

Visiting the Lost City States:  
Origin of the Two Buddhas Seated Side by Side in Dunhuang

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## 1. Dunhuang

AFTER Emperor Wu's (Liu Che) ascension, the Han Empire arrogated the humiliating peace treaty signed with the Xiongnu and dispatched an expeditionary force to the Western Regions. With prominent followers, such as Wei Qing, Huo Qubing and Li Guangli, the force advanced to the north-west and dealt a great blow to the region. Then between 111 BCE and 110 BCE, it established the four prefectures of Hexi in the oases to the north of the Qilian Mountains. These four prefectures were Wuwei (Liangzhou), Zhangye (Ganzhou), Jiuquan (Suzhou) and Dunhuang (Shazhou).

Among them, Dunhuang, in particular, was a major stronghold, with 11,200 households and a population of 38,325. Although it was initially a military base, once peace was established, Dunhuang transformed into a cultural metropolis from the Sui to Tang eras, with harmony centring on Mahāyāna Buddhism prevailing among diverse ethnicities. The coming together of these different peoples resulted in the splendid blossoming of a Buddhist culture.

'A Poem of Mogao Cave' in *The Twenty Poems of Dunhuang* still conveys the beauty of the caves in Dunhuang as follows:

Snow-covered peaks are approaching to the pellucid desert,  
Towered clouds are built over blue sky...  
Cleansing my mind and enjoying the scenic beauty,  
Here, I am away from dust and obscurity.<sup>1</sup>

Thanks to the efforts of pioneers to help spread Buddhism eastwards, 80 per cent of the population in Dunhuang took faith in Buddhism up until the end of the fifth century. The peaceful society in which Buddhism flourished was described in the *Narrative of Zhang Yichao* as follows:

It is February, the middle of spring, when colours and light are splendid, / Singing is heard from every household and all people are free from sorrow... / The three lights of sun, moon, and stars glow even further in recent times, / Everyone who is in these six counties says that it looks like the era of Emperor Yao.<sup>2</sup>

According to Pelliot 2691, the first cave of the Mogao Caves was said to have been constructed by a Buddhist who resided in Dunhuang in the ninth year of Yonghe (353 CE)<sup>3</sup> during the Jin Era of Emperor Mu. Also, *A Monument of Repeated Restoration of the Buddhist Alcove in the Mogao Caves* describes that Buddhist monk Le Zun, while roaming in the Gobi Desert in the second year of Jianyuan (366 CE) during the Former Qin, saw a thousand Buddhas flying in the sky when the setting sunlight reflected on the Sanwei Mountains. Thus, he decided this area had the “solemn beauty of excellent majesty and a sacred precinct of mysteriousness” and he created the first cave.

There is a river called Daganhe (the River of a Great Spring) in front of the Mogao Caves. Although it currently looks dry, the river carried a lot of water during the days of the Tang Dynasty according to the *Record of a Monument to Make a Meritorious Deed of Li Fujun in Longxi County in the Great Tang*. The *Geographical Description for the General Governor of Shazhou* mentions that the water rose in the river, especially in the early evening. As indicated in the *Remnant of the Detailed Rules of the Implementation of Farmland Water Conservancy Regulations in Dunhuang Prefecture of Shazhou*, irrigation canals were well developed; the *Beifu* (Northern township) canal, especially, was extended to 35 *lis* and was able to provide water for abundant produce such as beans, wheat, greens and millet. The stable and prosperous lifestyle in the area was described in *A Song of a Woman of a Hundred Years*:

30th, A good-looking boy with jewel-like cheeks,  
At the side of a curtained window, he holds a mirror to make a  
flowery mark on his face decent.  
In the season of peonies, ballads are invited,  
Paddles are raised to board a boat and to take an annulus of jade.<sup>4</sup>

In Dunhuang, as the most prosperous Buddhist metropolis among the oasis city states on the Silk Road during the Tang era, more than a thousand caves were made, 17 major monasteries were established,

and about a thousand Buddhist monks and nuns exerted themselves to spread the Buddhist teaching and to undertake works of translation.

As Xie Zhiliu clarifies in his *Descriptive Catalogue of Dunhuang Arts*, the Lotus Sutra was regarded as an important Buddhist text in Dunhuang.<sup>5</sup> Particularly, murals and clay statues of the two Buddhas Śākyamuni and Many Treasures seated side by side, which phenomenon is described in the ‘The Emergence of the Treasure Tower’ chapter, were already popular in the sixth century. Table 1 shows the top three chapters of the Lotus Sutra by era with images most depicted in the Dunhuang caves:

**Table 1**

| Era \ No.      | 1                                      | 2                        | 3                        |
|----------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Sui            | <b>Emergence of the Treasure Tower</b> | Parable                  | The Universal Gateway    |
| Early Tang     | <b>Emergence of the Treasure Tower</b> | Introduction             | Emerging from the Earth  |
| Peak Tang      | Introduction                           | Skillful Means           | Belief and Understanding |
| Mid-Tang       | <b>Emergence of the Treasure Tower</b> | Skillful Means           | Introduction             |
| Late Tang      | <b>Emergence of the Treasure Tower</b> | Belief and Understanding | Parable                  |
| Five Dynasties | Introduction                           | Parable                  | Belief and Understanding |
| Song           | Devadatta                              | Introduction             | Parable                  |

‘The Emergence of the Treasure Tower’ chapter recounts that, while Śākyamuni Buddha was expounding the Lotus Sutra at the Eagle Peak (*Gṛdhrakūṭa*), all of a sudden a Treasure Tower emerged from the earth and various Buddhas assembled from the worlds of the 10 directions. The Many Treasures Buddha (*Prabhūtaratna*), a Buddha in the remote past who attained Buddhahood before Śākyamuni Buddha and resided in the Land Purified by Jewels (*Ratnaviśuddhā*) situated in an eastern direction, came to the Eagle Peak because he knew that Śākyamuni Buddha would expound the Lotus Sutra. The Treasure Tower soared to the sky and its door was opened; then the Many Treasures Buddha who stayed inside invited Śākyamuni Buddha to sit on the other half of his seat.

On the southern wall of Cave 23 of the Mogao Caves, there is a mural that has a magnificent depiction of the Ceremony in the Air. In the ceremony, the Many Treasures Buddha testified to the correctness

of the Lotus Sutra in a loud voice saying, “Excellent! Excellent!” “World-Honored One, all that you have expounded is the truth.” ‘The Emergence of the Treasure Tower’ starts with the following description:

At that time in the Buddha’s presence there was a tower adorned with the seven treasures, five hundred yojanas in height and two hundred and fifty yojanas in width and depth, that rose up out of the earth and stood suspended in the air. Various kinds of precious objects adorned it.<sup>6</sup>

What is noticeable here is that the saviours of the people, in fact, arise from the earth and are not divine beings descending from the heavens. This helps us understand that people capable of spreading Buddhism would appear from ordinary folk just as clouds arise from the streams of the earth.

A mural in Cave 61 includes depictions from 20 out of the total 28 chapters of the Lotus Sutra. Caves 85, 23, 45, 231 among others, also show reverence for ‘The Emergence of the Treasure Tower’ chapter with some illustrations from the chapter drawn above and in between the main murals from other chapters (Fig. 1: Details are at the end of article).

The Many Treasures Buddha as the past Buddha and Śākyamuni Buddha as the present Buddha, seated side by side inside the tower, can be said to depict the transcendence over time and space and the eternal existence of the Buddhas. Previously I had thought of the content of ‘The Emergence of the Treasure Tower’ chapter as just a metaphor and an exaggeration. However, the other day, I had a dialogue with a professor of Space Science, who gave me an excellent perspective. The professor said:

There are so many things in this world that human beings cannot comprehend, such as where the end of the universe is and, if there is an end, what exists beyond? Because science has been developing and unravelling the way the universe functions, Buddhist world views, such as “a great trichiliocosm”, begin to be understood, little by little.

He continued:

There may be life on some other planets. As long as certain conditions are met, life can exist anywhere. Also, there are so many unknown things in life, such as where one exists before birth or after passing away. We only accept what our brain can understand.



Fig. 1

Returning to the Lotus Sutra, Śākyamuni Buddha, while seated in the tower, indicates, although in an indirect manner, that the Lotus Sutra is the most superior of all sutras, by saying that various other sutras are “not worth regarding as difficult”.<sup>7</sup> Also, he teaches that it would be difficult to spread the Lotus Sutra in the future and expounds the following teaching to make a connection with ‘The Emerging from the Earth’ chapter:

Who is capable of broadly preaching the Lotus Sutra of the Wonderful Law in this saha world? Now is the time to do so, for before long the Thus Come One will enter nirvana. The Buddha wishes to entrust this Lotus Sutra of the Wonderful Law to someone so that it may be preserved.<sup>8</sup>

Many of those who moved to Dunhuang when the county was first established were migrant farmers, criminals and political refugees. However, from the end of the Han Dynasty to the Three Kingdoms period, about 10,000 scholar officials, literati and artists, people who had succeeded to the authentic culture of 400 years of the Han Dynasty, escaped from Chang’an and Luoyang to the Gansu Corridor. The 56th of the Series of Biographies in the volume 86 of the *History of Jin* records

their flight in detail and remarks, “While the centre of the nation is in strife, this area is safe.”

Dunhuang thus became a place where intellectuals and artists who were previously in the central district of the nation gathered and their descendants helped Buddhist art flower and bloom. In other words, it became a centre where a great number of artists and craftsmen developed their creative talents. Without profound knowledge of Buddhism, art cannot incarnate Buddhist sutras. While making an effort to visually reproduce the text, many craftsmen and painters recited the Lotus Sutra and their hearts were gradually captivated by it. It is assumed that they desired to attain enlightenment through each stroke of their paintbrushes and made a contribution to spreading Buddhism in their local community.

## 2. Loulan

I visited Loulan, an oasis city state which was located west of Dunhuang, in March 2003. Starting our trip from Turpan, we drove for three days before reaching a place where we saw yardangs, wind-sculptured “clay terraces”, also called *longcheng* 龍城 (dragon’s castles). After that, going further south, I visited a Sogdian underground burial site located on the north side of Lop Nur (Fig. 2).<sup>9</sup> I was impressed to see *dharma cakras* (wheels of Dharma) drawn on the walls and a main pillar, because they were similar to the *dharma cakras* that were drawn in a stupa of Fayaz Tepa (second to fourth centuries CE) in Uzbekistan. The Sogdians were of Iranian extraction and originally believed in Fire Worship (Zoroastrianism) or Manichaeism. It can be surmised that after moving from Sogdiana to Loulan, they embraced the Buddhist faith, captivated by the sublimity of its teachings. In the burial, many



Fig. 2

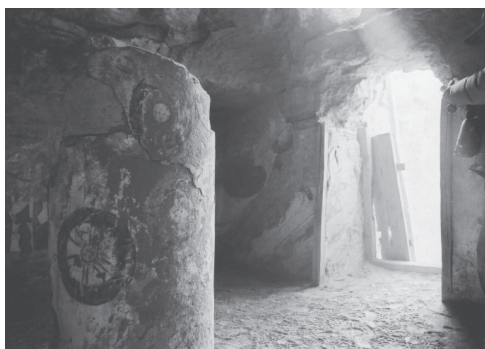


Fig. 3

*dharma cakras* were drawn and a figure that looked like the Buddha was depicted on the wall on the right side of the entrance (Fig. 3).

When I was surveying the interior of the fortress of Loulan, a guide who came from a town called Korla brought an old pottery water jar to show me. Its height was 35 cm and the diameter of the mouth was about 20 cm. He told me that he had excavated it at a Buddhist temple which he accidentally found while he was strolling around the outskirts of the town. In the temple, the guide said, there was a mural of three beautiful life-sized bodhisattva figures that were seated cross-legged; he drew a detailed map of the location for me.

In August 2004, I was heading to Sanlongsha, west of Loulan, starting from the Yumen Pass and going along the Great Wall. After a four-day camping journey, I arrived in Fangcheng which was called the storehouse of provisions during the Han period. I entered the underground burial site of Loulan that had been blasted and saw that straw mats and reed grasses were used as a ceiling. Human bones and casket materials were scattered and fragments of exploded murals were piled up in a corner of the burial.

In March 2006, after crossing the Yang Pass, I drove westwards along the northern foothills of the Altyn-Tagh Mountain range. In the middle of the desert, 50 km after Dongluk, our group was caught in a sandstorm. The wind velocity was 35 m per second, and nothing could be seen even a metre ahead. The fierce sandstorm brought our group to a standstill for 23 hours. In this third survey in Loulan, I thoroughly investigated the attire, face and style of moustache of the person in the burial. I measured the stupa inside the fortress of Loulan as well as and examined an accumulation of rock salt in the riverbed of the Kongque River, among others.



The Loulan Kingdom had existed from the first to the end of the fifth century. The *Record of the Western Regions* in the *History of the Later Han* describes, “The westerners who are in trade are coming and going through Loulan.” Also, an excavated wooden strip of an official communication reads, “(They) have dark complexions with large eyes. Among the fifty-six travellers are those turbaned with a white cloth.” These descriptions indicate that Loulan was at a crossroads of civilizations and people of diverse backgrounds passed through it. It can be presumed that the city state was most prosperous during the Jin period when Sima Yan ruled, because a large number of manuscripts written between 265 and 274 CE in particular were excavated.

In the year 400 CE when Faxian, who was heading to India, entered the fortress of Loulan, the area was run down. He left a note in his *Record of Buddhist Nations*, “There were more than four thousand monks; all of them belong to Hīnayāna Buddhism.”<sup>10</sup> The inhabitants of Loulan broke away from the custom of preserving and valuing the land and started a two-crop system, which led to soil degradation.

Further, they put sheep and goats out to pasture and their grazing ravaged the entire grassland. In addition, in order to make coffins for the dead, large trees were cut down, one after another. The land also suffered owing to soil salinity<sup>11</sup> and, as a result, in 492 CE the glorious kingdom was buried under drifting sand and disappeared from history.

### 3. Northern Passage of the Western Regions

It was sometime in the 1980s when the water level of the Murtuq River in Turpan rose and one of the Bezeklik Thousand Buddha Caves was flooded. After the water receded, one manager of the caves started working to get rid of the mud left inside the caves. That is when he noticed the head of a clay jar sticking out from the mud. When he pulled it out, he found a manuscript in the jar of ‘The Universal Gateway of the Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World’s Sounds’, the 25th chapter in the eighth volume of the Lotus Sutra in Chinese, which was translated by Kumārajīva in 406 CE in Chang’an (Fig. 4). There was a colophon in the manuscript that included the date of copy and the name of the scribe who copied it. After long negotiation with a director of the Turpan Museum, Mr Liu Hongliang, I was permitted to take one photo as a special favour.

Turpan was a city state ranked alongside Dunhuang in terms of the efflorescence of Buddhism. Many cave monasteries, such as the Bezeklik Thousand Buddha Caves, the Tuyuq Valley Thousand Buddha Caves and the Shengjinkou Thousand Buddha Caves lie scattered in



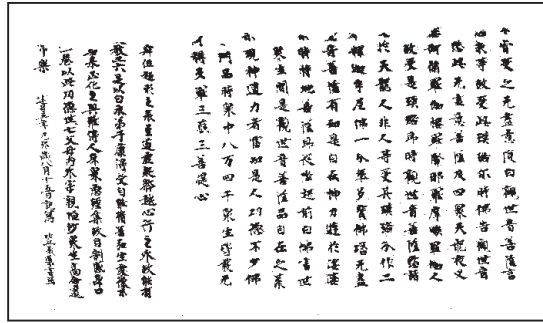


Fig. 4

ruins. The ruin which I investigated was the Lake Yarhu Thousand Buddha Caves, a centre of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

Caves 1, 2 and 6 were almost completely destroyed and no mural or Buddhist statue was found in their ruins. In Cave 3, I saw an inscription in Chinese which read that a military man named Ma, coming from Suzhou of Gansu Corridor, had made a pilgrimage to the monastery on October 8 in the 61st year of the Kangxi period (1671 CE) during the Qing Dynasty's reign. He left a record of his visit on the wall of the cave as a commemoration.

Cave 4 depicts various Buddhist narratives in a cramped manner. I saw a depiction of the Buddha seated on a lotus with many of his disciples, such as Samantabhadra and Mañjuśrī, drawn in a lively row. I also found a design of droopy robes.

In Cave 5, there were several lines in Chinese inscribed on its east-side wall which stated, "The second ... the tenth month, the year of *Yi Chou* ... arrived this Xigu (Western Valley) Temple." Because this cave is located on the western side of the Jiaohu ruins, we perceived that this monastery was named Xigu Temple.

In Cave 7 are drawings of a thousand Buddhas on the walls on all four sides, the carved gate and the ceiling. Some figures have umbrella-like flower canopies over their heads and are dressed in a garment that has a round collar which covers the shoulders, and some other figures have bodhi-tree-like flower canopies over their heads and wear a heavenly garment with the collar hanging down on both sides. All of them are seated on lotuses. From the hair styles and outfits of donors depicted in the mural, the language of the inscriptions, as well as the copying date of an excavated sutra manuscript found near the location, the Lake Yarhu Thousand Buddhas Caves were thought to have been created sometime between 327 and c. 440 CE, during the Nearer Jushi period (Fig. 5).

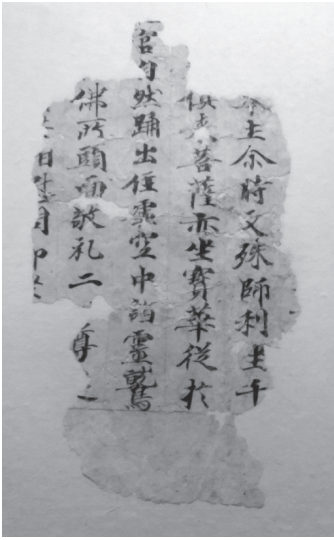


Fig. 5



Fig. 6

After the survey in Turpan, making my way north, I headed to the Xida Temple in Beiting. In Beiting, the Gaotai, Yingyun Daning, Longxing, Youfo and the Xida Temples were established, and each of these temples had beautiful murals covering their ceilings. Visual depictions helped illiterate people of the Western Regions access profound religious doctrines and truths.

What I paid attention to in the Xida Temple was the existence of the rare cross-legged bodhisattva statue in Liangzhou style (Fig. 6). The head and arms of the statue had been brutally destroyed and not only were the linen cloth and varnished tree remnants of the statue exposed, but the statue's wooden core was also cruelly exposed. Fortunately, the bottom part of the statue remains well preserved. The height of the statue could have been about life-sized. From the intaglio inscribed in the drapes of the thigh and the characteristic curved-line bulging style of the garment in the leg part, it can be inferred that the statue was made sometime between the eighth and ninth centuries. The reason why the design of the cross-legged Buddhist statues was not transmitted to Japan, I believe, was that the cross-legged sitting posture seemed unstable and alien to the Japanese spiritual climate, which preferred stability and tranquillity.

After visiting Beiting, I headed westwards to the ancient Kucha Kingdom. This is the hometown of Kumārajīva, a towering figure of renown for centuries. Kumārajīva was born in 344 CE (or 350 CE), and

his mother, Jīvaka, was a younger sister of Kucha king Bui Chun. His father was Kumārāyana, who came from north-west India. A prodigy, Kumārajīva became a monk at seven years of age. When he was nine years old, accompanied by his mother, he went to the Jibin Kingdom (present-day Peshawar), which was a centre of Buddhism at that time, in order to receive training in Buddhist practice.

After leaving Kucha, Kumārajīva passed through Gumo and Wensu, and then, travelling through the city of Qilan, he entered the Weitou Kingdom. Arriving at Shule (present-day Kashgar 喀什), he changed direction south-eastwards to reach Tashkurgan (stone fortress 石頭城, present-day Taxkorgan 塔什庫爾干), taking a brief period of rest in this border city. Thereafter, Kumārajīva went south-westwards and passed through the Khunjerab Pass, which is a halfway point between the Pamir Mountains and Karakorum Mountain Range. It is 160 km from the pass to Hunza. It is also 110 km to Gilgit from where Lotus Sutra manuscripts were excavated and a petroglyph was found. Chilas, a town located on the banks of the Indus River where Mahāyāna Buddhism was thriving, is 130 km further. Kumārajīva and his mother took this route to enter the Jibin Kingdom.

When he was 13 years old, Kumārajīva went back to Kucha and devoted all of his energy to spreading Mahāyāna Buddhism there. At this time, a number of Hīnayāna Buddhist monasteries had already been established in Kucha, including a great monastery in which 170 monks resided and a nunnery complex in which 180 nuns resided. All of these clerics repudiated Mahāyāna Buddhism.

In 382 CE, Fu Jian, an Emperor of the Former Qin Dynasty whose capital was situated in Chang'an, issued an imperial edict to summon Kumārajīva. Fu Jian appointed Lü Guang as a general and despatched 70,000 soldiers to Kucha. On the way, soldiers from Loulan, Turpan and Karashar joined the force and increased it to a total of more than 100,000 soldiers. This historical fact that 100,000 soldiers were despatched in order to summon Kumārajīva proves how capable and eminent he was.

After leaving Kucha to head towards Chang'an with Lü Guang and staying in Liang Province for 17 years, Kumārajīva entered Chang'an in 401 CE. It was winter and he was 57 years old at that time. Kumārajīva translated major Buddhist texts into Chinese day after day with the rigorous spirit of trying to convey the Buddha's real intention without any mistakes, even in a single word or phrase. The Caotang Temple in Chang'an, one of his translation sites, exhibits pictures of his life.



Fig. 7

I went to survey the Kizil Caves, the Kumtura Thousand Buddhas Caves, and the Subashi Temple ruins, which were said to be largely Hīnayāna sites. In these ruins, I saw pictorial representations of Jataka tales and the Buddha's life story. *The Great Tang Records on the Western Regions* states, "There were more than a hundred monasteries, and more than five thousand monks were studying the *Sarvāstivāda* of Hīnayāna Buddhism." After this, I investigated the A'ai Caves,<sup>12</sup> a

treasure house of Mahāyāna Buddhism. The Caves are located in the Kizilya Grand Canyon, which is 120 km north of Kucha and in the backcountry of the Tianshan Mountain Range. About 30 years ago, two Uyghur herdsmen went to a mountain area to gather medicinal herbs and noticed a large cave in a cliff 30 m in height. It is said that, after descending from the top of the cliff with the help of a rope, when they looked into the stone chamber, they let out an exclamation. There was a statue inside the chamber facing the entrance, which was surrounded by dazzling murals of Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī (Fig.7) and thousands of Buddhas. Aiming to reach the cave, I climbed up the cliff and minutely examined the chamber, then published the survey in an academic article.

The Weitou Kingdom was situated west of the Kucha Kingdom, which had control over the Weitou. The Weitou Kingdom, one of the 36 kingdoms of the Western Regions, had a long history dating back to the Han Dynasty. From the third to seventh century, besides officials of various tributary states, many Sogdian traders were coming and going from this kingdom, carrying novel coins and precious materials.

The Toqquz-sarai monastery in the Weitou Kingdom had many stupas and temples standing in a row and the lodgings were full of pilgrims who came to worship at the monastery between the third and mid-eighth centuries. I found six life-sized bodhisattva figures carved mid-slope into a riverbank cliff more than 30 m in height and took pictures of them.

As the Silk Road became Islamized, this kingdom too, fell to an onslaught of the Kara-Khanid Dynasty in Kashgar. Inside the royal fortress, I saw arrowheads, countless pieces of charred wood, and burned sun-dried bricks scattered around. Although followers of

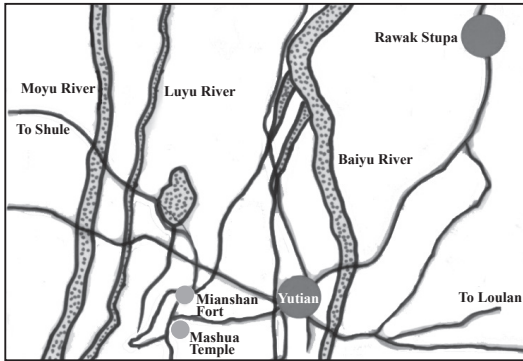
Buddhism originally abstained from taking life, people in the Weitou Kingdom had courageously fought against the Islamic force to protect Buddhism and died honourably, as did the populace of the ancient Kingdom of Khotan (ancient Yutian, present-day Hotan 和田).

There was a huge ruined fortress in the desert, located 75 km north-east of the Weitou Kingdom. It was the ruined city of Qilan, one of the branch cities of the Kucha Kingdom. This city, built during the former Han period, had a fortress which was laid 1.5 km east to west and 2 km south to north. The watchtower in the north-west corner was 13 m in height. I observed eight alcoves for Buddhist statues and noticed a fusion of Indian and Chinese cultures in the style of the Indian temple gate.

#### **4. Southern Passage of the Western Regions**

As Hotan was a place where Mahāyāna Buddhism was thriving, many fragments of Sanskrit manuscripts of the Lotus Sutra were excavated from there. The estimated time period over which these manuscripts were copied was between the fifth and 10th centuries. The manuscripts which Petrovsky, who was the Russian consul general in Kashgar from 1882 to 1902, collected, were also excavated in Hotan. The fragments of the Sanskrit Lotus Sutra manuscripts excavated from Hotan, which the Ōtani expeditionary party initially brought to Japan and later returned to China where they are currently held in the Lūshun Museum, were copied sometime between the fifth and sixth centuries. These are considered to be the historically closest edition to the Lotus Sutra manuscript which Kumārajīva used as a base text for his translation work.

In August 2017, I made a field trip to survey the ruined Rawak temple in the north-west of Jia district of Luopu prefecture in northern Hotan in order to search for vestiges of the Lotus Sutra (Map 1).<sup>13</sup> Up until about 100 years ago, there were many clay statues of standing Buddhas, more than 3 m high, arranged in the surrounding walls of the temple. Statues of bodhisattvas and donors were placed between these standing Buddha statues. Furthermore, there were vibrant Buddhist murals. The stupa was built in the third century and had been in use until about the ninth century. Currently, the first storey is buried under sand for conservation purposes and only the second storey appears above the ground. Remnants of a Sahasrabhuja Avalokiteśvara statue excavated from this ruined temple, still exhibited vivid decorative colours. Besides this, clay statues, moulded seated statues and cross-legged bodhisattva moulded statues were also excavated.



Map 1

In 1892, a manuscript of the Dhammapada in Kharosthi was found in a Buddhist stone cave located in the south-southwest of the Yotkan ruins. This manuscript, believed to have been copied sometime in the first to second century, was considered one of the oldest Buddhist manuscripts (Fig. 8).

In order to protect Buddhism, the Kingdom of Khotan had been fighting a solitary religious war with the Islamic Kara-Khanid Dynasty. Although the kingdom frequently requested reinforcements from Dunhuang, which was ruled by its kin, Dunhuang had never sent help, not even one soldier. Khotan fell in about 1008 CE and the Buddhist monasteries were completely destroyed. The *Great Dictionary of Turkic* mentions, “We came down on them like a flood; we went out among their cities; we tore down the idol temples; we shit on the idols’ heads.”<sup>14</sup>

Buddhism was thriving in Yecheng (Karghalik), which was located west of Khotan, from the third to ninth century. *The Great Tang Records on the Western Regions* states, “The surrounding of the kingdom is more than a thousand *lis* and the surrounding of the royal fort more than ten *lis*.” “The residents are faithfully devoted in the Three Treasures and



Fig. 8





Fig. 9

preferably enjoy the meritorious benefits.” “There are many Mahāyāna Buddhist scriptures and there is no other city where Buddhism was thriving more than this kingdom.” I visited the Qipan Thousand Buddhas Caves which still preserve the splendour of Buddhism in the past days of Yecheng (Fig. 9).

The Qipan Thousand Buddhas Caves were established around the second century CE. Because it was the early period of eastward transmission of Buddhism, the remains seem to be simple. In the early 10th century, the Qipan village was destroyed by the Kara-Khanid Dynasty, but people in the village who refused to be converted to Islam escaped eastwards. The Thousand Buddhas Caves lost their devotees and were abandoned. They were buried under 15 m of drifting sand from the Taklamakan Desert for more than a thousand years. However, because of this, the murals and Buddhist statues seem to have remained preserved. While I was there, I got information from a local herdsman that a new stone cave temple had been found in the desert 20 km west of the Qipan Thousand Buddhas Caves. I was told that it would take three days by camel. It is one of the Buddhist remains which I would like to visit for field research in the near future.

The Shule Kingdom had been prosperous from roughly 2300 years ago as an important transfer point for trade among travellers, such as those from Tashkent in Uzbekistan and those from Taxkorgan who passed through the Pamir Mountains northwards. This city state was thriving as an essential trading metropolis in such a way that even Romans came to trade here during the Roman Empire.

There are many Buddhist remains in this city state. One of them is the Sanxian Caves, located 18 km south of the city. They were excavated in a cliff of the Qiake Make River 1800 years ago and 70 Buddhas and bodhisattvas were depicted with vivid colours on the walls. Also, in the





Fig. 10

north of the city state, there are two stupas, called Mauri stupas, that are over 12 m in height, standing tall in the desert (Fig. 10).

Kumārajīva, as a young boy in 356 CE, had gone abroad to complete his studies in Kashmir, and after passing through Alexandria Prophthasia, stopped by in Shule to practice for more than a year. The most fruitful results of his stay there were that Kumārajīva met Suryasoma, who became his mentor in life, and that Kumārajīva was converted from Hīnayāna Buddhism to Mahāyāna Buddhism. Entrusted with the mission of spreading the Lotus Sutra, Kumārajīva persisted in practising his mentor's teaching.

Buddhism was thriving in the Shule Kingdom between the mid-third and seventh centuries CE. Xuanzang, who visited this area in 644 CE, mentions, "There are several hundred Buddhist temples and more than ten thousand monks" in *The Great Tang Records on the Western Regions*.

I got information from the director of Kashgar Museum that large-scale remains of a fortress had been found in the desert 10 km south of the Mauri stupas. I immediately visited the spot to survey it. A watchtower and the wall of a castle in a 12 km perimeter, built during the Han period, were confirmed. Because there are many excavated articles, such as coins and silk fabrics belonging to the late Han and Three Kingdoms periods, my hypothesis is that this citadel could be the metropolis of Shule, which had a connection with Kumārajīva.

The route from Shule to Taxkorgan was used by many travellers after the third century as one of the routes of eastward transmission of Buddhism and a shorter one than others that went via Central Asia. *The Great Tang Records on the Western Regions* calls Taxkorgan Qiephantuo and states, "There are more than ten temples, more than five hundred

monks, and the Sarvāstivāda of the Hīnayāna teaching is widespread.” The capital citadel was located on top of a huge rock mountain, which was called the stone fortress. At the corner of the fortress, I saw a signboard calling the location “Buddhist Remains”, and there was a museum that exhibited archaeological finds that related to Buddhism. There was also a signboard that mentioned some areas which are designated “Buddhist Cultural Zones” in the town.

## 5. Central Asia

The finding of some silk fabric of the Han Dynasty in a grave outside Rome proved that Chinese silk was transported to Rome even 2000 years ago. I myself saw silk fabric of the Han Dynasty on display that was worn by an eight-year-old girl in Rome. Along with the traffic of people and exchange of materials, thoughts and ideas were also disseminated and fused. In fact, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Manichaeism and Christianity were transmitted to the eastern regions.

Sometime between the second century BCE and the mid-eighth century CE, Buddhism was transmitted from the Gandhara district to Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Xinjiang. Age determination of Buddhist remains in areas such as Airtam, Fayaz-Tepa, Ajina-Tepa, Dalverzin-Tepa, Kalai-Kafirnigan, Kara-Tepa, Kunduz and Surkh-Kotal shows that Buddhism was introduced to various city states in Central Asia as early as about the second century BCE.<sup>15</sup>

Samarkand in Uzbekistan was a metropolis where Sogdians resided and a Chinese history book, the *Xin Tangshu* (New Tang’s History), calls it the city state of “Kang-guo 康国”. Sogdians were engaged in caravan trading and were called “Zahu 雜胡” or “Guhu 賈胡” in China. Buddhist relics, such as a bodhisattva statue, were excavated in the Afrasiab city fortress ruins in Samarkand in which many Sogdians were residing.

Bukhara, which means “monastery” in Sanskrit, is a historical city. In China, those who originally came from Bukhara were given the surname of “An 安”. They were under the control of the Kushan Empire whose domain extended to south Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. In this area, the royal family and a section of the common people accepted the Buddhist faith from the first century to the third.

When I visited a mosque in Bukhara, a local researcher told me, “This mosque is 1300 years old and eventually the foundation became weak. While carrying out the restoration work, we found a Buddhist temple underneath.” Immediately, I entered the basement of the mosque

and indeed found the podium of a Buddhist temple there. Because the temple was built in a scenic location, Muslims constructed their mosque at the same location after destroying the temple. What the cultural strata of the excavated archaeological items showed was that Buddhism had existed up until 930 CE in Central Asia. After the forces of the Tang Dynasty suffered a crushing defeat at the Battle of Talas River against the Abbasid Dynasty in 751 CE, Islam permeated into Central Asia. I was surprised, however, to learn that Buddhists there still kept alight the flame of their faith for almost 180 years after the defeat.

By way of Samarkand and Bukhara, and crossing the Amu Darya River, I visited Mary in Turkmenistan. The Merv remains lie in the drifting desert sands 30 km east of Mary. Considered the largest Buddhist remains in Central Asia, many archaeological relics relating to Buddhism were excavated from the Gyaaur Kala city fortress ruins and other sites. Among them are relics in the collection of the Turkmenistan National Museum, such as a jar with a coloured drawing which contained the Merv manuscript of a Sarvāstivāda text and a basalt stone Buddha statue with remnants of decorative gold foil showing the influence of Buddhist sculpture from Gandhara.

I found it hard to believe that the westward transmission of Buddhism, which came as far as Merv, halted abruptly in the area. In order to find some traces of Buddhist transmission, I did field research in Nisa, a capital of the early Parthian Empire located in the foothills of the Kopet Dag Mountain Range, 15 km west of Ashgabat. Although no Buddhist remains were found, I came across a line in a book published locally, which talked of a cultural relic that was influenced by Buddhism being found. If the particular relic was, in fact, excavated in Nisa, the history of Buddhist transmission would need to be rewritten. Heading further westwards, I visited Persepolis in Iran to hunt for possible Buddhist relics. At that time, I read an academic article that stated that three Buddhist temples in Iran and one in Turkey had been found. Although I cannot establish the genuineness of the claim, what can be said with certainty is that the western extremity of Buddhist transmission has to be treated with a degree of fluidity.

Major historical facts regarding the transmission of Buddhism in the northern part of Central Asia in around the first century BCE and the first century CE are summarized in Table 2:

**Table 2**

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Century BCE | Introduction of Buddhism in Kandahar, south of Afghanistan.<br>Introduction of Buddhism in Bagram.  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Century BCE | The Greater Yuezhi sent an envoy to China. An emissary of China was taught Buddhism by a prince of the Greater Yuezhi.  |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Century BCE | In the first year of the Yuanshou period (02 BCE) under Emperor Ai of the Han Dynasty, Jing Lu, the disciple of a doctor, orally received the Futujing from Yi Cun who was from the Greater Yuezhi. Buddhism thrived in the south-eastern part of Bactria.                                    |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Century CE  | Introduction of Buddhism to Termez, in the Amu Darya (Oxus) River basin.<br>In 67 CE, the legend of the Baima (White horse) temple in Luoyang.<br>In 74 CE, a monk in Kashmir transmitted Buddhism to the Kingdom of Khotan in Xinjiang.  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Century CE  | In 136 CE, Buddhism was mentioned in a Bactrian document in Taxila.<br>In 148 CE, An Shigao, a prince of the Parthian Empire, entered Luoyang and started working on translating Buddhist texts.<br>In 181 CE, An Xuan of Parthia translated Mahāyāna Buddhist texts into Chinese in Luoyang. |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Century CE  | In 266 CE, Zhi Yao from the Greater Yuezhi, Zhu Fahu (Dharmarakṣa), as well as Kang Senghui of Sogdia, worked on the translation of Buddhist texts in China.<br>In 281 CE, An Faqin from Parthia worked on the translation of Buddhist texts in China.  |

## 6. The Birth of Śākyamuni and the Development of Buddhism after Him

There are two traditions regarding the birthplace of Śākyamuni: Tilaurakot in Nepal and Piplahwa in India. The ruins of Kapilavastu, where Śākyamuni renounced the world, have not yet been identified.

I visited the Nairanjana River (present-day Lilajan River), which is a tributary river of the Ganges and which flowed to the west of Rajagriha. It is believed that Śākyamuni came to this riverside and sat under a bodhi tree to meditate and in time attained enlightenment to become the Buddha. Currently, the Great Tower of Bodh Gaya (the Mahabodhi Temple), which is 55 m in height and was erected in about the seventh century, marks the site.

I also climbed Grdhrakuta (the Eagle Peak), north-east of Rajagriha, part of the Magadha Kingdom in ancient India (present-day state

of Bihar), where Śākyamuni is said to have expounded important Mahāyāna Buddhist texts in his later years. The Lotus Sutra, which was also expounded here, was orally transmitted from mentors to disciples for about 400 years. The followers of the Lotus Sutra did not reject the traditional indigenous beliefs of the different local communities but instead accepted each local divinity as long as the principle teaching of the Lotus Sutra was being accepted. Because of this attitude, called the “precept of adapting to local customs”, it can be surmised that the Lotus Sutra was welcomingly accepted by the people of north-west India.

After the death of Śākyamuni, although many of his disciples followed their mentor’s teachings seriously, many of them later started to seek only their own individual enlightenment and lost the ideal of transforming society, that is, a practice to save the common people. As a result, their practice was not based on Buddhist sutras but on fictitious Buddhas or objects of worship, and Buddhism strayed away from its original teaching. Even before the attack on Buddhist temples by Islamic forces in 1203 CE, Buddhism became only a shell and its spirit had already been lost.

Because immense gold, silver and other treasures had been amassed in Buddhist monasteries, they became a target of Islamic forces. Hinduism and Jainism, which did not accumulate money and valuables, have, on the other hand, survived up to this present time. Currently in India, Buddhists form only 0.7 per cent of the total population.

Looking at the westward transmission of Buddhism to Gandhara district, it can be seen that Mahāyāna Buddhist movements occurred from a part of the early sectarian Buddhist schools around the first century BCE and CE. At the same time, a trend started to express the Buddha in the form of human images and Buddha statues began to be made in the area, mainly by descendents of the Greeks.

Buddhism was patronized during the time of King Kanishka (accession 127 CE?). A collection of Buddhist texts was made in Gandhara, and the early Mahāyāna Buddhist texts were known. The Lotus Sutra, which propounded enlightenment of all humanity, was also known during this time. However, because the central area in Gandhara was a stronghold of conservatives and the Sarvāstivāda of Hīnayāna Buddhism had gained power, it can be surmised that the Lotus Sutra was not readily accepted.

The upper course of the Indus River, especially from the towns of Chilas to Gilgit, was an area which was thriving in commerce and industry and where people of different ethnic groups were residing together. It was reminiscent of Shravasti and Rajagriha during Śākyamuni’s time. Many of the residents were free of the caste system

and considered that human destinies were determined by one's own attitude towards life. It was the historical stage of a paean to humanity, in which people of diverse ethnicities were living in harmony.

Centring on those who upheld the Lotus Sutra as the "King of the Various Sutras", the residents left behind highly artistic petroglyphs amounting to about 30,000 in number. Many of the residents transcribed and inscribed the teachings onto birch barks or rocks, and taught the sutra to their own children and grandchildren, helping them gain a clear grasp of its meaning. It can be assumed that, transcending time and space, the followers of the Lotus Sutra in Gilgit were directly connected to the Ceremony in the Air which occurred on Eagle Peak, and that their hearts pulsed with the determination to make certain the Law would long endure.

Gilgit is an important base of and a power source location for the Lotus Sutra in Kashmir. Because it lies at an essential point between Xinjiang and Gandhara, passing through the Pamir Mountains, many travellers were coming and going there. Thus the residents created the petroglyph of the two Buddhas seated side by side in a cliff there to help these travellers understand the Lotus Sutra.

It was a grand historical moment that the Lotus Sutra manuscripts were found in Gilgit, manuscripts that were transcribed on birch bark in the Gupta script sometime between the end of the sixth century and the early eighth century. The petroglyph of the two Buddhas seated side by side on the cliff of Gilgit too is an outstanding monument to the message contained in the Lotus Sutra. After field surveys in Xinjiang and Central Asia, I have concluded that the original figure of the two Buddhas seated side by side in Dunhuang existed at Hodur in Gilgit (Fig. 11).<sup>17</sup>

The petroglyph of the two Buddhas seated side by side was greatly revered in Gilgit; then, crossing over the Pamir Mountains, the reverence was transmitted to Xinjing and became a prominent motif in



Fig. 11



Dunhuang. Through the murals and statues found in the Hexi Corridor and the central districts of China<sup>18</sup> even nowadays, we can see that the image of the two Buddhas seated side by side gained popularity in those areas. In Japan, these two Buddhas were inscribed in a *mandala*; the Many Treasures Buddha on the right side of the centre and Śākyamuni Buddha on the left side.

The stream of the two Buddhas seated side by side was transmitted from Grdhrakuta to Kashmir, then it went eastwards from the Pamir Mountains to the Kingdom of Khotan, Loulan, Dunhuang, Gansu, Chan'an, Luoyang, and finally reached Japan (Figs 12, 13).



Fig. 12



Fig. 13

### Acknowledgement

I offer my gratitude to late Dr Seishi Karashima who gave me valuable feedback on the fifth and sixth sections of this article.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> In 1989, as a delegate of the Institute of Oriental Philosophy, I attended the International Conference on Dunhuang Studies that was sponsored by the Dunhuang Academy and presented a paper entitled 'About the Date of Completion of the Manuscript of *The Twenty Poems of Dunhuang in Shazhou*'. In Japan as well, Dunhuang was considered 'Jiangnan' (south of River Yangtze) on the outside of the Great Wall and the 'Earthy Paradise' on the far side of the desert. This is also expressed in the poem 'Tonkō 敦煌 (Dunhuang)' in *Rekijitsu no oni 曆日の鬼 (An Ogre in Passage of Years)* by Japanese poet, Shinjirō Kurahara 蔵原伸二郎, which reads "At that time, Buddhism was a new light, a full moon, a full moon of the Orient."



- 2 Yamada Katsuhisa 山田勝久, 'Tonkō monjo 'Chōgichō hembun' no kundoku ni tsuite 敦煌文書「張議潮變文」の訓読について' (On the Japanese Reading of Chinese Characters of Dunhuang Manuscript, *Narrative of Zhang Yichao*), *Hokkaidō kyōiku daigaku kiyō* 北海道教育大学紀要 (Journal of Hokkaidō University of Education), Part 1-A Humanities, 33 (1982), 47–57.
- 3 The remnant of the *Shazhou Geographical Description* states that the first cave was made mid-slope on the Mingsha Mountain in the ninth year of *Yonghe* (353 CE).
- 4 *A Song of a Woman of a Hundred Years* is found in Stein 2947 and Pelliot 3168. My article 'Tonkō shutsudo Nyōnin hyakusai hen no kenkyū 敦煌出土、女人百歳篇の研究' (A Study of *A Song of a Woman of a Hundred Years* excavated in Dunhuang) in *Gogaku Bungaku* 語学文学 (Linguistics and Literature) 24 (1986) includes the translation of this poem into Japanese with a Japanese rendering of Chinese characters.
- 5 Xie Zhiliu 謝稚柳, *Dunhuang yun shuxulu* 敦煌芸術叙録 (Descriptive Catalogue of Dunhuang Arts) (Shanghai: Shanghai Chuban, 1955), 1–12.
- 6 Burton Watson, trans., *The Lotus Sutra* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 170.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 178.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 176.
- 9 I have published the following article about this research, 'Rōranōkoku no kōbō to ryōbo no hekiga ni tsuite 楼蘭王国の興亡と陵墓の壁画について' (The Rise and Fall of Loulan and its Burial Murals), *Gakudai Kokubun* 学大國文 (Japanese Literature of Gakudai) 51 (2008), 59–75.
- 10 An article entitled '*Shahe Shanshanguo* 沙河・鄯善国' in the *Faxian chuan* 法顯伝 states, "The King of the nation upholds the Law. There could be more than four thousands monks who all study Hīnayāna." This point is explained in detail in the *Hokken den, Sōun kōki* 法顯伝・宋雲行紀 (The Record by Faxian and Travel Record by Song Yun) translated into Japanese and annotated by Kazutoshi Nagasawa 長澤和俊 (Tokyo: Heibon-sha, 1979), 9–13.
- 11 The fact that soil salinity was one of the primary factors that caused the downfall of Loulan is explained at length in my article, 'Ryūsa ni maibotsu shita Rōranōkoku 流砂に埋没した楼蘭王国' (Kingdom of Loulan Buried by Drifting Desert)', in *Yūkyūnaruru shirukurōdo kara heijōkyō e* 悠久なるシルクロードから平城京へ (From the Everlasting Silk Road to the Capital Heijō) (Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 2005), 81–87.
- 12 A detailed report about the A'ai Caves was included in *A'ai shiku* 阿艾石窟 (*The A'ai Caves*) published by Xinjiang Xinfua Shudian 新疆新華社書店 (2001). Also, the comprehensive report of the field survey I made was recorded in my article, 'Kijikoku A'ai sekkutsu ni egakareta inori to bi no isan 龜茲国アアイ石窟に描かれた祈りと美の遺産' (The Legacy of Prayer and Beauty Depicted in the A'ai Caves of Kucha Kingdom), in *Sirukurōdo no roman to bunmei no kōbō* シルクロードのロマンと文明の興亡 (The Adventurous Spirit and the Rise and Fall of Civilization in the Silk Road) (Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 2005), 152–65.
- 13 The Map is based on a note from the author's field study and 玄奘『大唐西域記』中国古典文学大系 22, 水谷真成訳 (Genjō. *Daitō Saiikiki, Chūgoku koten bungaku taikei* 22, trans. by Mizutani Shinjō [Heibon-sha, 1999], 295). The ruined Rawak temple is located 63 km north of Hotan and in a desert east of the Yurungkash River. Originally, the central stupa was over 12 m high, but it later collapsed and

currently only two stories remain. In April 1901, Englishman Aurel Stein found several Buddhist statues, each about 4 m high, in the ruined Rawak temple. These statues were thought to have been made sometime from the third century to the early fifth century.

- <sup>14</sup> Maḥmūd el-Kāšgarī, *Türkşiveleri lügati (Dīvānülüğāt-it-Türk) - Compendium of the Turkic Dialects (Dīvānluyāt al-Türk)* Part 1, ed and trans. by Robert Dankoff and James Kelly (Duxbury: the Harvard University Printing Office, 1982), 270. The lines are after a verse of four lines in a clause of “Känd”, starting with the account “Describing their raid on the Uighur.”
- <sup>15</sup> The remains of many Buddhist statues, which were created between the first and the second centuries in Gandhara, such as standing Buddha sculptures (first to second centuries, Peshawar Museum), and a Buddha’s biographic relief of ‘Indra and Brahma Entreating the Buddha to Preach’ (c. first century, Lahore Museum) were found in these areas.
- <sup>16</sup> I have surveyed a distribution of Buddhist monuments as a tool to chart the passage of the eastward transmission of Buddhism. The dates of establishment of Buddhist stupas and the time period of existence of Buddhist temples help to indicate the route of eastward transmission. I have created a map of the eastward transmission through the following Buddhist monuments which are spread from Gandhara to Central Asia (in alphabetical order, underlined monuments are on the map): Ai-Khanoum, Airtam, Ajina-Tepa, Bagram, Balalyk-Tepa, Bamyan, Bhamala, Bharhut, Butkara, Budrach, Chargul Dheri, Charsadda, Chatpat, Chilas, Dalverzin-Tepa, Dharmarajika, Durman-Tepe, Fayaz-Tepa, Ferghana, Fondukistan, Hadda, Haibak, Hajiabad, Halchayan, Hayatabad, Hazāra, Hazāra Zar Dheri, Jamal Garhi, Gumbatuna, Jamrud, Jaulian, Kalai-Kafirnigan, Kampyr-Tepa, Kara-Tepa, Krasnaya-Rechka, Loriyan Tangai, Mamane Dheri, Mekha-Sanda, Muhammad Nari, Panr, Parihasapura, Puli Khumri, Qunduz, Rag-i-Bibi, Ranigat, Rawak, Sahri Bahlol, Saidu, Shankardar, Shirkap, Shotorak, Sikri, Surkh Kotal, Suyab, Swat, Takht-i-Bahi, Tapa Sardar, Taxila, Tchingiz-Tepe, Tepe Maranjan, Tepe Rustam, Termez, Thareli, Tokar-Dara, Udegram, Zang-Tepa, ZarD heri, Zar-Tepa, Zurmala.
- <sup>17</sup> The Lotus Sutra was ardently revered at Hunza, Chilas, Thalpan and Hodur in Gilgit in the north-west of Pakistan. Petroglyphs on a cliff of the two Buddhas seated side by side appeared at the end of the fifth century.
- <sup>18</sup> The motif of the two Buddhas seated side by side transmitted eastwards from Dunhuang was first incarnated as Buddhist art at the Bingling Temple in Lanzhou and at the Maiji Mountain in Tianshui in China.

### Figure Details

Fig. 1: An illustration from ‘The Emergence of the Treasure Tower’ chapter drawn above the head of the Buddha who is seated in the centre (Mogao Cave 45, during the Peak-Tang period) (Photo by the author)

Fig. 2: Two young Uygur men blasted the upper side of the burial site and intruded into it through these piled up rocks in February, 2003 (Photo by the author)

Fig. 3: *Dharma cakras* found in the underground burial in Loulan. It can be assumed that the Sogdians embraced Buddhism (Photo by the author)

Fig. 4: Manuscript of ‘The Universal Gateway of the Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World’s Sounds’ chapter of the Lotus Sutra in Chinese, translated by Kumārajīva, which was excavated from the Bezeklik Thousand Buddha Caves (Copied by Yidao on August 15, 406 CE)

Fig. 5: Manuscript of the ‘Devadatta’ chapter of the Lotus Sutra, excavated from the Jiaohe-cheng ruins (Turpan Museum Collection)

Fig. 6: The cross-legged bodhisattva statue in the Xida Temple (Photo by the author)

Fig. 7: Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī in the A’ai Caves (Photo by the author)

Fig. 8: Ruined Rawak Buddhist temple (third to seventh centuries) in the Kingdom of Khotan (Photo by the author)

Fig. 9: There are no Buddhist statues and murals left in the Qipan Thousand Buddhas Caves on sand (Photo by the author)

Fig. 10: There are still stunning visuals with a strong Buddhist tinge in Taxkorgan. Mountains in the distance are the Pamir Mountains (Photo by the author)

Fig. 11: Petroglyph in Gilgit, which depicts Śākyamuni Buddha and the Many Treasures Buddha seated side by side. Image from *Gandhara: Das buddhistische Erbe Pakistans / Legenden, Klöster und Paradiese* (Mainz: Philipp von Zaben, 2008), 355.

Fig. 12: The two Buddhas seated side by side in the Bingling Temple (Cave 125) (Photo by the author)

Fig. 13: The two Buddhas seated side by side in the Maiji Mountain. The monument is in Cave 10 (Photo by the author)

#### **About the Author and Translator**

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