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Phra Kiattisak Ponampon (University of Cambridge)

Buddhist Meditative Techniques in S.2585

S.2585 is a significant Dunhuang manuscript, providing various types of Buddhist meditative techniques. Some techniques can be traced back to Central Asia and India, although some techniques seem to have been developed later. I argue that the vision of buddhas that accompanies single-minded contemplation of the navel as described in S.2585 may reflect the idea of a “buddha within” denoting the notions of buddha-nature and *tathāgatagarbha* in some contexts. I also argue that navel contemplation became an important part of Buddhist meditation practice in early Chinese Buddhism.

Chen Liu (University of Hamburg)

Zhijian and his Lecture about Bodhisattva Precepts in Dunhuang in the 10th Century:

An Analysis of S.3424

S.3424 is the second manuscript that related to Zhijian, a 10th century Buddhist monk, who wants to attain Pusa Jie 菩薩戒, Bodhisattva precepts, in Western India. The trace of his journey has been kept in three sets of manuscripts, which I called the “Zhijian manuscripts”. The Zhijian manuscript in Dunhuang, S.3424, related to his teaching of Bodhisattva precepts. The content of S.3424 could be divided into two main aspects: exonerate the crimes 滅罪 and accept and offer the food 受齋. In these rituals, Maitreya and his related keywords has been mentioned many times.

Junfu Wong (University of Cambridge)

Visionary Contemplative Practices in Dunhuang: A Case Study of Manuscript P.3556

Dunhuang manuscript P.3556 preserved an interesting record of visionary contemplative practices on the verso of a manuscript. It contains a name list of 56 nuns who lived in the Dunhuang area in the early 10th century and the results of their two sessions of contemplative practice. Almost half of the nuns claimed “not having seeing anything” (不見) during their contemplation, while the other half had a wide range of experiences, from seeing an object or a person to being participating in a strange event. These results were later graded by someone else with a three-tier ranking system, meaning there was a standard in place for evaluating these experiences. This paper explores the relationship between the visionary practices and the contemplative scriptures once popular in the Dunhuang area to see if we can learn something about this ranking system or whether we can associate these distinct experiences with contemplative scriptures or records.

Duo Xu (University of Hamburg)

The Human-bird Musicians: Kalavinka in Dunhuang

Mural Paintings and Manuscripts from the 6th to the 11th Century

The Kalavinka are cited in Buddhist sutras in a phrase translated as *jialingpinjia* 迦陵頻伽 or *miaoyin niao* 妙音鳥, which in English literally becomes “the exquisite sound bird”; the fine voice of these creatures is thus said to represent the holy Bodhisattvas. In the murals from the Mogao and Yulin sites near Dunhuang from the 6th to 11th centuries CE, the Kalavinka are portrayed as human-headed creatures with birds’ bodies. Further descriptions of Kalavinka can be also observed in the content of Dunhuang manuscripts, such as in P. 2272, P. 2955 and P. 4646. Previous studies have mainly focused on aligning the Kalavinka images with one another, however, and there has been only limited comparison made between the actual Dunhuang Kalavinka images and the evidence for Kalavinka in the Dunhuang manuscripts.

This paper thus aims to trace the transmission of the Kalavinka image to provide a more comprehensive overview of general use of Kalavinka both in images and text in relation to the “Pure Land” mythos prevalent in Dunhuang. To this end, it first analyses the Kalavinka images from the Mogao and Yulin murals, especially those of Kalavinka performing with musical instruments. After this, the descriptions of Kalavinka in the Dunhuang manuscripts are collated and examined in order to explore the particular periods during which Kalavinka appeared in Dunhuang manuscripts. The Kalavinka images and those manuscripts containing Kalavinka are then compared to facilitate a discussion of the images in relation to the textual descriptions in the manuscripts. In this way, this paper aims to direct attention particularly to a specific Kalavinka image found on a Tang dynasty (7th-10th century CE) five-stringed-lute, preserved in Nara Shōsōin in Japan and a Kalavinka-shaped gilded silver object from the Tibetan Tubo period (7th-9th century CE), as well as to compare Kalavinka images across different periods, forms, and locations in medieval times.

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Shutao Wang (University of Hamburg)

The Role of the *Xoštir* in the Turfan Manichaean Communities (8th – 11th Centuries)

The Turfan Manichaean material often mentions some figures titled as *xoštir*, which is an unconfirmed position in the dualistic structure of the Manichaean Church. Some scholars treat the *xoštir* as another term for the “presbyter” (*mahistak* - the third highest level in the basic five-tiered Manichaean hierarchy), while others suppose that the *xoštirs* may refer to certain monks whose status is just higher than the ordinary body of monks. But the specific position and function of the *xoštirs* in the Turfan Manichaean communities are yet to be explored. However, the Uyghur and Sogdian Manichaean letters give important hints about the function of the *xoštirs*, by reflecting the

behaviors of Manichaean community members and their interpersonal relationship. In addition, a confession text, a book illumination, a wall-painting, a group of multi-text *pustaka* documents, and three other texts, together reveal that the *xošturs* may have played a crucial role in the Turfan Manichaean religious and social life. The *xošturs* performed practical functions in communicating between monks and lay believers, and administrating the church affairs, personnel issues, and other community business as well as secular matters. The actual life-style of the *xošturs* was unlikely to obey the strict disciplines of monks, though the *xošturs* may have played an assistant role to the church leaders. In a word, the activities of the *xošturs* were closely connected to the daily operation of the Turfan Manichaean communities, testified by their frequent emergence in Turfan Uyghur and Sogdian Manichaean texts as well as pictures.

Suzanne Burdorf (Ghent University)

“If you read it aloud, it's easy to understand (*dú zhī yì shí* 讀之易識)”: Studying the Networks of Exchangeable Phonophoric Elements in the *Suijīn* 碎金 Dictionary

Ever since the beginning of Chinese historical linguistics, phonosemantic compound characters (*xiéshēngzì* 諧聲字 or *xíngshēngzì* 形聲字) have caught scholars' interest as evidence for the phonological system of Old Chinese (ca. 1000–200 BCE). At the same time, their value for studies on Middle Chinese has been overshadowed by the availability of more explicit sources, such as rime books and rime tables. However, the creation of phonosemantic graphs did not stop at the Han Dynasty. Quite the contrary: many new graphs were created long after sound changes had dramatically affected the spoken language. Moreover, the rise of vernacular literary genres forced scribes to make creative use of the basic components of their (much older) script in order to express this language in a written form. Due to phonological mergers, this did not seldom result in multiple, equally-suited, candidate graphs for one single morpheme or word.

The *Suijin* dictionary, which was preserved in five different manuscripts in Dunhuang, is a case in point. The aim of this dictionary was to provide a spelling for over 400 words that were used on a daily basis in the spoken language, but did not yet have a generally accepted written form. The majority of graphs listed in this work are in fact phonosemantic compounds, and in twenty-five entries we actually find alternative spellings. This paper explores whether network visualization software can help us explain the overlap between different phonophoric components occurring in these entries, and as such may contribute to our understanding of the medieval Chinese writing system.

Jing Feng (University of Cambridge)

Codicological Strata in Dunhuang Codices

People in medieval Dunhuang reused manuscripts in many ways, such as utilising blank pages to write other pieces of texts, using discarded manuscripts to bind other manuscripts, or slicing and

folding them to constitute new manuscripts. The resulting manuscripts are syntheses of textual and material components from different times and usually present miscellaneous appearance and complex codicological strata. Codices discussed in this presentation either contain multiple texts copied by one person or different individuals or encompass fragments of old manuscripts. A study of paratextual elements and physical characteristics of these codices sheds light on the circumstances of their production and use, offers insight into the interpretation of the text and has implications for the social and cultural history of this region during the ninth and tenth centuries. In this presentation, I limit my observations to codices but there is little doubt that similar phenomena also occur in other book forms found in Dunhuang.

Nadine Bregler (University of Hamburg)

Dunhuang Scroll Pelliot Chinois 3812 – Later Handling and Usage

Dunhuang manuscript P.3812 is well suited as a case study due to its good condition and length. Since no colophon is preserved to the poetry anthology written in a good hand on the recto, it is difficult ascertain when and by whom the manuscript was made. The focus of this presentation is to gain a better understanding of the later life of the manuscript. Codicological features as well as the different texts and scribbles in various hands on the recto and verso will be introduced, which reveal much about later users of the scroll. Special attention will be given to several unfinished scribbles in black ink. The position of these seemingly random scribbles in the verso side suggest different methods of using and handling a scroll.