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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Travels of Dunhuang and Turpan Manuscript Books between East and West

Abstract During the ninth to 13th centuries, multiple polities flourished along the Silk Road, and despite political boundaries, the flow of people, goods, and even books continued unabated. Dunhuang manuscripts recovered from the Library Cave record the exchange of books between Dunhuang and the Central Plains, India, and Khotan. Manuscripts excavated from Turpan reflect the travels of books between Xizhou Uyghur and Dunhuang, Sogdiana and other places, and some of the Turpan manuscripts are proven to have been brought from the West. Manichaean and Nestorian manuscripts found in Turpan are mostly codices, which are different from traditional books written in Chinese language. It is certain that the codex, as a book form, originated from the West.

Keywords history of books; Silk Road; East-West exchange; Uyghur; Sogdiana; codex

1 Framing the Question

Books constituted one category of objects that flowed along the Silk Road. As vehicles of religious faith and cultural thought, they often traveled to different regions in the wake of missionaries or monks who journeyed in search of the Dharma. Since sutra copying was regarded as a meritorious deed, religious scriptures also flowed as goods through the process of transcription and circulation. Once a city established an official school, monastery, or church, a library would invariably follow, and the need to augment its holdings further propelled the flow of books. Certain cultural metropolises, for their part, harbored diverse public and private collections as well as collectors, who likewise helped draw books from elsewhere into local repositories.

During the era when the Tang Dynasty (618–907) held sway over a vast expanse of East Asia, the flow of books was relatively unimpeded. In the wake of the Rebellion of An Lushan and Shi Siming 安史之乱, Tang authority declined in the Hexi Corridor and the Tarim Basin, while the Tubo 吐蕃, centered on the Qinghai-Xizang Plateau, and the Uyghurs, based on the Mongolian Plateau, grew in power and once controlled considerable territories. This power

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shift facilitated the flow of Buddhist and Manichaean scriptures. However, by the middle of the ninth century, the three major powers had all lost their hold over the Hexi Corridor and the Western Regions, local forces of diverse ethnic groups emerged, and the traffic along the Silk Road was disrupted to some extent. Around the turn of the ninth and 10th centuries, a number of regional polities gradually took shape amid a series of struggles, among them the Guiyi Army 归义军 (851–1036) at Shazhou Prefecture, the Ganzhou Uyghur (the latter half of the ninth century–1028), the Xizhou Uyghur (866–1283), and Khotan (the mid-ninth century–1006), while in northern China there arose the Liao (Khitan) (907–1125), the Jin (Jurchen) (1115–1234), and the Xixia (Tangut) (1038–1227). West of the Pamirs, the Abbasid Caliphate (750–1258) had begun to disintegrate from the ninth century onward, and within its former domains a succession of polities emerged: the Samanid (874–999), the Ghaznavid (975–1187), the Karakhanid (940–1213), the Seljuk (1037–1194), the Khorezm (c. 1077–1231), and the Qara-Khitai (1124–1218), among others.

Amid such a complex situation of coexisting regional polities, was the flow of books disrupted or even brought to a complete halt? From the scant surviving records, we can glean that those powers controlling different sections of the Silk Road still sought to profit from trade, and for this reason none of them completely closed the routes to traffic. Books, accordingly, continued to flow alongside other goods. Although a given polity's partiality toward a particular religion could impede the spread of other faiths, no single orthodoxy had yet come to dominate the entire realm.

Since Dunhuang and Turpan preserve a substantial corpus of manuscripts dating from the ninth to 13th centuries, they provide a valuable opportunity to examine the flow of books between the East and the West during precisely this period.

2 The Travels of Manuscript Books as Documented in the Dunhuang Manuscripts

In 848, Zhang Yichao 张议潮, a local military leader in Dunhuang, led the local people in expelling the Tubo garrisons, and secured control over the prefectures of Shazhou and Guazhou, which he subsequently submitted to the Tang court. In 851, the Tang court thereupon established the Guiyi Army, appointing Zhang Yichao as its Military Commissioner 节度使. This juncture coincided with a revival of Buddhism under the Tang, while certain Buddhist scriptures preserved in the Dunhuang region were no longer extant in the Central Plains. In 863, the monk Faxin 法信 from the Xiliang region, which fell under Guiyi Army jurisdiction, presented to Emperor Yizong of the Tang 唐懿宗 the *Commentary on the Treatise on the Knowledge of One Hundred Dharmas* 百法论疏 with *Notes* 钞, authored by Cheng'en 乘恩, a monastic scholar 学僧 at Ximing Monastery. Faxin did so upon the expressed wish of Military Commissioner Zhang Yichao. These texts were submitted for thorough examination to the Great Virtuous 大德 versed in the Threefold Training 三学 of the Two Avenues of Chang'an (Buddhist Registry for [Monasteries Situated

along] the Avenues of the Capital 左右街僧录司) and were subsequently deemed suitable for circulation. A detailed account is found in the "Biography of Cheng'en of Ximing Monastery of the Tang Capital" 唐京师西明寺乘恩传 in the sixth chapter of the *Biographies of Eminent Monks Compiled in the Song* 宋高僧传:

> The monk Cheng'en's origins are unknown. He set his mind upon learning, sought out teachers far and wide, and wherever he traveled, he inquired with such thoroughness that he exhausted every avenue of doctrinal inquiry. He often admonished his disciples, saying: "To delight in learning is to draw near to wisdom; to practice diligently is to draw near to benevolence. Once benevolence and wisdom are gradually attained, although the paths may differ, they ultimately lead to the same goal. One's advance toward the Bodhisattva stages will then be as effortless as a pellet of clay rolling downhill." Cheng'en greatly valued those who were diligent in learning and himself never wearied of instructing others. Toward the end of the Tianbao 天宝 era, when warfare broke out in the Guanzhong region, Cheng'en sought refuge in Guzang in the northwest. During his sojourn there, he was impressed that this place, situated close to the lands of the Qiang, nonetheless attached such importance to the study of Buddhist sutras. Cheng'en guided the local monastic community, exhorting and instructing its members, until they became deeply immersed in Chinese Buddhist traditions and applied themselves assiduously to penetrating the meaning of the Buddha's doctrine. Thereupon he composed a new *Commentary on the Treatise on the Knowledge of One Hundred Dharmas* with *Notes*, and the text circulated in the western lands. Cheng'en's *Commentary* took Ci'en 慈恩 as its patriarchal ancestor and Lufu 潞府 as its direct lineage; in content, it was largely identical to them, with little divergence. After Cheng'en's death, his *Commentary* was disseminated by his disciples. Then, in the third lunar month of the fourth year of the Xiantong 咸通 era, the monk Faxin from the Xiliang region, having attained a profound understanding of this field of learning, petitioned Zhang Yichao, the Military Commissioner of the circuit, to present Cheng'en's works to the throne. The court ordered the Great Virtuous versed in the Threefold Training of the Two Avenues of Chang'an to examine them in detail, and they judged the works suitable for circulation. Emperor Yizong approved the petition by imperial decree, whereupon Faxin was bestowed the purple robe and appointed Great Virtuous of the circuit. (Zanning 1987, 128)

Cheng'en was originally a monk of Ximing Monastery in Chang'an. Toward the end of the Tianbao era, fleeing the Rebellion of An Lushan and Shi Siming, he journeyed to Wuwei in the Hexi Corridor and lectured there. His *Commentary on the Treatise on the Knowledge of One Hundred Dharmas* "took Ci'en as its patriarchal ancestor and Lufu as its direct lineage." "Ci'en" and "Lufu" refer, respectively, to Kuiji 窥基 of Ci'en Monastery in Chang'an and his disciple Yizhong 义忠 from Lufu, leading figures in the transmission of the Consciousness-Only school 唯识宗 founded by Xuanzang 玄奘 (Zanning 1987, Ch. 4, 63–66, 77–78). As cited earlier, "In content, it was largely identical to them, with little divergence." Since the

doctrinal purport of Cheng'en's work was largely the same as that of the two great masters of Chang'an, it was promptly approved by the Great Virtuous versed in the Threefold Training of the Two Avenues of Chang'an during the Xiantong era and was subsequently authorized for circulation by imperial decree.

In 866, the "Basic Annals of Emperor Yizong" 懿宗纪 of the *Old History of the Tang* 旧唐书 records that Zhang Yichao further availed himself of the occasion of the Yanqing Festival 延庆节, which had been established for celebrating the birthday of Emperor Yizong, to present to the court four *lian* 联 (an ancient unit of measurement) of green-legged goshawks 青骹鹰 from the Ganjun Mountains, two horses, and two Tubo women. He also dispatched the monk Tanyan 昙延 to offer the *Mahāyāna-Śatadharma-Prakāśamukha-Śāstra* (*Treatise on the Door to the Knowledge of One Hundred Dharmas of Mahāyāna*) 大乘百法门明论 and other Buddhist scriptures (Liu 1975, Ch. 19, 660). A parallel account appears in Chapter 169 of the *Primary Tortoise of the Records Bureau* 册府元龟, in the "Subsection on Receiving Tribute and Offerings" 纳贡献门 of the "Section on Emperors" 帝王部. The sole difference is that the title of the presented text is recorded there as the *Dacheng Baifa Mingmen Lun* 大乘百法明门论, whereas the *Old History of the Tang* gives the title as the *Dacheng Baifa Menming Lun* 大乘百法门明论, with the fifth and sixth characters transposed. This variant reading helps correct the scribal error in the *Old History of the Tang*. The *Mahāyāna-Śatadharma-Prakāśamukha-Śāstra* is a short treatise translated by Xuanzang and constitutes one of the foundational scriptures of the Consciousness-Only school. The books presented by Tanyan were not limited to the *Mahāyāna-Śatadharma-Prakāśamukha-Śāstra*; it is regrettable that no further details of the others have come down to us. However, we do know that during the early period of Tubo rule in Dunhuang, there lived an eminent monk named Tankuang 昙旷, who was himself a master of Consciousness-Only learning. He too had been a monk of Ximing Monastery in Chang'an and authored the *Record of Explaining the Meaning of the Teaching of the Mahāyāna-Śatadharma-Prakāśamukha-Śāstra* 大乘百法明门论开宗义记 and the *Resolution on How to Clarify the Tenets of the Mahāyāna-Śatadharma-Prakāśamukha-Śāstra* 大乘百法明门论开宗义决. Both works survive today in multiple Dunhuang manuscripts (Ueyama 1990, 17–83). It is therefore reasonable to suppose that Tanyan may have sent these two works to the capital together with the *Mahāyāna-Śatadharma-Prakāśamukha-Śāstra*.

Zhang Yichao's presentation of scriptures and commentaries to the Tang court during the Xiantong era was without doubt a contribution to the Tang revival of Buddhism. It also demonstrates that, following the establishment of the Guiyi Army, Buddhist scriptures began to flow between the Hexi region and Chang'an. As the Dunhuang manuscripts reveal, a substantial number of scriptures from the interior subsequently reached Dunhuang.

Here we may cite the example of manuscript S.2659. The recto of this manuscript preserves copies of the *Manichaean Hymnscroll* 摩尼教下部赞 and the first fascicle of the *Karma of the Saṃgha* 僧羯磨, while the verso contains copies of the first fascicle of the *Great Tang Record of the Western Regions* 大唐西域记, the *Eulogies on Rebirth* 往生礼赞文, and the

Confession Liturgy for the Twelve Manifestations of Light 十二光礼忏文.[1] The manuscript of the *Great Tang Record of the Western Regions* was evidently executed upon a rejected sheet of the *Manichaean Hymnscroll*. Like several other practical Buddhist texts on the same sheet, it was written by the same hand, aligned to the top of the columns, and rendered in an inferior calligraphic script. In both content and form, it is clearly not a proper book. At the end of the manuscript appears a single-line colophon:

> One scroll of *Xizhuan ji* 西传记, copied by Śramaṇa Zhiyan's 智严 during his westward journey in search of the Dharma.

The "*Xizhuan ji*" manifestly refers to the copy of the *Great Tang Record of the Western Regions*. This indicates that these texts were made by this very Zhiyan. Manuscript S.5981 bears a colophon left by the same Zhiyan after his pilgrimage to the Mogao Caves and other sacred sites at Shazhou Prefecture. From this colophon, we learn that he was the abbot of the Guanyin Cloister of Kaiyuan Monastery in Fuzhou (present-day Fuxian County, Shaanxi Province), and held the title of Vinaya Great Virtuous of the Provisional (Ordination) Platform 临坛持律大德. In 924, early in the third lunar month, he set out for India in search of the Dharma and arrived at Shazhou Prefecture (Rong 1991, 956–957).

Furthermore, the Shanghai Museum preserves a codex 册子本, cataloged as Shangbo 上博 48 (41379). The 28th chapter in this codex is entitled "The Twelve Double Hours, Universally to Persuade the Four Communities to Practice in Accordance with the Teachings" 十二时普劝四众依教修行. The colophon to this text reads as follows:

> It was the 23rd day of the third lunar month of the second year of the Tongguang 同光 era (924). Zhiyan, a monk whose secular surname was Zhang 张氏, from the Guanyin Cloister at Kaiyuan Monastery in Fuzhou in the Han land of the East, was then journeying westward to India in search of the Dharma. Passing through Shazhou Prefecture, he took up residence for one or two months at Longguang [Longxing] Monastery, where he expounded the scriptures and preached the Dharma. He left behind the text of "The Twelve Double Hours, Universally to Persuade the Four Communities to Practice in Accordance with the Teachings" for the instruction of the local monastic community, and thereafter continued on his journey westward. Later, this text was copied and recopied through successive transmissions and thus came to circulate in the world. (SCCPH & SM 1993, 39–40)[2]

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[1] For a brief description and plates of this manuscript, see the *Three Early Editions of the Great Tang Record of the Western Regions* 大唐西域记古本三种 (Xuanzang 1981); *Dunhuang Manuscripts in British Collections (Chinese Texts Other than Buddhist Scriptures)* 英藏敦煌文献 (汉文佛经以外部分) (IH, CASS 1991, Vol. 4, 143–176).

[2] For further details, see Rong Xinjiang's 荣新江 book review titled "Dunhuang-Turpan Manuscripts Collected in the Shanghai Museum (Vols. 1–2)" 上海博物馆藏敦煌吐鲁番文献 (Rong 1995, 374–375).

From this account, we know that his secular surname was Zhang and that, as he passed through Dunhuang on his westward journey to India in search of the Dharma, he left behind the text of "The Twelve Double Hours, Universally to Persuade the Four Communities to Practice in Accordance with the Teachings," which he had composed, to the local Buddhist community. We may surmise that the first fascicle of the *Great Tang Record of the Western Regions* on the manuscript S.2659 was the very copy he had brought with him from the Guanzhong region as a travel guide and ultimately left behind at Dunhuang. This furnishes us with a vivid instance of books flowing from the Central Plains to Dunhuang.

There is also the Dunhuang manuscript P.5538. Its verso, lines 9–87, contains a bilingual Sanskrit-Khotanese phrasebook comprising 171 phrases or lexical items, each rendered first in Sanskrit and immediately followed by its Khotanese translation. A selection of passages is cited below translated into English:

A. 4 Whence have you come?
5 I have come from Khotan.
6 When did you come from India?
7 Two years ago.
8 Where did you stay in Khotan?
9 I stayed in a sanghārāma.
B. 13 Now where are you going?
14 I am going to China.
15 What is your business in China?
16 I shall see the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī.
17 When will you return here?
18 I shall see China and afterwards return.
C. 26 Have you books or not?
27 I have some.
28 [*Skt. adds*: What is the book?] Sūtra, Abhidharma, Vinaya, Vajrayāna 金刚乘? Among these what book is there?
29 Which book do you like?
30 I like Vajrayāna. Please teach it. (Bailey 1938, 528–529; Kumamoto 1988, 58–61)

This must have been a bilingual phrasebook used by a Sanskrit-speaking monk journeying from India through Khotan to Wutai Mountain in the Central Plains on a pilgrimage. His native tongue was Sanskrit; hence he would first write out in Sanskrit the sentences he anticipated needing to utter, and then have someone conversant in Khotanese render them into Khotanese. Since both languages were written in the Brāhmī script, he could consult the Sanskrit text for its meaning while pronouncing the Khotanese. In this way, as he passed through Khotan, Dunhuang, and other regions where Khotanese served as a lingua franca, he could introduce his place of origin, his lodging, his purpose of travel, and other pertinent

details. It is particularly noteworthy that he mentions carrying Indian Buddhist scriptures, above all, Vajrayāna texts.

We have not beheld the Vajrayāna texts that this Indian monk brought with him. Fortunately, however, among the Khotanese texts preserved in the Dunhuang Library Cave, a complete copy of the *Jātakastava* (*Praise of the Buddha's Former Births*) has been discovered, which can be firmly identified as having been carried from Khotan to Dunhuang. Designated Ch.00274 (newly cataloged as IOL Khot 74/3), this palm-leaf manuscript consists of 39 folios, written on both recto and verso, with four lines on each side. It is written in Late Khotanese verse, with every four lines forming a stanza; altogether it comprises 169 stanzas, grouped into 51 *jātaka* stories. The preface to this collection of verses declares:

> Humbly I invited, with faith [and] in love, the great knower of the tripitakas, in the Sāmanyā congregation, namely, Vedyaśīlä by name, [a man] like Ācāryadeva, skilled in phrasings like the [clever] fisherman in the water. "Deign therefore now to translate for me, O gracious one, in love of bodhi, for the transferring of merits, with a view to the good of Śrī Vīśa' Śūrrä, the great king, that therefrom in the country diseases and calamities may cease." (Dresden 1955, 422)

Judging by its contents, the majority of the *jātaka* stories recounted in this *Jātakastava* collection have parallel versions in Sanskrit, Tibetan text, and Chinese, with a small number finding no known counterparts elsewhere. Therefore, the work as a whole is not a translation but rather a compilation produced by the Khotanese themselves. According to the preface, the compiler of the collection was Vedyaśīlä, the great knower of the tripitakas from the Sāmanyā Monastery in Khotan. This monastery is none other than the monastery referred to as "The King's New Monastery" 王新寺 in Faxian's 法显 *Record of Buddhist Kingdoms* 佛国记, the "Sāmanyā Saṅghārāma" in Xuanzang's *Great Tang Record of the Western Regions*, and the Sum-nya Monastery in the Tibetan text *Li-Yul Lung-Bstan-Pa* (*Prophecy of Khotan*) (Zhang & Rong 2008, 232–233).[3] The phrase "Humbly I" refers to the patron Zhang Jinshan 张金山 (Khot. *Cā Kīmä-śanä*), a minister of Khotan who had previously traveled on a diplomatic mission to Dunhuang. This manuscript may well have been brought to Dunhuang by him in person. This constitutes the most compelling instance of a Khotanese Buddhist scripture transmitted from the Khotanese homeland to Dunhuang. In fact, it is highly probable that among the Khotanese Buddhist scriptures, medical treatises, and literary works discovered in the Dunhuang Library Cave, there are still others that were brought from Khotan rather than copied locally at Dunhuang.

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[3] See *A Gazetteer of the Buddhist Monasteries and Temples of Khotan* 于阗佛寺志 co-authored by Zhang Guangda 张广达 and Rong Xinjiang which was originally published in Issue 3 of the *Studies in World Religions* 世界宗教研究 in 1986, and was later included in the *Miscellaneous Studies on the History of Khotan (Revised Edition)* 于阗史丛考（增订本）.

3 The Travels of Manuscript Books as Documented in the Turpan Manuscripts

The flow of manuscript books between the Xizhou Uyghur and the regions to its east and west is likewise attested by a number of materials.

One Dunhuang document now held in the British Museum, designated Ch.00207, bears on its recto the "Record of the Benefactions Made by Guiyi Army Military Commissioner Cao Yuanzhong and His Wife, Dated the Fourth Year of the Qiande Era of the Song Dynasty (966)" 宋乾德四年归义军节度使曹元忠夫妇修功德记. The relevant passage is excerpted below:

> Great Song Dynasty, the fourth year of Qiande, a year with the cyclical signs of *Bingyin* 丙寅, the fifth lunar month, the ninth day. His Excellency Cao Yuanzhong 曹元忠, Military Commissioner of the Guiyi Army, specially appointed supplementary Grand Preceptor 检校太师, and President of the Council 中书令, Overlord of Cao Yuanzhong, and his wife entitled by Imperial Command "Lady of the Country of Liang" 凉国夫人, born of the Zhai family 翟氏 of the city of Xunyang, in order to observe the month of fasting retreated to these magical caves … They also asked several priests and laymen to select 24 tablets ... □□□. Then His Excellency in the cave copied out the *Great Sūtra of Buddha's Names* 大佛名经 and dividing it up into parts, sent one part each to some 17 temples, and detaching a further part sent it to Xizhou Prefecture in pursuance of a vow that he had made in connection with the worship of the *Buddha's Names*. (Jin 1983, 10)[4]

This passage explicitly records that Cao Yuanzhong (who held power from 947 to 974), Military Commissioner of the Guiyi Army at Shazhou Prefecture, when commissioning the copying of the *Sutra of the Buddha's Names*, had a copy specially prepared for the Xizhou Uyghur and dispatched an envoy to deliver it, in order to supply the *Sutra of the Buddha's Names* that was wanting in the Xizhou Uyghur *Tripitaka* (*Classic of the Great Storehouses*) 大藏经. This indicates that the Xizhou Uyghur had previously solicited scriptures from Shazhou Prefecture and that the Shazhou Prefecture authorities were consequently aware of the absence of the *Sutra of the Buddha's Names* from the Xizhou Uyghur's collection. This constitutes a particularly compelling instance of Chinese Buddhist scriptures being transmitted from Dunhuang to Turpan.

A Uyghur Buddhist scripture manuscript discovered by the German expedition at the ruined city of Jiaohe in Turpan (T II Y 21) (Bang & von Gabain 1931, 20–36) was identified by Kudara Kōgi as a translation of the *Profound Praise of the Lotus Sutra* 法华玄赞 (Kudara 1980, 49–65). On the first folio of this Uyghur manuscript, a phrase wholly unrelated to the content of the main text is inscribed: bo šačiu bägdä-si ol ("This is paper from Shazhou Prefecture") (Bang & von Gabain 1931, 20–21). This inscription indicates that the manuscript was written on paper brought from Dunhuang. Kudara further surmises that the translator of

[4] For complete plates of the manuscript, see *The Art of Central Asia: The Stein Collection in the British Museum II* (Whitfield 1983, fig. 84); for an English translation, see *A Catalogue of Paintings Recovered from Tun-Huang by Sir Aurel Stein* (Waley 1931, 316–319).

the *Profound Praise of the Lotus Sutra* was, in all likelihood, the very same eminent monk who rendered the Chinese *Suvarṇaprabhāsottama-Sūtra* (*Sutra of Golden Light*) 金光明最胜王经, the *Biography of the Tripitaka Master of the Great Ci'en Monastery of the Great Tang* 大慈恩寺三藏法师传, and other works into Uyghur. This monk was Šïngqo Säli Tutung, who hailed from Bešbalïq (i.e., Beiting) (Kudara 1983, 200–210; 1988, 50–51). According to scholarly research, his period of activity falls between the late 10th and early 11th centuries (Zieme 1976, 767–775). The manuscript of the *Profound Praise of the Lotus Sutra* can therefore reasonably be dated to approximately the same period. At Turpan, instances have also been found in which the verso of an official Dunhuang document was reused for the transcription of a Uyghur Buddhist scripture (Thilo 1968; Yamamoto & Dohi 1984, 155–157). The document in question is the "Register of Households and Allotted Lands of Shazhou Prefecture for the Third Year of the Duangong Era (990)" 端拱三年沙州户口受田簿. This demonstrates that the Xizhou Uyghur also imported paper from Dunhuang specifically for the purpose of copying Buddhist scriptures.

As for the connections between the Xizhou Uyghur and the regions to its west, particularly those beyond the Pamirs, our knowledge has until now remained rather limited. The "Fan and Yi" 蕃夷 of the *Draft Recovered Edition of the Essential Documents and Regulations of the Song* 宋会要辑稿 notes that the Küsän Uyghur "had their Grand Councilor clad in garments of variegated brocade from the Country of Dashi" (Xu 1957, Ch. 197, 7720). At this time, the Küsän Uyghur was subordinate to the Xizhou Uyghur, a fact that points to the material and cultural intercourse between the Xizhou Uyghurs and the Country of Dashi to their west. The Muslim writer Gardīzī, in his *Zayn al-Akhbār* (*The Ornament of History*), completed in 1050, records the Toquz Oghuz (i.e., the Xizhou Uyghur): "The Khagan resided in a palace of low buildings. Felt was spread over [the floors], while the exteriors of the buildings were draped with Muslim textiles, and Chinese brocade was laid over the felt" (Bartold 2016, 586). This attests to the use of Muslim textiles at the court of the Gaochang Uyghur (i.e., the Xizhou Uyghur).

In recent years, through the dedicated efforts of Yoshida Yutaka and others, a number of fragmentary records have been retrieved from the Turpan manuscripts, gradually bringing this previously obscure history to light. According to Yoshida's decipherment, the Sogdian document Ch/U 6879, excavated at Turpan and now held in the German collection, is an account dating from the ninth to 10th centuries, recording expenditures on cotton cloth supplied to the elect and members of the lower grade of the Manichaean church. Among other items, it lists "three (pieces of) cotton cloth of Yanqi" and "... cotton cloth of Sogdiana," indicating that the cotton cloth furnished to the Manichaeans in the Gaochang region was procured in part from Yanqi on the southern route of Tianshan Mountains and in part from the much more distant region of Sogdiana in Central Asia (Yoshida 2017, 114–117).

A Uyghur document unearthed at Turpan and now held in the German collection, Ch/U 3917, mentions that an agent of a high-ranking Manichaean cleric, Mar Yigi Bulaq, was engaged in trade that included the trafficking of slaves. This mercantile group, centered on

Xizhou, had established a trade network encompassing Yanqi and Küsän along the southern route of Tianshan Mountains, as well as Yaghma and Talas on the northern foothills of Tianshan Mountains. The network appears to have been active during the early or flourishing period of the Xizhou Uyghur, roughly from the ninth to 11th centuries (Moriyasu 2015; 2019, 171–174; Zieme 1977). It is thus evident that the commercial reach of the Xizhou Uyghur Manichaean community extended as far as the western Tianshan region, where it engaged in the slave trade with local Turkic tribes. This activity broadly coincided with the large-scale slave trade conducted by the Ghaznavid Dynasty in Central Asia along the Silk Road.

It was precisely through such commercial exchanges between the Gaochang Uyghur and the Islamic world beyond the Pamirs that Muslim textiles have been excavated in the Turpan region. The Ōtani Expedition discovered two textile fragments in Turpan bearing decorative Arabic script and Islamic motifs (Sakamoto 2004, 297–302).

With regard to the circulation of books as vehicles of thought and culture, new material evidence also sheds light on exchanges between the Gaochang Uyghur and the Transoxiana region.

The Sogdian fragments LM20-1552-23, now preserved in the Lüshun Museum, and So 11500 and So 20226, unearthed at Turpan and now held in the German collection, originally belonged to a single letter. This letter explicitly mentions Samar[kand], and its content indicates that it was sent by Manichaeans in Samarkand, the central city of Sogdiana, to the Khagan of the Gaochang Uyghur (Benkato 2018, 29; Yoshida 2019, 37–38).

The two Manichaean letters in New Persian preserved in the German collection were dated by Walter Bruno Henning and Werner Sundermann to a period before 880 (Durkin-Meisterernst 2015, 245–256; Henning 1936; Sundermann 1984, 289–316; 2007, 403–422). However, Yoshida has argued on the basis of their contents and the recto-verso relationship of the manuscripts that they should instead be assigned to the 10th century, the period to which the great majority of the Manichaean texts from Gaochang belong. The contents of these letters should be interpreted as recording that a možak (teacher) named Māhdād came from Samarkand to Gaochang to replace a možak named Mihrīzad (Yoshida 2019, 38–41).

In 1980, three Sogdian letters were unearthed from the Bezeklik Caves in Turpan. Two of them (designated A and B) were sent by the aftāδān (bishop) serving the Manichaean community centered on Gaochang to the community's možak seated in the city of Gaochang. This možak, named Mār Aryāmān Puhr, was at that time the supreme leader of the Manichaean community within the Gaochang Uyghur. According to the organizational structure of the Manichaean community, there were only 12 možaks in the entire world. As recorded in the "five grades" of the Manichaean hierarchy in *The Compendium of the Doctrines and Styles of the Teaching of Mani, the Buddha of Light* 摩尼光佛教法仪略, it is stated: "the 12 možaks when interpreted means 'attendant of the Law and teacher of the Way'" (Lin 1997, 285). The second letter (designated B) was sent from a city called Tūdh (*twδ-kδ*), which Yoshida identifies with Tūnkath (*twnkθ*) recorded in the Arabic bibliographic work *Kitab*

al-Fihrist (*The Book Catalog*), an encyclopedic guide to the knowledge of the author's time compiled by the Arab scholar al-Nadīm in 988. Located in the vicinity of Samarkand, the city was a place where Manichaeans in Central Asia congregated in considerable numbers during the 10th century. The letter, which should be dated to the early 11th century, demonstrates that the Manichaean church in Samarkand, Central Asia, was subordinate to the Manichaean community centered on Gaochang. The supreme leader of this community, the možak, was normally seated in a monastery at the heart of Gaochang (designated K), situated south of the Uyghur Khagan's palace city (designated E, now known as the Khan's Fortress). The Bezeklik Caves (known in the Tang Dynasty as Ningrong Cave Temple), located directly north of the city of Gaochang, constituted a monastery under the patronage of the Uyghur royal family, and they also included caves specifically dedicated to a Manichaean možak. These letters were in fact left behind when the možak came to the Ningrong Caves to perform religious services (Yoshida 2017, 120–123; 2019, 34–36).

This letter was sent from Samarkand by the Manichaean aftāδān, Mānī Wahman, to the možak to extend his greetings during the month of fasting. It is replete with pious formulas. Of particular interest is his description of the religious life of the local Manichaeans during the month of fasting at the end and beginning of the year. Some among them, he recounts, "chanted four hymns, repeatedly recited and sang 20 precepts and three hundred poems, and reverently perused the sacred scripture, the *Shābuhragān* (*Dedicated to Šābuhr*)"; others "twice chanted, in the Sogdian tongue, a hymn called 'Without-fault,' and repeatedly recited and sang 40 precepts and three hundred poems" (Yoshida 2000, 3–199; 2019, 156–188). This suggests that the Manichaeans of Sogdiana and Gaochang shared a common religious life, and that the exchanges between the two communities were both frequent and close.

4 Western Books Discovered at Turpan

It is noteworthy that the materials discussed above mention a considerable quantity of Manichaean works, hymns, precepts, and so forth, which intimates that these texts may likewise have circulated between the two regions. For instance, the *Shābuhragān* has been discovered at Turpan in both Middle Persian and Sogdian versions (Hutter 1992; MacKenzie 1979; 1980).

Yoshida has further surmised from this that certain Manichaean texts in Middle Persian and New Persian unearthed at Turpan were very likely brought from Samarkand to Gaochang. For example, the Middle Persian document Kao. 0111 (Or. 12452D/3), collected by Aurel Stein at the ruined Manichaean temple designated K, preserves two lines of text together with a painting on the recto, while the verso retains the remains of 11 lines from a folio originally copied in double columns (Gulácsi, Sims-Williams & Sundermann 2006). Since the material is leather (i.e., parchment), Stein surmises that this manuscript came from the West (Stein 1928, 594). Yoshida, for his part, surmises that this fragment originated from Samarkand (Yoshida 2017, 123–124).

Ursula Sims-Williams points out that two other Manichaean parchment manuscripts were

unearthed at Turpan. One is a double-sheet Sogdian fragment of the Manichaean cosmology, published as M 178 (MIK III 4990) and held in the Museum of Asian Art, Berlin (Boyce 1960, 143; Henning 1948); the other is a Bactrian Manichaean fragment, published as M 1224 and held in the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (Boyce 1960, 69). She further notes that three other parchment fragments unearthed at Turpan (MIK III 6268, 6267, 7048) are bookbindings (Figure 1) and should likewise derive from Manichaean manuscripts. Zsuzsanna Gulácsi provides a detailed account of the relationship between these three covers and the folios of Manichaean codices (Gulácsi 2001, 156–159). As a general rule, since these covers were brought from the West, the original book blocks they once enclosed, whether composed of paper or parchment folios, should likewise have come from the West. However, the folios themselves have either been lost or have not yet been identified.

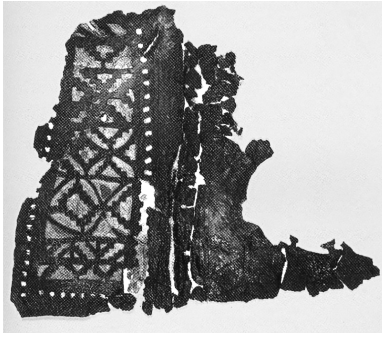

Figure 1 MIK III 6268

The Western codex was generally made of parchment. It first appeared in 85, had become widespread by the third and fourth centuries, and by the fifth century had completely supplanted the scroll-binding in the West. In terms of its production, after the text had been transcribed, the parchment sheets were folded once or twice to form a gathering, so that writing appeared on both sides of the folios. The codex was often furnished with a cover to protect the text. For ease of reference, foliation or pagination was added, enabling readers to locate relevant content quickly. The prevalence of the codex in the West was connected with the spread of Christianity.[5] The Manichaean and Christian manuscripts unearthed at Turpan bear a particularly close resemblance to the appearance of the East Syriac Church's manuscripts. William Henry Paine Hatch's *An Album of Dated Syriac Manuscripts* provides plates of manuscripts from 411 to the end of the 16th century (Hatch 1946), which can offer a useful basis for comparison with the Turpan manuscripts.

In fact, the surviving Manichaean scriptural texts in Middle Persian and Parthian, written in the Manichaean script and unearthed at Turpan, conform closely to the Western tradition

[5] On the origin and evolution of the Western codex, see *The Birth of the Codex* by Colin Henderson Roberts and Theodore Cressy Skeat in 1983; for the Chinese translation of this book, see the Chinese version by Gao Fengfeng 高峰枫 (Roberts & Skeat 2015), together with the introduction to the Chinese translation. For a detailed discussion of the codex, see the *Books before Print* (Kwakkel 2018).

in terms of their book format.[6] These texts generally take the form of codices, with writing on both sides of the folios; individual pages may be laid out in a single column, two columns, or four columns. Titles are often executed in red decorative lettering in the top margin. The codices as a whole are exceedingly refined, produced by professional scribes, and some are furnished with exquisite illustrations. We may cite several representative examples below.

The fragments numbered M 1001–1031, together with M 308 and M 6120, belong to one and the same manuscript, which contains a Middle Persian prose text dealing with Manichaean cosmology. The manuscript is in codex form, with writing on both recto and verso and three or four columns per page, the majority having four columns (Sundermann 1973).

M 2 consists of two parts. The first part preserves a Middle Persian Manichaean text on missionary history, comprising records of the chief Manichaean missionary Adda's journey to the West and of another missionary Ammo's journey to the East to propagate the religion (Sundermann 1981). The second part contains a Parthian Manichaean prose text in codex form, with writing on both recto and verso. Each page is divided into two columns, with 37 lines in each column, and a title is written in decorative lettering in the top margin. The original manuscript has been lost, but high-quality photographs of it are preserved in Göttingen.

The recto of M 4 contains Parthian Manichaean hymns, preserving the opening verses of groups of hymns, including the *Body-Soul Hymns*. The manuscript is in codex form, with each page measuring 15 × 12.5 cm (Figure 2). Each page is written in a single column of 23 lines. The text on the two facing pages is consecutive, with two binding holes clearly visible in the middle of the facing pages, one above the other (Boyce 1960, 2; Sundermann 1996, 7–8). The verso bears remnant text of Middle Persian Manichaean hymns, including hymns of supplication, with invocation of angels; its format is wholly identical to that of the recto (Boyce 1960, 2; Sundermann 1996, 9–10).

Figure 2 M 4

[6] Jean-Pierre Drège has noted the format of the *Jingjiao* 景教 and Manichaean codices unearthed at Turpan, surmising that the appearance of the codex in the Chinese world may be connected with the eastward transmission of Manichaeism or Christianity (Drège 2014, 376; 2018, 27–28). Feng Jing 冯婧 has drawn attention to the non-Chinese cultural attributes of the *Jingjiao* and Manichaean codices from Turpan, though without investigating their origins in depth (Feng 2022, 90–94).

M 40 is a Parthian fragment of Mani's psalms in codex form, written on both recto and verso, with the lower part damaged; each side preserves 11 lines. The top margin bears a title, decorated with red designs and dotted-line ornamentation, while the main text is flanked by red ruled lines on either side (Durkin-Meisterernst & Morano 2010).

The script and binding formats of these Manichaean scriptures likewise conform entirely to the system of Western books, distinct from the scroll-binding of Buddhist scriptures produced by the contemporary Buddhist community at Gaochang. They therefore represent a book-making tradition originating in the West as well. These book forms differ markedly from the traditional Chinese scroll-binding book and can be affirmed to be of Western provenance. Yet since the paper has not been subjected to physical analysis and very few contemporaneous Western papers are available for corroboration, it remains difficult to determine precisely where these manuscripts were written down. Based on my firsthand examination of manuscripts of this kind in Berlin and elsewhere, I have observed that these Middle Persian and Parthian Manichaean scriptures were all written on paper of superior quality, with remarkably regular laid lines 帘纹, wholly unlike the paper used for ordinary manuscripts in the Gaochang Uyghur at the time. Some specialists in Iranian languages maintain that this fine paper came from the Central Plains of China. However, even among the Buddhist scriptures and official and private documents produced during the Guiyi Army period at Dunhuang, east of Gaochang, paper of comparable quality is seldom encountered. It is therefore highly probable that the paper came from the West. We know that Samarkand was the site of the first paper-making workshop established in the Islamic world after the Battle of Talas River, and that the region had a long tradition of paper-making. From the latter half of the eighth century through the 10th century, it had already accumulated centuries of experience in paper-making and was fully capable of producing paper of the finest quality. Nonetheless, this question requires further material analysis of the original manuscripts before any definitive conclusion can be reached.

Among the Manichaean texts unearthed from Turpan, there are indeed some that were written on the verso of Chinese Buddhist scriptures. For instance, M 111 has a Chinese Buddhist scriptural text on the recto; later adherents of Manichaeism folded the Chinese Buddhist scripture manuscript vertically in half to fashion a codex, writing a single column on each page. One page bears a comparative glossary of Manichaean technical terms in Middle Persian or Parthian and Sogdian (Boyce 1960, 10; Weber 2000, 22–23), while another page carries Manichaean hymns written in Manichaean-Uyghur script (Boyce 1960, 10; Sundermann 1985, 58–60, pl. XXXIV; Wilkens 2000, 303–304). Since these texts contain Sogdian and especially Uyghur elements, they should be regarded as relatively late productions, evidently written locally at Gaochang. Some manuscripts also preserve their original find numbers, indicating that they were unearthed at Tuyugou. For example, M 7351 originally bore the number T II T a, showing that it came from the caves at Tuyugou. The Chinese text, now designated as the verso, but actually the recto, is a section of the fourth fascicle of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-Sūtra* (*Lotus Sutra*), written in carefully executed regular

script. It should be a Tang-period manuscript, earlier than the Manichaean text. However, this scroll was cut in half down the middle, and the verso (now designated as the recto) was used for writing Middle Persian hymns for the installation of a missionary. The writing is arranged in several groups of lines in different hands, irregularly set and spaced (Boyce 1960, 131). This is clearly a later text, distinct from the early Manichaean manuscripts. Werner Sundermann has systematically examined the overall corpus of Manichaean texts from Turpan held in the German collection. He has pointed out that, compared with the early Manichaean manuscripts unearthed at the ruined Manichaean temple designated *α* within the city of Gaochang, the Manichaean manuscripts from Tuyugou should postdate the Uyghur administration of Gaochang in 840. Some were written on the verso of Chinese Buddhist scripture manuscripts, leading him to suggest that these texts may even date to after 1000 (Sundermann 1991, 286–288).

Among the East Syriac Christianity manuscripts (known in China as *Jingjiao*) unearthed at Turpan, there are also some that were transmitted from the West. Erica C. D. Hunter, who cataloged the Syriac manuscripts, identifies the manuscript designated B-26 (MIK III 45) as a Syriac service-book (known as *Ḥuḏrā*, literally meaning "cycle" 轮) and observes that it is a codex that originally comprised 200 folios, of which 61 are now extant, with the binding cords still preserved along the margins. Judging from its content and script, it should be regarded as a codex transmitted from the West. According to radiocarbon dating of the paper, it was copied between 771 and 884. Hunter argues that, on the basis of the missionary history of the East Syriac Church, it may well have come from Merv in Central Asia; from the sixth century onward, Merv served as the easternmost diocese of the East Syriac Church and as a springboard for its further eastward expansion (Hunter & Coakley 2017, 11–16).

Among the Syriac Christianity manuscripts unearthed at Turpan, a considerable number are likewise in codex form (Hunter & Dickens 2014), their format identical to the Western tradition and distinct from that of Chinese manuscripts; among these, too, there should be texts that were transmitted from the West. As for the Christian texts in Sogdian and Uyghur written in Syriac script, they may well have been produced by local believers.

In sum, although the lands along the Silk Road were home to multiple coexisting polities from the ninth to 13th centuries, and warfare among them was by no means infrequent, the flow of people, goods, and indeed books was never entirely severed. We have adduced a number of illustrative cases from the Dunhuang and Turpan manuscripts to demonstrate this, yet the evidence warrants further investigation.

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