlüg bilgä kagan* 君登里邏羽録沒蜜施合句主録毗伽可汗	821–824
10	*ay täŋridä kut bulmıš alp bilgä kagan* 愛登里囉汨沒蜜施合毗伽可汗	824–832
11	*ay täŋridä kut bulmıš alp külüg bilgä kagan* 愛登里囉汨沒蜜施合句録毗伽可汗	832–839
12	?	839–840

a   In the following discussion, some but not all of the elements in the titles are particularly relevant. The English translations are given for the elements discussed below.

> The heaven-god and the earth-god deigned to tell (me) that the (Turkic) people were my (i.e. the Qaɣan's) slaves.[7]

This sentence mentions the earth-god in addition to the heaven-god. However, Heaven undoubtably played an important role. The titles that indicate

7   Moriyasu et al., "Šine-Usu Inscription," 25, lines E1–2.

Heaven as the source of the heavenly Charisma of the rulers reflect a nomadic tradition.[8]

2.1.2   Influence of Manichaeism

In the East Uyghur Kaganate, a radical change took place with regard to Uyghur beliefs. The third ruler decided to accept Manichaeism as the primary religion and promised to give his favours to its church and followers.[9] There are two reasons for the conversion of this ruler to Manichaeism: an outward one concerning politics and a rather inward one concerning economics. The ruler "needed one world religion to represent his empire, which has to be different from those of the rival empires, i.e. Tibetan Buddhism, Chinese Taoism, Judaism of Khazar, and so on."[10] The other factor in the ruler's adoption of Manichaeism is the crucial connection with Sogdian merchants, who were mostly Manichaean and therefore promised economic advantages. After an inter-religious conflict, from the seventh ruler's period (r. 795–808) onward, the Manichaeans eventually emerged as the winners and from then on received continuous support from the Uyghur rulers.

This essential religious shift affected the legitimation strategies of the Uyghur rulers, which is reflected in their titles. Since the time of the eighth ruler, who is famous for establishing the Karabalgasun Inscription, all rulers have either Moon (OT *ay*) or Sun (OT *kün*) as the first element of their titles, which was not previously evident. These celestial objects had a significant

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8   See also Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, "Qut: Ein Grundbegriff in der zentralasiatischen Religionsbegegnung," in *Humanitas Religiosa. Festschrift für Harald Biezais zu seinem 70. Geburtstag. Dargebracht von Freunden und Kollegen*, ed. L. Neulande (Stockholm: Almquist and Wiksell, 1979), 253–256.

9   About the conversion of the third Uyghur ruler, see e.g. TT II, 411–422; Larry V. Clark, "The Conversion of Bügü Khan to Manichaeism," in *Studia Manichaica IV. International Kongress zum Manichäismus, Berlin, 14.–18. Juli 1997*, ed. Ronald E. Emmerick et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2000), 83–123; Xavier Tremblay, *Pour une histoire de la Sérinde. Le manichéisme parmi les peuples et religions d'Asie Centrale d'après les sources primaires* (Wien: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2001), 108–110; Takao Moriyasu, "New Developments in the History of East Uighur Manichaeism," *Open Theology* 1 (2015): 319–322.

10 Yoshida Yutaka 吉田豊, "Sogudojin to Sogudo no rekishi ソグド人とソグドの歴史 [Sogdians and the Sogdian History]," in *Sogudojin no bijutsu to gengo* ソグド人の美術と言語 [Sogdian Arts and Languages], ed. Sofukawa Hiroshi 曽布川寛 and Yoshida Yutaka 吉田豊 (Kyoto: Rinsen shoten, 2011), 46; Yutaka Yoshida, "The Eastern Spread of Manichaeism, in *Handbook of Manichaeism*, ed. Jason BeDuhn (forthcoming), 6. Several scholars present this point of view, and Yoshida mentions individual researchers. The careful choice of religion in political connections with neighbouring states is also pointed out in the case of the Khazar's conversion into Judaism, see Peter B. Golden, "Kharazia and Judaism," *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 3 (1983): 130, 137.

function in Manichaen teachings. Thus these elements, especially the Moon element, were added to the ruler's titles because of the Uyghurs' conversion to Manichaeism.[11] From this we can conclude that since the period of the eighth ruler at the latest, the Uyghur rulers began to use Manichaeian teachings to legitimatise their rule.[12] Another important reason why they made a Manichaean element visible in their titles is probably that from the seventh ruler onward, the rulers belonged to a different clan than that of former rulers.

2.2   *Period of the West Uyghur Kingdom*

2.2.1   The Title of the Rulers in the Period of the West Uyghur Kingdom
While the official title of the Uyghur rulers is well preserved in the period of the East Uyghur Kaganate, this is not the case for the West Uyghur Kingom, which established itself in the Turfan Basin. After the collapse of East Uyghur Kaganate, the dynasties in China did not pay the Uyghurs in the Turfan Basin much attention anymore. This was because of their long, geographical distance to the West Uyghur Kingdom on the one hand, and because of their overall political instability on the other hand. Thus, while Chinese sources provide the titles of the East Uyghur Kaganate rulers, they do not document the West Uyghur rulers to the same extent. The titles shown in table 3.2[13] are collected

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11   See e.g. Alessio Bombaci, "Qutlug Bolsun!," *Ural-Altaische Jahrbücher* 38 (1966): 14; Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, "Das manichäische Königtum in Zentralasien," in *Documenta Barbarorum. Festschrift für Walther Heissig zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Klaus Sagaster and Michael Weiers (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1983), 231–233; Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, "The Sun and Moon as Gods in Central Asia," *South Asian Religious Art Studies Bulletin* 2 (1983): 11–13; Rybatzki, "Titles of Türk and Uigur Rulers," 245.

12   The element *täŋri* 'heaven' is still present in the title, so that the traditional idea, that Heaven was the source of the ruling power, possibly played a further role in the legitimation of the Uyghur rulers.

13   The list of those titles was made on the basis of Takao Moriyasu's, Peter Zieme's, Volker Rybatzki's and Rong Xinjiang's research, see Moriyasu, "Uiguru = Manikyō shi," 183–185; Moriyasu, *Die Geschichte des uigurischen Manichäismus*, 222–225; Peter Zieme, "Manichäische Kolophone und Könige," in *Studia Manichaica. Second International Conference on Manichaeism, St. Augustin/Bonn, August 6–10, 1989*, ed. Gernot Wiessner and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit (Wiesbaden, Harrasowitz: 1992), 323–327; Rybatzki, "Titles of Türk and Uigur Rulers," 252; Hiroshi Umemura, "A Qočo Uyghur King Painted in the Buddhist Temple of Beshbalïq," in *Turfan, Khotan und Dunhuang, Vorträge der Tagung „Annemarie von Gabain und die Turfanforschung", veranstaltet von der Berlin-Brandenburgischen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin (9.–12.12. 1994)*, ed. Ronald E. Emmerick et al. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1996), 364–366; Rong Xinjiang 荣新江, "Xizhou huihu mounian zaofota gongdeji 西州回鹘某年造佛塔功德记 [Some Investigations on a Record of Merit of Building a Buddha *stūpa* in an Unknown Year of the Western Uyghur Kingdom]," in *Tujueyu wenxue yanjiu—Geng Shimin jiaoshou bashi huadan jinian wenji* 突厥语文学研究—耿世民教授八十华诞纪念文集 [Studies in Turkic Philology. Festschrift in

from sources and texts written in different languages, mostly found in Turfan and Dunhuang (敦煌). To my knowledge, ten rulers' titles are preserved as follows:

TABLE 3.2   The titles of the rulers in the West Uyghur Kingdom

Titles	Ruling period
嗢祿登利邏汨沒密施合俱録毗伽懷健可汗	~ 856 ~[a]
ulug täŋridä kut bulmıš alp külüg bilgä kagan	
el bilgä täŋri elig	~ 954 ~
arslan bilgä täŋri elig = süŋülüg kagan	~ 981–984 ~
bügü bilgä täŋri elig	~ 996–1003 ~[b]
kün ay täŋritäg küsänčig körtlä yaruk täŋri bügü täŋrikänimiz	~ 1007–1008 ~
kün ay täŋridä kut bulmıš ulug kut ornanmıš alpın ärdämin el tutmıš alp arslan kutlug köl bilgä täŋri han	~ 1017–1031 ~
kün täŋridä kut bulmıš ärdämin el tutmıš alp kutlug ulug bilgä uygur täŋri uygur han	~ first half of the 11th c.[c]
täŋri bügü el bilgä arslan täŋri uygur tärkänimiz	~ 1067 ~
愛登曷哩阿那骨牟里弥施俱録闕蜜伽[　]聖[　]可汗	?[d]
*ay täŋri ?? qut bulmıš külüg köl bilgä [　] täŋ[ri] kagan	
kün ay täŋrilärdä kut b[u]lm[ı]š [buya]n(kut) ornanmıš alpın [ä]rdämin el tutmıš üčünč arslan bilgä han(täŋri elig tugmıš han)	?[e]

a   The title is documented in *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 [New Book of the Tang Dynasty], ed. Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, Song Qi 宋祁 et al. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), (completed 1060), vol. 217, chapter Huihu 回鶻 [Uyghurs], 6133.
b   Rong suggests putting another Uyghur ruler between this and the following one, though there are different opinions, see Rong, "Some Investigations on a Record of Merit," 185; Zieme, "Manichäische Kolophone," 326.
c   This ruler is mentioned in the Dunhuang fragment P. 3049 v. It is now preserved in Paris, see MOTH no. 5, 42–43, line 8'–11'.
d   While Rong assumes his ruling period is around 930, there are other suggestion, see Rong, "Some Investigations on a Record of Merit," 187.
e   For a detailed discussion of this ruler, see Umemura, "A Qočo Uyghur King," 364–366. He dates this ruler to after the end of the 10th century. The readings in the round bracket are suggested by Zieme. See Peter Zieme, "The West Uyghur Kingdom: Views from Inside," *Horizons* 5.1 (2014): 18. He suggests that this king ruled towards the end of the 10th century, before 980.

Honour of the 80th Birthday of Professor Geng Shimin], ed. Zhang Dingjing 张定京 and Abdurishid Yakup 阿不都热西提·亚库甫 (Beijing: China Minzu University Press, 2009), 184–187.

The first title differs from the other titles preserved in the fragments excavated in the Turfan and Dunhuang areas, because the Tang emperor planned to give it to the leader of the Uyghurs shortly after they migrated into the Tianshan area. The titles *el bilgä täŋri elig* and *arslan bilgä täŋri elig = süŋülüg kagan* appear in a Manichaean text. The title *kün täŋridä kut bulmıš ärdämin el tutmıš alp kutlug ulug bilgä uygur täŋri uygur han* appears as the addressee of a draft of a letter besides which another draft of a letter and several Manichaean texts are written on the same paper. The remaining rulers are all mentioned in Buddhist texts. The fourth ruler is mentioned because he issued an order. The tenth one appears in a cartouche beside the donor figures in a mural in a Buddhist cave. The eighth ruler's name is mentioned because Uyghur Buddhist donors wanted to share their religious merit with him, which they collected through copying the Buddhist texts. The other rulers' titles all appear in texts that are internally dated through references to the year of a particular king's reign. However, none of those texts appear to be official documents. Therefore, it is unclear whether the titles are complete or abbreviated ones. If we take the fifth, sixth, seventh, ninth, and tenth rulers' titles[14] as the complete and official titles, they bear in them the elements *han* or *elig* 'king,' which are used in the East Uyghur Kaganate.[15] The continuous use of these titles, together with the celestial objects *kün* and *ay*, indicates that there was likely no shift in the legitimation strategies of the Uyghur rulers in the period of the West Uyghur Kingdom.

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14   Those are: *kün ay t(ä)ŋritäg küsänčig körklä yaruk t(ä)ŋri bügü t(ä)ŋrikänimiz, kün ay t(ä)ŋridä kut bulmıš ulug kut ornanmıš alpın ärdämin el tutmıš alp arslan kutlug köl bilgä t(ä)ŋri han, kün täŋridä kut bulmıš ärdämin el tutmıš alp kutlug ulug bilgä uygur täŋri uygur han* and **ay täŋri ?? qut bulmıš külüg köl bilgä* [ ] *täŋ*[*ri*] *kagan, kün ay täŋrilärdä kut b*[*u*]*lm*[*ı*]*š* [*buya*]*n ornanmıš alpın* [*ä*]*rdämin el tutmıš üčünč arslan bilgä han.*

15   The other title, *Idok kut*, which became common in the Mongolian period, was probably already borrowed under the ruler of the West Uyghur Kingdom, because it is attested to in a Manichaean text, see, M III, 33–35, No. 15, TM 417, line 19, TM 47 (M 919), lines 9 and 14; R. Rahmeti Arat, "Der Herrschertitel Iduq-qut," *Ural-Altaische Jahrbücher* 35 (1964), 151–152. Those two fragments are now preserved under the same signature, M 919, see Larry V Clark, "The Turkic Manichaean Literature," in *Emerging from Darkness: Studies in the Recovery of Manichaean Sources*, ed. Paul Mirecki and Jason Beduhn (Leiden, New York, Cologne: Brill, 1997), 133. However, as the above-mentioned titles show, the use of the Uyghur rulers' title, *Idok kut*, was not common in the period of the West Uyghur Kingdom. This is pointed out by several scholars, see e.g. Umemura, "A Qočo Uyghur King," 361–378; Rybatzki, "Titles of Türk and Uigur Rulers," 258, 268–269.

3   Rulers of the West Uyghur Kingdom and Manichaeism

3.1   *Two Uyghur Kingdoms in Central Asia*

In 840, the East Uyghur Kaganate collapsed, and a significant part of the Uyghurs left Mongolia and migrated west. One group settled to the south, around the oasis of Ganzhou (甘州), while another went to the southwest and entered the Eastern Tianshan area. The former group founded the so-called Ganzhou Uyghur Kingdom (middle of the 9th c. to 1028) and the latter the West Uyghur Kingdom. Because of the lack of sources, it is not very clear how and when those two groups formed, or what the nature of their relationship was. This section deals with the West Uyghur Kingdom, although the Ganzhou Uyghur Kingdom, which existed in the same period, cannot be disregarded entirely, even given the lack of sources.[16]

The exact foundation process of the Ganzhou Uyghur Kingdom remains unclear, but it seems to have been established around 890. The rulers of this kingdom claimed descent from the Yaglakar clan, which was famous as the ruling clan of the East Uyghur Kaganate.[17] In 898/899, the Tang Dynasty officially acknowledged this kingdom as the Uyghur state and gave an imperial princess in marriage to the Uyghur ruler.[18] The Ganzhou Uyghur Kingdom appears to have tried to emphasize its position as the successor of the East Uyghur Kaganate. At least for a while, it maintained its nomadic characteristics, even offering the Tang Dynasty its military assistance, as had been the case when the East Uyghur Kaganate provided support for the suppression of An Lushan's Rebellion in the 8th century.[19] In Central Asia, the Ganzhou Uyghur Kingdom main-

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16   Elisabeth Pinks made an important contribution to the research of the Ganzhou Uyghurs with her book. James Russell Hamilton also dealt with this topic in his book. See Elisabeth Pinks, *Die Uiguren von Kan-chou in der frühen Sung-Zeit (960–1028)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1968); James R. Hamilton, *Les ouïghours. À l'époque des cinq dynasties d'après les documents chinois* (Paris: Collège de France, 1955).

17   In fact, with the enthronement of the seventh ruler, the ruling clan of this Kaganate changed from the Yaglakar to the Ädiz clan. Even so, the seventh Kagan was adopted by the Yaglakar clan, so that the continuity of the ruling clan was officially kept.

18   About this topic, see Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫, "Uiguru to Tonkō ウイグルと敦煌 [Uyghurs and Dunhuang]," in *Tōzai Uiguru to Chūō Yūrashia* 東西ウイグルと中央ユーラシア [Eastern and Western Uyghurs and Central Eurasia] (Nagoya: Nagoya University publishers, 2015), 307–311. The article was first published in *Kōza Tonkō 2 Tonkō no rekishi* 講座敦煌 2 敦煌の歴史 [Series Dunhuang 2 History of Dunhuang], ed. Enok Kazuo 榎一雄 (Tokyo: Daitōshuppansha, 1980), 297–338. The author himself has expanded the new version.

19   See Tanaka Mineto 田中峰人, "Kanshū Uiguru seiken no sayūyoku taisei 甘州ウイグル政権の左右翼体制 [Left and Right Wings System of the Ganzhou Uyghurs]," in *Sogudo kara Uiguru he–Sirukurōdo Tōbu no Minzoku to Bunka no Kōryū–* ソグドからウイグル

tained a close connection with the government in Dunhuang through several intermarriages. Although the religious affiliation of the Ganzhou Uyghurs' ruling house itself is unclear, some royal women, who had marital ties with the Dunhuang rulers, and their children are depicted in the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang as members of the members of Dunhuang's ruling.[20] Because of its geographical position, situated on the way from Dunhuang to China's central provinces, the Ganzhou Uyghur Kingdom was one of the West Uyghur Kingdom's most critical neighbours.[21]

The early history of the West Uyghur Kingdom also has many lacunae. Shortly after 840, the leader, Pang (龐) Tegin, entered the Karashar area with his followers.[22] He asked the Tang Dynasty for its formal endorsement of him as the Uyghur ruler. The Chinese emperor intended to award him the title. The Chinese ambassador, however, was attacked when he was halfway to the Uyghur's royal court, so that the official award does not seem to have been carried out.[23] Around 851, a local Uyghur leader moved to Turfan, indicating that this area was already under the Uyghur's control by that date.[24] In 866, the leader of the Uyghurs based in Beš Balık, Pugu Jun (僕固俊), occupied Turfan and the West Uyghur Kingdom. Pugu Jun seems to have subjugated the ruler in Karashar, but it is unclear whether they belonged to the same clan or not.

へ-シルクロード東部の民族と文化の交流- [From Sogdians to Uyghurs–Ethinic and Cultural Exchanges in the Eastern Part of the Silk Road], ed. Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫 (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 2011), 267–299; Moriyasu, "Uyghurs and Dunhuang," 311.

20   About this point, see section 5.1 below.

21   Moriyasu points out that the relationship with the Ganzhou Uyghur Kingdom was more important for the Chinese rulers of Dunhuang than that of the Khotan Kingdom. See Moriyasu, "Uyghur and Dunhuang," 320.

22   In regard to the migration of the Uyghurs and the establishment of the West Uyghur Kingdom, see Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫, "Uiguru no seisen ni tsuite ウイグルの西遷につい て Nouvel examen de la migration des Ouïgours au milieu du IXe siècle," in *Tōzai Uiguru to Chūō Yūrashia* 東西ウイグルと中央ユーラシア [Eastern and Western Uyghurs and Central Eurasia], ed. Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫 (Nagoya: Nagoya University publishers, 2015), 276–298. This article was originally published in the journal *Tōyō gakuhō* 東方学報 [Journal of Oriental Studies] 59.1–2 (1977): 105–130. The new version was subsequently enlarged by the author. About the West Uyghur Kingdom, see also Zieme, "The West Uighur Kingdom," 1–29.

23   See the first title in table 3.2 in section 2.2.2 above.

24   Several scholars suggest different interpretations with regard to the question of who placed the local leader in Turfan. See Moriyasu "Uiguru no seisen ni tsuite," 286–287; Rong Xinjiang 栄新江, *Guiyijunshi yanjiu—Tang Song shidai Dunhuang lishi kaosuo* 歸義軍史研究—唐宋時代敦煌歷史考察 [The History of Guiyijun—Research on Dunhuang's History in the Tang and Song Period] (Shanghai: Shanghai Chinese Classics Publishing Hourse, 1996), 353–354.

However, the former's occupation of Turfan means an inevitable change in the rulers' genealogy.

This summary of the foundation of the West Uyghur Kingdom indicates that there was infighting among its leaders, which lasted until a stable rule was established. Furthermore, it is not likely that Pugu Jun was from the Yaglakar clan, the ruling clan of the East Uyghur Kaganate. Although the rulers of the Ganzhou Uygur Kingdom *did* claim to belong to this clan.[25] In this situation, the Ganzhou Uyghur rulers presented a competing lineage to the rulers of the West Uyghur Kingdom. It was therefore necessary for Pugu Jun and his successors to present their rule as legitimage internally as well as externally. His target was, first and foremost, the Uyghurs, both those who came with him and those who were already in the Tianshan area during the period of the East Uyghur Kaganate. Hence, the primary issue of legitimation for the ruler of the West Uyghur Kingdom was that the newly established kingdom be regarded as the successor state of the original Uyghur Kaganate in Mongolia.

3.2   Manichaeism and the Legitimation of the Uyghur Rulers

Unlike the rulers of the Ganzhou Uyghur Kingdom, the rulers of the West Uyghur Kingdom faced difficulties in claiming genealogical legitimacy, so the significance of other factors that reflected the continuity of rule with the East Uyghur Kaganate grew. One of them was the ruler's role as supporter of Manichaeism, the state religion of the Uyghurs.

It is well known that the Uyghurs kept their Manichaean beliefs for a while after the establishment of the West Uyghur Kingdom and that the rulers demonstrated their role as protectors of the religion as the official creed. According to the Arabic source *Kitāb al-Fihrist* [The Catalog], written by the Shia scholar and bibliographer Ibn an-Nadīm (fl. around the 10th century), a Uyghur king allegedly made a diplomatic protest against the Khurāsān's ruler, who was supposedly suppressing the Manichaeans under his rule, and threatened him by

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25   The Ganzhou Uyghur rulers' claim of descending from the Yaglakar clan also seems to have been acknowledged by the people under the West Uyghur Kingdom's rule. The ambassador who came from that kingdom to Dunhuang wrote the prayer text P. 2988v, in which he refered to the Ganzhou Uyghur Kingdom as "the state of the holy Yaglakar" (OU *täŋi yaglakır eli*). Although this prayer text does not contain the date, the discovery site, the Dunhuang cave, indicates that it does not date later than the 11th century, see Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫, "Uigurugo bunken ウイグル語文献 [Uyghur Literature]," in *Kōza Tonkō 6 Tonkō kogo bunken* 講座敦煌6敦煌胡語文献 [Series Dunhuang 6 Non-Chinese Literature from Dunhuang], ed. Yamaguchi Zuihō 山口瑞鳳 (Tokyo: Daitō shuppansha, 1985), 22; MOTH, No. 15, 83–92, line 27.

claiming that he would similarly suppress the Muslims in his kingdom.[26] In exchange for state support, the Manichaean community seemed to have given its support for the legitimation of the West Uyghur Kingdom. One form this support may have taken is Manichaean hymns used in official ceremonies. In the Berlin Turfan Collection, altogether six hymns and praises in Middle Persian and Old Uyghur have been identified as dedicated to the Uyghur rulers or their kingdom.[27] Among them is also the so-called *Enthronement Hymn* M 919, indicating that some of them were probably produced for use in official ceremonies.

The expansion and completion of the ancestral legend, i.e. the Bokug Khan Legend, is another of the Manichaean contributions towards the legitimation of the rulers of the West Uyghur Kingdom. This legend is mainly documented in later Persian and Chinese sources dating from the Mongolian period (13th–14th c.). In this legend, the Uyghur ancestor, Bokug Khan, is described as a supernatural being. Several Manichaean elements play a significant role, like the tree of life, the light from Heaven, and the white robed person.[28] The introduction of Manichaeism in the East Uyghur Kaganate probably served as the impetus for the creation of this legend.[29] Because the legend mentions the migration of the Uyghurs in the westward direction, the final version was first established in the period of the West Uyghur Kingdom. This legend explains how the earliest Uyghur ancestor was born and how he won his lordship in a

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26 About the English translation of the corresponding sentences, see Bayard Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm: A Tenth-Century Survey of Islamic Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 802–803.

27 See VOHD 13,16, no. 297 (U 31), no. 334 (Ch/U 3917), no. 344 (U 5362), no. *348 (*TM 176), no. 352 (M 919). For the Middle Persian hymn, M 43 see Friedrich W.K. Müller, "Handschriften-Reste in Estangelo-Schrift aus Turfan II," *Abhandlungen der preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Klasse* 2 (1940): 78–79. Two further fragments U 141 and U 184 are maybe also dedicated to the Uyghur king. See VOHD 13,16, no. 298 (U 141) and no. 300 (U 184). In addition, the ruler is the topic of the three fragments. See VOHD 13,16, no. 339 (M 111 II), no. 343 (M 525a,b) and no. 384 (U 251a,b). For an overview on the Old Uyghur Manichaean literature, see Clark, "The Turkic Manichaean Literature," 121–141. There he listed 27 enthronements/installation hymns, benedictions or eulogies, among which 17 settled on the subject matter of rulers or a realm. See Clark, "The Turkic Manichaean Literature," 133–134, no. 119–134. However, Jens Wilkens later suggested different identifications for some of these texts. See VOHD 13,16.

28 Several scholars investigated this legend. For detailed information about sources, the summary, and previous studies, see e.g. Yukiyo Kasai, "Ein Kolophon um die Legende von Bokug Kagan," *Nairiku ajia gengo no kenkyū* 内陸アジア言語の研究 [Studies on the Inner Asian Languages] 19 (2004): 9–14.

29 As mentioned in section 2.1.2. above, there was a change of the ruling clans with the enthronement of the seventh ruler. Thus, it could also be seen as a motivation for producing this legend.

Manichaean context. Thus, the rulers of the West Uyghur Kingdom could claim their connection to those of the East Uyghur Kaganate through representing it as their own ancestral legend.

These factors indicate the strong commitment of the Uyghur rulers to Manichaeism, the state religion of both the East Uyghur Kaganate and the West Uyghur Kingdom, and the latter's official support for the legitimation of the former.

4 Official Treatment of the Religious Communities in the West Uyghur Kingdom

4.1 *Political and Financial Support for the Religious Communities*

Manichaeism kept its status as the state religion of the West Uyghur Kingdom, however the influence of Buddhism gradually became stronger. Eventually, during the second half of the 10th century or at the beginning of the 11th century, Buddhism deposed Manichaeism as the dominant religion of the Uyghurs.[30] Even so, both religions co-existed under Uyghur rule for a certain period thereafter. Before discussing the role of Buddhism in Uyghur legitimation strategies is, I address how the Uyghur rulers dealt with both religions during this period of co-existence in their kingdom.

The so-called "Order Concerning the Economy of Manichaean Monasteries," found in Turfan, attests to the fact that the Uyghur rulers generally involved themselves in the active management of the religious communities in their kingdom.[31] This partially preserved text bears the red-colored Chinese seal of the Uyghur chancellor imprinted eleven times, so we know that it was

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30 See e.g. Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫, "Toruko bukkyō no genryū to ko torukogo butten no shutsugen トルコ仏教の源流と古トルコ語仏典の出現 L'origine du Bouddhisme chez les Turcs et l'apparition des textes bouddhiques en turc ancien," in *Tōzai Uiguru to Chūō Yūrashia* 東西ウイグルと中央ユーラシア [Eastern and Western Uyghurs and Central Eurasia], ed. Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫 (Nagoya: Nagoya University publishers, 2015), 618–644. The article was first published in *Shigaku zasshi* 史学雑誌 [Journal of Historical Studies] 98.4 (1989): 1–35; Moriyasu, "Uiguru = Manikyō shi," 147–174; Moriyasu, *Die Geschichte des uigurischen Manichäismus*, 174–209; Xavier Tremblay, "The Spread of Buddhism in Serindia: Buddhism among Iranians, Tocharians and Turks before the 13th century," in *The Spread of Buddhism*, ed. Ann Heirman and Stephan Peter Bumbacher (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), 108–114.

31 Moriyasu made the edition of this text, with detailed philological and historical investigations, see Moriyasu, "Uiguru = Manikyō shi*,*" 35–126; Moriyasu, *Die Geschichte des uigurischen Manichäismus*, 39–147.

issued by the royal court of the West Uyghur Kingdom.[32] According to the contents of the document, the Uyghur royal court promised official financial support to the Manichaean monasteries in different ways, and the detailed rules for the management of the Manichaean monasteries were set out.[33]

While regulations were also made for the Buddhist community, they were probably less detailed than those for the Manichaeans. A fragment that possibly dates to the pre-Mongolian period promises tax exemption for a certain Buddhist monastery located in Murtuk.[34] This document has a red seal that shows significant similarities to that of the above-mentioned Manichaean document. Thus, it was likely also issued by the court of the West Uyghur Kingdom.

4.2   *Uyghurs' Religious Shifts and Political and Financial Support*

These examples make it clear that the Uyghur rulers involved themselves in the management of the religious communities. Now, it is an essential question: How was the religious shift from Manichaeism to Buddhism reflected in the Uyghur rulers' actions?

The contents of two fragments in particular are worth considering. The first fragment, M 112v, reports the destruction of a Manichaean monastery, which was ordered by the Uyghur king in 983. This order was given so that a new Buddhist monastery could be built, and the Uyghur prince personally carried out the construction.[35] It indicates that—already by the middle of the 10th century—the Uyghur ruler was ready to demonstrate his favour for the Buddhist community in such a radical way.

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32   See Moriyasu, "Uiguru = Manikyō shi," 127–128; Moriyasu, *Die Geschichte des uigurischen Manichäismus*, 149–151.

33   The rules for managing the monasteries were necessary because the Manichaean clergy had to follow a strict regime of rules, something which made the management of the monasteries on their own accord a tricky issue. At least part of those rules seems to have been enacted because reports about them are preserved in several fragments. See Moriyasu, "Uiguru = Manikyō shi," 83–87; Moriyasu, *Die Geschichte des uigurischen Manichäismus*, 103–108.

34   This fragment was dealt with by Zieme as Text B in his article, Peter Zieme, "Uigurische Steuerbefreiungsurkunden für buddhistische Klöster," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 8 (1981): 254–258. About the dating, see also Moriyasu, "Uiguru = Manikyō shi," 134, fn. 17; Moriyasu, *Die Geschichte des uigurischen Manichäismus*, 158, fn. 17.

35   See Moriyasu, "Uiguru = Manikyō shi," 147–150; Moriyasu, *Die Geschichte des uigurischen Manichäismus*, 174–178; Takao Moriyasu, "History of Manichaeism among the Uighurs from the 8th to the 11th Centuries in Central Asia," in *Siruku rōdo to sekaishi* シルクロードと世界史 [World History Reconsidered through the Silk Road], ed. Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫 and Sakajiri Akihiro 坂尻彰宏 (Toyonaka: Osaka University The 21st Century COE Program Interface Humanities Research Activities 2002, 2003), 86–90.

On the other hand, the second fragment, *U 9271, contains a list on the verso of the official income and expenditure for both Buddhist and Manichaean monasteries. This fragment indicates that the Uyghur rulers tried to give support to both religious communities. Dai Matsui assumes that this ledger was made specifically for the temple ruin α in Kočo, which was initially a Manichaean sanctuary. Because this temple was turned into a Buddhist temple in 1008, the account book should be dated to that period as well.[36] If his assumption is correct, the Manichaean monks were still allowed to stay in that temple, or perhaps near it, after it was handed over to the Buddhists. According to the ledger, the number of Manichaean monks was less than that of Buddhist monks, and the different items given to them are described as pure 'charity.' In contrast, items for the Buddhist community are described to as 'king's charity,' and were much greater than those given to the Manichaeans. Thus, it is clear that Buddhism was favoured by the ruler. However, it does not seem that the Uyghur rulers immediately cut off their support to the Manichaean community.[37]

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36   Dai Matsui, "An Old Uigur Account Book for Manichaean and Buddhist Monasteries from Tempel α in Qočo," in *Zur lichten Heimat. Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde in Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, ed. Team "Turfanforschung" (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2017), 409–420; Matsui Dai 松井太, "Koshō kojō jiinato α no manikyōto to bukkyōto 高昌故城寺院址 α のマニ教徒と佛教徒 [Manichaeans and Buddhists in Coexistence at Temple α of Qočo]," in *Ōtani tankentai shūshū saiiki kogo bunken ronsō. Bukkyō, Manikyō, Keikyō* 大谷探檢隊収集西域胡語文獻論叢：佛教・マニ教・景教 [Essays on the Manuscripts Written in Central Asian Languages in the Otani Collection: Buddhism, Manichaeism, and Christianity], ed. Takashi Irisawa 入澤孝 and Kōichi Kitsudō 橘堂晃一 (Kyoto: Research Institute for Buddhist Culture/Research Center for World Buddhist Cultures, Ryukoku University, 2017), 71–86. Regarding the change the temple that is now known as the ruin α, see e.g. Werner Sundermann, "Completion and Correction of Archaeological Work by Philological Means: The Case of the Turfan Texts," in *Histoire et cultes de l'Asie Centrale préislamique. Sources écrites et documents archéologiques*, ed. Paul Bernard and Franz Grenet (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1991), 286–288.

37   In addition, Yoshida supposes that the Manichaeans of the West Uyghur Kingdom shifted their essential Bema festival days because they wanted to have the participation of the members of the Uyghur royal family, who in the 10th century were increasingly attracted to joining the Buddhist festival that took place on the same day. See, Yutaka Yoshida "Buddhist Influence on the Bema Festival," in *Religious Themes and Texts of Pre-Islamic Iran and Central Asia. Studies in Honour of Professor Gherardo Gnoli on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday on 6th December 2002*, ed. Mauro Maggi et al. (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2003), 453–458. If his assumption is correct, the Uyghur royal family sent its members to the important festivals of both the Buddhist and the Manichaean communities. This again shows that the Manichaeans tried to get the Uyghur's royal support, and this effort seems to have been successful to some degree. So the Uyghur royal power supported not only the Buddhists but also the Manichaean communities, at least during a certain period. On

Whether these actions reflect a partial preference for Buddhism over Manichaeism or not, they show that the Uyghur rulers involved themselves deeply in the regulation of both Manichaean and Buddhist communities. As the fragment M 112v shows, some rulers were ready to express their religious preference in a radical manner. However, the last quoted ledger indicates that in some cases and at certain times the Uyghur rulers tried to maintain some equilibrium between the two religious communities. It was not only due to the religious tendency of the rulers *per se*, but was most likely also due to their political judgment.

4.3   *Political Treatments of the Different Buddhist Groups*

Such different treatment was even applied within the Buddhist community in Turfan. In the introduction of Buddhism to the Uyghurs, mainly Tocharians and Chinese Buddhists played important roles, although the latter's influence was increasingly dominant over time.[38] After Buddhism became the dominant religion among the Uyghurs, the rulers appointed Buddhist monks to government positions. The particular circumstances of this are still debated.[39] The Chinese letter P. 3672 bis reports one case of such an appointment. It was sent by a high-ranking Uyghur monk from Turfan to Dunhuang during the second half of the 10th century.[40] It shows the Uyghur monk's specific connection to

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this topic, see also Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫, "Nishi Uiguru ōkoku ni okeru manikyō no suitai to bukkyō no taitō 西ウイグル王国におけるマニ教の衰退と仏教の台頭 [The Declination of Manichaeism and the Rise of Buddhism in the West Uyghur Kingdom]," in *Tōzai Uiguru to Chūō Yūrashia* 東西ウイグルと中央ユーラシア [Eastern and Western Uyghurs and Central Eurasia], ed. Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫 (Nagoya: Nagoya University publishers, 2015), 590–617.

38   Since his first article in 1989, Moriyasu deals with this topic in several articles. For the most recent version, see Moriyasu, "Toruko bukkyō no genryū to ko torukogo butten no shutsugen," 618–644.

39   Concerning these discussions, see e.g. Takao Moriyasu, "Chronology of West Uighur Buddhism—Re-examination of the Dating of the Wall-paintings in Grünwedel's Cave No. 8 (New: No. 18), Bezeklik" in *Aspects of Research into Central Asian Buddhism. In memoriam Kōgi Kudara, Silk Road Studies XVI*, ed. Peter Zieme (Turnhout: Brepols publishers, 2008), 191–227. The Japanese version was published in *Bukkyō gaku kenkyū* 仏教学研究 [Studies in Buddhism] 62–63 (2007): 1–45, and again in Moriyasu's book in 2015. There are few changes in the contents of these versions. See also Jens Wilkens, "Buddhism in the West Uyghur Kingdom and Beyond," in *Transfer of Buddhism Across Central Asian Networks (7th to 13th Centuries)*, ed. Carmen Meinert (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2016), 246–249.

40   The letter was published by Moriyasu with philological and historical commentaries. For the newest version, see Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫, "Tonkō to Nishi Uiguru ōkoku—Torufan kara no shokan to okurimono wo chūshin ni— 敦煌と西ウイグル王国—トゥルファンからの書簡と贈り物を中心に— [Dunhuang and the West Uyghur Kingdom—The Historical Background of the Letter, P 3672 Bis, Sent from Turfan—]," in *Tōzai Uiguru to*

the Chinese Buddhist community in Dunhuang at that time. According to that letter, the Uyghur monk received a golden seal from the ruler of the West Uyghur Kingdom. The monk is known to have been the head of many Chinese and non-Chinese monks. This indicates that in the above period, the monk, who had a close relationship with Chinese Buddhism, was placed in a high-ranking position by the Uyghur ruler.[41]

This document seems to indicate that the Uyghur rulers had an apparent preference for Chinese Buddhism already in the second half of the 10th century, although the Tocharian influence was still present. However, Kōichi Kitsudō recently pointed out that on the wall in Mogao Cave 148 in Dunhuang, as well as in Cave 20 in Bezeklik, several Tocharian monks were painted with accompanying Brāhmī inscriptions, which inform us that these monks held the golden seal, like the monk in the above-mentioned Chinese letter.[42] Bezeklik Cave 20 was probably made during the 12th century. Of course, it is an open question whether this wall painting represents contemporary monks or historically important ones. However, at least in that period, it was still known that there were monks who followed the tradition of Tocharian Buddhism and who were given high-ranking government positions in the West Uyghur Kingdom. Also, in Bezeklik Cave 20, the monks appear dressed in not only Tocharian clothes, but also in Chinese clothes. It seems that those two Buddhist communities were recognised as important ones on the same level, or that at least that was what was intended.

The Uyghur rulers' simultaneous support for both the Manichaean and Buddhist communities (for a while at least) and the recognition of both Tocharian and Chinese Buddhist traditions as on the same level, indicate that the Uyghur rulers intended to maintain a balance between the different religious

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Chūō Yūrashia 東西ウイグルと中央ユーラシア [Eastern and Western Uyghurs and Central Eurasia], ed. Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫 (Nagoya: Nagoya University publishers, 2015), 336–337. The article was first published in *Tōhō gaku* 東方学 [Eastern Studies] 74 (1987): 58–74.

41 Although the monk in question wore an Uyghur title, Moriyasu assumes that he was Chinese, considering his command of Chinese letter writing. Cf. the renewed version, Moriyasu, "Chronology of West Uighur Buddhism," 208.

42 See Kitsudō Kōichi 橘堂晃一, "Bezekuriku sekkutsu kuyō bikuzu saikō—Tonkō bakkōkutsu no meibun wo tegakari to shite— ベゼクリク石窟供養比丘図再考—敦煌莫高窟の銘文を手がかりとして— [Reconsideration of the Monk's Donor Portrait in the Bezeklik Cave—According to the Inscription in the Dunhuang Cave—]," in *Ajia bukkyō bijutsushū. Chūō Ajia I. Gandāra~Tōzai Torukisutan* アジア仏教美術論集中央アジアI ガンダーラ～東西トルキスタン [Essays on the Asian Buddhist Arts. Central Asia I. Gandhara~Eastern and Western Turkestan], ed. Miyaji Akira 宮治昭 (Tokyo: Chūō kōron bijutsu shuppan, 2017), 523–550.

communities within their territory. This leads us to conclude that the government probably carried out specific religious policies, while at the same time tried to control and support those different communities.

5   Rulers of the West Uyghur Kingdom and Buddhism

As described in section 3.2, the rulers of the West Uyghur Kingdom acted as the protectors of Manichaeism, and the religion acknowledged that role of the rulers through hymns, some of which were performed in official ceremonies. Furthermore, section 4 shows that in domestic affairs, the Uyghur rulers gave their support to both Manichaean and Buddhist monasteries, and tried to keep a balance between the different religious communities. From these facts, it is likley that along with the shift in the Uyghur's belief, the role of Manichaeism in the legitimation of the rulers was taken over by Buddhism.

5.1   *Buddhist Legitimation in the Neigbouring Oasis States*
Takatoshi Akagi made a major contribution to the field of Buddhist legitimation in Central Asia, including the West Uyghur Kingdom. Based on the Dunhuang materials, he pointed out that in the 10th century, some of the Guiyijun (851–1036?, 歸義軍, Return-to-Allegiance Army) rulers in Dunhuang positioned themselves as Buddhist kings, by calling themselves '*cakravartin*,' or 'bodhisattva king,' and vigorously supported large-scale Buddhist events and the creation of Buddhist votive-caves. These activities coincided with changes in the political situation in the region. At that time, Dunhuang could no longer rely on the authority of the Chinese emperors, mostly because of Tang Dynasty's fall, and the governors there increasingly became independent. Thus, they had the need to legitimate their rule anew. In Akagi's opinion, the elevation of the rulers to the status of Buddhist or bodhisattva kings can not only be observed within the Guiyijun regime, but also in the Khotanese Kingdom and in the West Uyghur Kingdom during the same period.[43]

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43   See Akagi Takatoshi 赤木崇敏, "Jusseiki Tonkō no ōken to tenrijō'ō kan 十世紀敦煌の
王権と転輪聖王 [Kingship and the Idea of the Cakravartin in 10th Century Dunhuang],"
Tōyōshi kenkyū 東洋史研究 [Oriental Researches] 69.2 (2010): 233–252; "Konrin jō'ō kara
bosatsu no jinō he–Jusseiki Tonkō no ōken to bukkyō– 金輪聖王から菩薩の人王へ-1
0世紀敦煌の王権と仏教- [From Gold Wheel-Turning Kings to Bodhisattva Human
Kings—The Royal Power and Buddhism in Dunhuang in the 10th Century–]," *Rekishi no
riron to kyōiku* 歴史の理論と教育 [Historical Theories and Educations] 139 (2013): 3–17.
The Tangut emperors were also equated with *cakravartin* or *dharmarāja*, see e.g. Ruth W.
Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High. Buddhism and State Formation in Eleventh-
Century Xia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), 36–63.

The governors of the Guiyijun and their family members, including their Khotanese and Ganzhou Uyghur wives, are well represented among the donor figures in both the Mogao and Yulin Caves.[44] Thus, their presence demonstrates their power and diplomatic alliance with Dunhuang. However, whether the Khotanese and Uyghur rulers adopted the equalization of rulers with Buddhist kings is open to question. Unlike in Dunhuang, the political situation for the Khotanese and Uyghur rulers did not undergo any significant changes during the 10th century.[45] Furthermore, the written sources that might prove that the Khotanese and Uyghur rulers also used the same legitimation strategy as the rulers in Dunhuang have all been found in Dunhuang.[46] Thus it is possible that those sources reflect the equalization of the rulers in Dunhuang with Buddhist kings.

5.2   *Uyghur Rulers in Buddhist Paintings and Eulogies*

Some Uyghur donor portraits painted in caves or on banners have been referred to as Uyghur rulers' portraits. However, they mostly seem to be the portraits of royal family members or high-ranking Uyghurs, and only a few of them can be identified as ruler portraits, based on the inscriptions accompanying them.[47] Furthermore, many of those portraits are in the Mogao Caves at Dun-

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44   See e.g. Akagi Takatoshi 赤木崇敏, "Sōshi kigigun setsudoshi jidai no Tonkō sekkutsu to kuyōnin zō 曹氏歸義軍節度使時代の敦煌石窟と供養人像 [Dunhuang Caves and Donor Figures in the Period of Guyijun of the Cao Family]," *Tonkō shahon kenkyū nenpō* 敦煌寫本研究年報 [The Annual Reports on the Research of the Dunhuang Manuscripts] 10 (2016): 285–308; Moriyasu "Uyghur and Dunhuang," 318–322; Lilla Russell-Smith, *Uyghur Patronage in Dunhuang. Regional Art Centres on the Northern Silk Road in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2005), 228–229.

45   About the political change of the West Uyghur Kingdom, see section 3.

46   See, Akagi, "Kingship and the Idea," 250–253; "From Gold Wheel-Turning Kings," 9–11. There, altogether eight texts which mention the Khotanese kings are listed. While the fragment P. T. 1120, IOL Khot S 22 (Ch.xl.002), P. 2739 and P. 2958 mention the Khotanese kings as the addressers, the manuscript P 4099, IOL Khot S 47 (Ch.i.0021 b.a), IOL Khot S 21 (Ch.i.0021 a.a), IOL Khot S 74/3 (Ch.00274) and P 2739 are Buddhist eulogies, colophons, and prayer texts. None of them derive from Khotanese kings or their royal court, and therefore do not prove that the Khotanese kings themselves used the above-mentioned legitimation strategy. In regard to the Uyghur kings, only one Chinese prayer text, S. 6551, mentions an Uyghur king as the incarnation of a bodhisattva.

47   As far as I know, they are in the room S 105 in Beš Balık and the Mogao Cave 409 in Dunhuang. In regard to S 105, see, Umemura, "A Qočo Uyghur King," 364–366. For Cave 409, see e.g. Matsui Dai 松井太, "Tonkō shosekkutsu no uigurugo daiki meibun ni kansuru sakki (2) 敦煌諸石窟のウイグル語題記銘文に關する箚記(二) [Notes on the Uyghur Inscriptions in Dunhuang Caves]," *Jinbun shakai ronsō* (*Jinbun kagaku hen*) 人文社会論叢(人文科学篇) [Studies in the Humanities, Cultural Sciences] 32 (2014): 27–30. Besides, the portrait in the Western Thousand Buddha Cave (Chin. Xi Qianfodong 西千佛

huang. During the 11th century, Dunhuang came under the control of the Uyghurs connected with the West Uyghur Kingdom.[48] Thus, those portraits were possibly produced by these Uyghurs, who simply followed local customs. It is, therefore, likely that the donors' portraits were not so effectively utilised as a means to represent the rulers in Buddhist contexts in Turfan, as was common in Dunhuang.

Among the Buddhist eulogies in Old Uyghur, which are considerably more numerous than Manichaean ones, there are only a few that directly mention Uyghur rulers. In contrast to the Manichaean ones—which were often dedicated to the rulers and their kingdom, and were probably also used in official ceremonies—only a few Buddhist eulogy texts feature the Uyghur rulers and their kingdom as their main topic.[49] Furthermore, they are mostly written in

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洞) 13 (former Cave 16) is often mentioned as an Uyghur king, see Dunhuang yanjiuyuan 敦煌研究院 [Dunhuang Academy], *Zhongguo shiku. Anxi Yulin ku* 中国石窟安西榆林 窟 [Chinese Caves: Anxi Yulin Caves] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1990), 239. Concerning the Manichaean paintings, the same investigation ought to be carried out. However, the number of preserved Manichean paintings is really very small, and some of them were probably covered by newer Buddhist paintings. One example of this can be seen in Cave 38. Cf. Moriyasu "Uiguru = Manikyō shi," 7–27; Moriyasu, *Die Geschichte des uigurischen Manichäismus*, 2–28.

48 See, Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫, "Sashū Uiguru shūdan to Nishi Uiguru ōkoku 沙州ウイ グル集団と西ウイグル王国 [The Shazhou Uyghurs and the West Uyghur Kingdom]," in *Tōzai Uiguru to Chūō Yūrashia* 東西ウイグルと中央ユーラシア [Eastern and Western Uyghurs and Central Eurasia], ed. Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫 (Nagoya: Nagoya University publishers, 2015), 355–374. The article was originally published in *Nairiku ajiashi kenkyū* 内陸アジア史研究 [Inner Asian Studies] 15 (2000): 21–35; Takao Moriyasu, "The Sha-chou Uighurs and the West Uighur Kingdom," *Acta Asiatica* 78 (2000): 28–48. As summarised by Moriyasu, there are still different opinions on how strong the Uyghur's control on Dunhuang was at that time.

49 Zieme has worked intensively on the Buddhist alliteration eulogies in Old Uyghur, see e.g. Peter Zieme, *Die Stabreimtexte der Uiguren von Turfan und Dunhuang: Studien zur alttürkischen Dichtung* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1991); Peter Zieme, "La poésie en turc ancien d'après le témoignage des manuscrits de Turfan et Dunhuang," *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 149.5 (2005): 1145–1168. As far as I know, the following Buddhist eulogies are dedicated to the Uyghur rulers and their kingdom: Ch/U 6691+Ch/U 6687; Ch/U 7542; Ch/U 7750+Ch/U 7540; Ch/U 7547, Ch/U 6849 (T II Y 58$_6$), Ch/U 7154 (T III 1138), SI D/17, U 1864 (T II Y 22). About the first three praises, see BT XXXVIII, 176–181, 174–175, 208–209; Peter Zieme, "Remarks on Old Turkish Topography," in *Languages and Scripts of Central Asia,* ed. Shirin Akiner and Nicholas Sims-Williams (London: Routledge, 1997), 45–51; Peter Zieme, "Some Notes on the Ethnic Name *Taŋut* (*Tangut*) in Turkic Sources," in *Tanguty v Central'noj Azii. Sbornik Statej v Chest" 80-letija Professora E. I. Kychanova*, ed. Irina Fedorovna Popova (Moskva: Bostochnaja Literatura, 2012), 461–468; Peter Zieme, "Eine Eloge auf einen uigurischen Bäg," *Türk Dilleri Araştırmaları* 3 (1993): 271–284. About SI D/17, see Lilia Yusufzhanovna Tuguševa, "Ein Fragment eines frühmittelalterlichen uigurischen Textes," in *Turfan, Khotan und*

the cursive script, which indicates that they were possibly copied during the Mongolian period. Although they could in theory have been produced during the pre-Mongolian period, none of them indicate the possibility that they were used in official functions.

Even so, one eulogy, SI D/17, requires special attention. It is written in semi-block script in the horizontal mode, so its production can be safely dated to the 10th century. The eulogy relates to the above-mentioned ancestral legend of the Uyghurs. As discussed above, this ancestral legend was first completed in the West Uyghur Kingdom under a Manichaean influence. Thus SI D/17 refers to that legend in its early Buddhist adaptation. In the Old Uyghur Annals, written during the Mongolian period in the cursive script, the name of the ancestor, Bokug Khan, is also mentioned. Hence, we know that this Buddhist version predates the Old Uyghur Annals version, and was in vogue until the Mongolian period.[50] However, the other sources from the Mongolian period that preserve this legend do not mention the Buddhist version of the Bokug Khan legend. Especially the Persian *Tārīḫ-i Ǧahāngušāy* [The History of the World Conqueror (i.e. Činggiz Khan)] written by ʿAlā ad-Dīn ʿAṭa-Malik Ǧuwaynī (ca. 1226–1283) is important for thinking about the circumstances in which the Buddhist version of the legend was known. The author of that Persian book acted as an important political figure in Khurāsān under Mongolian rule. He also visited the Mongolian Great Khan's court in Karakorum on several occasions.[51] Thus he probably had a good chance to collect information on different ethnic

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Dunhuang: Vorträge der Tagung "Annemarie von Gabain und die Turfanfroschung", veranstaltet von der Berlin-Brandenburgischen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin (9.–12.12.1994), ed. Ronald E. Emmerick et al. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1996), 353–359; Oda Juten 小田壽典, "Buku han densetsu no uigurugo bukkyō shahon ichi danpen– Tugusheva happyō ni yosete ブク・ハン伝説のウイグル仏教写本一断片-トゥグーシェヴァ発表によせて [An Uyghur Buddhist Fragment of Bokug Han Legend—To L. Ju. Tuguševa's Lecture]," *Aidai Shigaku–Nihonshi, Ajiashi, Chirigaku* 愛大史学-日本史・アジア史・地理学 [Aichi University Historical Journal: Janapese History, Asian History, Geography] 7 (1998): 57–67. In addition, one praise Ch/U 7613+Mainz 713(T II Y 58) is dedicated to the Bäg of Kočo and his wife, see e.g. Jens P. Laut and Peter Zieme, "Ein zweisprachiger Lobpreis auf den Bäg von Kočo und seine Gemahlin," in *Buddhistische Erzählliteratur und Hagiographie in türkischer Überlieferung*, ed. Jens P. Laut and Klaus Röhrborn (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1990), 15–36, see BT XXXVIII, 182–191. See also Wilkens, "Buddhism in the West Uyghur Kingdom," 244–245.

50   See Tieshan Zhang and Peter Zieme, "A Memorandum about the King of the *On Uygur* and His Realm," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 64.2 (2011): 135–145; Zieme, "The West Uyghur Kingdom," 14–15.

51   John Andrew Boyle briefly summarised his life, see John A. Boyle, trans., *Genghis Khan. The History of the World Conqueror* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958), xxvii–xxxvii.

groups, including the Uyghurs, who were already Mongolian subjects at that time. Therefore, the Uyghur's ancestral Bokug Khan legend —which he documented in his book—can be seen as the standard version known at the Mongolian court.[52] It indicates that in that period, the original version of the legend which contains many Manichaean elements, still seems to have been known as the Uyghurs' ancestral legend, even among the Mongols, who were the suzerain of the Uyghurs, although the Buddhists already adopted it in the pre-Mongolian period.

5.3   *Uyghur Rulers and Their Activities in Other Buddhist Texts*

The eulogies are not the only place where the rulers demonstrated their power in Buddhist contexts. The Guiyijun governors appear in various prayer texts (Chin. *yuanwen* 願文) that often report the Buddhist activities carried out by the governors as official ceremonies.[53] Furthermore, the Tibetan manuscripts from Dunhuang inform us that certain Buddhist texts were systematically copied in Tibetan for the Tibetan emperors who ruled Dunhuang.[54] In the Tangut Empire, the translation project of Buddhist texts was carried out by order of the emperors.[55]

Up to now, however, no clear-cut traces of such activities have been found in any Buddhist texts from the West Uyghur Kingdom.[56] As several fragments and inscriptions show, Uyghur laymen and laywomen of the nobility, including

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52   The possibility that this part was re-edited after the introduction of Buddhism into the Mongolian court under Khubilai's rule (r. 1260–1294) cannot be completely denied. Because of the geographical and political distance, it is, however, not very likely that such a measure was seriously carried out.

53   About those texts, see Akagi, "Kingship and the Idea of the Cakravartin," 243; Akagi, "From Gold Wheel-Turning Kings to Bodhisattva Human Kings," 7.

54   See e.g. Kazushi Iwao, "The Purpose of Sūtra Copying in Dunhuang under the Tibetan Rule," in *Dunhuang Studies: Prospects and Problems for the Coming Second Century of Research*, ed. Irina Popova and Liu Yi (St. Petersburg: Slavia, 2012), 102–105.

55   See e.g. Nishida Tatsuo 西田龍雄, "Seika no bukkyō ni tsuite 西夏の仏教について [On Tangut Buddhism]," in *Seika ōkoku no gengo to bunka* 西夏王国の言語と文化 [Language and Culture of Tangut Kingdom], ed. Nishida Tatsuo 西田龍雄 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1997), 403–437. The article was first published in *Nanto bukkyō* 南都仏教 [Journal of the Nanto Society for Buddhist Studies] 22 (1969): 1–19; Shi Jinpo 史金波, *Xixia fojiao shilüe* 西夏仏教史略 [A Brief History of Tangut Buddhism] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 1988), 58–72.

56   The question of whether the Uyghurs created a Buddhist canon is also an important topic that has been discussed many times. Neither its production nor its existence can be documented in any surviving texts. For the details on this issue, see e.g. Jens Wilkens, "Hatten die alten Uiguren einen buddhistischen Kanon?" in *Kanonisierung und Kanonbildung in der asiatischen Religionsgeschichte,* ed. Max Deeg et al. (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 2011), 345–378.

members of the royal family, acted as donors. However, in these sources, the Uyghur rulers themselves do not appear as donors.[57] Most notable is the absence of Uyghur rulers in donor colophons. These colophons were commonly written after the same template, and were partly developed on the basis of Chinese prayer texts, the majority of which have been found in Dunhuang.[58] Both Chinese prayer texts and Old Uyghur colophons express the dedications of religious merit by the donors. Moreover, the people to whom the merit is dedicated are mentioned according to their social rank.[59] In many Chinese prayer texts, the Guiyijun rulers are usually mentioned at the top of this list.[60] This indicates that the legitimation strategy of those rulers functioned successfully in Buddhist contexts, and was also acknowledged by the inhabitants in Dunhuang. However, the Old Uyghur colophons dating from the period of the West Uyghur Kingdom do not mention those rulers at all, with a single exception, namely the preface of the Hami version of *Maitrisimit* [Meeting with the Maitreya], which was written in 1067.[61] Thus, the dedication of religious merit to the rulers does not seem to have become a fixture in Old Uyghur colophons

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57　Moriyasu, who investigated the inscriptions and wall paintings in Cave 8 in Bezeklik, assumes that this cave-temple was bestowed by the Uyghur king. See Moriyasu, "Chronology of West Uighur Buddhism," 199–200. However, the inscription he uses for his argument does not mention who presented the temple. As the so-called Stake Inscriptions show, several temples were donated by members of the royal family, see e.g. Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫, "Nishi Uiguru ōkokushi no konpon shiryō toshiteno bōkui monjo 西ウイグル王国史の根本史料としての棒杭文書 [Stake Inscriptions as the Fundamental Sources of the History of the West Uyghur Kingdom]," in *Tōzai Uiguru to Chūō Yūrashia* 東西ウイグルと中央ユーラシア [Eastern and Western Uyghurs and Central Eurasia], ed. Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫 (Nagoya: Nagoya University publishers, 2015), 678–730. The official financial support for the Buddhist temple discussed in section 4.2. above, is the only one which we know was given by an Uyghur ruler.

58　See BT XXVI, 37–44.

59　For the correct entries, which appear in this part, cf. BT XXVI, 43, table I.

60　See *Dunhuang yuanwenji* 敦煌願文集 [Collection of Prayer Texts from Dunhuang], comp. Huang Zheng 黃徵 and Wu Wei 吳偉 (Changsha: Yuelu shubanshe, 1995), e.g. 31, 319, 334, 338, 445, 459, 483, 487–488, 492, 521, 524, 587, 598, 605, and so on. Because several prayer texts mention the Tibetan king, the mention of the rulers seems to have become the concrete entry in the template of the prayer text already in the period of the Tibetan rule, see e.g. *Dunhuang yuanwenji*, 452, 555, 560.

61　See BT XXVI, 195–199, no. 100, lines 20–23. Also, Akagi points out that one Chinese text mentions the Uyghur ruler, together with his wife and other subjects, and that he is there compared to a bodhisattva incarnate. Because of this text, Akagi assumes that the Uyghur rulers also used Buddhism to legitimate their rule, similar to those in Dunhuang and Khotan. See Akagi, "Kingship and the Idea of the Cakravartin," 253–254. In this case, however, it has to be understood on the basis of the Chinese tradition, and does not necessarily reflect the actual strategy of legitimation by the Uyghur rulers.

during that period, although the structure of the dedication itself was certainly adopted in those colophons.

5.4   *Buddhism and Legitimation in the West Uyghur Kingdom*

As described above, the Uyghur rulers tried to keep a balance between the different religious communities, as well as controlling and supporting them at the same time. However, neither in the surviving visual materials nor in the written sources do we find any traces to demonstrate how ruling power played out in Buddhist contexts.

The Uyghur rulers' neighbours, the governors of Guiyijun, developed a new legitimation strategy in the 10th century. It was probably partly caused by the demise of the Tang Dynasty, which was an important souce of legitimation for the Dunhuang rulers. In Dunhuang, where the Buddhists were the absolute majority and were diplomatically connected with their Buddhist neighbourhoods, Buddhist legitimation was a strategy that worked well. Compared with Dunhuang, the West Uyghur Kingdom had a strong need for legitimation of its foundation. At that time, it was not Buddhism, but Manichaeism and the kingdom's identity as the successor of the East Uyghur Kaganate that played crucial roles in formulating its legitimation.[62] When Buddhism took over the role of state religion, the rule of the kingdom was stabilised, and the need for its legitimation was not as strong as in the former period. As the Buddhist adaptation of the ancestor legend shows, the Buddhists were eager to get the Uyghur rulers' favour. However, even during the period when Manichaeism kept its position as state religion, the local Buddhists seem to have enjoyed religious freedom without any constraints.[63] In addition, as discussed in section 4.2 and 4.3, they successfully got royal finantial support and acknowledgement through the appointment to various monks' positions by Uyghur rulers. Thus, it was not a life-or-death matter for the Buddhist community whether the Uyghur rulers officially demonstrate their power in Buddhist contexts or not, although it

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62   As Wilkens points out in Chapter 7 of this volume, the Uyghurs kept using their self-designation 'Ten Uyghurs' (OU *on uygur*), something which originated in the period of the East Uyghur Kaganate. This designation appears not only in Manichaean but also in Buddhist texts. Therefore, it probably indicates that the Uyghurs continued to identify themselves as the successor of the East Uyghur Kaganate.

63   The Chinese ambassador Wang Yande (939–1006, 王延徳) for example, reports that in the West Uyghur Kingdom, he saw Buddhist temples with the name plaque bestowed by the Tang court over the gate. He visited the kingdom around 980, hence at that time the temples were still keeping their identification from the Tang period. Thus, they do not seem to have experienced serious destructions under the Uyghur Manichean rule. About the German translation of Wang Yande's report, see Moriyasu, *Die Geschichte des uigurischen Manichäismus*, 167–168.

seems to have been considered desirable. Besides, the Buddhist community successfully received support from high-ranking Uyghurs, including members of the royal family, which would have been enough for the religion to enjoy its dominant position in the kingdom.

Moreover, the West Uyghur Kingdom seems to have established a cordial relationship with the Khitan Empire (907–1125, in Chinese sources known as Liao 遼), which ruled Manchuria, Mongolia, and northern parts of China, as well as its successor-state, the Kara Khitai (ca. 1124–1216, in Chinese sources known as Xiliao 西遼) in Central Asia. Thus, the connection with those protectorate powers could perhaps be seen as representing an alternative for the legitimation for the Uyghur rulers, such that Buddhism did not have to be the only medium available for the rulers. Furthermore, unlike in Dunhuang, in the West Uyghur Kingdom there were several religious groups, and even among the Buddhist communities, at least two different traditions were active. Also, to the west, the kingdom faced the Karakhanid Kaganate (999–1211), whose state religion was not Buddhism but Islam. Under these circumstances, it was probably not advisable to bring Buddhist legitimation of the rulers to the fore, to avoid a possible religious conflict between 'Buddhist' and 'Islamic' states. Maḥmūd al-Kāšġarī (ca. 1020–ca. 1070) recorded in his book *Dīwān Luġāt at-Turk* [Compendium of the Turkic Dialects] (composed in Baghdad in 1077) at least four poems of the Karahanid soldiers, who went to fight against the West Uyghur Kingdom.[64] Among them, only one mentions the Buddhist worship of the Uyghurs, while none of the others describe those battles as something like a religious war (Arab. *ǧihād*, lit. striving or struggling) against the Buddhist Uyghurs—whom they considered to be idol worshippers (Arab. *al-mušrikūn*). This is striking compared to the description of the Uyghur ruler as a protector of Manichaeanism in the Islamic sources from the former period.

The same impassive attitude of the Islamic states in regard to their non-Islamic neighbours, or rather their protectrate rulers, can be observed in what they report about the Kara Khitai Empire.[65] This empire had its origin in the Khitan Empire, which was famous for its rulers' adherence to Buddhism. After the establishment of the Kara Khitai Empire, traces of Buddhist worship are no longer found. This empire conquered several Islamic states and would appear to have changed their religious adherence. At the same time, the Kara Khitai

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64   See Robert Dankoff and James Kelly, trans., *Maḥmūd al-Kāšγarī. Compendium of the Turkic Dialects* (*Dīwān Luγāt at-Turk*), 3 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Print. Office, 1982–1985), vol. 1, 270, 327, 359; and vol. 2, 272. There are two additional poems, which probably deal with the battle against the Uyghurs. See vol. 1, 353 and vol. 2, 245.

65   About this empire, see e.g. Michal Biran, *The Empire of the Qara Khitai in Eurasian History. Between China and the Islamic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

showed religious tolerance, because religion took a secondary position compared to the importance of trade in Central Asia. Its politics seem to have gained acceptance among its Islamic subject states, which submitted to its rule without any uprisings for most of the period in question.[66]

Probably the West Uyghur Kingdom also took the similar religious and political position politics as the state in Central Asia, where trade with neighbouring states in all directions was the most crucial issue and religion was a secondary issue. In that respect, the West Uyghur Kingdom was the forerunner of the Kara Khitai and belongs to those Central Asian states which were formerly nomadic and ruled mainly settled people after their migration.

6　　　Legitimation in the Mongolian Period

6.1　　*Buddhist Legitimation of the Mongolian Emperors*

With the establishment of the Mongol Empire, the circumstances surrounding the Uyghurs and their kingdom changed dramatically. The Uyghur king voluntarily submitted to Činggiz Khan, because of which his kingdom enjoyed certain independence under Mongolian rule. Even so, the Mongolian emperors reigned supreme over the Uyghur kings, who came under their strategy of legitimation.

In the beginning, the Mongols probably had an idea of the power of their rulers, which was traditionally shared by nomadic tribes in Mongolia, including the Uyghurs, in the period of the East Uyghur Kaganate. From the moment that Khubilai Khan (r. 1260–1294) appointed Phakpa (1235–1280, Tib. 'Gro mgon chos rgyal 'Phags pa) as the Imperial Preceptor (Chin. *dishi* 帝師) in 1270, the Buddhist concept was established in which the Mongolian Great Khan was identified with a *cakravartin*.[67]

66　　See Biran, *The Empire of the Qara Khitai*, 172–201.

67　　See e.g. Ishihama Yumiko 石濱裕美子, "Pakupa no bukkyō shisō ni motoduku hubirai no ōkenzō ni tsuite パクパの仏教思想に基づくフビライの王権像について [Khubilai's King's Picture Based on Phakpa's Buddhist Concept]," *Nihon seizō gakkai kaihō* 日本西蔵学会会報 [Report of the Japanese Association of Tibetan Studies] 40 (1994): 35–44; Nakamura Jun 中村淳, "Chibetto to mongoru no kaikō—Harukanaru kōsei heno mebae— チベットとモンゴルの邂逅―遥かなる後世へのめばえ— [Encounter between Tibet and Mongol—The Beginning of the Long History—]," in *Chūō Yūrashia no tōgō 9–16 seiki. Iwanami kōza sekai rekishi 11* 中央ユーラシアの統合　9–16世紀　岩波講座世界歴史11 [Fusion of Central Eurasia from the 9th to the 16th Centuries. Series Iwanami World History 11], ed. Sugiyama Masa'aki 杉山正明 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1997): 135–137.

This legitimation strategy was also demonstrated by cultural events that were carried out by orders from the Mongolian court in regard to important state celebrations. At these cultural events, the publication of various texts in different languages were organised. Buddhist texts in Old Uyghur were also chosen for such purposes.[68] The use of the Old Uyghur texts in those events indicates that the Uyghur Buddhists and their texts played an essential role in the Mongolian court.

The Mongolian emperors' use of Buddhism as an element in their legitimation is also reflected in the Old Uyghur texts themselves. As mentioned above, in the donor colophons from the pre-Mongolian period, there are no specific entries by the rulers in the lists of dedication. However, in those from the Mongolian period, religious merit is often dedicated to the Mongolian emperor and his family members first, and one often finds the attribution that they 'belong to the bodhisattva clan' (OU *bodis(a)t(a)v ugušlug*).[69] Their presence in the donor colophons indicates that the central position of the Mongolian emperors in Buddhist contexts was also employed by the Uyghur Buddhists.

6.2 *Uyghur Rulers in the Mongol Empire*

Under those circumstances, the Uyghur rulers themselves openly began to demonstrate their association with Buddhism. Although the Mongolian emperors and not the Uyghur rulers appear as entries in the dedication list of the colophons, the Uyghur rulers themselves acted as donors involved in the production of the Buddhist texts.[70] Indeed, these activities seem to have been carried out because of the Uyghur rulers' private requests. Furthermore, as mentioned above, several Buddhist eulogies were written during the Mongolian period. The annals in Old Uyghur, which explains the history of the West Uyghur Kingdom with a Buddhist formulation, was also copied in that

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68 See e.g. Nakamura Kentarō 中村健太郎, "Uigurubun 'Seisō Temuru sokui kinen butten' shuppan no rekishiteki haikei–U 4688 [T II S 63]・*U 9192 [T III M 182] no bunseki wo tsūjite– ウイグル文「成宗テムル即位記念仏典」出版の歴史的背景–U 4688 [T II S 63]・*U 9192 [T III M 182]の分析を通じて– [Historical Backgrounds of the Publication of Uyghur Buddhist Colophons Found in U 4688 [T II S 63] and *U 9192 [T III M 182]]," *Nairiku ajia gengo no kenkyū* 内陸アジア言語の研究 [Studies on the Inner Asian Languages] 21 (2006): 66–82.

69 See e.g. BT XXVI, 60–61, no. 8a, lines 7–9, 112–115; no. 40, lines 31–32, 115–117; no. 41, lines 31–33, 122–123; no. 43, line 12, 132–134; no. 50, lines 6–9, 207; no. 109, lines 5, 249–251; no. 133, line 13, 261–262; no. 144, lines 1–3, 262–263; no. 145, lines 6–17, 265–266; no. 149, lines 10–12, 266–267; and no. 150, lines 1–2, 8–13.

70 The Uyghur ruler, Idok kut, is mentioned as a donor in several colophons. See BT XXVI, 112–115, no. 40, 261–262; no. 144, 265–266; and no. 149.

period.[71] Because of the cursive writing of those eulogies and the Old Uyghur annals, they can be recognised as local or private productions. This indicates that the publication of Buddhist texts on the occasion of official celebrations was reserved for the priviledge of the Mongolian emperors, while the Uyghur rulers refrained from officially demonstrating their Buddhist position to avoid infringing on the majesty of the Mongolian emperors.

At least, however, one text indicates the official acknowledgment of the Uyghur rulers' position within a Buddhist context. The bilingual Old Uyghur–Chinese inscription *Yidouhu gaochangwang shixunbei* 亦都護高昌王世勳碑 [The Genealogical Memorial Inscription of the Idok kuts, Kings of Kočo], written in 1334, sets forth the Uyghur rulers' genealogy. There, the rulers appear several times with such different Buddhist attributes as bodhisattva (OU *bodisatav*), having come down from Tuṣita (Heaven) (OU *tušittin inmiš*) *cintāmaṇi*-like (OU *čintamani täg*), and so on.[72] Because of the official characteristic of that inscription, such descriptions indicate that the Uyghur rulers also sought to place their genealogy within a Buddhist context.

When the inscription was established, the Mongol Empire faced political instability. The ruling house of the Uyghur rulers themselves was divided into at least two factions. The ruling family shifted their residence from Turfan to Yongchang (永昌), due to the fight between the Great Khan and Khaidu (+1301), the grandson of Ögödei (r. 1229–1241), in the second half of the 13th century.[73] While the rulers in Yongchang continuously served as subjects of the Mongol Empire, the new ruler was appointed in Kočo by the Čagatay rulers, who controlled the Turfan area.[74] The fragmentation of the Uyghur ruling house and the loss of a direct connection to its original homeland caused the rulers' authority to degrade. Also, at this time, the authority of the Mongolian emperors

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71   See section 5.2, fn. 55. Wilkens discusses the Uyghur rulers in Buddhist eulogies in Chapter 7 in this volume.

72   See e.g. Geng Shimin 耿世民, "Huihuwen 'yidouhu gaochangwang shixunbei' yanjiu 回鶻文《亦都护高昌王世勋碑》研究 [A Study of the Stone Tablet in Uyghur Script About the Meritorious Deeds of Princes of Kočo]," in *Xinjiang wenshi lunji* 新疆文史论集 [Collection of the Papers on Language, Literature and History of Xinjiang], ed. Geng Shimin 耿世民 (Beijing: Zhongyang minzu daxue chubanshe, 2001), 400–434, esp. 404, line 22; 406, line 8 and 13. The article was first published in *Kaogu xuebao* 考古学報 [The Archaeological Journal] 4 (1980): 515–529; Shimin Geng and James Hamilton, "L'inscription ouïgoure de la stele commemorative des Idoq Qut de Qočo," *Turcica* 13 (1981): 18, line 22; 22, line 8 and 13.

73   See e.g. Thomas T. Allsen, "The Yüan Dynasty and the Uyghurs," in *China among Equals. The Middle Kingdom and its Neighbors, 10th–14th Centuries*, ed. Morris Rossabi (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1983), 252–255.

74   See e.g. Allsen, "The Yüan Dynasty and the Uyghurs," 258–260; Rybatzki, "Titles of Türk and Uigur Rulers," 253–255.

no longer served as a reliable source for the legitimation of the Uyghur rulers. Hence, the Uyghur rulers sought to establish their legitimacy by positioning themselves within a Buddhist context.

7   Closing Remarks

The change in the rulers' titles in the East Uyghur Kaganate shows us that the beliefs chosen by the Uyghur rulers played an important role in legitimating their rule. The decision for the continuous royal support for Manichaean community and the change of the ruling clan of the East Uyghur Kaganate were probably important reasons for the introduction of the new Manichaean legitimation. When they migrated to the Eastern Tianshan area and founded the West Uyghur Kingdom, the first rulers who probably did not stem from the Yaglakar clan, the ruling clan of the East Uyghur Kaganate, had a strong need to legitimate their rule in order to stabilise their newly founded kingdom. Moreover, the Ganzhou Uyghur Kingdom, the rulers of which claimed they belonged to the Yaglakar clan, were the competing neighbouring state of the West Uyghur Kingdom. Because of that, the Uyghur ancestral legend was expanded so as to make it clear that the rulers of the new kingdom were the rightful successors to the East Uyghur Kaganate, both internally and externally. As a way of underscoring this, the rulers depicted themselves as protectors of Manichaeaism, and in return, the Manichaen community supported them with the production of a lot of hymns and eulogies dedicated to the rulers and their realm.

In the second half of the 10th century, or at the beginning of the 11th century, Buddhism achieved the position of state religion in the West Uyghur Kingdom. Even so, the Uyghur rulers seem to have tried to deal with the different religious communities equally and refrained from engaging in any form of persecution. The fact that the Uyghur rulers appointed Buddhist monks to government positions and decided the size of the financial support of Buddhist monasteries indicates that the rulers were actively involved in the management and control of the religious communities under their rule, regardless of the shift of their religious favor.

During the 10th century, in Dunhuang, Buddhist forms of legitimation in which the rulers positioned themselves as Buddhist kings, by calling themselves '*cakravartin*,' or 'bodhisattva king,' were demonstrated both in the visual and written materials. At that time, Dunhuang became more independent from the Chinese dynasties, and its rulers probably found it necessary to underline their Buddhist legitimation. On the other hand, the remaining

materials do not show that the Uyghur rulers actively represented their power in a Buddhist context. The West Uyghur Kingdom already successfully stabilised its rule when Buddhism became the dominant religion of the Uyghurs, so that the rulers did not have a strong need to make their power visible with the support of Buddhist teachings.

Also, in the circumstances of the West Uyghur Kingdom, which had various religious groups under its rule, and the neighbouring Islamic states in the west, it was unadvisable to underline the Buddhist characteristics of their rule, both in domestic and diplomatic politics, to avoid provoking outspoken conflicts between different religious communities like other Central Asian states, since trade with neighbouring states was the most important issue to creating a stable financial base and religious differences were dealt with only secondarily. The close relationship of the West Uyghur Kingdom with the Khitan Empire, the other possible source of legitimation for the Uyghur rulers, could also be a reason why the Uyghurs did not necessarily depend on Buddhist legitimation alone.

During the Mongolian period, the Mongolian emperors systematically introduced Buddhist legitimation for their rule, and the Buddhist texts in Old Uyghur were used as part of this demonstration of allegiance. In this context, the Uyghur rulers also began to show their personal favor to Buddhism. Formal Buddhist legitimation was, however, preserved for the Mongolian emperors only. It only came to be used for the Uyghur rulers when both the Mongol Empire and the Uyghur ruling house experienced political instability, and the latter needed to legitimatise their power again.

Donors and Esoteric Buddhism in Dunhuang during the Reign of the Guiyijun

Henrik H. Sørensen

1 Introduction

Our current understanding of Buddhism at Dunhuang (敦煌) is especially well-informed for the period when Dunhuang was under the control of the Guiyijun (851–1036?, 歸義軍, Return-to-Allegiance Army) regime, which ruled over Shazhou (沙州) and neighbouring Guazhou (瓜州) for a period covering nearly two centuries.[1] The primary sources, most of which were recovered from the celebrated Mogao Cave (Chin. Mogao ku 莫高窟) 17, contain a plethora of information on virtually all aspects of religious and secular life at Dunhuang, and on Buddhism in particular, during the period in question. However, even though we have been graced with numerous studies on so many aspects of Buddhism in the oasis town and at the Mogao Caves, there are still many questions and issues that wait to be answered. Among these is a more detailed and precise understanding of the relationship between the local population and Buddhist beliefs, especially what kind(s) of Buddhism were practiced in Shazhou during the Guiyijun period, and how this played out on the ground. Many scholars have discussed the extent to which lay Buddhist patrons supported Buddhism. In recent years, issues relating to the economy and material production in connection with Buddhist institutions have been popular themes, especially in studies by Chinese Mainland scholars, some even going so far as to refer to Buddhism during the Guiyijun period as 'secular Buddhism.'[2] Even so, we still need to better understand which forms of Buddhism were

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1 For a survey of the relationship between Buddhism and the local government at Dunhuang during this period based on primary sources, see Henrik H. Sørensen, "Guiyijun and Buddhism at Dunhuang: A Year by Year Chronicle," *BuddhistRoad Paper* 4.2 (2019). See also Rong Xinjiang 榮新江, *Guiyijun shi yanjiu* 歸義軍史研究 [A Study of the History of the Guiyijun], Zhongguo chuantong wenhua yanjiu congshu (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1995).

2 See for instance, Hao Chunwen 郝春文, *Tang houqi Wudai Song chu Dunhuang seng ni de shehui shenghuo* 唐后期五代宋初敦煌僧尼的社会生活 [The Social Life of Buddhist Monks and Nuns in Dunhuang during the Late Tang, Five Dynasties period and the Early Song] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1998). It goes without saying that it is the author's Socialist approach to Buddhism, and religion as a whole, which leads to his ideas of

prevalent in Dunhuang and why they were found particularly attractive by pa-trons. Surely there were many reasons why Buddhism had such an allure for people from all walks of life in the oasis—more than can be covered in a single paper such as this. Nevertheless, we may assume that the manner in which Buddhist beliefs and practices were formulated at Dunhuang during the Gui-yijun reign was hardly coincidental, nor a result of randomness. Clearly it hap-pened for certain reasons, which are necessary to understand if we want to go beneath the colourful surface of Buddhist life at Dunhuang during the 9th to 10th centuries.

In this essay, I account for the relationship between donor portraits—or rather, self-presentations by Buddhist donors, as represented in Buddhist vo-tive paintings from Dunhuang during the Guiyijun reign period—and those Buddhist cults depicted in said paintings. A closer look at these paintings and their donors indicates that an analysis of this relationship may provide us with more clear ideas of exactly what kinds of Buddhism were practised by the local clans in Shazhou (and by extension, Guazhou) during the period in question, and what this reveals about Buddhism in the western-most part of the Hexi Corridor (Chin. Hexi zoulang 河西走廊) and further west. Given that most of the donors portrayed in the paintings belong to the important, major clans in Shazhou, it goes without saying that the material under discussion here to a large extent reflects Buddhism and elite culture. In order to achieve the objec-tive outlined above, I selected a number of paintings that feature such donor portraits, which may inform us of the Buddhist practices that lay behind their imagery and production.

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a 'secular Buddhism.' From such a perspective all religion appears secular—to a greater or lesser degree—since virtually all of them participated in and were infused with so-called secular life. The gist of this book can be found in Hao Chunwen, "The Social Life of Buddhist Monks and Nuns in Dunhuang during the late Tang, Five Dynasties, and Early Song," *Asia Major Third Series* 23.2 (2010): 77–95; Chen Ming and Zhao Zhiling, "Fojiao renjian jingshen de huigui yu fo ku gongneng de zhuanbian—Guiyijun shiqi Dunhuang fojiao de jiben tezheng 佛教人間精神的回歸與佛窟功能的轉變—歸義軍時期敦煌佛教的基本特徵 [The Return of the World Spirit of Buddhism and the Transformation of the Functions of Buddha Caves: Basic Features of Buddhism in Dunhuang During the Guiyijun Period]," *Cross-cultural Communication* 4.2 (2008): 41–47. Although not ideologically handicapped like Hao, the Chinese scholar Ning Qiang (寧強) operates consistently with a dual model in which a distinc-tion is made between 'religious practitioners' on the one hand and 'secular donors' on the other, indicating that there were major differences between the ways the two groups under-stood and practiced Buddhism. Even though such distinctions may be meaningful as a man-ner of dealing with different categories of Buddhist practitioners, it is not overly useful as a way of understanding differences or degrees in relation to religious practice. Cf. Ning Qiang, *Art, Religion and Politics in Medieval China: The Dunhuang Cave of the Zhai Family* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004), 5, 121, 133.

Before proceeding, it is important to note that the Esoteric Buddhist beliefs and practices behind much of the icon production encountered in Dunhuang during the 9th–10th centuries, were overwhelmingly concerned with the cults surrounding the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara in his various forms. This observation—trivial as it may seem—is actually important, as we shall presently see, especially since it contributes to an understanding of the relationship between Buddhist donors and Esoteric Buddhism. It is also clear, at least for the surviving material from Cave 17, that there are no surviving icons which unmistakably reflect the presence of Tibetan Buddhism and its Tantric dispensation during the 10th century, neither directly nor indirectly.[3] I would also like to stress that the present study is not conducted from the perspective of Chinese Buddhist art history *per se*, but rather from the interface between religion, material culture, and history.

2   Buddhist Donors and Paintings at Dunhuang

Before embarking on a discussion of the primary issue defined above, there are a few points which need to be made regarding the production of religious artefacts and their sponsors, i.e. the Buddhist patrons and donors who commissioned them.[4] Buddhist patrons in Dunhuang during the 10th century come in a variety of types and hail from virtually all walks of life. As such they account for the members of the highest echelons of Dunhuang's society—including rulers and the important local clans—as well as merchants, farmers, artisans, etc., and foreigners, whether settled locally or travellers more generally defined. Moreover, Buddhist donors include Buddhist monastics as well as ordinary citizens. Since the Buddhist icons discussed here reflect the existence of thriving local cults in nearly all instances, we are justified in reading them as material expressions of their popularity during the time in question.

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3   There are only a handful of banner paintings and line drawings among the entire hoard, which reflect the presence of early Tibetan Buddhist art, i.e. MG 1148, MG 1131, MG 26466, OA 1919,0101,0.160, 1919,0101,0.50, OA 1919,0101,0.137, OA 1919,0101,0.101, OA 1919,0101,0.102, OA 1919,0101,0.103, etc. Possibly even OA 1919,0101,0.57R should be seen as an early example of a Tibetan Buddhist painting done under strong Chinese influence. Surely all of these date from the period when Dunhuang was under Tibetan rule, i.e. from between 780s to the mid-9th century. The same can be said about the wall paintings in the caves. Very few have been identified as from the period of Tibetan rule, and in any case all of these are in Chinese style, indicating that there were none or very few Tibetan artisans skilled in the production of Buddhist art working in Dunhuang during the 8th–9th centuries.

4   See Henrik H. Sørensen, "The Practice of Giving: Buddhist Donors and Donor Dedications from 10th Century Dunhuang," *BuddhistRoad Paper* 4.3 (2019).

The votive paintings (also referred to as banner paintings) that form the basis of this study come in a great variety of qualities and themes. Some were clearly produced for members of the local elite, whereas others reflect less affluent donors. All of them have in common the presence inside the picture frame of portraits of the donors who had them made as offerings to be dedicated to the local Buddhist establishments. This penchant for inserting representations of one's self into a holy icon reflects a new trend in Chinese Buddhist art, in which both a visual and textual record of the act of giving becomes almost as important as the deity depicted in the icon itself. One concrete way we see this change in relation to icon production is in the growing sizes of the donor portraits vis-à-vis the deity depicted, which in some cases take up nearly as much space within the painting as that allotted to the given Buddha or bodhisattva.[5] In this regard, it should also be noted that the votive paintings found in Dunhuang are in many ways typologically unique from the perspective of Chinese Buddhist iconography. While this material is often taken as representative of Later Tang Dynasty (923–935, 後唐) and Five Dynasties (906–978, 五代) Buddhist art in China *per se*, few seem to realise that these paintings represent a specialised form of Buddhist art that is very much localised. In fact, this form is not documented anywhere else, with the possible exception of stylistic remnants reflected in pictorial material found at the Uyghur Buddhist sites in and around Turfan. And of course, there is virtually nothing comparable to the votive or banner paintings that survives from anywhere else in China. This makes the Dunhuang paintings a unique cache of religious art, even if we sometimes encounter similar, individual forms and typologies in the art of East Asian more broadly defined.[6]

While we find a considerable number of different icons represented in the Buddhist paintings from Dunhuang, one type of motif overshadows them all, and that is depictions of the various forms of Avalokiteśvara. The votive paintings alone feature as many as twenty different forms, excluding the numerous variants, with the most significant representatives of the Esoteric Buddhist pantheon being the Thousand-armed, Thousand-eyed Avalokiteśvara

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5   For a discussion of this, see Henrik H. Sørensen, "Donors and Image at Dunhuang: A Case Study of OA 1919,0101,0.54," *BuddhistRoad Paper Series* 4.1 (2019). See also the recent discussion in Niel Schmid, "The Material Culture of Exegesis and Liturgy and a Change in the Artistic Representations in Dunhuang Caves, ca. 700–1000," *Asia major* 19.1–2 (2017): 171–210.

6   For instance, certain forms of deities and protectors, such as Mahākāla, Śiva, *vajrapāla*s, *lokapāla*s, etc., that are evident in the Dunhuang paintings, can be found in surviving examples from the Japanese Heian period (794–1185, 平安時代). See Henrik H. Sørensen, "Typology and Iconography in the Esoteric Buddhist Art of Dunhuang," *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 2 (1991–1992): 285–349. Although this survey is now slightly outdated, many of the observations presented there are still relevant.

(standing and sitting), Ekādaśamukhāvalokiteśvara (standing and sitting), Amoghapāśa (standing and sitting), Cintāmaṇicakrāvalokiteśvara, Mahāpratisāra, and to a lesser extent, Padmapāṇi. Moreover, there are many examples of all of these forms, underlying the importance of not only the general cult of Avalokiteśvara as pre-eminent among the Buddhist saviour deities, but also the proliferation of the cults of his different aspects. What follows is in large measure a reflection of this popularity, one which Buddhism in Dunhuang shared with the rest of medieval China.

3   Thousand-Armed Avalokiteśvara (MG 17659)

The cults associated with the various forms of Avalokiteśvara are central to the discussion of donors and Esoteric Buddhism in Dunhuang during the period of Guiyijun rule. But none of them are quite as important as *Sahasrabhuja-sahasranetra*, i.e. the Thousand-eyed and Thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara. There are a plethora of paintings on this theme, in the form of scrolls and wall paintings, as well as smaller images painted on paper, probably for commercial distribution. To some extent, this popularity is also reflected in surviving manuscripts of the *Nīlakaṇṭhakasūtra* (T. 1060.20, T. 1056.20, T. 1061.20, etc.) and its related liturgical texts.[7] Interestingly, the Tibetan manuscripts from Dunhuang also reflect the importance of this cult.[8]

    As it is impossible within the scope of a single presentation to account for all the various examples of paintings of the Thousand-eyed Avalokiteśvara, I selected one of the most representative paintings, namely MG 17659. It is a tripartite painting with Avalokiteśvara as the main icon and a much smaller depiction of Kṣitigarbha in the bottom right corner, facing the portrait of the donor on the left, who is shown standing with his entourage behind him (fig. 4.1).

    The male donor of this painting is identified as Fan Jishou (fl. 10th century, 樊繼壽), the second part of which means something like 'Succession of Longevity,' and is in all likelihood a styled name. We do not know who this person is, but surely he was a prominent gentleman belonging to the highest echelon of Dunhuang society, possibly directly related to the Cao (曹) rulers, since he is

7   Cf. e.g. OA 1919,0101,0.35, OA 1919,0101,0.159, MG 17775, etc.

8   See Sam van Schaik, "The Tibetan Avalokitesvara Cult in the Tenth Century: Evidence from the Dunhuang Manuscripts," in *Tibetan Buddhist Literature and Praxis*, ed. Ronald M. Davidson and Christian Wedemeyer (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 55–72.

FIGURE 4.1   The Thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara. Dunhuang, 10th c.
             MG 17659.

referred to in the inscription as District Governor (Chin. *du jiedu* 都節度).[9] In

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9   In addition, one may add in support of the view that Fan Jishou belonged to the nobility,
     that the quality of the painting indicates that it was obviously commissioned by a wealthy
     person. If we look at the context in which the painting in question was produced, we are
     looking for someone belonging to the highest levels of society, a government official and
     military man, and one who lived in or around 980. As it is, there is only one other refer-
     ence to a Fan Jishou in the Dunhuang material, in which the last part of the name is writ-
     ten with a different character, namely a private letter (P. 4518V° (11)). If indeed this is the

this case, the text of the donor dedication is lengthy and detailed, and although it is couched in the usual hyperbolic phraseology common to official and formal documents, it does feature a number of concrete facts regarding how the donor (or the composer of the dedication) envisaged the cult of the Thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara. Therefore, let us take a closer look at how the donor dedication written by a Fan Yanxing, (fl. Second half of 10th century, 氾彦興) expresses Fan Jishou's devotion:

[…] Subaltern of the Military Government (Chin. *jidu yaya* 節度押衙), Overseer and Secretary, Great Person of Silver-Green Bright Prosperity, Examining Officer [i.e. censor], Son of the Nation, Sacrificer of Alcohol, Fan Yanxing, (fl. Second half of 10th century, 氾彦興) reports that he has heard of the vow of the Great Compassion (大悲)[10] [that he alleviates] severe transgressions of innumerable *kalpa*s, as well as his rejection [to enter] *nirvāṇa* [for himself, signs that] the bodhisattva's virtue is deep. He manifests in corporal form in the world, opening *upāya*s (Chin. *kai fangbian* 開方便) according to [peoples'] roots and discourses on the sudden and gradual *dharma* methods (Chin. *dunjian famen* 頓漸法門), giving rise to a mind of compassion, case by case, and through big and small transformations, [such as] being born and dying, entering death, [in order to] uproot suffering and eliminate the Three Poisonous Roots (Chin. *sandu gen* 三毒根) [of hate, desire and ignorance]. He guides with wisdom the ignorant to bliss by [making them] revert to the Eight Victorious Levels (Chin. *bashengchu* 八勝處)[11] [where they will] obtain the ten thousand practices, and satisfy all [sentient beings] in the Six Paths [of rebirth]. Accordingly, in all the destinies, the merit will then eliminate the calamities, and his thousand eyes will illumine all of the ten directions, each of which will then have their darkness illumined […].[12]

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actual name of the donor in the painting, it is somewhat peculiar that we do not have more information on this person, as he was obviously a man of considerable importance, not only because of his titles, but also because of the way he appears in the painting. As is discussed elsewhere in this study, such a manner of portraying high ranking donors was reserved for the Cao kings and members of their immediate family.

10   A common epithet for Avalokiteśvara.

11   These refers to the levels of mastery of desire as undertaken by Buddhist adepts.

12   MG. 17659: [...] 節度押衙知上司書手銀青光祿大夫檢校國子祭酒氾彦興上竊, 聞大悲願重過無量劫, 而厭涅菩薩功深現有相身, 而世界進方便口隨根說於頓漸法門, 發慈悲心逐物興於大小變出生入死拔苦, 而除三毒根引智牽愚興樂, 而歸八勝處得萬行. 充於六道道道, 則福消災, 千眼照於十方, 方方則明暗 [...].

We see here the typical adoration and devotion to Avalokiteśvara as the pre-eminent bodhisattva of Chinese Buddhism, rather than an indication of the donor's formal affiliation with Esoteric Buddhism *per se*. There is of course, a reason why this particular iconographical motif was chosen, and one may speculate that the gentleman portrayed was indeed sufficiently appraised of the instructions found in the *Nīlakaṇṭhaka-sūtra*, the primary source on the Esoteric Buddhist cult of the Thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara.[13]

A characteristics of the Buddhist banner paintings from Dunhuang is a composition with different pictorial divisions within the same painting, a feature which became especially noteworthy—perhaps even popular—during the 10th century. In connection with these paintings that combine discrete iconographical themes, it is noteworthy that a few of them include renderings of both Avalokiteśvara and Kṣitigarbha.[14] This is what we see here, where Kṣitigarbha appears as a secondary icon in the painting. Exactly what connection there was between what were ostensibly two distinct cults, not to mention the relationship between the Thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara, a major Esoteric Buddhist divinity, and Kṣitigarbha, who is primarily associated with the tribunals of the Netherworld, is unclear. However, given that they represent the two primary saviour bodhisattvas in Chinese Buddhism par excellence, it is perhaps a logical artistic and conceptual step to include both in the same painting.

Although the royal-looking donor figure in this painting remains unidentified, I venture the opinion that the image actually portrays one of the Cao princes. Although the cartouche with his name and the dedication of the painting as an offering has not been rendered in the shape of a pillar, as is otherwise common for portraits of royalty in Dunhuang under the Guiyijun, there can be little doubt that this is a portrait of someone from the ruling elite. Note the attendants standing behind the donor, who carry the formal insignia of a high government official. Therefore our Fan Jishou may be identical with one of the Cao rulers, or even more likely, a Cao prince. Hence, I am inclined to read the name as a styled name, indicating that Fan Jishou may have been a son of Cao Yanlu 曹延祿 (r. 976–1002), but in any case was someone closely related to the royal family.

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13   Another copy of the *Nīlakaṇṭhaka-sūtra* is found in S. 3793, translated by Bhagavaddharma in Khotan in the 7th century. This is the same version found in T. 1060.20.

14   For an example of this, see MG 3644.

4 Painting of Ekādaśamukhāvalokiteśvara, Dated 985

Ekādaśamukha is another popular Esoteric Buddhist form of Avalokiteśvara, depictions of which occur with a relatively high frequency among the Buddhist paintings at Dunhuang. As with the Thousand-armed form, which in historical perspective actually derived iconographically as well as textually from Ekādaśamukha, there are several surviving examples of this image among the banner paintings, most of which include donor portraits and dedications. One such painting is preserved in the Harvard Art Museum (1943.57.14). Although representations of Ekādaśamukha tend to be depicted in slightly different ways, it is clear that the *Ekādaśamukhadhāraṇīsūtra* (T. 1070.20) served as the basic iconographical model.

The painting depicts Ekādaśamukhāvalokiteśvara in standing form with six arms (fig. 4.2). Surrounding him are scenes illustrating his role as saviour from perils, each identified by a corresponding text set in a red cartouche, a convention of the so-called scriptural tableaux (Chin. *jingxiang* 經相), and a feature that also applies to many of the wall paintings in the Mogao Caves. The pictorial renderings of the various perils from which Avalokiteśvara saves the faithful can be traced back to the *Pumen pin* 普門品 [Pumen Chapter] of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* (T. 262.9, 56c–58c), and as such are well-documented in paintings from the Tang period (618–907, 唐). Since that period, it became a sort of iconographical template for depictions of several Avalokiteśvara types in China.[15] Certainly this is borne out in the Buddhist art of Dunhuang.

In the lower right side of the painting, within the frame of the primary icon, is an image of a kneeling youthful monk. He faces the deity and holds an incense burner in his hand. The cartouche next to the monk reads: "Wholeheartedly offered by the Great Master Yuanman of the Zhang clan [(張氏)]" (fig. 4.3).[16]

This is not only a donor portrait of a Buddhist cleric Yuanman (fl. second half of 10th c., 圓滿); the portrait has been fully inserted into the painting of Ekādaśamukha, such as is common for donor portraits during the Tang. However in this case, the portrait of Yuanman is a relatively large size, which indicates a conceptual and artistic usurpation, almost akin to religious hubris. Perhaps Yuanman had already passed away when the painting was commissioned,

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15 In Dunhuang this iconographic template occurs in various contexts, many of which are somewhat divorced from its origin in the *Pumen Chapter*. It is common to have these scenes of salvation together with Esoteric Buddhist images of Avalokiteśvara. Cf. e.g. OA 1919,0101,0.2, MG 17665, OA 1919,0101,0.36, etc.

16 Harvard Art Museum, 1943.57.14: 故圓滿大師姓張氏一心供養.

which may have justified his portrait being painted within the primary com-
position itself.[17]

At the bottom of the painting is the usual separate section reserved for do-
nor portraits and dedications. There is a portrait of a person dressed in the
robes of an official, also a common feature of paintings from Dunhuang. He is
furnished with an identifying inscription in a cartouche, which reads: "Whole-
heartedly offered by the principal donor, the pure-hearted disciple, official of
the local government, the young gentleman and grandee, Zongshou."[18]

17   A similar case, namely the Tangut Emperor Renzong probably being depicted in the
      Uṣṇīṣavijayā depiction in Yulin Cave 3, is discussed in in this volume, "Creation of Tantric
      Sacred Spaces in Eastern Central Asia" by Carmen Meinert.
18   Harvard Art Museum, 1943.57.14: 施主清心弟子衛內張郎君宗壽一心供養.

故聞闍梨大師世姓張氏一心供養

FIGURE 4.3
Detail of Ekādaśamukhāvalo-
kiteśvara (figure 4.2)

The identity of the principal donor Zongshou (宗壽), is not entirely clear from the inscriptions of the painting. However, Cao Yijin (r. 914–935, 曹議金) had a great-grandson by this name.[19] It is therefore logical that this important member of the Cao clan (曹氏) is identical with the donor in the painting. The temporal frame also fits, which means that in all likelihood Cao Zongshou (fl. late 10th to early 11th c., 曹宗壽) is portrayed as the donor in this painting. His title shows that he was a lower-ranking official in the local government at the time of the donation.

On the opposite side of Cao Zongshou's portrait is the icon of the Thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara in seated form. It is also identified by a cartouche, the text of which is in the form of an invocation to the deity. The image represents

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19   Cf. Ji Xianlin 季羨林 et al., eds., *Dunhuang xue da cidian* 敦煌學大辭典 [Dictionary of Dunhuang Studies] (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 1998), 358–359.

an iconographically standard rendering of this form of Avalokiteśvara, and as such is found in numerous examples of portable paintings and murals.

Further elucidation of the donation of the Ekādaśamukha painting is found in the lengthy record of the dedication of merit next to the portrait of Cao Zongshou. It reads:

> Record of Merit [in connection with] a Silk Painting of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara.
>
> I have heard about his salvation of those in the Six Destinies, who are being pulled out of suffering the thousand extremities, and saved from drowning in the Eight Hardships, and those who repeatedly sink into the Three Mires. When there is someone who seeks help, there surely will be a response, but without prayers, there will be no compliance [unless] one corrects oneself. When in situations of danger, one will be granted peace and serenity; revolving in misfortune caused by evil influences may then be turned into blessings. [Indeed], the power of compassion cannot be spoken by words. The ways of the compassionate deliverance through compassion, how can it be estimated? It so happens that there is the Buddhist disciple, pure in faith, an official of the local government, the young gentleman and grandee [named] Zongshou. The true breath of heaven has divinely bestowed upon him unusual numinousity, an immense and extraordinary countenance and dignity. He is honest and astute, and gifted with [both] fervour and assurance. [...] He is able to speak about the *Liji* 禮記 [Book of Rites], the *Lunyü* 論語 [Confucius' Discourses], the *Shujing* 書經 [Book of History], the Five [Confucian] Virtues (Chin. *wude* 五德), and the Three Upright Things (Chin. *sanduan* 三端), and is moreover able to clarify them. He may [truly] be called a tiger or leopard cub; his cultured character reverts to spontaneity [endowed with] the appearance of a male phoenix, extraordinarily lucky and auspicious. Hence, he is able to show affection and esteem blessings of goodness, the essence of which is to respect the Buddha and the monks, so that the sprouts of the Way will manifest lushly in his mind's source. Watered by faith, it overflows the ground of thought.
>
> Suddenly he remembered that there was the Great Master Yuanman, whose worldly family name was Zhang, a person he greatly admired, and [consequently] ordered brushes colours, and gauze [silk] on which to have this image painted and be presented as an offering. Its true appearance combined with variegated colours, the merit of which will benefit all. First, he prays that the gods of the land (Chin. *sheji* 社稷) will be at peace, that Buddhism [(lit. Buddha)] on a daily basis will flourish and

become manifest, that all sentient beings may be apart from sufferings, and that the Eight Hardships will quickly be done away with. He whole-heartedly intones the name of Avalokiteśvara, so that he, for more than one hundred *kalpa*s of rebirths, will be set on the road to awakening.

Recorded on the 19th *gengshen* day in the 10th *renyin* lunar month in the 2nd *yiyou* year of the Yongxi [reign period] of the Great Song [i.e. 985].[20]

Although most of the text of this inscription is couched in formal and hyper-bolic language of the same kind as in the preceding example, it is nevertheless possible to distill a bit of useful data from it. First of all, it is immediately evi-dent that there is no trace of filial piety here, no prayers for the well-being of parents and ancestors, and incidentally also no mention of rebirth in Amitābha's paradise. Therefore this dedication is, in its entirety, an expression of Buddhist piety and devotion to Avalokiteśvara in particular. Although it is not entirely clear, It is possible that Yuanman was a co-donor of the painting, although it is not entirely clear, while it is certain that Zongshou was the one who financed it.

The text of the dedication does not yield much to inform us of Zongshou's practice of Buddhism, except that he was a devotee of Avalokiteśvara. Howev-er, the manner in which it stresses his learning of the various Confucian clas-sics is noteworthy. It not only casts him as a paragon of Buddhist virtue and piety, but also as a bearer of traditional Chinese culture, a true gentleman.

As a way of rounding off our discussion of this painting from the Harvard Museum Collection, the icon may document a *de facto* double cultic practice for worshipping two of the primary forms of Avalokiteśvara in accordance with the Esoteric Buddhist tradition. While such double or even triple formats can be found among the paintings from Dunhuang, they normally display devotion to different and often conceptually unrelated deities. However, in this case we see two major and important Esoteric Buddhist forms of Avalokiteśvara within the same icon. As such it underscores the considerable popularity and

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20   Harvard Art Museum, 1943.57.14: 繪觀音菩薩功德紀 竊聞化形六道, 拔苦千端, 拔八難之沉淪, 回三途之沒溺, 有求必應, 無願不從, 改危厄而與安寧, 轉禍崇而爲福佑. 慈悲之力, 莫可言焉. 愍濟之方, 豈可測矣. 粤有清信佛弟子, 衙內長, 郎君宗壽, 天中正氣, 神假奇靈, 恢偉之貌堂堂, 樸略之才侃侃. 莫不拾弓取滿, 六鈞七札而不虧. 說禮論書, 五德三端而具曉. 可謂虎豹之子, 文采迴然, 鸞鳳之姿, 禎祥自異. 故能情崇福善, 精敬佛僧, 道芽秀茂於心源, 信水溢流於意地. 忽想有故圓滿大師, 世姓張氏, 合世彌仰, 命筆丹青, 幖繪斯像, 發敬供養. 真容合彩, 福利周圓. 先願社稷安寧, 佛日興顯, 眾生離苦, 八難速除. 一心念號於觀音, 百劫超生於覺路. 紀矣. 於大宋雍熙二年乙酉歲十月壬寅朔十九日庚申題紀.

importance which Esoteric Buddhist cults enjoyed among the common Buddhists in Shazhou towards the end of the reign of the Guiyijun.

5   Amoghapāśa Maṇḍala (MG 3579)

The most common form of Amoghapāśāvalokiteśvara found at Dunhuang—in both banner and wall paintings—is the seated, six-armed form. Incidentally, this form is also common among Amoghapāśa representations found elsewhere in China and East Asia from the 9th–10th centuries.[21]

There are relatively few paintings in Dunhuang where this form of Avalokiteśvara is depicted alone, i.e. as a single icon. Usually he appears in the center of a *maṇḍala*, in accordance with the ritual cycle of the primary *sūtra*(s) dedicated to his cult, i.e. the various recensions of the *Amoghapāśakalparāja* (T. 1093.20, T. 1094.20, T. 1095.20, T. 1096.20, T. 1092.20, etc.),[22] most of which were translated between the late 6th century and the very beginning of the 8th century.[23]

From the perspective of Esoteric Buddhism, one of the finest and most impressive of the Dunhuang paintings depicts the *maṇḍala* of Amoghapāśa as the main icon with a secondary *maṇḍala* representing the Vajradhātu (MG 3579, fig. 4.4).[24] As a painting featuring two *maṇḍala*s, it is both a unique and intriguing icon, and although this specific painting has been discussed many times, none of these efforts have been particularly helpful in unraveling a number of central questions relating to it.[25] I try to amend this situation by placing it under new scrutiny, with special attention placed on the donor figures.

One of the problems regarding this painting, in particular its pair of high-class donors, is the fact that neither were their names nor the central text of

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21   For these developments, see Dorothy Wong, "The Case of Amoghapāśa," *Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology* 2 (2007): 151–158.

22   The last of these represents the impossibly voluminous thirty fascicle version attributed to Bodhiruchi (fl. late 7th to early 8th century).

23   For scholarly work on the *Amoghapāśakalparāja*, see the classical study by Meisezahl, R[ichard] O[tto], "Amoghapāśahṛdaya-dhāraṇī: The Early Sanskrit Manuscript in the Reiunji. Critically Edited and Translated," *Monumenta Nipponica* 17–18 (1962–1963): 265–328; Maria Reis-Habito, "Amoghapaśa Sūtra: A Historical and Analytical Study," *Studies in Central and East Asian Religions* 11 (1999): 39–67.

24   It is briefly discussed in Sørensen, "Typology and Iconography," 206–308.

25   Cf. e.g. Robert Jera-Bezard and Monique Maillard, "Le rôle des bannières et des peintures mobiles dans les rituels du bouddhisme d'Asie centrale," *Arts asiatiques* 44 (1989): 57–67 (esp. 64–66). Many years ago, I did an initial survey of the painting. Cf. Sørensen, "Typology and Iconography," 306–308.

dedication was added to the painting, which has made it difficult to identify them. Unfortunately, I cannot claim to solve this issue here, given the same limitations imposed on me as on those who previously worked with the painting. However, we will at least get a bit closer to such an understanding. Before attempting this, let us briefly review the format and lay-out of the painting first.

The top section of the painting features a basic *maṇḍala* depicting the Five Dhyani Buddhas flanked on either side by two Esoteric Buddhist forms of Avalokiteśvara, namely Cintāmaṇicakra (on the left) and the Thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara (on the right). As such the composition is not iconographically orthodox, at least not compared to formal Esoteric Buddhist iconography and its textual backdrop. Rather it reflects the creative interpretation of local artists. However, the basic iconic template of the Five Dhyani Buddhas depicted here is found in wall paintings elsewhere in both the Mogao Caves and at Yulin (榆林).[26] The Five Dhyani Buddhas all wear Five Buddha Crowns, and each of them holds the respective symbol of their family, i.e. vajra, lotus, jewel, etc. These iconographical features indicate that the group represents the central assembly of the Vajradhātu according to the *Sarvatathāgata-tattvasaṃgrahatantra/Vajraśekharasūtra* (T. 866.18, T. 865.18) and its several derivatives.[27]

The central *maṇḍala* in the composition is devoted to the cult of Amoghapāśa. As in the examples discussed above, it shows the bodhisattva with the same attributes in his hands, but he wears, in addition to these, a Five Buddha Crown on his head, a feature which underscores the deity's relationship with mainstream Esoteric Buddhism. Its manner of iconographical composition rather closely follows standard examples of Amoghapāśa *maṇḍala*s from

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26 Cf. Dunhuang wenwu yanjiu 敦煌文物研究, ed., *Dunhuang Mogao ku* 敦煌莫高窟 [Mogao Caves in Dunhuang], vol. 4 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1987), pl. 169; and *Yulin ku* 榆林窟 [The Yulin Grottoes], ed., Dunhuang yanjiuyuan 敦煌研究院, (Nanjing: Jiangsu meishu chubanshe, 2014), 47–48, pls. 10–11. Here the painting is wrongly dated to the mid-Tang. It is of course from the Later Tang.

27 This is represented by an entire cycle of texts belonging to what may originally have been a more coherent inter-connected set of scriptures, which still exist in the Chinese canonical (and extra-canonical) material as we have it today. In Dunhuang much of this material can be found in the form of textual digests or re-compilations, such as the celebrated *Tanfa yize* 壇法儀則 [Altar Methods for Ritual Proceedings (abbreviated title)] (P. 3913, Beijing 1388V°, S. 2316V°, etc.). For a recently edited version of this comprehensive ritual compendium, see Fang Guangchang 方廣錩, ed., *Zangwai fojiao wenxian* 藏外佛教文獻 [Buddhist Texts Outside the Canon], vol. 11 (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 2008), 17–231. It is very briefly discussed in Henrik H. Sørensen, "Esoteric Buddhism at the Crossroads: Religious Dynamics at Dunhuang, 9th–10th Centuries," in *Transfer of Buddhism Across Central Asian Networks (7th to 13th Centuries)*, ed. Carmen Meinert (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2016), 250–284.

FIGURE 4.4   Amoghapāśa *maṇḍala*. Dunhuang, second half of the 10th c.
            MG 3579

Dunhuang and elsewhere in East Asia, especially from the Japanese Heian period (794–1185, 平安時代). The present example is not exactly identical, but is comparable over-all and in general terms. The other deities surrounding the central image of Amoghapāśa are all emanations of Avalokiteśvara and include Hayagrīva, Tārā, Bhṛūkuṭī, etc. (T. 1096.20, 410c). The outer frame of the *maṇḍala* features half-*vajra*s resting on crescent shapes with lotus bases. The Four Offering Bodhisattvas representing the senses of vision, smell, taste, and hearing are in the four corners outside of the central part. In front of each of them are offerings on a small raised tray, and larger symbols below and above them indicate to which Buddha Family (Skt. *kula*) each belongs. Interspersed between the *vajra*s are the Eight Auspicious Symbols (Skt. *aṣṭamangala*) of Buddhism. Four wrathful guardian spirits block each of the gates in the four cardinal directions.

The third and bottom section of the painting consists of a pair of donor portraits, and is divided in the fashion typical of the Dunhuang paintings, with males and females on either side of a central frame meant to hold the text of the dedication. It is unusual that these were painted in gold, a feature usually only reserved for paintings of the highest artistic level.

Beginning with the left-hand side, we find the male donor dressed in a long official robe of dark color, wearing the corresponding hat with long wings. His face has a youthful expression, and in his right hand he holds an incense brasier with a long handle. Four attendants in military garb crowd behind, representing the carriers of the official insignia of the primary donor. They variously hold the regalia of a ruler, such as a staff of authority, an ewer, a pole fan, and weaponry.[28]

On right-hand side of the composition are two figures rendered in equal size. The one closest to the central frame is a Buddhist cleric, most likely a nun in full robes. She holds an incense burner in the left hand and what appears to be a flower in the right hand. She wears a Buddhist rosary (Skt. *mālā*) around her neck. Next to the nun is a portrait of what is likely the male donor's spouse. She is dressed in a robe indicating superior quality, but otherwise wears the same type of dress common to most female donors in paintings from the 10th century. She wears an elaborate hairdo, essentially an over-decorated crown complete with heavy, radiating hairpins, jewel tassels, and most importantly a phoenix in the crest. Slightly behind her stands a young female attendant, depicted as if to peep out from behind a division.

28　For similar renderings of military attendants, see the portrait of Cao Yijin in Mogao Cave 16 at Yulin. Cf. *Yulin ku*, 78, pl. 45.

On stylistic grounds, there are several indications that MG 3579 and the Harvard Ekādaśamukha painting discussed above were painted by the same painter during roughly the same period. This view is supported by the manner in which the donor monks in both paintings are rendered and various other stylistic features. Since the text of the dedication and two donor colophons was not written, the identity of all three donors remains unknown. However, given the manner in which the attendants of the main male-donor are rendered, it appears we are dealing with a portrait of one of the Cao rulers and his wife, assisted by what is probably a nun.

One important iconographical feature evident in connection with these donors is the particular cartouches in green that emulate *dhāraṇī*-pillars. This manner of rendering cartouches for names in donor portraits from Dunhuang is normally reserved for images of the Guiyijun rulers. In any case, it is not found with the usual donor portraits of lower-ranking people. While these pillar-like cartouches are fairly rare in votive paintings, they are seen with some regularity in donor portraits in wall paintings. This feature is found in connection with portraiture from the early Cao reign onwards, in particular in paintings representing Cao Yijin, such as those in Mogao Cave 100 (fig. 4.5).

The same feature may be observed in Cave 16 at Yulin, where a similar group of attendants carry the ruler's official insignia in the adjacent portrait of Cao Yuande (r. 935–939, 曹元德) (fig. 4.6). Clearly this group of figures represents a formal iconographical norm for rendering attendants of royalty.[29]

Despite the perfunctory nature of the above observations, we are well on our way to solving the possible identity of at least the identities of two of the three donor figures portrayed in MG 3579. Given that the pillar-like cartouches are only found in connection with portraits of Cao rulers, i.e. from the period between 914 to around 1037/1038, and that our painting falls well within the first half of this time frame, we are now in the position to narrow down the possible candidates to four: namely Cao Yijin himself, Cao Yuande, Cao Yuanshen (r. 939–944, 曹元深), and Cao Yuanzhong (r. 944–974, 曹元忠). It is of course, not certain that the portrayed male is one of these four. He could also be one of their sons or a close relative of royal descent.[30] However, I favour either

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29   Slightly later examples from the Dali Kingdom in Yunnan reveal the same overall manner of rendering such attendants. Cf. Helmut Brinker, ed., *Der Goldschatz der Drei Pagoden: Buddhistische Kunst des Nanzhao- und Dali-Königreichs in Yunnan, China* (Zürich: Museum Rietberg, 1991), 42–43, pls. 16–17. In this connection it is also useful to compare traditional images of the Four Heavenly Kings, each of whom in some cases are provided with similar groups of attendants holding their insignias, banners, and other regalia.

30   See the Water–Moon Avalokiteśvara in the Freer Gallery (F1930.36) dated 968. In the catalogue text of the museum, the donor is referred to as Cao Yanqing (fl. second half of 10th c., 曹延清), supposedly a son of Cao Yuanzhong. However, I am reluctant to accept such a view at face value. Mainly because it is not based on documented evidence

FIGURE 4.5
Donor portrait of Cao Yijin. Mogao Cave
100, 10th c.
© MOGAO GROTTOES, DUNHUANG,
GANSU, CHINA

FIGURE 4.6
Donor portrait of Cao Yuande. Mogao
Cave 100, 10th c.
© MOGAO GROTTOES, DUNHUANG,
GANSU, CHINA

Cao Yijin or Cao Yuanzhong as the most likely candidate for our portrait, with the woman as the principal wife. Cao Yuanzhong was an extremely devout Buddhist, and his activities as a fervent patron are well-documented. Therefore it may be him represented here, as the physical likeness between our donor and that of Cao Yuanzhong found on the southern wall of the corridor of Cave 19 at Yulin is striking. However, given the fact that these donor images are in many cases idealised or stereotypical in nature, we can not place too much trust in such similarities.[31]

6   The Amoghapāśa Painting of MG 23079

Among the scores of banner paintings from Mogao Cave 17, are some which represent alternative iconographical conceptions than the range of images that are based on more formal scriptures sources. Among these are MG 23079,[32] which depicts a standing, six-armed Amoghapāśa with the usual donor panel at the bottom (fig. 4.7). The painting itself is fairly large and is painted in ink and colours on a type of fine hemp cloth. According to Lilla Russel-Smith, the painting reflects Uyghur stylistic influence, which may or may not be correct. But it is abundantly clear that the donors depicted are all local Chinese, since they are clearly referred to as belonging to local clans. Moreover the males are evidently lower-ranking military officers in the Guiyijun army.[33]

    The example of Amoghapāśa in MG 23079 is iconographically unusual in that it is depicted in standing mode. Moreover, it is divorced entirely from its scriptural context, since all secondary images belonging to its ritual cycle are absent. Compared with other examples of Amoghapāśa from Dunhuang, e.g. MG 26466, MG 1131, and MG 23076, it is evident that MG 23079 represents an

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deriving from primary sources, but from a copy of the name that was once visible on the painting, i.e. the piece of the name that is now lost. Cf. the description in the catalogue text accompanying F1930.36. In any case, and despite the fact that everybody seems to believe this identification blindly and has moreover replicated it endlessly, I consider it a mistake. Mainly because there are virtually no other primary sources with which to verify this name. Perhaps the portrait was actually meant as a representation of Cao Yangong (r. 974–976, 曹延恭)? What is noteworthy, however, is that the portrayed scion of the Cao clan is also furnished with the same the pillar-like cartouche, which underscores that this was indeed a designator reserved for the royal clan of Dunhuang.

31   Cf. *Yulin ku*, 84, pl. 51.

32   Jacques Giès, *Les arts de l'Asie Centrale: La collection Pelliot du musée Guimet*, 2 vols. (Tokyo and Paris: Kodansha Ltd. and Reunion des Musees Nationaux, 1994), pl. 79.

33   Lilla Russell-Smith, *Uygur Patronage in Dunhuang Regional Art Centres on the Northern Silk Road in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 124 and 236.

artistically inferior and possibly also cheaper work. As such it belongs together with the relatively large group of banner paintings produced by less skilled painters for mid-level officials and clans in Dunhuang's social hierarchy.

The dedication of the donation in the central part of the lower register dividing the donors reads:

> The disciple of pure faith, Deng Xingquan, has had this one image of the Bodhisattva Amoghapāśa made. Firstly, on behalf of the people of the kingdom [...],[34] so that they may be in peace. [Next] on behalf of his past departed parents, so that they may attain rebirth in the Pure Land. [He also] prays for a harmonious family without [...][35] being evident. This was eternally bestowed as an offering. Recorded on a day in the fourth month of a *gengshu* year [i.e. 950 or 1010].[36]

Lastly the text of the individual cartouches reads: "[Whole-heartedly offered by] the deceased, compassionate father Deng Wenhuo. Whole-heartedly offered by the male Deng Xingquan."[37]

The rather rudimentary dedication and the two identifying texts stating the names of the donors, i.e. Deng Xingquan (n.d., 鄧幸全) and his father, do not reveal much concerning their degree of Buddhist practice, nor little regarding their beliefs. However, the text does underscore the fact that many of these offerings of paintings were part of some form of ancestor worship, in so far as Mr. Deng had the portrait of his deceased father inserted as one of the principal donors (fig. 4.8).

The donor inscription features a number of the same concepts and cultural patterns seen in many of the other banner paintings from Dunhuang, including the central concern for deceased parents, the images of which together with their formal dedications of the pious work, actually made by their descendants on their behalf, incorporate them into the process of returning merit believed to derive from the creating of the banner painting. Although the icon here obviously belongs to a special Esoteric Buddhist belief system, in this case the cult of Amoghapāśa and its related ritual practices, the dedication and prayers appended to the painting do not provide any additional information on this. Hence, one might surmise that a deeper engagement with Esoteric Buddhism, especially on the level of practice, was not a primary concern for

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34   One character is illegible.
35   Two characters are illegible.
36   MG 23079: 清信弟子**鄧幸全**敬造伯空卷索菩薩 壹軀. 先奉爲國人安□ 一爲過往父母, 秉生淨土, 願合家無 □□ 彰, 永充供養. 庚戌年四月日.
37   MG 23079: 故慈父鄧文或一心 [供養] 男鄧幸全一心供養.

FIGURE 4.7
Amoghapāśa.
Dunhuang, dated
1010.
MG 23079.

the donors. In fact, the main icon might as well have been Kṣitigarbha or some other major Buddhist deity, since an expression of piety and devotion is at the heart of the practice. Even so, the cult of Amoghapāśa was very popular at Dunhuang during the 9th–10th centuries, as documented by the existence of several banner and wall paintings, all of which underscore the importance of Esoteric Buddhism at that time.

FIGURE 4.8   Detail of Amoghapāśa (figure 4.7)

Before concluding the discussion of this painting and its context, we should mention that the name Amoghapāśa is written as 'Bokongjuansuo pusa' (伯空卷索菩薩), which—although it is somewhat unusual—is not so far removed as to constitute a simple error. Rather, it is a case of a different manner of transcription for the bodhisattva's name, a phenomenon commonly encountered among the Dunhuang manuscripts (and elsewhere).[38]

7   A Kṣitigarbha Painting in the Freer Gallery of Art

Among the lesser-noticed votive paintings from Dunhuang is one featuring the Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha, now in the Freer Gallery of Art (fig. 4.9).[39] Like some of the other paintings discussed here, this one also features a tripartite division with a main image and two secondary fields with images below, one depicting the donor and the other an additional divinity.

Obviously Kṣitigarbha is not a deity specifically associated with Esoteric Buddhism or its pantheon, but rather is an 'all-round' bodhisattva saviour, the cult of which had broad appeal for people from all walks of life in traditional Chinese society.[40] However, the present painting has an additional feature in

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38   Imre Galambos has briefly discussed the donor inscription of MG 23079 in a recent article, but in my view he makes too much out of the manner in which the name of Amoghapāśa has been transcribed. While not exactly 'orthodox' it is also not indicative of a lack in understanding on the part of the donor(s) as he claims. Cf. Imre Galambos, "Non-Chinese Influences in Medieval Chinese Manuscript Culture," in *Frontiers and Boundaries: Encounters on China's Margins*, ed. Zsombor Rajkai and Ildikó Bellér-Hann (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), 71–86 (esp. 79).

39   Freer Gallery F1935.11. The painting is said to have entered the museum's collection in 1935.

40   See Ng Zhiru, *The Making of a Savior Bodhisattva: Dizang in Medieval China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007). For a more specific study of this bodhisattva in

the form of an extra icon, namely that of Vajrasattva, one of the primary Esoteric Buddhist and Tantric deities.

The main image of Kṣitigarbha depicts the bodhisattva seated in a somewhat unusual setting. He is only attended by a military figure on his left, who represents one of the Ten Kings of the Netherworld (Chin. *shidian yanluo*, 十殿閻羅), i.e. Wudao Jiangjun (五道將軍), depicted in full armour and holding the bodhisattva's staff (Skt. *khakkhara*). To Kṣitigarbha's right is a small image of a crouching monk, probably meant to be Daoming (道明), a character from the *Kṣitigarbhasūtra*, together with a small reclining lion. The entire setting has an almost elegant, tropical ambience, which is slightly unusual in the context of the Buddhist iconography from Dunhuang. As Dunhuang paintings with the Kṣitigarbha-theme (with or without the Ten Kings of the Netherworld) have been studied in great detail by several scholars in the past, there is no need to repeat what has already been said on this topic.[41] It will suffice to say that the Freer painting's overall iconographical conceptualisation is somewhat off, if not downright peculiar. This is because the cult of Kṣitigarbha rarely if ever appears in an Esoteric Buddhist context, at least in late medieval China, as is the case here. Below I try to account for this anomaly. Bypassing the main image of Kṣitigarbha, we are free to discuss the two other images in the painting, starting with the female donor in the lower right side.

At the bottom of the painting on the right side is a donor portrait depicting a richly dressed, noble lady, seated with a votive offering of a lotus flower in her right hand. In addition to her bright red robe and ornate hairdo, replete with golden pins and other decorations, she wears a fancy phoenix tiara similar to the donor portrait of the wife of the Khotanese king in Mogao Cave 98.[42] The two small figures of her attendants hold royal regalia similar to those accompanying the Guiyijun rulers above. Although the central cartouche was meant to hold the formal text of the painting dedication, a short caption next to the image of the female donor provides a clue of who she is. The caption reads:

Dunhuang, see Wang-Toutain, Françoise, *Le Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha en Chine du Ve au XIIIe Siécle* (Paris: Presses du L'École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1998).

41   See Stephen F. Teiser, *The Scripture on the Ten Kings and the Making of Purgatory in Medieval Chinese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press and Kuroda Institute, 1994). See Wang-Toutain, *Le Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha*; and Henrik H. Sørensen, "The Meeting of Daoist and Buddhist Spatial Imagination: The Construction of the Netherworld in Medieval China," in *Locating Religions: Contact, Diversity and Translocality*, ed. Reinhold F. Glei and Nicholas Jaspert (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2017), 234–292.

42   Cf. *Dunhuang Mogao ku*, vol. 5, pl. 13. For a similar headdress worn by royal Uyghur donors (Ganzhou Uyghurs), cf. ibid., pls. 177, 79.

FIGURE 4.9
Kṣitigarbha with Vajrasattva
as secondary image.
Dunhuang, second half of
10th c.
F1935.11, FREER GALLERY

> In commemoration of the deceased Heavenly Lord, Sovereign of the
> Great Court of the Great Khotanese Gold and Jade Kingdom, bestowed as
> an offering by the [wife of] the Li Family.[43]

Again we see here a double-painting, i.e. a painting featuring two primary ima-
ges as its primary icons, actually a tripartite painting, with the Bodhisattva

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43   F1935.11: 故大朝大于闐金玉國天公主李氏供養. Li (李) is the Chinese family name
      formally given to the rulers of the Khotanese royal house.

Kṣitigarbha as the primary image, appropriately so since we are dealing with a votive painting dedicated to a deceased person of high rank. The bottom part is divided into two scenes, the right side with the lady donor and the left side with an image of the Bodhisattva Vajrasattva holding *vajra* and *ghaṇṭa*, a primary deity of mature Esoteric and Tantric Buddhism. The manner in which the female donor sits facing Vajrasattva seems to indicate that she has a special bond with this divinity, who might be interpreted as her deity of initiation or her meditational deity (Tib. *yid dam*). In formal Esoteric Buddhism, there is no overt connection between Kṣitigarbha and Vajrasattva, each of whom have their own separate and quite distinct cults, similar to the above case concerning Kṣitigarbha and the Thousand-eyed Avalokiteśvara. Therefore the Freer painting is yet another example of the collapse of two purposes into one, i.e. possibly the donor wished to address two concerns in the same painting, namely an overt petition to Kṣitigarbha as Lord of the Netherworld on behalf of the deceased Khotanese royal husband, and an invocation to Vajrasattva, who in this case may be seen as a reflection of a personalised expression of devotion on the part of the donor herself.

When trying to identify the donor portrait in this painting, the only possible person to fit with our female donor, obviously a woman of high nobility pedigree, is the daughter of Cao Yijin, who was married to Viśa' Saṃbhava, also known as Li Shengtian (r. 912–967, 李聖天), the king of Khotan. She is known in various documents as the Heavenly Consort (Chin. 天皇后) (P. 4516V°, P. 4518V° (2)).[44] If this assessment is correct, the painting was done shortly after Viśa' Saṃbhava's death, say around 967, during the early Northern Song (960–1126, 北宋).

Given that the painting was made by a member of the Khotanese royal family and that it features Vajrasattva as a major divinity in addition to Kṣitigarbha, we must surmise that Esoteric Buddhism played some role—or at the very

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44   Portraits of the Khotanese royal couple in question can be found among the donors painted on the walls of Mogao Caves 61 and 98. For their names among the donors of Cave 61, see *Dunhuang Mogao ku gongyang ren tiji* [Donor Inscriptions from the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang; hereafter DMGT], comp. Dunhuang yanjiu yuan 敦煌研究院 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1986), 21, and in Cave 98, ibid., 32. The later cave was inaugurated in 925 during the reign of Cao Yijin and later repaired by his successors. Cf. *Zhongguo bihua quanji: Dunhuang 9 (Wudai—Song)* 中國壁畫全集: 敦煌 9 (五代—宋) [Complete Collection of Chinese Wall Paintings: Dunhuang 9 (Five Dynasties—Song)], comp. Zhongguo bihua quanji bianji weiyun hui 中國壁畫全集編輯委員會 (Shenyang: Liaoning meishu chubanshe, 1990), pls. 4–5. For the relevant inscriptions, see DMGT, 32. One will note that the female donor of the Freer painting and the royal spouse represented in the wall painting wear similar clothing and ornaments, the only major difference being the colours of their respective robes.

least enjoyed a certain presence—in the kingdom of Khotan during the second half of the 10th century.

8   Kṣitigarbha and Ekādaśamukha as Dual Icons

Among the other votive paintings from Dunhuang providing evidence for the conflation of two otherwise distinct Buddhist cults, we have the example of MG 3644, a painting that despite being published several times, has so far largely failed to have its more intricate secrets unlocked. The theme of this painting is again the Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha presiding over the tableaux of the Ten Kings of the Netherworld, and as such the iconographical format does not deviate much from a series of other paintings from Dunhuang with the same theme.[45] What is noteworthy in this case is that the figure of Kṣitigarbha as the main icon in the painting has been augmented with an additional primary image, namely that of Ekādaśamukha, the Eleven-headed Avalokiteśvara, who is depicted next to him, both figures set under a pair of elaborate umbrellas (fig. 4.10).

The bottom panel is made up of the usual donor portraits, in this case three adult figures on each side and a young boy and girl at each end, with males and females duly placed on either side of the central, empty cartouche. Evidently the donor dedication and most of the cartouches bearing the names of the donors were never filled in, with only a few of the other cartouches completed text. Given that the painting represents a fairly high-quality work in comparative terms, combined with the fact that gold was used in several instances for the cartouches, we must surmise that this icon was made by members of a leading clan in Dunhuang, again possibly at the request of a member of the ruling Cao. One indication of this is the small figure of the girl on the far left, who wears a fancy red dress and the same elaborate head gear as the three female donors. These surely indicate high-level status similar to the image of the female donor in the Kṣitigarbha from the Freer Gallery discussed above.

With the possible exception that among the stone sculptures of Sichuan (四川) we sometimes find isolated examples of Kṣitigarbha and Avalokiteśvara within the same niche, indicating that the pair of saviours do have a conceptual pre-history in the earlier Tang material,[46] we have no documented or cul-

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45   Cf. e.g. OA 1919,0101,0.23, OA 1919,0101,0.19, etc.

46   For one such example cf. e.g. group no. 16 at Qianfoyan (千佛岩) in Jiajiang (夾江). It is discussed in Henrik H. Sørensen, "The Sculptures at the Thousand Buddhas Cliff in Jiajiang, Sichuan Province," *Oriental Arts* (1997): 37–48. See also Yu Chun 于春 and Wang Ting 王婷, *Jiajiang Qianfoyan: Sichuan Jiajiang Qianfoyan gudai moya zaoxiang kaogu*

FIGURE 4.10   Dual image of Kṣitigarbha and Ekādaśamukha. Dunhuang, 10th c.
MG 3644

tic precedents of the presence of this pair of primary bodhisattvas elsewhere in the material from Dunhuang. As was probably also the case for the Sichuanese examples just mentioned, it seems logical enough to have an icon produced which features the two primary saviour-bodhisattvas par excellence within the same picture frame. One could therefore see this iconic doubling as representing something akin to a full guarantee for salvation.

Ekādaśamukha is a major figure in the Esoteric Buddhist pantheon, and in fact has a relatively frequent presence among the images and tableaux of the wall and votive paintings of Dunhuang. His inclusion into what is otherwise a primary tableau of Kṣitigarbha and the Ten Kings raises two ways to interpret this fascinating but curious painting. I propose that in the case of MG 3644, we are dealing with something slightly different than we have seen previously in cases where two (or even three) iconographical themes are placed within the same picture frame, but reflecting a graded or hierarchical priority. In this case, the two otherwise distinct bodhisattvas are present within the same composition and seemingly of equal iconic importance. In other words, they were meant to be worshipped as an ensemble. The major part of the painting is taken up by the judicial courts of the Ten Kings, which leaves us in little doubt that this was meant as an offering in connection with a funerary event—possibly a seven-seven-type of ceremony (Chin. *qiqi zhai* 七七齋).[47] It appears that somehow the cult of Ekādaśamukha has been grafted onto that of Kṣitigarbha. After all, the *Ekādaśamukhadhāraṇīsūtra* promises salvation from rebirths in the Three Evil Destinies (Chin. *sanmie* 三滅) through the use of its spell and ritual proceedings.[48] The other explanation, perhaps less colourful, is that since both bodhisattvas are important saviours in their own right, what we have here may just be a case of double devotion, similar to the earlier examples in stone from Sichuan, and therefore we should not place too much importance on Ekādaśamukha's role as a major Esoteric Buddhist divinity.

diaocha baogao 夾江千佛岩: 四川夾江千佛岩古代摩崖造像考古调查報告 [The Thousand Buddha Cliff at Jiajiang: A Report of the Archaeological Investigation of the Ancient Cliff-carved Sculptures at Qianfoyan at Jiajiang in Sichuan] (Beijing Wenwu chubanshe, 2012), 55–57, pl. 28. Unfortunately this voluminous resource offers no attempt at identifying the group. For an example that is closer in time to our example from Dunhuang, and which also features the Ten Kings, see Tom Suchan, "The Eternally Flourishing Stronghold: An Iconographic Study of the Buddhist Sculpture of the Fowan and Related Sites at Beishan, Dazu ca. 892–1155" (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 2003), 521–524.

47   For a discussion of this type of ritual in the context of Dunhuang under the rule of the Guiyijun, see Sørensen, "The Practice of Giving: Buddhist Donors and Donor Dedications from 10th Century Dunhuang," *BuddhistRoad Paper* 4.3 (2019).

48   I.e. as someone reborn in hell, as a *preta*, or as a domestic animal.

9   Conclusion

Overall, based on the material presented here, I conclude that Esoteric Bud-
dhism and associated forms of belief held a significant position among the
Buddhists in the Dunhuang area throughout the 10th century, even though it
was surely not the only important form of Buddhism there. The relationship
between Esoteric Buddhism and the local Buddhist population in general is
hard to gauge with any degree of certainty on the basis of these paintings
alone, but it is clear that it was popular among the upper classes, given that a
good number of the donated votive paintings, especially those reflecting a high
quality of artistic execution, were directly related to it.

Since votive paintings are usually—or at least commonly—meant for dis-
play in ritual settings, we may surmise that the Esoteric Buddhist paintings, or
those reflecting its iconography, were used in the performance of specific ritu-
als. This means that worship of the Five Dhyani Buddhas, especially as ex-
pressed in the ritual cycle of the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*, the various
Esoteric Buddhist forms of Avalokiteśvara, Vajrasattva, Sitātapatrā, Marīcī, etc.,
took place in the temples of Shazhou with a certain frequency during the pe-
riod in question. This underscores our assumption that the worship of these
icons were, to a large extent, part of current beliefs. To a certain extent, this is
also supported by the extant liturgical material found among the hoard of
manuscripts, such as those prayer texts used in connection with certain ritual
proceedings. Examples of this include the *Jietan sanshi fayuan wen* 結壇散食
發願文 [Prayer Text for Making an Altar for Distributing Food (Offerings)]
(D. 8953.54), the scattered manuscripts of the important *Tanfa yize* 壇法儀則
[Ritual Rules for Altar Methods][49] (P. 3919, Beijing 1388V°, S. 2316V°, etc.), and
other similar documents found among the Dunhuang manuscripts. In many
cases this type of liturgical text features the invocation of many of the divini-
ties inhabiting the Esoteric Buddhist pantheon, underscoring without any
doubt the great importance of this tradition locally.

The relationship between image and text is of course one of the salient fea-
tures of mature Esoteric Buddhism in China, as well as of the early

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49   Abbreviated title. The full title is: *Jingang junjing jingang ding yijie rulai shenmiao bimi*
      jingang jie da sanmeiye xiuxing sishier zhong tanfa jing zuoyong wei tanfa yize – Da Pilu-
      zhena jingang xindi famen mi fajie tanfa yize 金剛峻經金剛頂一切如來深妙秘密金剛
      界大三昧耶修行四十二種壇法經作用威壇法儀則大毘盧那金剛心地法門秘法
      戒壇法儀則 [The Lofty Vajra Scripture, Vajraoṣṇīṣa of All the Tathāgatas, the Deep and
      Wonderful, Secret Vajradhātu, Great Samaya, the Scripture for Cultivating the Forty-two
      Kinds of Methods [for Setting up] the Altar Employing the Awesome Methods of Ritual
      Proceedings, The Mahāvairocana Vajra Mind Ground Dharma Door, Esoteric Dharma
      Precepts Altar Methods of Ritual Proceedings].

Indo-Tibetan Tantric tradition that arose more or less simultaneously. The impact of both was felt in the region with increasing effect during the 10th century. The many examples of the central presence of this material in Dunhuang, both as reflected in the votive paintings discussed above, and in the murals, document that Esoteric Buddhist imagery and the cults they represent were relatively widespread and popular during most of the 10th century.

Is it fair to say that the donors of the Esoteric Buddhist paintings we discussed here saw themselves as followers of Esoteric Buddhism? Probably they did, but perhaps not exclusively so, as we know that at least some of them also expressed their Buddhist faith in the context of more mainstream cultic practices. Essentially Buddhism at Dunhuang during the reign of the Guiyijun was many-faceted and polyvalent, encompassing a wide range of Buddhist beliefs and practices. Therefore, we may conclude that while the various cults associated with Esoteric Buddhist deities were indeed quite popular locally, at least among the members of the higher echelons of society, they were worshipped alongside other, more common Buddhas and bodhisattvas. This situation is also reflected in the way the caves created during this time were decorated. None show a dominant Esoteric Buddhist iconography, but in many caves Esoteric Buddhist themes appear alongside more general forms, such as paradise scenes and generic Buddha assemblies.

Based on the examples given here, we are now in the position to say a few things about Buddhist donors at Dunhuang and their relationship with Esoteric Buddhist beliefs and practices. First of all, it is clear that the donor dedications accompanying some of these paintings do not inform us of deep-level comprehension or mastery of Esoteric Buddhism. Most of the textual data we have shows that the Esoteric Buddhist imagery, important as it might have been in the performance of rituals by specialists, is not treated by devotees very differently than more mainstream Buddhist icons. This is to say that Esoteric Buddhism was not just seen as just another aspect of Buddhism. The reason why Esoteric Buddhis imagery occurs so frequently as it does, is because Esoteric Buddhism itself was present in Dunhuang. It appears that formal display of Buddhist piety was the most important function and expression of worship by the ruling clans. Because there was a rich imagery representative of the Esoteric Buddhist pantheon to take from, pictorial representations related to it became common. In other words, Esoteric Buddhist iconography was employed because it was popular. The Buddhist clerics who officiated at most of the rituals performed by and for the members of the lay community in Dunhuang had a deep knowledge of Esoteric Buddhist lore, and most probably asked donors that related icons be made for them.

There are paintings of other important Esoteric Buddhist divinities at Dunhuang, which have not been discussed here in relation to donors, such as the

Cintāmaṇicakrāvalokiteśvara or the Thousand-armed Mañjuśrī, the cults of which enjoyed great popularity locally. However, there are no surviving examples of paintings with donors of Cintāmaṇicakra, so a discussion of this theme has not been included here.

Finally, we can say with some confidence that based on the structural formats of many of the banner paintings, it is problematic to insist that they represent anything in the line of an 'orthodox' or exclusive Esoteric Buddhism. Only in a few isolated exceptions, such as in representations of Amoghapāśa, the Thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara, or the rudimentary Vajradhātu Maṇḍala (and other *maṇḍala*s), encountered in both the Mogao Caves and Yulin Caves, can we speak of iconographical forms—and by inference of the related rituals—that unmistakably signal Esoteric Buddhist practices in the more formal sense.

Acknowledgments

The Formation of Tangut Ideology: Buddhism and Confucianism

Kirill Solonin

1 Introduction[1]

Tangut ideology is represented through two large bodies of texts: secular books on the one hand and Buddhist scriptures on the other. The former was generally associated with Tangut Confucianism, although the majority of texts in this category are in fact *books for beginners* (Chin. *mengshu* 蒙書). This category includes both Chinese and Tangut materials (e.g. the translations of the Chinese category books (Chin. *leishu* 類書), as well as the Tangut versions of Chinese classics). This category further includes Tangut-Chinese textbooks such as the famous *mji²zar¹dzjij¹bju¹pjạ¹gu¹nji¹* 級�semantic 㩼 㦌[Timely Pearl in Hand] and encyclopedic compilations, such as *śjij²gu¹·wo²ŋjow²* 刻虥繆㡡 [The Sea of Meanings Established by the Sages], a collection of essential materials concerning the Tangut State.[2]

Another important part of the category of secular texts are Tangut poetry and collections of Tangut proverbs, which were probably also used for educational purposes. There existed several genres of Tangut poetry characterised by their specific use of language and variety of content. Some of the poems demonstrate a direct connection with Buddhist ideas, whereas other poems are based on what could be referred to as native Tangut ideology. In many cases, the poems gravitate around the figure of the Tangut emperor.

One more group of texts in the secular category are the lexicographic materials, including Tangut dictionaries, rhyme tables, etc. The most famous among these is the so-called *jwir² ŋjow²* 㾛㡡 [Ocean of Writing], generally known under its calqued Chinese title *Wenhai* (文海). This division of texts is observed

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1 The first draft of this paper is published in the journal *Entangled Religions* of the Käte Hamburger Kolleg 'Dynamics in the History of Religions Between Asia and Europe' at CERES. Kirill Solonin, "Buddhism and Confucianism in the Tangut State," *Entangled Religions* 8 (2019). In this chapter, all references to Chinese Buddhist texts are given by CBETA edition, 2014.

2 On the Tangut *leishu* see Imre Galambos, *Translating Chinese Tradition and Teaching Tangut Culture* (Berlin, Morton: De Gryuter, 2014), 156–160.

in the native Tangut texts, such as the "Preface" to the dictionary *ŋwə¹γiẹ².we²bju¹* 傗祇羰 [Division of Rhymes According to the Five Categories of Sounds].[3]

From the perspective of Tangut intellectual history, the major obstacle in reconstructing the history of adaptation of both Buddhism and Confucianism is that Tangut Buddhism is identifiable in terms of its origins, languages, lineages of transmission, and scholarly (or sectarian) affiliations (Chin. *zong* 宗). One can trace distinctions between 'official' and 'popular' versions of Buddhism among the Tanguts, and speculate about the nature of Tangut Buddhist institutions, and so forth. That is, Tangut Buddhism is a concrete entity, whereas the nature of Tangut Confucianism remains evasive. We are in possession of several translations of the Chinese classics, as well as information concerning the role of Confucian scholars in Tangut politics and education, whereas we have strong reasons to believe that most of the Tangut Confucian scholars remained Buddhists from the perspective of their religious affiliation. Importantly, the *ŋwər¹ljij¹kie¹dzjɨ²* 蕬籹 縖骸 [Law Code of the Tiansheng Era] (from 1147–1168) contains detailed entries on both Buddhist and Daoist institutions in the Tangut Empire, but no Confucian rituals or practices are mentioned therein. This means Confucianism in the Tangut Empire should be treated as a heuristic device that allows one to group together the collection of various materials pertaining to the art of government.[4]

The term Confucianism is in itself a scholarly construct, and thus the fact that a native Tangut term for this cannot be found is not surprising. In the cases we have, the closest analogue terms are the Teaching of Humanity (Tang. *dźjwu¹tsjir¹* 쬒�andas) and Secular Books (Tang. *mur¹jwir²* 斒荄) in relation to non-Buddhist literature. There are several other terms to be discussed below, including an important term *rjijr²* (縿), which translates Chinese *ru* (儒, Confucian(ism)). Such a terminological variety indicates the original ambiguity and volatility of scholarly labels when applied to the actual source materials. The term Confucianism and its various implications developed primarily from the study of Sinitic culture and history, whereas the Tanguts themselves came from a different historical background. Thus the application of imposed terminology to their culture produces associations that are not necessarily congruent with the source materials. This is also obvious for Tangut Buddhism, which is an easier case, and would seem to be even more correct for Confucianism. At the same time, Tangut culture reveals obvious traces of the ideological

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3   The Preface is to be found in a publication of the texts from Karakhoto preserved in Russia. *Ezang Heishui cheng wenxian* 俄藏黑水城文獻 [Documents from Khara-Khoto preserved in Russia], ed. Shi Jinbo, Wei Tongxian and E.I. Kychanov, vol. 7 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chuban she, 1997), 258–259.

4   This approach was suggested by one of the anonymous reviewers of the present paper.

system, which is generally referred to as Confucianism understood in a very broad sense.[5] These elements emerge in a complex combination with other constituents of the Tangut ideological whole. Here I discuss some aspects of this multifaceted relationship in regard to the formation of the Tangut ideology. I continue to use the term Confucianism as a heuristic device and to label a variety of non-Buddhist ideologies traceable to what is generally identified with Confucianism in Chinese history. On the contrary, in my understanding, Buddhism remains an identifiable entity, open to a positivist description.

Scholars generally concur that during the periods when power was usurped by the clans of the empresses'—i.e. during the reigns of Yizong (r. 1047–1067, 毅宗) and Huizong (r. 1067–1086, 惠宗), as well as the early period before 1092 during the reign of Chongzong (r. 1084–1139, 崇宗)—Buddhism was a major factor in political legitimation in the Tangut Empire.[6] Confucian political doctrine was promoted when emperors tried to restore the sovereignty of their Ngwemi (Tang. *ŋwe² mji¹* 緂愜, Chin. Weiming 嵬名) clan. In other periods Confucianism was limited to its specific sphere of the art of government (Chin. *rushu* 儒術), while the ideological agenda in the Tangut state remained dominated by Buddhism. That is, the manner in which Buddhism, or Confucianism, and to a lesser extent Daoism, emerged in the Tangut Kingdom, differed substantially from the Sinitic paradigm of the Three Teachings (Chin. *sanjiao* 三教).

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5   See the discussion Lionel M. Jensen, *Manufacturing Confucianism. Chinese Traditions and Universal Civilization*. (Durham, N.C.: Duke Universiry Press, 1997)

6   Many of the published texts and inscriptions discussed in this paper were originally used in Ruth Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), which is the first—and by far the most—influential Western publication on the subject. However, I have chosen not to use any of her translations and interpretations in what follows. The approach taken in Dunnell's monograph is that Buddhism was a major instrument of political legitimation in the Tangut State, especially during the so called 'regencies,' i.e. the period from the death of the first monarch Yuanhao (1038–1048, 元昊) until the late 11th century, when the young Emperor Qianshun (1086–1139, 乾順) finally emancipated himself and the imperial clan from the domination of the empress-dowager's Liang clan. As Dunnell argues, the Tangut model of 'Buddhist' legitimation proved so powerful that its remainders are discovered throughout the history of the former Tangut realm, even after the demise of the Tangut State in 1227. A partially similar but broader set of sources is collected by Shi Jinbo in his work on the Tangut society. See, Shi Jinbo 史金波, *Xixia shehui* 西夏社會 [The Tangut Society], vols. 1–2 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2007). Shi's work, although fundamental from the perspective of the variety of source materials used, is generally descriptive and not analytic. His interpretations and translations of the sources are quoted only in those cases where I did not have direct access to the primary sources.

2   Terminology: Issues Regarding the 'Teaching' and the 'Law'

Chinese sources on the Tangut Empire hardly ever mention Buddhism, but in turn emphasise the elevated position of Confucianism. Even though Confucius was promoted to the rank of Emperor by Renzong (r. 1139–1193, 仁宗), the exaggeration of the role of Confucianism in the Tangut State is obviously a later creation by Yuan (1260–1368, 元) period writers, including those responsible for finalizing of the *Xiaguo zhuan* 夏國傳 [History of the Tangut Empire], as found in the *Songshi* 宋史 [History of the Song Dynasty]. This, in turn, can be explained through the influential position of the Tangut scholar-officials (most notably from the Gao (高) and Wo (斡) clans) in Yuan China. That is, the image of the Tangut civilization fluctuated with the passage of time, depending on the ideological stances of various authors, who for various reasons had chosen to write about the Tanguts. That is, external evidence naturally contains ideological bias, which needs to be juxtaposed with evidence found in the primary sources.

As is clear from the extant Tangut sources, the relationship between Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism was never explicitly problematised by the Tanguts, and the paradigm of the Three Teachings was not mechanically applied by them to their specific situation either. However, the Tanguts did in fact develop their own local version of the Three Teachings.

The privileged position of Buddhism in Tangut society has been recognised by both Tangut rulers and scholars. Chronologically, Sinitic Buddhism was widespread in the area of Helan Mountain Range (Chin. Helan shan 賀蘭山) prior to the Tangut resettlement there in the mid-8th century. The role of Buddhism in the formation of the Tangut State is corroborated by the fact that the earliest surviving texts in both Tangut and Chinese are epigraphical records dealing with state sponsored Buddhist activities. The famous *Chongxiu Huguosi Ganying ta bei* 重修護國寺感應塔碑 [Stele Commemorating the Renovation of the Gantong *Stūpa* from the State Protection Monastery] is one such example.

Even a superficial scan of the works of native Tangut origin (odes, collections of proverbs, dictionaries, rhyme tables, etc.) reveals a terminological and metaphorical uniformity observed throughout the textual corpus. This means that the same set of terminology is applicable in a variety of discourses, i.e. those concerned with Sinitic Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism, native Tangut Buddhism, Confucianism, legal matters, Tangut poetry, etc. This is not much different from the situation in China, or anywhere else.

The one major difference is that the set of Tangut ideological terms emerged in its entirety within a relatively short span of time. Moreover, its evolution

cannot be chronologically traced. One can, however, be certain that by the 1050s, the major part of the relevant vocabulary was in place, something which allowed the commencement of the Buddhist translation project. This means that for the Tanguts the invention of terminology and its application were simultaneous processes, and thus the creation of the terminological repertoire was dictated by the necessity to put into writing all aspects of Tangut lore: Buddhist, secular, native Tangut mythology, etc.

The Tangut version of *Quanfa puti xin wen* 勸法菩提心論 [Admonition to Develop *bodhicitta*] by Pei Xiu (791–864, 裴休) mentions three types of teachings: The Teachings of the *sūtra*s (Tang. *lwər²rejr²* 㵽薮), the Teaching of the Immortals (Tang. *śji² tśhji²* 㜯祿), and Secular Books (Tang. *mur¹·jwir²* 繎茷). The last term literally translates as 'secular literature' (Chin. *sushu* 俗書), as opposed to Buddhist and Daoist books, and essentially indicates Confucian writings. This Tangut term is a compound representing the original Chinese term *rujia* (儒家), traditionally translated as Confucianism.[7] At the same time, proceeding from the contexts, the Tangut word *rjijr²* 繛 (Chin. *ru* 儒), is believed to translate 'Confucians,' imply a 'scholar,' or imply 'someone with a scholarly degree.' Chinese *rujia* (儒家) is translated in Tangut as 'learned people' (Tang. *rjijr² mjir²* 繛翍); the Confucian connotations of this term are the result of a semantic transfer and are not etymologically determined.

Other fundamental terms such as the Way of Sage (Tang. *śjij² tśja¹* 刘薮, Chin. *shengdao* 聖道,), Sage (Tang. *śjij²* 刘, Chin. *shengren* 聖人), and so forth, are originally Buddhist (meaning Buddhism and Buddha respectively) in the Tangut language, rather than Confucian, and are also attested in translations from Tibetan. The formative process for the development of ideological terms in Tangut followed a pattern markedly different from what we find in China. In the Tangut language, the terminology did not evolve from being Confucian to being Buddhist, but *vice versa*.[8] One rather obvious example is the term Treatise (Tang. *mər² mja¹* 䇓薮), based on the Sanskrit *mūlamātṛkā* in relation to the Confucian classics.[9]

The Tangut terms for Daoism are *śji² tśhji²* (㜯祿, Chin. *xianjiao* 仙教) or *gju̱² tśhji²* (縼祿), which returns to the Chinese *jiufa* (救法). The terms

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7   For the Chinese text see, *Quanfa puti xin wen* 勸發菩提心文 [Admonition to Develop *bodhicitta*], XZJ 1010.58, 486b18.

8   The process might in fact have been even more complicated with regard to the Chinese terms, which, when developed to render Buddhist ideas on the basis of the indigenous Chinese thought, had to be conveyed into meaningful Tangut.

9   Peng Xiangqian 彭向前, *Xixia wen Mengzi zhengli yanjiu* 西夏文《孟子》正理研究 [Edition and Research of the Tangut Translation of *Mengzi*] (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2014), 166.

respectively originate in the teaching of immortals or the art of salvation (implies healing, etc.); still another term is the Teaching of Laojun (老君, Tang. *nar² gor²* 黀綃).

The most important among the Tangut ideological terms is *tsjir¹* (祾), usually translated as the *dharma* (Chin. *fa* 法 in all of its connotations) or teaching (Chin. *jiao* 教), which places Tangut religious discourse outside the Sinitic paradigm of the Dao. The Tangut analog of this term emerged in contexts where it was determined by the usage in the translated texts. Although the contexts allow us to discern specific Confucian or Buddhist connotations of the term "*tśhji²*," the primary meaning of *tsjir¹* was probably neither entirely Buddhist nor Confucian, but implied the sense of maintaining that which is correct.[10] Hence, although the modern Chinese translations of this term as *fa* or *jiao* may be adequate, they remain context-dependent, whereas etymologically the word means 'true teaching.' Application of this denomination to a specific teaching elevates it to a higher level in the ideological hierarchy. The connotations of this term are indicative of its superior position in the Tangut ideology, exceeding the value of the "written law," which was known in Tangut as the translation of the Chinese term *lü ling* 律令.[11]

The term *tsjir¹* equally applies to Buddhism, Daoism and Confucianism, which generally means that in theory there were the three 'laws' in the Tangut Empire:

1. The Law of the Buddha
2. The Law of Immortals
3. The Law of Humanity

Among these, the Buddhist law was represented by the 'sacred' scriptures, whereas the 'secular domain' consisted of a variety of literature of different backgrounds, including the Confucian classics. This is not a purely speculative reconstruction, since such a model is confirmed by some original Tangut sources, among which the most clear-cut example is the introductory verse to

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10   Li Fanwen 李範文, ed., *Xia Han zidian* 夏漢字典 [Tangut–Chinese Dictionary] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2011), 467. The Tangut dictionary known under the Chinese name *Wenhai* analyses this character as the combination of 祾 and 憄, i.e. correct ritual and correct actions (紤綃). This last word is used in Buddhist texts to translate the Sanskrit *carita*. The closest analogy to this Tangut character is the modern Chinese suffix *fa* 法, which nominalizes the verbs in the 'manner of action.' The character *tjij²* (憄) is interpreted as correct law (Li Fanwen, *Xia Han zidian*, 1910).

11   It remains to be proven to what degree the Chinese discourse on religions is applicable to the Tangut materials. For the discussion of the relevant matters, see: R. Company, "Chinese History and Writing about Religion(s): Reflections at a Crossroad," in *Dynamics in the History of Religions Between Asia and Europe: Encounters, Notions, and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Volkhard Krech and Marion Steinicke (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 273–295.

The Sea of Meanings Established by the Sages,[12] where the 'laws' are listed together with their respective literary genres. This same text introduces a dichotomy of the Law of the Buddha versus the Law of the Kings (*njij² tsjir¹* 廡 祫), which—according to the text—should be listed together with the Law of the Buddha. The clarification of the relationship between these categories remains one of the most fundamental tasks of Tangut Studies. However, the manner in which Daoist texts should be classified (in case they were translated into Tangut) is unclear.

It is tempting to reconstruct the ideological system of the Tangut Empire similarly to the paradigm of the Three Teachings of the Song. However, the situation in the Tangut Empire was probably not as straightforward. One possible way of interpreting the Tangut 'ideological vocabulary' is that it was either primarily Buddhist or ideologically neutral. The relevant terminological sets for Confucianism and Daoism are probably derivatives from the Buddhist system. This is probably due to the hierarchical priority of Buddhism in the Tangut State. This point remains to be proven on the basis of a broader selection of source materials, but here it is adopted as a working hypothesis. In short, from a philological perspective, one can postulate the priority of Buddhism in the process of formation of the ideological system of the Tangut Empire. At the same time, the idea of the Tangut Emperor exercising his power within the framework of the Tibetan donor recepient (Tib. *mchod yon*) paradigm is probably applicable only (if at all) to the final period of the Tangut history;[13] one simple reason for that is that the institute of the "imperial preceptor" remained an extraordinary position outside the Tangut administrative system, and was not listed in the Tangut legal codes.

3   Buddhism and the Beginnings of Tangut Statehood

Monuments of Tangut epigraphy, especially the *Da Xiaguo zang sheli jieming* 大夏國葬舍利碣銘 [Inscription on Burying the Relics in the Great Tangut

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12   Keqianuofu 克恰諾夫, Li Fanwen 李範文, and Luo Maokun 羅矛昆, *Shengli Yihai yanjiu* 圣立義海研究 [Study of the Sea of Meanings Established by the Sages] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 1995), 46. The translation needs to be revised but nonetheless provides an idea of the general message of the text.

13   David S. Ruegg, *Ordre spirituel et ordre temporel dans la pensée bouddhique de l'Inde et du Tibet. Quatre conferences au Collège de France* (Paris: Collège de France—Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, 1995), 34–37. I thank the reviewer of this paper for directing me to this publication.

State], the *Chengtian si beiji* 承天寺碑記 [The Record of Chengtian Temple],[14] and the *Stele Commemorating the Renovation of the Gantong stūpa from the State Protection Monastery*, all dating to the period before the 12th century, reveal the early existence of Buddhist-oriented policies as well as the practice of Buddhist state protection. Significantly, state protection rituals persisted as part of officially sanctioned political practice from the earliest times in recorded Tangut history until the demise of the Tangut Empire. In contrast, attempts to institutionalise Confucianism can only be traced to the 12th century, especially to its later years.[15] In this regard Zhang Shi (fl. mid. 11th c., 張陟), one-time advisor (Chin. *moyi* 謀議) to Emperor Jingzong (1038–1048, 景宗), wrote in the *Inscription on Burying the Relics in the Great Tangut State*:

> Our Imperial Majesty endowed with literary abilities of a Sage and military prowess of a hero, [blessed] with superior humanity and supreme piety,[16] whose wisdom and eloquence exceeds that of Tang Yao, who is as heroic as the Han [Gao]zu, majestically reveres the Way of the Buddha, and had invented the Fan [i.e. Tangut script]; the 'apple garden' and 'lotus palace' wholeheartedly with the closed palms adorn and protect the Golden Vehicle and Precious Realm. Now it so happened, that the famous scholars from the East and Realized Masters [(Skt. *paṇḍita*)] from the West presented hundred and fifty pieces of relics [(Skt. *śarīra*)], and a joint of Buddha's finger, Buddha's arm and one *uṣṇīṣa* bone. Those were all put into a silver casket and golden vault, covered with iron armour and put into a stone box, covered with precious items, with Vaiśrāvana [...]. The stream was dug below it, and above it the *stūpa* touching the skies

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14   Collected in: Li Fanwen 李範文, ed., "Xixia wencun 西夏文存 [Tangut Literary Heritage]," *Xixia yanjiu* 西夏研究 [Tangut Studies] 4 (2007): 880–881.

15   The *Songshi* 宋史 [History of the Song Dynasty] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), 4257 contains paragraphs on the establishment of the so-called Tangut School (Chin. *fanxue* 番學) and Chinese School (Chin. *hanxue* 漢學) by Jingzong, and puts Yeli Renrong (d.u., 野利仁榮) in charge of the Tangut School. The exact nature of both insitutions is debatable, but these were not institutions designed to promote Confucianism. The Tangut version of the Chinese Academy of the Sons of the Country (Chin. *guozi jian* 國子監) and Hanlin Academy (Chin. *hanlin xueshi yuan* 翰林學士院) were established by Chongzong under the title of Guoxue (國學). These policies were further continued by Renzong.

16   Sun Bojun believes that "shengwen yingwu chongren zhixiao huangdi" 聖文英武崇仁至孝皇帝 ('sage in literature, heroic in battle, revering humanity, profoundly filial') might be one of the official titles of Emperor Jingzong. However, this title is not otherwise attested. See Sun Bojun 孫博君, *Xixia wenxian congkao* 西夏文獻叢考 [Collection of the Research Materials on Tangut Manuscripts] (Shanghai: Shanghai guiji chubanshe, 2015), 92–95.

was erected, the fragrant flowers always scent there and metal and stone surround [the *śarīra*]. We wish: the state is protected, and Southern Mountains remain strong for the eternity, so that the sacred household continues as long as the spring beans [continue to grow],[17] [we pray the] the officials serve their Lord with sincerity , we pray for the safety of the ten thousand households, and the cessation of hostilities around the border fortresses, and for the abundance of vegetables and wheat in our storehouses [...].[18]

The text reveals the role of Buddhist relics in the cult of Tangut state protection, as well as the connections with both Indian Buddhists and Chinese monks as early as the reign period of Emperor Jingzong. The 'Golden Vehicle' might be interpreted as some type of Esoteric Buddhism. However, the paragraph is too concise to warrant any further speculation as to the nature of Buddhist faith implied therein. Nonetheless, this again corroborates the records in the *History of the Song Dynasty* concerning presenting Jingzong with Buddhist *sūtra*s, even before he became the first Tangut Emperor.[19]

The *Liangzhou Huguo si Gantong ta* 涼州護國寺感通塔 [Stele of the Gantong *stūpa* in the State Protection Temple in Liangzhou], which is in fact the record of a Dharma ceremony commemorating the restoration of the *stūpa* in question, demonstrates that the Tangut elite was primarily interested in the ritual side of the religion and its state-protection implications. Note that the technical ritual vocabulary is already in place in the text of this stele despite its relatively early date, and the same vocabulary continues to emerge throughout the remaining years of Tangut history. If one accepts the information from the *Xixia shushi* 西夏書事 [Records of Events in the Tangut Empire], then the situation concerning the Buddhist policies of the Jingzong reign period becomes even clearer:

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17   I.e. a perennial plant.
18   *Da Xiaguo zang sheli jieming*: 我聖文英武崇仁至孝皇帝陛下，敏辯邁唐堯，英雄
     □漢祖；欽崇佛道，撰述蕃文，奈苑蓮宮，悉心修飾，金乘寶界，合掌護持。
     是致東土名流，西天達士，進舍利一百五十嵩，并中指骨一節，獻佛手一
     枝，及頂骨一方，罄以銀椁金棺、鐵甲石匱，衣以寶物，□以毗沙.下通掘地
     之泉，上構連雲之塔，香華永馥，金石周陳。所願者：保佑邦家并南山之堅
     固，維持聖嗣同春葛之延長，百僚齊奉主之誠，萬姓等安家之懇，邊塞之干
     戈偃息，倉箱之蔬麥豐盈 [...]. The translation follows Lou Fuyi's copy of the text, in:
     Li Fanwen 李範文, ed., *Xixia yanjiu* 西夏研究 [Tangut Studies], vol. 4 (Beijing: Shehui
     kexue chubanshe, 2007), 877–879. The date of the stele is Xixia Tianqing (西夏天慶) 3,
     i.e. 1096.
19   *Songshi*, 186.

Nangxiao [i.e. Jingzong] was born on the fifth day of the fifth month and he established this day as a day of celebration. The original custom was to celebrate the winter solstice, Nangxiao determined that the first week of every season should be a sacred holiday, so that officials and common people should revere the Buddha and pray for happiness for him. For this, at a distance of fifteen *li* from Zhongxing [i.e. the Tangut capital], corvée laborers built many pagodas, all as tall as fifteen *zhang*, as well as the Gaotai Temple […], where the *Great Collection of sūtras* [i.e. *tripiṭaka*], presented by the Middle Kingdom, was preserved. He invited many Uyghur monks to dwell there, explain the texts of the scriptures and render them with the Tangut writing.[20]

The colophons to the surviving publications of Tangut Buddhist texts indicate that fundamental Mahāyāna scriptures had been translated during the reign of Huizong (i.e. during the latter half of the 11th century). Surviving epigraphy informs us that temples were established to further propagate the religion among the Tanguts at least as early as this era, although evidence for Buddhist piety among Tangut elites can be traced back as early as the 10th century, if not earlier. A major event in the early history of Tangut Buddhism is certainly the establishment of Chengtian Temple (Chin. Chengtian si 承天寺) around 1050 by Yizong's mother, Empress Dowager Liang. As was the norm at that time, the empress was a Buddhist and an ardent promoter of Tangut national uniqueness.

To further propagate Buddhism, Yizong requested a copy of the Chinese Buddhist Canon, complete with book covers and shelf-marks. Combined with another acquisition of the canon by Huizong in 1072 and the continuing influx of 'new translations' from the Office for the Translation of Buddhist Scriptures (Chin. *yijing yuan* 譯經院), an institution that existed for a hundred years (982–1082) in the Song capital Bianliang (汴梁, modern Kaifeng 開封), these acquisitions formed the textual basis for large-scale Buddhist translation projects that continued throughout Tangut history, initially with the help of Uyghur monks, and later with the assistance of Tibetan teachers. Concerning

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20   *Xixia shushi*: 曩霄五月五日生, 國中以是日相慶賀. 舊俗止重冬至, 曩霄更以四孟
      朔为聖節, 令官民禮佛, 爲己祈福. 至是, 于興慶府東一十五里役民夫建高台寺
      及諸浮圖, 俱高数十丈, 貯中國所賜《大藏經》, 廣延回鶻僧居之, 演繹經文, 易
      爲蕃字. See Wu Guangcheng 吳廣成, Gong Shijuan 龔世俊, Hu Yubing 胡玉冰, eds.,
      Xixia shushi jiaozheng 西夏書事校證 [Punctuated and Corrected *Records of Events in
      the Tangut Empire*] (Lanzhou: Gansu wenhua, 1995), 212. The accuracy of this record cannot be completely verified.

Huizong's request, Song Emperor Shenzong (1048–1085, 神宗) replied with an edict, which reads:

> Order to the Lord of the Tangut Realm: [We] have examined the report requesting to purchase Buddhist scriptures, The Great *Tripiṭaka*, together with the book covers and shelf-marks, both old and new translations of the *sūtra*s from various periods [...]. Especially for this purpose, we have ordered the responsible officials to collate and verify [the texts], so that the titles are not missing, all the editions are properly bound and both paper and ink are excellent, [...] [we] have already commanded the *Sūtra Printing Office* to publish the available *sūtra*s according to the standard, and present them. Order Baoan jun [(保安軍)][21] to officially notify You-zhou [(宥州)], so that people will be dispatched to the border to complete the transaction, and thus [the texts] will be obtained.[22]

Both Tangut requests and the Song court responses appear generic, and continue to remerge throughout the relevant sources. Combined with data from extant Tangut epigraphy and legislation, both stele inscriptions and book requests demonstrate the existence of so-called Buddhist policies in the Tangut Empire, and an apparent desire to 'transform' the Tanguts through Buddhism.

From a chronological perspective, one can infer that the creation of the Tangut script coincided with the famous case when Emperor Jingzong had nine Indian monks detained while travelling with 'tribute' to the Song in 1036. The *Records of Events in the Tangut Empire* reports this as follows:

> In the first month of the 3rd year of Jingyou [(景佑), i.e. 1036], the Indians came with tribute. On their way East, after six months they reached Dashi, after two months they arrived to Xizhou, and again after three months the came to Xiazhou. At first the monk Shancheng [(善稱)] and his group of nine arrived to the [Song] capital [Bianliang], presented the Sanskrit *sūtra*s, Buddha bones and an effigy of a bodhisattva with the bronze teeth (?). They stayed in the capital for three months, Renzong

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21   Tangut administrative unit on the Song border.
22   詔夏國主，省表乞収贖釋典《大藏經》并簽帙復帕, 前後新舊翻譯經文, [...] 特降旨命, 令有司點勘，無至脫漏卷目，所有印造裝成，紙墨工直 [...] 已指揮印經所，應有經本，并如法印造給賜，令保安軍移牒宥州，差人于界首交割，至可領也. The original request by Huizong also survives. For Shenzong's edict see, Zhang Jian 張鑒, *Xixia jishi benmo* 西夏紀事本末 [*Records of Events in the Tangut Empire from the Incept to Completion*] (Lanzhou: Gansu renmin chubanshe, 1998), 142; punctuation follows the original. A similar request was presented by Yizong in 1058.

presented them with *shubo* and sent them on the return journey. When they arrived to Xiazhou Yuanhao [i.e. Jingzong] kept them at the relay station and requested Sanskrit *sūtra*s, but to no avail, and thus detained them. Since then there were no monks from the Western regions bearing tribute.[23]

As already stated above, state support and control over Buddhism continued until the demise of the Tangut Empire, which was marked, among other things, by the establishment of the translation platform (Chin. *yichang* 譯場) in 1214 to re-translate the *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra* to protect the state after the first assault by Mongol forces.[24] Imperial support of and control over Buddhism is also demonstrated by notes on several extant Buddhist scriptures, such as imperially translated (Tang. *me̱² lhej²* 刻 𗓽), imperially revised (Tang. *me̱² njar¹* 刻 𗣼), or provided with imperial prefaces.

Another indication of direct imperial patronage is the organisation of the nation-wide *dharma* Assemblies (Chin. *fahui* 法會),[25] which might be taken as a way to explain the Tangut textual heritage preserved at Karakhoto. These pro-Buddhist policies culminated in the production of a Tangut version of the Buddhist Canon, attested as early as Chongzong's time.[26] The above indicates that Buddhism remained within the focus of the Tangut imperial attention, and implies that Buddhist texts were translated from early on as one of the components of the state-building policies. This observation obviously contradicts the note in the *History of the Song Dynasty* and several Yuan period compilations concerning the exclusive role of Confucianism in the Tangut

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23   *Xixia shushi*: [景佑三年正月] 　天竺入貢，東行經六月至大食國，又二月至西
　　　州，又三月至夏州。先是僧善稱等九人至京師，貢梵經、佛骨及銅牙菩薩
　　　像，留京三月，仁宗賜束帛遣還。抵夏州，元昊留于驛舍，求貝葉梵經不
　　　得，羈之，由是西域貢僧遂絕。 　This record is partially corroborated with entries
　　　from the *Songshi*, and thus is probably more reliable than other records in the *Xixia
　　　shushi,* 140. The "Since then there were no monks from the Western regions coming with
　　　the tribute" seems to be an addition by Wu Guangcheng.

24   For the transcription of the Tangut text and preliminary translation, see Shi Jinbo 史金
　　　波, *Xixia fojiao shilue* 西夏佛教史略 [A Concise History of Tangut Buddhism] (Yin-
　　　chuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 1988), 280–282.

25   We know of two such assemblies, one to commemorate Renxiao's fiftieth anniversary as
　　　emperor (1184) and the second held in commemoration of his passing (1193).

26   According to the reading of the seal on the Tangut translation of the *Chang Ahan jing*
　　　長阿含經 [Skt. *Dīrghāgama*]. Kychanov Evegenij Ivanovich, *Katalog Tangutskiykh Bud-
　　　dhijskyih Pamyantnikov iz Sobrania SbF IV RAN* [Catalog of Tangut Buddhist Texts from
　　　the Collection of the IOS RAS] (Kyoto: University of Kyoto Press, 1999), 45. What is im-
　　　plied under the title *tripiṭaka* remains to be clarified.

State[27] but agrees with the Tangut native sources. That is, one can suggest a close connection between the invention of the Tangut script and the making of Buddhist translations. This generally places Buddhism at the core of Tangut statehood, whereas similar records regarding the purchase of Confucian literature did not develop to such a scale.

4   Buddhism, the Writing System, and Tangut Rituals

The sources in both Tangut and Chinese contain vague indications of the existence of an ideological tension that persisted at the Tangut court throughout recorded Tangut history. This conflict is epitomised as the competition between non-Chinese, i.e. Tangut, and Chinese Rituals (Chin. *fanyi hanli* 番儀漢禮). The nature of the Tangut Rituals is discussed at length in the famous imperial proclamation of Jingzong, addressed to the Song court.[28] These included the Tangut style of clothing, haircut, music, rituals, and script, which were designed to discriminate the Tangut population from the subjects of the Song. From the Tangut sources, the situation appears to be more complicated.[29]

The Tangut word *mji² dzjo²* (級繎) is the direct source of the Chinese term *fanli* (番禮), the Tangut Rituals, known from Chinese sources. However, Tangut sources also mention *lhjwij² dzjo²* (鼲繎), the Rituals of Lhi, which would return the same Chinese translation. Despite this, the terms were obviously different from the Tangut perspective, as indicative of the two layers in Tangut society and their respective ritual systems. However, the relationship between the two is beyond the scope of the present study. The nature of the Chinese Rituals (Tang. *zar¹tjij²* 糤愢) is not so easy to determine (although for Yizong these also included Sinitic clothing style).[30] The tension between the two ritual systems reveal two possible civilisational choices: to promote Tangut identity, or to follow the Sinitic pattern. The tensions culminated during the reigns of Yizong and Huizong, the latter having been deposed by his mother as part of an attempt to introduce Sinitic rituals instead of the Tangut ones. The mutiny of Ren Dejing (fl. 12th c., 任德敬), during the reign of Renzong in the 1140s, was partially inspired by this character's anti-Chinese stance. At the same time,

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27   According to the *Songshi*, 4257 the first to have been translated were the *Xiaojing* 孝經 [Scripture on Filial Piety], the oldest Chinese dictionary known as *Erya* 爾雅, and the *Siyan zazi* 四言雜字.

28   *Songshi*, 4258.

29   Some Chinese sources use *fan* (蕃) in the same capacity, *fan* (番) is used throughout this paper.

30   *Songshi*, 4260.

there are no indications that the conflict between the two ritual systems actually reflected tensions between the various nationalities of the Tangut Empire, or otherwise of a reflection of alternative loyalties, as might have been the case elsewhere.[31]

According to the sources presented below, Buddhism was generally associated with Tangut 'nationalism,' as one of the tokens of Tangut sovereignty, and thus, together with the writing system, a part of the Tangut Rituals. The *phiow¹ bjij² lhjij tha²sjiw¹ lhej so̱¹ u̱² śjij²dzjij² bu¹* 祥 㞒 䐍 㪣 㦿 㪧 㪣 䖎 刻 㪦 [Imperial Preface to the Newly Translated *tripiṭaka* of the Great State of White and High] (date unknown) states the following:

> People are stupid and unwise; [they] indulge in evil and do not understand the good teaching; the Great Sage realised his compassion and instructed using skillful means [...]. [The Buddha] preached the teaching with his golden mouth for the benefit of all the sentient beings, [...] so that the dust of the *sahā* world was brought into order. [When his] days of transforming the world came to an end, the Buddha entered *nirvāṇa*. [Then] the 'Semblance Dharma' was collected in the West; Sanskrit texts were [...] East and were widely spread in the world [...]. Original literature [(Tang. *jwir* 㪣, Chin. *wen* 文)] is smooth and eloquent, [thus] the benefit of the Lhi Realm [i.e. the Tangut Empire] is great, [...] and incalculable. The meaning [of the teaching] is vast and encompasses all things. The womb of the secret mind of all Buddhas, sea of nature of *tathāgata* teaching, all in [...] and discriminate between big and small according with one's *karma*. The sun of wisdom traverses the heaven, and illuminates the three worlds, compassion [...] delivers four [kinds] the sentient beings. I, the king, with the compassion in my mind, extended benevolent thought onto the outside, [...], safety of the Realm. In the past, The Wind Emperor [i.e. Jingzong] initiated the translation of the *sūtra*s, and afterwards, the teaching of the master Laojun [(?)] was still incomplete, the 'August things'[32] were not yet in their entirety and the virtue remained deficient. People [...] were not pursuing the way of purity, desire was the most frequent of the ten evils [which they] did; the gate of three liberations [...], the water from the source [...] is polluted, and the profanes took from it what they needed. The good words are like gold, the sentient beings [...] transform. [The sentient beings] abide [in the cycle

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31   Yang Shaoyun, "'Stubbornly Chinese?' Clothing Styles and the Question of Tang Loyalism in Ninth-Century Dunhuang," *International Journal of Eurasian Studies* 5 (2016): 152–188.

32   Tangut 㪦 㪣, i.e. the responsibilities of an emperor.

of] birth and death, and are not seeking liberation from it, love and desire […], […] search.

The good rule of the Realm originates from the sacred teaching, transforming the people proceeds from the discipline; six *pāramitā*s […], purity rises from the great vow. Peoples are the same, but their languages differ, their lands are diverse, and their rituals vary, [their] scripts […], […] to be taught accordingly. Thus, to nourish and educate the people, imperial translation was commissioned, together with the eloquent expositions, all arranged as the chain of jewels, so that […] the three vehicles and five parts of the teaching are concisely presented. The vast […] of the eighty-four thousand […], entry into the gate of non-duality, as the moon, bright in the night, […]. [As soon as the cause and (?)] the fruit are understood, the attainment of the [true] vision is manifest. Stupid and wise are equally blessed and will reach the other shore. Broadly undertake […] became the law for the ten thousand [generations] to follow. Rivers and streams cannot be measured with *dou*, can earth be calculated with […]?[33]

This preface reveals some of the more significant foundations of Tangut identity: the Tangut Realm as such, the Tangut Rituals, and the language itself. All three relate to the state propagation of Buddhism, i.e. the sacred teaching referred to in the text. This epitomises Tangut statehood and national identity. The preface allows us to further suggest that Buddhism was in an intimate way related to the well-being of the Tangut Realm, and thus with the domain of the rituals of state protection. In its turn, the Tangut writing system, as is known from a variety of the Tangut sources (e.g. the Preface to the *Division of Rhymes*

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[33] *phiow¹ bjij² lhjij tha²sjiw¹ lhej so¹·u² śjij²dzjij² bu¹*: 𗫂𗙏𗥃𗏹，𗫡𘝚𗣫𗤒𗈶𗥃；𗤒𗐆𗉛𗤨，□□□𗭴𗭴𗭴。𗫲𘝚𗣼𗦻，𗙴𗋽𗰗𗺌𗯿𗪙；[𗥃]□□□，𘈩𗢮𗣼𗤁𗤁𗄑。𗾧𗫡𗊱𗴲，𘐆𗾫𗃀𗰖，𗾖𗟻𗱕𗰗𗤨，𗧘𗄼[𗥃]□□□，□𗅲𗸕𗥃，𗪙𗥂𗙼𗄈，𗨁𗧁𗤨𗤒，𗈜[𗒹]□□𗤨𗄈□𗀀𗸕𗴝𗰗。𗸮𗸕𘟀𗱥𗣼𗟭。𗁅𘉋𗑤𗴺𗄻𗴲，𘈪𗫵𗴺𗣼𗾗𗴖，𗄈𘗴[𗴝]□□□，𗫡𘀗𗑤𗥖𗴾𗣼。𘆡𗊱𘊴𗴲，𗰗𗥀𘟀，𗰖□□□𗧨𘟀𗝢。𗸕𗭴𗾖𗎚，𗣼𘗶𗟻𗥅，[𗳾𘉐]□□，□□□□。𘟀𗏹𘈪𘊴𗉛𗖻𗄈，𗴝𗱥�123𗴾𗣅𗥅𗟻，𗸕𗅩𗄈𗴿，𗥂𗰖𗥃𗴖；𗸕𗥒𗅩□□，□𘉐𗑤𘊴，𗫻𘟀𗏹𗣼𘉋；𗴝𗸕𗝢𗐆，𘈩□□□𗣺。𗦺𗫚𗐆𗥃𘈩𘉋，𗄈𘐆𗣎𗇃𗣺，𗥜𗬢𗂴𘈩□□，□𗾖𘈩𗇉𘉐𗥃。𗸕𗭻𗴝𗴲，𘟀𗅩𗁅�)□□□，□𘉐𗴲𗴾。𗀔𗫚𗑤𗴲𗰴，𘈩𗶾𗣼𘟀，𗮐𗄈𗐆𗴿，�]𗈓�;，�]𗄣�]□□𗈶�)，𗈺𗱷𗄼��}，𘗾�+�}�]□□□□□□□□□□。�}�)�}，�$𗑤�)。�$�!�$，�]�)�ᴊ。□□��)，��}�}�)。�5�)�}�)�)，�)□□□�)�+�}. Transcription of the text in Shi Jinbo, *Xixia fojiao shilue*, 230.

According to the Five Categories of Sounds mentioned above), was an essential part of the Tangut ritual system as well. This allows further speculation on the possible confluence between the Law of the Kings and the Law of Buddha, which are both expressed through the writing system as literature (荄, Chin. *wen* 文), and to hypothesize that the Tangut figure of the bodhisattva, Son of Heaven (*tshjɨ¹tsjij²mə¹zjɨ¹* 糺縦縢縖, i.e. the Tangut Emperor), which often appears in Tangut poetry, was a trope indicative of the coalescence of all the major constituents of formal Tangut identity. By this, one can suggest that for the Tanguts, invention of the Tangut script was a truly royal endeavor.

   This allows one to further speculate that the category of secular texts was associated with the domain of Chinese Rituals, and could be elevated to the status of Law only through translation into Tangut. From this, one can further imagine that Tangut identity was closely associated with the language and writing system, in a way resembling the Sinitic concept of *wen* (文), i.e. the culture associated with and rendered through writing. The writing system was one of the foundations of the Tangut Rituals, which, according to native texts, were essential for Tangut self-identification. Thus, one may suggest a connection between Buddhism and Tangut 'nationalism.'

5   Confucianism in the Tangut Empire

The founder of the Tangut state, Jingzong, as well as his father, who was posthumously recognised as Taizong (981–1103, 太宗), are unequivocally referred to as Buddhists by both native Tangut and Chinese sources.[34] The first request for Buddhist texts by Jingzong dates to the first years of his reign; his father had made a similar request in 1030. Jingzong does not appear to have shown any interest in Confucianism, and may have even have despised Daoism, though he was certainly interested in Chinese military texts.[35] His overall concern seems to have been to preserve Tangut identity through the enforcement of Tangut Rituals, the writing system, and educational institutions.

   The first attempt to establish what might be called Confucianism and Chinese Rituals was undertaken by Yizong in the 1060s. This Sinification project is normally interpreted as a part of the plan to reestablish sovereignty of the

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34   Taizong requested a copy of the Buddhist Canon in 1030 (*Xixia shushi*, 128). Jingzong did the same in 1035 (*Songshi*, 185).

35   *Liaoshi* 遼史 [History of the Liao Dynasty] and *Songshi* mention that Yizong was carrying with him two texts, the *Yezhan ge* 野戰歌 [Yezhan ge] and *Taiyi Jinjian jue* 太乙金鑒訣 [Mirror of Taiyi], supposedly military and divination texts. These texts are mentioned in other sources as well. However, their actual nature remains unclear (*Songshi*, 4257).

Tangut imperial clan against the clan of the Empress-dowager. Infatuated by the Chinese style of clothing, Yizong abandoned the Tangut Rituals in 1062 and asked for permission to adopt Chinese court rituals. Permission was granted by the Song court, together with the permission to continue the usage of the 'bestowed surname' (Chin. *cixing* 賜姓) instead of the Tangut surname Ngwemi, which had been adopted by Yizong.[36] He further requested editions of the Chinese classics later in the same year, including the *Jiu jing* 九經 [*Nine Canons*], the *Tangshi* 唐史 [History of the Tang Dynasty], and the encyclopedia *Cefu yuangui* 冊府元龜 [Prime Tortoise of the Record Bureau].[37]

This first request was followed by another in 1063, when Yizong asked for the Academy of the Sons of the Country, an edition of the *Nine Canons*, including the standard commentary (Chin. *zhengyi* 正義), a copy of the *Mengzi* 孟子 [Book of Mencius], and various medical books. Yizong simultaneously petitioned to be allowed to purchase a number of goods, including belts, as well as a request for workers, and a group of artisans to be sent to the Tangut capital.[38] This request was granted by the Song court because it was seen as the responsibility of the Chinese empire to 'transform and educate' 'Western Barbarians' in the correct and civilised manners, i.e. Chinese culture. Dispatching artisans was meant to promote and enhance a 'transformation' in the Tangut royal clan along the Chinese path through what was perceived as superior workmanship.[39]

However, attempts to introduce Chinese Rituals, which also implied the importation of both Confucian books and concepts, did not affect Yizong's Buddhist devotion. Requests for Chinese editions of the *Tripiṭaka* continued throughout his reign, and he remained a devoted Buddhist up until his death, as is reported in the *Mengxi bitan* 夢溪筆談 [Records of Discussions in Mengxi].[40] *Song Da zhaoling ji* 宋大詔令集 [Collection of the Song Orders]

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36   Si Yizu 司儀組, ed., *Song Dazhaoling ji* 宋大詔令集 [Collection of the Song Orders] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), 912.

37   諒祚獻馬五十匹欲建書閣寶藏之. 并求 九經, 唐史, 冊府元龜, 及本朝正至朝賀儀.仁宗賜以 九經, 還所獻馬. 表求太宗御制, 詩》草, 隸石. I quote this paragraph from *Xixia shushi*, 237 (the source is *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編 [Extended Continuation of the Comprehensive Mirror in Aid of Governance]).

38   *Song Dazhaoling ji*, 912.

39   *Xixia jishi benmo*, 130.

40   This story emerges in all the standard histories of the Tangut State. *Mengxi bitan* 25, Zazhi 雜誌 [Various Records] 2: "[...] the Emperor as he rushed into the Buddhist temple to pray and bled to death, but the herdsman, who stayed therein, did not dare to show up." [...] 馳入一佛祠. 有牧牛儿不得出, 懼佛座下, 見其脫靴, 血浣于踝. See the version in the Chinese texts project, accessed May 29, 2017. <http://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=en&res=338826&search=%E8%B0%85&remap=gb>.

contains an undated *Ci Xiaguo zhu ling zunshou fanyi zhao* 賜夏國主令遵守番儀詔 [Decree to the Lord of the Tangut Empire to Respect the Original Tangut Clothing Style]. The decree was probably addressed to Yizong, indicating that the pro-Song ritual policies were abandoned soon after they had been adopted.[41]

Huizong had only petitioned the Song court for permission to revert to the Tangut Rituals and clothing under pressure from his mother, the Empress Dowager, who was both a devoted Buddhist and a strong advocate of Tangut uniqueness. The Tangut petition was granted, something which marked a triumph for Tangut nativism and Buddhism in particular.[42] Thus, in the 2nd year of *Xining* (Chin. 熙寧, 1069), the Chinese Rituals were officially abandoned. Even though Huizong was deposed by the empresses' clan, it stands to reason that the role Buddhism played in the Tangut Empire was institutional. Hence, Buddhism always remained a primary instrument for legitimising and protecting the realm.

Available textual sources seem to indicate that the restoration of the Tangut royal clan Ngwemi by Chongzong took place simultaneously with the increase in the royal patronage of Confucianism, which culminated in the establishment of the State Academy (Chin. *guoxue* 國學), with three hundred scholars and students assigned to it.[43] Chinese texts on Tangut history mention Confucianism as an important political factor since as early as the 12th century.

Yet it appears that the influence of Confucianism culminated as late as the mid-12th century, when a Tangut version of the Chinese Hanlin Academy was established by Renzong. State-sponsored Confucian education remained an important part of Tangut ideology throughout the rest of Tangut history, and its influence was made manifest in the establishment of an examination system. At least three nationwide examination sessions took place during the 12th century, covering the reigns of both Chongzong and Renzong. The practice of adolescent examinations (Chin. *tongzi ke* 童子科) was also introduced during the 1140s.[44] From the period of Chongzong onwards, provincial and county schools were built and/or renovated, and enrollment in the Confucian school in the capital grew from three hundred students to almost three thousand during Renzong time. Renzong reestablished (or rather, rebuilt) the Imperial Academy (Chin. *taixue* 太學), set up an Inner Academy (Chin. *neixue* 內學),

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41   *Song Da zhaoling ji*, 913.

42   *Xixia jishi benmo*, 146; Song Da zhaoling ji, 917.

43   *Songshi*, 4266.

44   Zhou Lasheng 周臘生, "Xixia gongju gouchen 西夏貢舉鉤沉 [Tangut Examination System]," *Xiaogan Xueyuan xuebao* 孝感學院學報 [Journal of Xiaogan Institute] 31.2 (2011): 14–21.

and appointed famous scholars (Chin. *mingru* 名儒) to preside over it. Further-more, he developed a nation-wide educational network. In 1146, Confucius was elevated to the rank of emperor with the title Emperor Promoting Culture (Chin. *wenxuan di* 文宣帝). The restoration of the Imperial Academy was com-memorated with an eulogy:

> Ode for the Renovation of the Imperial Academy
>   The Star of Literature [sent] by the Will of Heaven, the treasure of the State/Humanity and Virtue transform the State to happiness; the Sages of the Mi [Realm],[45] made[46] sacred words and sacred phrases as texts, so that [they] became the Teachers of Virtue for the thousands of the Black-Headed; August Plans and August Words[47] composed verses, the ten thousand of the Red-Faced took them as examples. [Texts and verses] are [similar to] building a fortress [lit. 'wall') without earth, [this] city of no-earth is as eternal as Heaven and Earth, beautiful and marvelous; [again, texts and verses] are [similar to] the fire without ashes to feed it, there is no ashes to feed it, but it shines like the Sun and the Moon, bright and brilliant; After that, in the *renzi* year, the Great Temple[48] was rebuild on the Old Shadow [i.e. Ancestral Temple], the new hall for the Lord of Scholarship[49] was established, and very soon the gods and the spirits

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45   Tang. *gọr¹ no²* (結瓶), the Teacher, translates as Chin. *junshi* (君師) or *fuzi* (夫子), imply-ing Confucius, to discriminate from other teachers (Peng Xiangqian, *Xixia wen Mengzi zhengli yanjiu*, 54–55). Thus, the Tangut expression in the ode translates as 'Tangut Con-fucius.' This might also imply Yeli Renrong. However, to comply with the next line, a generalised translation was selected.

46   Tang. *thjwi¹* (瓬) (Li Fanwen, *Xia Han zidian*, 70) probably should be interpreted as the Chin. *kai* (開). Its usage here is determined by the matters of rhyme with Tang. *ɣir* (瓶) 'to make.'

47   Tang. *mẹ¹ phji¹ mẹ²njwo¹* (奻瓶奻㣀) translate as Chin. *yumou yuci* (御謀御詞). In this compound, Tang. *mẹ* (奻) is a standard epithet for the 'Emperor'; the compound indi-cates Tangut emperors in general.

48   Tang. *tha² mjijr²* (儝纀) translates as Chin. *da gong* (大宮). However, according to the *Tongyin* gloss, *mjijr²* (纀) is explained as: 'all what Augusts and Sages do, is accomplished.' In other occurrences, this word translates Chin. *rui* (睿). Considering the above, the sug-gested translation is Imperial Ancestral Temple (Chin. *taimiao* 太廟). This term obvi-ously parallels Tang. *pjụ²* (瀫) in the capacity of an Imperial palace in the next line. The meaning of the line is not completely clear, and the translation is tentative. *Renzi* year indicates 1192, see: Nie Hongyin 聶鴻音, "Xixia wen *Xin xiu Taixue ge* kaoshi 西夏文《新修太學歌》考釋 [On the Tangut Ode For the Renovation of the Imperial Acad-emy], in *Xixia wenxian lungao* 西夏文獻論稿 [Papers on the Study of Tangut Texts], ed. Nie Hongyin 聶鴻音 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2012), 197.

49   Tang. *rjijr² njij²* (纙 庸) is literally translated as Chin. *ruwang* (儒王) or *shiwang* (士王), i.e. the Lord of the Scholars-officials. Considering that the title of Emperor was bestowed

rejoiced in it; the Great Hall of Light,[50] [which] brings harmony to the people and the seasons, was established; the Auspicious Palace,[51] in [its] Metal corner[52] the windows were made, so that the Black wind from the Original West blows there as a hurricane; in the Wood direction[53] the doors were carved, the clean canals and the water sources were cleared.[54] The Hall of Hundred trees,[55] warm in winter, is adorned with treasures, guarded by the lions so that the wind does not get through;[56] the pagoda with seven levels,[57] cool in summer, decorated with paintings, the exquisite seats of the guarding spirits touch the clouds, when [one] sleeps [there] at night, the fear does not touch his eyes, can he dream of evil? When [one] lies [i.e. prostrates] beneath the Jin Platform,[58] he does not know destruction, [since] he is protected; when the morning comes, [one] stands in attendance with the palms raised, and thinks about the good; one abides next to the sacred likeness of the Buddha, and happiness is donated as the measure of life.[59] Think of this! The safety of our State, as eternal as the Heaven and Earth, is manifest; [our] precious throne as permanent as the Sun and the Moon, is said to be established firmly. The Emperor with his hands gives the wine, [we] drink the medicine soup and are not captured by extinction, the August Plan[60] abides on the Flower Seat, as magnificent as [in his] youth, and does not know about the old age. One Sage makes ten thousand happy as one through his benevolence, could it happen in the later dynasties?[61]

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on Confucius by Renzong, the Lord of Scholars should imply Confucius.

50   Tang. *bju¹ kjɨr²* (�giant glyphs) translates as Chin. *mingtang* (明堂).

51   Tang. *gju² rjur² mjɨ²* (Tangut glyphs) literally reads as Chin. *jixiang gong* (吉祥宮), possibly translated as 'Temple of Mañjuśrī.'

52   I.e. West.

53   I.e. East.

54   This line generally means that the new building was designed according to the principle of the five elements.

55   Literal translation: Tang. *jir² phu¹ jij²* (Tangut glyphs); Chin. *baishu ge* (百樹閣).

56   Tentative translation.

57   Tang. *śjạ¹ tsewr¹ du¹* (Tangut glyphs) translates as Chin. *qi ceng lou* (七層樓). Here it should probably be interpreted as a 'seven level pagoda' in the Buddhist sense.

58   Tang. *kjĩ ¹thej²* (Tangut glyphs) is a Chinese transcription, which returns something similar to Chin. *jintai* (金台). This term is attested in other sources as 'altar'; possible interpretation: *jitan* (祭壇), 'sacrificial platform.' Another possible interpretation chosen by Nie Hongyin, is "Xixia wen *Xin xiu Taixue ge* kaoshi," 198: *lingtai* (靈台).

59   Tentative translation.

60   Emperor Renzong.

61   Tangut text: 嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴/ 嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴/ 嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴/ 嚴嚴嚴/ 嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴/ 嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴/ 嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴/ 嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴/ 嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴/ 嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴嚴/ 嚴嚴嚴嚴□嚴/ 嚴嚴嚴嚴/ 嚴嚴嚴

Many parts of the *Ode for the Renovation of the Imperial Academy* are open to interpretation. However, the elevation of Confucius with an imperial title, as well as the *renzi* year date (1192), clearly indicate the reign of Renzong. Together with a variety of Sinitic tropes, the text contains clear indications of the coalescence between Confucian and Buddhist motifs within the figure of the emperor. Here language emerges as a royal divine attribute, bringing together a variety of teachings. This is probably in accord with what was suggested above in this presentation. The analysis presented above is nowhere close to being exhaustive. However, the contents of the *Ode for the Renovation of the Imperial Academy* does indicate that Confucianism in the Tangut Empire was a specific ideology, obviously permeated with Buddhist elements and possibly also those of the Tangut imperial cult. All of this needs further research.

As already stated, the rise of Confucianism took place within a relatively short period of time, indicative of Renzong's plan of creating a power base independent from the tribal aristocracy and powerful clans. This was a continuation of both Jingzong and Chongzong's policies.[62] However, none of these Confucian endeavors are reflected in the surviving Tangut texts. Even so, we can juxtapose the surviving terminology with the Chinese sources. Tangut texts mention *mji² γiew¹dzjij²* (毭黻散), which points to Chinese *fanxue* (番學), and *mji²xâ²sǫ¹γiew¹* (毭黻散黻) to Chinese *fanhan san xue* (番漢三學), i.e. the Tanguto-Chinese School of Three Learnings. This obviously was not the Imperial Academy mentioned above, but an institute of higher learning.

The rise of Confucianism in the Tangut Empire during the reign period of Renzong coincided with administrative reforms, including the reassignment of the administrative units *zhou* (州) and *jun* (郡) (Tang. *tśiw² io²* 玅瓶), together with the inception of Tangut coin production, something which also attest to increased administrative development in the Tangut Empire. This period of

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縔佖羕羕／琵帳薭劙陋級／敠繖薮级桃煹／縿廥觽戺菨綴／豏嬰狱嬰帳缈扬琵／
敠佖絔／嵺粼猴豩妭竴蕤菺／綄綷炕／蕬猊帍繖纅婑／譧憠蒨菲蔽薮龢／蕤猅
菀蔱薮鞻／綖蒏紛婑扬歝繈／藏菂纯羍擸／谻赦菀獥／翙飝骹莽鞔毲扬／菀
蕾賫疵胤／玆赦骹譃／甊狱菀綫鼬薮鍝／旁羛褼蒺缈恍黻骹鄢／毢毻豩骹
蒎繈／鮸艥骹騴蕤蔽葯／纗扬炻愮報扬绎繠纁龢／刭豀绊眿矖绝／麁愮骹涂
綛綛秲／瑔炵菀／矕蕥妬譅貔嚈羕菨嘺鵋／刭刭觇赦貮嵺纃缈弥劾骹／縔帳骹羕

The transcription of the Tangut texts is borrowed from Nie Hongyin, "Xixia wen *Xin xiu Taixue ge* kaoshi," 195–202. The translation is mine. The text is in odic Tangut, thus the translation is in many cases uncertain.

62   Account of these events is presented, among other sources, in *Songshi*, 4268–4269. *Songshi* places these events in the periods *Daqing* (1140–1144, 大慶) and *Renqing* (1144–1148, 人慶) immediately preceding enfeoffing of Ren Dejing as the Prince of Chu (Chin. Chu wang 楚王).

reform and development extends from 1145 to 1149.[63] Opposition to this course was represented by a powerful minister, Ren Dejing as mentioned above.[64]

The success of Renzong's reforms was secured by a group of Confucian-oriented scholars. One of them was Wo Daochong (d. 1185, 斡道冲), a 'professor' in both the Chinese and Tangut schools. He had been promoted by Renzong and was loathed by the Ren Dejing for his opposition to the latter's plan to split the Tangut State into two domains, one of which he intended to rule independently.[65] Others include Luo Shichang (fl. mid. 12th c., 羅世昌) and Wo Zhaze (fl. mid. 12th c., 斡札簀), who are mentioned as responsible for compiling the Tangut historical records and other books.[66] Wo Daochong's descendants continued to be important officials during the Yuan Dynasty, and arranged for the famous literatus Yu Ji (1278–1342, 虞集) to compose an eulogy in Chinese for their progenitor. Part of the text reads:

> Eulogy to the Image of Prince Wo from the Tangut Empire
>
> The Prince belonged to the Wo family, his ancestors were from the Lingwu area, later moved to Xingzhou following the Tangut Lord. Their hereditary occupation was that of 'historiographer of the Tangut State'. His name was Daochong, second name Zongsheng. At the age of eight, he qualified for the children examinations with the *Shangshu* 尚書 [Book of Documents], was well trained in the Five Canons. He was appointed as the teacher in both the Tangut and Chinese schools, translated *Lunyu zhu* 論語註 [The Commentary to the Analects], and wrote an explanation of its meaning, entitled *Lunyu xiaoyi* 論語小義 [The Concise Meaning of the Analects] in 20 *juan*, he also composed the *Zhouyi bushi duan* 周易卜筮斷 [Interpretation of Divinations *bu* and *shu* of the *Yi jing*]. These were written in the national [Tangut] script, and distributed throughout the realm, and still remain in circulation up to now. In his official career, he was promoted to the palace secretariat [(Chin. *zhongshu* 中書)], as prime minister [(Chin. *xingxiang* 宰相)] of the realm, and then passed away.

63   Chronology in *Xixia jishi benmo*, 222–223.

64   Nie Hongyin 聶鴻音, "Fan Han erzi yuan biazheng 番漢二字院辨正 [Study on the Tangut and Chinese Schools]," in *Xixia wenxian lungao* 西夏文獻論稿 [Papers on the Study of Tangut Texts], (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2012), 134–136.

65   Details of Ren Dejing's mutiny are widely available; the most concise version is found in the *Xixia jishi benmo*.

66   Biographies available in: Zhou Chun 周春, Hu Yubing 胡玉冰, eds., *Xixia shu jiaobu* 西夏書校補 [*Xixia shu* with Puncuation and Comments] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2014), *juan* 14, *liezhuan* 列傳 [Biographies].

Originally, the people of the Tangut Empire, revered Confucius as the Sage Emperor, the Promoter of Culture. Therefore, the painted image of the Prince was prepared, and sacrifices were established. Other regional and county schools followed this pattern. When the Tangut Empire collapsed, the regions and counties were abolished by warfare, the temples [of Confucius] and the schools were all destroyed, and the traces only survive in Ganzhou. The door plaques from the temple of the Emperor [i.e. Confucius] can still be seen in Xingzhou, together with the stone carving of the *Lingzhi ge* 靈芝歌 [Lingzhi Hymn] composed by the Tangut Lord[67]; the main hall and the galleries [of the ancestral temple] have survived in Liangzhou. [...] The Eulogy says: When the Tangut Empire was prosperous, it worshipped Confucius in the most respectful and intimate manner, and imperial sacrifices were established for him. There was a Confucian official, who completely understood the *Book of Documents*, understood canonical texts and literary works, transformed the capital of the realm, and then served his lord as chancellor [...].[68]

The *Eulogy to the Image of Prince Wo from the Tangut Empire* is actually the most authoritative Chinese source on Tangut Confucianism and corroborates to some extent the *Ode for the Imperial Academy*. Although the text is indicative of the development of the Tangut educational system, as well as of the large number of translations of the classic texts, the rise of Confucianism was in many ways politically motivated. Confucianism in the Tangut Empire remained strong among Tangut officials and scholars, who continued their service under the Yuan. The son of Wo Daochong, Gao Zhiyao (1206?–1271?, 高智耀), qualified for a *jinshi* degree during the Tangut Empire, and later, after a period of seclusion following the demise of the empire, he served as a senior scholar-official under Godan Khan (1206–1251). Crucially, the Confucian

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67   Composition by the Emperor Chongzong, attested in other sources.
68   西夏相斡公畫像贊 公姓斡氏, 其先靈武人; 從夏主遷興州, 世掌夏國史公. 諱道沖, 字宗聖. 八歲以《尚書》中童子舉, 長通五經, 爲蕃漢教授, 譯《論語註》別作解義二十卷曰:《論語小義》, 又作《周易卜筮斷》, 以其國字書之, 行於國中, 至今存焉. 官至其國之中書, 宰相而殁. 夏人嘗尊孔子爲至聖文宣帝, 是以畫公象, 列諸從祀, 其國郡縣之學, 率是行之. 夏亡郡縣廢於兵, 廟學盡壞, 獨甘州僅存其迹. 興州有帝廟門牓, 及夏主靈芝歌石刻, 涼州有殿及廡. [...] 述贊曰: 西夏之盛, 禮事孔子, 極其尊親, 以帝廟祀, 乃有儒臣, 早究典謨, 通經同文, 教其國都, 遂相其君 [...]. See, Yu Ji 虞集, "Xixia xiang Wo gong huaxiang zan 西夏相斡公畫像贊 [Eulogy to the Image of the Tangut Prince Wo]," in *Daoyuan xue gu lu* 道園學古錄 [Records of the Studies of the Past in Daoyuan] 3, in *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 [Complete Collection of the Books in Four Repositories], ch. 1633c (*Yuan wen lei* 元文類 [Collection of the Yuan Prose], 80).

learning of these Tangut officials does not seem to have affected their Buddhist sympathies. In his report, another official Wang Yun (王惲, 1227–1304), describes Gao Zhiyao as follows:

> Inspector Gao Zhiyao is by nature soft and irresolute, [his] accomplishments are unheard of; his joy is serving the Buddha and paying homage to the monks, by his intentions and behavior he is [like] no one else, but a monk with hair. That is, he does not have the abilities to carry out his official duties in a disciplined and rigorous manner, and has difficulties accomplishing tasks which require confronting [others].[69]

Gao Zhiyao was considered an exemplary Confucian scholar and official, and yet, as Wang Yun has observed, his true allegiance was to Buddhism. There is no reason to believe that other Tangut Confucians behaved in a different manner. That is, the sources quoted above indicate that there existed a complementary relationship between Buddhism and Confucianism, and not that the two teachings presented alternatives to each other.

Despite the above, there is very little concrete information about the 'Confucian' translations; more importantly, there is no data indicative of a connection between the Tangut writing system and the Chinese classics. What there is, however, are indications of the imperial connection between the Tangut language and the writing system, and, as shown above, with the Buddhist scriptures.

6   Provisional Conclusions

The above discussion, fragmentary as it is, indicates that the Tanguts created a multifaceted ideological complex that incorporated elements of both

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69   使高智耀, 資性罷輭, 不聞有爲, 事佛敬僧, 乃其所樂, 迹其心行 , 一有髮僧耳, 既乏風憲之材, 難處搏擊之任. The report is of course politically motivated, implying that Gao Zhiyao's Buddhist faith did not allow him to reveal the abuses of the *saṃgha* members, who were confiscating agricultural land from the peasants, an important issue in Yuan politics. Wang Yun 王惲, *Qiujian xiansheng Daquan ji* 秋潤先生大全集 [Collected Works of Master Qiujian] 86, in *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 [Complete Collection of the Books in Four Repositories]. The electronic version (accessed November 24, 2018, <http://skqs.guoxuedashi.com/wen_2385a/52013.html>) contains the following information: "Exposition of inappropriate performance of duties by Inspector Gao Zhiyao in the Tangut province of Zhongxing" (彈西夏中興路按察使高智耀不當狀), and "The local customs in the Hexi [region] are generally monastic" (河西土俗, 大牛僧祇). Gao Zhihui was himself a Tangut descendant, the son of the last Tangut governor of the Tangut capital Zhongxing (中興).

Buddhism and Confucianism. The role of Daoism was probably negligible. Although no one can claim to possess a complete understanding of the texts presented here, their overall purport to establish Tangut national identity nevertheless seems clear. This, in turn, means that traditional interpretation of the educational and ritual policies of Tangut emperors as following either a Confucian or a Buddhist agenda needs some adjustment.

As it appears now, the core of the ideological system was the concept of Tangut Rituals, which in turn gravitated around the Tangut writing system, which again was associated with the figure of the Tangut emperor. The writing system endowed Buddhism, Confucianism and Daoism with the status of Teachings (Chin. *jiao* 教), thus all teachings were probably believed to be complementary to each other. Nevertheless, priority was obviously given to Buddhism, because this religion was more closely associated with the idea of the unique position of the Tanguts in the world. Promotion of Confucianism during the later period of Tangut history from the mid-12th century onwards did not induce or cause any neglect of Buddhism.

In fact, we can enumerate a rather long list of Buddhist triumphs during Renzong's reign period, including a large-scale project to edit earlier Buddhist translations, the significant growth of Tibetan Buddhism, an expanding number of translations from Tibetan, the establishment of the office of the Imperial Preceptor (Chin. *dishi* 帝師), and so forth.

At the same time, monuments of Tangut encyclopedic learning, as well as the publication of the Tangut odes, which codify the Tangut national lore, also date from Renzong's period and immediately thereafter. Such a tremendous growth has to be explained, and one way to do so is to hypothesize the final formalisation of the idea of what constituted Tangut Rituals, which in turn determined the nature of Tangut self-identity. As a nation they showed themselves to be endowed with their own specific version of culture, i.e. Chinese *wen,* which legitimised and secured their position in the world *vis-à-vis* their neighbours, who were recognised as possessing similar, but inferior, qualities.

Hence, the Tangut emperors starting from Chongzong, generally followed Jingzong's line by not promoting Sinitic culture as an alternative to Tangut; nor did they seek to promote Buddhism per se (especially, to promote Tibetan Buddhism as an alternative to the Sinitic version of Buddhism), but instead they sought to nourish what they perceived as the Tangut national spirit. It only so happened that Buddhism was more intimately associated with the Tangut national idea than Confucianism.

Sacred Space and Pilgrimage

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From Padmasambhava to Gö Tsangpa: Rethinking Religious Patronage in the Indian Himalayas between the 8th and 13th Centuries

Verena Widorn

1　Introduction[1]

Authenticity—in all its various aspects[2]—seems to be one of the most required criterions when analysing an object of art. The questions of authenticity of provenance and originality in particular are of major importance for western art historians. The interest in genuine workmanship, the knowledge of an exact date, and chronology keep scholars occupied in their search for proper timelines and the artistic lineages of monuments and artefacts. The time of

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1　I especially wish to express my gratitude to Carmen Meinert and her team for the generous invitation to the start-up conference of her ERC project *BuddhistRoad*, which gave me the opportunity to present and now to publish a topic that has been on my mind for several years and was supported through several field trips to pilgrimage sites in Himachal Pradesh. Still, this study is just a first attempt to express my uneasiness with the manner in which academic studies forces western concepts of authenticity onto otherwise hagiographic ideals. I am also thankful to Max Deeg and Lewis Doney for their critical and efficient comments on my paper during the conference. I especially thank Erika Forte for all her helpful suggestions and her constant encouragement. I am particularly grateful to Melissa Kerin, who in many discussions stimulated my thinking about the concept of western and non-western geography of art and who made essential comments to this paper. I equally appreciate the suggestions and helpful hints by Tasha Kimmet. My research trips to Lahul and Kinnaur were generously financed by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) in the framework of different research projects on the cultural history of the Western Himalaya directed by Deborah Klimburg-Salter, who encouraged and has always supported my interest in the sacred environment of the region.

2　The concept of authenticity is not only difficult to define, but also quite controversial in various disciplines. While the historical sciences consider authenticity mostly in the sense of 'historical truth,' 'genuineness,' and 'originality' as counterparts to 'false documents/fake news,' 'forgery,' or 'imitation,' the term is exposed in the postmodern discourse primarily as a construct of subjective perceptions. For anthropology, Regina Bendix comprehends the question of authenticity as the root discourse of the discipline, albeit with a broad and elusive semantic domain, due to the moral, emotional, or even romanticising conceptualisation of the term. See Regina Bendix, "Diverging Paths in the Scientific Search for Authenticity," *Journal of Folklore Research* 29.2 (1992): 104–105. Susanne Knaller also notes the intricacies of the concept of authenticity "in that it enables to contaminate empirical, interpretative, evaluative and normative moments in a barely unlockable way." See Susanne Knaller, *Ein Wort aus der Fremde. Geschichte und Theorie des Begriffs Authentizität* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2007), 9.

commission and the role of patronage are considered not only historically and politically decisive factors for iconography and style but also reveal certain information about the social, economic, and ideological backgrounds of the creation process. Outside of the western art historical sphere, authenticity can be expressed and valued differently. Historic and artistic values are minor components in a devotional context and often mean little or nothing to local communities' current spiritual relationship to the artefact or building. What tend to be important characteristics from an academic perspective, namely when, how, and by whom an object was made, seem less relevant for communities of devotion, who are concerned with the ritual potency of a cultic icon—especially on a personal level for the individual practitioner.

The association of monuments with religious personalities whose life narrations are hagiographic and not historical accounts, is a frequent phenomenon in the Western Himalayas. In this paper, as a case study, I employ an art historical perspective to discuss and compare the religious landscape and the Buddhist legacy of two regions, namely the valleys of Kinnaur and Lahul (at present of the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh) (map 6.1). Both districts share several common features that allow for a meaningful comparison, such as a similar topographical setting and a location at the periphery of the former Tibetan Empire in the 8th century, the West Tibetan Kingdom of Purang-Guge in later centuries, and the Ladakhi reign at the turn of the first millennium. Both districts are traversed by important trade (and at present-day tourist) routes, which also double as pilgrimage routes, connecting the plains of India with the high mountains of the Himalayan and Zanskar Ranges. These corridors of trade and pilgrimage helped to establish cultural exchanges among these areas. A mixed population of Buddhists and Hindus have settled in both regions. Thus vital religious centres and Buddhist strongholds have developed there in the last millennium—although the boundaries between the different schools and even faiths often blur.

Kinnaur and Lahul share a common artistic heritage, which is the focus of this discussion. With references to oral traditions, daily rituals, local beliefs, and art historical evidence, I present current perceptions of three Buddhist figures of the Western Himalaya, namely the Indian Tantric ascetic Padmasambhava/Guru Rinpoche (8th c.), the Western Tibetan translator Rinchen Zangpo (ca. 985–1055, Tib. Rin chen bzang po), and the Tibetan yogi and pilgrim Gö Tsangpa (ca. 1189–1258, Tib. rGod tshang pa). By shifting my analysis away from chronology and western conceptions of authenticity, and by embracing local knowledge and history, this essay contributes a Baxandall-like study[3] that focuses on the mechanisms that shape the religious landscape of

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3   The art historian Michael Baxandall formulated the concept of the 'Period Eye,' arguing that works of art should be looked at and described by considering the cultural factors and conven-
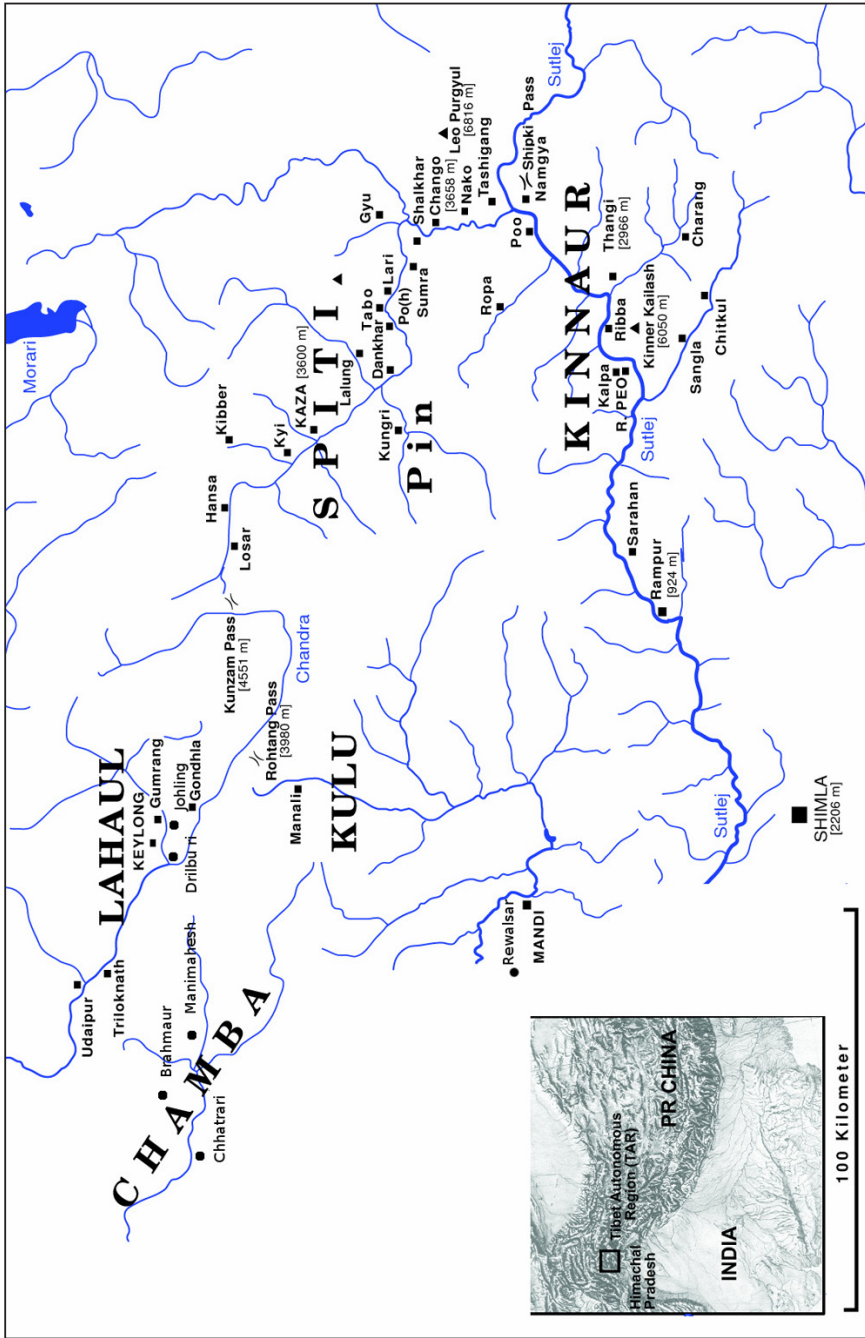
MAP 6.1   Map of Himachal Pradesh, India.
WESTERN HIMALAYA ARCHIVE VIENNA (WHAV)

this area and explains the handling of cultural heritage in a sacred geography. Using a method that prioritises the lived experience of these sites and hagiographic accounts of them, this paper contributes to identifying and using categories and materials of analysis that stem from and respond to the Western Himalayan context as opposed to perpetuating western-informed categories of art analysis in a quest for chronological and artistic authenticity.

2   State of Research

The focus of art historical research in the Western Himalayas is often on ancient remains of rather popular Buddhist monasteries in Ladakh and Spītī, which provide a relatively well-preserved monastic infrastructure with beautiful wall paintings that date to the end of the 1st and beginning of the 2nd millennium.[4] While we do have a rather extensive survey of Buddhist art and architecture in Spītī and Ladakh, comparable studies for Kinnaur and Lahul are still missing, partly due to the fact that several monasteries and shrines have been either destroyed or recently restored and repainted.[5] There are few publications discussing the role of these august Buddhist personalities and local perceptions of them in relation to the artistic evidence in the Western

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tions that influence the visual characteristics of an object at a particular point of time. See Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 29–32. He states that "if we wish to explain pictures, in the sense of expounding them in terms of their historical causes, what we actually explain seems likely to be not the unmediated picture but the picture as considered under a partially interpretative description. The description is an untidy and lively affair." Baxandall, *Painting and Experience*, 10–11. Applying this concept to the religious monuments in the Western Himalayas, the description of artefacts should not present an authentic picture of the past, but promote the idea of addressing the relationship between art, architecture, landscape, and the local contemporary concept of patronage.

4   See e.g. the still valid standard references by Roger Goepper and J. Poncer, *Alchi Ladakh's Hidden Buddhist Sanctuary* (London: Shambala, 1974, reprint 1996): and Deborah Klimburg-Salter, *Tabo—A Lamp for the Kingdom. Early Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Art in the Western Himalaya* (Milan: Skira, 1996) who base their studies on the pioneering works of August H Francke, *Antiquities of Indian Tibet, Part I: Personal Narrative. Of a Journey in 1910 from Simla to Srinagar; Through Kinnaur, Spītī and Ladakh. For the express Purpose of Investigating the Buddhist Antiquities* (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1914); and Giuseppe Tucci, *Indo-Tibetica II. Rin-c'en bzan-po e la rinascita del Buddismo nel Tibet intorno al mille* (Rome: Reale Accad. d'Italia, 1933).

5   In the 1970s, the architect Romi Khosla studied the technical and architectural construction of selected Buddhist monasteries in Lahul, providing several ground plans that are mainly out-dated due to heavy restoration and reconstruction work on the buildings in the last few decades. See Romi Khosla, *Buddhist Monasteries in the Western Himalaya* (Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 1979), 153–154.

Himalayan area.[6] Only a handful of publications bring together artistic evidence and anthropological considerations to provide a more faceted and dynamic picture of the religious practices in the past and present in relation to the material culture of the Western Himalaya.[7] But the method of purely iconographic or stylistic analysis of artistic masterpieces in Kinnaur (especially Upper Kinnaur) has recently moved to a more interdisciplinary approach that considers the non-hierarchical concept of visual and material culture and the shifting identity of monuments throughout the centuries.[8]

The research and restoration work on the Nako Temple complex in Kinnaur by an international team of conservation experts, architects, and art historians, and by the village community, also reveals a more differentiated insight into the village and its sacred and vernacular architecture. Art historical research in Lahul is still in an early stage. The secular and religious monuments have only

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6 Based on the anthropological studies of Elizabeth Stutchbury, *Rediscovering Western Tibet. Gonpa, Chorten and the Continuity of Practice with a Tibetan Community in the Indian Himalaya* (PhD diss., Canberra, 1991), the translation of the travel accounts of Tibetan pilgrims by Giuseppe Tucci, *Travels of Tibetan Pilgrims in the Swat Valley* (Rome: IsMEO, 1971), and my own art historical observations, I made a first attempt to reconstruct a possible artistic and religious setting that the Buddhist practitioners might have experienced in Lahul from the 13th to the 17th century: see Verena Widorn, "Traversing the Land of Siddhas and Dakinis—Art Historical Evidence along the Buddhist Pilgrimage Routes through Lahul," in *Cultural Flows across the Western Himalaya*, ed. Patrick McAllister, Christina Scherrer Schaub, and Helmut Krasser (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 2015), 189–235.

7 A first attempt to reassess art historical observations at the Buddhist temple in Ribba, Upper Kinnaur, by considering local folk tales and songs, was made by Deborah Klimburg-Salter, "Ribba, the Story of an Early Buddhist Temple in Kinnaur," in *Buddhist Art and Tibetan Patronage, Ninth to Fourteenth Centuries*, ed. Deborah Klimburg-Salter and Eva Allinger (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2002), 1–28, later followed by Laxman Thakur, "Rin chen Bzang po's Footsteps: Re-Evaluating the Contribution of the Great Translator through Folklore and Archaeology," in *Buddhist Himalaya: Studies in Religion, History and Culture. Proceedings of the Golden Jubilee Conference of the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, Gangtok, 2008*, ed. Alex McKay and Anna Blikci-Denjongpa (Gangtok: NIT, 2011), vol. 1, 209–218.

8 While this approach is a rather recent phenomenon with regard to Western Himalayan art, there are already several endeavours for Indian art that seek to destabilise traditional approaches and western conceptions of art, because they limit our understanding of other cultures, see e.g. Pika Gosh, *Temple to Love. Architecture and Devotion in Seventeenth-Century Bengal* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2005). For Kinnaur, one should certainly mention two publications by Melissa Kerin, *Art and Devotion at a Buddhist Temple in the Indian Himalaya* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015); Melissa Kerin, "Materiality of Devotion: Tibetan Buddhist Shrines of the Western Hima-laya," in *Art of Merit: Studies in Buddhist Art and its Conservation*, ed. David Park and Kuenga Wangmo (London: Archetype Publications, 2013), 286–296. Both studies point out the organic and interactive aspect of village temples (not only of the Western Hima-laya), where important personalities and teacher are frequently recognised and idolised beyond their sectarian affiliation.

been selectively studied with a concentration on the more ancient objects.[9] In the 1970s, the architect Romi Khosla studied the technical and architectural construction of selected Buddhist monasteries in Lahul, providing several ground plans that are partly out-dated, due to heavy restoration and reconstruction work on the buildings in the last few decades.

An exceptional publication is a small booklet released by the Garsha Young Drugkpa Association (YDA) in 2011. Nawang Jinpa meticulously compiled and critically discusses the opinions of different experts on the art and architecture of Lahul, complemented by the local perspectives and religious concepts of villagers and the Buddhist community. The respectful veneration of artefacts and sacred geography is evident on each page and reminds us that we are dealing with a living tradition that is subject to fluctuations, changes, and adaptions of religious systems over time. As the Garsha Young Drukpa Association explains:

> Although we explore written records, we have not relied solely on an academic approach because modern academism easily leads into deserts where the succulent water of faith and the nectar of miracles are regarded as highly suspect. For a pilgrim, such an approach is also suspect, because it is bound to errors and narrow views. [...] Thus in academic art and religious history of Lahaul, updates are constant.[10]

3   The Topographical and Religious Setting in Lahul and Kinnaur

Today, Lahul is a subdivision of the district of Lāhaul–Spītī and consists of three valleys named after the rivers that run through the region. While the population of the Bhaga and the Chandra Valley is nowadays mainly Buddhist, the inhabitants of the Chandrabhaga Valley, which was part of the neighbouring Chamba district for several centuries, are mainly Śaivas. The Bhaga Valley is currently a stronghold of the Drukpa Kagyü School (Tib. *'brug pa bka' brgyud pa*). The centre of the sacred landscape in Lahul is the holy mountain

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9   See e.g. Deborah Klimburg-Salter, "Tucci Himalayan Archives Report, 2: The 1991 Expedition to Himachal Pradesh," *East and West New Series* 44.1 (1994): 13–82 or Christian Luczanits, "Another Rin chen bzang po Temple?" *East and West* 44.1 (1994): 83–98, who were travelling through Lahul following the footsteps of Giuseppe Tucci's expedition of 1931.

10   Garsha Young Drukpa Association (YDA), *Garsha, Heart Land of the Dakinis* (Kyelong: Garsha Young Drukpa Association, 2011).
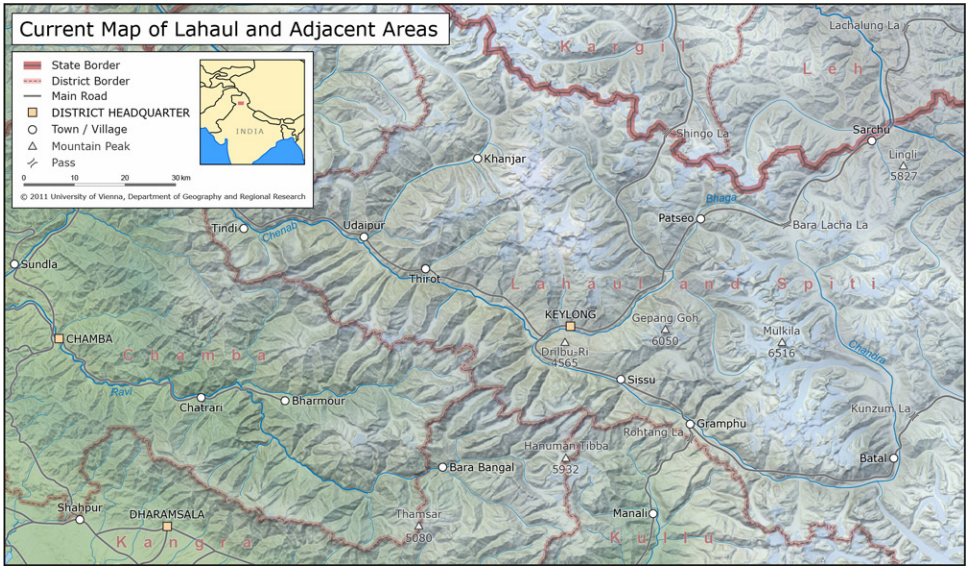
MAP 6.2   Map of Lahul, India.
CULTURAL HISTORY INFORMATION SYSTEM (CHIS)

Drilburi—forming a religious trinity with the Buddhist shrine of Triloknath and the Hindu shrine of Mirkulā Devī in Udaipur (map 6.2).[11]

In the neighbouring district of Kinnaur, despite the fact that scholars focusing on the region concentrate on its Buddhist heritage, at present the majority of the population is Hindu, around 85 percent.[12] Nevertheless, there are important Buddhist establishments not only in Upper Kinnaur but also in the

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11   By the local Buddhist tradition, Mt. Drilbu (Gandhola) is considered the place of the Buddha's Body associated with Cakrasaṃvara, while Triloknath is the place of Speech associated with Avalokiteśvara, and Udaipur is considered the place of Mind/Heart of Vajravārāhī. Furthermore, a place in or near Udaipur is also considered to be one of the twenty-four holy *tīrtha*s in India, associated with the *vajrakāya*. According to various Tantric schools, the *vajra*-body of the Buddha is divided into twenty-four limbs, each referring to a sacred site. The Mirkulā Devī Temple, or at least its location, corresponds to the toes of the *vajrakāya* and has, therefore, become a pilgrimage centre of trans-national interest for Buddhists, despite its Hindu origin. All three sites are also visited by Hindus—largely for general purification, but also for the wish-granting characteristic of a pilgrimage site, guaranteeing fertility, abundance, and prosperity. See Widorn, "Traversing the Land of Siddhas and Dakinis," 216.

12   See Census of India and also Alex McKay, *Kailas Histories. The Renunciate Traditions and the Construction of Himalayan Sacred Landscape* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 180.

MAP 6.3   Map of Kinner Kailash, India.
             CHIS

southern Sangla and Baspa Valley, situated along the circumambulation routes
of the holy mountain, the so-called 'Kinner' Kailash (map 6.3).[13]

3.1   *Padmasambhava*

Buddhism is generally said to have been first introduced into the Indian Hima-
laya by Nāgārjuna (fl. ca. 150–250) in the 2nd century and later revived by the

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13   Alex McKay, who studied the different Kailash mountains in the Himalayan area, ex-
        plains that the local people not only consider Kinner Kailash to be the abode of Śiva
        but also associate it with the dead ancestors of the community. See McKay, *Kailas Histo-*
        ries. McKay points out that the predominant character of the modern pilgrimage around
        Kinner Kailash is promoted as Saivite and that it follows the Hindu ritual calendar, but
        that it also has an explicit Buddhist component, proceeding via several ancient Buddhist
        temples.

legendary teacher Padmasambhava in the 8th century. In order to understand the development of Buddhism in the Indian Himalayas from the 10th century onward, one certainly has to comment on the role of Padmasambhava—especially on all the uncertainty about his real and mystical life, his influence on religious orders, and his position in the political system of Tibet and Northern India.

Within the religious traditions of the Indian Himalayas, there is a general belief that the Indian master of Tantric Buddhism, Padmasambhava, passed through the region on his way to Tibet, where he had been invited by the Tibetan King Tri Songdétsen (r. 742–ca. 800, Tib. Khri Srong lde bstan) on the advice of the Indian Buddhist philosopher Śāntarakṣita (725–788). Padmasambhava's special magical abilities gained through Tantric meditation and his ability to tame the enemy demons and therefore strengthen Buddhism, are often referred to.[14] In recent years, more and more doubts have emerged about the existence of Padmasambhava as an historic person. Due to his mystical character in his life stories, Friedrich Bischoff was among the first to argue that Padmasambhava was an invention of later centuries and only a kind of religious idea.[15] The legendary form of his biographies can best be understood as texts to be read as spiritual textbooks for Buddhist followers and not

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14   Rob Mayer points to the fact that not all early Buddhist texts were positive about Padmasambhava's role in Tibet. The important historical text the *dBa' bzhed* [Testament of the Ba] states that the great Tantric master was not well received in the south of Tibet, and he was even requested to return to India "since his display of powers creates anxiety and hostility in the minds of the Emperor and his ministers." See Robert Mayer, "'We Swear our Grandparents were there!' (Or, What Can the Sex Pistols Tell Us about Padmasambhava?) The Making of Myth in 10th Century Tibet and 20th Century England," in *The Illuminating Mirror, Tibetan Studies in Honour of Per K. Sørensen on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday,* ed. Olaf Czaja and Guntram Hazod (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2015), 341–342. Mayer agrees with Mathew Kapstein that one explanation might be that Padmasambhava was a teacher of transgressive Tantric practices very much independent of, and perhaps in opposition to, the Imperial Buddhist program. See Matthew T. Kapstein, *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism. Conversion, Contestation, and Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 159; and Mayer, "We Swear Our Grandparents were there," 342. During his travel in the region now part of Punjab, Xuangzang (600/602–664, 玄奘), the famous Chinese pilgrim of the 7th century, reports on Buddhists living with naked ascetics smeared with ashes from cremation grounds and wearing bones on their heads. David Lorenzen, *The Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas: Two lost Śaivite Sects* (New Delhi: Thomson Press, 1972), 15–16. Based on the studies of Alexis Sanderson on Indian Tantrism (especially in Kashmir), Mayer sees Padmasambhava as a practitioner of Mahāyoga Tantra at a time when the Śaiva-influenced *kāpālika* forms of Buddhist Tantrism gained popularity south of the Himalaya, and later in the 9th century became prevalent in Tibet.

15   Friedrich Bischoff, "Padmasambhava est-il un personnage historique?," in *Proceedings of the Csoma de Körös Symposium*, ed. Louis Ligeti (Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1978), 31.

necessarily as historiographical works. Researchers such as Peter Schwieger,[16] Ronald Davidson,[17] Jacob Dalton,[18] and Alex McKay[19] consider the phenomenon of Padmasambhava and the conception of magical acting, in light of a cultural, historical, and socio-political context that covers not only the past but also considers new trends.

Padmasambhava's presence in the Indian Himalayas seems to be proven by the *Padma bka'i thang yig* [Testament of Padmasambhava], one of the treasure texts, a type of text said to have been hidden by Padmasambhava so that it could be discovered at a time in the future when Tibet was prepared to receive the text's teachings. The *Testament of Padmasambhava*, discovered by Orgyen Lingpa (1323–ca. 1360, Tib. O rgyan gling pa) in 1352 in the Yarlung Valley, contains a list of places that were supposedly visited by the great master.[20] Tobdan refers to another ancient Buddhist text related to Padmasambhava, the *bLon po bka' yi thang yig* [Legends of the Ministers], which mentions the name of Gandhola in Lahul.[21]

3.2   *Rinchen Zangpo*

The other figure of great—but probably regional—renown in the Western Himalaya is the translator Rinchen Zangpo, an allegedly charismatic and energetic figure, who had a following of disciples and the support of powerful patrons, such as the religious king Yéshe Ö (ca. 947–ca. 1024), Tib. Ye shes 'od). From the late 10th century onwards, Tibetan Buddhism expanded in this region through the kings of Purang-Guge and the nobility, who founded monasteries and temples. The *mNga' ris rgyal rabs* [Royal Genealogies of Ngari],[22] dated to the end of the 15th century, describes the political dominance of Yéshe

16   Peter Schwieger, "Geschichte als Mythos – Zur Aneignung von Vergangenheit in der tibetischen Kultur. Ein kulturwissenschaftlicher Essay," *Asiatische Studien* 54.4 (2001): 945–973.

17   Ronald M. Davidson, *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Ronald M. Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance. Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

18   Jacob P. Dalton, "The Early Development of the Padmasambhava Legend in Tibet: A Study of IOL Tib J 644 and Pelliot Tibétain 307," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 124.4 (2004): 759–773; Jacob P. Dalton, *The Taming of the Demons. Violence and Liberation in Tibetan Buddhism* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2011).

19   McKay, *Kailas Histories*.

20   Detlef I. Lauf, "Zur Geschichte und Kunst Lamaistischer Klöster im Westhimalaya." *Asiatische Studien* 25 (1971): 367.

21   Tobdan. *History and Religions of Lahul* (New Delhi: Books Today, 1984).

22   For translation and an extensive commentary on the genealogy, see Roberto Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu-ge Pu-hrang According to mNga'ris gyal rabs by Gu-ge mkhan-chen*

Ö and his religious reformations in Guge and the adjacent region.[23] This process, in Tibetan historiography referred to as the second diffusion of Buddhism (Tib. *phyi dar*), included the foundation of monastic centres and Buddhist shrines, the institutionalisation of these religious establishments, and the suppression of Tantric rituals brought by practitioners such as the legendary and highly venerated Padmasambhava to the Indian Himalayas, where they intermingled with local belief and the worshiping of territorial deities.[24] Dalton argues that the development of Buddhism from the 8th to the middle of the 10th centuries was the cultural foundation for later forms of Tibetan Buddhism, since religion could be practiced at that time without clerical and aristocratic influence.[25] It became more liberal and open to the inclusion of local rituals. Yéshe Ö, however, sought to prevent these 'old, indigenous' practices (including death rituals) from infiltrating his new religious ideas. Through the translation and canonisation of Sanskrit texts into Tibetan, and the dissemination of the Buddhist teachings through edicts and the newly established monasteries, Yéshe Ö and his key agent, the great translator Rinchen Zangpo, created a buddhocratic empire that commissioned artisans and craftsman from Kashmir and from local workshops. Rinchen Zangpo is credited with the foundation of 108 temples, an auspicious number for Tibetans. Born in the region of Ngari (Tib. mNga' ris), his life dates are pretty much secure based on

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Ngag-dbang graps-pa (Dharamsala: Tho-liṅ dpal dpe med lhun gyis grub pa'i gtsug lag khaṅ lo 1000 'khor ba'i rjes dran mdzad sgo'i go sgrig tshogs chuṅ gis dpar skrun źus, 1996).

23   The early political history of Kinnaur in the West of the Guge region/Kingdom is not fully clear. Although the royal chronicles of the Bashahr Dynasty (1412–1956) and the *rana*s or *raja*s who ruled the state during the British Raj up to the 1947, claim an unbroken dynastic rule of 120 generations—it seems that the Western Tibetan kings extended their territory to the vicinity of Kinner Kailash until the collapse of the Guge Kingdom until the mid-17th century.

24   Seyfort Ruegg presents three models that describe the relation of pan-Indian and local gods to Buddhism: the substratum model, the borrowing model, and the agonistic or hostile model. See David Seyfort Ruegg, *The Symbiosis of Buddhism with Brahmanism/ Hinduism in South Asia and of Buddhism with Local Cults in Tibet and the Himalayan Region* (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 2008), viii. The first one suggests a common ground of religious belief and practice in India, which is shared by Buddhism and Brahmanism. The latter model seems to be another possibility to apply to the Himalayas in the tenth century, to demonstrate the superiority of Buddhism over local beliefs after a political and religious chaotic period, in Tibetan historiography referred to as time of fragmentation (Tib. *sil bu'i dus*). This last sentence needs to be edited. It is not clear what you mean by the second half of the sentence, "to demonstrate the...chaotic period."

25   Dalton, *The Taming of the Demons*, 36.

historical accounts and several biographies written by his followers.[26] Several buildings in the Indian Himalayas, especially in Kinnaur, are considered to have been founded by him.

3.3   *Gö Tsangpa*

From the 12th/13th century onwards, the relocating of Tibetan pilgrimage from the biographical sites of the Buddha in the Ganges region to less frequented places in more remote areas, led to a new tradition of Tibetan pilgrimage in the Indian hills.[27] The landscape became sanctified by magical acts and meditation, and many ancient sites became associated with the mystical power of Tantric yogis. One of the first Tibetan pilgrims who traversed the areas of Kinnaur and Lahul and left a spiritual imprint on the region was the Drukpa Kagyü monk Gö Tsangpa, who travelled through the area on the way from Central or Western Tibet to Oḍḍiyāna in the Swat Valley (the assumed birthplace of Padmasambhava). Gö Tsangpa was supposedly an emanation of Milarépa (1040–1123, Tib. Mi la ras pa) and is equally famous for his music and dance performances. The religious history of the Lahul region is closely connected to this personality, who is sometimes even erroneously considered to be from the region. There are several hagiographies describing Gö Tsangpa's pilgrimage from Zhang Zhung to Oḍḍiyāna through the Indian hills; the most well-known one is probably the manuscript Giuseppe Tucci located in Spīti in 1933, later published by him in 1971.[28] Together with the adept Orgyenpa Rinchenpel (ca. 1229–1309, Tib. O rgyan pa rin chen dpal), the Drukpa Kagyü yogi shaped the

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26   A translation of the earliest biography of Rinchen Zangpo, together with a list of associated temple foundations, is provided by David Snellgrove and Tadeusz Skorupski in the second volume of their path breaking book. David L. Snellgrove and Tadeusz Skorupski, *The Cultural Heritage of Ladakh, Vol. 2: Zangskar and the Cave Temples of Ladakh* (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1980). Besides his mention in the *Deb ther sngon po* [Blue Annals], George Nicholas Roerich, *The Blue Annals*. Part 1 (Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1949), 68–69, further information on Rinchen Zangpo's life and other historical records on the Kingdom of Purang-Guge are discussed in Tsepak Rigzin, "Rinchen Zangpo: The Great Tibetan Translator," *Tibet Journal* 9.3 (1984): 28–37; Vitali Roberto, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang* and recently David Thomas Pritzker, "Canopy of Everlasting Joy: An Early Source in Tibetan Historiography and the History of West Tibet" (PhD diss., University of Oxford, 2017).

27   Toni Huber, *The Holy Land Reborn. Pilgrimage and the Tibetan Reinvention of Buddhist India* (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008).

28   The itinerary (one out of fourteen) found by Tucci is named *rGyal brgod ts'an pa'i rnam thar gnas bsuds pai sgron me* [Lamp that Integrates the Biography of Gö Tsangpa] and is a separate chapter of the *dKar rgyud rnams kyi rnam thar gyi sgron me*. See Tucci, *Travels of Tibetan Pilgrims in the Swat Valley* (Rome: IsMEO, 1971), 374.

sacred geography and collective memory of Lahul in such a formative way that his impact and presence is still felt there today.[29]

Traces of these Buddhist masters can be found everywhere in the artistic heritage of Lahul and Kinnaur Valleys. The three figures mentioned above are highly venerated and frequently depicted in wall paintings, scroll paintings, and sculptures in Buddhist shrines and monasteries.[30] Additionally, there are some places in the Indian Himalaya that are particularly dedicated to and associated with their presence and patronage. I present the most prominent examples in the following sections in order to show how closely these objects and monuments are connected to the landscape and geological peculiarities of the region and how art is instrumental to sanctifying certain sites and creating a sacred geography of art.[31]

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29   The YDA points out that there is "such a vivid memory of his amazing feats that they [the local people] believe that he was around just a few generations ago." See Garsha Young Drukpa Association (YDA), *Garsha, Heart Land of the Dakinis*, 62.

30   None of these presentations were produced coeval to the (assumed) life-times of the three prominent personalities. One interesting example is the pictural programme of the oldest paintings in the monastery of Tabo, Spītī. Although the monastery is considered to be one of his foundations, Rinchen Zangpo is obviously not presented in the depiction of important historical figures and donors in the old entry hall of the main temple. The wall paintings dated to the foundation phase of the late 9th or early 10th century show a group of patrons and clan members of noble families, including Yéshe Ö and his two sons. The absence of Rinchen Zangpo in this assembly is explained by Klimburg-Salter by his time in Kashmir and his absence from Guge between ca. 987 and 1000, and from 1016 to 1021, as suggested by the Italian historian Luciano Petech in contrast to Vitali's slightly different chronology of the Great Translator's biography, see Klimburg-Salter, Deborah, "Imagining the World of Ye shes 'od. 10th Century Painting in Tabo," in *The Cultural History of Western Tibet. Recent Research from the China Tibetology Research Center and the University of Vienna,* ed. Deborah Klimburg-Salter et al. (Vienna, Beijing: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 2008), 240.

31   The concept of the sacredness of (Himalayan) landscape in general has been widely discussed by e.g. Niels Gutschow, Axel Michaels, Charles Ramble, and Ernst Steinkellner, eds., *Sacred Landscape of the Himalaya* (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 2003). The 'spatial turn' in art history, however, is not a recent phenomenon but a still debated issue questioning how the meaning of space and the concept of place is related and determined to the creation and characteristic of art and architecture. Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, in his book *Toward a Geography of Art*, is rethinking and investigating the notion and role of geography for art historians in an historical dimension. Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *Toward a Geography of Art* (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 2004). He highlights the conjunction of the temporal with the spatial aspects of objects and monuments and even suggests speaking of a "geohistory" of art; ibid., 13.

4   The Adoration of Padmasambhava in the Lahul and Kinnaur Valleys

The representation of Padmasambhava is omnipresent in the art of the Indian Himalayas. Practically all temples and monasteries have one or more sculptures or paintings of Padmasambhava, typically sitting in the royal position (Skt. *lalitāsana*), face adorned with a moustache and a goatee, and head covered with a red hat. He is usually holding a Tantric staff (Skt. *khaṭvāṅga*) and a skull cup (Skt. *kapāla*) in the left hand and a *vajra* near his heart in the right hand. But more important than his iconic images are special locations and natural phenomena in the geography that refer to his miraculous acts and presence. Power places, spectacular sites, and unique features in the mountainous landscape of Himachal seem to be specifically predestined for sanctification by the great guru Padmasambhava.

4.1   *Lahul*

One of these special locations is the site of Gandhola in Lahul. Gandhola is at the crossing of three valleys and allows a perfect view down on the cremation ground at the confluence of the Chandra and Bhaga Rivers (fig. 6.1). Eight Great Charnel Grounds are assigned to important events in Padmasambhavas life and the *siddhi* he received. In Lahul, this place is also associated with him by the local tradition. Equally important and sacred for both Hindus and Buddhist, it is considered a magical site and attracts Tantric practitioners:

> For Buddhist yogis, it has been considered a place of power also due to the energy of the currents coming together, enhancing special meditations aimed at uprooting all forms of self concern and grasping. In his biography, the great yogi Rangrik Repa (17th century) narrates how, as he reached this point of his pilgrimage, he remained on that spot for several hours in a state of total contemplative awe.[32]

The small three-storied shrine of Gandhola is situated on the slopes of the holy Mt. Drilbu (Drilburi), high up above the confluence of the rivers and is said to have been founded by Padmasambhava. A famous marble head, today kept in the Tupchiling Monastery just below Gandhola, is attributed to the site and is supposed to have been blessed by him (fig. 6.2). The partly damaged white-marble object displays the heads of a crowned Buddha or bodhisattva with half closed eyes. Although the crown is quite damaged, one can still guess the vague

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32   Garsha Young Drukpa Association (YDA), *Garsha, Heart Land of the Dakinis*, 27.

FIGURE 6.1   Confluence of Chandra and Bhaga, view from Gandhola, Lahul.
CHRISTIAN LUCZANITS, 1993, WHAV

FIGURE 6.2 Marble head of an Avalokiteśvara. Gandhola, Lahul (?) Dated to the 8th century, kept in Tupchiling, Lahul.
CHRISTIAN LUCZANITS, 1993, WHAV

silhouette of a figure with the arms resting on the legs in the lotus seat, proba-
bly Buddha Amitābha—indicating that the head might have been part of a
statue of Avalokiteśvara. The spiritual importance of the head is surrounded
by local legends that evolved in the last few decades, as the narrations about its
discovery show. Madanjeet Singh reports that the head was "dug up in the val-
ley below the junction of the rivers Chandra and Bhaga" without giving any
further information.[33] O.C. Handa places this event sometime between 1917
and 1953, and believes that the fragment belonged to a marble Avalokiteśvara
sculpture enshrined in the ancient Gandhola Monastery, whose original struc-
ture was destroyed in an avalanche.[34] The marble piece was known to, and
maybe even documented by, Henry Lee Shuttleworth when he visited Lahul in
the 1920s, since the Moravian missionary Walter Asboe refers to him in a letter
to the curator of the former ethnographical Cranmore Museum in Chislehurst,
U.K., in the 1930s.[35] Asboe collected various objects and items of ritual and
daily use for the British museum and was explicitly looking for this head in

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33   Madanjeet Singh, *Himalayan Art. Wall-painting and Sculpture in Ladakh, Lāhaul and Spītī,
     the Siwalik Ranges, Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan* (London, Melbourne: Macmillan, 1968).

34   O.C. Handa, *Buddhist Monasteries of Himachal* (New Delhi: Indus, 2004), 123. Unfor-
     tunately, Handa gives no sources for his story nor mentions any date for the alleged de-
     struction of the possible ancient structure of the monastery.

35   One of the most comprehensive surveys of the villages and artistic remains in Lahul is
     provided in the unpublished notes from the Herrnhuter missionary August Hermann
     Francke, drawing an interesting picture of the region's Buddhist artefacts at the begin-
     ning of the 20th century. See August H. Francke, *The Ancient History of Lāhaul* (Herrnhut:
     unpublished, undated); August H. Francke, *List of Ancient Monuments Lahul & Spītī. Ar-
     chaeological Survey, Panjab and United Provinces Circle* (Herrnhut: unpublished, undated,
     unpublished). While Francke was mainly interested in the Buddhist heritage of the area,
     the Dutch Sanskritist Jean Philippe Vogel, from the Archaeological Survey of India, with
     whom he was in constant exchange, was concentrating on the Hindu remains and monu-
     ments of the western part of Lahul, which belonged to Chamba State in earlier times. See
     Jean P. Vogel, *Antiquities of Chamba State* (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Print-
     ing, 1911). Francke also kept close contact and friendship with the British officer and ori-
     entalist Henry Lee Shuttleworth, who was travelling the Western Himalayas on behalf of
     the Indian Civil Service and who was working together with Francke on a planned but
     never realised forth volume of the *Antiquities of Indian Tibet.* The first two parts were
     published by Francke in 1914 and 1926. See also Christian Jahoda, "Archival Exploration of
     Western Tibet or What Remained of Francke's and Shuttleworth's Antiquities of Indian
     Tibet," in *Pramāṇakīrtiḥ. Papers Dedicated to Ernst Steinkellner on the Occasion of his 70th
     Birthday*, ed. Birgit Kellner et al. (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 2007), 361–394;
     and Yannick Laurent, "Henry Lee Shuttleworth (1882–1960) and the History of Spītī," *Re-
     vue d'Études Tibétaines* 41 (2017): 13. It is interesting to notice that although Francke's and
     Shuttleworth's research on Lahul was only fragmentarily published, it seems that their
     findings were well known and photographs were frequently circulated provoking suc-
     ceeding missionaries and collectors to get their hands on certain artefacts.

order to purchase it and send it to the U.K. Thus far, we do not have any information regarding whether his search was successful or not—the head is still in Lahul, and there are certain rumors that it is kept safe in the Tupchiling Monastery because there were attempts to steal the precious object in the past. The mysteries that twine around all these events—their vague chronology and speculative background—have even increased the local appreciation of the image as a sacred artefact. The Garsha Young Drukpa Association supports the local tradition that considers the discovery, or rather emergence, of the head seventy years ago at the confluence of the rivers to be a miraculous event.[36]

Handa claims that "the head is stylistically and thematically identical to the one [sculpture] at Triloknath and may be coeval."[37] Handa refers to the marble idol of the shrine at the famous nearby pilgrimage site in the Chandrabhaga Valley, which seems to be a place of worship for Buddhists as well as Hindus for several centuries.[38] The temple's main image is a six-armed Sugatisaṃdarśana Lokeśvara[39] that sits on a high lotus pedestal and displays the gesture of 'wish-granting' (Skt. *varadamudrā*) with one of his right hands. It is at least in modern times, also venerated by Hindu pilgrims as an image of the ascetic Śiva. The sculpture is difficult to date, but seems to have replaced the original central image, a dark stone Lokeśvara, maybe only after the 17th century.[40] The marble sculpture is not an exact copy of the black stone image, but follows it in iconography and form. However, apart from the rare use of marble, the fragmented head of Gandhola differs stylistically from both images

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36   Garsha Young Drukpa Association (YDA), *Garsha, Heart Land of the Dakinis*, 28.

37   Handa, *Buddhist Monasteries of Himachal*, 123.

38   Obviously of Buddhist origin, clearly indicated by the two small Buddhas in the brackets of the columns in front of the sanctum, and the main idol, the Nāgara Temple with the conspicuous tower is clearly more oriented on and influenced by the North Indian temple design than by any Tibetan tradition, and can therefore be dated to a period before the 10th century. See therefore Verena Widorn and Gerald Kozicz, "The Temple of Triloknath—A Buddhist Nagara Temple in Lahul," *South Asian Studies* 28.1 (2012): 15–35. This date is also supported by an inscription found inside the temple and translated by Diwakar Acharya. See Garsha Young Drukpa Association (YDA), *Garsha, Heart Land of the Dakinis*, 135.

39   The iconography of the Sugatisaṃdarśana Lokeśvara is especially found in Kashmir in the 10th and 11th centuries, but the Triloknath image is not as elegant and delicate as the bronze sculptures of that time.

40   The itinerary of Taktsang Répa (1574–1651, Tib. sTag tshang ras pa) mentions that in Triloknath there is the image of Avalokiteśvara (Tib. sPyan ras gzigs) in a difficult to iconographically identify form of … (Tib. 'Gro drug sgrol ye shes); see Tucci, *Travels of Tibetan Pilgrims in the Swat Valley* (Rome: IsMEO, 1971), 410. The use of the term 'stone' and not 'marble' in the itinerary might indicate that the dark stone image was still worshiped in the 17th century.

in Triloknath. It seems to display only some similarities with the dark stone sculpture, such as the clear-cut eyebrows, the fringes on the forehead, and the crown type, but it certainly shares common features with Kashmiri examples of the late 7th/8th centuries. This early date certainly supports the local belief that the marble head (or rather the whole sculpture, now lost) already existed, was worshiped, and was blessed by Padmasambhava when he allegedly passed through Lahul on his way to Tibet, stopping at the spectacular site of Ganghola. O.C. Handa states that the pre-eminent position of Gandhola is mainly due to Padmasambhava's visit there. He maintains that:

> the popular tradition of the area and the Terma references are unambiguous about that. The Pad-ma bKai Thang states that the 'Padma' happened to meditate at 'Gandhola' before embarking upon his Tibetan odyssey. Padmasambhava might have acquired supernatural tantric faculties after meditating at this place. It was the application of those faculties in Tibet that he could command a reverential status of the Second Buddha. [41]

4.2   *Kinnaur*

The role of Padmasambhava in Kinnaur today is also mainly restricted to the image of a Tantric master and magician who brought Tantric Buddhism to the region by taming the demons—Kinnaur allegedly has the highest number of powerful local deities in the Western Himalayas.[42] Handa states that:

> The Dharma that Padmasambhava preached was apparently not much different from the already existing cult-system in that region. In the scheme of his 'unreformed' religion, there was emphasis on the propitiation and appeasement of the demons in their fierce aspects, which also included several indigenous sacraments. Therefore, the type of Buddhism that has come to stay in major part of Kinnaur is in no way different to its primitive form that Padmasambhava propagated, and it is considerably different in practice to the one prevalent in Spiti, Ladakh and [the] rest of the Tibetan world.[43]

According to Handa, in Kinnaur there is now a stronghold of twelve monasteries of the Nyingma School (Tib. *rnying ma pa*), the oldest of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism that traces back its origins to Pamasambhava.

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41   Handa, *Buddhist Monasteries of Himachal*, 123.
42   Ibid., 180.
43   Ibid.

At the village Nako, close to the Tibetan border, the Guru *lha khang* is a small temple situated just beside an high-altitude water basin, built around a rock with imprints said to have been miraculously left by Padmasambhava (fig. 6.3).[44] According to Luczanits,[45] who studied the heavily damaged murals and sculptures of the interior, and Kurt Tropper,[46] who transcribed and translated the inscriptions and captions found in the temple, it is difficult to decipher any "unambiguous historical information on the founding of the monument, its decoration or even school affiliation."[47] Based on stylistic comparisons with wall paintings from Ladakh, Luczanits suggests a date in the late 14th century and an affiliation to the Drigung Kagyü order, which promoted the teachings of Padmasambhava, by the late 13th century particularly in Ladakh. He further emphasises the small shrine and its decoration in a local painting style as "the only major example preserved in the Spiti Valley" that "supersedes the comparable Ladakhi monuments."[48]

The uniqueness of the Guru Lha khang for the local population is not based on its extraordinary decoration, but on the presence of the stone imprints identified by the village tradition as the footprints not only of Padmasambhava but also of the local god Purgyal.[49] Natasha Kimmet uses the term "touch relics" (earlier introduced by Deborah Klimburg-Salter for hand- and footprints of lamas on the verso of thangkas) to define the semiotic value of these sacred markers.[50] Touching the signs on the rock that indicate the physical appearance of the god and the guru at that place, promises blessings and merits to the worshipers and pilgrims. The small monument is built around these precious marks, and the architectural structure of the edifice follows the necessity of enshrining them in the centre. The topographical features of the landscape

44   Handa, *Buddhist Monasteries of Himachal*, 186. Handa reports that according to local belief, these are the landing marks from when Padmasambhava flew on his tiger to the rock in Nako.

45   Christian Luczanits, "The Nako Monuments in Context." In *Nako. Research and Conservation in the Western Himalayas,* ed. Gabriela Krist (Vienna: Böhlau, 2016), 36–39.

46   Kurt Tropper, "Inscriptions and Captions in the Gu ru Lha khang at Nako, Kinnaur." In *Tibetan Art and Architecture in Context, PIATS 2006: Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the Eleventh Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Königswinter,* edited by Erberto Lo Bue and Christian Luczanits (Halle: International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, 2010), 143–174.

47   Luczanits, "The Nako Monuments in Context," 39.

48   Ibid., 40.

49   Natasha Kimmet, "Architectural Palimpsets: Exploring Matters of Production, Inhabitation and Perception in the Vernacular Architecture of Nako." In *Nako. Research and Conservation in the Western Himalayas,* ed. Gabriela Krist (Vienna: Böhlau, 2016), 64.

50   Ibid., 64.

FIGURE 6.3   Imprints of Padmasambhava. Guru Temple (Tib. *lha khang*) in Nako, Kinnaur.
DEBORAH KLIMBURG-SALTER, 1998, WHAV

(the rock with marks next to the lake) are the determining factors and the spiritual trigger for the establishment of this religious building.

Kimmet further notes that the settlement of Nako developed within defined sacred boundaries, with the Guru Lha khang at the corner of the Nako lake and the sacred Buddhist compound, consisting of four temples at the northwest of Nako, constituting the earliest structural parameters of the village.[51] Four caves in the vicinity of Nako are furthermore identified as Padmasambhava meditation caves, where he also gave disclosures to his followers.

The heritage of Padmasambhava in Kinnaur is not directly connected to its material culture, but rather to the spiritual energy of special spots and sites in the area. The territory becomes sanctified by the attribution of certain places to the miraculous acts of the guru—resulting in a network of places for worship, and a geography of artistic and religious infrastructure, geared to the needs of pilgrims. However, none of these establishments can be dated on an art historical analysis back to the 8th century.

5   The Living Tradition of Rinchen Zangpo in the Kinnaur and Lahul Valleys

Alex McKay points out that the strong dominance of Buddhist establishments at the western fringes of the Guge Kingdom (11th–17th c.) is "an early phase of Buddhist propagation in the first Millennium CE"[52]—a phase that was initiated by Padmasambhava and brought to full blossom by Rinchen Zangpo and the renaissance of Mahāyāna Buddhism credited to King Yéshe Ö in the third quarter of the 10th century. Twenty-one minor Buddhist foundations are mentioned in the biography of Rinchen Zangpo;[53] one of them is supposedly situated in Lahul; seven of them are identified in the region of Kinnaur: the temples of Chulling, Ropa, Poo, Kanam, Kamru, Thangi, and Charang/Tsarang. The latter three are part of the Kinner Kailash circumambulation route.

The foundation of a relatively large amount of Buddhist shrines in an area that is often considered by scholars as being situated at the periphery of the Guge Kingdom must be seen as a strategic stroke. McKay sees the establishment of the religious sites along the already existing Kinner Kailash circumambulation route as a territorial definition enacted by the Buddhist reformers,

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51   Natasha Kimmet, "Architectural Palimpsets," 63.

52   McKay, *Kailas Histories*, 179.

53   David L. Snellgrove and Tadeusz Skorupski, *The Cultural Heritage of Ladakh, Vol. 2: Zangskar and the Cave Temples of Ladakh* (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1980), 87.

with the mountain as the frontier.[54] Thakur even points out that the monastic network "in an agriculturally potential area such as Thangi and Tsarang […] was essential for the sustenance of the Buddhist communities."[55]

5.1   *Kinnaur*

All seven monuments ascribed to Rinchen Zangpo in Kinnaur are called Lotsawa Temple (Tib. *lo tsa ba lha khang*) by the local community, honouring the Great Translator and indicating their foundation and close relation with Rinchen Zangpo.[56] Despite major changes in their original structure and decoration—the temples were extended, restored, partly reconstructed, repainted, and refurbished—there is still enough archaeological and art historical evidence that indicate a foundation date during the time of the so-called second diffusion of Buddhism. In particular, an astonishingly substantial corpus of clay sculptures—mainly life-size, or slightly over life-size, non-portable objects—can be found in nearly all of these temples (sometimes still attached to the wall, as in Charang). They give vivid testimony of early Buddhist iconographic/iconologic programmes and stylistic inspiration from the art of Kashmir.[57]

The legacy of Rinchen Zangpo is still ubiquitous in Kinnaur. His presence is firmly established not only through existing material culture but also through oral traditions such as ritual speeches or folk songs. Thakur recorded songs related to the Great Translator in several villages of Kinnaur, including Ribba, Ropa, and Kanam.[58] He calls these songs, consisting of up to ninety stanzas, "almost stable texts" that:

> have been memorized, repeated and handed down generation to generation, thus avoiding to considerable extent obliteration during the last one thousand years.[59]

It is interesting to note that the oral tradition of Kinnaur shifts the birth place of Rinchen Zangpo from Khatse (Tib. Khwa tse) in Ngari (today Western Tibet)

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54   McKay, *Kailas Histories*, 180.
55   Thakur, "Rin chen Bzang po's Footsteps," 212.
56   Alternative names of local deities are also possible, e.g. Rangrik monastery (Tib. Rang rig rtse mgon pa) in Charang.
57   For a detailed study and classification of the clay sculptures in Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh see Christian Luczanits, *Buddhist Sculpture in Clay: Early Western Himalayan Art, late 10th to early 13th Centuries* (Chicago: Serindia, 2004).
58   Thakur, "Rin chen Bzang po's Footsteps," 212–216.
59   Ibid., 112.

to Sumra, a small village at the district border between Spītī and Kinnaur. This might be for not only legitimisation reasons but also due to the fact that the 18th incarnation of Rinchen Zangpo was born there in 1923.

Several of the songs address the building of monasteries and Buddhist shrines, sometimes giving conceivable logistic information on transport of construction material, such as wood and stones, and the great efforts of the Buddhist *saṃgha* to accomplish these works in the inhospitable mountainous region.[60] Also the miraculous construction of the temple in Ribba in only one night by Rinchen Zangpo himself is sung about, including the legend that after finishing the temple and offering it to the local community, Rinchen Zangpo had to flee from Ribba before he was mutilated or even killed by some wicked inhabitants.[61] There might be several explanations for why the life of Rinchen Zangpo was threatened by the villagers—that he should be prevented from building a similar monastery, that new Buddhist tendencies were not welcomed, or that people were shocked by the magical powers of the Buddhist reformer.[62]

Interestingly enough, the Ribba Temple, destroyed in a fire in 2006, was the only monument that seemed to be coeval with or slightly later than Padmasambhava's supposed presence in Kinnaur—but it is likely before the 10th century and the second diffusion of Buddhism.[63] Located high above the Sutlej River, the original small single-celled temple was integrated into a larger complex, so that the original structure functioned as the cella of the temple in modern times. An external circumambulation path (Skt. *pradakṣiṇapatha*) placed on an elevated veranda led around the carved walls of the sanctum. The elaborate wooden portal, frequently repainted and covered with whitewash in the last decades, consisted of multiple horizontal registers and vertical doorjambs, decorated alternately with floral scrolls and figurative bands that form small niches, each filled with only one figure. The lintels displayed rows of sitting Buddhas in architectural and ornamental frames. Ribba shared these features with other originally single-celled monuments in the Western Himalayan area, such as the Buddhist shrine of Triloknath (Lahul) and the Hindu shrines

60   Thakur, "Rin chen Bzang po's Footsteps," 213.

61   Ibid.

62   These founding legends are frequently told in similar versions all around Himachal Pradesh e.g. the artist Gugga, famous for his bronze statues from Brahmaur in Chamba, is said to had to leave the region after he built the wooden temple of Śaktī Devī in the 7th century. O.C. Handa, *Woodcarving in the Himalayan Region* (New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company, 2006), 58–59.

63   For an art historical assessment of the temple see Klimburg–Salter, "Ribba, the Story of an Early Buddhist Temple in Kinnaur,"; and Luczanits, *Buddhist Sculpture in Clay.*

of Udaipur (Lahul), Chhatrarhi and Brahmaur (Chamba), and Nirmand (Kulu). All six monuments can be dated to an early period and are situated on important regional and trans-regional pilgrimage routes.[64]

The destroyed temple was recently rebuilt, intended as a reconstruction of the original structure, consisting of a single-celled monument without the attached assembly hall for the monks (fig. 6.4). But the extensive building activity around the wooden temple suggests that in the near future, there will be a large compound of several massive (concrete) edifices for the *saṃgha*, that indeed will strengthen the Buddhist community and the role of Ribba as a religious centre in present times. Based on old photographs and drawings, an effort was made to copy the original carvings of the wooden portal in order to imitate an authentic impression of the ancient monument. The result is certainly debatable from an aesthetic and conservational point of view. One can notice that the reconstruction work on the Ribba temple takes part in a recent regional renovation and enlargement process of numerous Buddhist and Hindu wooden shrines in Kinnaur.[65] Workshops from Nepal were supporting the local craftsmen, mixing new elements with traditional motifs, and creating a certain uniformity of the hitherto unique monuments. This might be inaccessible to our historic and nostalgic mind, but in the case of Ribba, it might cause a new spiritual and ritual impetus at the site. This new temple underlines that the old temple was—and the new building still is—a highly appreciated reminder of the activities of Rinchen Zangpo in former times.

The temple was inaugurated in 2016, with a big ceremony and in the presence of the 19th and current incarnation of Rinchen Zangpo, namely Tenzin Kalzang Lochen Tulku Rinpoche (Tib. bsTan 'dzin kal bzang lo chen sprul sku rin po chen) (fig. 6.5). His religious home is the Kyi Monastery in the Spītī

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64   The temple in Ribba is part of the circumambulation route of the Kinnauri Kailash (known locally as Kinner Kailash), which encircles the mountain considered sacred by both Hindu and Buddhist Kinnauris. The route, stretching over two hundred kilometres, is performed clockwise, visiting the local sanctuaries on the way. Although of probably more ancient origin, Klimburg-Salter refers to a tradition that attributes all important sites and monuments on this route to the great translator Rinchen Zangpo, as a replication of his own travel from Guge to Oḍḍiyāna. See for that Klimburg-Salter, "Ribba, the Story of an Early Buddhist Temple in Kinnaur," 7.

65   It all started when the wooden temple of the Badri Narayan Temple in Batseri in the Sangla Valley was destroyed in a fire around 2000. It was rebuilt by the local community, very loosely following the traditional structure of stone interspersed with wooden beams. For the wooden carvings, the local community engaged local workshops from the neighbouring valleys as well as Nepalese craftsmen, which produced, among other extraordinary motifs, a rather Baywatch-like erotic frieze. However, the rather unusual aesthetic of the new temple and the wooden carvings became famous in the region and are highly appreciated by the local people. This appreciation resulted in a series of renovations of other local village shrines in the surrounding region.
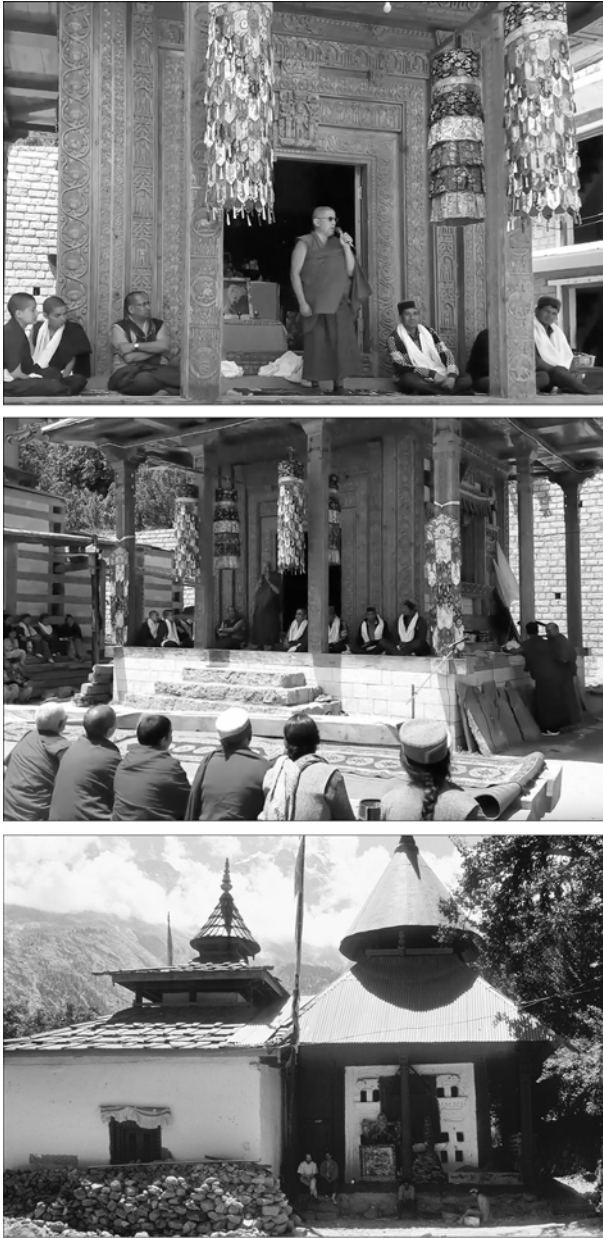
FIGURE 6.4
Lotsawa Temple (Tib. *lo tsa ba lha khang*). Ribba, Kinnaur. Restored in 2016 (top and middle) and before destruction in 1994 (bottom).
SOURCES RESP. <HTTPS:// WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/ WATCH?V=NFDSKNJPQHC> (2:57 AND 2:43); DEBORAH KLIMBURG-SALTER, 1994, WHAV

Valley, his other headquarters is in Delhi, where he holds a political office. Nevertheless, he spends considerable time in Kinnaur and Spītī, being a representative at various religious festivities in the region. He is highly esteemed among the community, and his status as the Great Translator's incarnation grants him authority. Christian Jahoda, who examined the authoritative speech tradition

FIGURE 6.5   Tenzin Kalzang Lochen Tulku Rinpoche, the 19th incarnation of Rinchen Zangpo
inside the restored Lotsawa Temple in Ribba, 2016.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ht6gg0KPZog> (2:50)

(Tib. *mol ba*) in Spītī and Kinnaur, refers to an incident at an assembly with the trance medium of Tabo, who "reminded and admonished to hold the present incarnation of the Great Translator Rinchen Sangpo in high esteem (notwithstanding the fact that he had married and become a political figure)."[66] In this speech, only the Dalai Lama was placed above Lochen Tulku Rinpoche, putting him on the same level as a bodhisattva.

5.2   *Lahul*

The local tradition of Lahul dates four temples to the time and person of Rinchen Zangpo, two small shrines in the Bhaga Valley, Gumrang and Johling, and two in the Chandra Valley, namely a small house temple in Choskhor and a shrine in Gondhla (not to be confused with Gandhola), which had been thrice rebuilt since the 10th century.[67]

Only one site in Lahul, namely Johling (fig. 6.6), just opposite Kyelong, directly on the left bank of the Bhaga, can actually be identified as one of the

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66   Christian Jahoda, "Imparting and (Re-)Confirming Order to the World: Authoritative Speech Traditions and Socio–political Assemblies in Spītī, Upper Kinnaur, and Purang in the Past and Present," *Oral Tradition* 30.2 (2016): 336.

67   Garsha Young Drukpa Association (YDA), *Garsha, Heart Land of the Dakinis*, 47.

FIGURE 6.6 Dilapidated shrine. Lha Lama Temple (Tib. *lha bla ma lha khang*). Johling, Lahul. Dated to the time of Rinchen Zangpo.
VERENA WIDORN, 2002, WHAV

twenty-one minor foundations mentioned in the biography of the Great Translator. Visiting and documenting the site in 1991, Klimburg-Salter ascertained that the temple was named by local people Lha Lama Temple (Tib. *lha bla ma lha khang*), which she associates with Lha lama Yéshe Ö (Tib. Lha bla ma Ye shes 'od).[68] The single-celled temple of Johling, built on a square ground plan, is nowadays totally ruined. Although the building had not been in ritual use any more, the local people used to decorate the interior with flowers, at least up to the 1990s.[69] Fifteen years ago, the monument, after increasing decay, was covered with a new tin roof to slow the decay. The original simple structure of the temple consists of massive stone walls interspersed with thick wooden beams, a typical traditional Lahuli method of construction that can be also seen in Gumrang. The former flat roof was supported by two wooden pillars and gave shelter to at least two wooden sculptures, a Buddha Śākyamuni under the *bodhi* tree (now housed in the Bhuri Singh Museum in Chamba) and an Amitābha (now in the British Museum in London)[70] that can be dated to the

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68   Deborah Klimburg-Salter, "Tucci Himalayan Archives Report, 2," 46–48.

69   In 1991, Klimburg-Salter noticed the annual harvest offering laid before the location of an ancient altar. See ibid., 46–50.

70   The wooden Amitabha from the British Museum was one of the acquisitions of Walter Asboe, knowing them from a photograph that Shuttleworth had taken in 1923 (now kept

late 10th or early 11th century, due to stylistic features.[71] In their publication, the Garsha Young Drukpa Association expresses regret and some lack of understanding that the villagers let the temple rot, and that the wooden sculptures were removed from the area and cannot be venerated in situ anymore:

> May the story of Joling remind us to treasure deeply the priceless spiritual heritage of Garsha Khandroling, Heart Land of Dakinis! […] Our present pilgrimage does not allow us to receive their [the two wooden Buddha sculptures] blessings, but we can remember them.[72]

By raising the shrine and its former wooden decorations to the status of a *memento mori*, the ruin and the sculptures remain anchored in the memory of the local population, as precious creations of Rinchen Zangpo.

Based on stylistic evidence, especially the sculptural decoration, which consists of several badly preserved clay statues, the sanctuary of nearby Gumrang is considered by art historians to be of a later date (probably 12th century) than is believed by the locals.[73] The small hamlet, also called Tonpa Gompa (Tib. *ston pa dgon pa*), is in a fragile state; the murals are mainly gone and the small bits and pieces of the former textile ceiling decoration are in a woeful condition. The temple was almost collapsing about eighty years ago,[74] forcing the locals to take out the fragile clay sculptures that were originally attached to the main wall in a *maṇḍala*-like composition.[75] The sculptures, (fig. 6.7) or as it turned out later, the local spirits of the place, were against the removal and were whispering, weeping, and howling so loud that the terrified villagers returned the objects, just placing them side by side against the wall and leaving the building untouched, as they were instructed by the spirits.[76] This story elu-

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in the British Library and in the Kern Institute in Leiden). Asboe purchased the sculpture from the local lama for around 65 Rupees, being aware of the fact that this enterprise had to be done secretly, without informing local authorities or the Buddhist community (see letter by Asboe 1933, unpublished, Moravian Missionary Archive, London).

71   Verena Widorn, "Buddha Śākyamuni, Johling (Kyelong), Lāhaul and Spītī," in *Vision of an Enlightend King, A Centenial Bouquet of Himalayan Art from the Bhuri Singh Museum Collection,* ed. Vijay Sharma (Chamba: Bhuri Singh Museum, 2008), 52–53.

72   Garsha Young Drukpa Association (YDA), *Garsha, Heart Land of the Dakinis*, 48–49.

73   Luczanits, *Buddhist Sculpture in Clay*, 107–112.

74   Garsha Young Drukpa Association (YDA), *Garsha, Heart Land of the Dakinis*, 50.

75   Two photographs taken by H.L. Shuttleworth in the 1920s and now kept in the British Library, London, show the former position of the clay sculptures attached to the main wall with the four-headed Vairocana in the centre (see also Widorn, "Traversing the Land of Siddhas and Dakinis," 200, 201). One of the photographs was recently published by Laurent, "Henry Lee Shuttleworth (1882–1960) and the History of Spiti," 14.

76   Garsha Young Drukpa Association (YDA), *Garsha, Heart Land of the Dakinis*, 50.

FIGURE 6.7   Interior and clay sculptures of Tonpa Gompa (Monastry). Gumrang, Lahul. Dated
              to 12th century.
              VERENA WIDORN, 2002, WHAV

cidates the current rather unusual line up of the sculptures,[77] and probably
also some of the damage to the clay figures. It might also explain why the tem-
ple, as one of the oldest monuments in the region and although still in use and
veneration, is slowly decaying. In contrast, two simple *stūpa*s in the vicinity of
the Gumrang shrine (fig. 6.8) are still in good shape. Both *stūpa*s are built of
irregular stones stacked over one another to provide square platforms (Skt. *me-
dhi*) and a round dome (Skt. *anda*); the upper part of the smaller *stūpa* seems
to be totally missing. The larger structure has a further small square platform
(Skt. *harmika*) topped by a wooden umbrella (Skt. *chhatri*). Obviously the two
monuments are also directly attributed to Rinchen Zangpo, who according to
local narrations was asked by the villagers to construct them for the protection
of their houses, which were frequently swept away by avalanches.[78] With re-
gard to their good state of preservation, and in comparison to the clay sculp-
tures of Gumrang, one can only agree with the local perception:

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77   This formation has even led to some misinterpretation with regard to the original posi-
      tion of the sculpture. See e.g. Luczanits, *Buddhist Sculpture in Clay,* 108, and Garsha Young
      Drukpa Association (YDA), *Garsha, Heart Land of the Dakinis*, 50, who assume that the
      sculpture of the Buddha Vairocana had been placed in the middle of the room, surround-
      ed by the other figures each facing a cardinal direction.
78   Garsha Young Drukpa Association (YDA), *Garsha, Heart Land of the Dakinis*, 51.

FIGURE 6.8   Old stone *stūpa*s. Near Gumrang, Lahul. Dated to the time of Rinchen Zangpo.
VERENA WIDORN, 2002, WHAV.

The fact that this ancient stupa still stands after so many centuries demonstrates in itself powerful protection, and also supports the wisdom saying that stupas are even holier than statues.[79]

In any case, the *stūpa*s are firmly rooted in the landscape and could not be removed from their position, since the location is part of their function as an emblem of a more than a thousand-year long protection against natural catastrophes.

6   The Power of the Tibetan Pilgrims and the Buddhist Yogis

The religious environment encountered by Tibetan pilgrims such as Gö Tsangpa, when traveling through the Western Himalayan region in the 13th century, was marked by monuments and artefacts of the Ngari Kingdom and Mahāyāna Buddhism. Nevertheless, neither well-known religious institutions nor important monasteries of that time seem to have attracted special attention from these pilgrims. Despite the difficulties of allocating the spellings of names in the pilgrims' travelogues to today's villages and real places, and thus of reconstructing the itineraries in detail, one can notice that many monastic sites are not mentioned.

6.1   *Kinnaur*
There is not much information on the travels and sojourns of Gö Tsangpa in Kinnaur, based on his itineraries translated by Tucci.[80] The hagiography states that after having crossed Zhang Zhung, the Tibetan pilgrim went to Spītī, after stopping at the "temple in To ldin [Tholing] in Zan zun where he saw the residence of Atisa and Lha bstun Byan c'ub od."[81] He then seemed to proceed to a place called Bichok (Tib. Bi lcogs) that Tucci cautiously identifies as Pilche in the Lipak Valley opposite Nako, where the great *siddha* Karagpa (Tib. Ka ra pa) had been meditating for thirty years.[82] His further encounters with other *siddha*s in this area are not fixed to any particular location, and it seems that the story illustrates different ways of meditation that the yogi was confronted with on his travels.

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79   Garsha Young Drukpa Association (YDA), *Garsha, Heart Land of the Dakinis.*
80   Tucci, *Travels of Tibetan Pilgrims in the Swat*, 15–17.
81   Ibid., 16.
82   Ibid., 16–17.

There are some reasonable doubts that Gö Tsangpa traversed Kinnaur on his way to the West (he probably took the northern route over Spītī), as there is hardly any tradition of worshiping the great yogi in this area.

6.2   *Lahul*

In Lahul, a dozen of small monasteries have been erected on the slopes of the hills of the Bhaga Valley in the last centuries, on both sides of the Bhaga River overlooking the valley. Based on different sacred biographies (Tib. *nam thar*) and oral transmissions, the local tradition relates several of these sites to famous religious personalities of the Drukpa Kagyü order, who lived from the 13th century onwards—especially to the Tibetan pilgrims Gö Tsangpa and his followers.[83] Toni Huber sees the transfer of pilgrimage routes from northern India to the Himalayan region in the early 13th century as the implementation of new spiritual concepts—such as the search for the *vajrakāya* in the Indian mountainous region. For him, this time is the point of departure for a new Tantric Buddhist *pītha* system, with twenty-one external locations, spanning from Western Tibet to the Hindukush.[84] Gö Tsangpa belonged to the first generation of Tibetans who ignored the importance of the eight great sites in the Ganges plain, directly connected to the eight major events in the Buddha's life. He and his adepts, such as Orgyenpa, followed the new tradition, in which they performed their inner and outer ritual journey in the mountainous regions of the wide Himalayan range. Huber thinks that common Hindu sites and symbols, as well as spiritual places associated with local deities, were adopted by the Buddhist Tantric system to create a *pītha* network in the Himalayan region, consisting mainly of Śaiva and Śākta sites.[85] This phenomenon is especially true with Lahul, as evidenced by the numerous sites still worshiped by Hindus as well as Buddhists, such as the Gandhola cremation ground or the joint veneration of the main idol of Triloknath. The journeys of the Drukpa Kagyü pilgrims through the Western Himalayan region were certainly marked by an ideological return to Tantric Buddhism attributed to Padmasambhava (and suppressed by the Guge rulers in the 10th and 11th centuries).

From the travel itinerary, we can assume that the Tibetan pilgrims were primarily looking for extraordinary places in remote, sparsely populated areas,

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83   For a detailed description of the routes, see Giuseppe Tucci, *Travels of Tibetan Pilgrims in the Swat*, 15–17; and Verena Widorn, "Traversing the Land of Siddhas and Dakinis—Art Historical Evidence along the Buddhist Pilgrimage Routes through Lahul," in *Cultural Flows across the Western Himalaya*, ed. Patrick McAllister, Christina Scherrer Schaub, and Helmut Krasser (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 2015), 189–235.

84   Huber, *The Holy Land Reborn*, 109.

85   Ibid.

Local Drukpa Kagyü lineage with Padmasambhava (left), sculptures in the
monastery of Gandhola, Lahul.
CHRISTIAN LUCZANITS, 1993, WHAV

where the connection with nature became the most critical part.[86] The Bud-
dhist institutions built up by the royal family and Rinchen Zangpo at the time
of the second diffusion of Buddhism seem to have played only a minor role for
the pilgrims, as there are hardly any references in their travelogues to places
such as Johling or Gumrang. Instead, according to his itinerary, Gö Tsangpa
preferred to retreat to high mountain levels and to meditate in caves or in nat-
ural surroundings.[87] He was probably impressed by the narrow Bhaga Valley in
Lahul and the breath-taking view from the slopes of Mt. Drilbu over the conflu-
ence of the rivers at Gandhola—similar to his religious ancestor Padmasamb-
hava, according to the local imagination.[88] In the shrine of Gandhola, this
spiritual connection is symbolised by a row of small statues presenting Pad-
masambhava in a direct lineage with two Drukpa Kagyü yogis (fig. 6.9).

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86   See Widorn, "Traversing the Land of Siddhas and Dakinis," 229, 230.
87   Garsha Young Drukpa Association (YDA), *Garsha, Heart Land of the Dakinis*, 63.
88   The Garsha Young Drukpa Association also emphasise that Gö Tsangpa sought especially
      caves of his spiritual forefathers, and locations related to Cakrasaṃvara and Vajravārāhī,
      as his guru was an emanation of Cakrasaṃvara. See ibid. The *mahāsiddha* Ghāṇṭapa is
      said to have turned the peak of Mt. Drilbu into the centre of a *maṇḍala* of Cakrasaṃvara
      by performing sexual union with his consort. See Stutchbury, *Rediscovering Western Ti-
      bet*, 46.

The sanctification of the landscape through spiritual journeys and wondrous actions is at the forefront of the formation of local myths spinning around the Tibetans' pilgrimages. Here, too, it is above all the territorial markings of the imprints that were left in rocks by the yogis, and which are regarded as clear signs of their physical presence in former times. They can be also regarded as symbols of their miraculous power, as some are considered to be starting or landing marks when the yogis were flying through the air. At a later date, shrines and monasteries were built around them and form the requisite religious infrastructure for the numerous devotees. For Gö Tsangpa, the Garsha Young Drukpa Association reports that:

> Today, his most popular legacy and source of grace are the many miraculous imprints of his body that he embedded in rocks. Around Drilbu Ri, at least six sites are hallowed in this way: Sila cave, Sila Gompa, Kardang Jhabje, Gotsang village, Biling and Yurdong cave. All of them have been turned into shrines, temples or monasteries.[89]

All the mentioned shrines were repeatedly renovated or substantially expanded in the last centuries, and there are no more traces of ancient remains that might have supported an early foundation date. The monuments and caves are spectacularly located on both sides of the river, high on the mountain slopes overlooking the entire Bhaga Valley. The Yurdong Monastery is harmoniously embedded into the steep mountainside beneath an overhanging cliff, which shows the close connection between architecture and nature, and the quite deliberate fusion of art with landscape (fig. 6.10). Special topographical features such as "[…] the strange remains of a dry tree" are associated with "some firewood that had only half burnt [... and] got stuck" when Gö Tsangpa crossed the Bhaga Valley with just one stride between Yurdong and Gotsang.[90] The flights or jumps of the Tibetan yogi over valleys and long distances not only explain the imprints in the landscape, but also create a network of buildings, which are located on both sides high above the river and the villages, partly within sight. The distances between these sites are not to be measured by normative standards but with spiritual ranges that tie the spots together.

At the beginning of the 17th century, when Taktsang Répa travelled through Lahul and especially the Bhaga Valley, the region was already a religious centre of the Drukpa Kagyü School. Taktsang Répa spent several months in this

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89   Garsha Young Drukpa Association (YDA), *Garsha, Heart Land of the Dakinis*, 63.
90   Ibid., 67.

FIGURE 6.10   Yurdong Monastery. Bhaga Valley, Lahul.
                       VERENA WIDORN, 2017, WHAV

area, including six months in winter in retreat in Yurdong.[91] The Garsha Young
Drukpa Association explains that the monastery of Yurdong had to be gradu-
ally expanded over the centuries "due to the fervent worship of local people as
well as the natural influence of great meditators."[92]

Several other monasteries in the valley were also renewed in the last de-
cades, partly dismantled and reconstructed with new colourful woodcarvings
and wall paintings. The historical substance and ancient wall paintings may be
largely lost, but the veneration and worship of the Tibetan yogis is still vivid in
the iconography of the murals. Conversely, the temples associated with Rin-
chen Zangpo are slowly collapsing.

7   Conclusion

Many temples (up to an auspicious number of 108) are said to have been
founded by Rinchen Zangpo throughout the Western Himalayan region—but
not all of them are valued with the same esteem. Kinnaur, on the one hand,

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91   Tucci, *Travels of Tibetan Pilgrims in the Swat Valley*, 410–411.
92   Garsha Young Drukpa Association (YDA), *Garsha, Heart Land of the Dakinis*, 67.

seems to have remained a stronghold of Tibetan Buddhism, introduced by King Yéshe Ö and Rinchen Zangpo at the turn of the first millennium. Local beliefs and territorial deities were incorporated and religious centres institutionalised, keeping and cementing the superior position of Buddhism. The oral tradition strongly supports the long tradition, apotheosizing the Great Translator as the main figure and the shining key agent of this whole development. Even the temple of Ribba, which contained art historical elements suggesting a foundation date prior to the second diffusion of Buddhism, was incorporated in the legendary canon of his activities and monastic foundations.

In Lahul, on the other hand, the religious tradition took a totally different turn, already set in motion by Tibetan pilgrims in the 13th century. The pilgrims were longing for perfect meditation places, looking for sites with special spiritual power, and seeking to go on retreat to high locations. They obviously found this ideal setting in the landscape of Lahul—a *maṇḍala*-like topography with the holy Mt. Drilbu in the centre, enclosed by the two rivers Bhaga and Chandra. The pilgrims totally ignored the already existing religious monuments, but were instrumentalised as monastic founders themselves. Several of the pilgrims must have passed Kinnaur on their way from Tibet to Oḍḍiyāna, but with a much more minor impact on the religious landscape of the region than they had on Lahul.

An interesting and still not fully comprehensible factor in the Buddhist history of the present state of Himachal is the legendary figure of Padmasambhava. The art historical attributions of certain objects and monuments in Lahul and Kinnaur to the supposed life time of Padmasambhava are as varying and hypothetical as the different scholarly interpretations of his actual existence and presence in the Western Himalayas. To our current scientific knowledge, we must consider the numerous legends and miracles surrounding him a construct of various schools and traditions that use this personality for particular purposes, goals, and legitimisation. Of course, this does by not exclude the possible presence of an important Tantric master in the 8th century and his impact on the later Buddhist art and architecture of the Himalayan region.

DaCosta Kaufmann resumes his discourse on the geography of (Western) art with the statement that "history of art lies at the conjunction of the temporal with the spatial" and that "art history's arguments, theories and narratives are ultimately based on locations as well as chronology."[93] I would go one step further and argue that art historians have to be aware that in the process of attributing the Himalayan artefacts and monuments to famous personalities, location and topography are strong issues in the local tradition, while chronol-

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93   Kaufmann, *Toward a Geography of Art*, 351.

ogy and especially the authenticity of origin and patronage became a matter of collective memory and mentality. The date of creation is only important to the extent to which it supports the ideological background and the religious ideals of the assumed patron. The way of perceiving and handling the artistic heritage in the Western Himalayan area may not coincide with the appreciation of western art historians and their quest for authenticity. But to understand certain mechanism and agencies involved in the process of sanctification of the topographical and cultural landscape in the Western Himalayas, might help to distinguish between rural legends and historical facts. It might also help to accept, even in an academic world, the fluent boundaries between the perceptions of mysticality and the reality that keeps the sacred geography and the religious tradition alive.

Sacred Space in Uyghur Buddhism

Jens Wilkens

1   Introduction[1]

Buddhism became the major cultural driving force among the Uyghurs after it began to spread in earnest around the turn of the first millennium CE.[2] It affected all arenas of cultural expression, such as architecture, visual arts, literature, poetry, and so on. Sacred space in Uyghur Buddhism is a topic which has not been researched in a systematic fashion so far, although some important points have been touched upon in previous research.[3] When dealing with this issue, several key aspects are to be examined without reference to the complex discussion concerning the concept of 'the holy' or 'the sacred' in Religious Studies. A highly important issue connected with the topic is certainly pilgrimage, but as Simone-Christiane Raschmann's article "Pilgrims in Old Uyghur Inscriptions: A Glimpse behind their Records" (see Chapter 8 in this volume) is dealing with it, I refrain from discussing this most significant aspect of sacred space viewed from the angle of religious practice. While art historical and archaeological questions immediately come to mind, I will confine this investigation to a perusal of Old Uyghur texts, due to a lack of sufficient expertise in the aforementioned domains. A thorough investigation of the issue would be best accomplished by a team of specialists from those different fields. A combination of archaeological methods and philological expertise, for instance, has led Takao Moriyasu to discover the 'Manichaean layer' beneath a 'Buddhist

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1   I would like to thank Yukiyo Kasai and Kirill Solonin for their remarks on my paper. All translations from primary sources are my own. The references are always to the Old Uyghur original in the text editions. A subscript number 2 in a translation denotes a hendiadys.

2   On Uyghur Buddhism, especially in the West Uyghur Kingdom (second half of 9th c. to 13th c.), see Jens Wilkens, "Buddhism in the West Uyghur Kingdom and Beyond," in *Transfer of Buddhism Across Central Asian Networks (7th to 13th Centuries)*, ed. Carmen Meinert (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2016), 191–249; Jens Wilkens, "Der Buddhismus bei den türkischen Völkern in Zentralasien," in *Der Buddhismus II: Theravāda-Buddhismus und Tibetischer Buddhismus*, ed. Manfred Hutter (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2016), 469–490; and Peter Zieme, "The West Uigur Kingdom: Views from Inside," *Horizons* 5.1 (2014): 1–29.

3   For example, the concept of the two orders—a spatial model of Buddhist governance which distinguishes between an inner (i.e. religious) and an outer (i.e. political) sphere. See Zieme, "The West Uigur Kingdom," 6–10.

layer' in the well-known cave temples of Bezeklik near Turfan.[4] This state of affairs is described metaphorically by Kim Knott as an example of 'place as palimpsest.'[5]

A further line of enquiry would be whether the caves commissioned or executed by Uyghurs in the Turfan area, at Dunhuang (敦煌) or elsewhere can be identified as specimens of sacred space. It is worth mentioning in passing that the paintings in some caves in Dunhuang reflect the cult of the book among the Uyghurs. They are connected with the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, the final part of the *Avataṃsakasūtra*, in the case of the Mogao Cave B 464, while other inscriptions of this grotto refer in cartouches to the *Suvarṇaprabhāsasūtra*[6] (a section on the ten *bhūmi*s). Peter Zieme has discovered a close connection between the paintings of this grotto and the texts accompanying them.[7] In the case of this particular cave, artistic expression follows the patterns laid out by the basic texts.

As one would expect, the holy places of Buddhism in India are—as in other Buddhist traditions—highly significant in Uyghur Buddhism, and most of them are connected with the bodily presence of the Buddha; that is, in the form of relics or in traces left behind such as footprints, the mark of his shadow and so on. This 'grid'[8] is the religious grounding for a transnational religion in the 'diasporic space'[9] or—as it was put recently—in the Buddhist 'cosmopolis.'[10]

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4   Takao Moriyasu, *Die Geschichte des uigurischen Manichäismus an der Seidenstraße: Forschungen zu manichäischen Quellen und ihrem geschichtlichen Hintergrund* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2004), 1–30; Takao Moriyasu, "The West Uighur Kingdom and Tun-huang around the 10th–11th Centuries," *Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften – Berichte und Abhandlungen* 8 (2000): 342–344.

5   Kim Knott, "Spatial Theory and Method for the Study of Religion," *Temenos* 41.2 (2005a): 10, following de Certeau.

6   Peter Zieme, "Paul Pelliot, les études turques et quelques notes sur la grotte B 464 de Mogao," in *Paul Pelliot: de l'histoire à la légende*, ed. Jean-Pierre Drège and Michel Zink (Paris: Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, 2013), 426–430.

7   Zieme, "Paul Pelliot," 429.

8   This network was recently defined as a 'Kultlandschaft' in Hans-Ulrich Wiemer, "Kulträume: Einführende Bemerkungen," in *Kulträume: Studien zum Verhältnis von Kult und Raum in alten Kulturen*, ed. Hans-Ulrich Wiemer (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2017), 9: "Kulträume können schließlich miteinander verknüpft sein, sei es, daß sie in eine Sequenz kultischer Handlungen, ein Kultprogramm, einbezogen sind, sei es, daß sie als Teil eines größeren Ganzen gedacht werden. Erfolgt diese Verknüpfung performativ, kann man von einer Kultlandschaft sprechen, die durch das Beziehungsnetz konstituiert wird, das zwischen mehreren Kulträumen besteht."

9   Knott, "Spatial Theory," 9.

10   Tansen Sen, "Yijing and the Buddhist Cosmopolis of the Seventh Century," in *Texts and Transformations: Essays in Honor of the 75th Birthday of Victor H. Mair*, ed. Haun Saussy (Amherst: Cambria Press, 2018), 345–368.

Rich material is found mainly in translated works such as in the Old Uyghur version of the biography of the Buddhist pilgrim and eminent monk and translator Xuanzang (600/602–664, 玄奘).[11] The translation can be roughly dated to the first half of the 11th century. In the fifth chapter, especially, places where the Buddha trod are mentioned, for instance, when the Tripiṭaka master sets out for Kauśāmbī to visit the Ghoṣilārāma Monastery.[12] Concerning the terminology applied here, we find 'holy place$_2$' (OU *kutlug yer oron*) for this particular monastery.[13] Xuanzang bowed here to the remains of the ladder by which the Buddha descended in Sāṃkāśya while performing the *devāvatāraṇa* miracle.[14] The learned masters of Nālandā try to persuade Xuanzang to stay in India by referring to the traces the Buddha left behind before he entered *nirvāṇa*.[15] One Old Uyghur text admonishes the believers to revere holy places in India that were connected with Buddha's life. This Caityastotra is a part of the introductory portion of the *Altun Yaruk Sudur*, the Old Uyghur version of the *Suvarṇaprabhāsasūtra*[16]—the Tibetan version of which has survived as well.[17] Obviously, as a block-printed edition shows, the work, which has no known exact parallel in any other Caityastotra text, was "also transmitted as a separate work among the Uigurs."[18] It is a praise of the eight *caitya*s. Another Uyghur text on *caitya* veneration was made available to the public by Peter Zieme in 2007.[19] No parallel in any other language has come up so far and there are some peculiar details mentioned which are unique to the Old Uyghur text. Only two leaves have been identified which deal with the second and fourth *caitya* of the traditional set of eight; that is, respectively, the commemoration of the awakening and defeat of Māra at Uruvilvā and the Buddha's visit to his

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11   The full title in Old Uyghur is *bodis(a)t(a)v taito samtso ačarinıŋ yorıkın ukıtmak atl(ı)g tsi-en-čüen tegmä kavi nom bitig* [Kāvya Text$_2$ Named Ci-en-zhuan with the title "Biography of the Bodhisattva and Tripiṭaka Master of the Great Tang Dynasty"].

12   Siglinde Dietz, Mehmet Ölmez, and Klaus Röhrborn, *Die alttürkische Xuanzang-Biographie V. Nach der Handschrift von Paris und St. Petersburg sowie nach dem Transkript von Annemarie v. Gabain ediert, übersetzt und kommentiert* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2015), 154–155 (lines 1320–1335).

13   Dietz, Ölmez, and Röhrborn, *Xuanzang-Biographie V*, 154 (line 1327).

14   Ibid., 155 (lines 1331–1335).

15   Ibid., 43 (lines 0079–0085).

16   Dieter Maue and Klaus Röhrborn, "Ein Caityastotra aus dem alttürkischen Goldglanz-Sūtra," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 129 (1979): 282–320.

17   Although it states in the colophon that the Old Uyghur translation by a certain Amoghaśrī (d.u.) is based on a Sanskrit original, it appears to be at least partly modeled after the Tibetan version. See Maue and Röhrborn, "Ein Caityastotra," 289.

18   Peter Zieme, "Caitya Veneration—An Uigur Manuscript with Portraits of Donors," *Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology* 2 (2007): 165.

19   Zieme, "Caitya Veneration."

mother in the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven, starting in Sāṃkāśya. The title of the work is *caiti* (i.e. Skt. *Caitya*). In the case of both significant events, the notion of sacred space is combined with a detailed dating, which can be interpreted as a particular, auspicious moment. In an *avadāna* text interspersed with poetical parts in strophic alliteration, some epithets of the Jetavana Monastery (OU *četavan säŋräm*)[20] are enumerated; one of which is that it is "an exquisite₂ *subhūmi* location" (OU *üdrülmiš säčilmiš subum oronluk*)[21], which is to say, 'an auspicious place.' The Uyghurs apparently had a specific Indic terminology at their command to describe sacred space, while in this case, the term *subhūmi* is uncommon in Sanskrit. The description of the conditions of Buddha's deeds in Śrāvastī, ruled by King Prasenajit, and of the position of *saṃgha* and laymen obviously serves as a model for the West Uyghur Kingdom (mid-9th c. to 13th c.) in this text.

In *vyākaraṇa*s it is possible not only to link persons of the past—often people associated in one way or another with different Buddhas—with high ranking Uyghur noble men and women but also to forge a symbolic connection between holy places in India and in the Uyghur realm, especially with Kočo. In one text edited by Masahiro Shōgaito, this is especially conspicuous.[22] A diagnosis of the present situation is given, speaking of a time of degeneration, depravity and impurity, in which the Uyghur nobility tirelessly works to rebuild a thriving Buddhist community. They are even called the 'charisma₂ of the realm of Kočo' (OU *kočo ulušnuŋ kuṭı kıvı*),[23] a term reminiscent of the protective deities guarding the land of the Uyghurs.[24] The alleviation of the woes of the present is supposed to finally lead the people to be reborn here on earth, when Maitreya will attain Buddhahood, in order to receive the prophecy for their own *bodhi* from him. In one Uyghur text, Maitreya's descent is located

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20   Orthography normalised here.

21   Masahiro Shōgaito, "Drei zum *Avalokiteśvara-sūtra* passende Avadānas," in *Der türkische Buddhismus in der japanischen Forschung*, ed. Jens Peter Laut and Klaus Röhrborn (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1988), 90 (line 252).

22   Shōgaito, "*Avalokiteśvara-sūtra*," 94–98 (lines 300–343).

23   Ibid., 96 (line 317).

24   We know from a Manichaean text that the Uyghurs thought that the city of Kočo (Chin. *Gaochang*, 高昌) was guarded by twenty-two protective spirits. See M III, 40 (text no. 23, verso lines 6–7). In Buddhist texts, protective deities guarding the house or the palace of the king are mentioned several times (references in BT XXXVII, 501, commentary to lines 05294–05296). In the introductory chapter of the *Maitrisimit*, the protective spirit of the realm of Kočo is mentioned together with pan-Indian deities. See Jens P. Laut, "Gedanken zum alttürkischen Stabreim," in *Splitter aus der Gegend von Turfan: Festschrift für Peter Zieme*, ed. Mehmet Ölmez and Simone-Christiane Raschmann (Istanbul, Berlin: Ölmez, 2002), 134–135.

precisely in a certain village near a certain city in China,[25] while it is usually expected to occur in Ketumatī (present-day Varanasi in India).

2 Terminological Observations

When discussing sacred space in Uyghur Buddhism, some terminological observations might be useful. If we look at the Old Uyghur texts, three words come to mind when space is described as holy, symbolically charged or out of the ordinary. The first one is *korıg* or *korıglıg*, originally denoting an enclosed space which is imbued with a quality that can be described as 'taboo' in the wider sense of the term, not unlike the Latin *sanctum*. It survives in some modern Turkic languages.[26] In Old Uyghur Buddhist texts, both words are only used with reference to tabooed women or girls, especially those living in the women's quarters of a palace. The connotation 'private property of chiefs' is present in Karakhanidic Turkic. The word is adopted in Mongolian too, where it can refer to any place bearing a taboo; for instance, the burial ground of the ruler[27] or an 'inviolate grove'[28]. It is not altogether certain whether the word had this specific connotation in Old Turkic as well. As far as I can see, it is not present in Old Uyghur texts edited so far. While the usual word for 'protect' is *küzäd-* ~ *küzät-* in Old Uyghur, occasionally *korı-*——the etymon of *korıg*—is applied. In one text, we find this phrase: "by protecting the Buddhist religion$_2$ which is called 'good' from outside harm and dangers$_2$."[29] We can clearly detect a spatial

25 Annemarie von Gabain, "Ein uigurischer Maitreya-Text aus der Sammlung Tachibana (aus dem Nachlaß herausgegeben von Peter Zieme)," *Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften – Berichte und Abhandlungen* 9 (2002): 233 (lines 082–087).

26 von Gabain, "Maitreya-Text," 233.

27 "To be sure, as Pelliot observed, a *qoruq* was not necessarily an actual tomb-site in the Mongol age; the term could refer to any forbidden precinct, and as Bartol'd observed, the term was not restricted to 'topography' in its application: the name of a deceased khan, which was not to be used or spoken for three generations, is spoken of as a *qoruq*, i. e., 'taboo,' by Rašīd ad-Dīn, and the term *qoruǧčï* applied to the guardians of the royal tomb-sites was also used for guardians of the royal harem." Devin DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Tükles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 183. Note that *qoruq* is not found in classical Mongolian where we have *qoriɣ*, *qoriya(n)* and *qoruɣ-a*.

28 DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion*, 183.

29 OU *ädgü tetyük nomuɣ šazinıɣ taštın sıŋarkı apakšal ada tudalartın korıyu*, in ed. Zhang Tieshan and Peter Zieme, "A Further Fragment of Old Uigur Annals," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 66.4 (2013): 401 (lines 50–51).

model here. The good (i.e. Buddhism), being in the centre, is to be protected from evil coming from outside.

The second word, the adjective *ıdok*, 'holy,' can refer to a place—for instance, to the *bodhimaṇḍa*[30] or a *caitya*[31]—but also to persons as 'holy one(s),' thus operating as a noun. It may even denote deceased persons; for example, in the sentence "May our mother and father, the holy ones (i.e. the deceased ones) be reborn above in the Tuṣita (heaven)."[32] Etymologically, the word is derived from the verb 'to send' (OT *ıd-*), and according to the dictionary by Gerard Clauson, means "sent, i.e. dedicated, to God."[33] Originally, according to Maḥmūd al-Kāšġarī's *Dīwān Luġāt at-Turk* [Compendium of the Turkic Dialects] (completed 1077), the word refers to an "animal which is set free [...]; its back is not loaded nor its udders milked nor its fleece shorn because of a vow incumbent on its owner."[34] Although this practice is not found in the Old Uyghur texts so far, it is still known among some modern Turkic speaking peoples as well as among the Mongols.[35] The category of the sacred is thus connected with the notion of space (away from the deictic centre) and, originally—as is surmised—a rite of passage.[36] The sacred belongs to the outside and is kept at bay from the social world. The title of the ruler of the West Uyghur Kingdom was *ıdok kut* (lit. Holy Charisma), a combination of two terms essential to the

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30   Cf. the following quote from a poem: "at this holy$_2$ *bodhimaṇḍa*" (OU *adınčıg ıdok bo tavčolug oronta*), quoted after BT XIII, 106 (text no. 15:5).

31   BT III, 71 (line 1017).

32   OU *ögümüz kaŋımız ıdoklar üstün tužit tugzunl[ar]*. See Peter Zieme, "Bolalım bäg yutuz – Ein buddhistisches Stabreimgedicht aus Toyok," in *Şinasi Tekin'in anısına: Uygurlardan Osmanlıya* [In Memory of Şinasi Tekin: From the Uyghurs to the Ottomans], ed. Günay Kut and Fatma Büyükkarcı Yılmaz (Istanbul: Simurg Kitapçılık, 2005), 735 (IX).

33   Sir Gerard Clauson, *An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth-Century Turkish* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 46a. The word is possibly etymologically connected with Mongolian *iduyan* (~ *udayan* ~ *uduyan*) 'shamaness.' See Juha Janhunen, "Siberian Shamanistic Terminology," in *Traces of the Central Asian Culture in the North: Finnish-Soviet Joint Scientific Symposium Held in Hanasaari, Espoo 14–21 January 1985*, ed. Ildikó Lehtinen (Helsinki: Suomalais-Ugrilainen Seura, 1986), 101.

34   Translation according to Clauson, *Etymological Dictionary*, 46b. Marcel Erdal has his reservations regarding this etymology of *ıdok*: "We cannot, at present, exclude the possibility that Kāšġarī got this idea from the meaning of *ıdma yılkı*, which he documents with the meaning 'an animal which is allowed to go free.'" See Marcel Erdal, *Old Turkic Word Formation: A Functional Approach to the Lexicon*, vol. 1 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1991), 233.

35   See Elisabetta Chiodo, "The Horse White-as-Egg (*öndegen čayan*): A Study of the Custom of Consecrating Animals to Deities," *Ural-Altaische Jahrbücher Neue Folge* 11 (1992): 125–151. In her article she compares Turkic and Mongolic materials.

36   Sacred space and 'boundary zones' are investigated in Veikko Anttonen, "Space, Body, and the Notion of Boundary: A Category-Theoretical Approach to Religion," *Temenos* 41.2 (2005): 185–201.

study of concepts of the holy and the sacred among the Uyghurs.[37] The ideas about *kut*—the third word to be examined briefly here—were still important after the conversion to Manichaeism and later to Buddhism.[38] In Turkic, *kut* is a multifaceted term with a wide range of meanings; for example, 'royal charisma,' 'good fortune,' 'majesty,' 'salvation,' 'aim of salvation,' 'rank,' 'blessing,' 'grace,' 'merit,' 'protective spirit,' 'soul,' 'vow,' 'element,' 'quality,' and so forth. Persons and places can be the seat of *kut*—imagined as a kind of substance and coming from above[39]—which makes them special in a religious sense. In Uyghur Buddhism, *kut* became conflated with the concept of *puṇya* (OU *buyan*). The latter not only bears the usual meaning of 'merit' but also 'good fortune,' 'grace,' 'majesty,' and so on when used in synonym compounds with *kut*. Just like the amount of *kut* in heaven, the store of *puṇya* which can be dedicated to others is sometimes imagined as residing in heaven above.[40]

I would argue that in the royal title, the horizontal aspect of the holy (OU *ıdok*) is combined with the vertical aspect (OU *kut*).[41] A striking 'survival' of the pre-Buddhist and pre-Manichaean conception of *kut* is found in two Buddhist texts edited by Kōgi Kudara and Juten Oda respectively. Both are translations from Chinese. In the first one, a Uyghur version of the **Taishan jing* 太山經 [*sūtra* of Mount Tai],[42] we find: "his lifespan will be long, his good fortune (OU *kut*) thick"[43] (OU *özi uzun kutı kalın bolgay*). And in the second text, the *Säkiz Yükmäk*, a translation from the *Bayang jing* 八陽經 [*sūtra* of the Eight Principles]:[44] "his lifespan$_2$ will be long, his good fortune (OU *kut*) will be thick"[45]

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37   On this title, see Reşid Rahmeti Arat, "Der Herrschertitel *Iduq-qut*," *Ural-Altaische Jahrbücher* 35 (1964): 150–157. Róna-Tas rightly stated that there must have been a difference between the two constituents of the term *ıdok kut*. See András Róna-Tas, "Materialien zur alten Religion der Türken," in *Synkretismus in den Religionen Zentralasiens: Ergebnisse eines Kolloquiums vom 24.5. bis 26.5.1983 in St. Augustin bei Bonn*, ed. Walther Heissig and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1987), 39.

38   On the Turks' ideas about *kut*, see Róna-Tas, "Materialien," 40.

39   Ibid., 41.

40   BT XXXVIII, 168 (text Gb27).

41   Róna-Tas, "Materialien," 42, says that the ruler is the *kut* itself.

42   The Chinese title is reconstructed after the OU title *taišanke*.

43   Kudara Kōgi, "Kanbun 'Taizankyō' to uiguruyaku Tayšanki. Torufan chihō no amida butsu kankei no gikyō 漢文太山経とウイグル訳 Tayšanki. ―トルファン地方の阿弥陀佛関係の偽経 [Chinese Taishan jing and Uyghur Tayšanki—Unknown Apocrypha on Amida Buddha in the Turfan Area]," *Ryūkoku daigaku ronshū* 龍谷大學論集 [Journal of Ryūkoku University] 463 (2004): 4 (lines 15–16).

44   The full title of this text is usually given as *Foshuo tiandi bayang shenzhou jing* 佛說天地八陽神呪經 [*mantra-sūtra* of the Eight Principles of Heaven and Earth as Spoken by the Buddha].

45   BT XXXIII, 230 [437, Ib] (I deviate from Oda's translation). The Chinese parallel deviates here. Cf. Oda, *A Study*, 231.

(OU *özi yašï uzun bolur kutï kalïn bolur*). We can compare the small Karabalga-
sun Inscription written a few decades after the conversion to Manichaeism,
where the *kut* of the ruler is said to have become 'thin' (OT *yuyka*) in the blue
heaven.[46] This idea is certainly pre-Manichaean. In another translated text, the
ninth chapter of the *Biography of Xuanzang*, *kut* is said to have settled down
(i.e. from above) on the Anfumen (安福門) street, originally the city gate, in
Chang'an (長安, modern Xi'an 西安).[47] Thus the ideas about *kut* form a pre-
Buddhist and pre-Manichaean layer within Uyghur culture. As in the instance
in the *Biography of Xuanzang* quoted at the beginning of the paper, a place can
be imbibed with *kut*. The term 'the holy realm of Kočo' (OU *kutlug kočo uluš*)
can be found within the texts.[48] The winter capital of the Uyghurs, Kočo, seems
to be the focus of the whole realm, or even identical with it.[49] The holiness of
a whole city is a concept found in another context. In a fragment of a text
which is probably part of a historical elaboration, there is a description of how
a ruined city called *ordo uluš*—probably to be understood as 'residence'—was

46   Quoted after Róna-Tas, "Materialien," 41, where it is stated correctly that the inscription
      reflects the old ideas about *kut* even though it was written after the conversion to Man-
      ichaeism. As the inscription belongs to the East Uyghur Khaganate (ca. 744–840), it has to
      be surmised that the conception of *kut* was similar to the belief expressed in the Old
      Turkic inscriptions of the Orkhon Valley.

47   Hakan Aydemir, *Die alttürkische Xuanzang-Biographie IX: Nach der Handschrift von Paris,*
      Peking und St. Petersburg sowie nach dem Transkript von Annemarie v. Gabain ediert, über-
      setzt und kommentiert, vol. 1 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2013), 108, (line 582). Cf. also ibid.,
      110 (line 599). Further attestations in the 7th chapter are discussed in the commentary to
      the first passage in Aydemir, *Xuanzang-Biographie IX*, vol. 2, 321, where it is rightly stated
      that the translator of the ninth chapter misunderstood the syntax because *kut ornanmïš*
      ('[where] the divine fortune has descended') should refer to the gate and not the street.
      Kirill Solonin points out to me that in both cases the Old Uyghur translation differs from
      the Chinese original because instead of an equivalent for *kut*, the emperor is mentioned
      (personal communication).

48   Takao Moriyasu, "Uighur Buddhist Stake Inscriptions from Turfan," in *De Dunhuang à Is-*
      tanbul: Hommage à James Russell Hamilton, ed. Louis Bazin and Peter Zieme (Turnhout:
      Brepols, 2001), 186 (line 04); Peter Zieme, "Remarks on Old Turkish Topography," in *Lan-*
      guages and Scripts of Central Asia, ed. Shirin Akiner and Nicholas Sims-Williams (London:
      School of Oriental and African Studies, 1997), 50 (line 4). BT XXXVIII, 235 (text Je05); Laut,
      "Gedanken," 134 (line 29, a colophon to the introductory part of the *Maitrisimit*; here: OU
      kutlug kočo uluš kutï "the protective spirit of the holy realm of Kočo"). See the title *kutlug*
      kočo ulušlug kanpo bišaŋčup ïrpal bahšï "the abbot (Tib. *mkhan po*) Guru Byaṅ chub dpal
      who belongs to the holy realm of Kočo" BT VII, 76 (text O 17–18).

49   Jens P. Laut and Peter Zieme, "Ein zweisprachiger Lobpreis auf den Bäg von Kočo und
      seine Gemahlin," in *Buddhistische Erzählliteratur und Hagiographie in türkischer Überlief-*
      erung, ed. Jens P. Laut and Klaus Röhrborn (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1990), 23 (line 36):
      kočo uluštakï bodun bokun kuvrag[ï] "the host of the people in the realm of Kočo (Gao-
      chang)."

rebuilt. In one line it is called 'divine city' (OU *t(ä)ŋri balık*).[50] There is also a reference to 'heavenly winter quarters' (OU *t(ä)ŋridäm kıšlıklar*).[51] The identity of this ruined city is not altogether certain.

3 Physical Space

After the Uyghurs had to leave their original homeland in Mongolia and settled along the northern rim of the Tarim Basin during the middle of the 9th century, they had to face new environmental and cultural conditions. Although some Uyghurs were already living along the northern rim of the Tarim Basin before the demise of the East Uyghur Kaganate (ca. 744–840) in Mongolia, the major part of the Uyghur populace entered the world of the small oases only in the 9th century. We can safely assume that their perception of space underwent important changes at that time. As Michael C. Brose points out:

> By the eleventh century the Uyghurs had themselves become Tarim Basin indigenes whose kingdom controlled the area, and whose identity was shaped by their ancient imperial history and their immediate sociocultural context.[52]

Occasionally the Uyghurs reflected on their surroundings in their writings. I would like to mention briefly a text in strophical alliteration known as the 'Jade Empress,' first edited by Kudara in 2001[53] and re-edited by Abdurishid Yakup in 2014.[54] Additional remarks were made by Peter Zieme in two articles

50 Peter Zieme, "Ordo Uluš, Solmı and Bešbalık," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 62.3 (2009): 257 (line 6).

51 Zieme, "Ordo Uluš," 257 (line 8).

52 Michael C. Brose, "People in the Middle: Uyghurs in the Northwest Frontier Zone," in *Battlefronts Real and Imagined: War, Border, and Identity in the Chinese Middle Period*, ed. Don J. Wyatt (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 255.

53 Kudara, Kōgi, "Saiiki shogo dankan shū (19.20) chōsa chūkan hōkoku 西域諸語断簡集（19・20）調査中間報告 [Collection of Fragments in Different Languages from Central Asia (19.20) Midterm Research Report]," *Tōkyō daigaku shozō bukkyō kankei kichōsho ten—tenji shiryō mokuroku* 東京大学所蔵仏教関係貴重書展―展示資料目録一 [Precious Buddhist Manuscripts in the University of Tōkyō Library—Catalogue of the Materials on Display] (Tokyo: University of Tōkyō Library, 2001), 20–24.

54 Abdurishid Yakup, "Dongjing daxue fushu tushuguan cang huihu wen <feicui gongzhu zan> yishi 东京大学附属图书馆藏回鹘文〈翡翠公主赞〉译释 [Translation of the Uyghur 'Praise on the Jade Princess' in the Library of the University of Tokyo]," in *Neilu Ouya lishi yuyan lunji—Xu Wenkan xiansheng guxi jinian* 内陆欧亚历史语言论集 徐文堪先生古稀纪念 [Studies on the History and Languages of Inner Eurasia—Festschrift

published on academia.edu in the summer of 2015,[55] in which he introduced newly identified fragments and also some important new readings. The spirit named the Jade Empress (OU *kaš hatun*) is characterised as a descendant of the Nāga Vāsuki who has her residence "in the valley of Karakočo" (OU *kara kočo özäkintä*) "with its banks rich in jade" (OU *kašlıg kıdıglıg*).[56] It is explicitly stated in the text that the Uyghurs call her *kaš hatun*, the Jade Empress.[57] Although one text mentions a nun called *kaš hatun* from Toyok,[58] the legendary creature in the poem simply cannot be a human being. The references to mythology are too explicit. The poem reflects the Uyghurs' perception of their own landscape with *kaš hatun* as a beneficent entity who provides water in an arid region. The newly identified text[59] seems to point to a use of the poem in the context of rain magic.

4   A Uyghur Approach to Sacred Space?

Taking the imagery of the poem of the Jade Empress as a starting point, one is tempted to ask whether there is a special Uyghur way of conceiving sacred space. In order to give an answer to this question, one would be well advised to investigate those sources which are most likely to be original Uyghur compositions; that is, poems, colophons, inscriptions and letters. The literary genre can be somewhat blurred at times because colophons or inscriptions can be written in strophic alliteration, the typical feature of Altaic poetry.[60] There is one particular poem in sixteen lines with a kind of chorus after each stanza, which praises a quiet and secluded monastery and the nature surrounding it.[61] The landscape and vegetation is typical of the arid and mountainous regions of the Tarim Basin. A river is always of vital importance for the cave monasteries in

on Occasion of the 70th Birthday of Professor Xu Wenkan], ed. Xu Quansheng 许全胜 and Liu Zhen 刘震 (Lanzhou: Lanzhou daxue chubanshe, 2014), 148–161.

55   Peter Zieme, "Notizen zur 'Jadeherrin'," June, 2015, accessed August 24, 2018. <https://www.academia.edu/12823748/Notizen_zur_Jadeherrin_>; "Weitere Notizen zur 'Jadeherrin'," July, 2015, accessed August 24, 2018>. <https://www.academia.edu/13303452/Weitere_Notizen_zur_Jadeherrin_>.

56   Yakup, "Feicui gongzhu zan," 154.

57   Yakup, "Feicui gongzhu zan," 154.

58   Zieme, "Notizen," 3.

59   BT XIII, 138–139 (text no. 27; newly identified in Zieme, "Weitere Notizen").

60   And there are Uyghur versifications of texts in donor languages such as Chinese or Sanskrit.

61   Peter Zieme, *Die Stabreimtexte der Uiguren von Turfan und Dunhuang: Studien zur alttürkischen Dichtung* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1991), 117.

this area while caves are also an essential part of the pre-Buddhist religion of the ancient Turks.[62] Running water as well as dense forests and foaming lakes add to the picture represented in the Buddhist poem, too. Only in such a place would one be able to control one's senses and enjoy in complete solitude the pleasure of the *dharma*, as the text states.[63] It is remarkable that the author depicts the landscape as something enjoyable, with an inherent aesthetic quality, and a complement to the benefits of meditation.

But not only monastic life is depicted in the religious texts. In one composition traditionally called the *Harvest Blessing*,[64] there is a very positive description of agricultural activities.[65] The backdrop of this text is Buddhist, but with a very specific local content. There is a second *Harvest Blessing*[66] in which the god Dhanyadeva is given ritual oblations. This deity is mentioned in the first *Harvest Blessing* too. In the *Maitrisimit* we find the native Uyghur term *tarıg täŋri*, God of Cereals,[67] and it is highly likely that this name refers to the same deity. In the second *Harvest Blessing*, offerings to Dhanyadeva are supposed to please him so that he procures rich amounts of grain. Both texts display a poetical structure in strophic alliteration. Parts of both texts are not well understood; some terms have been interpreted only in a preliminary way. It is conceivable that both blessings were meant to be recited to accompany agricultural rituals. In a region with very little rain, where cultivation is usually only possible with elaborate irrigation, a ritual focus on the soil is quite understandable. On the other hand, the high esteem in which agricultural activities are held in these texts is somewhat surprising as tilling the soil is usually viewed negatively in a Buddhist context. One Uyghur example explicitly describes several of these activities as "harming$_2$ the true$_2$ inner self of all the Buddhas in the three worlds."[68]

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62 On caves as a seat of 'numinous powers,' see Rolf Gehlen, "Raum," in *Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe. IV: Kultbild – Rolle*, ed. Hubert Cancik, Burkhard Gladigow, and Karl-Heinz Kohl (Stuttgart, Berlin, Köln: W. Kohlhammer, 1998), 377–398.

63 Zieme, *Stabreimtexte*, 117 (line 12). This is a re-edition of Reşid Rahmeti Arat, *Eski Türk şiiri* [Old Turkic poetry] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1991), 66–67 (text 8).

64 Peter Zieme, "Ein uigurischer Erntesegen," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 3 (1975): 109–143.

65 Zieme, "Erntesegen," 113–114 (lines 22–59).

66 Ádám Molnár and Peter Zieme, "Ein weiterer uigurischer Erntesegen," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 16.1 (1989): 140–152.

67 Version from Hami, chapter XXVI, leaf 8 (verso 11–12). See Geng Shimin, Jens P. Laut, and Georges-Jean Pinault, "Neue Ergebnisse der Maitrisimit-Forschung (II): Struktur und Inhalt des 26. Kapitels," *Studies on the Inner Asian Languages* 19 (2004): 60.

68 OU *üč yer suvdakı tüzü burhannıŋ kertü köni özläri buzuglı artat(ı)glı ärür*, in manuscript Mainz 774, lines 10–12 (verso), quoted in Peter Zieme, "Uigurische Steuerbefreiungsurkunden für buddhistische Klöster," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 8 (1981): 242 (note 46).

5   The Symbolic Level

If we leave the rather clearly defined realm of physical space, we may proceed
to socially and symbolically constructed space. In several texts the land of the
Uyghurs is mentioned. It can be imagined as a kind of holy land or as lying in
the centre of civilisation. The Uyghur ruler is addressed in one poem as "oh our
ruler, who was born in the centre (OU *orta törümiš hanım(ı)z-a*)."[69] One poem
speaks of the rewards for concentrating one's mind on the Buddhas of the ten
directions, the first of which is that "one is born$_2$ in the Uyghur land, the centre
realm (OU *uygur elilig orton ulušta tugup b(ä)lgürüp*)."[70] Further on, a rebirth
in the Tuṣita Heaven is mentioned.[71] Even in modern scholarship the Uyghurs
were characterised as 'people of the middle.'[72] This is the relational aspect of
the land of the Uyghurs. Periphery is imagined here as centre, a fact well known
in spatial theory. The realm is threatened by enemies and other dangers. This is
stated in the so-called *Memorandum*, a text of mixed prose and verse depicting
the early phase of the West Uyghur Kingdom, which was committed to writing
in the 13th or 14th century. Here, we find the interesting statement, "The holiest
of realms is the realm of the On Uygur."[73] The conception of their homeland is
very likely to be an essential factor in the construction of Uyghur identity. In
line forty of this text, there is reference to the old sacred centre of the Turkic
peoples in the region of Ötükän. Land and ruler are seen as complementary in
this text. The place name Ötükän or Öṭikän is attested in other texts as well.[74]
The place name Kičig Öṭikän (Small Ötükän) found in one poetic text[75] was
probably relocated in the vicinity of Beš Balık—the summer capital of the Uy-
ghurs—to remember the old sacred centre and to be in closer contact with a
place imbibed with charisma. Notice that despite the mixed population of the
Tarim Basin, what matters is that the land belongs to the Uyghurs in a Uyghur
perspective. Buddhas, bodhisattvas and protective deities can be invoked to
help secure the well-being of the land and its inhabitants. One example is a

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69   BT XIII, 154 (text no. 39:9, 13).
70   Ibid. (text no. 55:4).
71   Ibid., 183 (text no. 55:8).
72   Brose, "People in the Middle."
73   Tieshan Zhang and Peter Zieme, "A Memorandum About the King of the *On Uygur* and
      his Realm," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 64.2 (2011): 142 (line 36;
      OU *eltä ıdokı on uygur eli ök ärmiš*).
74   For references, see Peter Zieme, "'Toyın körklüg': An Old Uigur Buddha Poem," *Studies on
      the Inner Asian Languages* 28 (2013): 22–23. The place name is also attested in Manichae-
      an Sogdian. See Nicholas Sims-Williams and Desmond Durkin-Meisterernst, *Dictionary of
      Manichaean Sogdian and Bactrian* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), 38a.
75   Peter Zieme, "Toyın körklüg," 15 (line 5).

praise of Maitreya recently edited by Yukiyo Kasai[76] and re-examined shortly afterwards by Peter Zieme.[77] In this highly difficult poem, which displays a peculiar imagery, Maitreya is asked to eradicate ailments and sufferings of the Uyghur people in the realm of Kočo.

There is one poem found in Yarkhoto which is a praise of the Uyghur realm.[78] Coming back to the *Memorandum*, the term Ten Uyghurs (OU *on uygur*) is of importance. It appears in the *Maitrisimit* as "the praised realm of the Ten Uyghurs."[79] In other texts, we even find a fictive Sanskrit term, *daśahaihura* 'Ten Uyghurs,'[80] and even *daśahaihuramaṇḍal* (as a term written in Brāhmī script which is the designation of the realm of the Ten Uyghurs).[81] We do not know exactly to what extent the tribal organisation was still effective in shaping social life in the West Uyghur Kingdom, but it most probably was still meaningful even after the Uyghurs became sedentary in the Tarim Basin, not only on a symbolical level. By using an Indian term, *daśahaihura*, the prestige of the Sanskrit tradition is transferred to the Uyghur realm in Central Asia. The "blessed and holy land of the Ten Uyghurs" is mentioned in a Manichaean hymn as well.[82] The notion of centrality[83] is evoked in a wall inscription by the two Uyghur monks Dharmaśrī (d.u.) and Taypodu (d.u.), which bears the title *sukavadi ulušnuŋ okıtıgı* [Invocation of the Sukhāvatī Land]. It is one of several inscriptions on a wall painting with scenes from hells:

76   BT XXXVIII, 140–143.

77   Peter Zieme, "Altuigurischer Lobpreis auf Maitreya in Versen, die in der Anrufung, die Nöte des Uigurischen Reichs zu lindern, kulminieren," April, 2017, accessed August 24, 2018. <https://www.academia.edu/32289782/Altuigurischer_Lobpreis_auf_Maitreya_in_Versen_die_in_der_Anrufung_die_Nöte_des_Uigurischen_Reichs_zu_lindern,_kulmi nieren>.

78   BT XIII, 154–155 (text no. 39).

79   Geng Shimin and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, *Das Zusammentreffen mit Maitreya. Die ersten fünf Kapitel der Hami-Version der Maitrisimit, in Zusammenarbeit mit Helmut Eimer und Jens Peter Laut herausgegeben, übersetzt und kommentiert*, vol. 1 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1988), 12 (lines 23–24). Similarly, in a colophon in alliterative verse from the Saint Petersburg collection quoted in Zieme, "The West Uyghur Kingdom," 8 (SI 4bKr 6 recto 9–11): "One who keeps and protects without spoiling anything the pure and holy dharma and śāsana (of the Buddha) and the blessed realm and country of the On Uygur forever, for countless eons" (OU *arıg ıdok nomın šazının/alkatmıš on uygur elin ulušın/apamulug üd suratılıg tuškatägi/artadmatın küyü küzädü tuttačı*).

80   BT XXXVIII 136 (line Ea13). Also, in the poem in Uyghur script, we find *haihurlar* for 'Uyghurs.' See Zieme, "Notizen," 3 (111d).

81   Zieme, "Old Turkish Topography," 47. Note the elision of the final –a of the Sanskrit term which corresponds with the usual spelling of *mandal ~ mantal* in Uyghur script.

82   TT IX 18 (line 90; OU *alkatmıš ıdok [o]n uygur eli*).

83   On the image of the centre in the history of religions see Gehlen, "Raum," 394–395.

look, in this cella (of the) monastery[84]
which is nothing less than the pillar of the land of the Ten Uyghurs
look in this excellent monastery gorge.[85]

6   The 'Embodiment' of Sacred Space

In spatial theory, the human body is identified as "the source of 'space.'"[86] It is seen as the key to concepts of orientation. In some Uyghur Buddhist texts translated from other languages, we can detect this idea as well. A telling usage of two metaphors is found in chapter 11 of the work *Maitrisimit*. The moment of conception in the case of the Bodhisattva Maitreya is described as first leaving the Tuṣita palace and then "entering the darkness of the womb of queen Brahmāvatī."[87] In the same chapter, queen Brahmāvatī approaches a rose-apple tree to give birth to Maitreya. At this very same spot grew the *aśoka* tree under which Śākyamuni was born. And then a second metaphor is found: "At this very same sacred place$_2$ did the god of gods, Buddha Kāśyapa, Buddha Kanakamuni, and Buddha Krakucchanda leave the palace of (their) mothers' womb."[88] The presence of the bodhisattva transfigures his mother's womb, otherwise perceived as a place of darkness and despair, into a receptacle of the holy.[89] In the 26th chapter of the same text there is a damaged passage which contains a description of the cosmological Buddha. In this case it is King Siṃha

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84   The term *manistan* usually but not exclusively refers to a Manichaean monastery.

85   BT XIII (text no. 59:2–5):
       una bo manisṭan öẕäntä
       on uygur el ulušnuŋ
       ugrayu soka basrokı
       una bo ništa aryadan kısılta

86   Knott, "Spatial Theory," 4, 22–23; Gehlen, "Raum," 393: "Erklärbar ist diese Dominanz des Zentrums aus der Stellung des Menschen im Raum mit dem eigenen Körper als Koordinatennullpunkt."

87   OU *br(a)hmavati hatunnuŋ karanlag tünärigintä olurur*. Chapter 11, folio 3, verso 23–24. Geng Shimin, Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, and Jens P. Laut, "'Das Erscheinen des Bodhisattva'. Das 11. Kapitel der Hami-Handschrift der Maitrisimit," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 15.2 (1988): 323. For a damaged parallel from Sengim, see now Michaël Peyrot and Ablet Semet, "A Comparative Study of the Beginning of the 11th Act of the Tocharian A Maitreya-samitināṭaka and the Old Uyghur Maitrisimit," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 69.4 (2016): 361 (lines 099–101).

88   Chapter 11, folio 8, verso 16–20. Geng, Klimkeit, and Laut, eds., "Erscheinen des Bodhisattva," 328–329 (OU *ol ok kutlug yer oronta t(ä)ŋri t(ä)ŋrisi kašip burhan kanakamuni burhan kr(a)kašunḍe burhan [ö]g karınlag vimanıntın ünä y(a)rlıkadılar*).

89   Ibid., 318.

observing the four continents and other auspicious marks such as bejewelled *kuṭāgara*s on the back and haunches of Maitreya.[90] It is possible that passages such as this one and lists of the thirty-two *lakṣaṇa*s were used to visualise in meditative practices. Note that the *Maitrisimit* is one of the earliest Old Uyghur Buddhist texts. It was translated from Tocharian A into Old Uyghur probably in the 9th century. After the classicial period in which translations from Chinese prevail, a new phase in Uyghur Buddhism began with the advent of Tibetan Buddhism in the late 13th century. The need for translations from Tibetan arose and new rituals and their accompanying *maṇḍala*s and texts began to spread. The appropriation of Tibetan Tantric literature was seemingly rather selective, to judge from the texts identified so far.[91] In a *Cakrasaṃvarasādhana* translated from Tibetan by Puṇyaśrī (d.u.) in the 14th century, there is an enumeration of the twenty-four spots of the body where the *vīra*s and *yoginī*s reside.[92] They correspond to the twenty-four outer places, such as Pulliramalaya, Jālandhara, Oḍḍiyāna, Arbuta, Godāvarī and so on. Thus, the body is envisaged as sacred space, with visualisation as a kind of inner pilgrimage.

7 Concluding Remarks

Through a philological examination of the complex issue of sacred space in Uyghur Buddhism, it has become clear that concepts developed in other Buddhist traditions of the area are adapted and reformulated, whereas others are connected with the Uyghurs' self-perception. They reflect how the Uyghurs positioned themselves within the Buddhist community and how they established their identity. In this respect, we can detect an intersection with the topic of 'legitimation,' which is discussed with reference to Uyghur Buddhism by Yukiyo Kasai in this volume. It is fortunate that Uyghur poetry has received a lot of attention from scholarship. Without our knowledge of poems, inscriptions and other original compositions, the Uyghurs' take on sacred space would look exceedingly derivative. Although references to the topic are more often than not rather sketchy, they nevertheless contain important information that provides direct insight into Buddhist life in the Tarim Basin on an individual level, aside from authoritative texts.

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90 See the short note by Jens P. Laut, "Noch einmal zum 26. Kapitel der Maitrisimit," *Studies on the Inner Asian Languages* 21 (2006): 183–184.

91 The most substantial contribution to the study of Tantric texts in recent years, comprising several new identifications, is BT XXXVI.

92 BT VII, 32–34 (text A, lines 31–84).

Pilgrims in Old Uyghur Inscriptions: A Glimpse behind Their Records

Simone-Christiane Raschmann

1   Introduction

The remains of Old Uyghur Buddhist scriptures of varying content, as well as records and documents of Buddhist communities and monasteries which are preserved in numerous Central Asian collections worldwide, clearly demonstrate the widespread and fairly long-lasting Buddhist orientation of the Uyghurs and their affiliation to different Buddhist schools or varieties of Buddhism.[1] In addition, colophons added to the copies of Buddhist texts and cartouches added to Buddhist wall paintings deliver information on translators, writers, readers and sponsors.[2] Finally, a significant number of Old Uyghur inscriptions were left by pilgrims at various sites. But, as far as we know today, indigenous records on Buddhist pilgrimages like those of the famous Chinese Buddhist monastic travellers Faxian (ca. 340–before 423, 法顯), Xuanzang (600/602–664, 玄奘), and others, are just as limited as manuals or descriptive itineraries for pilgrimage in Old Uyghur Buddhist literature.[3]

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1   Cf. amongst others, Jens Wilkens, "Buddhismus bei den türkischen Völkern Zentralasiens," in *Der Buddhismus II: Theravada-Buddhismus und tibetischer Buddhismus*, ed. Manfred Hutter (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2016), 469–490; Jens Wilkens, "Buddhism in the West Uyghur Kingdom and Beyond," in *Transfer of Buddhism Across Central Asian Networks (7th to 13th Centuries)*, ed. Carmen Meinert (Leiden, Boston: Brill 2016), 191–249; Peter Zieme, "The West Uigur Kingdom: Views from Inside," *Horizons* 5.1 (2014): 1–29; Peter Zieme, "Uighur Buddhism," in *Oxford Bibliographies: Buddhism*, ed. Richard Payne (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), accessed September 18, 2018. doi: 10.1093/obo/9780195393521-0197; Peter Zieme, "Local Literatures: Uighur," in *Brill's Encyclopedia of Buddhism. Vol. I. Literature and Languages*, ed. Jonathan A. Silk et al. (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2015), 871–882.

2   Peter Zieme, Religion und Gesellschaft im Uigurischen Königreich von Qočo. Kolophone und Stifter des alttürkischen buddhistischen Schrifttums aus Zentralasien (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1992); BT XXVI.

3   For an interesting discussion concerning questions such as whether the Chinese pilgrim records form a consistent genre of their own or whether the documents they produced should no longer be called pilgrims' records, see Max Deeg, "When Peregrinus is not Pilgrim: The Chinese "Pilgrims'" Records—A Revision of Literary Genre and its Context," in *Searching for the Dharma, Finding Salvation: Buddhist Pilgrimage in Time and Space*, ed. Christoph Cueppers and Max Deeg (Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute, 2014), 65–95.

However, although very important initial steps have been taken in order to gain a better understanding of the Uyghur pilgrimage, a comprehensive and interdisciplinary study of the many different sources is still missing. Of course, such an undertaking would go beyond the scope of the present study. The present paper is restricted to

1. presenting the actual state of research on the basis of the scholarly literature;
2. surveying and evaluating the Old Uyghur pilgrim inscriptions from Dunhuang, Hohhot (in present Inner Mongolia) and the Turfan region; and
3. showing the potential of the interdisciplinary approach to the subject, using the example of ruin Q in Kočo.

2   Uyghur Buddhist Pilgrimage

Even though several details of the process are still under discussion, there seems to be general agreement that the substantial and long-lasting conversion from Manichaeism to Buddhism among the Uyghurs started in the late tenth century, after their migration to the west and their settlement in the eastern part of the Tianshan (天山), the Heavenly Mountains. Buddhist culture was present in this region from the first centuries of the Common Era onwards, and in its early stage Uyghur Buddhism was mainly influenced by Tokharian and Chinese Buddhism, the followers of which had been living in the territories of the newly founded West Uyghur Kingdom (second half 9th c. to 13th c.) for a long time. The role of the Sogdians in this process is still under discussion. Without going into detail here, there exists conclusive evidence in the Old Uyghur Buddhist sources for this briefly outlined process. Starting in the 11th century at the latest, when most Uyghurs had converted to Buddhism already, Uyghur Buddhism underwent a broad and manifold development. Furthermore, because of the strong relations between Dunhuang and the West Uyghur Kingdom, the influence of Buddhism from Dunhuang had to be taken into account when considering the orientation of Uyghur Buddhism.[4] It is thanks to

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4   For more detailed information on this subject see, amongst others, Wilkens, "Buddhism in the West Uyghur Kingdom," 204–225; Takao Moriyasu, "Chronology of West Uighur Buddhism: Re-examination of the Dating of the Wall-Paintings in Grünwedel's Cave No. 8 (New: No. 18), Bezeklik," in *Aspects of Research into Central Asian Buddhism: In Memoriam Kōgi Kudara*, ed. Peter Zieme (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 191–227; Xinjiang Rong, "The Relationship of Dunhuang with the Uighur Kingdom in Turfan in the Tenth Century," in *De Dunhuang à Istanbul: Hommage à James Russell Hamilton*, ed. Louis Bazin and Peter Zieme (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001), 275–298.

the existence of a well-developed Old Uyghur scriptural culture that indige-
nous pilgrim inscriptions are available for collecting first-hand information
concerning Uyghur pilgrimage, and since text philology is the author's primary
field, the remarks concerning Uyghur pilgrimage will concentrate on the re-
sults of the studies of the preserved written sources. In the present context, it
seems to be worth mentioning that the biography of the famous Chinese Bud-
dhist monk and pilgrim Xuanzang is to be found among the Old Uyghur Bud-
dhist scriptures translated from Chinese into Old Uyghur between the end of
the 10th and the beginning of the 11th century. This given date is closely con-
nected to the known lifespan of its translator, Šiŋko Šäli Tutuŋ (fl. second half
of 11th c./beginning of 12th c.) from Beš Balık, whose Chinese or Uyghur de-
scendance is still under discussion, as is the precise date of the translation. The
Old Uyghur Xuanzang biography belongs to the first comprehensive Buddhist
scriptures which were translated from Chinese into Old Uyghur, most probably
under the deep influence of Dunhuang Buddhism.[5] It goes without saying that
pilgrims aim to visit, at least once in their lifetime, sacred places which are of
extraordinary religious significance. Among the various sacred mountains of
Chinese Buddhism, Mt. Wutai (Chin. Wutai shan 五台山) has an important
role. Dunhuang was not just an important place for pilgrims on their road to
Mt. Wutai, Chinese poems written in praise of this sacred mountain are known
from the Dunhuang text findings.[6] From the current state of research, one
could conclude that no other versions of these poems existed if it were not for
the Chinese versions known from Dunhuang. Furthermore, according to Peter
Zieme, no translation of the famous *Wutai shan zan*五台山贊 [Praise of Mt.
Wutai] in other languages of the Middle Ages other than Old Uyghur has been
found (fig. 8.1).[7] It is quite remarkable that the *Praise of Mt. Wutai* is attested

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5   For an overview on the extensive literature on the Old Uyghur Xuanzang biography and the
    editions of its text, cf. Johan Elverskog, *Uygur Buddhist Literature* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997),
    131–135; Albet Semet, *Lexikalische Untersuchungen zur uigurischen Xuanzang-Biographie*
    (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005), 1–31; BT XXVI, 144–147; Hakan, Aydemir, *Die alttürkische
    Xuanzang-Biographie IX* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2013), 1–10.

6   Wilkens, "Buddhism in the West Uyghur Kingdom," 222; Peter Zieme, "Three Old Turkic
    Wutaishanzan Fragments," *Nairiku ajia gengo no kenkyū* 内陸アジア言語の研究 *Studies on
    the Inner Asian Languages* 17 (2002): 223–239; Peter Zieme, "Gudai Huigu fojiao zhi zhong de
    Wutai shan yu Wenshu shili 古代回鹘佛教之中的五台山与文殊师利 [Mt. Wutai and
    Mañjuśrī in Uyghur Buddhism]," in *Yishan er wuding: Duo xueke, kua fangyu, chao wenhua
    shiye zhong de Wutai xinyang yanjiu* 一山而五顶：多学科、跨方域、超文化视野中的
    五台信仰研究 [One Mountain of Five Peaks: Studies of the Wutai Cult in Multidisciplinary,
    Crossborder and Transcultural Approaches], ed. Miaojiang 妙江, Chen Jinhua 陳金華, and
    Kuanguang 寬廣 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang daxue chubanshe, 2017), 117–126.

7   Zieme, "Wutai shan yu Wenshu shili," 119.
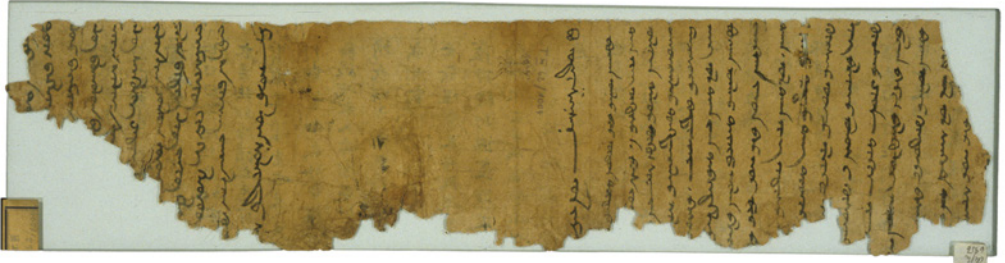
FIGURE 8.1 Fragment of an Old Uyghur translation of the *Wutai shan zan* 五台山贊 [Praise of Mt. Wutai].
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not only in Old Uyghur translation but also in transcription; that is, in a version that presents the Chinese text in Uyghur script.[8] Zieme assumes that the Old Uyghur translation has to be dated to the tenth century at the earliest.[9] Again, the existence of an Old Uyghur version of the *Praise of Mt. Wutai* (OU *udaišan-san*) is further proof of the close relation between Uyghur and Dunhuang Buddhism. It is therefore not surprising that the religious veneration of pilgrimage to Mt. Wutai (OU *udai šan*) is expressed in Old Uyghur pilgrim inscriptions found in the caves of the Dunhuang region.[10]

A first insight into Buddhist pilgrimage among the Uyghurs based on their own written sources was presented by Tibor Porció in 2014, under the title, "Some Peculiarities of the Uygur Buddhist Pilgrim Inscriptions."[11] Within the scope of this study, Porció presents an instructive comparison of the structure between the Old Uyghur colophons, on one side, and Old Uyghur pilgrim inscriptions, on the other.[12] He concludes:

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8   Zieme, "Wutaishanzan Fragments," 224–227.

9   Zieme, "Wutai shan yu Wenshu shili," 119.

10   Matsui Dai 松井太, "Tonkō sekkutsu Uigurugo, Mongorugo daiki meibun shūsei 敦煌石窟ウイグル語・モンゴル語題記銘文集成 [Uyghur and Mongol Inscriptions of the Dunhuang Caves]," in *Tonkō sekkutsu tagengo shiryō shūsei* 敦煌石窟多言語資料集成 [Multilingual Source Materials of the Dunhuang Caves], ed. Matsui Dai 松井太 and Arakawa Shintaro 荒川慎太郎 (Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asian and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 2017), 73: Y03 Uig 30 *män šakyapal udai-ka barur-ta kenki-lär-kä ödik kıldım kutuɣ-tu boltuɣai kemen*; Y03 Uig 32 *täväči tuṭuŋ udai-ka barur-ta ödik kıldım sadu bolzun*.

11   Tibor Porció, "Some Peculiarities of the Uygur Buddhist Pilgrim Inscriptions," in *Searching for the Dharma, Finding Salvation: Buddhist Pilgrimage in Time and Space*, ed. Christoph Cueppers and Max Deeg (Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute, 2014), 157–178.

12   Porció, "Pilgrim Inscriptions," 166–174.

It goes without saying, the colophons and the inscriptions are, by fundament, the outputs of two distinct activities and of different occasions, therefore they have their own distinctive characteristics, respectively; i.e. they contain elements without a direct counterpart in the other. However, it is not impossible to match, at least tentatively, some of these elements.[13]

As also attested through Old Uyghur colophons, some of the inscriptions are composed in alliterative verses. As an Old Uyghur term, *ödik* (register, memorandum, memoir)[14] is used quite often by pilgrims to title their inscription.[15] Porció appropriately called the pilgrim inscriptions "postscripts to pilgrimage." It is most probably not only due to the local conditions that the length of the preserved Old Uyghur inscriptions varied significantly. In some of them, quite a number of elements known from the Old Uyghur colophons are present—such as date, names of pilgrims, motivations, information regarding the transfer of merits, wishes and aims, and, finally, a closing formula.[16]

In the meantime, more and new epigraphic material has been made available, resulting from the ongoing field work in the Buddhist sites on the Northern branch of the Silk Road and in the Hexi region in particular. Multidisciplinary research projects dealing with the manifold materials preserved in the Central Asian collections, while focusing on single Buddhist sites, deliver further information as shown below.

2.1   *The Scope of Old Uyghur Pilgrim Inscriptions*

Only recently, the most comprehensive edition of Old Uyghur and Mongolian inscriptions in the Dunhuang Caves thus far was published by Dai Matsui.[17] The term Dunhuang Caves (Chin. Dunhuang shiku 敦煌石窟) in the title of this edition is used as a collective term since inscriptions from six different Buddhist cave sites in and around Dunhuang are presented—78 Old Uyghur, seven Mongolian and one Sogdian inscription from 35 caves of the Mogao Caves (Chin. Mogao ku 莫高窟); one Old Uyghur inscription from the Northern Section of the Mogao Caves (Chin. Mogao ku beiqu 莫高窟北区); two Old Uyghur inscriptions from Cishi Pagoda (Chin. Cishi ta 慈氏塔), a single-storey wooden

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13   Porcio, "Pilgrim Inscriptions," 171.

14   Marcel Erdal, *Old Turkic Word Formation: A Functional Approach to the Lexicon*, vol. 2 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1991), 444.

15   Porció, "Pilgrim Inscriptions," 165–166. See, for instance, the quoted examples in footnote 10.

16   Ibid., 171–172.

17   Matsui, "Tonkō sekkutsu Uigurugo," 1–161.

pagoda near the Mogao Caves; 185 Old Uyghur and six Mongolian inscriptions from 25 Yulin Caves (Chin. Yulin ku 榆林窟); one Old Uyghur inscription from the Eastern Thousand Buddha Caves (Chin. Dong Qianfodong 東千佛洞); and finally, one Old Uyghur and one Mongolian inscription from the Five Temple Caves (Chin. Wugemiao shiku 五個廟石窟) in present Subei Mongol Autonomous County.[18] Matsui's edition is part of a presentation of the results of a large research project which dealt with the multilingual source materials from the Dunhuang Caves, including Chinese, Tibetan and Tangut inscriptions as well as inscriptions in Brāhmī script and the study of donor portraits.[19] The huge amount of pilgrim inscriptions representing all important Buddhist languages of that time in this area again underlines the importance of the Dunhuang Buddhist cave complexes within the scope of Buddhist pilgrimage, and with regard to the number of written remains of the Uyghur Buddhists in particular. In addition, some written remains point to an even broader symbolic power and signify a multi-religious society. An Old Uyghur inscription in Syriac script was left in one of the Yulin Caves by a group of people of different faiths. At the end of their visit to this site, they left the inscription in memory of their pilgrimage to Yulin Cave 16.[20] It is not only the personal names of two of them that clearly identify them as followers of the Christian faith; the terms used in the concluding wishes and closing formulae—"May it be a memory, Amen!" (OU *yad bolzun amin*)[21] and "Until all eternity, Amen." (OU *apamuka-tägi amin*),[22]—also clearly show a Christian context.[23]

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18   Some of the inscriptions are known from earlier editions. All references are to be found at the top of the edited inscription of each.

19   Matsui Dai 松井太 and Arakawa Shintaro 荒川慎太郎, eds., *Tonkō sekkutsu tagengo shiryō shūsei* 敦煌石窟多言語資料集成 [Multilingual Source Materials of the Dunhuang Caves] (Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asian and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 2017).

20   Matsui, "Tonkō sekkutsu Uigurugo," 100 (Y16 Uig 05):
1   *bečin yıl bešinč ay on beš-tä biz*
2   *xaču-lug buyan temür n(ä)tn(i)'ēl y(ö)ḫ(a)n(ä)n*
3   *bo xaču-nuŋ tag buxar-ıŋa kälip*
4   *iki kün tezginip üč sorma*
5   *bir xoyn ašın sökünüp yenä ya[n]ıp*
6   *bartımız yad bolzun amin*
7   *apamuka-tägi amin*

21   Ibid., line 6.

22   Ibid., line 7.

23   Peter Zieme has already mentioned the existence of this inscription in his paragraph on the scarecely attested Old Uyghur Christian texts from Dunhuang, cf. Peter Zieme, *Altuigurische Texte der Kirche des Ostens aus Zentralasien. Old Uigur texts of the Church of the East from Central Asia* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2015), 24.

However, it is possible that the two Christians were in company with a Buddhist, since the personal name on the first position in their inscription, Buyan Temür, could be interpreted as a Buddhist one (OU *buyan* < Skt. *puṇya*, means merit, meritorious deeds).[24] The group of people characterise themselves as "belonging/originating from Xaču"[25] (OU Kaču < Chin. Guazhou 瓜州), which is Guazhou County (瓜州县, formerly Anxi County 安西县) in the Hexi region. The Yulin Caves are located about 55 kilometres to the south of Guazhou. The pilgrims call the site "the mountain temple of Guazhou" (OU *kačunɪng tag buxarɪ*).[26] According to Matsui, most of the Old Uyghur and Mongolian pilgrim inscriptions from the Dunhuang region date back to the Mongol period (13th–14th c.). The term *buxar* used in the designation of the Yulin Buddhist cave temples is the Mongolian form of Sanskrit *vihāra*, 'monastery, temple,' which gives further support to this dating.[27] According to their record, the pilgrims stayed for two days, went around, took three wheat beers or wine (OU *sorma*) and one meal of sheep meat during their stay, and departed. By means of collecting details like those given in the quoted inscription, we are able to enlarge our knowledge about Uyghur pilgrimage. The edited epigraphic material offers detailed data about the range of pilgrimage to the Buddhist sites in the Dunhuang area. As Matsui summarises, with regard to the present subject:

> The situation suggested by the Chinese inscriptions mostly tallies the Uigur and Mongolian inscriptions of the Yulin and Mogao Caves, in which we frequently come across the toponyms of the Gansu region such as Šaču = Shazhou, Qaču = Guazhou and Sügčü = Suzhou, and Yungčang-vu < 永昌府 Yongchang-fu, and T(a)ngut čölgä "the Circuit (čölgä < Mong. čölge = Chin. 路 lu) of Tangut" each once, as the origin of the pilgrims. Besides the toponyms of the Gansu, those of the Eastern Tianshan region such as Qamïl or Napčik appear in the Uigur inscriptions.[28]

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24 The Old Uyghur term *buyan* is also attested in a Christian (and Manichaean) context, but most probably is not used as an element of personal names for followers of their religious communities.

25 Matsui, "Tonkō sekkutsu Uigurugo," 100 (Y16 Uig 05), lines 1–2: *biz xaču-lug*.

26 Matsui, "Tonkō sekkutsu Uigurugo," 100 (Y16 Uig 05), line 3.

27 For further attestations of the term see Matsui, "Tonkō sekkutsu Uigurugo," 142. A similar designation for this Buddhist site, i.e. the 'sacred mountain temple' (OU *kutlug tag süm*) from Yulin Cave 25, has already been discussed in Porció, "Pilgrim Inscriptions," 172 (fn. 104).

28 Dai Matsui, "Revising the Uigur Inscriptions of the Yulin Caves," *Nairiku ajia gengo no kenkyū* 内陸アジア言語の研究 [Studies on the Inner Asian Languages: Papers in Honour of Professor Takao Moriyasu on His 60th Birthday] 23 (2008): 27–28. A small map indicating the listed places is included in Matsui's article (ibid., 28).

He concludes that "they clearly indicate the Uigurs' active traffic for Buddhist pilgrimage between the Eastern Tianshan and the Gansu region in the Mongol times."[29]

Uyghur Buddhist pilgrimage also included the site of the White Pagoda (Chin. Bai ta 白塔) on the site of the ancient city of Fengzhou (丰州) (located 17 kilometres from present Hohhot, Inner Mongolia) as is attested from their inscriptions.[30] The Pagoda of the Ten Thousand Volumes of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* (Chin. Wanbu Huayan jing ta 萬部華嚴經塔) was built under the Khitan Empire (907–1125, in Chinese sources known as Liao 遼), in the Fengzhou Buddhist temple complex. This seven-storey pagoda was erected between 983 and 1031 to serve as a *stūpa* for *sūtra* storage. According to the recently published Old Uyghur material, we learn about pilgrims originating in Kamıl, Toksın or Čambalık who visited the place. In their often hardly legible inscriptions, which are spread through storeys two to seven, they often report about their wishes and aims; such as, they came in order "to bow to this holy *stūpa*" (OU *bo ıdok stupta yüküngäli kälip*),[31] "to become Buddha because of this merit" (OU *bo buyan küčintä burhan bolalım*),[32] so that the inscription "May […] be seen in future!" (OU *kenki körgülük bolẓun*),[33] or "to bow to the Noble Mañjuśrī"[34] (OU *ary-a mančuširika yükünürmän*)[35]. These wishes and aims are totally in accordance with those known from formerly published Old Uyghur Buddhist pilgrim inscriptions.[36] If we take into consideration the historical situation of that area in the Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368, 元), it is no wonder that, again, among the edited Old Uyghur inscriptions, at least two can be related to persons who had a Christian background.[37]

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29   Matsui, "Revising the Uigur Inscriptions of the Yulin Caves," 28.

30   Yudong Bai 白玉冬 and Dai Matsui 松井太, "Old Uigur Inscriptions of the White Pagoda, Hohhot," *Nairiku ajia gengo no kenkyū* 内陸アジア言語の研究 *Studies on the Inner Asian Languages* 31 (2016): 29–77. In total, the two authors were able to decipher and edit twenty inscriptions of different scope.

31   Ibid., 39 (text J, lines J5–J6).

32   Ibid., 44 (text R, line R4).

33   Ibid., 45 (text T, line T3).

34   Skt. *Āryamañjuśrī*, name of a bodhisattva, i.e. the Bodhisattva of Wisdom.

35   Bai and Matsui, "White Pagoda," 45 (text T, line T8).

36   Porció, "Pilgrim Inscriptions," 167–174.

37   Bai and Matsui, "White Pagoda," 33–36 (text C) and 42–44 (text Q). For more details with regard to the Christian environment, I would like to refer to the two articles of Pier Giorgio Borbone with more bibliographical data concerning the whole scope of inscriptions in the White Pagoda, which also includes inscriptions in Chinese, Khitan, Jurchen, and Mongolian: Pier Giorgio Borbone, "Syroturcica 2: The Priest Särgis in the White Pagoda," *Monumenta Serica* 56 (2008): 487–503; Pier Giorgio Borbone, "More on the Priest Särgis in the White Pagoda: The Syro-Turkic Inscriptions of the White Pagoda, Hohhot," in *From*

Scholars dealing in detail with the interpretation of the historical significance of the Buddhist caves in the Turfan oasis—like Takao Moriyasu, Koichi Kitsudo and Dai Matsui in their studies on the Bezeklik Caves[38]—appealed for the strengthening of efforts regarding the philological work on the related inscriptions at these spots, too.[39] Even in case of the famous wall paintings from the Bezeklik Caves, inscriptions are not limited to the attached cartouches, which provide information about depicted deities, persons or the sponsors of the painting (fig. 8.2).

Peter Zieme recently published the quite numerous inscriptions and scribbles of different hands, which are to be found on the Brāhmaṇa Painting from Bezeklik Cave 20.[40] They were spread through the whole painting, using the free spaces. In some few cases, pilgrims even described the purpose of meditation and veneration in verse.[41] For example, shortly before departing home, a pilgrim transferred the merit that had been earned in the course of his stay to the Good Noble Ones (OU *ädgü täŋrilärkä buyan ävi*[*rürmän*]).[42] More material in the Central Asian collections still needs consideration. Just recently, around 130 pieces of wall inscriptions were re-discovered for detailed investigation in the Museum of Asian Art in Berlin. They belong to the finds of the four German Turfan expeditions between 1902 and 1914, which were excavated

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       the Oxus River to the Chinese Shores: Studies on East Syriac Christianity in China and Central Asia, ed. Li Tang and Dietmar W. Winkler (Zürich, Münster: LIT Verlag, 2013), 51–65.

38   Moriyasu, "Chronology of West Uighur Buddhism," 191–227; Koichi Kitsudo, "Historical Significance of Bezeklik Cave 20 in the Uyghur Buddhism," in *Buddhism and Art in Turfan: From the Perspective of Uyghur Buddhism. Buddhist Culture along the Silk Road: Gandhara, Kucha, and Turfan*, ed. Irisawa Takashi (Kyoto: Ryukoku University, 2012), 141–172; Matsui Dai, "Ning-rong 寧戎 and Bezeklik in Old Uighur Texts," *Nairiku ajia gengo no kenkyū* 内陸アジア言語の研究 *Studies on the Inner Asian Languages* 26 (2011): 141–175.

39   Kitsudo, "Bezeklik Cave 20," 151; Matsui, "Revising the Uigur Inscriptions," 29.

40   Peter Zieme, "A Brāhmaṇa Painting from Bäzäklik in the Hermitage of St. Petersburg and Its Inscriptions," in *Unknown Treasures of the Altaic World in Libraries, Archives and Museums: 53rd Annual Meeting of the Permanent International Altaistic Conference, Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, R[ussian] A[cademy of] S[ciences] St. Petersburg*, July 25–30, 2010, ed. Tatiana Pang et al. (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 2013): 181–195. Grünwedel's Cave 9 corresponds to Bezeklik Cave 20 today. This wall painting is preserved in the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg. For further studies see, among others, Peter Zieme, *Buddhistische Stabreimdichtungen der Uiguren* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1985), 189–192; Matsui, "Ning-rong," 141–175; Zhang, Huiming, "A Study of the Story of the Penance and Elimination of Sins in the Golden Light Sūtra Illustration from the Bezeklik Caves (Focusing on Ty-575 Fragments of the Hermitage Collection)," in *Dunhuang Studies: Prospects and Problems for the Coming Second Century of Research*, ed. Irina F. Popova et al. (St. Petersburg: Slavia, 2012), 321–332.

41   Zieme, "Brāhmaṇa Painting," 188–189.

42   Ibid., 188 (section 7(a), line 7).

FIGURE 8.2 Buddhist wall painting with scenes from hell and pilgrim inscriptions from Bezeklik Cave 18 (Grünwedel's no. 8).
III 8453, © STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ASIATISCHE KUNST

at different sites. Only a few of them have already been published or cata-logued.[43] The attached finding marks are sometimes very general in their information,[44] but in cases like 'Chotscho: Ruine K,' 'Sängim: Tempel 1,' 'D (= Dakianusšahri/Kočo), Ruine/Tempel Q,' and 'Kumtura, 3. Höhle (Bartus Wohnhöhle),' the specific excavation spot is given and may provide a first clue for detecting the holy places for Buddhist pilgrims in the Turfan oasis or neigh-bouring territories. Like those in the Dunhuang Caves, these inscriptions pres-ent multilingual source material in Sanskrit, Tocharian, Syriac, Sogdian, Old Uyghur and Chinese. Some of the inscriptions are preserved as squeezes, black-and-white photographs or re-drawings of the original inscriptions only. Only a comprehensive study of all available remains of the pilgrims' inscrip-tions from the excavation spots in the Turfan oasis could enhance our knowl-edge about the 'holy places' and the specific features of Uyghur pilgrimage in this area, with any certainty.[45] There is no doubt that in order to study the present subject, additional sources, including those in languages other than Old Uyghur, have to be taken into consideration. An excellent example is the Mongolian decree from the Chaghataid Khanate (1220–1370) discovered in the Dunhuang Caves (B163:42), since it reports on the support of Chaghataid au-thorities for pilgrims on the pilgrimage routes in the Turfan region.[46]

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43   Among the published inscriptions, ten are in Old Uyghur language and Brāhmī script from Kumtura and Kızıl, which were described and edited in the catalogue volumes of Dieter Maue, cf. VOHD 13,9: 201–205 (catalogue nos. 72–77); VOHD 13,27: 457–465 (cata-logue nos. 210–213). Further on, seven inscriptions in Tocharian and Kharoṣṭhī were pub-lished by Georges-Jean Pinault in 1987, cf. Georges-Jean Pinault, "Épigraphie koutchée-nne: I. Laissez-passer de caravans, II. Graffites et inscriptions," in *Sites divers de la région de Koutcha. Épigraphie koutchéenne = Mission Paul Pelliot* (*Documents conservés au Musée Guimet et à la Bibliothèque Nationale*), ed. Georges-Jean Pinault et al., vol. 8 (Paris: Insti-tuts d'Asie du Collège de France, 1987), 59–196. The Christian Sogdian inscription from the 'Ruine eines großen Klosters' was dealt with by Nicholas Sims-Williams and James Hamilton, cf. Nicholas Sims-Williams et al., *Documents turco-sogdiens du IXᵉ–Xᵉ siècle de Touen-houang* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1990), 38; Nicholas Sims-Williams, "Sogdian and Turkish Christians in the Turfan and Tun-huang Manuscripts," in *Turfan and Tun-huang: The Texts*, ed. Alfredo Cadonna (Florence: Olschki, 1992), 58.

44   This general information on the find spot are given in cases like D (= Dakianusšahri/ Kočo), Sängim (T II), Subashi Längär, Bulayık, Ming-öy Kızıl, 'MQ Qumtura' (Murtuk/ Kumtura).

45   Further information is to be found among the numerous scribblings of Old Uyghur read-ers, owners, or sponsors on the manuscripts and block prints preserved in the Berlin Tur-fan Collection, cf. among others BT XXVI, 45–275; VOHD 13,22: 165–293.

46   For the edition of this Mongolian decree and its interpretation, see Dai Matsui, "A Mon-golian Decree from the Chaghataid Khanate Discovered at Dunhuang," in *Aspects of Re-search into Central Asian Buddhism: In Memoriam Kōgi Kudara*, ed. Peter Zieme (Turn-hout: Brepols, 2008), 159–178.
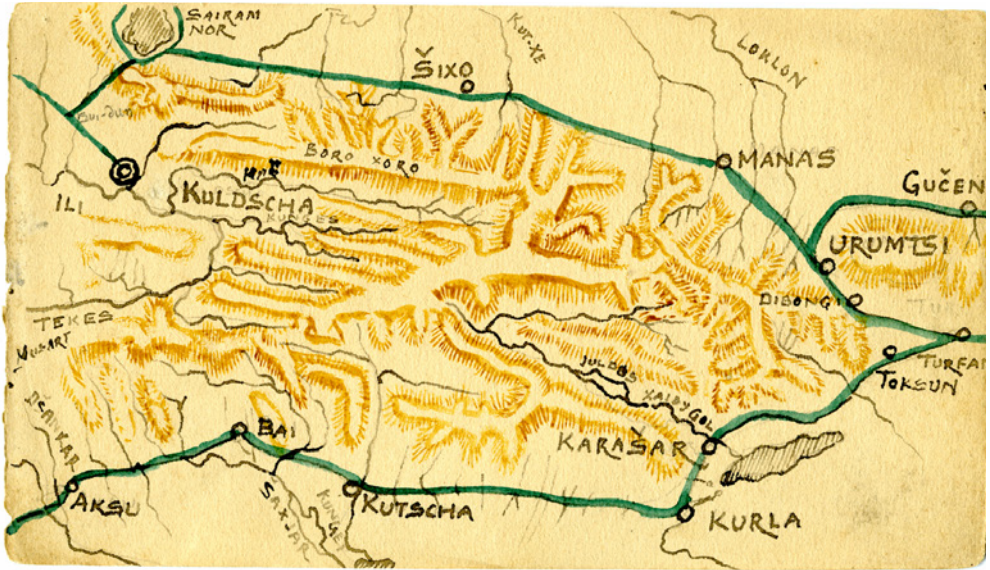
MAP 8.1   Sketch plan drawn by Albert Grünwedel in 1902 showing a route section of the
First German Turfan expedition.
TA 6876-24, © STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ASIATISCHE
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3   The Inscriptions of Ruin Q in Kočo—A Case Study of a 'Holy Place'

In the course of an international project (2014–2015) dealing with the investigation of the various wooden architectural objects from ruin Q in Kočo and their function, all available information concerning the findspot was gathered together.[47] It came to light that it was not only a Brāhmī inscription on two of the beams of a wooden structure from ruin Q that was preserved,[48] a whole series of wall inscriptions were found there, as well. Together with the wooden

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47   The research project 'Medieval pre-Islamic architecture in Kocho on the Northern Silk Road' at the Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin was supported by the Gerda Henkel Stiftung.

48   The two wooden beams are preserved under the inventory nos. III 4435b and III 4435c in the Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin. For some figures of these wooden architectural elements, Klaas Ruitenbeek et al., "Ruin Q in Kocho and its Wooden Architectural Elements," in *The Ruins of Kocho: Traces of Wooden Architecture on the Ancient Silk Road*, ed. Lilla Russell-Smith et al. (Berlin: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, 2016), 110–111.
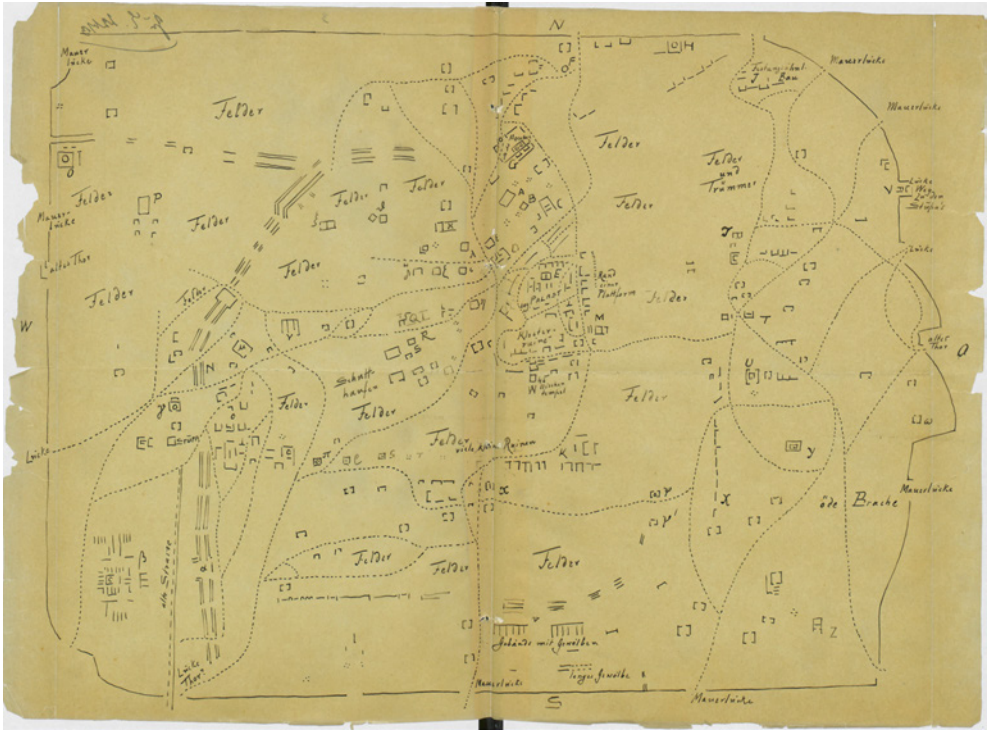
MAP 8.2   Sketch plan of Kočo drawn by Albert Grünwedel (First German Turfan expedition,
             1902–1903).
             TA 253, © STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ASIATISCHE
             KUNST

elements, they were brought to Berlin by the German Turfan expeditions (map
8.1).[49]

   According to Grünwedel's sketch plan of the old city of Kočo (map 8.2), ruin
Q is located in the "west of the so-called citadel or Khan's Palace almost in line
with ruins η (Eta) and μ (Mu)."[50]

   What is of special interest here is that one of the rooms within ruin Q was
named 'room with inscriptions' (Germ. Inschriftenzimmer).[51] In the findings

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49   According to the preserved records, ruin Q in Kočo was visited and excavated only during
        the First German Turfan expedition in 1902–1903. This expedition was led by Albert
        Grünwedel (1856–1935), an Indologist, Tibetologist and Art Historian with great expertise
        in Buddhist Studies, who was the first director of the Indian Department at the Berlin
        Museum für Völkerkunde (1904–1921).
50   Ruitenbeek, "Ruin Q," 103.
51   Ibid.

inventory, "Inschriftentempel Q" was also used as a designation for this location.[52] Again, according to Grünwedel's report on the first expedition, "All these inscriptions were located in the inner room at the southernmost part of the terrace."[53]

With regard to the present topic, this overall approach to ruin Q cleared the path for looking at this place as a pilgrimage site "because of the role that architecture and objects played as framing devices for the pilgrims' experience at a much wider variety of sites than those that we know from texts."[54]

On the other hand, the importance of the deciphering and interpretation of inscriptions in order to determine the specific function of a building in the past becomes quite clear if we take the following example into consideration. According to the recent results of the Berlin research project, it was not only the square pillar in the middle of the 'room with inscriptions' that served as a replacement for a *stūpa*, as it was presumed by Grünwedel,[55] "but also the building which houses the pillar."[56] Michaël Peyrot, who studied the Tocharian B inscriptions from ruin Q in Kočo in detail, was able to contribute and deliver a further argument as a result of his philological approach, as one of these Tokharian B inscriptions from one wall in the 'room of inscriptions' reads, "whoever has gone into this *stūpa*."[57] Being a *stūpa*, the large quantity of inscriptions left at this place is no longer surprising, since it may be assumed that

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52   A copy of a relevant entry of the excavated wooden beams from the original findings list is published in Ruitenbeek, "Ruin Q," 104, fig. 1: Extract of Grünwedel's list of Kočo finds. Museum für Asiatische Kunst, TA 657.

53   Ruitenbeek, "Ruin Q," 106. English translation by Ruitenbeek after Grünwedel, Albert, *Bericht über archäologische Arbeiten in Idikutschari und Umgebung im Winter 1902–1903* (München: Verlag der K. B. Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1905), 34.

54   Wiebke Friese et al., "Introduction: Archaeologies of Pilgrimage," in *Excavating Pilgrimage: Archaeological Approaches to Sacred Travel and Movement in the Ancient World*, ed. Wiebke Friese and Troels Myrup Kristensen (London, New York: Routledge, 2017), 1.

55   Grünwedel, *Bericht über archäologische Arbeiten in Idikutschari*, 173. Also quoted in Ruitenbeek et al., "Ruin Q," 106.

56   Ibid.

57   Michaël Peyrot, "Tocharian B Inscriptions from Ruin Q in Kocho, Turfan Region," in *The Ruins of Kocho: Traces of Wooden Architecture on the Ancient Silk Road*, ed. Lilla Russell-Smith et al. (Berlin: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, 2016), 129. Also quoted in Ruitenbeek et al., "Ruin Q," 106. Unfortunately, because of the existing damage, the context of *kiriš* in the Old Uyghur inscription from ruin Q with the inventory no. III 1046 of The Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin is not clear. It reads in line 3: [...] *YS kiriš bo säŋräm vuhar-ka*. We may take Clauson's translation into consideration: "1 kiriş 'entry, way in; incomings, revenue" ED, 747a) and see a certain proximity to the Tocharian B inscription of the fragment with the inventory no. ВД 757 of The State Hermitage in St. Petersburg, which states in line 2 "Whoever has gone into this *stūpa* ...," according to Peyrot's above already cited translation.

ruin Q was regarded as a 'holy place' worthy of pilgrimage. The project's report explains, furthermore:

> The inner walls of the "room with inscriptions" were white-washed and from about the middle up to the western wall with the doorway they were covered with Uyghur and a few Chinese inscriptions.[58]

The fact that the attested inscriptions were written in different languages clearly indicates the multi-ethnicity of the pilgrims visiting this place,[59] and we may suppose that ruin Q was a major destination for Buddhist pilgrims in the Turfan oasis throughout several centuries.

The attested Tocharian B term *pat* (*stūpa*) in one of the Tocharian B inscriptions is especially significant, and Peyrot was able to discover the full meaning of the corrupted Tocharian B inscription by quoting from the Sanskrit *Pradakṣiṇagāthā*: "Having made a circumambulation of a *stūpa*, one attains the four noble truths, the [five] faculties and the [five] powers, and the fruit of monkhood."[60] The Old Uyghur term *säŋräm* (TochA/B *saṅkrām*, Skt. *saṅghārāma*) used in the inscription, with the inventory no. III 386 of the Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin (fig. 8.3), may seem to have a much broader sense than *stūpa*, but it fits to the attested idea of entering this place—a problem that remains in the interpretation of the Tocharian B inscription, since the attested form *patne* is a locative singular (i.e. in the *stūpa*; into the *stūpa*).[61]

It is well proven, for instance, from the so-called Old Uyghur Sivšidu-Yakšidu manuscripts preserved in the Institut of Oriental Manuscripts, Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg, that the term *säŋräm* and/or its synonym *virhar* were explicitly used for the designation of places for worshipping and religious activities.[62] In the case of the above-mentioned group of texts, it is the *abita kur säŋräm* or the *abita kur atl(ı)g v(i)rhar* (i.e. "the Abita-cave temple"), most probably situated at the Toyok Caves and related to the Uyghur

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58   Ruitenbeek et al., "Ruin Q," 106. All of that which seemed to be relevant among the detected inscriptions and what was accessible for the expedition was brought to Berlin. These inscribed wall fragments are among the above mentioned re-discovered material. In addition to Matsui (Matsui, "Revising the Uigur Inscriptions," 28), ruin Q attests Chinese pilgrim inscriptions at a Buddhist site in the Turfan region.

59   A small number of inscriptions is also attested in ruin K in Kočo.

60   For the full reference, see Peyrot, "Tocharian B Inscriptions," 134 note 7.

61   Peyrot, "Tocharian B Inscriptions," 134 note 6.

62   Dai Matsui, "Uigur Manuscripts Related to the Monks Sivšidu and Yaqšidu at "Abita-Cave Temple" of Toyoq," in *Journal of Turfan Studies: Essays of the Third International Conference of Turfanological Studies, 2008, Turfan,* ed. Academia Turfanica (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2010), 704.

Pure Land Buddhism.[63] Further attestations of the designation of the place could be detected in other Old Uyghur inscriptions from ruin Q as well.[64]

A short poem is part of the Old Uyghur inscription with the inventory no. III 367 (fig. 8.4).[65] It seems to be a praise on the building and on those who took part in the construction of the *vihāra*, as well as on the efforts of the contemporary people who rebuilt damaged parts. A possible closing formula may be reconstructed as 'all things are unstable' (OU *alku nomlar ürl*[*ügsüz ol*]). The author or, at least, the writer of this inscription has *šilavanti* (Skt. *śīlavat*,

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63 As pointed out by Matsui, Old Uyghur texts related to Pure Land Buddhism have been hitherto known mostly from the Buddhist sites of Sängim, Murtuk, Yarkhoto, and the ruins α and μ in Kočo, cf. Matsui, "Sivšidu and Yaqšidu," 705.

64 Here I would like to thank Peter Zieme for his co-operation with deciphering the inscription. Nevertheless, I have to admit that the deciphering is still in progress, and therefore, the interpretation may still undergo changes.

65 Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin.

FIGURE 8.4 Old Uyghur inscription from a wall of ruin Q in Kočo.
III 367, © STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ASIATISCHE
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possessing moral behaviour) as an element in his name.[66] The text of this short poem clearly demonstrates the awareness of a long existing history of this *stūpa* or *vihāra*, which might be one of the factors in it becoming a holy place. And, again according to the the text, there were remarkable efforts to keep

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66   Unfortunately, the first element of the personal name is only partly preserved and at the moment no reliable reconstruction can be given.
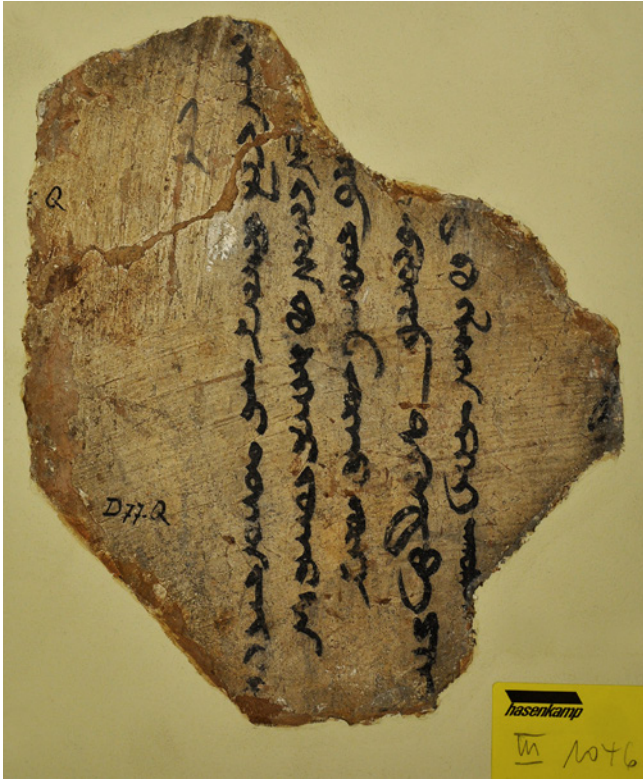
FIGURE 8.5
Old Uyghur inscription
from a wall of ruin Q in
Kočo.
III 1046, © STAATLI-
CHE MUSEEN ZU
BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR
ASIATISCHE KUNST

it like that. But it is not certain whether we may take this as a contemporary report of the pilgrim.

Also, the Old Uyghur inscription already cited above, with the inventory no. III 1046 (fig. 8.5), provides an attestation of the designation of the building as *saṅghārāma vihāra* (OU *säŋräm vuhar*). Looking on the preserved material from ruin Q, we find a very common feature which is present in almost all Old Uyghur pilgrim inscriptions; they start with the date of the record. This is of course given according to the twelve-animal cycle of the Chinese calendar.

The presence of the date seems to be an important indicator that the inscriptions stem from people from the outside. They were written down during their stay at this place or, as shown, shortly before departing from there. It seems to be quite clear that they are not written by the local monastics. This is an important criterion for regarding them as pilgrim inscriptions, since movement—that is, leaving from home (or more precisely, "from one's usual

everyday-life environment"[67]), arriving at at least one holy place and departing from there in order to return home—is a substantial aspect of pilgrimage. What is remarkable in comparison to other pilgrim inscriptions from the Dunhuang or Yulin Caves, for instance, is that in the current state of research, almost no mentions of the pilgrims' origins have been detected.

This fact raises a question concerning the range of the pilgrimages to this Buddhist site. As far as the material that has been edited up until now is concerned, neither the Old Uyghur inscription in Brāhmī script nor the inscriptions in Tocharian B contain relevant information. But, unfortunately, they are all in a very poor state of preservation. The idea that this absence provides us with a clue to the identification of ruin Q as primarily being a holy place for pilgrimages limited to local areas cannot be discounted.[68]

The only exception would be the inscription with the inventory no. III 393 (fig. 8.6).[69] Following the date "Year of the hare, ten[th month], [at the] th[ird day]" (OU *taviśgan yıl on[unč ay ...]/ ü[čünč yaŋïka]*), it reads: "I, the ox-herd (and?) camel[-herd] from Koŋlï" (OU *m(ä)n koŋlï balık-lıg udčï täv[äči ...]*).

Even though this place name is attested not only here but also in Old Uyghur and Mongolian documents, it is not localised yet. In the Mongol document from the Berlin Turfan collection, with the catalogue no. MongHT 75 ('Geleitbrief für Kuriere'[70]), which was also excavated in the ruins of Kočo (= Dakianuššahri[71]), Koŋlï is mentioned as the place where the document on hand was issued during a stay in winter time (fig. 8.7).[72]

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67   Max Deeg, "Buddhist Pilgrimage: An Introduction," in *Searching for the Dharma, Finding Salvation: Buddhist Pilgrimage in Time and Space*, ed. Christoph Cueppers and Max Deeg (Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute, 2014), 5.

68   On this topic, see Deeg, "Buddhist Pilgrimage," 8.

69   Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin.

70   BT XVI, 182. The shelf no. of the fragment in the Berlin Turfan collection is Mainz 869.

71   The finding signature of the damaged document is T II D 306. In the records of the Second German Turfan expeditions, this document is mentioned in the findings list of the expedition from the excavation spots of Dakianusshahri, Sängim and Chikkan Köl up to February 17th, 1905: [T II D] 306 Uig. Dokument, 'Ruine a. gr. Kl.' Because of the great similarity in the script, there are often mistakes in the identification of the language in the very early stage of the discovery. The abbreviation of find spot probably has to be interpreted as 'Ruine am großen Kloster.'

72   The editors of the catalogue of the Mongolica, preserved in the Berlin Turfan collection, presented the reading Qunglu for the place name in MongHT 75, line 10, cf. BT XVI, 182. Resulting from the results of an inspection of the original text, the former reading, 'Qongli,' presented by Michael Weiers, should be preferred, cf. Michael Weiers, "Mongolische Reisebegleitschreiben aus Čaɣatai," *Zentralasiatische Studien* 1 (1967): 41–42. The vocalisation of the first syllable remains an unanswered question.
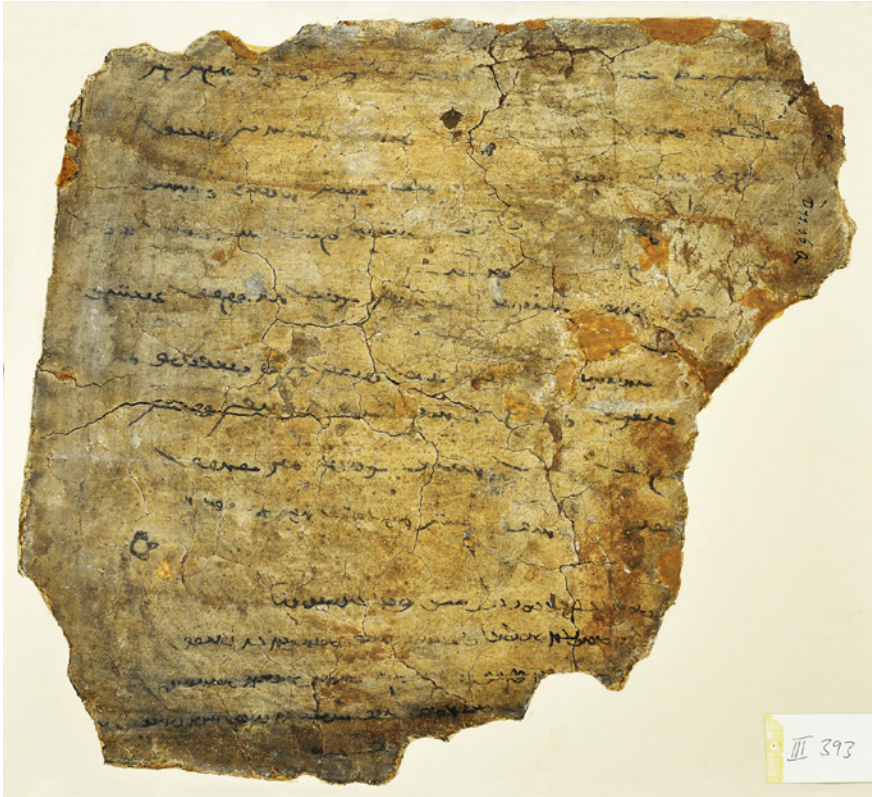
FIGURE 8.6 Old Uyghur inscription from a wall of ruin Q in Kočo.
III 393, © STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ASIATISCHE
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From the land sale contract *U 9341, we learn that a canal, named Kargač or Karanč, is located in Koŋlı (OU *koŋlı-takı kargač/karanč ögän*).[73] Unfortunately, in Dai Matsui's new study on "Old Uigur Toponyms of the Turfan Oases," this place name is not mentioned.[74] The interpretation of the personal names

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73   *U 9341 line 03. This document belongs to those lost in World War II in the Berlin Turfan collection. It is only preserved as a photograph in the Arat estate in Istanbul, cf. VOHD 13,28: 143 (catalogue no. 111). A further attestation is to be found in an Old Uyghur manuscript of the Berlin Turfan collection, with the inventory number Ch/U 7145, which is related to the system of postal relay stations, cf. VOHD 13,21: 194–195 (catalogue no. 189: Ch/U 7145 v).

74   Dai Matsui, "Old Uigur Toponyms of the Turfan Oases," in *Kutadgu Nom Bitig: Festschrift für Jens Peter Laut zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Elisabetta Ragagnin et al. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2015), 275–303.
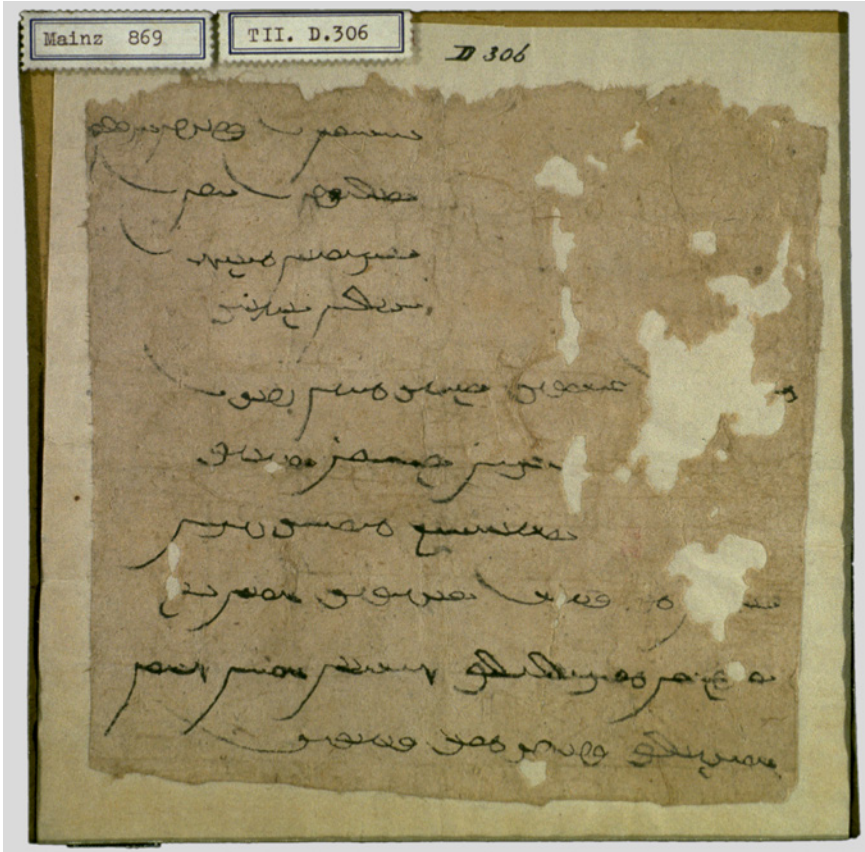
FIGURE 8.7 Mongolian document ('Geleitbrief für Kuriere') preserved in the Berlin Turfan col-
lection.

mentioned in the inscription is not completely clear either, since the elements
udči (or read *oṭačı*?) and *täväči* can be interpreted as professional titles ('cattle
breeder,' 'camel breeder') as well as proper names.[75] Most interestingly, the ar-
rival of a caravan at the *säŋräm virhar* is mentioned further in the text lines
and may point to the existence of interrelations between the routes of the
caravans and the routes of pilgrims in the Turfan oasis. And it seems to be quite
reasonable that these are not interrelations between the routes only. It is also
highly probable that pilgrims joined these caravans because of the adverse

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75   The existence of a further name element cannot be excluded, but the following part of the
      inscription is not preserved.

conditions in this area, at least for a certain section of their journey. Pilgrimage, that is, the process of travelling, is dependent on socio-economic conditions. Buddhist laymen involved in the trade or postal relay systems, who visited Buddhist sites on their routes in order to venerate these holy places, are not among those who are to be counted as Buddhist pilgrims in the strict sense of the term. Additionally, it is attested by the recent research on the Old Uyghur documents that cattle breeders, the above mentioned *udčɪ*, are part of the postal relay system; just as *ud ulag*s ('ox *ulag*') are part of this system.[76]

In the inscription III 393, a section concerning the wishes resulting from the *puṇya* earned by visiting this Buddhist site (i.e. the *stūpa*) is present as well. The Buddhist intention of being "liberated from the cycle of reincarnations through the vehicle of Buddhahood" (OU *burhan* [*kutɪlug k*]*ölök üzä sansar ämgäktin oẓup*) is expressed in this particular case.[77] The conclusion phrases in the inscription III 1046, already cited above several times, reads, "May merit come. May pain disappear!" (OU [*ä*]*dgü kälẓün ämgäk ärtẓün*),[78] phrases that are quite similar to those known from the preserved pilgrim inscriptions in the Dunhuang Caves.[79] These text parts clearly stand for the main intentions of Buddhist pilgrimage: the acquisition of religious merit by visiting holy places and, finally, to attain liberation from the cyclic existence (Skt. *saṃsāra*, OU *sansar*).

The group of pilgrims who produced the inscription III 37 9 (fig. 8.8) describe themselves as students or teachers (OU *bošgutčɪlar*).[80] Unfortunately, the reading of the two preceding and slightly damaged words is still not completely certain, but in the present context "divine Buddhist teaching" (OU *t(ä)ŋri šaẓin*, Skt. *śāsana*) is a an option.[81] The personal names which are listed as members of this group, after the given date, show a clear affiliation to the Buddhist community; for instance, Tilik Ačari,[82] D(a)rmaḍaz (Skt. *dharmadāsa*, slave of the *dharma*), Karunadaz (Skt. *karuṇādāsa*, slave of *karuṇā*), and Buyan Tämür.[83] Further studies are necessary for a complete understanding of this

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76   Cf. BT (forthcoming), UlReg06-10.

77   III 393, lines 9–10.

78   III 1046, line 6.

79   Matsui, "Tonkō sekkutsu Uigurugo," 56 (no. 86: M465 Uig 04), 90 (no. 170: Y12 Uig 13), 100 (no. 196: Y16 Uig 04), 106 (no. 207: Y19 Uig 02), 136 (no. 281: D02 Uig 01).

80   III 379, line 3.

81   III 379, line 3.

82   The Old Uyghur personal name element *ačari* is a Buddhist title given to Buddhist monks acting as teachers (Skt. *ācārya*).

83   Old Uyghur personal names with the element *daz* (Skt. *dāsa*) are discussed in Peter Zieme, "Samboqdu et alii: Einige alttürkische Personennamen im Wandel der Zeiten," *Journal of Turkology* 2.1 (1994): 119–133.
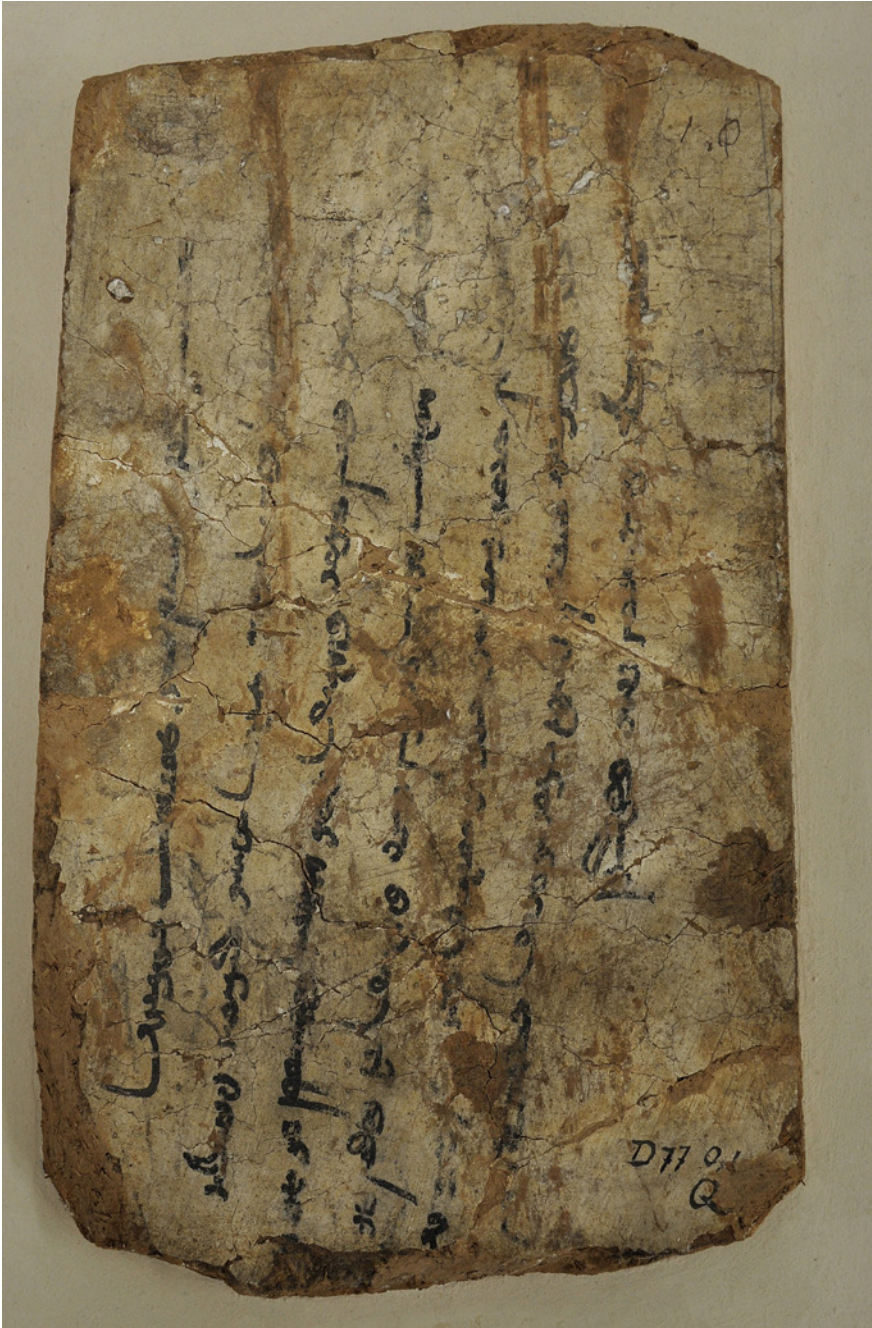
FIGURE 8.8   Old Uyghur inscription from a wall of ruin Q in Kočo.
III 379, © STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ASIATISCHE
KUNST

inscription, but another part of the group probably consists of the people with Kulun Ky-a Tümän Bägi at the head. If my interpretation is correct, the inscription was written on behalf of quite a large group of people.[84]

Some results of the interdisciplinary research project 'Medieval pre-Islamic architecture in Kocho on the Northern Silk Road' provide a clue for the approximate time span during which ruin Q was a holy place for Buddhist pilgrims in this area. Gudrun Melzer, who was studying the Sanskrit inscription on the preserved wooden beam from ruin Q (fig. 8.9), came to the conclusion that the script corresponds to type VI (alphabet u) of Northern Turkistan Brāhmī, used between the 7th to 14th centuries.[85]

According to Dieter Maue, that was also the case for the Old Uyghur inscription in Brāhmī script on the above cited wall fragment with the inventory no. III 319.[86] According to Melzer, a great majority of the published Sanskrit manuscript findings from Kočo written in this type of script have "a probable (Mūla-) Sarvāstivāda background."[87]

Peyrot dates the Tocharian B inscriptions from ruin Q to the eighth century or later.[88] The very cursive style of the inscription in Old Uyghur script gives us a tentative indication of a fairly late date for the Old Uyghur inscriptions from ruin Q; that is, the Mongol period (13th–14th c.).

Taking the aspect of architecture into account, it is possible to add that the wooden elements from ruin Q, with their unique lavish painting, date from the tenth to eleventh centuries.[89] This is also the case for the painted designs on

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84   It is most probably only by chance that a person named Karunadaz (Karuṇādāsa) is also mentioned in the Old Uyghur inscription in Brāhmī script on the wall fragment III 319 from ruin Q (Maue, *Alttürkische Handschriften, Teil 1*, 204–205: catalogue no. 76), as well as the Śīlavān Dharmadāsa (Brāhmī: *dha ma da-z śi la va nti*) in the inscription of the wall fragment III 419 (Maue, *Alttürkische Handschriften, Teil 1*, 205: catalogue no. 77) from the Ming-öy Kızıl Caves (Chin. *Kezi'er Qianfodong* 克孜尔千佛洞) near Kumtura. These names are fairly widespread among Uyghur Buddhists. According to Maue, the Brāhmī script of the inscriptions corresponds to the alphabet u of Lore Sander's palaeography, cf. Lore Sander, *Paläographisches zu den Sanskrithandschriften der Berliner Turfansammlung* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1968), 182–183, plates 29–41.

85   Gudrun Melzer, "Appendix: A Fragmentary Sanskrit Inscription on a Wooden Beam from Ruin Q (III 4435 B)," in *The Ruins of Kocho: Traces of Wooden Architecture on the Ancient Silk Road*, ed. Lilla Russell-Smith et al. (Berlin: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, 2016), 123–126. According to Melzer, the content of this inscription is a collection of epithets of the Buddha, cf. Melzer, "Appendix," 123–124. For a figure of the Sanskrit inscription, see Melzer, "Appendix," 123, fig. 38.

86   See footnote 83.

87   Melzer, "Appendix," 124.

88   Peyrot, "Tocharian B Inscriptions," 128.

89   Ruitenbeek et al., "Ruin Q," 114b, 122a.

FIGURE 8.9 Buddha image painted on beam in Kočo.
III 4435C, © STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN, MUSEUM FÜR ASIATISCHE
KUNST/MARTINA RUNGE

them, which represent the typical style of the period.[90] Ruitenbeek calls the
reconstructed wooden structure an "amalgamation of Chinese wood architec-
ture and Central Asian earth architecture."[91] According to him, "the Chinese-
style wooden architecture of Kočo reflects older Tang-dynasty styles, perhaps
going back to the Xizhou period."[92]

From the results of the multi-disciplinary approach[93] presented above, it is
possible to state that ruin Q with its former function as a *stupa* occupied an

90   Ruitenbeek et al., "Ruin Q," 119b.
91   Ibid., 109a.
92   Ibid., 115b.
93   The volume quoted above, "Excavating Pilgrimage," with contributions of scholars ex-
      ploring archaeological evidence, including architecture and "the material footprint of
      activities undertaken by pilgrims" (Wiebke Friese et al., "Introduction," 1) is a good ex-
      ample for this topic from another area of the ancient world; i.e. Classical and Hellenistic
      Greece, the Roman Empire and Late Antiquity.

extraordinary position at the site of Kočo and was a holy place worthy of pilgrimage.[94]

   With regard to the main topic of this contribution, I would like to close with a short quotation of my honoured teacher from one of his recently published articles:

> While standard expressions or dates are even decipherable in the worst cursive script, reading names and other more essential issues of such inscriptions is much more difficult.[95]

Therefore, a comprehensive study of all available material concerning the Uyghurs and Buddhist pilgrimage in the Turfan region as well as the full range of the pilgrim's movement would be worth discussing in a project in its own right.[96]

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94   For further remarks on the topic see also Deeg, "Buddhist Pilgrimage," 20.
95   Zieme, "Brāhmaṇa Painting," 193.
96   An comprehensive edition of the recently re-discovered and aforementioned Old Uyghur wall inscriptions from the Museum of Asian Art is in preparation.

Looking from the Periphery: Some Additional Thoughts on Yulin Cave 3

Max Deeg

1   Introduction

This contribution was conceived and developed from an encounter with a section of the pictorial programme of Yulin Cave 3.[1] More specifically, it focuses on the programme of the diptych at the left and right sides of the entrance of the famous Cave 3 at Yulin (榆林) in the Hexi (河西) region. Produced during the Tangut Empire (ca. 1038–1227, in Chinese sources, known as Xixia 西夏),[2] it represents as its main subjects, the Bodhisattvas Samantabhadra on the left and Mañjuśrī on the right side, who are both directed at the door and thus facing each other (figs. 9.1 and 9.2).[3] Unlike the clearly recognisable main figures of the two paintings, the iconographical function of the various smaller central and peripheral elements does not seem to be completely coherent and conclusive. The paintings obviously do not refer to one single narrative programme, such as a major *sūtra* or legend, but seem to exist as a whole and particularly with all its peripheral details—some of which I will address and discuss here—a patchwork of different themes and topics added to the two central bodhisattvas, the meaningfulness of which the artist(s) probably was convinced when putting them together. Very possibly, the motifs, while originally coming from different sources, places and regions, were brought together in a local narrative context. When presenting my observations here—not as an art historian but as a textual scholar—I see my role as adding some comments on possible ways

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1   In more concrete terms, the basis of this paper is a response which I gave to a paper by Michelle McCoy at the *BuddhistRoad* start-up conference at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum, which resulted in the publication of the present volume.

2   The cave is easily accessible virtually through the website Digital Dunhuang 數字敦煌, "Yulin Grottoes Cave 003," accessed October 5, 2018. <https://www.e-dunhuang.com/cave/10.0001/0001.0002.0003>.

3   In most attempts at interpreting these two paintings, the narrative frame/periphery has been neglected in favour of the stylistic features of the main figures in the two paintings, the Bodhisattvas Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra; see e.g. Lilla Russell-Smith, *Uygur Patronage in Dunhuang: Regional Art Centres on the Northern Silk Road in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2005), 219–220.

of interpreting some features of the paintings rather than explaining the full iconographic programme of the two, given my restricted knowledge of the period and discipline.

I think that the pictorial content of the diptych, although not yet fully understood, represents all aspects of the title of the conference and the present volume:

1.   there clearly is sacred space;
2.   there is pilgrimage in the form of the two peripheral figures Xuanzang (600/602–664, 玄奘) and Sudhana, discussed in my comments; and
3.   there is patronage and legitimation through a newly invented or, rather, newly combined narrative (or narratives) around the establishment of sacred space of the Northern Mt. Wutai (Chin. Wutai shan 五台山) of the Tangut Empire.[4]

2   Tripiṭaka-Xuanzang and a Proto-Xiyou ji

As a student of Buddhist textual and narrative traditions, I would like to add some rather spontaneous thoughts on the peripheral elements, which may help the art historian to contextualise the paintings in a new way. I will first focus on two rather peripheral scenes or figures and their possible meaning and function: Xuanzang, or Sanzang (三藏), i.e. Tripiṭaka (as he is addressed in the respective texts), in the left upper part, and the figure identified as Sudhana in the right lower part of the Samantabhadra painting (figs. 9.3 and 9.4). In the more general context of both paintings, it seems possible that Xuanzang and Sudhana are featured in the diptych because they are, from a Sinitic Buddhist point of view, the ideal or idealised travellers or pilgrims; but it is as yet unknown why and in what function they may have been inserted into the composition.

I will start with the small group of Xuanzang, the monkey and the horse (fig. 9.3). In its iconographic composition, the group clearly reflects a developmental phase of the Xuanzang legend which was finally codified and popularised in the novel *Xiyou ji* 西遊記 [Record of the Journey to the West],[5] composed

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4   On Tangut Buddhism and Mt. Wutai, see Russell-Smith, *Uygur Patronage in Dunhuang*, 215–221; Kirill Solonin, "Tangut Chan Buddhism and Guizang Zong-mi," *Zhonghua foxue xuebao* 中華佛學學報 [*Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal*] 11 (1998): 365–424.

5   On the *Xiyou ji* and its complex history of antecedents, its development and research history, see Jaroslav Prušek, "The Narrators of Buddhist Scriptures and Religious Tales in the Sung Period," *Archiv Orientální* 10.1–2 (1938): 375–389; Glen Dudbridge, "The Hundred-Chapter Hsi-Yu Chi and Its Early Versions," *Asia Major New Series* 14.2 (1969): 141–191; Glen Dudbridge,

FIGURE 9.1   Samantabhadra. Yulin Cave 3, ca. 12th/13th c.
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during the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644, 明) and attributed to Wu Cheng'en (ca. 1500–1582, 吳承恩). It clearly reflects the stage that the legend had reached at the time of the Song Dynasty (960–1279, 宋), from which it must have been transferred to a Tangut context. The existence of a still nameless proto-Sun Wukong (孫悟空), referred to as monkey-traveller (Chin. *hou xingzhe* 猴行者) (and the horse loaded with the sacred scriptures), is clearly indicated in the earliest sources of the story as, for example, the so-called *Kōzan-ji-Xiyou ji* 高山寺-西遊記 [Record of the Journey to the West from the Kōzan Temple] which actually consists of two very similar texts, the *Datang sanzang qujing shihua* 大

The Hsi-yu chi: A Study of Antecedents to the Sixteenth-Century Chinese Novel (London, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970); and Victor Mair, "Suen-Wu-Kung = Hanumat?," in: *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan dierjie guoji hanxue huiyi lunwenji, Wenxuezu 2* 中央研究院第二屆國際漢學會議論文集文學組 2 *Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Sinology, Section Literature* (Taibei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan, 1986), 659–752.

FIGURE 9.2   Mañjuśrī. Yulin Cave 3, ca. 12th/13th c.
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唐三藏取經事話 (or shihua 詩話) [Story of the Matter of Tripiṭaka Fetching the *sūtra*s from the Great Tang] or the *Datang sanzang fashi qujing ji* 大唐三藏法師取經記 [Record of the Dharma-Master Tripiṭaka Fetching the *sūtra*s from the Great Tang].[6]

In those texts, a certain focus lies on Xuanzang's and monkey's return, and this seems to be the scene depicted in the diptych. In chapter fifteen of the

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FIGURE 9.3   Detail of figure 9.1, Xuanzang and proto-Sun Wukong. Yulin Cave 3,
ca. 12th/13th c.

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Story of the Matter of Tripiṭaka Fetching the sūtras from the Great Tang, entitled
Ru Zhuguo duhai zhi chu 入竺國度海之處 [On the Entering of the Kingdom of
India and the Crossing of the Ocean], it is clearly described how the horse[7] is
loaded with the sacred scriptures before returning to China.[8] The lotus pedestal

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7   This horse is the white horse (Chin. *baima* 白馬) which the queen of the kingdom of the
women gave to Xuanzang in a previous (tenth) chapter *Jingguo Nüren guo chu* 經過女人
國處 [On the Passing Through the Kingdom of Women]. Japanese paintings from the
Kamakura Period (1185–1333, 鎌倉時代) depict the itinerant monk in a similar way to the
one in Yulin Cave 3, but without the horse: Dorothy Wong, "The Making of a Saint: Images
of Xuanzang in East Asia," *Early Medieval China* 8 (2002): 63. For other representations of
Xuanzang, see Asahi Shinbun 朝日新聞, *Saiyūki no Shiruku Rōdo: Sanzō hōshi no michi*
西遊記のシルクロード: 三藏法師の道 [The Silk Road and the World of Xuanzang]
(Osaka: Asahi Shinbun, 1999).

8   三藏頂禮，點檢經文五千四十八卷，各各俱足，只無《多心經》本。法師收
拾，七人扶持，牽馬負載，起程回歸告辭。竺國僧眾，合城盡皆送出，祝付
法師回程百萬，經涉艱難，善爲攝養，保護玄文；回到唐朝，作大利
益。 "[Master] Tripiṭaka paid reverence, checked the 5418 fascicles of *sutras* [and] each
of them was complete [but] only a copy of the [*Prajñāpārami*]*tāhṛdaya-sūtra* was miss-

FIGURE 9.4   Detail of figure 9.1, Suddhana. Yulin Cave 3, ca. 12th/13th c.
© MOGAO GROTTOES, DUNHUANG, GANSU, CHINA

ing. The *dharma* master arranged [the *sūtra*s], [his] seven companions assisted [him] and loaded one after the other on a horse in preparation for [their] return, [and they] took their leave. All the monks of the kingdom of India came out of the city to bid [him] farewell, wished the *dharma* master well for his return over millions [of miles] through hardship, [that he] kept up his health and took care of the mysterious texts; [when he would] have returned to the court of the Tang this would be of great benefit." My translation differs from Charles J. Wivell, "The Story of How the Monk Tripiṭaka of the Great Country of T'ang Brought back the Sūtras," in *The Columbia Anthology of Traditional Chinese Literature*, ed. Victor Mair (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 1200.

bearing the *sūtra*s on the back of the horse in the painting may refer to the complete collection after the *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdayasūtra* (Chin. *Xinjing* 心經) [Heart *sūtra*] had been added in the next episode of the *Zhuanzhi Xianglin sishou xinjing ben* 轉至香林寺受心經本 [Arriving at the 'Fragrant Grove Monastery' and Receiving a Copy of the 'Heart *sūtra*'].[9]

Having clarified the context from which the small group of Xuanzang, the monkey and the horse originated, the connection with Samantabhadra and Mañjuśrī is still unclear. Dorothy Wong has tried to interpret the painting in connection with the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* and supposes that "Xuanzang has assumed the role of the prototypical pilgrim Sudhana in his ultimate meeting with Samantabhadra."[10] Besides the fact that there is no textual evidence of such a connection, this is internally contradicted by the presence of Sudhana in the painting, which obviously has escaped Wong's attention.

As it is a Song-period legend of Xuanzang and his monkey companion which is reflected in their appearance in the painting, it seems to be plausible to look for a connection between the bodhisattva(s) and the two pilgrims in this very narrative tradition and the two paintings. Unfortunately, neither Samantabhadra nor Mañjuśrī appear in the extant Song story, the *Story of the Matter of Tripiṭaka Fetching the sūtras from the Great Tang.*

However, the fact that the monk and the monkey in the painting are venerating at least one of the two bodhisattvas (i.e. Samantabhadra)—who always appear as a pair in the extant Ming Dynasty *Record of the Journey to the West*—seems to point to a version of the narrative in which Xuanzang and his accompanying monkey already had a connection with the bodhisattvas. In the extant *Record of the Journey to the West*, this connection is particularly the sub-narrative of chapter 77, *Qunma qi benxin yiti bai zhenru* 群魔欺本性 一體拜真如 [The Crowd of Demons Deceive the Fundamental Nature—One Body Pays Reverence to the True Nature]. Previously Xuanzang—Tang seng (唐僧)—and his companions have been captured by three demons: two of them Mañjuśri's and Samantabhadra's transformed vehicles, the elephant Xiangwang (象王) or Baixiang (白象) and the lion Shiwang (獅王) or Qingshi (青獅). When the monkey Sun Wukong is not able to free them, he travels through the air to India (Chin. Tianzhu 天竺), to Mt. Gṛdhrakūṭa (Chin. Jiufeng shan 鷲峰山), to ask the *tathāgata* (Chin. *rulai* 如來) for help. The *tathāgata* summons his

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9   On the link between the *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdayasūtra* and Xuanzang in Buddhist art, see Wong, "The Making of a Saint," 63 and fig. 8. The paintings of the "Prajñā assembly" (Wong) interestingly represent Mañjuśrī, Samantabhadra and Xuanzang.

10   Ibid., 72.

disciples Ānanda (Chin. A'nan 阿儺) and Kāśyapa (Chin. Jiaye 迦葉) to get Mañjuśrī (Chin. Wenshu 文殊) from Mt. Wutai (Chin. Wutai shan 五臺山) and Samantabhadra (Chin. Puxian 普賢) from Mt. Emei (Chin. Emei shan 峨眉山), and all together they fly to the place where the monk and his companions are captured, subdue the demons—Mañjuśrī's and Samantabhadra's own animals[11]—and free the monk and his companions.

It seems to me that a prototype[12] of this very sub-episode in the *Record of the Journey to the West* from the Song period may be the underlying motif for Xuanzang's and the monkey's presence in the compositional framework, obviously already known to the Tanguts.[13] I would suggest the following interpretation—admittedly hypothetical because it is not found in any textual version—: the scene in the painting represents Xuanzang and the monkey on their way back from India when they pay respect to the two bodhisattvas because they previously had helped rescue them from being killed by the animals turned into demons.

To be sure, this interpretation does not necessarily invalidate Michelle McCoy's statement that Xuanzang appears here to 'authenticate' the scenery. She may draw her authority from two different contexts: one as the 'connoisseur' of Buddhist sacred landscape beyond the Sinitic sphere—as a traveller or pilgrim, as it were—and another one, more specific, from the emerging legendary narrative finally developing into the *Record of the Journey to the West* as it was brought in literary form in the Ming Dynasty.

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11   卻被文殊、普賢念動真言,喝道:"這孽畜還不皈正,更待怎生?"諕得老怪、二怪不敢撐持,丟了兵器,打個滾,現了本相。二菩薩將蓮花臺拋在那怪的脊背上,飛身跨坐,二怪遂泯耳皈依。 "But Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra recited magical spells and shouted: 'These beasts still do not return to rightness—what are [they] waiting for?' They intimidated the two monsters [in a way that] they did not dare to resist, dropped [their] weapons, rolled around and displayed [their] original characteristic marks. The two bodhisattvas took their lotus pedestals, threw them on the back of the monsters and flew to sit on [them], [so that] the two monsters finally just disappeared and were converted [to their former tamed form]." Text quoted after Wikisource, "西遊記/第077回," accessed October 6, 2018. <https://zh.wikisource.org/wiki/西遊記/第077回>. See also the translations in William J.F. Jenner, *Journey to the West*, 3 vols. (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1982–1986) and Anthony C. Yu, *The Journey to the West* (Revised Edition), 4 vols. (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 2012).

12   Another proto-narrative is reflected in an album from the Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368, 元), in which Xuanzang is much more proactive—e.g. subduing demons—than in the extant *Xiyou ji*. See Wong, "The Making of a Saint," 75 and fig. 18.

13   Xinjiang Rong, *Eighteen Lectures on Dunhuang* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2013), 481.

3 Sudhana and the Avataṃsaka Tradition

More evident is the link between Sudhana *kumāra* (Chin. Shancai tongzi 善財童子) and Samantabhadra (fig. 9.4): this is a clear reference to the *Avataṃsakasūtra*, which held much popularity in Tangut Buddhism,[14] or more specifically, to the last section of the enormous *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* containing Sudhana's famous pilgrimage on his quest for knowledge.[15] After having visited spiritual advisors (Skt. *kalyāṇamitra*, Chin. *shanzhishi* 善知識), guided by Mañjuśrī, he finally receives the teaching by Samantabhadra.[16] The depicted scene then represents this final stage of Sudhana's quest for wisdom when he has reached Samantabhadra, perhaps, as indicated by his bodily position, coming from Mañjuśrī depicted on the other painting of the diptych. Sudhana has therefore reached the end of his physical and spiritual journey, as Xuanzang has accomplished his task of bringing back the sacred scriptures of Buddhism to China, depicted in the opposite corner of the painting. It seems that the shared themes between the presence of the two figures, Xuanzang and Sudhana, are pilgrimage and a ritualised landscape in which the two bodhisattvas, Samantabhadra and Mañjuśrī, had a position and place of their own in an imagined Buddho-Indian topography.[17]

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14   See e.g. Kirill Solonin, "The Glimpses of Tangut Buddhism," *Central Asiatic Journal* 52.1 (2008): 72.

15   For East Asian representations of Sudhana's pilgrimage, see Shunshō Manabe, "The Development of Images Depicting the Teaching of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*," in *Avataṃsaka Buddhism in East Asia: Origins and Adaption of a Visual Culture*, ed. Robert Gimello Frédéric Girard, and Imre Hamar (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), 205–221; and Dorothy Wong, "The Art of Avataṃsaka Buddhism at the Courts of Empress Wu and Emperor Shōmu/Empress Kōmyō," in *Avataṃsaka Buddhism in East Asia: Origins and Adaption of a Visual Culture*, ed. Robert Gimello, Frédéric Girard, and Imre Hamar (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), 222–260; for a discussion of South Asia (Borobudur), see Jan Fontein, *Entering the Dharmadhātu: A Study of the Gaṇḍavyūha Reliefs of Borobudur* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2012); and for an example from the Tibetan tradition (from Tabo/Tha po), see Ernst Steinkellner, *Sudhana's Miraculous Journey in the Temple of Ta pho. The Inscriptional Text of the Tibetan Gaṇḍavyūha Edited with Introductory Remarks* (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1995).

16   For this last stage of Sudhana's journey from Mañjuśrī to Samantabhadra, see Buddhabhadra's (359–429) translation T. 278.9, 783b27, and Śikṣānanda's (562–710) translation T. 279.9, 439b6. For an English translation of the Śikṣānanda version, see Thomas Cleary, *The Flower Ornament Scripture: A Translation of the Avatamsaka Sutra* (Boston, London: Shambala, 1993), 1503.

17   In this context, one could ask if such a connection—the one of a paradigmatic pilgrim—is not reflected in the existence of Song Dynasty (960–1279, 宋) *Datang sanzang qujing shihua* at the Kōzan Temple, a temple closely connected with Myōe (1173–1232, 明恵), one of the most eminent exponents of the Avataṃsaka tradition in the Japanese medieval

4   A Tangut Drainage Narrative?

Although it is not surprising in the context of medieval Buddhist art that Sa-
mantabhadra and Mañjuśrī are paired together, the periphery of the Mañjuśrī
painting raises interesting interpretational questions. At the conference, Mi-
chelle McCoy rightfully pointed out the specific feature of water landscape,
particularly the dramatic streaming or pouring down of water from a cleft in
the mountains in the Mañjuśrī painting (fig. 9.5). She linked this motif to water
control and suggested that it reflects elements from the post-Tang Dynasty
(618–907, 唐) foundation legend from Khotan, according to which Vaiśravana
and Śāriputra drained a primordial lake by cutting its shore.[18] The links to this
narrative in the painting—apart from the king of Khotan standing or walking
in front of Mañjuśrī[19]—seem to be the monk with a bodhisattva's staff (Skt.
kakkhara) in front of Mañjuśrī (Śāriputra) and the armoured deity behind the
bodhisattva (Vaiśravaṇa)[20] (fig. 9.6). However, there is no indication that the
water scenery is directly influenced by the Khotanese story in which no con-
nection with Mañjuśrī is found. While Mañjuśrī and the Khotanese king are a
relatively well-established iconographic element in Dunhuang from the 10th
century onwards, a direct link with the drainage motif is missing.

In light of what John Brough has already observed in his 1948 article "Leg-
ends of Khotan and Nepal"[21] and my own research on Buddhist foundation

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period. See e.g. Robert E. Morrell, "Kamakura Accounts of Myōe Shōnin as Popular Reli-
gious Hero," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 9.2–3 (1982a): 171–198; and George J. Jr.,
Tanabe, *Myōe the Dreamkeeper: Fantasy and Knowledge in Early Kamakura Buddhism*
(Cambridge Mass., London: Harvard University Press, 1992), 122. Of Myōe, we also know
that he was very much interested in pilgrimage, particularly to India and with reference
to Xuanzang: Robert E. Morrell, "Passage to India Denied: Zeami's Kasuga Ryūjin," *Monu-
menta Nipponica* 37.2 (1982b): 179–200; Tanabe, *Myōe the Dreamkeeper*, 50; Bernard
Faure, "Kegon and Dragons: A Mythological Approach to Huayan Doctrine," in *Reflecting
Mirrors: Perspectives on Huayan Buddhism*, ed. Imre Hamar (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz,
2007), 300, 305–306.

18   For a detailed discussion of this and other 'drainage' legends in the wider Himalayan
region, cf. Max Deeg, *Miscellanae Nepalicae: Early Chinese Reports on Nepal—The Foun-
dation Legend of Nepal in its Trans-Himalayan Context* (Lumbini: Lumbini International
Research Institute, 2016); on Khotan, see p. 113.

19   Qiang Ning, *Art, Religion, and Politics in Medieval China: The Dunhuang Cave of the Zhai
Family* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004), 103f; Christoph Anderl, "Linking
Khotan and Dūnhuáng: Buddhist Narratives in Text and Image," *Entangled Religions: In-
terdisciplinary Journal for the Study of Religious Contact and Transfer* 8 (2018): 30.

20   On the presence of this legend in Dunhuang, see now Ning, *Art, Religion, and Politics in
Medieval China*, 92, and Anderl, "Linking Khotan and Dūnhuáng," 33.

21   John Brough, "Legends of Khotan and Nepal," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African
Studies, University of London* 12.2 (1948): 333–339.

FIGURE 9.5   Detail of figure 9.2, drainage scene. Yulin Cave 3, ca. 12th/13th c.
      © MOGAO GROTTOES, DUNHUANG, GANSU, CHINA

legends along the wider Himalayan range,[22] I would push this point a little bit
further, even though it may appear somewhat speculative. While I do not know
of any legend in which Samantabhadra is connected to water and its regula-
tion, Mañjuśrī is clearly the main agent in one of the major drainage narratives
in the Himalayan region. It is the Nepalese Buddhist story of Mañjuśrī cutting
a hole into the mountains with his sword to release the water from the primor-
dial lake in the Kathmandu Basin, populated by *nāga*s and flooding the light of
the Svayaṃbhū, which is recorded in its oldest form in the shorter version of
the Newar Buddhist *Svayaṃbhū-purāṇa*.[23] The scene clearly shows a valley en-
compassed by high mountains and a building in the centre of the valley which

22   Deeg, *Miscellanae Nepalicae*.
23   Ibid., 162.

FIGURE 9.6
Detail of figure 9.2,
Mañjuśrī and his
entourage. Yulin Cave
3, ca. 12th/13th c.
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TOES, DUNHUANG,
GANSU, CHINA

might well be, in this case, a sinicised version of the Svayaṃbhū-caitya (fig. 9.5). All of these features do not really fit the Khotanese narrative but, rather, the Nepalese legend.

While it is obvious that the extant Nepalese legend itself has been influenced by the Chinese idea that Mañjuśrī is residing on the Five-Peak-Mountain, Mt. Wutai (Skt. Pañcaśikhaparvata),[24] the extant Mt. Wutai legends from China do not contain any element regulating or controlling water except the constant emphasis of Mañjuśrī's role as the poisonous *nāga*s (Chin. *dulong* 毒龍).[25] Thus, however this may be explained historically, the diptych's focus on water and its flow—if it has anything to do with the two major bodhisattva figures and if it is more than a pure water landscape—is clearly influenced by a story similar to the Nepalese one (and maybe others, some of which are unknown). It is only in the Nepalese narrative that Mañjuśrī acts as a central figure. One possibility is, of course, that the painter(s) combined the well-known combination of the Khotanese king and Mañjuśrī with the other famous Khotanese motif, the drainage of the primordial lake through Śāriputra and Vaiśravaṇa. What is missing, however, is the link with Mt. Wutai, Mañjuśrī's residence in China.

There is another point that makes such a connection between the painting and the Nepalese legend (or a similar one) even more likely—the presence of both Mt. Wutai (Skt. Pañcaśikhaparvata) and Mt. Gośirṣa, Oxhead Mountain (Chin. *Niutou shan* 牛頭山, Skt. Gośīrṣaparvata), respectively Mt. Gośṛṅga, Oxhorn Mountain (Chin. Niujiao shan 牛角山, Skt. Gośṛṅgaparvata), is only explainable in the wider Trans-Himalayan context of the ubiquitous mythological narrative of the foundation of the country through the drainage of a

24   Deeg, *Miscellanae Nepalicae*, 178.

25   Ibid., 181.

primordial lake which is therefore neither flooding nor damming. It is the Nepalese story's link to Mt. Wutai which makes the link most plausible. The Khotanese nomenclature of the Oxhorn and Oxhead Mountain clearly is influenced by the Gośṛṅga (Oxhorn) or Gopucchaparvata (Oxtail Mountain) in the Nepalese story; but Mt. Wutai is not playing any role in this story. It then may have been the common motif of the drainage of the primordial lake which prompted the artist(s) to make a connection—almost intuitively—between the Khotanese and the Nepalese narratives of draining a primordial lake.

Furthermore, the fact that the Oxhead Mountain playing such an important role in the Khotanese narrative is also found in the Chinese Avataṃsaka tradition[26] may explain the combination of Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra in the diptych, the two bodhisattvas who figure so prominently as a complementary pair in the *Avataṃsakasūtra*. The mountain may be the logical narrative link to the drainage motif in the Mañjuśrī painting. Historically, a Nepalese-Tangut connection, maybe through Tibet,[27] cannot be excluded as the origin of the particular iconography in Yulin Cave 3. The artist(s), in this case, would have woven together many different strands of legends and motifs into the incredibly dense patchwork of elements and motifs in the diptych.

5   Conclusion

In light of the wider artistic programme of the cave, I am tempted to speculate about the position and function of the diptych to the left and right of the entrance as a passage through the mountainous areas into, or from, the more central Buddha realm inside the cave, represented by the programmes of the other paintings in the same cave; for example, scenes from the life of the Buddha, from the *Vimalakīrtisūtra*, the Pure Land of the Buddha Amitāyus. Traveling in and access to a sacred space, an imagined and idealised 'India' of the Buddha and Vimalakīrti or Buddha land, could well be represented by the two paintings at the side of the entrance to the cave—the peripheral figures of Xuanzang and Sudhana only underlining and making recognisable this very idea.

If the diptych really is the result of an amalgamation process of motifs and narrative elements from such different periods and regions as my suggested interpretation implies, then it obviously represents very well the Buddhist

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26   Deeg, *Miscellanae Nepalicae*, 123 note 525.

27   Ronald M. Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* (New York, Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2004), 281.

nodes thematically framing the topic of the present volume, which allowed new Buddhist clientele—the Tangut patrons—to reformulate successfully already existing concepts, elements and narratives from different but still entangled regions for the sake of creating their own form of Buddhist identity.

Creation of Tantric Sacred Spaces in Eastern Central Asia

Carmen Meinert

1 Introduction

The spread of Tantric Buddhism in Eastern Central Asia between the 10th and early 13th centuries is well documented in textual and visual evidence from various sites. Among the earliest dateable textual evidences of Tantric Buddhism in Eastern Central Asia are the Tibetan Dunhuang manuscripts from the second half of the 10th century, as recent palaeographic research by Sam van Schaik and Jacob Dalton shows.[1] So far, these manuscripts have been used mostly by scholars of Tibetan Studies, for whom they are seen as constituting auxiliary materials to the reconstruction of early Tibetan Buddhist history—particularly valuable due to the lack of equivalent materials for this period deriving from Tibet itself. However, to my knowledge none have so far looked at Eastern Central Asian Buddhism as an integrated system in itself, which also influenced the development of Buddhism in Tibet (and in the Sinitic world as well). As an example, in my earlier work, I examine individual interesting manuscripts from the Dunhuang Collection, without addressing the larger context in which these were actually produced. I failed to question what these manuscripts actually meant for the local Eastern Central Asian communities themselves.[2] However, here I suggest that with a deeper knowledge of the spread of

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1 Jacob P. Dalton, Tom Davis, and Sam van Schaik, "Beyond Anonymity: Paleographic Analyses of the Dunhuang Manuscripts," *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies* 3 (2007): 18, accessed November 29, 2017. <http://www.thlib.org?tid=T3106>. The catalogue of the Tibetan Tantric manuscripts from the Dunhuang Collection stored in the British Library is published in Jacob P. Dalton and Sam van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Stein Collection at the British Library* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2006). Cf. also Xinjiang Rong, "The Nature of the Dunhuang Library Cave and the Reasons for Its Sealing," *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 11 (2000–1999): 247–275; Rong Xinjiang 荣新江, "Zailun Dunhuang zangjing dong de baozang—Sanjie si yu zangjing dong 再论敦煌藏经洞的宝藏—三界寺与藏经洞 [Further Discussion on the Treasure in the Library Cave of Dunhuang—Three Stages Monastery and the Library Cave]," in *Dunhuang xue xinlun* 敦煌学新论 [New Contributions to Dunhuang Studies], ed. Rong Xinjiang 荣新江 (Lanzhou: Gansu jiaoyu chuban she, 2002), 8–28, especially pp. 18–19.

2 See for example my articles: Carmen Meinert, "The Conjunction of Chinese Chan and Tibetan rDzogs chen Thought: Reflections on the Tibetan Dunhuang Manuscripts IOL Tib J 689-1 and

Tantric Buddhism in Eastern Central Asia, new insights will emerge for its spread in Tibet, and by extension in the Sinitic world.

After the demise of the Tibetan Empire in 842, and its dominon over large parts of Eastern Central Asia, the model of state-sponsored Buddhism in effect during Tibetan rule was replaced with a model of dispersion, in which Buddhist practice and ideology were widely adopted by local actors in Eastern Central Asia. Interestingly, Tibetan continued to be used as a *lingua franca*, until at least the middle of the 11th century, and probably even later.[3] With it Tantric Buddhism as evidenced in the Dunhuang manuscripts developed into a flexible system for group formation that cut across boundaries of class, clan, and ethnicity, extending to various locations in the Central Asian Buddhist network (as Sam van Schaik recently shows).[4] However, as new political rules with new and strong imperial patronage systems were established in Eastern Central Asia (particularly by the Tanguts and Uyghurs) (map 0.1 of this volume), the latest ritual techniques, such as the Cakrasaṃvara and Vajravārāhī rites, were also translated into local vernaculars, such as Tangut, Chinese, and Uyghur, as evidenced in local artistic production. This step in the transmission of Tantric Buddhism in Central Asia is visible in visual (and textual) materials—expecially as it developed under Tangut rule (ca. 1038–1227, in Chinese sources known as Xixia 西夏), examples of which I address in this article. That material provides evidence of the continuation of Tantric transmissions beyond the 10th century textual production at Dunhuang (敦煌)—a fact that has only recently been acknowledged by scholars and as yet hardly researched systematically. I argue that in the late 12th century, most likely under the rule of the Tangut Emperor Renzong (r. 1139–1193, 仁宗), a transition is visible in visual depictions from (predominantly Sinitic styles of) Mahāyāna and Esoteric Bud-

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PT 699," in *Contributions to the Cultural History of Early Tibet*, ed. Matthew T. Kapstein and Brandon Dotson (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007), 239–301; Carmen Meinert, "Between the Profane and the Sacred? On the Context of the Rite of 'Liberation' (*sgrol ba*)," in *Buddhism and Violence*, ed. Michael Zimmermann (Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute, 2006), 99–130.

3   Given the evidence of Tibetan manuscripts from the Karakhoto Collection which postdate the Dunhuang Collection, it is not unlikely that Tibetan continued to be used among Tantric Buddhist communities in Eastern Central Asia beyond the 11th century. Tsuguhito Takeuchi and Maho Iuchi provisionally date Tibetan texts from the Karakhoto Collection to three time periods: the 11th to 12th c., the 12th to 13th c. and the 13th to 15th c. See Tsuguhito Takeuchi and Maho Iuchi, eds., *Tibetan Texts from Khara-Khoto in the Stein Collection of the British Library: Studies in Old Tibetan Texts from Central Asia* (Tokyo: Toyo Bunko, 2016), 10.

4   Sam van Schaik, "Tibetan Buddhism in Central Asia: Geopolitics and Group Dynamics," in *Transfer of Buddhism across Central Asian Networks (7th to 13th Centuries)*, ed. Carmen Meinert (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 57–81.

dhism to Tibetan Tantric Buddhist transmissions. It was under Tangut imperial patronage that Tantric Buddhist imagery was produced in Eastern Central Asia for the first time on a large scale—both in the form of murals in caves, as well as in the form of thangkas stored in Buddhist architectures and instutions. My intent is to analyse these examples of visual production *not* from an art historical perspective, but rather from the perspective of an interdisciplinary *Bildwissenschaft* as developed by Hans Belting. Belting argues that one should trace images (Germ. *Bilder*) as cultural practices (Germ. *Kulturpraktiken*), and analyse religious images as a fundamental commodity of a given religious practice. In his magnum opus, *Likeness and Presence. A History of the Image before the Era of Art* (first published in 1990 in German with the title *Bild und Kult: eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst*) he writes:

> We can therefore consider these cult images, or "holy images," as Edwyn Bevan has called them in his book of that title, only if we adopt a historical mode of argumentation that traces them back to the context in which they historically played their part. These images represented a local cult or the authority of a local institution, not the general beliefs of a universal church.[5]

Therefore, the cultic potency attributed to such images is only understandable through situating them within social practices and their respective local historical contexts.

Much in line with this, I relate the presence of visual materials at different locations within the Tangut Empire to each other, considering them from a network approach. This is a promising approach for determining how visual images in the Tantric Buddhism of the Tangut Empire (1) support state-protection and legitimation, (2) present the emperor as an Aśokan-style Buddhist ruler, and (3) attest to the growing popularity of Tantric Buddhist practices for purely private soteriological purposes (also from the perspective of the ruler).[6] Thus, a key component in the ongoing process of buddhicisation of Eastern Central Asian lands was the Tangut territory as a sacred environment filled with pagodas, *stūpa*s, monasteries, and caves. These elements were mediums through which the Buddhist divine was seen, visualised, and experienced.

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5   Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence. A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. by Edmund Jephcott (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 3. For the German version of the quote see: Hans Belting, *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst*, 7th edition (Munich: Beck, 2011), 14.

6   Rob Linrothe, "Xia Renzong and the Patronage of Tangut Buddhist Art: The Stūpa and Ushnīshavijayā Cult," *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies* 28 (1998): 93–94.

They represent a thorough transformation that would not have been possible without extensive imperial patronage.

2   Tangut Buddhist Patronage: The Background

Before moving to the concrete examples, I provide a brief outline on the background to the establishment of the Tantric Buddhist sites under the Tangut imperial patronage of Renzong in the second half of the 12th century. During Renzong's fifty-five year reign, the Tangut territory reached its greatest extent, and contained a multi-ethnic population of Tanguts, Chinese, Tibetans, Uyghurs, Khitans, and other peoples (map 10.1).[7] These different groups were unified under an administrative system largely modeled after the Chinese one, with an educational and cultural programme installed by Renzong's father in the early 12th century. In 1145, Renzong promoted further measures to implement a Confucian style education for the official recruitment system of the Tangut state. In 1161, he established the Hanlin Academy (Chin. *hanlin xueshi yuan* 翰林學士院), which was in charge of compiling the historical records of the dynasty.[8] Therefore, Renzong can be described as a very active ruler, who, at the height of the Tangut Empire, successfully transformed it into one of the *major* cultural and Buddhist centres in Central and East Asia at the time.[9]

Renzong and his family members, particularly his second empress from the Chinese Luo (羅) clan, were all fervent supporters of Buddhism. In fact, they continued the heritage of their predecessors, for whom Buddhism played a major role. In the 11th century, these rulers mainly oriented themselves towards the Chinese Song Dynasty (960–1279, 宋). Between 1031–1073 six copies of the Chinese Buddhist canon were ordered from the Office for the Translation of Buddhist Scriptures (Chin. *yijing yuan* 譯經院). The Tanguts even copied that as a model, and set up a similar institution in their capital for the translation of the Buddhist canon from Chinese into Tangut.[10]

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7   The production of this map was facilitated through the *BuddhistRoad* project which received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No. 725519). This map can also be downloaded under a creative common licence at <https://buddhistroad.ceres.rub.de/en/visual-aids/>.

8   For the interplay of Confucianism and Buddhism in the Tangut Empire, see also Chapter 5 "The Formation of Tangut Ideology: Buddhism and Confuciansm" in this volume by Kirill Solonin.

9   Ruth W. Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High. Buddhism and State Formation in Eleventh-Century Xia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), 23–26.

10   Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High*, 36–49.

During the 12th century, Emperor Renzong continued and accelerated this process of the production of Buddhist knowledge. Among his most important acts of patronage that evidence the increasing institutionalisation of the Buddhist clergy and their activities, four stand out. (1) He regulated monastic affairs, as documented in the Tiansheng Law Code (Tianshen reign under Renzong (1149–1169/1170, 天盛)). (2) He introduced the extraordinary position of the Imperial Preceptor (Chin. *dishi* 帝师), which according to Ruth Dunnell took place some time in the 1170s—at a time when the might of Renzong was briefly curtailed by a high-ranking officer and military man. After that, Renzong's authority was strengthened. Dunnell writes:

> Establishment of the office of imperial preceptor may have been another, more personal, response aimed at enhancing the throne's spiritual authority and divine powers of protection.[11]

In fact, the establishment of the extraordinary position of the Imperial Preceptor coincided with the invitation of Tibetan Buddhist masters to the Tangut court (more about this further down). (3) He printed a new edition of the Buddhist canon (1149–1169). (4) He organised Buddhist ceremonies and the distribution of printed Buddhist *sutra*s on a grand scale at special events, such as on the occasion of Renzong's 60th birthday in 1184, and on the 50th anniversary of his ascension to the throne in 1189. As Imre Galambos has pointed out:

> If we were to take the Kozlov collection [i.e. the Karakhoto Collection in St. Petersburg] as a representative sample of the translation and publication activities in the Tangut state, twice as many dated Buddhist texts come from the time of [Renzong's] reign than from all other periods of the Tangut state together.[12]

Although the Tangut Empire is well-known for its dual orientation of Buddhist trends (Sinitic as well as Tibetan), a turning point in imperially favouring Tibetan Buddhism over (or at least alongside) Sinitic traditions coincides with the early days of Renzong's reign (after the third decade of the twelfth

11   Ruth Dunnell, "The Hsia Origins of the Yüan Institution of Imperial Preceptor," *Asia Major, Third Series* 5.1 (1992): 103.

12   Imre Galambos, *Translating Chinese Tradition and Teaching Tangut Culture—Manuscripts and Printed Books Form Khara-Khoto* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2015), 112–113; the quote is found on p. 113. Linrothe also argues that the most productive period of carving and printing of Buddhist texts was under Renzong, cf. Rob Linrothe, "Peripheral Visions: On Recent Finds of Tangut Buddhist Art," *Monumenta Serica* 43 (1995): 243.

century), when Tangut military problems with the Song Chinese court receded and Tibetan missionary activities to the Tangut court led to Tibetan Tantric Buddhism becoming truly international for the first time in its history.[13] This example attests to how changing situations in the political field immediately impacted the religious field: In other words, demarcation processes in the political realm (the move away from the Chinese model of a 'civilised' state as the main inspiration) mirror religious demarcation processes extended to the Tibetan Buddhist representatives. Tibetan masters, mainly of the Kagyü School (Tib. *bka' brgyud pa*) were invited to the Tangut court, where some of them eventually enjoyed the privileged title of Imperial Preceptor. Probably for the first time in the history of Central Asian Buddhism, Tibetan Tantric Buddhism became institutionalised to a large degree.

To sum up: Apart from establishing a Chinese-style administration, Tangut imperial patronage of Buddhism played an important part in diplomatic relations with neighbouring cultures. Internally, the establishment of Buddhist sites in the form of actual physical spaces, through the building of temples, new monasteries, *stūpa*s, caves, and repairing pre-existing monuments—such as the Yulin Caves (Chin. Yulin ku 榆林窟), the Mogao Caves (Chin. Mogao ku 莫高窟), the Gantong *stūpa* (Chin. Gangtong ta 感通塔) in Liangzhou (涼州))[14]—were ongoing enterprises which intensified under Renzong's rule. The renovation of existing sites was most likely associated with the prestige of the throne. The renovation of existing sites and the creation of new sites were certainly *not* something new, but rather were the continuation of existing social and religious practices in the region—as was the case with Chinese and Tibetan rulers for centuries. After all, the Tanguts had inherited a thoroughly buddhicised land, or as Ruth Dunnell put it, the "[c]onquest of Hexi and acquisition of the classical Buddhist lands […] brought new religious obligations and opportunities to the Tangut rulers."[15] Yet one thing was new under the Tangut Emperor Renzong's rule, namely the shift in orientation from mainly (or solely) Mahāyāna Buddhist topics and depictions (doctrines as well as practices) to the inclusion of Tantric teachings and related visual material. Thus, it was under Tangut rule that the sacred geography of the region was enriched with the presence of Tantric Buddhist masters and deities.

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13   Ruth W. Dunnell, "Esoteric Buddhism under Xixia (1038–1227)," in *Esoteric Buddhism and the Tantras in East Asia*, ed. Charles D. Orzech, Henrik H. Sørensen, and Richard K. Payne (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2011), 467.

14   A summary in Chinese concerning the repare and repainting of caves in Yulin and Dunhuang during Tangut rule is given in: Dunhuang wenwu yanjiu suo 敦煌文物研究所, ed., *Zhongguo shiku. Dunhuang Mogao ku* 中國石窟。敦煌莫高窟 [Caves in China. The Mogao Caves in Dunhuang] (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1987), vol. 5, 175–185.

15   Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High*, 36.

I argue that in the process of establishing a network of Tantric sites, the Tanguts seem to have been inspired by the Tibetans, who developed such sites, thereby relocating what was originally an Indian sacred geography to their own land. Toni Huber convincingly argues that the Tibetans followed the pilgrimage routes of the Indian Tantric *pīṭha* sites. Such sites were primarily understood as related to internal yoga practice meant to realise a *maṇḍala* of a given deity within one's own body, i.e. as a *vajra* body (Skt. *vajrakāya*), also manifested in the external world with certain deities presiding in the geographical '*vajra* body.' Religious feasts were performed at such sites, both internal yogic practices as well as externalised rituals. One of the sub-divisions of the sites in the *pīṭha* cultic circuit were the Eight Cemeteries (Skt. *aṣṭa śmaśāna*) or Charnel Grounds, in which Tantric ascetics performed meditation and rites. The Tanguts essentially continued this trend, and relocated the superimposed *vajra* body onto their own geographical realm. In this manner they connected themselves to a global Buddhist trend. Evidence of this network of sacred Tantric sites is found in the periphery of the Tangut territory, as well as at the centre, close to the Tangut capital of Zhongxing (中興, modern Yinchuan 銀川).[16] I suggest that the production of Tantric art in the following sites should be understood as related, and as productions from a similar period in the late 12th century, namely in the periphery of the Tangut Empire: (1) in Dunhuang at the Mogao Caves, (2) in Yulin, (3) in the Eastern Thousand Buddha Caves (Chin. Dong Qianfodong 東千佛洞) near Guazhou (瓜洲), (4) in Karakhoto, and at the centre close to the Tangut capital (5) in the Baisigou Square *stūpa* (Chin. Baisigou fangta 拜寺溝方塔),[17] and (6) in the Hongfo *stūpa* (Chin. Hongfo ta 宏佛塔)[18] (for the location of the six sites in the Tangut Empire see map 10.1).

In the following, I focus on depictions of two popular cults in the Tangut Empire at these sites, namely Uṣṇīṣavijayā, as an example of transmissions of the so-called Outer Tantras according to the Tibetan doxographical system, and Cakrasaṃvara and Vajravārāhī, as an example of transmissions of the Inner Tantras or Anuttarayogatantras, both transmissions linked to Tibetan masters and Tangut imperial patronage.

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16   The Tangut capital was renamed a few times and appears in sources as Xingzhou (興州), Xingqing (興慶) and Zhongxing (中興). For a discussion of the renaming of the capital see: Ruth W. Dunnell, "Naming the Tangut Capital: Xingqing/Zhongxing and Related Matters," *Bulletin of Sung and Yüan Studies* 21 (1989): 52–66.

17   A good photo of the Baisigou Square *stūpa* was published in: Runze Lei, "The Structural Character and Tradition of Ningxia's Tangut Stupas," *Orientations* 27.4 (1996): 59, fig. 8.

18   Photos of the Hongfo *stūpa* before and after the restoration were published in: Lei, "The Structural Character and Tradition of Ningxia's Tangut Stupas," 56, figs. 2 and 3.

3   Examples of Visual Traces of Tantric Buddhism in the Tangut Realm

The starting point of my interest in Tantric visual art in Eastern Central Asia was the Mogao Caves. When the Tanguts conquered Dunhuang some time in the first half of the 11th century,[19] the site had already seen around 700 years of patronage by various imperial and local rulers. Although an important site historically, for the Tanguts Dunhuang was an outpost at the western-most border of their territory. Even so, it was a jewel of the highest Buddhist prestige and of international renown. In fact, Tangut patronage of Buddhism in Dunhuang eventually played an important role in the acceptance and submission of the local community to their authority.[20] Mogao Cave 465, as the sole Tantric Buddhist cave in the cave complex, complete with an elaborate iconographic programme related to the Anuttarayogatantras, has been a riddle to scholars (fig. 10.1).[21]

In recent Chinese research, attempting to place the cave in its cultural and historical context, the most important advances were made by Xie Jisheng[22] and by the young Chinese scholar Ruan Li. Ruan Li identified all the main deities and suggested that the cave is related to the Tibetan Kagyü tradition active in the Tangut Empire, with a focus on the deities Cakrasaṃvara and Vajravārāhī, who are depicted on the main wall facing the entrance. Ruan even suggested that a statue of Vajravārāhī might have been placed on the central altar (which originally had five tiers),[23] given the popularity of that cult in the Tangut Empire. What is most striking is the fact that despite the exquisitely painted murals in an accurately excavated cave, featuring a well-planned iconographic programme, *no* donor figures are depicted in the cave. This is unusual in Dunhuang because the previous rulers of Dunhuang, the Guiyijun (851–1036?, 歸義

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19   Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High*, 193 fn. 59. Ruth Dunnell reviewed the Chinese secondary sources, with the result that most Song Chinese sources date the Tangut conquest of Dunhuang to the year 1036, however, with a rather loose reign until much later in the 11th century.

20   Ibid., 63.

21   For detailed images of this cave see Yang Xiong 楊雄 and Wu Jian 吳健, eds., *Dunhuang shiku yishu. Mogao ku di siliuwu ku (Yuan)* 敦煌石窟藝術。莫高窟第四六五窟（元）[Art from the Caves of Dunhuang. Mogao Cave 465 (Yuan)] (Nanjing: Jiansu meishu chubanshe, 1996). An image of the main chamber of the cave appears on plate 3 (p. 34).

22   Xie Jisheng 谢继胜, "Mogao ku di 465 ku bihua hua yu Xixia kao 莫高窟第465 窟壁画绘于西夏考 [Study of the Wall Paintings in Mogao Cave 465 from Tangut Times]," *Zhongguo zangxue* 中国藏学 [China's Tibetology] 2 (2003): 69–79.

23   Ruan Li 阮丽, "Mogao ku di 465 ku mandaluo zaikao 莫高窟第465窟曼荼罗再考 [Study of the *maṇḍala* in Mogao Cave 465]," *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宫博物院院刊 [Journal of the Museum of the Forbidden City] 168 (2013): 61–83.
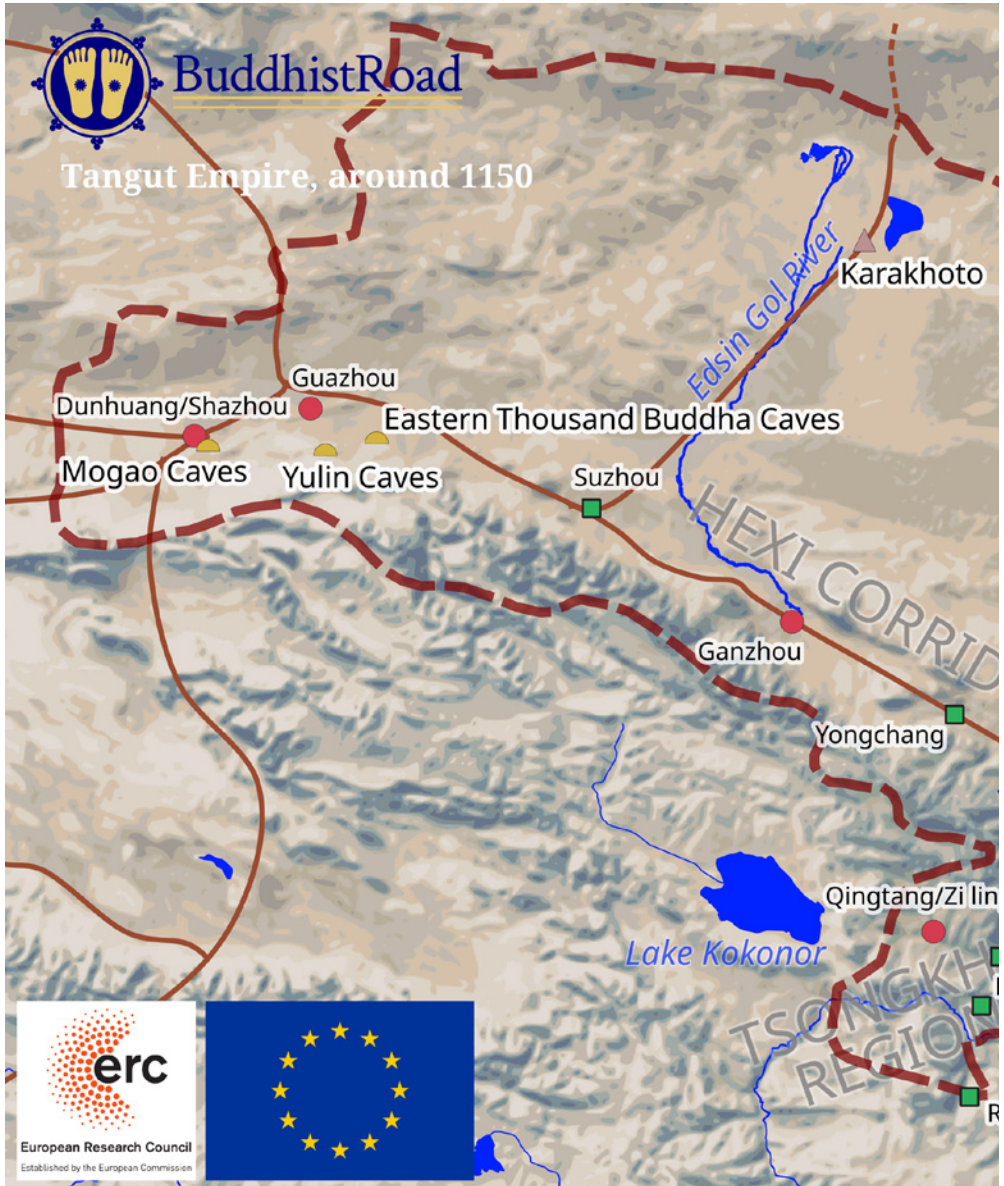
MAP 10.1   Territory of Tangut Empire around 1150.
© ERC PROJECT *BUDDHISTROAD*. THE MAP WAS PREPARED BY JÜRGEN
SCHÖRFLINGER.
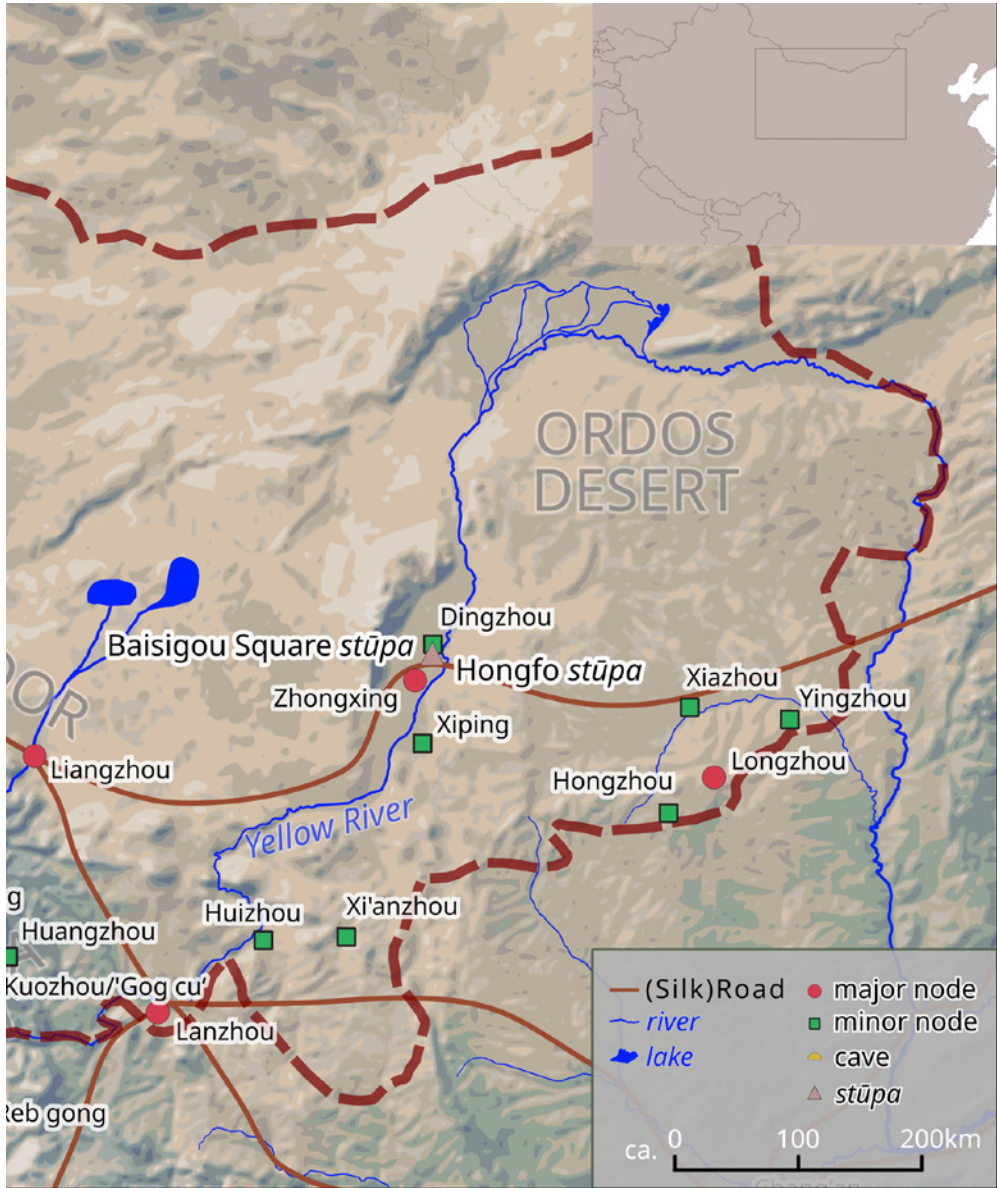
軍, Return-to-Allegiance Army), followed a general trend in the region of de-
picting life-sized donor figures, for example as in Mogao Cave 61.[24] It is also
unusal in the context of Tangut productions at other sides, where donor figures
are typically depicted (though not in life-size), as I demonstrate below.

Despite lacking donor figures, I suggest that Mogao Cave 465, with its delib-
erate Tantric iconography programme, was most likely created under Tangut
imperial patronage in the late 12th c., either patronised by Renzong himself or
by his son and immediate successor, Huanzong (r. 1193–1206, 桓宗). I assert the
cave as the culmination of imperial patronage of Tantric visual art in the Tan-
gut Empire, around the late 12th to early 13th centuries, a period leading to the
eventual Mongol conquest of the Tangut Empire. Since there is no immediate
evidence for my hypothesis found within the cave itself, I employ the following
method of deduction by looking at the larger context of the cave and the pro-
duction of other Tantric Tangut sites from around the same time. I make an
excursion to the other sites mentioned above before returning to Mogao Cave
465 at the end of this chapter.

The nearby Yulin Caves in Anxi (for the location of the site see map 10.1)
were also situated in the Western periphery of the Tangut territory. As we know
from Chinese scholarship, Yulin Caves 2, 3, and 29 were created and renovated
under Tangut rule. In Cave 29, presumably from 1193, the year of Emperor Ren-
zong's death, we have a Tangut inscription which identifies the donor portraits
as high-ranking Tangut military officers with titles, namely the "acting Shazhou
[that is, Dunhuang] Army Supervisor Zhao Mayu" and the "Guazhou Control-
ler General Zhou Zuyu."[25]

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24   For images of 10th century life-size donor figures in Mogao Cave 61 see Dunhuang wenwu
       yanjiu suo, *Dunhuang Mogao ku*, vol. 5, plates 77 and 79.
25   Linrothe, "Xia Renzong and the Patronage of Tangut Buddhist Art," 115, fig. 3; Rob Lin-
       rothe, "Uṣṇīṣavijayā and the Tangut Cult of the Stūpa at Yü-lin Cave 3," *National Palace
       Museum Bulletin* 31.4–5 (1996): 1–25. Moreover, Yulin Cave 29 depicts a master identified

In Yulin Cave 3, on the Southern wall in the Eastern section, we find a depiction of an Uṣṇīṣavijayā *maṇḍala* (fig. 10.2). According to Rob Linrothe, the transmission likely came through Tibetan artisans, as a personified cult of Uṣṇīṣavijayā did not exit in much of East Asia at this time.[26] Uṣṇīṣavijayā is known as a Tantric deity related to long-life and protection (also for a favourable rebirth). She sits within the womb of a *stūpa* representing the Buddha body. The most remarkable feature of this mural is its central depiction of a royal figure, maybe a donor, at the divinity's feet on the steps of the *stūpa*. Linrothe suggests that here Emperor Renzong has positioned himself (although not in life-size) in this very central position as an imperial patron in the sacred narrative honoring the deity as an initiated meditator. Linrothe further identifies a rite related to Uṣṇīṣavijayā that was practiced in antiquity in India on the occasion of a person's sixtieth birthday, called the Ugraratha rite.[27] Renzong celebrated his sixtieth anniversary on a large scale in 1184, producing and distributing 51,000 painted and printed banners, according to a dedicatory inscription from that year.[28] According to Linrothe, a printed Uṣṇīṣavijayā *dhāraṇī* found in the Square *stūpa* of Baisigou, close to the Tangut capital (for the location of the site see map 10.1), might be one such example of a printed Uṣṇīṣavijayā *dhāraṇī* produced for Renzong's birthday (?).[29] In fact, another Chinese fragment found within the *stūpa* was a handscroll that he and Ruth Dunnell date to the year 1180, making it not unlikely that these objects were placed in the *stūpa* for the 1184 celebrations.[30]

I raise another argument in support of Linrothe's hypothesis that Emperor Renzong is depicted in the central position of the Uṣṇīṣavijayā *maṇḍala* in Yulin Cave 3, as both a royal patron and a private person, or as a meditator. In two other sites, namely in the Eastern Thousand Buddha Caves of Guazhou, and in material from the Karakhoto Collection (for the location of these sites see map 10.1), we find images of Uṣṇīṣavijayā, albeit stylistically somewhat

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in an inscription as Zhenyi State Preceptor. A certain Zhengyi, also known as Jingjie, is mentioned in an 1189 imperial preface. However, Shi Jinbo notes that it is not clear whether both persons are identical or not. Cf. Shi Jinbo 史金波, *Xixia fojiao shilüe* 西夏佛教史略 [A Concise History of Tangut Buddhism] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chuban she, 1988), 302. See also Ruth W. Dunnell, "Translating History from Tangut Buddhist Texts," *Asia Major* 22.1 (2009): 51 fn. 28 and 77 fn. 110.

26   Linrothe, "Xia Renzong and the Patronage of Tangut Buddhist Art," 98–103. The image of the Uṣṇīṣavijayā *maṇḍala* from Yulin Cave 3 is published in: Dunhuang yanjiuyuan 敦煌研究院, ed., *Zhongguo shiku. Anxi Yulin ku* 中國石窟。安西榆林窟 [Caves of China. Yulin Caves in Anxi] (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1997), plate 153.

27   Linrothe, "Xia Renzong and the Patronage of Tangut Buddhist Art," 103–105.

28   Shi Jinbo, *Xixia fojiao shilüe*, 40.

29   For the image of this printed Uṣṇīṣavijayā *dhāraṇī* see Linrothe, "Xia Renzong and the Patronage of Tangut Buddhist Art," 115, fig. 3.

30   Linrothe, "Xia Renzong and the Patronage of Tangut Buddhist Art," 96–97.

different from the Yulin Cave 3. If we compare the position of the patron figure as it appears in Yulin Cave 3 with what we find in the very same position in the depiction from Guazhou, it is apparent that the position of the donor figure in Yulin Cave 3 must have been deliberately chosen. In the mural in the Eastern Thousand Buddha Cave 2, in the position below Uṣṇīṣavijayā, on the steps to the *stūpa*, one can see her seed syllable in *siddhaṃ* script (fig. 10.3).[31] The seed syllable is the essence of the deity, here placed in a very prominent position. Even more striking is the comparision with the Uṣṇīṣavijayā *maṇḍala* on the wooden panel x2406 from Karakhoto (fig. 10.4).[32] Here, the donor figure is depicted in the lower right corner of the panel, outside the sacred *maṇḍala* space (more about this donor further below). In the central position below Uṣṇīṣavijayā, on the steps of the *stūpa,* is what is most likely the representation of a Tantric initiate, maybe an Indian, kneeling in veneration to the deity, with a Tantric crown on his head, and holding an umbrella with both hands.

I suggest that the depiction in Yulin Cave 3 took such an arrangement as its inspiration, with minor but important changes: In the Yulin depiction, the patron figure also holds an umbrella, but he is standing not kneeling (maybe bending slightly forward with the upper part of his body). We may assume that only the emperor himself would be in a position to firstly commission his own local creation and place himself as a patron *within* the *maṇḍala* of the deity; secondly, choose the central position where the essence of the deity, or an initiate in the tradition, is depicted; and thirdly, take the liberty of not kneeling in front of the deity in such a prominent place within the sacred narrative frame. It is easy to imagine that no one else could have taken the privilege to do so! If the Uṣṇīṣavijayā *maṇḍala* in Yulin Cave 3 was produced on the occasion of Rengzong's 60th anniversary celebration in 1184, it was probably done with the aspiration for a long and protected life (in fact, he had another nine years to live). From this evidence, I infer that the Tangut ruler, most likely Renzong, not only portrayed himself as a pious supporter of (Tantric) Buddhism, in the

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31   The image of Uṣṇīṣavijayā in the Eastern Thousand Buddha Cave 2 in Guazhou is published in: Zhang Baoxi 张宝玺, *Guazhou Dong qianfodong Xixia shiku yishu* 瓜洲東千佛洞西夏石窟藝術 [The Art of the Tangut Caves in the Eastern Buddhas Caves in Guazhou] (Beijing: Xuyuan chuban she, 2012), plates 6 (p. 105) and 6 (2–1) (p. 106); a sketch of Cave 2 in found on p. 16, fig. 14.

32   The image of the Uṣṇīṣavijayā *maṇḍala* on the wooden panel x2406 from Karakhoto is published in: The State Hermitage Museum, Russia, Northwest University for Nationalities, and Shanghai Chinese Classics Publishing House, ed., *Khara-Khoto Art Relics Collected in the State Hermitage Museum of Russia*, vol. 2 (Shanghai: Shanghai Chinese Classics Publishing House, 2012), plate 125. Another almost identical image (x2407) is found on plate 126. Moreover, the images can also be downloaded on the museum website: <https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/digital-collection/25.+archaeological+artifacts/477210> and <https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/digital-collection/25.+archaeological+artifacts/477211>, accessed August 30, 2018.

FIGURE 10.3   Mural of Uṣṇīṣavijayā. Eastern Thousand Buddha Cave 2, Guazhou.
ZHANG BAOXI, *GUAZHOU DONG QIANFODONG XIXIA SHIKU YISHU* (2012),
PLATE 6 (P. 105)

FIGURE 10.4   Wooden panel of Uṣṇīṣavijayā *maṇḍala*. Karakhoto, late 12th c. (?).
X2406, THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST. PETERSBURG

manner of an Aśokan-style Buddhist ruler, but also as an initiate with a very private soteriological aspiration.

Moreover, the two almost identical Karakhoto panels (x2406 (fig. 10.4) and x2407) of the Uṣṇīṣavijayā *maṇḍala* show that Tantric practices seem to have been wide-spread among the Tangut nobility (according to the garments and headdress of the donor figures in the lower right corners of the wooden panels). They depict a male and a female donor, who certainly commissioned what appears to be a standard Uṣṇīṣavijayā depiction (figs. 10.5 and 10.6). Kirill Solonin kindly helped to decipher the Tangut inscriptions in the painting. The male donor can be identified as "The one who took the vow" (Tang. Yeli zi śiã), the last three characters appear to be a nickname or 'styled name,' rendered in Chinese as 'Songbai shan' (松柏山). The female person is called Liang (梁) and made the aspiration that another person may attain true liberation.[33]

Let me move on and link another piece of evidence to my argument that Tangut imperial rulers, particularly Renzong, were rather strong and eager supporters of creating Tantric sacred spaces within their realm. In Karakhoto, also

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33   Thanks to Kirill Solonin for identifying the Tangut inscription for me.

FIGURES 10.5–10.6   Male and female donors in lower right corner of wooden panels of
                    Uṣṇīṣavijayā *maṇḍala*. Karakhoto, late 12th c. (?). Details of x2406 (fig.
                    10.4, male donor) and x2407 (female donor).

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an outpost of the Tangut Empire (for the location of the site see map 10.1),
*stūpa*s were erected and filled with various Buddhist materials (with printed
texts and manuscripts in Chinese, Tangut and Tibetan and pieces of visual art).
These Buddhist monuments appear as markers on the Tangut borders and
might be understood as rendering protection to Tangut territory.

    The thangka x2400 from the Karakhoto Collection[34] provides extraordin-
ary evidence of the intimate relationship between a Buddhist master, sitting

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34   The image of the portrait of the Buddhist master with the imperial couple (x2400) from
      Karakhoto is published in: The State Hermitage Museum, Northwest University for Na-
      tionalities, and Shanghai Chinese Classics Publishing House, *Khara-Khoto Art Relics Col-
      lected in the State Hermitage Museum of Russia*, plate 173. Moreover, the images can also
      be downloaded on the museum website: <https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/por
      tal/hermitage/digital-collection/25.+archaeological+artifacts/477204>.

FIGURE 10.7   Thangka with a portrait of a Buddhist master with imperial
               couple. Karakhoto, late 12th c. (?).
               X2400, THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST. PETERSBURG

in meditation posture with the gesture of teaching, and a couple from the
imperial family, both with hands held in veneration (fig. 10.7). A number of
scholars have suggested that the depicted master might be either a State Pre-
ceptor (Chin. *guoshi* 國師) or an Imperial Preceptor. Kira Samossiuk suggests
that the date of the thangka should not be earlier than the 1170s, and sees in the
donor couple a *young* ruler with his *young* wife, thus ruling out that it could be

Renzong, who was already old by 1170. She suggests it more likely depicts one of his successors, either Huanzong (r. 1194–1206, 桓宗) or Xiangzong (r. 1206–1211, 襄宗).[35] Although it is difficult to judge the actual age of the imperial couple depicted, it is possible to put the master depicted in context with other materials. If we look at the distinct facial features of the Buddhist master in the thangka—his wrinkles on the forehead, particularly his pronounced beard— and his outer garment, it is very likely a portrait of a contemporary of the imperial couple (fig. 10.8).

I suggest that this Buddhist master's specialty was the transmission of the Vajravārāhī and Cakrasaṃvara cycles, based on his appearance in other Karakhoto thangkas. A master with the same distinct facial features appears in the Karakhoto thangka x2393 of Vajravārāhī (figs. 10.9 and 10.10) and in the Karakhoto thangka x3556 of Cakrasaṃvara-Vajravārāhī in union (figs. 10.11 and 10.12).[36] This master, when seen in connection with transmissions of the Anuttarayogatantras, is likely a Tibetan.

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35   Kira Samossiuk, "'Donors' in the Tangut Painting from Khara-Khoto: Their Meaning and Function," *The Tibet Journal* 26.3–4 (2001): 173–174.

36   The images of Vajravārāhī (x2393) and Cakrasaṃvara-Vajravārāhī in union (x3556) from Karakhoto are published in: The State Hermitage Museum, Northwest University for Nationalities, and Shanghai Chinese Classics Publishing House, *Khara-Khoto Art Relics Collected in the State Hermitage Museum of Russia*, plates 142 and 132. Moreover, the images can also be downloaded on the museum website: <https://www.hermitagemuseum. org/wps/portal/hermitage/digital-collection/25.+archaeological+artifacts/477197> and: <https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/digital-collection/01.+paint ings/539191>, accessed August 29, 2018. Here an interesting date is provided for x2393: "after 1189–before 1200."

FIGURES 10.9–10.10 Thangka of Vajravārāhī and detail of Buddhist master in lower corner of left register. Karakhoto, late 12th c. (?).
X2393, THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST. PETERSBURG

FIGURES 10.11–10.12 Thangka of Cakrasaṃvara-Vajravārāhī in union and detail of Buddhist master in lower left corner. Karakhoto, late 12th c. (?).
X3556, THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST. PETERSBURG

FIGURES 10.13–10.14   Thangka of Vajravārāhī and detail of Buddhist master in lower left
corner. Western Trans-Himalaya, anonymous collection.
DEBORAH E. KLIMBURG-SALTER, *THE SILK ROUTE AND THE*
DIAMOND PATH (1982), PLATE 112

In fact, Tibetan masters with a similar distinct outer garment are found in a
Vajravārāhī thangka from the Western Transhimalayas identified by Deborah
Klimburg-Salter (figs. 10.13 and 10.14),[37] and more importantly for immediate
comparision, at Guazhou in the Eastern Thousand Buddha Cave 4, in a central
niche directly opposite the entrance (fig. 10.15).[38] There is a remarkable stylis-
tic similarity in the depiction of the pleats of the outer garment, and the way
the rope is wrapped around the legs in both depictions. Unfortunately, the
Guazhou mural is rather damaged and the facial features are no longer dis-
cernible.

37   The Vajravārāhī thangka from the Western Transhimalayas is published in: Deborah
Klimburg-Salter, *The Silk Route and the Diamond Path: Esoteric Buddhist Art on the Trans-*
Himalayan Trade Routes (Los Angeles: UCLA Art Council, 1982), plate 112.

38   An image of the master in Eastern Thousand Buddha Cave 4 in Guazhou is published in:
Zhang Baoxi, *Guazhou Dong qianfodong Xixia shiku yishu*, plate 35 (p. 184). An image of
the niche in Cave 4 is published on p. 183, fig. 34 and a sketch of the cave on p. 16, fig. 15.

FIGURE 10.15   Mural of portrait of Buddhist master with white hat. Eastern Thousand
Buddha Cave 4, Guazhou.
ZHANG BAOXI, *GUAZHOU DONG QIANFODONG XIXIA SHIKU YISHU*,
PLATE 35 (P. 184)

FIGURE 10.16   Buddhist master with white hat. Mogao Cave 465, Eastern wall, above
                entrance in main chamber, Dunhuang, late 12th c. (?).
                YANG XIONG AND WU JIAN, *DUNHUANG SHIKU YISHU. MOGAO KU DI
                SILIUWU KU (YUAN)*, PLATE 117 (P. 145)

However, what is striking is the fact that here, the depicted master is wearing a white hat—the same type of white hat which appears in some of the other Tantric sites mentioned previously, both in murals and thangkas, and most importantly, in Mogao Cave 465 in Dunhuang (fig. 10.16),[39] the cave where this discussion began. The white hat is similar to a Tantric crown which is sometimes worn for initiations[40]—there are further examples of this crown from Dunhuang (figs. 10.17 and 10.18) and Karakhoto (figs. 10.19 and 10.20).

Let me return to the most important evidence for my argument, namely the Karakhoto thangka with the portrait of the Buddhist master and the imperial donor couple (see fig. 10.7), and put forth the following thesis: I suggest that here we might have a depiction of the Tibetan Kagyü master Tsangpopa (+1218,

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39   Images of Tantric masters with a white hat in Mogao Cave 465 are also published in: Yang Xiong and Wu Jian, *Dunhuang shiku yishu. Mogao ku di siliuwu ku (Yuan)*, plates 105 (p. 134, Northern wall, central section) and 117 (p. 145, Eastern wall, above entrance).

40   Thanks to an exchange with Matthew Kapstein in December 2017 in Paris, I agree with him that this white hat must be a ceremonial hat worn by Tantric masters on special occasions, rather than a Padmasambhava hat, as suggested by Xie Jisheng. Xie Jisheng, "Mogao ku di 465 ku bihua hua yu Xixia kao."
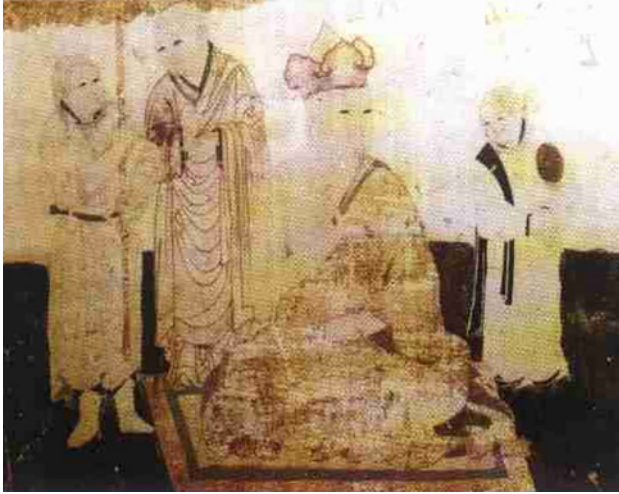
FIGURE 10.17
Buddhist master with white hat. Mogao Cave 464, Dunhuang.
XIE JISHENG, "MOGAO KU DI 465 KU BIHUA HUA YU XIXIA KAO," 80 (PLATE 12)

FIGURE 10.18   Buddha crown for Tantric ritual practice. Dunhuang.
P. 4518 (7), © THE BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD

Tib. gTsang po pa dKon mchog seng ge), a disciple of the First Karmapa Düsum khenpa (1110–1193, Tib. Dus gsum mkhyen pa), who was sent to the Tangut Empire instead of the First Karmapa, when the latter refused the invitation of Emperor Renzong. We do not know exactly when Tsangpopa arrived in the Tangut capital, but given the general context and interest of Renzong in Tibetan Tantric Buddhism, some time in the late 1180s seems to be a realistic date. Tsangpopa eventually enjoyed the title of Imperial Preceptor in the Tangut Empire,[41]

41   Another important Tibetan who eventually received the title of Imperial Preceptor was the Barompa (Tib. 'Ba' rom pa) master Tishi Repa (1164/65–1236, Tib. Ti shri Sangs rgyas ras pa), who responded to Renzong's son and successor Huanzong's invitation to the

FIGURES 10.19–10.20 Fragments of crowns for Tantric ritual practice. Karakhoto.
X2500 (LEFT) AND X2503 (RIGHT), THE STATE HERMITAGE
MUSEUM, ST. PETERSBURG

an extraordinary position which, as I have indicated, was created in a time
of need for Emperor Renzong (probably in the 1170s according to Ruth Dun-
nell). As a matter of fact, Tsangpopa was known to have received Vajravārāhī
transmissions from the First Karmapa. In the important historical work of the
Karmapas, the *zLa ba chu shel gyi phreng ba* [Garland of Finest Crystal Gems],
first pointed out by Elliot Sperling, we find the following passage:

> When the king of the Tangut [Empire] […] invited the lord himself [, that
> is the First Karmapa Düsum khenpa], he sent Tsangpopa in his stead,
> having bestowed on him the development and completion stage teach-
> ings of Vajravārāhī and then exhorted him, [saying:] "Meditate in the
> Helan Mountains [near the Tangut capital]!" There he served as lama to

Tangut capital, ca. 1196/97 (r. 1194–1206). Cf. Elliot Sperling, "Further Remarks apropos of
the 'Ba'-rom-pa and Tanguts," *Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 75.1 (2004):
9–10.

the king of the Tangut [Empire] and received the appellation Tsangpa Tishi [, that is Imperial Preceptor Tsangpopa].[42]

I suggest that the Vajravārāhī teachings were among Tsangpopa's specialties, which he also taught in the Tangut Empire, so that his portrait might have found its way onto related Karakhoto thangkas. In fact, one more piece of visual evidence related to the Cakrasaṃvara and Vajravārāhī cycles (and also related to depictions in the Mogao Caves and in one of the Karakhoto thangkas) was found close to the Tangut capital in a sealed chamber near the top of Hongfo *stūpa* (for the location of the site see map 10.1). There, a thangka was found depicting twelve-armed Cakrasaṃvara and Vajravārāhī, together with a Sinitic depiction of the planetary Buddha Tejaprabhā, both studied by Rob Linrothe. He suggests that both thangkas were sponsored by the same patron, and that any Buddhist monument built or restored close to the Tangut capital likely had imperial approval, given the record of Renzong's Buddhist patronage activities.[43] A very similar depiction of a twelve-armed Cakrasaṃvara and Vajravārāhī was found in Karakhoto (x2369),[44] in an arrangement that is, as the Chinese scholar Ruan Li discovered, identical to what once decorated the Western section of the Northern wall of Mogao Cave 465 in Dunhuang.[45] Therefore, the popularity of the Vajravārāhī and Cakrasaṃvara cults was neither limited to the center nor to the periphery of the Tangut Empire, but was most probably initiated at the centre through the transmissions of Tibetan masters such as Tsangpopa.

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42   The translation, with slight changes by myself, follows Elliot Sperling, "Lama to King of Hsia," *The Journal of the Tibet Society* 7 (1987): 33, Tibetan text on p. 48 (c). See also: Si tu paṇ chen Chos kyi 'byung gnas and 'Be lo Tshe dbang kun khyab, ed., *sGrub brgyud Karma kam tshang brgyud pa rin po che'i rnam par thar pa rab 'byams nor bu zla ba chu shel gyi phreng ba* (New Delhi, 1972), 1 f. 26v.

43   Linrothe, "Peripheral Visions: On Recent Finds of Tangut Buddhist Art," particularly p. 247. The images of both thangkas are found here on p. 237 (fig. 1) and 238 (fig. 2). See also Linrothe, "Xia Renzong and the Patronage of Tangut Buddhist Art," 95; Lei Runze, "The Structural Character and Tradition of Ningxia's Tangut Stupas," *Orientations* 27.4 (1996): 59.

44   The Karakhoto thangka x2369 is published in: The State Hermitage Museum, Russia, Northwest University for Nationalities, and Shanghai Chinese Classics Publishing House, *Khara-Khoto Art Relics Collected in the State Hermitage Museum of Russia*, vol. 2, plate 130.

45   Ruan Li, "Mogao ku di 465 ku mandaluo zaikao," 65. An image of the Western section of the Northern wall in Mogao Cave 465 is also published in: Yang Xiong and Wu Jian, *Dunhuang shiku yishu. Mogao ku di siliuwu ku (Yuan)*, plate 107 (p. 135).

4   Conclusion

Having sketched here the larger context of what I assert to be a deliberate creation of a network of Tantric sacred spaces within the Tangut realm, I put forth the following working hypothesis concerning Mogao Cave 465: If we accept that the Uṣṇīṣavijayā *maṇḍala* in Yulin Cave 3 (fig. 10.2) was produced on the occasion of Rengzong's sixtieth anniversary celebration in 1184, and depicts Renzong as the patron placed within the sacred narrative, then the choice was probably made by a devout Buddhist practitioner with the aspiration for a long and protected life and a favorable rebirth. In 1184, Renzong had another nine years to live. His reign marked the hight of the Tangut Empire, a very wealthy and cultured civilisation with an emperor regarded in the Buddhist world of his time as a Dharmarāja (Tib. *chos kyi rgyal po*), a Buddhist king, as we can see in correspondances of Tibetan Kagyü masters with Renzong.[46] I suggest that for an emperor who has accomplished all worldly goals and who is a devout Buddhist practitioner, his spiritual aspirations would be given priority in his final years. As such, a spiritual teacher like the Tibetan master Tsangpopa, initiated in the Anuttarayogatantras, the Vajravārāhī cycle, by the First Karmapa, might have instructed Renzong the way to accomplish this goal. If we accept this scenario, we might also consider the possibility that Renzong could have acted as a patron of Mogao Cave 465, namely in the attempt to create a ritual space dedicated to Vajravārāhī and other Tantric deities under the guidance of

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46   See for example the works of Jigten Gönpo (1143–1217, Tib. Jig rten mgon po) in which the Tangut kings are referred to as Buddhist kings: 'Bri gung Chos rje 'Jig rten mgon po Rin chen dpal, *The Collected Works* (*Bka' 'bum*) *of Khams gsum chos kyi rgyal po Thub dBang Ratna Srī*, ed. H.H. Drikung Kyabgon Chetsang (Konchog Tenzin Kunzang Thinley Lhundup) (Dehradun: Drikung Kagyu Institute, 2001), vol. 5, Se. 183, text no. 488. Jigten Gönpo, the founder of the Drigung Kagyü School (Tib. *'bri gung bka' brgyud pa*), was in contact with the Tangut Emperors. He dispatched a symbolic gift of an image of Mañjughoṣa to the Tangut court as a token of peace when the Mongols, under Činggiz Khan, first attacked the Tanguts in 1207. See Sperling, "Lama to King of Hsia," 32. Moreover, three fragments in Tibetan script from the Karakhoto Collection related to Jigten Gönpo evidence the relationship between the Drigung School and the Tangut court, namely IOL Tib M 959 (cat. no. 232), IOL Tib M 954 (cat. no. 270) and IOL Tib M 958 (cat. no. 274). The cat. nos. in brackets refer to the catalogue: Takeuchi and Iuchi, *Tibetan Texts from Khara-Khoto in the Stein Collection of the British Library: Studies in Old Tibetan Texts from Central Asia*. The three manuscripts are also briefly discussed in: Maho Iuchi, "Early Bka' brgyud Texts from Khara-Khoto in the Stein Collection of the British Library," *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 65.3 (2017): 233–238. Moreover, Cécile Ducher communicated to me in Paris in December 2017, that she found references in many biographies of Tibetan masters of the 12th century, indicating that they were eager to go to the land of the Tanguts.

an accomplished master like Tsangpopa. After all, Cave 465 is a place remote from both the Tangut capital and the main centre of attention in the Mogao cave complex itself; it is situated at its very Northern end, surrounded by burial caves—a perfect place of Tantric ritual practice. In the end, this ritual space might even have served as the (secret) mortuary cave for Emperor Renzong. As a devout Buddhist practitioner, he potentially experienced the sacred dimension of the depicted enlightened beings, so that there was no need felt to depict an image of the donor—but this is mere speculation in the attempt to find an answer to the still open question concerning the lack of a donor figure in Cave 465. Thus, I suggest seeing the creation of Tantric sacred sites in Tangut lands as mirroring the very personal spiritual development (or even ascension) of the imperial donor Renzong, during the last few decades of the 12th century, a development that seems to have continued with his successors.

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