Searching for the Dharma, Finding Salvation – Buddhist Pilgrimage in Time and Space

Proceedings of the Workshop
"Buddhist Pilgrimage in History and Present Times"
at the Lumbini International Research Institute (LIRI),
Lumbini, 11 - 13 January 2010

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LUMBINI INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

2014

LIRI Seminar
Proceedings Series

Edited by

LUMBINI INTERNATIONAL
RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Volume 5

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Lumbini International Research Institute
Lumbini 2014

Cover photo: Buddhist monks from Amnye Machen on pilgrimage
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BUDDHIST PILGRIMAGE – AN INTRODUCTION

MAX DEEG

> *I'm a traveler, a pilgrim.*
> *No one can hold or stop me,*
> *not the bonds of joys and sorrows,*
> *not the room I live in.*
> *My load of cares pulls me down;*
> *it too will be torn loose, will fall away.*

(Rabindranath Tagore)[1]

Pilgrimage clearly is in. And this is not only true in the sense of a recent global "touristisation" of religiously, or otherwise ideologically relevant or inspired travelling (due to faster modern means of transportation and improved infrastructure and a "re-enchantment" of the world – as is demonstrated by the interest shown in the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in Europe[2]), but also in other places[3] and ways. The increased interest is also observable in the academic discourse about pilgrimage in the modern world and in the past, which becomes evident through the publications, general and specialized, on specific religious traditions or historical periods, as well as the sociological and anthropological interpretation of pilgrimage, and even on the blurred boundaries of the sacred and the profane in modern "pilgrimages" that have been published in the last two decades or so[4]. Even Anglican Christian theologians, themselves belonging to a religious tradition that did not really involve pilgrimage as a religious practice, made it a subject of theological reflection[5].

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1   Tagore 2002: 117.
2   See, for instance, popular publications on Christian pilgrimage like Harpur 2002, or on major pilgrimage sites in different religious traditions, Westwood 2002.
3   Cp. the articles in Eade, Sallnow 1991; see also Hopper 2002.
4   See e.g. the comprehensive encyclopedia edited by Davidson & Gitlitz 2002. Examples for mostly anthropological and regional studies of pilgrimage are Crumrine, Morinis 1991.
5   Bartholomew, Llewelyn 2004; although the editors acknowledge pilgrimage as a transreligious phenomenon their definition at the beginning of the introductory chapter clearly emphasis their monotheistic and spiritual point of view: "Pilgrimage is a journey to a special and holy place as a way of making an impact on one's life with the revelation of God associated with that place." (p.xii) The editors emphasise that the book was motivated by a lack of "theological analysis" in the face of the growing interest in pilgrimage (p.xiv). Another theological attempt to redefine pilgrimage in a protestant context is Post, Pieper, Van Uden 1998. Another aspect of pilgrimage

Indeed, scholars concerned with pilgrimage more generally acknowledge the fact that it is a trans-religious phenomenon.

Although not reflecting the same degree of increase in publications on pilgrimage as in the Christian context[6], Buddhist Studies has also produced a decent amount of work on pilgrimage[7] and connected topics, such as sacred topography, relic cult, etc. A recent exhibition (and catalogue) on Buddhism and pilgrimage in a trans-traditional context[8] shows that this tradition is no exception when it comes to the importance of pilgrimage in its religious practice. The present collection of articles, resulting from a conference held at one of the most auspicious and sacred sites of Buddhism, Lumbinī, will certainly contribute some more facets to the enquiry into Buddhist pilgrimage by bringing together both specific expertise and general discourse on the topic.

Pilgrimage is a powerful concept and metaphor, not only in the Western world, but also - as the first stanza from a poem by the famous Bengal poet and Nobel laureate, Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) quoted above illustrates - in other cultures. Images and symbols of pilgrimage have influenced masterpieces of world literature[9] and shaped whole literary genres. Its metaphorical usages include individual quests of a spiritual nature ('life as a pilgrimage'[10]) or the forging of communal identities. Its pragmatic usages include the gaining, or preservation, of social status, as is the case of the ḥājj or Catholic "Wallfahrt", as well as, once again, broader communal functions, which may have ideological and/or political – in some cases even extremist[11] – undertones. The metaphorical use of pilgrimage to express the fundamental, existential, journey of life towards a soteriological goal is clearly the one that Tagore intended when writing his poem. An example of the communal

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is – one is tempted to say – gender, but there has been remarkably little work done concentrating on this aspect: see e.g. on women's pilgrimage in late Medieval Christianity Craig 2009, and on modern Greek pilgrimage Dubisch 1995.

6   To name just a few publications: Nolan, Nolan 1992; Coleman, Elsner 2003 (see others in the bibliography).

7   This is especially true for Japanese pilgrimage (see, e.g., Davies 1983 & 1984; Drummond 2007; MacWilliams 1995 & 2000, Moerman 2005, Reader 2005; Rodríguez del Alisal, Ackermann, Martinez 2007, Nicholoff 2008), and Tibetan pilgrimage: see e.g. the work of Toni Huber (Huber 1999a & b, 2003, 2008), Dowman 1988, and the article by Katia Buffetrille in this volume.

8   Proser 2010.

9   On a comparison of Dante's *Divina comedia* and the Chinese Ming novel Xiyou-ji 西遊記, "Record of the Journey to the West" (popularized in the West by Arthur Waley's *Monkey*), see Yu 1983.

10 See, for instance, in the title of the the the autobiography of the Chinese monk Zhenhua 真華 (1922-): Mair, Yü 1992 (the original Chinese *Canxue suotan* 參學瑣談 has no connotation to pilgrimage; the title of the German translation, "Zhenhua – Lehr- und Wanderjahre eines chinesischen Mönches", draws on the literary motif of Goethe's educational novel "Wilhelm Meister": Günzel 2000). Applied for the biography of the missionary-scholar, James Legge by Girardot who seems to have in mind the luminal aspect of pilgrimage when he calls Legge's life story a "transcultural pilgrimage" (2002: xxvii).

11 For instance, in the case of Devi 1958 it is Aryan-Nazi ideology.

function is, for instance, reflected in the saying "Europe is born on pilgrimage, and Christianity is her native tongue."[12], which is attributed to the German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832, though it is still to be found, however, in his published writings). In a public context, the borders between the political and the religious aspects of pilgrimage may become blurred; for example, in the case in the mausoleum of chairman Mao Zedong 毛澤東 (1893-1976)[13].

It must be asked, however, if the opening of the term pilgrimage in academic discourse to the analysis of all kinds of travelling to 'special places' (such as football stadiums, residences of living or deceased celebrities)[14] will do it any favours. The Christocentric nature of the term pilgrimage has led to a critical refusal to adopt it in other religious contexts, as has been pointed out, in the context of possible continuity between Graeco-Roman and Late Antique Christian pilgrimage, by Elsner and Rutherford who state: "... the denial of the term pilgrimage (over)emphasizes difference (and hence change), while its employment (over-)emphasizes similarity and hence continuity."[15] My impression is rather that the opposite is true: we find a very wide and loose use of the term for all kinds of different phenomena by sociologists and some anthropologists[16]. I therefore am rather hesitant to yield the power of definition and application of the term to either "believers" or theoreticians only, and stride the middle way of keeping pilgrimage in the sphere of religion as a communal and socially-constructed category.

The papers in the present volume focus on the observable and traceable aspects of pilgrimage in mainly, but not exclusively Buddhist Asia (see James Hegarty's article on Hindu pilgrimage, which features Buddhists, but only as characters in Hindu pilgrimage narratives). They are the result of a workshop on Buddhist pilgrimage

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12 "Europa ist auf der Pilgerschaft geboren, und das Christentum ist seine Muttersprache."
13 See the contribution of Rudolf G. Wagner, "Reading the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall in Peking: The Tribulations of the Implied Pilgrim", in Naquin, Yü 1992: 378-423. For another example of an entanglement of religious and political aspects of pilgrimage (Taiwan-South China) see Hatfield 2010.
14 See, for instance, most of the articles collected in Reader, Walter 1993, and Margry 2008. The re-conceptualisation of pilgrimage only works if religion is defined in a substantialist way and is left to the "subjective" emic self-perception: "all notions and ideas that human beings have regarding their experience of the sacred or the supernatural in order to give meaning to life and have access to the transformative powers that may influence their existential condition." (Margry 2008: 17). While this may work on the emic level, the fuzziness of terms and concepts like "sacred", "supernatural", "transformative powers" indicate the danger of shaping the term "religion", and in consequence "pilgrimage", into an empty cartridge that can be filled with almost everything. It seems useful to remember that some emic categorization makes clear distinctions between different types of travelling, e.g. *ḥājj* ("pilgrimage"), *hijra* ("migration"), and *riḥla* ("travel"): Netton 1995.
15 Elsner & Rutherford 2005: 2f.
16 A more traditional approach of keeping pilgrimage in the context of religion is taken by the papers collected in Morinis 1992.

held at an auspicious site, one of the four Great Places of Buddhist pilgrimage, Lumbinī, the birth place of the Buddha, in the confines of the Lumbinī International Research Institute (LIRI) between the 11th and 13th of January 2010. The aim was to bring together scholars working on different Buddhist cultures and traditions and in different disciplines like anthropology, archaeology, art history, religious studies and text philology. Unfortunately, due to personal and organisational difficulties some colleagues invited could not participate.[17] Their inability to participate and to contribute to this volume has created an unfortunate "gap", since it was the organizers' original intention – in the full awareness that it would be an impossible task to cover all the facets of Buddhist pilgrimage – to include Japanese pilgrimage and archaeological perspectives on Buddhist pilgrimage from early and medieval South Asia in the discussion.

If we speak of Buddhist pilgrimage, some questions arise quite naturally: What kind of characteristics, features, criteria, aspects, actions, terminology entitles us to apply the term pilgrimage to historical or contemporary phenomena? What is it that allows us to speak of Buddhist pilgrimage? What are the specific characteristics that distinguish Buddhist pilgrimage from other types of pilgrimages? Can we establish different types of pilgrimages in Buddhist tradition and how do they relate to the ones in other religious traditions?

It is interesting to see how the approach to pilgrimage in the study of religions has changed in roughly a century: from a rather uncritical acceptance of some general concept of pilgrimage, which is more or less shaped and influenced by the notions of the Muslim *ḥājj* or the Christian journeys to the Holy Land in Medieval times, to a more elaborated and defined theory. In James Hasting's famous *Encylopædia of Religion and Ethics*, for instance, no definition of pilgrimage is given at the beginning[18] and the presentation of the phenomenon is made in a kind of hierarchy, which seems to be based on the importance of pilgrimage in a given religious system: starting with the *ḥājj* in Islam[19], its regional predecessor in Babylonia, then

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17 Janice Leoshko, University of Texas at Austin (art history of South Asia), Sherry Fowler, University of Kansas (Japanese art history).

18 Although the second subarticle "Pilgrimage (Babylonian)" by T.G.Pinches starts with an attempt at a definition: "By this word [pilgrimage] most people understand a journey to a holy place or shrine, either in the pilgrim's native land or abroad. The object of a pilgrimage is to obtain some benefit, material, moral, or spiritual, which the sanctity of the chosen spot is thought to transfer. It is true that pilgrimage may be undertaken because such a journey is regarded as meritorious, but the idea of the acquisition of divine favour, either directly or through a saint, is seldom absent. All kinds of benefits may be asked in return for the labour and travail, from the healing of a bodily infirmity to the gift of everlasting life." (in Hastings 1919: 12a).

19 For a more discussion of the *ḥājj* see, for example, the entry *ḥadjdj* in Lewis, Ménage, Pellat, Schacht 1986: 31b-38b., s.v.

Buddhist[20], Christian, Jewish, Indian, and Japanese[21] examples.

Over time, Cultural and Religious Studies have developed their own definitions of, and theories on, pilgrimage, which are meant to be generic and applicable to, if not defining of, the phenomenon. The most prominent one, though not undisputed, is Victor and Edith Turner's[22] theory and interpretation of pilgrimage as a movement from one's usual everyday-life environment to a "centre out there", which is demarcated by liminal departure and return[23]. Turner, basing his work on van Gennep's model of "rites de passage", assumes that all pilgrimage is a "social process", in which the pilgrim leaves his home in order to undertake a journey in a kind of social "liminal state", to a "sacred place", also called "the center out there", which is out of the sphere of the pilgrim's home community[24]. During the journey pilgrims – Turner, as a rule, sees pilgrimage as a communal experience of people moving to the same place – are positioned outside of their usual social context and form a (new) community of pilgrims, an "egalitarian, undifferentiated, and open-ended 'communitas'". Personally and internally transformed, the pilgrim finally returns to his own social context and community[25].

Despite its popularity and its compellingly clear structure, the shortcomings of Turner's model, when it is applied to other pilgrimage phenomena / realities, are obvious[26]: it was developed mainly in the context of Saint Mary pilgrimages in

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20 The article by A.S.Geden (in Hastings 1919: 13b-18a) reflects the common knowledge and assumptions about Buddhism at his time: pilgrimage, not found as a religious "duty or advantage" in the Tripiṭaka – by which the Pāli canon and the "original" Buddhism of the Buddha himself is meant – is a "popular practice" – represented by the later Mahāyāna – by which the Buddhist mimicked an ancient Hindu practice. It is interesting to see how Japanese pilgrimage is treated in a separate sub-article "Pilgrimage (Japanese)", written by the Japanese scholar Masahiro Anesaki who recognizes the Buddhist origin and nature of Japanese pilgrimage but also, almost in an attempt to justify the separate entry, lists what he thinks are very specific Japanese forms of pilgrimage like "poetic" (aesthetic) traveling or the pilgrimage in search of revenge to be taken of an enemy, probably in order to emphasize the warrior-like nature of Japanes culture (in Hastings 1919: 27a-28a).

21 Hastings 1919: 10a.-28a., s.v.

22 Edith Turner's introduction to the lemma "Pilgrimage" in the first edition of the *Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol.11, 327ff., from the year 1987 has been reprinted (with an updated bibliography) in the second edition Jones 2005: 7144a-7148a. The lemma "Pilgrimage" by Friederike Hassauer in Stuckrad 2006: 1452-1456 (a translation of the German *Metzler Lexikon Religion*, published 1999-2002), reflects the influence of Turners' theory but disappointingly narrows the presentation completely on pilgrimage in the Latin Christian world.

23 Turner 1969, 1973, 1974, 1978.

24 Turner has elaborated on his conceptualization of liminality and community in two of his early articles "Liminality and Communitas", and "Communitas – Model and Process" (reprinted in Turner 1995).

25 A comprehensive and accepting description of Turner's theory can be found in Naquin, Yü 1992: 6f.

26 For a critique of Turners' concept see, e.g., Elsner, Rutherford 2006: 5.

Europe and Mexico, where the pilgrims do indeed depart from a home community and actually form, at the sacred place and for a short period, a new *communitas*. Although clearly applicable in some of the cases that are discussed in the present volume, there are other examples where there is no newly-formed community (see Buffetrille) and no distinct liminal phase, as clear as Turner would have it. Chinese monastic travellers, if we can call them pilgrims, at least on certain sections of their journey (see Deeg), for instance, travel mostly on their own (e.g. Xuanzang, Yijing) or in small groups (Faxian, Song Yun, Huisheng), and there is no indication of a specific liminal period or a preparatory phase or rite.

In a more general way pilgrimage is, as Stoddard upholds, "a journey to a sacred place motivated by religious devotion"[27], which is a definition that opens the scope of pilgrimage to individual religious journeys. It also makes pilgrimage more goal- and purpose-oriented than in Turner's concept, which very much emphasizes the processal character of pilgrimage and has relatively little to say about the pilgrimage sites, their structure, function or purpose. In this way, the concrete objects of veneration and the narrative or conceptual origins of local "sacredness", or the importance of a *locus*, are re-included in the discussion. Pilgrimage sits at a point between religious residency and itinerary: without movement there is no pilgrimage; without leaving somehwere there is no pilgrimage, but it is also the case that without an element of 'return' there is no pilgrimage. It has been argued that Buddhist monastics – and those in other religious traditions in similar contexts – left, at least ideally and ideologically, one community, the worldly one, to join another one. In this view monks are therefore engaged on a lifelong pilgrimage[28]; the Chinese expression for becoming or being a monastic, *chujia* 出家, "having left the house(hold)", clearly reflects this[29]. Buddhist monks (and nuns), however, are not pilgrims as such, not even when they assumedly were, in some distant past, roaming

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27 Stoddard 2010: 2. On the metalinguistic level – "pilgrimage" used as both descriptive and analytic term in Religious and Cultural Studies – it does not make sense to open it up to much to metaphorical or generalized meaning as, for instance, in Davidson & Gitlitz 2002: xvii: "In its most basic sense, we conceive of pilgrimage as a journey to a special place, in which both journey and the destination have spiritual significance for the journeyer.", where also nothing is gained when the dimension of spiritual experience is introduced since the latter is only seizable in its linguistic or rhetoric shape.

28 Dietz 2005 emphasizes the itineracy of early Christian asceticism and monasticism, "travel as a practical way of visiting living and dead holy people, and as a means of religious expression of homelessness and temporal exile" (2f.). This could also be suggested for early Buddhist monasticism. The other notion of "perpetual pilgrimage ... in an allegorical form" does certainly not apply to early Buddhism, especially its use in early Christianity was certainly facilitated by the semantic conotation of "homelessness and foreignness" in the Latin term *peregrinus*.

29 The semiotic similarity of the Buddhist ordination (Skt. *pravrajyā*, Pāli *pabbajjā*) and monastic lifestyle have already been highlighted by Geden in his article on Buddhist pilgrimage in Hastings 1919: 13b.f.

mendicants. This is because the concept of a spatial destination and of veneration is not crucial for this lifestyle. Arguing from another angle, monks and nuns can go on pilgrimage, just as any other layperson can, and they normally do so in the same way and with the same rules and customs.

Both definitions, Turner's more specific one and other broader ones along the lines of Stoddard, refer to two important aspects of pilgrimage, which could be called temporal and spatial[30]. Using these terms and concepts at the same time breaks through the sequential analysis of the phenomenon as consisting of a period of movement[31], a period of arrivedness, and another period of movement, as suggested in Turner's model, in favour of a more dynamic understanding of pilgrimage, according to which the borders between these three phases become blurred, but at the same time interactive.

As is well known, the term pilgrimage – and its cognate and correspondent terms in other Western languages e.g. German *Pilger(fahrt)*[32], French *pèlerinage*, etc. – is derived from Latin *peregrinus*, "foreigner, stranger"[33]. It reflects the general view and the self-understanding of the pilgrim as someone travelling through a foreign land, which is (far) away from home. It does not indicate any religious goal or purpose in itself, The word clearly reflects its medieval context, in which making a pilgrimage to the sacred sites of Christianity indeed meant to visit places outside of one's normal cultural and social environment.

There is a general agreement that pilgrimage is a phenomenon found in almost all religious traditions[34]. In the Christian tradition, pilgrimage is practiced since the

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30 On the relation between time and space in Thai Buddhist pilgrimage cp. Keyes 1975.

31 On this aspect of pilgrimage – although pilgrimage is taken there in a very broad way – see Coleman, Eade 2004.

32 German is, as far as I know, the only language with two words for pilgrimage: "Pilgerfahrt" and "Wallfahrt". The word "Pilger" is derived from a Middle-Latin loanword *pelegrinus*, dissimilated from Latin *peregrinus*, "foreigner", and "Wallfahrt" is a derivation of the Old High German verb *wallôn*, "to roam (abroad)". It should be noticed that the German word "Wallfahrt" generally seems to refer to institutionalized travelling, often in group, to a sacred site, but can also mean an individual journey. See also Brückner, s.v. *Pilger, Pilgerschaft*, in Kirschbaum 1968: 440: "Der Wallfahrer gehört größeren Gemeinschaften an, auch wenn er seinen kurzen Weg allein zurücklegt." ("The 'Wallfahrer' is part of larger communities although he pursues his short path on his own."), who admits, however, that "P.[ilger] u. Wallfahrer bisw.[eilen] Synonyma sind." ("Sometimes p[ilgrims] and 'Wallfahrer' are synonyms.") Exactly – and, I am afraid, incorrectly – the opposite explanation for Wallfahrt being a more distant journey and "Pilgerfahrt" referring to a more "local pilgrimage" is given in Davidson, Gitlitz 2002: 476b, s.v. "Pilgerfahrt". Too much focus on length and frequency of the journey is put in the differentiation of Naquin, Yü 1992: 3: "German differentiates between short and more frequent pilgrimages (Wallfahrt) and longer, rarer ones (Pilgerfahrt)."

33 Georges 1913-1918: 1582, s.v. *peregrinus*; 1581, s.v. *peregrinatio*, "travelling, staying abroad"; 1580, s.v. *per-egrē*, "outside of town, outside of the country".

34 On pilgrimage in the different religious traditions see Chélini, Branthomme 1983 (Christianity); Chélini, Branthomme 1987 (other religions and regions); Chélini, Branthomme 2008 (a slightly

fourth century[35]. Except from the pilgrimages to the Holy Land[36], to the sites in and around Jerusalem connected with the life of Jesus, to Rome as the See of the pope, and to Santiago de Compostella in Northern Spain, which became trans-regional for pilgrims, there were locally limited pilgrimages to regional sitesm, which developed quickly over time[37]. A similar tendency of the establishment of trans-regional – in the sense of referring back to the origin of the religion or its founder – and more local pilgrimages is found in other religious traditions, including Buddhism[38].

Pilgrimages are necessarily linked to a *locus sacer*[39], or, in some cases with a whole system of such places (see Hegarty), which can develop into a structure and sequence reflected in pilgrimage itineraries. These sacred sites are usually connected to a numinous or sacred being or entity, or, in the case of founder religions, with the biography of the founder or an eminent saint, be it trans-traditional[40] or more local, of the religious tradition[41]. Mary Campbell, in relation to Christian pilgrimage, has aptly emphasized this role of places for pilgrimage: "Places are referred to as witnesses of those events and people, and pilgrims in turn are witnesses of those places seen *as* events."[42] Buddhist pilgrimage can equally be interpreted as "a journey to see the Buddha" (Strong), or some other important personality or event incorporated

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unbalanced collection of papers in regional terms, with only one contribution on Asian – Japanese – religion); Coleman, Elsner 1995; Stoddard, Morinis 1997; Naquin, Yü 1992: 1ff. "Introduction".

35 See Angenendt 1997: 208ff. On the debate on pilgrimage in late antiquity see Bitton-Ashkelony 2005.

36 See Chareyron 2005.

37 On pilgrimages to Santiago, Rome and Jerusalem see Von Saucken 1995 and 1999; for Christian pilgrimage in general see Chélini, Branthomme 1982; on crusades and pilgrimage see Dupront1987: 239ff. On the different aspects of Medieval Christian pilgrimage see Sumption 2003, Webb 2001 & 2002.

38 In the Nepalese context of the Kathmandu valley, the so-called Nepāla-maṇḍala, Nick Allen has made a distinction between transregional and purely regional pilgrimages; see also Gellner 1992: 189ff.

39 On holy places in different religious traditions see Tworuschka 1994. One of the earliest Western overview on pilgrimage places in the three main Indian traditions, Hindu, Buddhist and Jain, is Helmut von Glasenapp's book (von Glasenapp 1928). Bharati 1963 discusses Hindu pilgrimage in general, and Bhardwaj 1973 is a sociological study on Hindu pilgrimage places; on a case study (Hardwar) see Lochtefeld 2010. Studies of religious sites and areas have become more prominent in recent years;see for instance the study of one of the Chinese sacred mountains, Nanyue 南嶽, by Robson 2009.

40 A pilgrimage site or a network of places may be claimed and used by more than one religious tradition – without necessarily leading to violent competition or appropriation as in the well-known case of the Babri Masjid mosque in Ayodhyā by Hindu fanatics claiming it to be Rāma's birthplace in 1992 – which may or may not share a common narrative. See e.g. Jerusalem as a sacred Muslim place: Elad 1999.

41 Except sacred sites in the so-called tribal religions which are thought to originate themselves in a resident *spiritus locus*.

42 Campbell 1991: 19.

in a place. What is "seen" then is often a place to which a constitutive narrative is linked, be it from the beginning of *post ex facto*, and this narrative is very often, but not exclusively, the stabilizing element of a pilgrimage site (Hegarty). In some cases pilgrimage, can even be defined as the "ritual re-enactment of religious narratives"[43] on the basis of "narrative maps".[44] Narratives – and historical local names connected to them – can be so powerful that pilgrimage sites may shift when a new identification is made or becomes authoritative.[45]

Turner's "centre out there" therefore bears more aspects than just spatiality; one could even say that the spatial function of a pilgrimage site, a centre, to which all pilgrims and visitors are orienting themselves and are striving toward, is constituted – "empowered", as it were – by its connection with a narrative, which makes it what it is. The narratives linked to a sacred place may have a tendency to concretisation in the sense of "anthropomorphisation" or "euhemerisation" of the rather abstract idea or divine basis of a sacred place: Vrindāvana in Mathurā reflects the places where Kṛṣṇa acted like a young charming boy, and the story of the Svayaṃbhūnath *caitya* in the Kathmandu valley only gets its meaning, I would claim, through the involvement of human or semi-human beings like Mañjuśrī, or the anonymous people who constructed a *caitya* around the primordial and abstract *svayaṃbhū*. This is without excluding other, earlier, layer of religious meaning, what can often be traced, but is not always documented[46].

The stability of a site – the spatial aspect of pilgrimage – and its connection with a narrative – the spatio-temporal aspect – often depends on "materialisation" in the form of an object or several objects. It seems as if there is a hierarchy of "objectivation" of a pilgrimage site; the most basic factor of stability is the erection of an architectural structure, like a temple or a church *in situ*. These architectural structures mark the places as "sites of memory"[47], and in some cases this underlying concept distinguishes

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43 Elizabeth A. Castelli in "Editor's Preface" of Feldhaus 2003.

44 Huber 1999a: 6.

45 The mountain Pañcaśikhaparvata as the abode of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī became identified as mountain Wutai-shan 五臺山 in China and caused pilgrimages of even Indian Buddhists to the Middle Kingdom: see Sen 2003: 76ff. The modern archaeological discovery and identification of Buddhist sites like Bodhgayā, Sārnāth, and Lumbinī linked with the major events in the life of the Buddha did not only cause their reestablishment as pilgrimage places for the Buddhist oikumene in the 19th and early 20th century, but also led to a reorientation of Tibetan pilgrimage from one site to a new one: see the discussion in Huber 2008.

46 For instance, in the case of the Svayaṃbhūnāth *caitya*, one of the most prominent religious sites in the Kathmandu valley, Alexander von Rospatt has argued that the Buddhist complex of architecture, ritual and narrative superseded an earlier, pre-Buddhist religious site: see von Rospatt. This is also possible in other cases, especially when the narratives are "conversional", i.e. reflecting the defeat of an earlier religious stratum like in the case of the so-called oak of Donar by the Christian missionary , etc. On the transformation of a pagan temple, the Parthenon, into a church and centre of pilgrimage in the Medieval period see Kaldellis 2009.

47 "Stätten des Gedenkens": see Greschat in Tworuschka 1994: 139.

them from other religious buildings or structures, such as is the case for Buddhist *stūpas* or *caityas*, or the sepulchral shrines of Muslim saints, which are, in whatever form they may have developed, containers of the relics of a religiously significant individual, which then represent his or her presence. More concrete are the "traces" of the narrative or of specific events mentioned in it. These may be natural features of the landscape (a rock, a tree, etc.), the origin of which is related in the narrative. The most concrete object linking the narrative's *in illo tempore* with the present of the pilgrims is an object that represents the sanctifying action in the past. This can be an artifact like a statue (the giant Jain Gommaṭeśvara statue at Śravaṇabeḷgoḷa, or the Jagannātha at Puri) or symbol (e.g., a Śiva *liṅga*[48]), or a painting (like the one of the Black Madonna of Częstochowa in Poland[49]). More "convincing" are relics since they do, to a greater extent, represent the physical aspect of the narrative: its protagonist and his or her actions.

In the more general context of Buddhism, the visit to a sacred site does not lead to the final goal, liberation, but it is considered to provide religious merit (Skt. *puṇya*, Chin. *gongde* 功德, *fu* 福) and may serve as a "catalyst" for final emancipation by causing a rebirth in "pole position". In the past, Buddhist pilgrimage has been ascribed as a typical activity of laypeople (*upāsakas* and *upāsikās*)[50] not least because in the *locus classicus* - the Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra - the Buddha only recommends the visit of the sacred places for laypeople. Indeed, the oldest report of a concrete religious journey is the one of the layman, king Aśoka (reported in the Aśokāvadāna). It should not be overlooked, however, that pilgrimage was nonetheless an important means of acquiring merit through contact with a sacred place, a sacred object, such as, as discussed above, the sacred "trace", which is to say, the relic (Skt. *śarīra*) etc. The acquiring of merit by visits to sacred sites, often marked by a *stūpa* or *caitya,* is reflected in donation inscriptions, where the donor makes a gift to the site and, more specifically, either to the local *saṅgha* or the *stūpa* itself. Inscriptions at the oldest known Indian *stūpa* sites (Sāñcī, Barhūt) indicate that these places were important pilgrimage sites and document some of the activities pilgrims were engaged in. Inscriptions – sometimes in the form of graffiti – are also important sources for the existence of pilgrimages in areas where no direct records of these activities are extant (see e.g. Porció's paper on Uighur pilgrim inscriptions).

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48 There are, of course, also examples of natural objects as *liṅgas* like the famous ice *liṅga* of Amarnath (Jammu and Kashmir).

49 Between artifact and relic is the "shadow of the Buddha" in Nagarahāra which the Buddha is said to have left behind in a cave in order to tame a violent *nāga*: this picture is at the same time created but also, like a relic, a physical remainder of the holy agent, the Buddha. It was famous enough in the Buddhist world of the first half of the first millennium to even have an impact on Chinese Buddhists: see Zürcher 2007: 224f. and 242f.

50 The view that for Buddhists pilgrimage only constitutes an option and not a duty is undoubtedly correct but this is true for all religious traditions – even for the *ḥājj* in Islam. A differentiation of pilgrimage practice between popular religion (lay religion) and monasticism cannot be construed in the light of the historical sources.

Reports on, or records of, pilgrimages can only be expected to come from scriptural cultures, but even in this case they do not necessarily exist: in the Hindu context (see Hegarty), even in Islam, despite the fact that pilgrimage (*ḥājj*) is a religious duty, not to speak of the ancient cultures of Egypt, Mesopotamia, etc., no real (individual) pilgrim records can be found[51]. One of the reasons for this may be that the "actors", i.e. the pilgrims, did not belong to the strand of society who could write. In a lot of cases the ones capable of writing, the religious specialists or "priests", were responsible for the administration of the pilgrim sites and, at best, produced ritual manuals of the schemes and structures of pilgrimages and rites at the pilgrimage place, which normatively followed the more general rules prescribed by the tradition for these occasions.

Although a lot of emphasis is put in modern research on the aspect of experience of the pilgrimage reports on this very aspect from historical periods are rather rare. What one can find are manuals for the practical and infrastructural sides of pilgrimages, as well as descriptive itineraries, which describe how to reach certain places and what is to be found there. Medieval Christian pilgrimage texts of travelling to the Holy Land were written as a kind of travel guides and as a literary genre conveying knowledge or spiritual guidance[52]. In Europe, Christianity had been consolidated as the only accepted faith for centuries, but the Holy Land was paradoxically - although partly under European control for some time during the Middle Ages - heathen territory. Still, for a long time, a Christian *geographia sacra* was established by means of the information contained in the New Testamant; other than the well-known places, where Jesus lived, there were no other sites to be discovered or described. This may explain the "topicalisation", "literarisation", fictionalisation or "epicisation" of the extent genre of pilgrimage literature, which continues through the whole Middle Ages up to the Reformation[53] – one of the paradigmatic examples being John de Mandeville's fictive "report" of his pilgrimage. A clearly delineated sacred topography or geography, which was extended, legitimized by legends, and structured by a network of *stūpas*, while of key importance in the Buddhist context, obviously did not exist in the Christian context[54].

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51 It is striking that the first report of a *ḥājj* claiming individual and personal experience comes from a Westerner, the notorious-famous Richard Burton (Burton 1857). A modern Buddhist individual pilgrimage report is the Nevārī Theravāda monk Dharmaloka's record of his journey to Mount Wutai 五臺 in China in order to see the *bodhisattva* Mañjuśrī (Dharmaloka 1980).

52 These itineraries have been studied more by Western medievalists in recent times; cp., for example, Huschenbett 1985, 1987, 1991. For the projected landscapes in these itineiraries which can be compared with the one created in the legend of king Aśoka (in the Aśokāvadāna: see Strong's article in the present volume) see Leyerle 1996.

53 On the rediscovery or reinvention of Palestine as a goal for Christian pilgrimage in the 19th century see Rogers 2011, and on its representation in (mainly Protestant) American litareture see Yothers 2007.

54 Cp. Brückner's article *Pilger, Pilgerschaft* in Kirschbaum 1968: 439ff., who distinguishes between three kinds of concrete spatial pilgrimage in the Christian context: the *peregrinatio ad*

Places of pilgrimage – despite all the popular emphasis on natural "places of power" – are created by humans and receive their legitimation through narratives of origin and of their effectiveness through miracles and the soteriological advantages ascribed to them[55]. Beside the social aspect of pilgrimage, the individual goal is definitely the direct or indirect benefits gained by it, such as: the accumulation of merit; the hope of a better position in the afterlife or upon rebirth; or more mundane and inner-wordly reward, which might include such things as: relief from disease; the conception of a child; or the attainment of wealth and happiness, etc. The attractiveness and therefore continuity of a pilgrimage place is very much dependent on its functionality, which can be described as a combination of accessability, infrastructure and proof of efficacy.

The process of travelling – Turner's liminal phase – to the pilgrimage places is dependant on socio-economic conditions. Claims have been made that the boundaries between pilgrimage (as a religious phenomenon) and tourism[56] (as an originally profane and mass-oriented way of travelling) have become blurred[57] – and they certainly have and may never, except for the sheer quantity of travellers, have been as distinct as some have assumed.[58] In modernity, through faster and more convenient and safe ways and means of travelling, it is difficult to qualify such a distinction since it depends on parameters like "spirituality", "truth", etc.[59], which can neither be quantified nor located concretely beyond the rhetoric of texts in historical contexts. So, although a distinction between these parameters does not seem possible and useful from a descriptive and analytic point of view, a too open concept of pilgrimage, which 'buys into' the use of the term in clearly non-religious – or "quasi-religious" – contexts

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loca sancta, pilgrimages to Palestine and the sites ascribed to the life of Jesus, starting with Constantine and fully established from the sixth century; journeys of and praying ("Buß- und Betefahrten") to places outside of Palestine such as Rome and Santiago de Compostella developed as alternatives and sometimes in a kind of competition with these "Ur"-places; the third form then is the *concursus populi*, das eigentliche Wallfahrtswesen *"an Gräber-, Gnadenbild- od. Wunderkulten, Heiltums- u. Ablaßkonkurse, Rogationsfeiern u. Pflichtprozessionen"*. One can argue that pilgrimages in other religious traditions, including Buddhism, can be categorized in a similar way, as has been done by Allen 1996.

55 This is also true for recently formed or forming pilgrimage phenomena: see Dubisch, Winkelman 2005.
56 On the different aspect and connection of "religious travel and tourism" see Rajand, Morpeth 2007, and also Swatos, Tomasi 2002, Swatos 2006.
57 See Badone, Roseman 2004.
58 This would render the Turners' often-quoted dictum "a tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist" almost a truism.
59 No one will, for instance, doubt the fact that the origin and propagation of pilgrimages and pilgrimage places have a political dimension as well – e.g. Aśoka's pilgrimage though we can only speculate about what the real motifs were – without becoming less "true" or authentic. For the Islamic context cp. Bianchi 2004, but similar motivation can, of course, also be found in, e.g., the revival of the Buddhist pilgrimage places like Bodh Gayā and Sārnāth through the Buddhist "ecumenical" movement in the 19th century.

as well as in metaphorical ways, does not seem to help to come to terms with it on an academic level. Here "religious" is, of course, not to be taken in a substantialist way but in the sense of socio-cultural practice and contextualisation; whether a person or a group of people travelling along the pilgrimage route of Santiago di Compostella or paying visits to the sacred places of Buddhism in Northern India may be called pilgrim(s) or not is as much determined by their inner and outer motivations and intentions as by the historically and culturally defined *via* and *locus*. Offering obeisance to the memorial or grave of a celebrity does (not yet?) combine these two aspects and is only pilgrimage in a metaphorical sense[60]. The examples discussed in this volume all reflect, without doubts, these two dimensions.

Relics and *stūpas*, as the central points of pilgrimage sites, are, as John Strong notes, contradictory in meaning and feelings they rouse in visitors: they are the visible symbols and signs of "the present absence" of the Buddha. In this function they may evoke the feeling of, and insight into, the impermanence (*anityatā*) of the worldy "reality". Relics in all religious traditions have, however, another important capability linked to their mulipliety and transportability: they can create new pilgrimage places by being "discoverd" or relocated.

This "expansion" or "mulitplication" of pilgrimage sites also clearly happens in due course of historical development of Buddhism. Kōichi Shinohara has distinguished three ways of "constructing Buddhist sacred places" which are all relate to the life (or lives) of the Buddha: 1. "converted local deities", 2. "movable objects (relics and objects) used by the Buddha", and 3. "previous Buddhas and previous lives of the Buddha"[61]. In the wider context of the establishing of Buddhist sacred topography and potential pilgrimage places, these categories of the "sanctification" of a place, which partly overlap (e.g. in relics left at a place of visitation or of a particular action, such as the many hair and nail relics), can and, indeed, must be extended.

While the established pilgrimage places in the heartland of the religion, the sites connected to the life of the Buddha (and his major disciples) preserved their prominence[62], other regions also claimed their share of sacred sites. This was achieved either through the creation of narratives of a visit of the Buddha to the region; examples for this are the Buddha's three visits to the island of Laṅkā according to the Pāli *vaṃsas*, or his visit of, and activities in the Northwest as reported in the Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya e.g. the conversion of "local deities" like the *nāgas* Apalāla and Gopāla. The visit, action, or residency of an eminent Buddhist saint is also very often claimed as sign of the sacredness of a place, especially if the place in question was distant from the Buddhist heartlands. A substantial number of foundation legends certainly established pilgrimage places in the respective region in this way

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60 According to this definition cases like some of the ones discussed in Reader, Walter 1993 may be called "pilgrimage" in a metaphorical way at best.

61 Shinohara 2003: 91.

62 And were re-established to this status from the 19th century onwards; see e.g. Chan 2001.

(Madhyantika in Kaśmīr, Śāriputra in Khotan, Śāntikaradeva in Nepal). The third of Shinohara's categories consists of two subcategories: locating existing but yet unlocalized narratives about the earlier lives of the Buddha (jātaka); the Indian Northwest, Greater Gandhāra, was a prominent region where former births of the Buddha were localized. Historically older, obviously, were sites ascribed to, or linked with, Śākyamuni's predecessors, the various Buddhas of the past; this is reflected in the form of the stūpas of the Buddhas Kanakamuni and Krakucchanda (which were located by Chinese visitors near Śākyamuni's hometown, Kapilavastu, or Kāśyapa near Śrāvastī, but historically substantiated and brought back to a period quite close to the lifetime of the Buddha by the Aśokan pillar inscription of Nigalisāgar near Kapilvastu and the stūpa and pillar stump of Gotihawa nearby).

Shinohara's third category, 'objects', are clearly the most transportable and translocatable resource for the establishing of new sacred sites endowed with miraculous powers, which may consequently become pilgrimage places[63]. They are normally taken to be corporeal remainders of, or items left behind by, a religiously eminent person – they are thus 'relics' (Skt. śarīra, Chin. sheli 舍利, Tib. sku). Relics are clearly more prominent in Buddhism and Christianity[64] than in other religious traditions, and this may well be linked to the important role that the "founder" of the tradition, and his successors, played in the development of the religion. Relics are the most tangible representation of the presence of the sacred past in the present and are therefore treated with considerable respect (as well as being very much an economic concern) in the two traditions. Both Christian and Buddhist reliquaries provide ample enough testimony of this.[65] Relics and a given place are normally connected by means of a narrative explaining how and why the relic came to that particular location and what meaning it has for it.

Relics may claim that they were left at the place where they are venerated by the person, from whom they originate, but in order to provide for places of pilgrimage considerably beyond the region of the religion's origin they have to be divisable and movable. In Christianity, the dividing of relics into smaller portions was not seen as

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63 Fontein 1995: 21, correctly points out that the exploration of Buddhist relics and miracle tales could benefit from research done on Christian relic and miracle belief. In this respect still important is Pfister's two-volume monography *Der Reliquienkult im Altertum*, Gießen 1909-12, and Beissel's 1976 book *Die Verehrung der Heiligen und ihrer Reliquien in Deutschland*, but also the more recent works by Legner 1995, and Angenendt 1994. Comprehensive and extensive discussion of the Buddhist relic cult in general is found in the articles in Germano, Trainor 2004 (including a comparison between Buddhist and Christian relic veneration by John Strong); on specifically the Indian Buddhist cult of relic see the books by Trainor 1997, and Strong 2004; on relics in Chinese Buddhism see Kieschnick 2003: 29ff.

64 Cp. Strong's article *Relics* in EoR, Bd.12, 275b.ff. On relics of Christ see Nickell 2007.

65 On early Christian reliquaries see Noga-Banai 2008; Chaganti 2008. Buddhist reliquaries from India are presented and discussed in Willis 2000, and more specfically from Gandhāra in Jongeward, Errington, Salomon, Baums 2012.

problematic and *translatio*, the moving of a relic from one place to another, from its place of origin e.g. from Jerusalem to Europe[66], was a normal ritual procedure. This is well known in Buddhism as well; the Ur-legend of dividing relics in the Buddhist tradition is, of course, the division of his corporeal relics, the ashes, the bones, and the teeth, after the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa* and cremation, which is then extended and expanded in the story of Aśoka's opening of the original *stūpa*s and the distribution of the relics found therein in forty-eight thousand *stūpa*s over the whole of Jambudvīpa.

Another way of transferring a relic is theft, known as *furta sacra* in the Christian context[67]. There are examples of relic thefts in the Buddhist context as well, such as of the tooth relic in Śrī Laṅkā as reported in the *vaṃsa*s, or the attempted theft of the Buddha's almsbowl recorded by Faxian in his travelogue which finally led to the translation of the object to Puruṣapura. The multiplication of relics and therefore of potential pilgrimage places is connected with the growth of hagiographical legends and literature[68], and this is specifically true for the so-called "secondary relics", i.e., for objects which were in the possession of sacred persons or were used and touched by them ("relics of contact")[69]. This kind of relic was obviously easier to get hold of than the so-called "primary relics", i.e. corporeal parts of an authoritative person. It was in the interest of regions and areas that did not originally belong to the original or "orthodox" sacred geography to incorporate themselves (and to participate in the economic benefits of being a pilgrimage place[70]) by claiming such relics.

Relics are, of course, too precious to be kept and displayed without proper protection, and it is not only the reliquary that enshrines and holds the precious item or substance. Already in the Mahāparnirvāṇa Ur-legend, it is the sepulchral mound of a world-ruling king, a *cakravartin*, in which the relics should be enshrined, a *stūpa* (or *caitya*), which fulfils this function. The architectural form of the *stūpa* (Pāli *thūpa*, Chin. *ta* 塔, Tib. *chos rten*) indicates that the relic was not necessarily meant to be physically touched or seen. The importance of the *stūpa* was such that it could become an object of veneration or representation of the presence of the sacred itself[71]. Whether or not a *stūpa* contained a relic could become secondary, as the famous examples of

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66 Cp. v. Dobschütz in Kirschbaum 1968: 538f., s.v. Reliquien; Legner 1995: 11ff. On *translatio* of relics in Early Christianity see Noga-Banai 2008: 130ff.

67 On the theft of relics in Medieval times see Geary 1978.

68 John Mandeville, for instance, reports – against the testimony of the New Testament – that Jesus wore several crowns; he also mentions that the German emperor have the shaft of the spear with which Christ was stabbed when hanging on the cross and that the Byzantine emperor and Paris claimed to be in possession of the spearhead of this very spear (Bale 2012: 11).

69 Term by Dobschütz: a.a.O., 538.

70 John Mandeville, for instance, speaks of the miraculous grave of the apostle John on the island of Patmos (Bale 2012: 14), not to mention the many tombs of earlier Biblical figures (e.g. Adam's, Abraham's, etc.; Bale 2012: 36) and later saints in different regions of the Christian oikumene.

71 See the importance given to the construction of the *stūpa* or *caitya* in the Laṅkan *vaṃsa*s (Berkwitz 2007), or the Nepalese Svayaṃbhūpurāṇa.

Sāñcī and Bārhūt[72] show – and this seems to be a difference to the Christian relic cult, where the reliquary or the architectural structure containing (or purported to contain) the relic does not become the object of veneration. In any instance it is, however, almost insignificant – or is not questioned – if a relic is "genuine" or "true"[73].

Relics and their *stūpas* may constitute the oldest centres of pilgrimage in Buddhism, but they do not do so exclusively. There are cases in which pre- or non-Buddhist sites were appropriated as Buddhist pilgrimage places, and in some instances places were deliberately declared new places for pilgrimage (before a narrative can develop)[74]. Natural sites, routes of traffic and commerce may become pilgrimage sites or routes.

The articles collected in the present volume reflect many of the aspects of pilgrimage discussed above and show the value of the study of Buddhist traditions for topics such as the present one. Some of them present new, or newly interpreted, data on Buddhist pilgrimage in different cultural traditions (Wang, Porcio), while others throw new light on well-known sources and themes (Deeg, Strong). Understudied, or rather under-received, areas like Thai pilgrimage (Skilling / Pakdeekham) and traces of pilgrimage in Uygur culture (Porcio) are discussed and can be connected with studies from the rich Tibetan tradition (Buffetrille, Ramble). Different aspects of movement and travelling (the 'liminal' in Turner's model) and the structure and development of the goal, that is to say, of the sacred site or sites (Turner's "center out there'), as they are explored in this volume, give a multilayered picture of Buddhist pilgrimage.

The volume also sets Buddhist pilgrimage in its broader (South-)Asian context and starts with some reflections and considerations of Hindu pilgrimage. James Hegarty discusses pilgrimage in medieval Hindu literature with an eye on its adversarial relationship with other South Asian religions, such as Buddhism. Hegarty investigates the notion of pilgrimage in the great epic Mahābhārata and in the Kaśmīran Nīlamatapurāṇa and duly emphasizes the connection between place (*tīrtha*) and narrative. He points out that the epic and purāṇic visits to pilgrimage places and their recitation / commemoration "are being constituted as functionally equivalent to Vedic ritual activity" – even quantifying the equivalence in terms of merit –, and thereby reflect the high importance of the pilgrimage. Hegarty's remark that the main narrative of the epic is embedded in an account of pilgrimage (of Ugraśravas) may be compared with the account of Aśoka's pilgrimage to the important sites of the Buddha's life in the Aśokāvadāna (see Strong). This highlights the importance of the pilgrimage site as places of the "significant past". Hegarty points out that, in the Mahābhārata, the performative power of a *tīrtha* narrative is almost able to substitute

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72 On Bhārhut see now Guyton 2003.

73 See Fontein 1995: 21: "The authenticity of *śarīra*, ..., is largely irrelevant."

74 See, for example, the modern case of the establishment of the Maitreya pilgrimage by the Japanese Buddhist lay-movement Reiyū-kai 霊友会 to a mountain called Miroku-san 彌勒山: Hardacre 1988.

real pilgrimage. In the Nīlamatapurāṇa Hegarty traces the continuity with the established *tīrtha* ideology of the Mahābhārata, but also clearly shows the mixture of trans-regional sacred topography and a regionalisation which is paralleled in the juxtaposition of Vedic ritualism and local *nāga*-cult. With this "localisation" or "regionalisation" a phenomenon is highlighted, which is also the precondition of the establishment of local and regional pilgrimage traditions in Buddhist cultures outside of the Buddhist heartland. In the Kaśmīran source Hegarty also sees a shift from the exclusive ritualism (and perhaps 'narrativism') of the epic to a functional emphasis on the image of the deity, which reflects a new paradigm of pilgrimage practice which renders, one could argue, pilgrimage more "physical" again. He stresses the point that the sources' (re)interpretation of pilgrimage and the narratives linked to pilgrimage places has to be mapped against an engagement and contest with Buddhism (and, in the earliest period, other *śramaṇa* movements) – a reminder that Buddhist pilgrimage traditions also did not develop in isolation from their religious, social and cultural environments.

A historical and conceptual introduction to Buddhist pilgrimage is provided by John Strong's contribution, in which he discusses the four (respectively the extended eight) main pilgrimage sites of Buddhism that are linked to the life of the Buddha: the place of birth in Lumbinī; the place of enlightenment in Bodhgayā; the place of the first sermon in Sārnāth; and the place of the *parinirvāṇa* in Kuśinagara (or: *-nagarī*) all of which are mentioned in a famous passage of the Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra. Strong argues that, if this passage is interpreted in a wider context, it may point to an earlier pilgrimage tradition during the Buddha's lifetime, where the monks visited the Buddha, in a way reminiscent of the general Indian form of veneration of an important religious leader or a deity by getting *darśan* ("view"), after the rainy season retreat.[75] He makes a point for reversing the historical development of the four Buddhist pilgrimage sites, suggesting that in the earlier scheme it was the four so-called secondary sites, Śrāvastī, Saṃkāśya, Vaiśālī and Rājagṛha, the places of the Buddha's residence, which were visited, and that the other four were upgraded to distinguish the early Buddhist pilgrimage places from the ones of other traditions, such as Jainism, by selecting places distinctly connected with the biography of the Buddha. At the same time, the pilgrimage places transcend the biographical events of the Buddha's life by evoking certain basic Buddhist concepts: in Lumbinī, the merit of the preceding existences of the Buddha; in Bodhgayā, the supernatural knowledge gained through enlightenment; in Sārnāth, the compassion of teaching the *dharma*; and in Kuśinagara, the permanence of the *dharma*. Strong emphasizes the use of the language of *darśan* and *saṃvega* ("excitement, emotion") when Buddhist texts describe visits to the sites, as in the case of the legend of king Aśoka. He also reminds us that the element of remembrance (*anusmṛti*) plays an important role in bridging

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75 The aspect of visiting and seeing is also found in Late Antiquity: see Frank 2000.

the seeming contradiction between the inaccessibility of the Buddha and the attempt at physical representation.

Max Deeg discusses a group of texts which are normally taken as sources for paradigmatic Buddhist pilgrimages: the records of the Chinese Buddhist travellers to India in the first millennium, such as Faxian 法顯 and Xuanzang 玄奘. Deeg questions the notion of pilgrimage reflected in these sources, which are usually termed "pilgrim records". He suggests that such a designation is naïve and uncritical in terms of both the theory of pilgrimage and actual content of the texts. He attempts to subsume these sources, quite different in form and content, under the relatively loose genre of travel writing and points out their 'traditional' descriptive patterns, but also their capacity to innovate new form and content, which was integrated in some of these sources. Although one can find quite clearly demarcated passages in some of the sources that emphasise pilgrimage, the overall purposes and intentions of these texts lay elsewhere. Deeg shows the multi-layered structure and intentionality of the texts, of which pilgrimage forms only a small part. He does not deny the fact that the travellers at some stage were actually pilgrims – though he contends that this designation should be understood in an emic, historically-contextualised fashion. In some of their writing, pilgrimage, as both a motivation and an activity, is obviously reflected (see also Ramble's article), but Deeg uncovers further layers if meaning and contextualizes the texts, and their authors, historically and in the light of other forms of Chinese literature. This helps to interpret the Chinese Buddhist 'pilgrims' in a new light, which goes beyond both the restricted and highly generalised notions of pilgrimage that were discussed above.

Wang Bangwei's article sheds new light on the journey of one of the Chinese travellers discussed by Deeg. He introduces, for the first time in a Western language, new historical evidence for Faxian's possible stay at the famous grottoes of Bingling-si 炳靈寺 in present day's Lanzhou 蘭州, where more than two decades ago a mural painting of a monk was discovered, which was identified by its accompanying inscription as Faxian. Wang discusses the different scholarly opinions brought forward as to the authenticity and identity of this painting. He contextualizes it in the wider historical and archaeological setting and makes a case that Faxian could well have made his first summer retreat on his journey to India at Bingling-si in the historical kingdom of Qiangui 乾歸 in 399. This image would then not only provide a more detailed piece of evidence for Faxian's travel route to the West, which is not specified in the monk's own account, but it would also be the only example of a portrait of one of the great Chinese Buddhist travellers.

Dorothea Broeskamp discusses the development of the art historical programme in one of the major Chinese Buddhist pilgrimage sites, the Shang-tianzhu-si 上天竺寺 in present Hangzhou 杭州. This monastery was famous because of its miraculous and self-created sandalwood statue of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara / Guanyin pusa 觀音菩薩. This statue marked a sharp change in the iconography of Guanyin since it is the first "White-Robed" (baiyi 白衣) Avalokiteśvara, which is an iconographic

form that gained prominence and popularity very quickly after its introduction. Broeskamp traces the development of the Shang tianzhu si as a pilgrimage place in connection with the White-Robed Guanyin against a concrete historical scenario with the Tiantai monk and abbot Ciyun Zunshi 慈雲遵式 at its centre. She shows that the change may have gone hand in hand with sectarian affiliation when the monastery became officially a Tiantai monastery (from having been a Chan institution before). Broeskamp traces the iconographic elements of this new form of representation of Guanyin back to its possible Indian and Central Asian origins (asceticism, purity), and repositions the development of the new form of Avalokiteśvara, which made Shang-tianzhu-si an attractive pilgrimage place and which was part of the complex process of reshaping the religio-sectarian landscape of Chinese Buddhism in the early Song dynasty: the statue of Avalokiteśvara in its new shape became an accessible and tangible representation of the social value of "royal power, ascetic prowess and altruistic compassion" supported by the Tiantai reformers and *literati* officials, as well as a stabilizing force in society. Broeskamp's example clearly shows how an encompassing social and political agenda can shape a specific form of visual and spatial expression, which, in its embodied form as a place (the monastery) and as an image (the Guanyin statue), can become a powerful and influential centre of pilgrimage.

What has been touched upon by Broeskamp, the formation of a pilgrimage place by ascribing to it a special event and meaning in the past, is presented by Peter Skilling and Santi Pakdeekham in the context of Thai Buddhism. They discuss the historical development of the pilgrimage site of Phra Thaen Sila-at. The foundation of this site highlights the already discussed elements of a 'prominent feature' – in this case a stone slab, on which the Buddha is said to have sat in the past – and a narrative explaining the importance and soteriological benefit of the place, which is here presented in a wider story of a prophecy (*byākaraṇa*) made by the Buddha that promised the pilgrim a healthy and long life, a rebirth in heaven and, eventually, a final birth as a human before he or she will finally enter *parinirvāṇa*. The whole story shows a remarkable similarity with other Buddhist foundation narratives and uses the whole register of elements from Buddhist tradition pertinent to the establishment of a complex sacred landscape and a network of pilgrimage places; visits to the place of the stone slab are not only undertaken by the Buddha Gotama (Śākyamuni, Pāli Sakkamuni) but also of the the five Buddhas of the past on the occasion of their enlightenment. Indeed, (hair) relics are distributed and enshrined by king Asoka (Skt. Aśoka). The continuity of the site as a pilgrimage place, in later periods especially for members of the royal family and prominent members of the *saṅgha*, is traced by Skilling and Pakdeekham through a variety of historical sources (archaeological, inscriptional, historiographical, biographical) from the Sukhothai period to the present Rattanakosin era. One could argue that the relative silence of these sources about the legend and the meaning of the stone slab is a proof that the origin of the site was prominent in the cultural and religious memory in different times throughout Thai history.

The previous example, where the narrative of origin is known as well as material documenting actual pilgrimage, may remind us that, even in cases when the origin and meaning of a specific place is not known from any extant sources, we may still assume a narrative and material origin for the site. This is true of the next case study, in which Tibor Porció discusses a widely neglected strand of sources, Uygur inscriptions, often only in graffiti-like form and content from ca. the 13th to the 16th century and distributed across a vast area from Kizil in the Tarim basin to Yulin. Porció makes a point that these inscriptions are not just sillily scribbled notes of bypassers, but reflect a certain pattern that shows their authors' / writers' familiarity with Uygur literary culture. Oddly enough, these inscriptions, although giving individual names, places and dates, seem to document Uygur pilgrimage in Medieval Buddhist Central Asia without revealing much information about the pilgrimage sites themselves and the specific religious practices, except the very general notions of worshipping and burning incense, connected with them. What can be inferred from some of the inscriptions is that the pilgrimages were made to sacred mountains – without giving information why they were sacred – or monasteries - and that one of the purposes was to create and, sometimes, transfer merit (Skt. *puṇyapariṇāma*). The material opens up questions of the connection between pilgrimage and mobility patterns in semi-nomadic societies, which may be paralleled with similar situations in Tibetan and Mongolian contexts.

Place and space are the focus of Charles Ramble's article on Tibetan pilgrimage. Based on the conceptual distinction of place as being associated and filled with concrete cultural meaning and space as the natural site, Ramble point out the polysemous nature of the latter: it can carry different meanings for different "players" (of different religious belonging, different stages of life, social status, etc.), and the same space therefore can be constituted and described as different places. Ramble illustrates this by the example of two descriptions of Tibetan travellers – pilgrims? – to the Golden Temple of the Sikhs in Amritsar. Ramble also addresses the multi-genre representation of pilgrimage in writing. He makes a similar point to Deeg, albeit from a different angle, which taken together yield a more complete image of pilgrimage: Ramble's examples come from bio-hagiographic and administrative sources and show that pilgrimage, although motivationally and intentionally a religious affair, is entangled with all kinds of other aspects of human life and society, as all other aspects of religion as well.

The importance of pilgrimage in Tibetan culture and religion as indicated by Ramble's article, especially of journeys to and around sacred mountains, is underlined again by Katia Buffetrille's paper on pilgrimage to Mount Kha ba dkar po on the border between Tsha ba rong and the Chinese province of Yunnan. The article emphasizes the position of mountain circumambulances in general, and, based on historical documents and field research, more specifically highlights the obvious relationship between pilgrimage and death and the afterlife in Tibetan traditions. Buffetrille points out the similarities between certain features and aspects of this

pilgrimage with the description of the intermediate stage between death and rebirth (*bar do*), as described in the Tibetan "Book of the Dead", Bar do thos grol, and argues that pilgrimage here can be described as "the physical experience of *bar do* through some features of the landscape" and namely by pilgrimage around sacred mountains; certain features of the landscape (cliffs, dangerous passages) are interpreted, if not directly and explicitly, in the light of the imagery of the text. By the pilgrimage – one could say – the pilgrims pre-enact what will happen after death. In more general terms, the example and history of mountain pilgrimage is a good example of how different religious ideas such as the autochthonous local mountain deity and the Buddhist concept of protective deity can easily merge. Buffetrille's article stresses the importance of the ritual and liminal – although she disagrees with Turner's notion of newly formed *communitas* – in pilgrimage, which in so many other historical cases is not accessible due to a lack of historical sources.

The volume closes with an overview on the most important and frequented pilgrimage places in Nepal with a focus on Lumbinī, Paśupatināth and Muktināth, in which Him Lal Ghimre, an expert on pilgrimage-tourism, explores the overlap between pilgrimage and tourism and reflects upon ways of harmonizing both for the benefit of all parties: both the travellers and the hosting communities. Ghimre introduces these pilgrimage sites from the viewpoint of the developmental, infrastructural and administrative challenges they pose to Nepal. Ghimre favors a trans-religious approach to the creation of pilgrimage networks, which could help to attract pilgrim-tourists and facilitate the economic and spiritual development of Nepal. For Ghimre, Muktināth represents a typical traditional multireligious pilgrimage site since it is visited and venerated by Hindus and Buddhists; he suggests that, although Paśupatināth originally is a Hindu site and Lumbinī a Buddhist one, there is an argument for developing these places beyond their denominational affiliations.

Pilgrimage in general, and Buddhist pilgrimage in particular, are topics too broad to be discussed here exhaustively, but it is to be hoped that the articles collected in the present volume can give an overview of the fascinating variety of Buddhist pilgrimage in the past and at present, but also add new insights into the more general discourse on pilgrimage. In the end, our limitations may not be so very different from real pilgrimage, where only a handful of places out of the many can be visited. Yet, the higher aim must be kept in mind - no matter how many, or how few, of such places we visit and explore (as academics or pilgrims): the coming to a better understanding of ourselves and the world around us.

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GOING NOWHERE: POWER AND POLEMIC IN BRAHMINICAL PILGRIMAGE LITERATURE

JAMES M. HEGARTY

Introduction

Pilgrimage is considered, inescapably, to be a matter of going somewhere. More than this, it is a matter of going somewhere special, and powerful. Pilgrimage is normally undertaken because an individual wishes to make, or mark, a change in their life, or wishes in some way to benefit from the power, of whatever type, concentrated in their destination. This power can be present in a variety of forms: in the landscape itself; in a building or installation; in an image or relic housed there; or in some sense of the possibility of fuller or richer communication with empowered beings of one sort of another at that location. Places of pilgrimage are also about memory; human beings are predisposed to recall the world through images and movement. The marking of places as especially significant is almost always connected to stories of how they came to be so. What was long known by classical orators, that memory is best structured spatially, is known, implicitly, by all those who establish and recall networks of pilgrimage places.

Yet this paper is not about pilgrimage. It is about pilgrimage literature. While there is an obvious connection between the literary evocation of pilgrimage and the practice of pilgrimage, they are not the same thing. Historical analyses of pilgrimage literature have tended, however, to conflate the two. This is understandable when one is trying to reconstruct social practice from scattered and incomplete material and literary evidence. However, this paper is based on a somewhat counter-intuitive question: When is pilgrimage literature not (only) about pilgrimage? I will argue that, at least in the Brahminical sources that I take up, pilgrimage literature is often about far more than simply going somewhere. I will show how it is connected to ideological change and inter-religious rivalry, specifically with the Buddhists, who form the main focus of this volume.

While this is a paper that will take up Brahminical understandings of pilgrimage, it is my hope that discussion of these materials will serve one of the key goals of the conference at which this paper was originally presented, which is, in the words of Max Deeg, one of its conveners, 'to detect the differences, similarities and underlying structures and functions of pilgrimage'. Comparative analysis of materials where interaction is a matter of historical record – such as it is between Hindus and Buddhists – is of key importance in this regard and has the advantage of being instructive

whatever its result: either similarity or difference in the underlying structures and functions of the phenomena under investigation. It is my hope, then, that this brief exploration of Brahminical materials will allow readers of this volume to begin to forge connections, or establish contrasts, between Hindu and Buddhist pilgrimage literature in South Asia, and beyond.

Pilgrimage in the Mahābhārata

Perhaps the earliest Brahminical text to take up pilgrimage as a religious practice is the Mahābhārata (emerging in something like its present form around the beginning of the common era).[1] It pays particular attention to the value and role of the establishment and visitation of tīrtha, 'fording points' (to be taken literally in some cases – as always denoting a riverine context – and more figuratively – as referring to an empowered location – in others). We do not find any evidence of pilgrimage of this type in Vedic sources. The Mahābhārata is heavily engaged in the business of integrating new religious practices, while at the same time asserting their hoary antiquity and effectiveness. It is this dynamic combination of innovation and legitimation that I will explore here. The Mahābhārata, with its emphasis on the foundation and visitation of tīrtha, tells us an awful lot about not just pilgrimage, but also the way in which religious narrative was itself being positioned as the preeminent source of religious power in post-Vedic Hinduism.

Indological studies of tīrtha in the Mahābhārata have generally focussed on their being granted a given sacrificial value in the text (a visit to tīrtha x is equivalent to Vedic ritual y). This process has been interpreted as part of a broader pattern of the democratisation of religious observance in post-Vedic South Asia. Vassilkov summarises the position rather well when he states, 'In defiance of the Vedic System of Ideas, they proclaim the reward of visiting tīrtha to "surpass even the reward of sacrifices" (3.80.38).'[2] The risk of such an assertion is that it might be guilty of throwing out the inter-textual baby with the historical bathwater. That is to say that there is a danger that a defiant attitude to the minutiae of Vedic observance, and the imposition of vast and exclusivistic sacrificial rites, is mistaken for a fundamental move away from the 'Vedic System of Ideas', this is a system of ideas that I believe is essential for the comprehension of the Sanskrit Mahābhārata's construction of pilgrimage.

In the āraṇyakaparvan, the third book of the Mahābhārata, we find a major description of Kurukṣetra, the location of the main Mahābhārata war, as tīrtha.[3] The Pāṇḍavas – the heroes of the tale – visit the field of Kuru at the commencement of their exile as a result of the disastrous dice-game of the sabhāparvan.[4] Its status as

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1   See Hegarty 2012 for details, esp. 25-36.
2   Vassilkov 2002: 141. It is important to note that this statement does not negatively impact upon the fascinating analyses, insights and comparisons of this excellent article.
3   Though it is first mentioned in this way at Mbh.1.2.1-2.
4   See Mbh.3.6.1.

tīrtha is discussed by Pulastya in his enumeration of the *tīrtha* of the world in the minor book of the tour of *tīrthas*, the *tīrthayātrāparvan*. Pulastya says:

> Then one should go, O Indra of kings, to the celebrated Kurukṣetra. [5]

It is in the course of the *tīrthayātrāparvan* that we also find an exploration of the subordinate *tīrtha* of the Kurukṣetra area. This description is couched entirely in terms of events in the significant past and more particularly in terms of the actions of ancestors of the Pāṇḍavas:

> Here, sire, King Yayāti Nahuṣa brought up a sacrifice that abounded with many gems, in which Indra delighted ... In this same spot King Bharata repeatedly sent off his black-dappled sacrificial horse, after he had obtained, by means of *dharma,* all of the earth.[6]

The layering of narratives concerning the significant past is continuous: we are also told, in the ādiparvan, of how Kurukṣetra was named after Kuru, the common ancestor of the Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas, who practised austerities there:

> Samvaraṇa's wife Tapatī Saurī bore him a son Kuru, and seeing that he was *dharma*-knowing the people chose him for their king. It is his name that made *kurujāṅgala* famous, Kurukṣetra which the ascetic made auspicious with his great austerities.[7]

We are further told in the *ādiparvan* that Kurukṣetra was one of the dwelling places of Takṣaka, the snake king who slew Parikṣit, the father of Janamejaya (the Pāṇḍavas' descendent and the king to whom the Mahābhārata is being narrated).[8] The king Citrāṅgada – another ancestor of the Pāṇḍavas – is also slain on the field of Kuru by his namesake the *gandharva* king Citrāṅgada.[9] In the story of Sunda and Upasunda, the two *asuras* make their home in Kurukṣetra, having subjected the whole earth to their dominion.[10] In the *udyogaparvan*, Bhīṣma does battle with the infamous Rāma

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5   Mbh.3.81: *tato gaccheta rājendra kurukṣetram abhiṣṭutam*
6   Mbh.3.129.12 & 15:
    atraiva nāhuṣo rājā rājan kratubhir iṣṭavān
    yayātir bahuratnāḍhyair yatrendro mudam abhyagāt
    ...atraiva bharato rājā medhyam aśvam avāsrjat
    asakṛt kṛṣṇasāraṅgaṃ dharmeṇāvāpya medinīm
7   Mbh.1.89.42-3:
    tataḥ saṃvaraṇāt saurī suṣuve tapatī kurum
    rājatve taṃ prajāḥ sarvā dharmajña iti vavrire
    tasya nāmnābhivikhyātaṃ pṛthivyāṃ kurujāṅgalam
    kurukṣetraṃ sa tapasā puṇyaṃ cakre mahātapāḥ
8   Mbh.1.3.144.
9   Mbh.1.95.7.
10 Mbh.1.202.27.

Jāmadagnya (better known as Rāma of the axe) in the field of the Kurus.[11] The war books themselves narrate the chief events of the battle of the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas – the cousins and enemies of the Pāṇḍavas - at Kurukṣetra. In the śalyaparvan, we also hear of Kurukṣetra as the location of the investiture of the war god, Skandha.[12] In the anuśāsanaparvan, we hear of the conquering of death by Sudarśana and Oghavatī who dwell, again, on the field of Kuru.[13]

And this is just one example (albeit a prominent one)! What is clear is that all these narratives of the past lead to a close association between narrative activity and tīrtha in the Mahābhārata: We can see this most clearly by returning to the very beginning of the Mahābhārata when the bard Ugraśravas states:

> I was at the Sarpa Sattra of the great spirited royal ṛṣi Janamejaya, son of Parikṣit, where Vaiśampāyana told various auspicious stories, just as they had happened, in the presence of the great prince. Tales first uttered by Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana. I myself, having listened to these stories of diverse meaning that are peculiar to the Mahābhārata and having wandered around far flung tīrtha came to the auspicious tīrtha, Samantapañcaka (Kurukṣetra) by name, that is attended upon by the twice-born, the country where there took place the battle of the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas and all the great kings. So what shall I tell you, O twice born?[14]

The main narrative of the Mahābhārata is thus told by Ugraśravas to the Brahmins of the Naimiṣa forest while he is on a tour of tīrtha in a tīrtha! Indeed, the Naimiṣa forest becomes associated with, not just the events of the past, but acts of narration. It is worth noting in this regard that tīrtha, and particularly Kurukṣetra and the Naimiṣa forest, came to be the paradigmatic sites for narration in the Purāṇas (this includes, amongst others, the Bhāgavata and Devībhāgavata Purāṇas, which are narrated in Naimiṣa, while the Vāyu and Skanda Purāṇas are narrated in Kurukṣetra,

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11 Mbh.5.179.2
12 Mbh.9.43.48 & 51.
13 Mbh.13.2.39.
14 Mbh.1.1.8-14:
    janamejayasya rājarṣeḥ sarpasatre mahātmanaḥ
    samīpe pārthivendrasya samyak pārikṣitasya ca
    kṛṣṇadvaipāyanaproktāḥ supnoyā vividhāḥ kathāḥ
    kathitāś cāpi vidhivad yā vaiśampāyanena vai
    śrutvāham tā vicitrārthā mahābhāratasamśritāḥ
    bahūni samparikramya tīrthāny āyatanāni ca
    samantapañcakam nāma puṇyam dvijaniṣevitam
    gatavān asmi tam deśam yuddham yatrābhavat purā
    pāṇḍavānām kurūṇām ca sarveṣām ca mahākṣitām
            ...bravīmi kim aham dvijāḥ
    purāṇasamśritāḥ puṇyāḥ kathā vā dharmasamśritāḥ
    itivṛttam narendrāṇām ṛṣīṇām ca mahātmanām

while still others are narrated in the Himālaya, Puṣkara, Kailaśa or other *tīrtha*s).[15]

The foregoing narratives have, amongst other things, emphasised the *tīrtha* as a site where great deeds were performed. The *tīrtha* is used both to commemorate specific ritual or ascetic acts in the past and, in some cases, to facilitate the performance of great ritual or ascetic acts. As this happens, *tīrtha* visitation – and the recitation of *tīrtha* narratives – are being constituted as functionally equivalent to Vedic ritual activity. The importance of *tīrtha* visitation is neatly encapsulated by the following blunt declaration by the sage Lomaśa:

> Previously in the *devayuga*, the age of the gods, I saw it all, O lord, the *devas* delighted in *dharma* and the *asuras* abandoned it. The *devas* visited *tīrtha*s, O Bhārata, the *asuras* did not.[16]

Here, the paradigmatic Vedic conflict for ritual dominance between two phratries of divine beings is re-cast in terms of *tīrtha* visitation. The relationship between *tīrtha* and ritual is also formalised in the aforementioned equivalencies between a *tīrtha* and the performance of a given Vedic ritual: A visit to the *tīrtha* of Puṣkara, for example, is given as the equal of ten *aśvamedha*s (royal horse sacrifices) while a visit to Kurukṣetra has the equivalent sacrificial value of the two main sacrifices of the Mahābhārata's main narrative, namely the *rājasūya* and the *aśvamedha*.[17]

The texts I have cited show, very clearly, how the Mahābhārata projects ritual practice into narrative accounts of the significant past, and in so doing transforms ritual into a form of history and a form of geography. The power of this historical geography is further amplified in the Mahābhārata by means of an emphasis on the movement "between" *tīrtha*s and not solely their visitation in isolation. In the *āraṇyakaparvan*, before Yudhiṣhira embarks with his brothers on a tour of *tīrtha*s, he asks of the rewards or fruits (*phala*) of the *pṛthivīpradakṣiṇas*, the circumambulation of the earth by means of the clockwise tour of the world's *tīrtha*s:

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15 See Bonazzoli 1981: 48-59, Purāṇa 21: 116-166. In the first article Bonnazzoli comments that "the places of purāṇic recitation indicated by the Purāṇas are something more than a mere geographical or topographical problem. They tend, rather, along with many other points, to form the structure or inner logic of the Purāṇas themselves. They deserve therefore a thoughtful and careful examination" (48). The present paper stands as a response to this injunction. It should also be noted that the descendents of primary characters in the Mahābhārata become interlocutors in purāṇic recitation. Thus Śuka, the son of Vyāsa, narrates to Parikṣit, the son of Abhimanyu and father of Janamejaya, in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa (and this narration takes its place within a further narrative frame of a sūta, or bard, and Śaunaka in the Naimiṣa forest), see Bhāgavata Purāṇa.1.3.40-44, cited in Doniger 1993: 35.

16 Mbh. 3.92.6-7:
purā devayuge caiva dṛṣṭaṃ sarvaṃ mayā vibho
arocayan surā dharmaṃ dharmaṃ tatyajire 'surāḥ
tīrthāni devā viviśur nāviśan bhāratāsurāḥ

17 Given at Mbh.3.80.48 and Mbh.3.81.6.

If a man makes a *pradakṣiṇa* tour of the earth to visit *tīrthas*, what is his
reward *(phala)?* You are obliged to speak of this in its entirety, O *brāhmaṇa*.[18]

Nārada then cites the discourse of Pulastya and Bhīṣma on the value of a tour of the
tīrthas of the world. Whenever *tīrthas* in the Mahābhārata are described or visited it
is as part of a tour. These tours are too numerous to list here. Indeed, the very close
of the Mahābhārata is taken up with a *tīrthayātrā* that spans the last two books and
which culminates in the giving up of life (the great departure, or *mahāprasthāna*) by
the Pāṇḍavas and their common wife, Draupadī. In this way, the *tīrthayātrā* is
emphasised as being as essential to the maintenance of prosperity, of a functional
social order, as the *yajña* is in other contexts (such as the *Brāhmaṇa* literature and
also, of course, within the Mahābhārata), Lomaśa was very clear in his advice on this
matter: the Pāṇḍavas, like the *devas*, will be victorious due to their visitation of
tīrthas.

Having spent so much time in valorising *tīrtha* visitation, the Mahābhārata is
surprisingly fond of the question "What need has he of the waters of Puṣkara?" We
can, if we translate a little more of the context of this rhetorical question, see that it is
indeed narrative activity, and specifically the recitation of the Mahābhārata, that, in
an act of revolutionary substitution, is said to obviate *tīrtha* visitation:

It once fell from the lips of Dvaipāyana, immeasurable, sanctifying, purifying,
and blessing – what need has he of sprinkling with the waters of Puṣkara?[19]

In this way, the Mahābhārata presents itself as surpassing *tīrtha* and *tīrtha*
visitation. These are of course forms of religious practice which themselves had been granted
functional parity with the performance of Vedic ritual activities. The Mahābhārata
does include within itself, however, *narratives* of *tīrtha* visitation. The value of these
is made clear in the *āraṇyakaparvan* where we find a text that states that the act of
hearing about *tīrtha* is itself productive:

This truth one should whisper into the ear of the twice born, of the good, of
one's son, one's friends and one's pupil and one's follower. It is *dharmic*, it is
auspicious, it is sacrificially pure, it is pleasure, it is heavenly, it is lovely, it is
the most purifying, it is the mystery of the great *ṛṣis*, it frees from all evil.
Having studied it amidst the twice born one should obtain stainlessness. *He
who should hear of the eternally auspicious tīrtha is always pure* ... He recalls
for himself his many births and rejoices in the highest heaven.[20]

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18 Mbh.3.80.10:
   pradakṣiṇaṃ yaḥ kurute pṛthivīṃ tīrthatatparaḥ
   kiṃ phalaṃ tasya kārtsnyena tad brahman vaktum arhasi
19 Mbh.1.2.242 & Mbh.18.5.54:
   dvaipāyanauṣṭhaputanihsṛtam aprameyaṃ; puṇyaṃ pavitram atha pāpaharaṃ śivaṃ ca - kiṃ
   tasya puṣkarajalair abhiṣecanena
20 Mbh.3.83.84-87: .

Indeed, even the declaration of an intention to visit a *tīrtha* can be enough:

> All people who go there are freed from their evil. He or she who should perpetually say, "I will go to Kurukṣetra, I will live in Kurukṣetra." is freed from evil.[21]

Thus, merely the expression of *tīrtha* as text, in an oral form, becomes equivalent to its visitation.[22] Listening to *tīrtha* narratives becomes auspicious and purifying in a way that resonates with the more general declarations of *phalaśruti* ("the consequences of hearing") in both the Mahābhārata and subsequent genres of religious narrative. This emphasis, on the impact of the reception of *tīrtha* narrations, can be seen, in addition, to foreground the act of not just speaking but also listening, i.e. of participating in narrative activity as an audience member. This itself constitutes a power dynamic: The Mahābhārata is privileging its own particular form of discourse whilst simultaneously seeking to take command of place and past in the public imagination. [23] It is exegetically encompassing those forms of religious thought and practice that precede it.

The rhetorical conservatism of the Mahābhārata, in its commitment to a cast of Vedic notables and the imagination of Vedic ritual activity, is thus belied by its radically innovative approach to itself and to other forms of post-Vedic religious practice. A certain sort of Vedic 'theatre' is, in this way, yoked to an agenda of ideological development and practical change in early South Asia. Pilgrimage is, in the Mahābhārata, merely an aspect of a wider concern to establish a new user-friendly and competitive religious dispensation (attended by a more than lightly propagandistic history and geography). It is perhaps not surprising given the success of the

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idaṃ satyaṃ dvijātīnāṃ sādhūnām ātmajasya ca
suhṛdāṃ ca japet karṇe śiṣyasyānugatasya ca
idaṃ dharmyam idaṃ puṇyam idaṃ medhyam idaṃ sukham
idaṃ svargyam idaṃ ramyam idaṃ pāvanam uttamam
maharṣīṇām idaṃ guhyaṃ sarvapāpapramocanam
adhītya dvijamadhye ca nirmalatvam avāpnuyāt
yaś cedaṃ śṛṇuyān nityaṃ tīrthapuṇyaṃ sadā śuciḥ
jātīḥ sa smarate bahvīr nākapṛṣṭhe ca modate

21 Mbh.3.81.1-2:
  kurukṣetraṃ gamiṣyāmi kurukṣetre vasāmy aham
  ya evaṃ satataṃ brūyāt so 'pi pāpaiḥ pramucyate
  The emphasis on the efficacy of even the desire to visit the field of Kuru is repeated at Mbh.3.81.173-8, where we also find another assertion that Kurukṣetra is Brahmā's main altar.
22 This development resonates with Patton's view of the post-Vedic development of Mantra as portable, synecdochic, ritual. Here, however, pilgrimage, is the empowered form of religious activity, which is then condensed and made portable. The interpretive strategy involved is, however, identical. See Patton 1996.
23 As Inden said of the imperial Rāṣṭrakūṭas, it is striving to give "a better account of the world" than had its predecessors. See Inden 1990: 246ff.

Mahābhārata in this regard[24] that both its example and its key rhetorical strategies were to be taken up in later texts that sought to promulgate their own vision of past, place and preferred religious practice.   `

The Nīlamata Purāṇa

The Nīlamata Purāṇa (henceforth simply the Nīlamata) is a text that makes its relationship to the Mahābhārata clear from the outset: it locates itself at the very same extended sacrifice held by Janamejaya – the descendent of the Pāṇḍavas - at which the Mahābhārata is narrated. King Janamejaya opens the Nīlamata by asking Vaiśampāyana (who is the main narrator of the Mahābhārata and a pupil of its putative author, Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa) why the Kaśmīris did not appear at the Bhārata war.[25]

The structure of the Nīlamata is relatively simple[26]: Having located its primary narration at the great sacrifice of King Janamejaya, the text introduces a dialogue between Gonanda I of Kaśmīr and the sage Bṛhadaśva, the text then proceeds through an account of the formation of the cosmos and of Kaśmīr; it describes the partial and, eventual, full habitation of Kaśmīr by humankind and presents the dialogue of the Brahmin Candradeva and Nīla in which the latter presents his teachings on the rites and pilgrimages to be performed by the human residents of Kaśmīr; after this there is an account of the *nāga*s and *tīrtha*s of the region. The text finishes with an explanation for its non-inclusion in the main body of the Mahābhārata. In this way the text is dependent on the Mahābhārata both for its overarching account of the significant past and for its status as a work that, in the Nīlamata's own words is "highly exhaustive" and "dear to the people like the full moon".[27] We are told that the Nīlamata was not included because this would make the Mahābhārata "too big with all the treatises".[28]

Masato Fuji explains the formation of the text in terms of multiple redaction. He also suggests that its origin was as part of a Hindu revival in Kaśmīr.[29] The idea of

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24 For an overview of the impact of the Mahābhārata in first millennium literature and epigraphy see chapter 5 of Hegarty 2012: ?-?.
25 NP.3:
    śrī janamejayaḥ:
    mahābhārata saṃgrāme nānādeśyā naradhipāḥ /
    mahāsūrāḥ samāyātāḥ pitṝṇāṃ me mahātmanām //3//
26 This has been very ably described and discussed by Fujii 1994: 55-83.
27 NP.1452-3:
    ity evam uktaṃ janamejayasya vyāsasya śiṣyeṇa mahāvratena /
    kṣiptaṃ na yad granthagurutva*bhītyā samagraśāstraiḥ khalu bhārate vai //1452//
    sarvatra naitad viṣayopayogyaṃ tadā na cakre bhagavān mahātmā /
    atīva hṛdye bahuvistare 'pi janapriye bhāratapūrṇacandre //1453//
28 This is not only one of the more egregious examples of closing the stable door after the horse has bolted in world literature, it also seems to tacitly suggest that incorporation of materials in the Mahābhārata was conceived of as entirely possible if undesirable in this case.
29 Fujii 1994.

"revival" is an important one. We find some support for it in the Xiyu ji of the Chinese traveller Xuanzang (travelled 629-645):

> ... Buddhists had overturned their religion and exterminated traditional rituals ... This is the reason why the people of this country at present do not make much of [Buddhism] and devote themselves to anti-Buddhism and *deva*-temples.[30]

What is of interest, of course, is not just the fact, but also the manner of revival. I would like to focus on the text as we now have it, in the redaction that, at least in broad terms, Kalhaṇa, the author of the famous Kaśmīri historical chronicle, the Rājataraṅgiṇī, knew (a text I take up below). This is certainly one in which the epic frame story is fully integrated. The date of the text is, as is so often the case, somewhat underdetermined. Scholarly opinion tends to prefer a date of composition that is Karkoṭa (C.E. 7th to 9th century) or immediately pre-Karkoṭa (but post-Kuṣāna).[31]

The Nīlamata's account of the creation of Kaśmīr begins with the idealisation of the region and its social estates:

> Filled with rows of rice-fields, thriving and endowed with good fruits etc. inhabited by the people who perform sacrifices and are engaged in self-study and contemplation – virtuous ascetics well versed in the Vedas and Vedāṅgas – by highly prosperous *kṣatriya* adepts in all arms and weapons, by *vaiśyas* engaged in the means of livelihood, by śūdras serving the twice born, it is bedecked with the temples of the gods and all *tīrthas* and is auspicious.[32]

There is no stinting here in the emphasis on the physical and social perfection of Kaśmīr. We also find a high regard paid to forms of Vedic knowledge in a text that, as we shall see, actually enjoins a series of distinctly post- or non-Vedic rites and activities.

Having dealt with the creation of the cosmos (beginning with an account of epochal reckonings and Viṣṇu's incarnation in the form of a fish) and the basic topography of the region, the Nīlamata narrates the tale of the establishment of human residency in Kaśmīr through the machinations of Kaśyapa (initially for only half the

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30 Xiyu ji, Taishō vol. 51, 887b, Funayama's translation: Funayama 1994: 369.
31 This is Ikari's contention; Witzel suggests the earlier date. See Witzel 1994, esp. 287, note 140. The matter is discussed in some detail in Deeg 2014 (forthcoming; section 3.4.3.1).
32 NP.14-16:
    śālimālākulaṃ sphotaṃ satphaladyaiḥ samanvitam /
    svādhyāyadhyāneniratair yajñaśīlair janair yutam //14//
    tapasvibhir dharmaparair vedavedāṅgapāragaiḥ /
    kṣatriyaiḥ sumahābhāgaiḥ sarvaśastrāstrapāragaiḥ //15//
    vaiśyair vṛttiparaiḥ śūdrair dvijātiparicārakaiḥ /
    devatāyatanopetaṃ sarvatīrtham ayaṃ śubham //16

year).[33] It is worth noting that Kaśyapa is embarked on a tour of *tīrtha* when he is prevailed upon by King Nīla for aid. The "*prajāpati*" of Kaśmīr – as the Nīlamata has it[34] – is thus prominently engaged in precisely the form of religious activity that the text itself enjoins most prominently (just as was the case in the Mahābhārata). It is also worth noting that Kaśyapa may perhaps be best described as an icon of the upwardly mobile Brahmin: with only minor Ṛg Vedic references (chiefly in book nine – with the name occurring only once, at 114.2), and given as a designation for Brahmins of questionable ancestry in the Gotra–pravara-Mañjarī,[35] he becomes, in Buddhist and Epic sources, amongst the most important of the great sages; against this background, Kaśyapa becomes something of a guarantee of the presence of self-legitimating innovation.[36] Thanks to Kaśyapa, human residency in Kaśmīr is made dependent on the worship of the *nāga* in whose territory humankind dwell.[37] This rich blend of mainstream theism (which is most often Viṣṇu focused), "*tīrthism*" and *nāga*-cult combined with a rhetoric of Vaidika conservatism (it is the land of Veda and Vedaṅga after all) is characteristic of the Nīlamata. Subsequent to the grant of partial residence, humankind establishes the right to reside in Kaśmīr for the whole year, this time through the activities of Candradeva, a descendent of Kaśyapa, who receives the boon of permanent residence for humankind from Nīla as a consequence of his elaborate praises of him:

> Nīla said: O best among the twice born, it will be so. Acting upon my instructions received by me from Keśava, the human beings may live here constantly.[38]

Human society is made dependent on (a) the actions of a Brahmin, now no longer a patriarch but instead one of his local descendents and (b) *nāga* rites that are anchored in the divine agency of Viṣṇu. Even Candradeva's praises of Nīla smack of an agenda of the fusion of *nāga*-cult into mainstream, "Vaidika", "Brahmanism":

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33 Who establishes the rights of humankind to dwell in Kaśmīr and curses Nīla and the *nāga*s to
    co-residence with them for half the year (the other half being spent with the *piśāca*s). See
    NP.207-8ff.
34 at NP.226
35 See Brough 1953: 36.
36 Kaśyapa is taken up at length in D.D. Kosambi's excellent paper: Kosambi 1964: esp. 35 and
    41.
37 NP.223-4:
    nāgasya yasya ye sthānenivasiṣyanti mānavāḥ /
    te taṃ sampūjayiṣyanti puṣpadhūpānulepanair //223//
    naivedyair vivivadhair dhūpaiḥ prekṣādānaiḥ suśobhanaḥ//224//
38 NP.375:
    nīlaḥ:
    evam astu dvijaśreṣṭha vasantv iha naraḥ sadā /
    pālayantastu mad vākyaṃ keśavād yanmayā śrutam //375//

O Nīla, enthroned like the lord of sacrifice you are propitiated with various rites, for the attainment of salvation by the *brāhmaṇas* who know the meaning of the Vedas and perform proper sacrifices in worldy matters ... O Nīla, the Vedas have sung about you – the eternal one – as the essence of the Vedas, the object of worship in the fire, the fulfiller of the desires of those who seek salvation and those who are ambitious[39]

It is worth noting that the tendency to strategically position a given divine being as the "true recipient" of Vedic sacrifices is well attested in other sources: both within Kaśmīr – in the Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa[40] – and beyond – in the Bhagavad Gītā and the Viṣṇu Purāṇa.[41] In all these case it is, of course, Viṣṇu who is so described. Nīla goes on to offer a detailed account of the rites to be performed by humankind in order to ensure their continued residence in the area. This is, if you like, the small print; that their performance is an ongoing responsibility is made absolutely clear:

If the instructions of Nīla are not followed – then occur here floods, excess of rain, drought, famine, deaths, untimely death of the king and dreadful punishments from the king ... the snow will fall to a great extent. So the instructions of Nīla must be announced to the people again and again.[42]

The text includes an account of the death of Gonanda I on account of his non-adherence to the teachings of Nīla:

Vaiśampāyana said: "Even thus told by Bṛhadaśva, King Gonanda restarted [only a few of] the practices which had been in abeyance due to the fault of time. Thereafter, he was overthrown by Balabhadra at Mathurā."[43]

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39 NP.354 & 359:
   tvaṃ nīla yajñeśa ivāsanastho
   vedārthavidirbhavividhairvidhānaiḥ /
   saṃsārakāryeṣu suyāgakṛdibha
   rārādhyase mokṣaphalāya vipraiḥ //354//
   nīla tvāmeva vedārtha jagur vedāḥ sanātanam /
   dyeyaṃ vahnau mumūkṣūṇāṃ kāmināṃ cārthasādhanam //359//
40 for details see Inden, 'Imperial Purāṇas' p. 65.
41 BhG.9.14-27, VP.3.8.
42 NP.906 & 907:
   nīlavākyaṃ na kriyate
   ativṛṣṭiranāvṛṣṭidurbhikṣaṃ maraṇaṃ tathā /
   akāle rājamaraṇaṃ rājadaṇḍaśca dāruṇaḥ //904//
   himasyaiva prapatanaṃ bhūri caiva prajāyate /
   tasmācchrāvyaṃ tu lokānāṃ bahuśo nīlabhāṣitam //907//
43 NP.909 & 910a:
   vaiśampāyana uvāca:
   evam ukto 'pi gonando bṛhadaśvena bhūmipaḥ/
   prāvartayat samucchinnānācārān kāladoṣataḥ //909//
   tasmāt sa balabhadreṇa mathurāyāṃ nipātitaḥ /

The Nīlamata, like the Mahābhārata, institutionalises itself (or at least its teachings). Yet, far from being localised as a consequence of the restriction of its horizons of application, the teachings of Nīla show instead a fully elaborated, and distinctly "global" (albeit *paurāṇika*) vision of the estates, deities, beings and regions of South Asian pre-modernity (this is made absolutely clear in its cosmically grand opening with its details of *yugas,* the incarnation of Viṣṇu in the form of a fish and the sacrifice of *dakṣa* as well as much else besides).[44] There is thus nothing accidental about the rich fusion of local and trans-regional ideologies and practices that the Nīlamata develops. Instead, we find a sustained act of the public imagination of the significant past, main rites and religious geography – including prominent pilgrimage locations – of a Brahmin-dependent, *nāga*-centred Kaśmīr. This is made even clearer in the Nīlamata in its accounts of the *tīrtha*s and significant divine images of Kaśmīr. These contain both similarities and differences to parallel texts in the Mahābhārata: The descriptions of the *tīrtha*s of Kaśmīr in the Nīlamata are much the same:

> Holy is the river Harṣapathā and so also is the Candravatī. The wise say that there accrues [the merit of the perfomance of] *rājasūya* at the confluence of these two.[45]

Both texts present the visitation of *tīrtha*s to be the functional equivalent of Vedic rites (as well as gift giving activities and as productive of a variety of heavens and transcendent states). The key difference is that the emphasis on the divine image is far stronger in the Nīlamata. For example:

> After seeing near Cakrasvāmī, the goddess siting in the lap of Hara, one is freed from all sins and is honoured in the world of Rudra.[46]

This, however, reflects the logic of substitution that the praise of *tīrtha*s in the Mahābhārata has already established: if practice x can be functionally equivalent to former practice y then there is absolutely no reason why such acts of substitution cannot continue *ad infinitum* and, as we can see in the Nīlamata – as long as this logic of substitution and equivalence is preserved, suchlike innovations can be presented as forms of Vedic orthodoxy. The *tīrtha* is equivalent to the Vedic ritual and the image is equivalent to the *tīrtha*. In this way, the Nīlamata takes up and extends the justificatory logic of the Mahābhārata in establishing the functional equivalence of new rites and practices to forms of Vedic observance. There is also in this matter a point of contrast between the two texts: The Mahābhārata seeks always to establish

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44 See NP.31-73.
45 NP.1350:
    nadī harṣapathā puṇyā tathā candravatī ca yā /
    saṅgamaṃ yatra tatroktaṃ, rājasūyaṃ manoṣibhiḥ //1350//
46 NP.1054:
    cakrasvāmisamīpe ca dṛṣṭvā devīṃ haraṅkagām /
    sarvapāpavinirmukto rudralokamavāpnuyāt //1054//

its own pre-eminence regardless of the rites or teachings it describes. The Nīlamata does not. The Mahābhārata asks "What need has he of the waters of Puṣkara?" at its beginning and end, the Nīlamata formulates no such bold rhetorical claims and is relatively modest in the estimation of its own *phalaśruti:*

> Having listened to the glorification of the Vitastā, one is freed from all sins and having heard the whole of the Nīlamata, one gets the merit of [the gift of] ten cows.[47]

This is, I would suggest, precisely because of its subordination to the Mahābhārata: This has two functions; the first is to establish the relationship of the text to the Great Bhārata and thus to borrow some of its status and power; the second is to establish the particular authority of the text in relation to Kaśmīr and Kaśmīris. By this I mean that the statement of local relevance whilst speaking of modesty in terms of "global" appeal also suggests real ambition in terms of establishing an authoritative public imagination of past and place and preferred practices in its locality (with an attendant agenda of particularism). This allows the text to subordinate itself to the Mahābhārata whilst simultaneously, in a sense, superseding it. The logic of this supercession is simple: The Nīlamata is to Kaśmīr what the Mahābhārata is to Bharatavarṣa (thus reflecting, in textual terms, the very same logic that we saw was applied to religious practices – from *yajña* – sacrifice – to *tīrtha* – place of pilgrimage – to *mūrti* – the divine image). I would tentatively suggest that the very clarity of this relationship of dependence and supercession helps us to discern the extent to which the Mahābhārata was itself a bold attempt at a Brahminical intervention in the public imagination. In both cases this is likely to be as a consequence of competition with anti-Vedic religious ideologies and, in particular, those of the Buddhists. This leads me to a consideration of the Nīlamata's rather strange near-silence in regard to the Buddha and his followers.

Disappearing, and Re-appearing *bauddhas*

There are minimal references to the Buddha or to his followers, *bauddhas*, in the Nīlamata.[48] The one that is perhaps of most significance is:

> O Brahman, Viṣṇu, the lord of the world shall be born as the preceptor of the world, Buddha by name, in the twenty eighth Kali *yuga*.[49]

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47 NP.1451:
   śrutvā vitastāmāhātmyaṃ mucyate sarvakilviṣaiḥ /
   śrutvā nīlamataṃ sarvaṃ daśadhenuphalaṃ labhate //1451//
48 From NP. 709 to 715.
49 NP.709:
   viṣṇudevo jagannātho brahman prāpte kālau yuge/
   aṣṭāviṃśattame bhāvī buddho nāma jagadguruḥ //709//

Here the Buddha is presented as an incarnation of Viṣṇu and his worship is prescribed in this light (which forms the content of the remaining Bauddha related verses in the text). We thus find that the short sequence of verses dedicated to the Buddha in the Nīlamata are presented in the context of his theological subordination to Viṣṇu. The likely period of composition and dissemination of the Nīlamata is one of strong Buddhist influence at both state and local level. This is, of course, in the context of earlier Buddhist domination of the region under the Kuṣānas. While some commentators have read the "inclusivism" of this verse as being indicative of cordiality in the relations between Brahminical and Buddhist traditions in the Kaśmīr of this and later periods,[50] I am disinclined to read the text in this way. A consideration of Kalhaṇa's treatement of the Buddhists in his historical *kāvya*, the Rājataraṅgiṇī, lends some support to my inclination: Far from effacing the Bauddhas as the Nīlamata does, we find in the Rājataraṅgiṇī an extended, if not entirely ideologically neutral, presentation of a Kaśmīr with a rich Bauddha heritage. The Rājataraṅgiṇī is replete with long litanies of the establishment of images, *vihāras, caityas* and *stūpas*. These are too numerous to list. Certain kings, and more prominently their wives[51] and key ministers, are shown to be prominent patrons of Buddhism.[52] Kings are also compared to the Buddha (in a positive light) or described as Bodhisattvas.[53] I will not take up, in this regard, Kalhaṇa's rather meagre treatment of Aśoka and Kaniṣka as these have received ample treatment by other, more qualified, (and chiefly Buddhological) scholars.[54] There are also descriptions of what seem to amount to persecutions against Buddhists[55], debate with Buddhists[56] and perhaps even partial acceptance of Buddhist teachings by some kings[57] in the Rājataraṅgiṇī.

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50 Funayama 1994: 368, comments that "the NM suggests that Buddhism and the orthodox power of the time got along together". He reads the Rājataraṅgiṇī's reworking of the Nīlamata myth of partial residence in Kaśmīr (discussed below) as reflecting a fundamental change in Brahminical attitudes to Buddhism. This seems unlikely for reasons historical and hermeneutical, as I seek to show below. It is also worth noting that Funayama offers rich and interesting discussions of correlations between Chinese sources and the Rājataraṅgiṇī as well as wider discussions of the intellectual history of Kaśmīr in the light of Chinese and Sanskrit sources. Inden also describeds the Nīlamata as according "open recognition" to the Buddhists of Kaśmīr. This is, as we have seen, something of an overstatement.

51 A matter that is not taken up here is the extent to which Buddhism is associated by Kalhaṇa with the threat constituted by the male relatives of king's wives (or of threatening ministers – another class of subordinates). This might be an example of the "coding", indeed the conflating, of the "threatening ideology" and the threatening male line as equivalent.

52 RT.1.93 / 94 / 98 / 103 / 144 / 146 / 170, RT.3.9 / 11 / 12 / 13 / 14 / 355 / 380 / 381 / 464 / 476, RT.4.200 / 203 / 204 / 256 / 507, RT.8.243 / 246

53 e.g. RT.8.2376

54 See for example Olivelle 2011.

55 RT.2.201 (after Nara's wife is seduced by a Buddhist ascetic!) and RT.7.1096. – though Harṣa also destroys Hindu shrines.

56 At RT.I.112.

57 Jalauka is both described as a *bodhisattva*, and is persuaded to desist from his destruction of *vihāras* by the intercession of a Buddhist witch (*kṛtyakāḥ*). RT.I.131-147.

While Kalhaṇa, very obviously, does not adopt a strategy of the elision of Buddhism in his work (which would be inappropriate given his intention to provide a complete account of the history of the kings of Kaśmīr), he is not without his criticisms of the role of Buddhists in the social and religious decline of Kaśmīr and its kings. These are clearest in the context of immediately post-Kuṣāṇa Kaśmīr. In voicing these critical perspectives, he is heavily reliant on narrative elements drawn from the Nīlamata. In Kalhaṇa's account, the *bauddhas* become predominant in Kaśmīr during the reign of the three Turuṣka (Kuṣāṇa) kings, Huṣka, Juṣka and Kaniṣka (with the aid of the Buddhist patriarch, Nāgārjuna),[58] subsequent to this, during the reign of King Abhimanyu I, the rites of Nīla are laid aside (178):

> When the traditional customs were broken in the land, the *nāga*s, who had lost their accustomed oblations sent down excessive snow, and thus destroyed the people.[59]

As a consequence of this, the people of Kaśmīr are forced to spend half of the year outside of their land in neighbouring territories.[60] It is noted that while the *bauddha*s perish in the snow, the Brahmins do not.[61] A Brahmin, descended from Kaśyapa, Candradeva by name (the same name of course as the Brahmin who appears in the Nīlamata) offers praise to Nīla and receives his teachings again:

> King Gonanda III, who ascended the throne at that time, reintroduced the pilgrimages, sacrifices and other [practices] in honour of the *nāga*s, as they had been before. When the rites originating from Nīla has been re-established by this king, the *bhikṣu*s and the snow calamities ceased altogether. [62]

In this way, the events of the Nīlamata are integrated and re-cast as an explicitly anti-Buddhist narrative.[63] This is, I would suggest, circumstantial evidence for the fact that the Nīlamata was itself an anti-Buddhist text. Witzel even conjectures that the reign of Gonanda III might be the period of composition of the Nīlamata.[64] The

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58 See RT.1.171-178.
59 RT.I.179:
    maṇḍale viplutācāre vicchannabalikarmabhiḥ /
    nagair janakṣayaś cakre prabhūtahimavarṣibhiḥ //179//
60 See RT.1.180.
61 See RT.1.181.
62 RT.1.185-186:
    rājā tṛtīyagonandaḥ prāptarājye tadantare /
    yātrāyāgādi nāgānāṃ prāvartayata pūrvavat //185//
    rājñā pravartite tena punarnīlodite vidhau /
    bhikṣavo himadoṣāśca sarvataḥ praśamam yayuḥ //186//
63 Just as they subsequently are by Jonarāja in his Rājataraṅgiṇī, with regard to the Muslims. See Witzel 1994: 246ff. The relationship between Himalayan aetiological narrative and inter-religious rivalry is something touched upon by Deeg 2014.
64 See Witzel 1994: 248. Kosambi 1964: 43, points to the Brahminical re-imagination of Kaśmīr

common strategy of domination by silence (or theological or ritual incorporation) in the Nīlamata (and the Mahābhārata), in which one says something by saying nothing, or very little, is thus absent in the Rājataraṅgiṇī. The presence of the Bauddhas in one however establishes the artifice involved in their very limited presence in the other; the explicitly anti-Buddhist re-working of narrative elements of the Nīlamata in the Rājataraṅgiṇī reinforces their reading as implicitly anti-Buddhist. It also sees Kalhaṇa at his most "epico-purāṇic"; the difference between the distant past – as described in the Nīlamata – and the more recent past – as addressed in the Rājataraṅgiṇī's account of the aftermath of *turuṣka* rule – collapses into a relationship of mutual resemblance (although, in the Rājataraṅgiṇī, a King Gonanda successfully revives, rather than fails to implement the teachings of Nīla). Inden says of such processes in the Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa:

> The user of the text, its composite author/reader, may see itself as resembling agents of the past who provide the (previously unknown) rules for action, which, if followed, will bring about the desired state of affairs that will resemble that of the past – only it will exist in the changed circumstances of the future.[65]

Kalhaṇa's reworking of the Nīlamata materials stands, by implication, as something of a demonstration of this process. Here, it is Kalhaṇa who tells of agents (Candradeva and Gonanda III) who themselves resemble agents of the past (another Candradeva and Gonanda I in the Nīlamata), who demonstrate to the readership of the Rājataraṅgiṇī that Buddhists are problematic and inimical to year round residence in Kaśmīr (like the *piśācas* before them). This recalls the recasting of the *asura-deva* conflict in the Mahābhārata as like that of the Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas (the "goodies" and "baddies" of that tale), both of whose fates were dependent on *tīrtha* visitation. In all cases, the logic is simple: the possession of superior rites will result in prosperity and stable rule; the present is a recapitulation of the past. The use of mutually resembling narratives should, in turn, encourage us to look again at the long-standing hypothesis regarding the ideological agenda of the Mahābhārata formulated by Sylvain Levi and expanded and developed by James Fitzgerald; that the Mahāhārata was a Brahminical rejoinder to the growing profile of *śramaṇa* (chiefly Buddhist and Jain) traditions.[66] It also lends support to the perspective that the Nīlamata, far from being a passive indicator of cordiality between Hindus and Buddhists (as has been suggested), is, in fact, a *nāga*-centred, Kaśmīri focused, re-imagination of the region as reliant on the establishment, *and maintenance*, of a Brahminical orthodoxy (of the type described, of course, by the *nāga*-King, Nīla). This view is based on "reading back" from

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under the Karkoṭas as modelled on a "standard pattern" established by the Mahābhārata in a fashion that in some ways anticipates my own argument.

65 Inden 1990: 70.
66 See Lévi 1918-1919: 99-106. See also Fitzgerald 1991: 150-170.

Kalhaṇa's Rājataraṅgiṇī and "reading forward" from the Mahābhārata. In more general terms, it shows that literary descriptions of pilgrimage must be integrated with an analysis of the ideological agendas of the texts in which they occur as well as the likely contexts of production in which they emerged.

Conclusions

Brahminical discourse on pilgrimage is, then, not always a matter of going somewhere. The Mahābhārata added pilgrimage to a *smorgasbord* of Brahminically endorsed religious practices, which were designed to appeal to a population – and, perhaps more importantly, ruling elites – who were actively exploring other religious possibilities. As it did so, the Mahābhārata used pilgrimage narratives (both of their foundation and visitation) to adumbrate a new vision of the past and the extent of a South Asia, which had been delineated by conquest from the Mauryan period onwards. By combining new, convenient and, one assumes, more popular, religious activities – prominent amongst which was pilgrimage – with a new historical and geographical synthesis that asserted the hoary antiquity, and Vedic equivalence, of these new practices, the Mahābhārata effectively brought into being a new form of, Brahminically-focused, justificatory narrative that was ideally suited to cope with innovation and change.

The Nīlamata Purāṇa was one amongst many texts that took up the example of the Mahābhārata and "scaled it down" to more local concerns and interests. The description of places of pilgrimage once again provided an opportunity for the construction of coherent, Brahminically-inflected, history and geography, but this time of Kaśmīr rather than the entirety of *bhāratavarṣa*.

The Rājātaraṅgiṇī, in turn, made clear the ideologically charged subtext of the Nīlamata Purāṇa – by reworking the narrative of the discovery of the foundational rites for human residence in Kaśmīr into an explicitly anti-Buddhist narrative. This allowed me to infer the very great extent to which the Mahābhārata was itself in an antagonistic relationship with Buddhism (despite its silence on this matter).

In summary, it was my intention to show how descriptions of places of pilgrimage were part of a much larger ideological agenda in the texts under consideration. The Mahābhārata, for South Asia as a whole, and the Nīlamata Purāṇa – read through the lens of the Rājātaraṅgiṇī –, for Kaśmīr, were in the business of establishing ideologically exclusive visions of past, place and of acceptable religious practices (and of naturalising these as suitably *vaidika*) in direct competition with Buddhist and other non- or anti-Vedic ideologies.

Abbreviations

Mbh   Mahābhārata
NP   Nīlamatapurāṇa
RT   Rājataraṅgiṇī

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THE BEGINNINGS OF BUDDHIST PILGRIMAGE:
THE FOUR FAMOUS SITES IN INDIA

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Virtually every survey of Buddhist pilgrimage mentions, early on, the famous passage in the Mahāparinirvāṇa sūtra (MPNS) in which the Buddha recommends visits, after his death, to the four sites marking his birth, enlightenment, first sermon and *parinirvāṇa*.[1] Two of these places – Lumbinī and, possibly, Bodhgaya – were visited by the historical king Aśoka in the 3rd century BCE,[2] while all four of them are said to have been singled out by the legendary Aśoka for a special maximum tribute of one hundred thousand pieces of gold.[3] Faxian 法顯 (early 5th cent.), the first of the major Chinese pilgrims, likewise visited all four sites which, he says, were marked by the "four great *stūpas*" of Central India.[4]

The four sites appear to have formed, early on, a significant set,[5] yet seldom are some basic questions asked about them. How did this list develop? In what context? What is the rationale for the choice of the particular sites that make up this set? What

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1 See, for example, Trainor 2004; Huber 2008: 18. For textual references to the MPNS see below.
2 Bloch 1950: 157, 112. On Aśoka's visit to Lumbinī, see also Deeg 2003: 17ff.
3 See Div. 389-394 = Eng. trans., Strong 1983: 244-251.
4 T.2085.863b = Eng. trans., Li 2002: 197. See also Deeg 2005: 556.
5 The significance of sets of pilgrimage sites in Buddhism has yet to be explored. By no means was the MPNS grouping the only such set. Faxian, elsewhere, mentions the four great *stūpas* of Gandhāra marking places where the bodhisattva in previous lives had sacrificed his body (or parts thereof) as part of his quest for buddhahood, as well as the four sites that are the same for all buddhas (Bodhgaya, Sarnath, Śrāvastī and Saṃkāśya) (T.2085.858b & 861b = Eng. trans., Li 2002: 170, 186; see also Deeg 2005: 522, and Strong 2004: 53). Deeg (2005: 269, 542-43) says that the third of these places is in Uruvilvā where the Buddha defeated the Kāśyapa heretics, but a parallel Pali tradition (DA. 2: 424; BuvA. 297; English translation: Horner 1978a: 428) suggests it is Śrāvastī. Later, the Korean pilgrim Hye Ch'o 惠超 (travelled ca. 723-729) (Yang, et.al, n.d.: 42) speaks of a different set of four *stūpas* (at Śrāvastī, Vaiśālī, Kapilavastu and Saṃkāśya), while his Chinese contemporary Wukong 悟空 (travelled 751-790) (see Lévi and Chavannes 1895: 357-358) mentions visiting a more standard list of eight sites. Alternatively, we hear of the "eight Droṇa *stūpas*" that originally enshrined the relics of the Buddha, before they gave way to the 84,000 *stūpas* built by Aśoka (see Strong 1983: 109ff). In Sri Lanka we find featured the "sixteen great places" said to have been visited by the Buddha during his three journeys to the island (Gombrich 1971: 109-110), as well as the thirty-two "*yojana stūpas*" built by King Devānaṃpiya Tissa to house the Buddha relics given to Mahinda by his father Aśoka, each site also being marked by the planting of a *bodhi* tree sapling descendant from the original tree of enlightenment (see Strong 2004: 155). Similar schemes

was envisaged as the purpose of pilgrimage to these places? What experience(s), if any, were sought by pilgrims there? Was pilgrimage, in fact, actually needed at all or could these sites, and the events that took place there, be accessed in other ways?

The four sites and the origins of Buddhist pilgrimage

There are at least four extant early versions of the paragraph in the MPNS in which the Buddha recommends visits to the sites that interest us: one in Pali (in the Mahāparinibbāna suttanta = Dīgha Nikāya # 16), one in Sanskrit, and two in Chinese (one in the translation of the Dīrghāgama [= T.1], and the other in the free standing MPNS translated by Faxian [= T.7]).[6] These all recount the episode in generally similar terms, although, as we shall see, there are some noteworthy differences between them. In addition, there are two other translations of the MPNS (T.5 and T.6) that do *not* contain the paragraph that interests us, but which do contain parallel relevant information.[7]

Let me begin with a translation of the Pali version. The Buddha is on his deathbed and, as part of a long series of final instructions to his disciple Ānanda, he says: "Ānanda, there are four places that are apt to cause emotion (*saṃvejanīya*) and ought to be seen (*dassanīya*) by a faithful follower. What four? The place [about which it can be said] 'Here the Tathāgata was born'; the place [about which it can be said] 'Here the Tathāgata attained supreme enlightenment'; the place [about which it can be said] 'Here the Tathāgata set in motion the Wheel of Dhamma'; the place [about which it can be said] 'Here the Tathāgata attained Nirvāṇa without remainder'....

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may be found in other parts of Asia: the twelve sites of Northern Thailand and beyond, each one associated with a zodiacal animal in the twelve year calendrical cycle (see Keyes 1975); the Four Holy Mountains of China which, by Ming times (1368-1644), "formed a grand Buddhist pilgrimage circuit" (Naquin and Yü 1992: 17), held together not only by the cults of four great bodhisattvas but also by association with the four elements of wind (Wutai shan 五臺山), fire (Emei shan 峨眉山), earth (Jiuhua shan 九華山) and water (Putuo shan 普陀山) (Naquin and Yü 1992: 190). In Japan, we find the thirty-three sites of the Saikoku 西国 pilgrimage reflecting the thirty-three forms of Kannon 観音 (Avalokiteśvara) (Foard 1982); the eighty-eight sites connected to the figure of Kūkai 空海 or Kōbō Daishi 弘法大師 (774-835) in Shikoku 四国 (Reader 2005); and the twenty-eight temples on the Kunisaki 国東 peninsula in Kyushu 九州 representing the twenty-eight chapters of the Lotus sūtra (Myōhō renge kyō 妙法蓮華經, Saddharmapuṇḍarīka sūtra) (Grapard 2004:792). Similarly, in China, the Huayen jing 華嚴經 (Avataṃsaka sūtra) and its story of Subhadra the pilgrim who visits fifty-three teachers in search of enlightenment (see Fontein 1967) "served as the basis for mapping and naming important sites" (Naquin and Yü 1992:16).

6   D., 2: 140-41 (Eng. trans., Walshe 1987: 263-264); Waldschmidt 1950-51, 3: 388-391 (this contains also parallel texts in the Tibetan and Chinese Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya); T.1, 1: 25c-26a (German translation, Weller 1940: 178-179); T.7, 1: 199b-c. See also Bareau 1971: 29ff. The place in which the episode is found in the overall narrative varies, coming fairly early on in the Pali and T.7, and rather later in the Sanskrit and T.1.

7   See below.

Ānanda, faithful monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen should visit these places. And those who pass away while going with faith on pilgrimage to these shrines will be reborn, at the break-up of their body after death, in a good realm, a heaven."[8]

This paragraph is usually discussed as though it were free-standing. It is important, however, to read it in conjunction with the immediately preceding paragraph in which Ānanda expresses to the Buddha his sorrow that, in times past, after they had spent the rains-retreat in various places, mind-cultivating (*mano-bhāvanīya*) monks used to come for the sake of seeing (*dassanāya*) the Buddha (i.e., of having *darśan* with him), but that now, after the Blessed One's demise, they will no longer be able to do so. And this grieves him.[9]

The same passage – which I shall call "Ānanda's lament" – is missing from the Sanskrit, but it is found in the Chinese translations. In T.7, Ānanda further specifies that the monks used to journey not only in order to see the Buddha, but to worship him and make offerings, to ask questions and to receive instruction on the Dharma. Once the Blessed One enters *parinirvāṇa*, there will no longer be any point in their coming.[10] In the Dīrghāgama (T.1), after a similar "lament," Ānanda is then said to pose the obvious question: "what should these monks who used to come to visit the Buddha do now?"[11] This reinforces the suggestion that the Buddha's recommendation of the four sites in the very next paragraph should be read as an answer to that question: going on pilgrimage to these sites will not only be a way for devotees to earn rebirth in heaven, but it will also be a solution to the Buddha's absence – a way for them to continue to "see" and venerate him after his passing.[12]

Ānanda's lament, however, not only helps explain the reason for the establishment of the four sites of pilgrimage, it also sheds light on what, I think, is a still earlier pilgrimage tradition, perhaps existing during the lifetime of Buddha himself: namely, the monks' practice of journeying to visit the Buddha at the end of the rains-retreat. In this regard, a number of points should be made.

First, the indications contained in Ānanda's lament are corroborated by several passages in the Vinaya which explicitly state that "it was the custom for monks who had kept the rains to go and see the Lord," and which then describes their journeys to do so.[13] The scenario this suggests makes good logical sense: monks and nuns could

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8   D. 2: 140-141.

9   D. 2: 140 = Walshe 1987: 263.

10 T.7.199b.26-28.

11 T.1.26a.2; see Bareau 1971: 30.

12 In this light the Pali's use of the language of *darśan* in both its description of the sites (they are *dassanīya*) and in Ānanda's bemoaning the fact that disciples will no longer be able to see the Buddha the way they used to is significant. It should be noted that Buddhaghosa has a different interpretation. According to him, Ānanda (who is not yet enlightened) is worried that, after the Buddha's death, he won't be able to see the "mind-cultivating monks" anymore, and so the Buddha tells him where he can find them. See DA. 2: 582 (English translation: An 2003: 153).

13 Horner 1938-52, 4:209, 1: 153 (text in Vin. 1: 158, and 3: 88).

not travel during the three months of the rains; liberated from this restriction, they may well have decided to go on a journey to "see" the Buddha, for whatever reason – additional instruction, answers to questions that came up during their three months of practice, devotional longing, merit making, a spiritual recharge, etc. Buddhaghosa, in his commentary on the text of "Ānanda's lament," is more specific. He states that "at the time of the Buddha, ... the monks used to assemble twice a year: at the approach of the rainy season, in order to take a subject for meditation... and after they had passed the rains retreat, in order to announce what [spiritual] distinction they had attained by practicing the subject for meditation they had taken."[14] This would suggest that the monks going to see the Buddha were meditating monks.

Secondly, this highlights an important discrepancy between Ānanda's lament and the Buddha's recommendation of the four sites: as we have seen, in both the Pali text and T.7, Ānanda bemoans the fact that *monks* (more specifically monks who cultivate the mind [*mano-bhāvanīya*]) will no longer be able to come and see the Buddha. But then, in the very next paragraph, when the Buddha describes the four sites of Lumbinī, etc., he presents them as places for *all Buddhists*, specifying that they will be visited by monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen.[15] If pilgrimage originally started as a strictly monastic tradition for meditating monks during the lifetime of the Buddha, it would seem that, with the Buddha's passing, it became more generally a devotional tradition for all Buddhists.

Thirdly, in this regard, we find that in T.7, a potentially significant and rather interesting detail has been added to our scenario: there Ānanda laments that, in former times, when the rains-retreat was finished, the monks used to come from the four directions to see the Buddha "sometimes in Vaiśālī, sometimes in Rājagṛha, sometimes in Śrāvastī, and sometimes in another [unnamed] place."[16] Now they will no longer be able to.[17] These cities, it should be pointed out, were not just significant urban centers, they were also the places where, at least in the Pali tradition, the Buddha is said to have spent the twenty-eight last rains-retreats of his career (four in Rājagṛha, twenty-three in Śrāvastī, and one (the last) in Vaiśālī).[18] Thus, once more, the scenario makes sense: the rains over, the monks, free to travel again, would decide to go see the Buddha in one of those places where he would most likely happen to be at the end of *his* rains-retreat.

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14 An 2003: 151 (text in DA. 2: 581).
15 D. 2: 141; T.7.199b.29-199.c1.
16 One can only speculate on the identity of the fourth "other" place mentioned in the text. My own suspicion is that it might well be Saṃkāśya, in part because of the early importance of this site in Buddhism, and in part because, prototypically, it became the place where one went to see the Buddha at the end of the rains (as he descended from heaven). On early traditions about Saṃkāśya, see Strong 2010. The Vin. (1: 158, 3: 88; English translation: Horner 1938-52, 4:209, 1: 153), in specifying that monks used to visit the Buddha at the end of the rains, mentions Śrāvastī and Vaiśālī as places where they would go to find him.
17 T.7.199b.22-23.
18 See Strong 2009: 133.

This list of cities is, of course, interesting for another reason. Students of Buddhist pilgrimage will have noted that these three places correspond also to three of the four so-called "secondary sites" of pilgrimage that were added to the original four to form a group of eight, much featured in Pāla art (750-1175),[19] and in relatively late texts such as the various versions of the Aṣṭamahāsthānacaitya-stotra.[20] The eight include, along with Lumbinī, Bodhgaya, Sarnath, and Kuśinagarī, the sites of Vaiśālī, Rājagṛha, Śrāvastī just mentioned, and also Saṃkāśya, where the Buddha descended from heaven.

Despite Toni Huber's recent questioning of whether these eight were ever, prior to the 20th century, a bona fide grouping of pilgrimage sites actually visited by actual pilgrims,[21] it is generally argued that there was an evolution from the four to the eight sites in the Buddhist tradition.[22] The evidence from T.7, however, suggests that perhaps the reverse happened: that, while the Buddha was still alive, disciples used to go on pilgrimage to find him, at the end of the rains-retreat, in Śrāvastī, Vaiśālī, etc., but that after his death, these urban centers were replaced by a new list, namely the four sylvan sites marking his birth, enlightenment, first sermon and death. Only much later were the four city sites re-added to form the listing of eight.

What could account for such a replacement? It can be argued, of course, that biographically speaking Lumbinī, Bodhgaya, Sarnath and Kuśinagarī were deemed to be the more spiritually important and effective sites, but it may be that there were other reasons. And here I can only speculate, but one possibility might have been a desire to use pilgrimage sites to distinguish Buddhism from other religious movements at the time. For instance, Rājagṛha, Śrāvastī, and Vaiśālī were all important Jain centers of pilgrimage and, in the absence of the Buddha, Buddhists may have wished to avoid the confusion, competition, and overlap with them.[23] It may also be that if,

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19 See Huntington 1987; Leoshko 1993/94; Karetsky 1987; Parimoo 1982.

20 See Bagchi 1941; Nakamura 1980; Huntington and Huntington 1990: 531-532; Skorupski 2001. The eight sites are highlighted also in Alfred Foucher 1987.

21 Huber 2008: 22-29. Huber seems to ignore some important evidence from Wukong and Yijing, and the traditions revolving around the eight sites of earthquakes, on which see Fiordalis 2008: 49.

22 See, e.g., Leoshko 1993/94.

23 There is another possibility. In one of the Chinese translations of the Aśoka legend, the Ayu wang jing 阿育王經 (T.2043), Aśoka prefaces his pilgrimage with Upagupta with a declaration that he wishes to visit and mark all the places where the Buddha walked, stood, sat or lay down (Li 1993: 26-27; text in T.2043.136c.7-8.) Unfortunately, the text does not go on to make clear which biographical events correspond to which of these well-known iconographic postures, but that does not prevent us from speculating. Let us start with the easiest ones. We know, from Buddhist iconography, that the Blessed One in *parinirvāṇa* at Kuśinagarī is always represented as lying down. At his first sermon at Sarnath, he is usually shown to be seated, with his hands in the *dharmacakra mudrā*. Representations of his birth at Lumbinī often show him standing. The problem comes with his enlightenment at Bodhgaya; this is also an occasion on which he is shown as seated, either in meditation or calling the earth to witness. At this point, all I can do is to call attention to a curious feature of Aśoka and Upagupta's pilgrimage. In all versions of

as Gregory Schopen suggests (see below), sites of pilgrimage were also Buddhist sites of burial "ad sanctos," i.e., graveyards, it was thought inappropriate, or physically difficult, to have them inside of cities, or even in important monasteries.

Darśan and saṃvega.

I have argued so far that one way of understanding pilgrimage to the four sites is to see them as newly established places where devotees could journey to see the Buddha – to continue to have *darśan* with him – even after his death and *parinirvāṇa*. It should be said, however, that the Pali text is a bit more ambiguous than this initial conclusion would suggest, for it describes the sites of pilgrimage not only in terms of the language of *darśan*, but also as places said to be apt to arouse *saṃvega*.

Saṃvega is a complex notion, but it is generally thought to be a religious emotion in the face of the sight of the truth of impermanence or any other feature of *saṃsāra* that gives rise to a desire to adopt the religious life. The Pali Text Society dictionary defines it as: "agitation, fear, anxiety; thrill, religious emotion (caused by contemplation of the miseries of this world)."[24] Traditionally, the three signs of the old man, dead man and corpse that so moved the young Gautama are said to have given rise to *saṃvega*.[25]

What is it about the four pilgrimage sites that results in *saṃvega*? We are not explicitly told, but one possibility might be that it is the realization of the impermanence of the Buddha, or at least of his body, at those very places where he was perhaps most present. This would imply that pilgrimage to (and so *darśan* at) these sites entails a dual and contradictory emotion of remembering the presence of the Buddha at a particular time and place of his life by "seeing" him, *and* of being moved by a realization of his present absence there. In this sense, pilgrimage sites would be akin to relics which, I have argued elsewhere, are essentially reminders of a biographical process that affirms both the presence and the absence of the departed one.[26]

It is not clear in the Pali text of the Mahāparinibbāna suttanta whether these four sites individually do this, or whether they do it as a group. The logic of the latter is tempting, since it could be argued that, if the four sites were visited *ad seriatim* in a bio-chronological order, pilgrims could, in effect, retrace the lifestory of the Buddha allowing them to experience his coming into presence at birth leading up to his going

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the story, including the Ayuwang jing, considerable attention seems to be given to the site near Bodhgaya where the *nāga* king Kālika saw the Buddha "walking like an elephant going this way to the Bodhi tree" (Li 1993: 31 = T. 2043.137b). Kālika, in fact, appears in person and recalls for Aśoka that time when he saw the Buddha "as he walked on the Earth" on the way to the seat of enlightenment (Li 1993: 32 = T. 2043.137c).

24 Davids and Stede 1925: 658. Edgerton 1953, 2: 541, defines it as "perturbation" and defines *samvejanīya* as "to be shuddered at."

25 Brekke 1999: 853-854.

26 Strong 2004.

into absence at death. Unfortunately, there is very little evidence that pilgrims, if indeed they went to all of these sites, ever visited them *ad seriatim* in a bio-chronological order. The Chinese monk Faxian, for instance, does not do so; his visits to them seem, rather, to be determined by the exigencies of travel.

There is one literary instance, however, in which the bio-chronological order is emphasized. That is the Aśokāvadāna legend of Aśoka's visit to sites marking the lifestory of the Buddha, as a result of his desire "to honor the places where the Blessed One lived and mark them with signs (i.e., *caityas*) as a favor to posterity."[27] Aśoka's pilgrimage is interesting for a number of reasons. Guided by the Elder Upagupta, he starts at Lumbinī and works his way, in biographical order, through no fewer than thirty-two sites, until he reaches Kuśinagarī. Of the thirty-two sites visited by Aśoka, the four that are clearly the most important are the same four featured in the MPNS, since these are the ones that Aśoka specifically marks with *caityas*, and to which he makes offerings of one hundred thousand pieces of gold.[28] At the first two of these (Lumbinī and Bodhgaya), the language of *darśan* is invoked, except that the "seeing" of the Buddha is not direct, but secondhand: at both places, Upagupta summons a divinity (a tree spirit at Lumbinī and the *nāga* king Kālika at Bodhgaya) and introduces them as witnesses who *saw* the Buddha at those spots. This excites Aśoka who exclaims (for example at Lumbinī) "you saw his birth and saw his body adorned with the marks," and he asks the tree spirit for a description which is then provided.[29]

When Aśoka gets to Kuśinagarī, however, things are somewhat different. There, no witness of the Buddha's death is called and what is emphasized is Aśoka's religious emotion (*saṃvega*?) at seeing the place where the Buddha passed away. He, in fact, faints at the sight. This, granted, is a stereotypical reaction of kings learning about the Blessed One's *parinirvāṇa*,[30] but it serves to mark the intensity of Aśoka's emotion, and reinforces the argument that the pilgrimage as a whole involves, as the Pali Mahāparinibbāna suttanta suggests, the double biographical experience of the presence and then the absence of the Buddha – *darśan* first and then *saṃvega*.

More specifically, however, when we consider the sites separately, it reminds us that not all places of pilgrimage elicit the same religious emotion. It is not often asked what aspects of the Buddha were thought to move pilgrims at different sites, but here we see a suggestion that, emotionally or spiritually, pilgrimages to Lumbinī occasioned different recollections than did pilgrimages to Bodhgaya, or Sarnath, or Kuśinagarī. This is a theme to which I shall return.

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27 Strong, 1983: 244. Text in Div. 389.
28 Div. 389-394; Eng. trans., Strong 1983: 251-57.
29 Div. 390; Eng. trans., Strong 1983: 246.
30 See the famous case of Ajātaśatru recounted in Waldschmidt 1950-51, 3: 491-492. See also Soper 1950: 149.

From *darśan* to *anusmṛti* and from *anusmṛti* to *darśan*

In the examples of the legendary Aśoka's visits to Lumbinī and Bodhgayā, and in his calling on witnesses there, we would seem to have an instance of what might be called "*darśan* by proxy." Going to the site enables one to "see" the Buddha, thanks to the testimony of local witnesses[31] who vividly remember and so help others recall the figure of the Buddha.

Another way of viewing *darśan* by proxy, then, is to see it as *darśan* (direct seeing) on its way to being *anusmṛti* (vivid imaginative or meditative recall).[32] This is important because, in the non-Pali versions of the MPNS, the language of "seeing" disappears, and is replaced by the language of "recall." The Sanskrit text, for instance, speaks of the four sites as localities (*pṛthivīpradeśa*) which are to be recalled (*anusmaranīya* / Chin. *nian* 念) by the faithful.[33]

The notion of *anusmṛti* (recalling, vividly remembering, bringing to mind) is interesting when coupled to pilgrimage because, unlike *darśan*, it does not necessarily imply a need of going to or physically being at a place. To be sure, the Sanskrit text of the MPNS later adds that the four sites in question should also "be gone to (*abhigamanīya*),"[34] but the separation of the two notions (of *darśan* and *anusmṛti*) raises the question of their relationship.

A clue comes, perhaps, in the Dīrghāgama (T.1) version of the episode. There too, the four sites are initially presented in the context of "four recollections" (*si nian* 四念), or mindfulnesses (*nian* = *anusmṛti*).[35] Ānanda is worried that, after the Buddha's demise, it will not be possible to see him anymore, face to face, and the Buddha reassures him by replying: "Don't worry, Ānanda, all the *kulaputra* [sons of good family] will forever have the four remembrances. What four? They will recall, first, the Buddha's birth place. ... They will recall, second, the place where the Buddha first attained the way. ... They will recall, third, the place where he set in motion the

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31 It is difficult to know how literally we should take Aśoka's belief in tree spirits and *nāga* kings in our estimation of what happened at those sites, but there is a sense in which, demythologized, these divinities are not much different in their witness than the testimony of, say, an Aśoka pillar at a site, or of local guides in the time of the Chinese pilgrims.

32 On anusmṛti, specifically of the Buddha, see Harrison 1978.

33 Waldschmidt, 1950-51: 388. Schopen 1997: 140n.14, points out that the reference to *anusmaranīya* is a reconstruction by Waldschmidt based on the Tibetan text, but it is paralleled by the Chinese MSV version of the passage, and he concludes that "one can either go in person to the four places or call them to mind from afar." He goes on to suggest, however, that "calling them from afar" (*anusmṛti*) was introduced into Chinese and Tibetan texts because, in those cultures, actual pilgrimage was not a realistic possibility. But the evidence of the Dīrghāgama clearly indicates that both were envisaged.

34 Waldschmidt 1950-51, 3: 390.

35 These four are different from the usual four mindfulnesses found in Buddhist meditative texts, i.e., the mindfulnesses of the body (*kāya*), of feelings (*vedanā*), of thoughts (*citta*), and of elements of reality (*dharma*).

recommend the institution of actual pilgrimage, or that thought it was unnecessary for those able to see the Buddha in meditation without leaving home.[42]

T.6, however, does provide a further clue as to why these four events in the life of the Buddha were important things to recall – even if they were disassociated from the places where they occurred. The text does not limit itself to recommending generic *buddha-anusmṛti*. Instead, it says that in focusing on the event of the Buddha's birth, devotees should recall his accumulated merits (*puṇya*, Chin. *fude* 福德); in focusing on the event of his obtaining the way, they should recall his supernatural powers (*abhijñā*, Chin. *shenli* 神力); in focusing on his setting in motion the wheel of *dharma*, they should focus on his compassionate ferrying of beings over the sea of *saṃsāra*; finally, in focusing on his complete extinction, they should focus on his transmitted teachings.[43]

Much the same set of recollections can be found in the Dīrghāgama (T.1) version of the story, but there they are connected not to biographical events in the life of the Buddha but explicitly to the four sites where those events occurred. Thus, although the text is not altogether clear, it seems to be saying that one should go to Lumbinī in order to recall the Buddha's merits stemming from his previous lives; one should go to Bodhgaya in order to recall the Buddha's supernatural powers or superknowledges defining his enlightenment; one should go to Sarnath in order to recall the Buddha's compassion exhibited in his preaching; and one should go to Kuśinagarī in order to recall the eternal Buddha *dharma* that will carry on after him.[44] This is significant because it shows once again that the four pilgrimage sites are related not simply to significant moments of passage in the lifestory of the Buddha, but also to different qualities or aspects of his buddhahood.

The Rewards of Pilgrimage.

It can be argued that all this talk of *anusmṛti* makes most sense, in the context of monastic meditative practice (which does not correspond to generalized monastic practice). The Pali text and T.7, however, make it clear that the four sites are to be visited not only by monks and nuns but by laymen and laywomen as well. And here

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42 One is reminded here of the famous scene at the descent of the Buddha from Saṃkāśya when Utpalavarṇā and others vie to go to the site to see the Buddha in person, while Subhūti is content to stay in his cave because he has already seen the Buddha with his *dharma*-eye. For sources, see Lamotte 1949-80: 633-635n.

43 T.6.188b.1-3. These recollections make good sense in terms of the actual biography of the Buddha.   What is emphasized at his birth is his physical body and its glory—the result of countless previous lives of merit making. At his enlightenment, what is stressed is his obtaining of the last three (sometimes all six) of the super-powers or knowledges (*abhijñā*), especially the memory of previous births, the divine eye, and the eradication of the four *āsravas*. His first sermon at Sarnath reflects his compassionate act of saving all sentient beings. And, at his death, we see a transition to the focus on his Dharma, his teaching.

44 T.1.26a.9-12 = German translation, Weller 1940: 179.

I would like to turn to the very end of the Buddha's recommendation in the Pali text, where he promises that Buddhists who die in the course of making the pilgrimage to these sites, or after having made it, will by virtue of their merit be reborn in heaven (or in the favourable human state).[45]

This brief statement (which is found with variants in other versions of the passage) is rather striking. On the one hand, it may simply have been inserted to make clear the meritorious nature of this new practice – pilgrimage – and to guarantee its place among other effective good acts of devotion.[46] The appeal of a better rebirth to the laity and many monastics is clear – but what about those "mind-cultivating" monks and nuns seriously engaged in meditative practice? Interestingly, the Dīrghāgama, in its version of this passage, specifies that all who "go on pilgrimage to these places and pay reverence to these many *stūpa*s will after death be reborn in heaven, *except for those who attain the way.*"[47]

Bareau makes light of this specification as being patently obvious, something that goes without saying,[48] but the same indication appears in the Sanskrit text where we are told that heaven will be the destiny of those pilgrims who are still "with remainder" (*sopadhiśeṣa*) when they die.[49] It is possible, then, that we have here an indication of two alternative rewards for pilgrimage to these sites: a good rebirth (in heaven or as a human) for those still on the path, or *parinirvāṇa* for those who are already enlightened or become so at the site.

In this regard, the Sanskrit is interesting for an additional reason. It calls those who go on pilgrimage to these sites "attendants of shrines" (*caityaparicāraka*) or "worshippers of shrines" (*caityavandaka*) and has the Buddha declare that all those who "die in my presence" (*mamāntike kālaṃ kariṣyanti*) – presumably meaning at the pilgrimage site – will go to heaven.[50] This appears to be a variant on the Pali's indication that death en route will result in such a rebirth. The theme of death on the way to or at the pilgrimage site seems further reinforced in the Sanskrit's specification earlier that devotees at these places should practice *anusmṛti* "for the rest of their lives" (*yāvajjivam*).[51]

Gregory Schopen has proposed that we see in all this further evidence of the Buddha's "actual presence" at sacred sites, and that we compare these sites to Hindu *tīrtha*s, to which pilgrimage, while living, is meritorious, and pilgrimage in death, is soteriological.[52] In this light, and in the context of his claims about "burial ad sanctos"

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45 D. 2: 140-41 = English translation, Walshe 1987: 264.
46 Indeed, in T.7.199c.10f., Ānanda further asks the Buddha to proclaim this new fact. See Bareau 1971: 32.
47 T.1.26a.12-13.
48 Bareau 1971: 32,
49 Waldschmidt 1950-51, 3: 390.
50 Waldschmidt 1950-51, 3: 388, 390.
51 Waldschmidt 1950-51, 3: 388.
52 Schopen 2005: 364.

in Buddhism, some forms of pilgrimage would be undertaken to Buddhist sites in order to die there or some might take place posthumously, by the transportation and enshrinement of one's remains there.

Tentative Speculative Conclusion

This brief examination of traditions around the Buddha's establishment of the four sites of pilgrimage has perhaps raised more questions than it has answered. At this point, I feel like someone just starting out on a jigsaw puzzle: all the pieces (hopefully) have been turned over, but how they fit together is not yet completely clear. But, in lieu of a definitive conclusion, let me describe one possible picture.

The origins of Buddhist pilgrimage may date back to the time of the Buddha and may lie in the habit of monks travelling to see him (wherever he was) at the end of the rains-retreat. The Pali *Vinaya* and Buddhaghosa specify this as a common custom,[53] and our sources appear to assume it. This would have been a purely monastic practice, in which the physical presence of the Buddha defined the place of pilgrimage, and it affords us a minimal definition of pilgrimage as "a journey to see the Buddha."

Such an understanding still held over after the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*, but it became necessary to find other ways of defining that "presence" and that "sight" of the Buddha and the places where it could be experienced. So, either because of their importance in the life of the Buddha, or out of a desire for distinction from other traditions, or to clarify different aspects of the Buddha's career and accomplishments, or for whatever reasons, the four sites of Lumbinī, Bodhgaya, Sarnath and Kuśinagarī were chosen. The Aśokāvadāna affirms the importance of these four in the attention it claims Aśoka directed towards them. Pilgrimage to these new sites was seen as being practicable by all devout Buddhists, whether monastic or lay, male or female. They were thought of as places that could variously move or inspire devotees or cause them to "see" or to recall or to hear testimony about the Blessed One. They may also have been seen as good places to die or be buried.

Not everyone, however, thought that actual pilgrimage to these sites was necessary. Some felt that a sort of mental pilgrimage was possible simply by vividly recalling the qualities the Buddha exhibited at these sites. Such mental recollection (or visualization) could sometimes inspire actual pilgrimage to these places, or be carried out after actual pilgrimage to them. In this way, different recollections of different Buddha-qualities brought different places to mind, and, conversely, different places brought different recollections of different Buddha-qualities. Religious emotions and experiences may well have varied from place to place, though altogether, the sites and recollections could help form a total picture of the Buddha. Whatever the local experience, however, pilgrimage to these sites was fundamentally soteriological, resulting either in a favorable rebirth or in escape from *saṃsāra*.

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53 See above.

Abbreviations:

BuvA   Buddhavaṃsaṭṭhakathā; see Horner 1978.
D   Dīgha Nikāya; see Carpenter 1911.
DA   Dīgha Nikāya Aṭṭhakathā; see Stede 1971.
Div   Divyāvadāna; see Cowell, Neil 1886.
MPNS   Mahāparinirvāṇa sūtra.
MSV   Mūlasarvāstivāda vinaya.
T   Taishō shinshū daizōkyō.
Vin   Vinaya piṭaka; Oldenberg 1969-1984.

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WHEN PEREGRINUS IS NOT PILGRIM: THE CHINESE "PILGRIMS'" RECORDS – A REVISION OF LITERARY GENRE AND ITS CONTEXT

MAX DEEG

Studies of Buddhist pilgrimage in India in the first millennium of the Christian era certainly would have taken a different direction without a number of source texts that originated from outside of the subcontinent. What comes to one's mind almost immediately, if one speaks of Buddhist pilgrimage in the first millennium of the Christian era, are the reports of Chinese Buddhist monastic travellers to India: Faxian 法顯 (trav. 399-412 or 413)[1], Song Yun 宋雲 (and Huisheng 惠生; trav. 518-521?)[2], Xuanzang 玄奘 (600 0r 602-664; trav. 629-645)[3], Yijing 義淨 (635-713; trav. 671-692)[4], Huichao 惠(慧)超 (trav. ca.720-727)[5], Wukong 悟空 (trav. 751-790)[6], and others[7], whose reports have either not survived or come down to us in fragments. Their reports are frequently described as 'pilgrimage records'. Their travelogues or itineraries are very often taken to reflect and represent Buddhist pilgrimage *kat exochen* and the fact that at least three of the papers in this volume (Strong, Wang, and the present article) will deal with, or refer to, these texts underlines their importance.

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1 Gaoseng-Faxian-zhuan 高僧法顯傳, "Biography of the Eminent Monk Faxian", or Foguo-ji 佛國記, "Reports on Buddhist Kingdoms" (T.2085; see also Bangwei Wang's article in this volume). On Faxian see Deeg 2005 in the bibliography of which is given an extensive list of editions and translations of all the texts.

2 Song Yun's report is preserved in the Luoyang-jialan-ji 洛陽伽藍記, "Records of the Monateries of Luoyang" (T.2092). On Huisheng and his record see Deeg 2007.

3 Xuanzang's record is the Datang-xiyu-ji 大唐西域記, "Records of the Western Regions of [the Dynasty] of the Great Tang" (T.2087), and the other major source his biography, Datang-ciensi-sanzang-fashi-zhuan 大唐慈恩寺三藏法師傳, "Biography of the Tripiṭaka-Dharma Master of the Cien-Monastery of [the Dynasty] of the Great Tang" (T.2053), by his disciple Huili revised later by Yancong.

4 Yijing's report on monasticism in South and South-East Asia, Nanhai-jigui-neifa-zhuan 南海寄歸內法傳, "Record of the Inner Law Sent Back from the Southern Sea" (T.2125); a collection of biographies of Chinese monks who went to India to "seek the dharma" (*qiufa*; on this term see below) Datang-qiufa-gaoseng-zhuan 大唐求法高僧傳, "Biographies of Eminent Monks Searching for the Dharma of [the Dynasty of] the Great Tang" (T.2066).

5 T.2089.1.

6 T.2089.2.

7 See Chavannes 1903: 430ff.

In my paper I do not intend to completely demolish the notion of pilgrimage in relation to the Chinese "pilgrim" records and their authors – this would be an almost Sisyphean task in the light of the well-established use of the words pilgrims and pilgrimage in this context[8], but instead I wish to open up the academic discourse and the use of these sources to a new understanding, which so far has been very much prevented by the uncritical application of the concept of pilgrimage.[9] One could question the value of such a deconstruction and suggest that it was both hypercritical and futile, but my counter argument would be that, when the texts are uncritically thrown in one basket and treated like quarries from which one can break stones for whatever purpose one likes, the essential aspects of the texts are neglected and their interpretation – or very often rather isolated parts of them – is flawed.

Discussing mainly texts (see also Hegarty) I would like to place my focus on questions of genre (see also Ramble) and context. For this purpose, I take genre in a pragmatic and rather broad sense as a form of literature in the framework of which elements of form, content, intentionality, and the intended audience are shared[10]. This implies that genre here is a heuristic tool for comparison and interpretation in a wider cultural and literary context; in this case, that of Chinese literary activity, let us say, between the early 5th (Faxian's record) and 9th century (Wukong's report)[11]. It also suggests that I am not looking for emic literary categories and discourses –

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8   See, for instance, the discussion in the article "Buddhist Literature" (by Helwig Schmidt-Glintzer and Victor H. Mair) Mair 2001: 165, where the travelogues are presented as a subcategory of Buddhist historiography; here the monks are called pilgrims (and Yijing's description of South Asian monasticism, the Nanhai-jigui-neifa-zhuan, oddly enough is called a report of the monk's travels in South and South-East Asia).

9   This criticism could also be extended to the ubiquitous view that the famous tour to visit different teachers by Sudhana in the Avataṃsaka-sūtra is a pilgrimage; while this may be true for a very loose and metaphorical interpretation of the pilgrimage concept – as an educational journey – it does not really substantiate, I would argue, our understanding of what the message and intention of the text really is. On the interpretational level "pilgrimage" (and "pilgrim") here becomes an empty cartridge that claims to give meaning but rather hides a lot of meaning by blocking the view on other layers of the text.

10 I cannot enter into a discussion on modern genre theory which has an even approach, reflected, for example, in Bawarshi, Reiff 2010: xi: "Many aspects of communication, social arrangements, and human meaning-making are packaged in genre recognition. Genres are associated with "sequences of thought, styles of self-representation, author-audiences stances and relations, specific contents and organizations, epistemologies and ontologies, emotions and pleasures, speech acts and social accomplishments. Genres shape regularized communicative practices that bind together organizations, institutions, and activity systems. Genres by identifying contexts and plans for action also focus our cognitive attention and draw together the dynamics of our mind in pursuit of specific communicative relations, thereby exercising and developing particular ways of thinking."

11 Boulton's PhD thesis (1982), despite its title and unfortunately, is useless since it neither addresses critically the question of genre nor does it go beyond paraphrasing the content of the records (obviously mainly on the basis of translations).

which doubtlessly existed in early Medieval China[12] – but for the means to establish the texts in question in a coherent context. This being said, I am not suggesting, before a critical evaluation, that the corpus of texts that are bundled together as "Chinese Pilgrim Records" form a consistent genre of their own; the individual texts display, I would argue, multi-generic tendencies. In fact, this is the reason why some of the texts have partially survived: Song Yun's record was incorporated into the description of the monastic sites of Luoyang, and Wang Xuance's 王玄策 (fl. 646-661) report is only preserved in fragments scattered across Buddhist encyclopaedic literature. It is not so much the form or context that led scholars from the middle of the 19th century onwards to group these texts together as pilgrim records, but one shared and common feature of the actions of their authors / protagonists: they had all travelled to the Western Regions, including India.

I will investigate the intentions and purposes behind these texts and how they were perceived by their respective audiences[13]. Perhaps most saliently for the present volume, I will consider to what extent they can reveal – if anything – about Buddhist pilgrimage. In this, I am sharing a basic concern with Charles Ramble's analysis of Tibetan sources in the present volume. I will try to identify to what extent, and if, where (or in which circumstance) the authors and their cultural environment saw themselves as "pilgrims" in the sense the term is used in modern academic discourse. I will also try to relocate the texts in their intentional and cultural contexts, and to trace the way in which they became 'pilgrimage texts' and the way their authors became idealized Buddhist 'pilgrims'. They clearly were travellers – *peregrini*, "travellers and foreigners" in the original sense of the word (see Deeg, Introduction) – but, I would argue, this does not necessarily make them pilgrims in the conventional or academic meaning of the term. If this is the case, the question still remains: 'should the documents they produced stop being called "pilgrims' records?' I will argue that there are two ways of answering this question: from the auctorial standpoint, I would deny such an attribution, but on the side of the reception of the texts and their usage, there was indeed a tendency to take them as descriptions of pilgrimages, both for their documentary value and the construction of their authors as something equivalent to "pilgrims". I would still insist, however, that, without a clear distinction of these

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12 For traditional categories of genre see, for example, Owen 1992, and the respective passages in Mair 2001, Luo 2011.

13 This seems to correspond to a more dynamic understanding of genre as formulated in Bawarshi, Reiff 2010: 4: "At various times and in various areas of study, genre has been defined and used mainly as a classificatory tool, a way of sorting and organizing kinds of texts and other cultural objects. But more recently and, again, across various areas of study, genre has come to be defined less as a means of organizing kinds of texts and more as a powerful, ideologically active, and historically changing shaper of texts, meanings, and social actions. From this perspective, genres are understood as forms of cultural knowledge that conceptually frame and mediate how we understand and typically act within various situations. This view recognizes genres as both organizing and generating kinds of texts and social actions, in complex, dynamic relation to one another."

different hermeneutical levels, of the texts and their authors, important aspects of both will continue to be neglected, and the consequence will be that the resultant – romanticized – view, which is promulgated in those academic disciplines that deal with these texts (*viz.* history, art history, archaeology, history of literature) will persist and contnue a distorting effect on the scholarly discourse.

I would like to start by quoting a critical remark by the late Dutch scholar Erich Zürcher on these Chinese travellers:

> In most cases, and certainly in the most illustrious ones, the desire to visit and adore the holy places of Buddhism played a secondary role; the word "pilgrim" with the strong connotation of worship, longing and devotion is hardly appropriate to denote these travelling monks who, according to the Chinese standard expression, primarily went "to obtain the doctrine", 求法.[14]

Although Zürcher seems to overemphasize the rational motifs of studying and the quest for learning, he certainly has a point which is supported by the modern Chinese notion of these travellers: they are called *xueseng* 學僧, "studying monks" and their activities *liuxue* 留學, "staying abroad for the purpose of studies"[15]. While the importance of religious motifs for the Chinese Buddhist travellers to undertake their year-long and dangerous journeys cannot be denied, I would argue that individual religious motifs alone do not make a pilgrimage. I myself have reached the conclusion that, if not refraining outright from the use of the term, one should, at least, call these monks "pilgrims" (making use of inverted commas to indicate the questionable nature of the term). I have to confess, indeed, that I myself have changed my position on this issue over time – since their set of motivations seems to have been quite complex and multiple, and not at all a uniform one. The motif of seeing the sacred places was certainly very important, but not the most important reasons for the challenging journeys they undertook.

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14 Zürcher 1972: 61f.; see similar Gernet 1988: 191. Christoper Schipper 1960: 339, emphasises as the main purpose the studies in Indian monastic centres of learning. Paul Magnin, in: Chélini, Branthomme 1987: 284f., retains the term pilgrimage (*pèlerinages*), but at the same time states: "Enfin, ce prodigieux mouvement en direction de l'Inde et des grands centres bouddhiques suscita peu à peu le désir de visiter les lieux où vécut le Bouddha. Ce souci de mettre ses pas dans ceux du Bouddha n'était certes pas absent de la pensée des premiers voyageurs, mais il demeurait secondaire par rapport au but essentiel que était la quête de la Loi." A strong *caveat* has also been raised by Barrett 1990: 99: "It is customary, and necessary, to caution against depicting their journey's as pilgrimages in the conventional sense: the principal motive which impelled these three [i.e., Faxian, Xuanzang, and Yijing] to risk an early death in a foreign land was an ardent desire to bring back more of the Buddha's word to China, in order to alleviate spiritual darkness in their own home country."

15 Historically this term was used by the Japanese monks who traveled to Tang China to study Buddhism: see Tō-daiwajō-tōsen-den 唐大和上東征傳, "Biography of the great Ācārya [Ganjin] of the Tang Travelling to the East", by Genkai 元開 (722-785) from the year 779 (T.2089.988a.29 and b.6).

The strongest emphasis on religious striving is embedded in the term *qiufa* 求法, "searching / striving for the *dharma*"[16], used by Zürcher in the quotation above in an almost technical way. But even here the main connotation is not the search for the Buddha and his sacred traces/places (*shengji* 聖跡), which is the overall aim of pilgrimage, but for collecting, in the widest sense, his teaching (in form of acquiring, studying and translating texts). The multiple examples of this term in "canonical" Buddhist literature show that it had a very generic meaning. In the 99th *sūtra* of the Madhyamāgama / Zhong-ahan-jing 中阿含經, the Qiufa-jing 求法經 (T.26.569c. 23ff.), corresponding to the Dhammadāyāda-sutta (no.3 of the Pāli Majjhimanikāya), for instance, the Buddha talks about the correct way to follow him and his *dharma* to his main disciples. The Chinese term *qiufa* 求法 here corresponds to the Pāli compound *dhammadāyāda*, "heir of the *dharma*" (as opposite to *āmisadāyāda*, "heirs in material things")[17], and certainly reflects a strong commitment to the *dharma* which finally leads to the result the Pāli term expresses: to become a direct hearer of the Buddha's *dharma*. And even when the term is used in connection with travelling to the West (including the Japanese monks studying in China) it does, in a widest possible interpretation, mean the general activities connected to the study of the *dharma* which could, of course, include visits to the sacred places. A brief view through the biographies collected in Yijing's gives ample examples of what *qiufa* was considered to consist of: the motivation of the monks was hardly the purpose of exclusively visiting the "spiritual (or sacred) traces" (*lingji* 靈跡 or *shengji* 聖跡) but to "collect" and transmit the *dharma*.

The Chinese documents that definitely and clearly refer to pilgrimage[18] (for the purpose of achieving merit from visiting sacred places, either for the travellers themselves or commissioned by others, deceased or living - including emperors), are the few Chinese inscriptions from Bodhgayā, which are dated to around the Song period[19]. Interestingly, none of them contains the term *qiufa,* but instead they speak of the veneration of the *bodhi* throne (*bodhimaṇḍa* or *vajrāsana*, Chin. *jin'gang-zuo* 金剛座) by composing eulogies, donating robes (*kāṣāya*, Chin. *jiasha* 袈裟), or erecting (commemorative) stone *stūpas* (*shita* 石塔) – all acts clearly indicate the intended and mostly accepted purpose of pilgrimage: visiting a sacred place for the purpose of acquiring religious benefit or merit (Skt. *puṇya*; Chin. *gongde* 功德 or *fu* 福).

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16 See Hirakawa 1997: 1931b.f., s.v.: *dharmakāma, dharmaparyeṣṭi, dharmārthika*, or for *qiufa-zhe* 求法者 *dharmagaveṣin* or *arthika*.

17 Bhikkhu Bodhi 97. A discussion of the different versions of the *sūtra* is given in Anālayo 2011: 1, 34ff.

18 I do not know of any clear-cut Chinese term which corresponds to pilgrimage. The term *xunli* 巡禮, pronounced *junrai* in Japanese – in the title of Ennin's diary rather *junrai-gyō* 巡禮行– and used for pilgrimage, is used for the act of veneration or circumambulation of sacred places (*shengji* 聖跡) or *stūpas* (e.g. in Yijing's Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya translation, T.1443.929c.9; T.1447.1054a.22; T.1452.452c.13; Xuanzang's Biography, T.2053.236a.19f., 241c.2).

19 See Chavannes 1896 and 1897; Bagchi 1951: 79, 86ff. The study of the inscriptions have been neglected since; but see recently Gongkatsang, Willis 2013.

To come back to the question of genre and whether or not the texts constitute a, or belong to, a closed genre, another way of categorizing the texts is – and has been – under the label "travel literature" (Chin. *youji* 遊記)[20]. If we understand "travel literature" or "travel writing" as an open genre, in the sense of Brummett,[21] or as a "genre composed of other genres"[22], most of the records fit in quite nicely, and this conceptualisation is even apt to bridge the gap between the different intentionalities, contents and forms of the texts. Records of pilgrimage are a sub-genre of travel literature, but in order to be so – I would argue – they have to reflect primarily the intention to visit and venerate sacred places, as is, for example, the case in the early travel books of Egeria (travelled ca. 381-384) and Paula (travelled 382-384; written by Jerome) and others, which concern the Holy Land[23]. In the context of Late Antique travel, Maribel Dietz has introduced a useful distinction between "monastic travel" and pilgrimage as such, defining the latter as "goal-centered, religious travel for an efficacious purpose"[24], and I would suggest that, in the case of the Chinese travellers, the first term is to be applied in most cases and contexts.

Since, in my opinion, the term pilgrimage has been attached to the Chinese travellers' activities in too naïve a fashion[25], though this was at a time, to be fair, when there was not the level of theoretical and meta-linguistic reflection that marks the contemporary scholarly period, it seems appropriate to first take another[26] look at what pilgrimage generally means, or can mean. One immediately thinks of Victor and Edith Turner's reflections on pilgrimage, discussed briefly in the introduction of this volume, which may be, even more briefly, repeated in the present context. The Turners applied the phases of van Gennep's rites de passage to pilgrimage and discerned "(1) separation (start of the journey), (2) the liminal stage (the journey

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20 See e.g. Mair 2001: 555f. (article "Travel Literature" by James M. Hargett), where the records are grouped together with works like the Mu-tianzi-zhuan 穆天子傳, Zhang Qian's 張騫 (lost) record, and other later texts without distinguishing the different forms and content. A similar genre of travel records are the Japanese *kikō* 紀行 of which the writings of Matsuo Bashō 松尾 芭蕉 (1644-1694) are probably the best known example: see e.g. Barnhill 2005.

21 Brummett 2009: 1: "... travel as a mode of narrative and experience, a mode that was not comprised in a simple or single genre called 'travel writing,' but rather one that was expressed in a variety of intersecting genres and a complex matrix of material and rhetorical forms."

22 Campbell 1991: 6.

23 A modern translation of Egeria's itinerary Peregrinatio ad terram sanctam is Wilkinson 1999; see also Campbell 1919: 15ff. Jerome's relatively brief account of Paula's pilgrimage is translated in Stewart, Wilson 1887.

24 Dietz 2005: 7.

25 What Dietz 2005: 6, has to say about early Christian religious travel may be applied to the Chinese "pilgrims" as well: "The title "pilgrim" has been bestowed on a wide variety of religious travelers, sometimes without careful attention to either the meaning of the term or to the precise motivation for and structure of the journey in question." An attempt to open up – or rather: to keep open – the concept of pilgrimage, not least to claim continuity between Antique and early Christianity, is made by Elsner, Rutherford 2006: 1ff. ("Introduction").

26 See Introduction.

itself, the sojourn at the shrine, and the encounter with the sacred), and (3) reaggregation (the homecoming)." Pilgrimage is supposed to differ from the phenomenon of initiation by the fact that it is constituted by a journey, a physical and social displacement rather than focusing on a mental or spiritual journey, and by the fact that there is normally – with exception of the Muslim *ḥajj* – no clear-cut and outwardly recognisable change of social status involved. According to the Turners the middle phase of a pilgrimage is marked by "an awareness of temporary release from social ties and by a strong sense of communitas ("community, fellowship"), as well as by a preference for simplicity of dress and behaviour, by a sense of ordeal, and by reflection on the basic meaning of one's religion."[27]

I do not want and certainly do not need to enter into a critique of some of the problematic presuppositions made by the Turners (see Introduction) but only want to point out that none of the points which they stress – with the exception of the rather prosaic statement that a journey has the three stages of a start, the performance itself and an end – are really relevant for the Chinese monks who left us travelogues: most of them undertook their journey without a constant party of co-travellers, were not temporarily released from social ties, and the journey was not seen or noted, as far as one can tell, as a "rite de passage". In the case of Xuanzang, Yijing and Huichao, Turner's notorious "center out there" as the goal of pilgrimage is the North-East Indian monastery of Nālandā, which is, although without any doubt a famous centre of Buddhist learning, certainly not what the Turners describe or what is usually taken as a pilgrimage center: with the "spiritual magnetism" of a sacred object (image or relic) and the correspondent ancillary phenomena, such as apparitions, healings, collection of merit (*puṇya*, in the Buddhist case), etc. In the light of their stays of several years in this monastery, one may question the appropriateness of the general attribute 'pilgrim' for these Chinese travellers for most of their time abroad. To come up with a comparable example from the Western context: nobody is likely to call Saint Jerome, that is: Hieronymos of Stridon (347?-420)[28], a pilgrim because he lived in the Holy Land for considerable periods of his life – and at one point or another, of course, travelled there and visited the holy places[29]. In fact, one could ask: what made Xuanzang, a prolific exegete, commentator and translator of Buddhist scriptures, a pilgrim in the eyes of his interpreters, while Jerome, although he certainly was on a pilgrimage at some stage of his life, became known and famous as translator and theological author? The answer cannot only be as simple as Jerome not having written a travelogue of his own.

Again, I do not want to deny that the Chinese Buddhist travellers were pilgrims when they visited the sacred sites while staying in India, and it is also clear that very often they describe pilgrimage places and sometimes even practices involved with

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27 Quotations from Edith Turner's article "Pilgrimage" in Mircea Eliade's Encyclopedia of Religion, 2nd edition.
28 On Jerome see Rebenich 2002.
29 On Jerome's travels to the sacred sites see Weingarten 2005: 193ff.

pilgrimage. But the main purpose of the Chinese travellers seems to have been to study and to learn Buddhist practices and to acquire Buddhist texts to bring them home and to translate them. This is clearly expressed by Faxian at the beginning of his text:

> When Faxian stayed in Chang'an [he] deplored [the fact] that Vinaya-piṭaka was uncomplete [in China]. Thereupon, in the first year of the era Hongshi, in the *jihai*-year (399), [he] agreed with Huijing 慧景, Daozheng 道整, Huiying 慧應, and Huiwei 慧嵬 [that they would] go to India together in search of the precepts.[30]

A similar point that the transfer of knowledge was the main purpose of his journey is made at the end of Faxian's record:

> [Faxian] had thought [that] the masters [in China] had not heard everything [about the Western Regions], [and therefore he] did not care for his own life and did return across the ocean despite the utmost dangerous [journey]. Luckily [he] was helped in these dangers by the mysterious power of Three Venerable [Jewels]. Therefore [he could] write down what [he] had experienced, [since he] wanted the sages [in China] to participate in [what he] had heard and seen.[31]

In most cases, the travelogues, due to factors such as incompleteness, shortness, do not explicitly reveal the real reason(s) and motivation of the journey, but we know in some cases, e.g. of Song Yun and Senghui in the early 6th and of Wang Xuance in the middle of the 7th century, that they were on semi-official or official imperial missions[32].

Another factor that raises some doubts if some of the Chinese monks going to India can be called pilgrims (conceiving of themselves as such – whatever the Chinese term they or their contemporaries may have had), is the fact that they stayed in India for a considerable period of time and did not return home to China after visiting the holy places. One can, at best, speak of pilgrimages inside of India, which then are not very well documented as such in their reports (except in the cases of Faxian and Yijing). The extended stay in India, linked to what has been called the "borderland complex" by Antonino Forte, Tansen Sen, and others – a reluctance to return to a home country which, in soteriological terms, was considered to be a borderland (Chin. *biandi* 邊地) –, was obviously more ubiquitous than the preserved travelogues of our "returners" imply. Yijing's collection of biographies of monks "searching the *dharma*" indicates this quite clearly by the number of monks who went to India and either stayed or died there, but already earlier – in Faxian's travelogue – this is clearly

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30 T.2085.857a.6ff.　法顯昔在長安，慨律藏殘缺，於是遂以弘始二年歲在己亥，與慧景，道整，慧應，慧嵬等同契，至天竺尋求戒律。

31 T.2085.866b.20ff. 竊惟諸師未得備聞，是以不顧微命，浮海而還，艱難具更，幸蒙三尊威靈，危而得濟，故竹帛疏所經歷，欲令賢者同其聞見。 See Deeg 2005: 576.

32 Needham 1954: 207, has called these monks, and especially Xuanzang, „pilgrim-scholar-diplomats".

shown when his last companion, Daozheng 道整 (see above), decides to stay in Central India[33].

No doubt, the topic of pilgrimage is addressed in the texts, as can be seen by the examples presented and discussed above. But at the same time it is striking how the different genres deal with it, the records being relatively plain and descriptive while the biographies are eventfully embellished and portray the travelling as a dramatic pilgrimage[34]. Faxian, for instance, talks very briefly – and for the record in exceptionally emotional terms – about a visit to mount Gṛdhrakūṭa, the famous "Vulture Peak" near Rājagṛha, that clearly bears, with its description of the ritualized veneration and the topical emotional part, the features of pilgrimage:

> In the New City [of Rājagṛha] Faxian bought [a supply of] incense, flowers, oil lamps [and] asked two local bhikṣus to bring [him], Faxian to the Gṛdhrakūṭa. [There he] offered flowers, incense and kindled lamps to brighten [the place]. [He] was very distressed and sad, wiped his tears and said: "Once the Buddha expounded the Śūraṅgama[sūtra] here. [Now, I], Faxian, was born [in a time when I] cannot meet the Buddha [any more]." Then [he] recited the Śūraṅgama[sūtra] in front of a rock cave, stayed one night and returned to the New City.[35]

The same event is then described, in a much more dramatic way and obviously elaborates on the Faxian-Gaoseng-zhuan, in Faxian's biography, in Huijiao's Gaoseng-zhuan (= Sengyou's Chu-sanzang-jiji):

> The next morning [Fa]xian wanted to visit the Gṛdhrakūṭa mountain. The monk in the monastery discouraged him and said: "The way is difficult and dangerous. There are also a lot of black lions roaming around which devour humans. How do you want to go there?" [Fa]xian said: "[I] have wandered here from afar over [distance of] some ten thousand [miles] and made a vow to reach the Vulture Peak. Fate is not predictable – if [I] go out or stay, there is no safety! How can I, now that the wish I harboured over years is almost

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33 T.2085.864b.29ff.　道整既到中國，見沙門法則，眾僧威儀，觸事可觀，乃追歎秦土邊地，眾僧戒律殘缺；誓言:"自今已去至得佛，願不生邊地。"故遂停不歸。法顯本心欲令戒律流通漢地，於是獨還。 ("When Daozheng came to the Middle Kingdom (madhyadeśa = Magadha) [and] saw the way of the śramaṇas, the solemn dem of the saṅgha, [and he] was full of admiration of [everything he] saw. Therefore [he] sadly thought back to the borderland of the Qin [and] the deficiencies of the rules of the saṅgha [there and] made a vow: "From now until I will reach Buddhahood [I] will not be [re]born in a borderland." Consequently [he] stayed [in India] and did not return [to China]. [Since] Faxian's original intention was to transfer the monastic code to the land of the Han [he] returned alone [to China].") Deeg 2005: 562.

34 Cp. Barrett 1990.

35 T.2085.862c. 法顯於新城中買香，華，油，燈，倩二舊比丘送法顯到耆闍崛山。華，香供養，然燈續明。慨然悲傷，收淚而言:"佛昔於此住，說首楞嚴。法顯生不值佛，但見遺跡處所而已。"即於石窟前誦首楞嚴。停止一宿，還向新城。 Deeg 2005: 552.

accomplished, give up? Although there are dangers and difficulties, I do not fear." The monks could not stop him. Thereupon they dispatched two monks to accompany him. [Fa]xian finally reached the peak of the mountain. The sun had already set when [Faxian] wanted to stay the night. The two monks were frightened; they abandoned him and returned [to their monastery]. [Fa]xian stayed alone on the mountain, burnt incense and worshipped. He was so moved [by the view of] the ancient traces as if he saw the Venerable One [himself]. When night fell three black lions came, sat down in front of [Fa]xian, licked [their] chaps [and] beat [their] tails. [Fa]xian continuously recited *sūtras* and directed [his] thoughts on the Buddha. The lions lowered [their] heads and tails [and] crouched in front of [Fa]xian's feet. [Fa]xian stroke them with [his] hand and beseeched them: "If [you] want to do me harm, wait until I have finished reciting. If [you] have come to test me then you may return right now." The lions stayed on for a while, [and] then they left.[36]

Compared with the relatively straight-forward autobiographical report the biography embellishes the events in a typical hagiographic way which emphasises the devotion and religious "courage" of the "hero" and thereby changes the simple visit into a dramatic performance of religious vision and achievement, enriching it as an "inner" pilgrimage as it were.

This focus on the individual experience of the traveller when visiting and seeing the sacred places is also projected in a topical way in Xuanzang's Biography, and in a most prominent way in Yijing's collection of biographies of *"dharma*-seeking" monks, the "Biographies of Eminent Monks Searching for the Dharma". Although the main purpose of most monks is obviously to study and collect Buddhist texts and eventually translate them into Chinese, the motivation given for undertaking the dangerous journey to India in these cases is mostly to see the "Sacred Traces", i.e. the famous Buddhist pilgrimage places connected with the Buddha's life. This motif is, however, almost used as a topos, as are the pilgrimages to the sacred places themselves: in reality they are mainly restricted to the region around Nālandā (Gṛdhrakūṭa, Bodhgayā / Mahābodhi) with Kuśinagara, the site of the *parinirvāṇa*, being the most distant of the famous places, while Śrāvastī (with the famous Jetavana monastery), Kapilavastu (the Buddha's hometown), Lumbinī (the place of the Buddha's birth), Sāketa / Sāṃkāśya (where the Buddha descended from the Trayastriṃśa Heaven after having explained the *dharma* to his deceased mother), Sārnāth (Mṛgadāva or the

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36 T.2059.337c.19ff. 顯明旦欲詣耆闍崛山。寺僧諫曰:"路甚艱阻,且多黑師子亟經噉人。何由可至?"顯曰:"遠涉數萬,誓到靈鷲。身命不期,出息非保。豈可使積年之誠既至而廢耶?雖有險難,吾不懼也!"眾莫能止,乃遣兩僧送之。顯既至山,日將曛夕,欲遂停宿。兩僧危懼,捨之而還。顯獨留山中,燒香禮拜,翹感舊跡如覩聖儀。至夜有三黑師子來,蹲顯前,舐脣搖尾。顯誦經不輟,一心念佛。師子乃低頭下尾,伏顯足前。顯以手摩之,呪曰:"若欲相害,待我誦竟;若見試者,可便退矣。"師子良久乃去。 (see also, with some differences, Chu-sanzang-jiji, T.2145.111c.25ff.); Deeg 2005: 615.

"Deer Park", the place of the first sermon) are almost never visited, although some of these are invoked as sites longed for in the original vows of the travellers before they leave China[37]. Yijing's collection of biographies includes his own "career", and since this is, as far as I can see, unique in the whole set of literature linked in some way with Chinese Buddhist monks' travels to India, I will translate the complete passage:

In the first year of the [era] Xianheng (670) [Yi]jing was in the Western Capital (Chang'an) [where he] pursued [his] studies. Together with the *dharma*-master Yichu[38] from Bingzhou[39], the *śāstra*-master Honghui from Laizhou and two or three other virtuous [monks he] agreed [to visit] the Vulture Peak [and] set their minds on [seeing] the *bodhi* tree. But Yi[chu] longed [to] go to Bingzhou [because of] the old age of his mother; master [Hong]hui met with Xuanzhan in Jiangning (Nanjing) [and] sincerely wanted to lead a secure life. When Xuankui[40] arrived in the capital [of the prefecture] of Guang[zhou] [and his] original intention was prevented [Yijing] left accompanied only by the younger monk Shanxing from Jinzhou. [Thus his] old friends in Shenzhou (i.e. China) were scattered in all directions just like that, [and his] new friends in India were still obscured and not yet met. At that time [he] loitered around [and he had] difficulties to express [his] feelings [and therefore he] drafted [a poem] based on the topic of the [ancient poem] "Four Worries"[41], omitting just two [syllables with the following] five words [pro verse]:

The ten thousand miles of my journey
[will be full] of hundreds of gloomy thought.
How [can I] order this shadow [of a body] of six feet
to pace off to the border of the five Indias?

[And more verses of] five words (to dissolve his sorrow even more):

A great general can maltreat a division,
but it is difficult to shake the will of a simple soldier.

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37 An exception is Zhihong 智弘 who visited most of the famous places (T.2066.9a.14ff.): Chavannes 1894: 137f.

38 In the Song-Gaoseng-zhuan a *śramaṇa* Yichu is mentioned as the scribe in a translation team of the Khotanese monk Tiyunbanre 提雲般若 / *dɛj-wun-pɛ:n-ɲia'*, translated as Tianzhi 天 智, "Divine Wisdom" (T.2152.369b.6f.) and therefore to be reconstructed as Devaprajñā (or the alternative name Tiyuntuorena 提雲陀若那 / *dɛj-wun-da-ɲia'-na'* / Devendrajñāna; active 689-691).

39 并州, according to the emendation of *bingbu* 并部, or rather the subsequent *bingchuan* 并川, made by Chavannes 1894: 114, note 4.

40 The monk of the biography preceding Yijing's autobiographical passage translated here. Xuankui fell ill and could not accompany Yijing on his journey as originally intended.

41 Ascribed to the Han-poet Zhang Heng 張衡 (78-139) as the classical form of a seven-syllable melancholic poem; see Chavannes 1894: 115, note 2. The poem is about the poets longing for a beautiful girl whom he cannot reach because of the hindrances of nature – this is probably the point of comparison for Yijing who is longing to go to India but is still hindered go there.

If [one] discusses the sadness of [one's] short life –
how can one achieve a full period [of life]?

Then, in the third year [of the era] Xianheng (672), [Yijing] spent the summer
retreat in the capital [of the prefecture] of Yang[zhou]. In early autumn [he]
unexpectedly met the imperial envoy of Gongzhou, Feng Xiaoquan, and
followed [him] to the capital of [the prefecture] of Guang[zhou] [where they]
met the captain of a Persian vessel at a agreed time and went southward. [Yi]
jing then received another instruction from the imperial envoy to go to
Gangzhou [where he] once again acted as [Yijing's] *dānapati*, and together
with [his] younger brothers, the imperial envoys Xiaoyan and Xiaozhen, and
the ladies Ning and Peng and [their] families [he] bestowed presents [on him];
[they all] contended in giving [him] supply and each [of them] gave [him]
exquisite food [so that he] would not lack anything on [his] travel across the
ocean [and because they] feared [that he would have] to suffer hardness in
[these] dangerous places; [they] were serious in [their] kindness like parents;
[they] accommodated [everything] according to the wish of the orphan (i.e.
Yijing), together were [his] refuge [and] let [him reach] the excellent places
[in India]. That [he] could visit and venerate [what he] wished for is because
of the effort of the family Peng. But the question of [his] leaving or staying
troubled the [minds of] the *saṅgha* and laypeople of Lingnang (Guangdong
and Guangxi), [and] the brilliant scholars of the north were distressed by [the
thought] of [his] departure. On the eleventh month [Yijing] turned towards
[the stellar constellations of] Yi [and] Zhen (i.e. south) [and] turned his back
on Panyu (Guangdong), directed [his] daydreams to the Deer Park[42], and with
a deep sigh gazed into the distance [in direction of] the Cock[foot] Peak[43]. At
that time the northern wind began to blow in direction of the vermillion region
(i.e. south), [and] plenty of canvas was drawn up the two [masts]. [Yijing]
abandoned the northern regions with alone the instrument to measure the wind
flying. For a long time [the ship] was dividing the vast sea; great mountain-
like waves [floated] turbulently across the ocean, [leaving the ship] slanting
through huge ravines [of water], with cloud-like waves towering up to the sky.
After less than twenty days [they] reached Foshi[44]. [He] stayed [there] for six
months and gradually studied the "Knowledge of Sounds"[45]. The king
supported [him and] send [him] to the kingdom of Moluoyu[46] (now changed

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42 Luyuan 鹿園, Skt. Mṛgadāva, near Vārāṇasī where the Buddha turned into motion the wheel of
    the *dharma*, i.e. made his first predication.

43 Jifeng 鷄峯, Skt. Kukkuṭa[pada]giri, where Mahākāśyapa is waiting for the advent of the future
    Buddha Maitreya.

44 佛逝 / *but-dziaʰ*, short for Shilifoshi 室利佛逝 / *ṣit-liʰ-but-dziaʰ*, an abbreviated and
    probably local form of Śrī Vijaya (?Bujay?]: Coedès 1968: 82.

45 *shengming* 聲明, Skt. *śabdavidyā*, i.e. studying language in general.

46 末羅瑜 / *mat-la-juă*, Skt. Malāyu.

into [the territory of] Śrī Vijaya) [where] again [he] stayed two months [and then] turned to Jiecha[47]. When the twelfth month had arrived the sails were set [and Yijing] embarked on the king's ship again and gradually moved towards Eastern India. Going from Jietu in northern [direction] for more than ten days [one] arrives in the kingdom of the naked people; turning to the east and overviewing the shore [over a distance of] one or perhaps two miles [one] sees coconut trees and betel forests, lovely to behold. [When] the [people] there saw a ship arriving [they] competed in embarking several hundred boats, all carrying coconuts, bananas, utensils [made] of rattan and bamboo to trade with. What they like is just iron [stuff, and] for [a piece] as big as two fingers [one] obtains five to ten coconuts. The men are all naked, [and] the women cover [their] body with a piece of leaf. The merchants jokingly offer them clothes, but [they] wave [their] hands disapprovingly and do not use [them]. [Yijing] obtained the information that this kingdom forms the south-western border of Shuchuan. Although this kingdom does not produce iron, there is still a small amount of gold and silver. [The people] only eat coconut and yam roots, and there is not much rice or grain. Therefore iron is the most precious [material] (in this kingdom iron is called *luhe*[48]). The people have no black colour and [their] bodies are of medium size. [They] are very skilful at weaving rattan baskets [of a quality] that cannot be gotten anywhere else. If [one] does not do trade with [them they] immediately shoot poisonous arrows [and] who is hit by [one] will not survive. Going perhaps half a month from there in north-western direction [Yijing] finally arrived in the kingdom of Danmolidi[49] which is the southern border of East India and is about sixty stades from the Mahābodhi and Nālandā. There [Yijing] first met master Mahāyānapradīpa[50] and stayed there for one year to learn Sanskrit and to study the linguistic treatises[51]. After that [he] and master [Mahāyāna]dīpa took the straight route in western [direction together with] some hundred merchants [who] went to Central India. Ten days [journey] from the Mahābodhi [they had to] cross over big mountains and swampy [terrain and] the path was difficult and dangerous to travel [and one] must [go as] a group of many people, [be it] in disorder, and

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47 羯茶 / *kiat-drɛ:*. This has been identified as modern Kedah on the Malay peninsula the ancient Skt. name of which was Kaṭāha: Coedès 1968: 40.

48 盧呵 / *lɔ-xa*, Skt. *loha*.

49 耽摩立底 / *tam-ma-lip-tej*, Skt. Tāmralipti.

50 Dasheng-deng 大乘燈, a Chinese from Aizhou 愛州, whose biography is reported earlier in the text and whose name is transliterated as Muheyenabodiyibo 莫訶夜那鉢地已波 / *mɔʰ-xa-jiaʰ-na'- pat-diʰ-ji'-pa* (T.2066.4b.18f.); Chavannes 1894: 68f.

51 *shenglun* 聲論, i.e. the text by which the basics (e.g. sounds) of the language were taught. I follow Wang's edition instead of T. *shengwen-lun* 聲聞論 which would imply the study of Hīnayāna *śrāvakaśāstra* which would make sense as well, since Yijing had already studied the *śabdavidyā* earlier in Śri Vijaya (see above).

avoid proceeding on one's own. Then [Yi]jing fell sick with a seasonal disease
[and his] body became exhausted, [and he] sought help from the merchants'
band [which they] could not grant under the given circumstances. Although
[he] tried as hard as [he] could to move forward [he] had to rest a hundred
[times on a distance of] five miles. At that time there were about twenty monks
from the monastery of Nālandā [who] had left in advance together with the
eminent [Mayāyāna]pradīpa [and Yijing] had been left behind alone to walk
through the dangers. Then, in the late afternoon mountain brigands arrived,
holding [their] bows [and] shouting aloud, watching and harassing [him];
[they] first snatched [his] upper garment, then took away [his] lower garment
until only [his] girdle [was left and] then even seized [it]. At that very moment
[Yijing] really thought that [he must] pass away forever from the world of the
humans [and could] not fulfil [his] intention to visit and pay respect [to the
sacred places and that his] body would be cut in pieces by the sharp points [of
the brigands' spears and he would not] fulfil the hope [he] had harboured
originally. Furthermore there was a tradition in that kingdom that if [one]
could get hold of a white-coloured man [one should] kill [and] sacrifice [him]
to the gods. [When Yijing] pondered on these words [he] became even more
depressed. [He] threw [himself] into the mud [and] smeared [his] whole body
[with it], covered [his] body with leaves, and slowly walked away, leaning on
[his] staff. At sunset the camp [of the caravan] was still far away, and it was
just on the second watch of the night that [he] reached [his] companions.
[Yijing] heard the eminent [Mahāyāna]pradīpa regularly calling out outside of
the village, and when [they] saw each other [Mahāyānapradīpa] ordered [the
others] to give [Yijing] a garment, [had him] wash [his] body in a pond and
only then [he] entered the village. [They] walked from there several days [and
when they] first arrived in the monastery of Nālandā [he] venerated the
Mūla[gandhakoṭi]stūpa[52], then ascended on Gṛdhrakūṭa to see the place [of the
traces] of the woollen garment[53]; then [he] went to the Mahābodhī temple to
venerate the true image [of the Buddha where he] made a kāṣāya of the size of
the Tathāgata's [statue] from the silk cloth [which he] had brought as a gift

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52 Muluojiantuojuzhi 慕攞健陀俱胝 / *moʰ-la-gianʰ-da-kuś-tri. According to Yijing's earlier
    description of Nālandā-vihāra one of the main stūpas at Nālandā (T.2055.6b.2ff.): 於門南畔可
    二十步有窣堵波，高百尺許，是世尊昔日夏三月安居處。梵名慕攞健陀俱胝，唐云根
    本香殿矣。 ("About twenty paces to the south of the gate, at the side [of the street], is a stūpa,
    more than one hundred feet high, [marking] the place where the World-Honored One formerly
    spent the three months of [his] summer retreat. In Sanskrit it is called Mūlagandhakoṭi, in [the
    language of] the Tang this means "Temple of the Essential Incense"."); see Chavannes 1894:
    94, note 6.

53 Xuanzang reports a stone on which the Buddha, after a rainstorm, dried his robes which left
    their traces on the bolder: T.2087.921b.19f.; Ji 1985: 728.

from the monks and laypeople east of the mountains[54] [and] himself dressed [the statue] with it. [He] offered several ten thousands of silk gauze umbrellas brought on behalf of *vinaya* master Xuan from Puzhou, did the prostrations the *dhyāna* master Andao from Caozhou had asked [him] to perform [in front] of the image of the Mahābodhi, at and then spread [his] five limbs on the ground in single-minded devotion, first [for the sake] of [gaining] the four favours for China and more generally for the living beings in the *dharma* realm. [He] made the vow of meeting the dignified Maitreya at the first assembly [after his enlightenment under] the *nāgapuṣpa* [tree and] to dedicate [himself] fully to the true teaching [in order] to obtain the immortal wisdom. Thereupon [he] venerated all the sacred traces, passed by the monastery and arrived at Kuśi[nagara]; wherever [he] went [he showed] admiration and sincerity. [He] entered the Deer Park [and] stepped on the Cock [Feet] Peak. [He] stayed at the monastery of Nālandā for ten years on [his] search for *sūtra*s before [he] turned to talking about returning and went back to Tāmralipti. Before [he] arrived there [he] fell prey to a disastrous robbery and barely evaded being stabbed to death. Thereupon [he] went on board of a ship [that] passed through the kingdom of Jiecha. The Tripiṭaka of Sanskrit books which [he] brought with him [comprised] more than five hundred thousand verses [which] would make up thousand fascicles in Chinese translation [which he] had [with him] during [his] stay in the kingdom of [Śrī] Vijaya.[55]

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54 *shandong* 山東, according to Chavannes 1894: 124, note 1, here is to be taken in a more general sense and not as the name of the region. It is, however, possible that the province Shangdong is meant since both Caozhou and Puzhou, the home provinces of masters Xuan[?] and Andao.

55 T.2066.7c.3ff. 淨以咸亨元年在西京尋聽，于時與并部處一法師、萊州弘禕論師，更有二三諸德同契鷲峯，標心覺樹。然而一公屬母親之年老，遂懷戀於并川。禕師遇玄瞻於江寧，乃敦情於安養。玄達既到廣府，復阻先心。唯與晉州小僧善行同去。神州故友索爾分飛，印度新知冥焉未會。此時躑躅難以為懷，戲擬四愁聊題兩絕而已　五言：＂我行之數萬，愁緒百重思。那教六尺影，獨步五天陲。＂　五言(重自解憂曰)：＂上將可凌師，疋士志難移。如論惜短命，何得滿長祇。＂于時咸亨三年，坐夏楊府。初秋，忽遇龔州使君馮孝詮，隨至廣府，與波斯舶主期會南行。復蒙使君命往崗州，重為檀主。及弟孝誕使君、孝軫使君、郡君寧氏、郡君彭氏等合門眷屬，咸見資贈，爭抽上賄，各捨奇飡。庶無乏於海途，恐有勞於險地。篤如親之惠，順給孤之心。共作歸依，同緣勝境。所以得成禮謁者，蓋馮家之力也。又嶺南法俗，共鯁去留之心；北土英儒，俱懷生別之恨。至十一月，遂乃山翼軫，背番禺，指鹿園而遐想，望鷄峯而太息。于時廣莫初颺，向朱方而百丈雙挂；離箕創節，棄玄朔而五兩單飛。長截洪溟，似山之濤橫海；斜通巨壑，如雲之浪滔天。未隔兩旬，果之佛逝。經停六月，漸學聲明。王贈支持，送往末羅瑜國。(今改為室利佛逝也。)復停兩月，轉向羯茶。至十二月，舉帆還乘王舶，漸向東天矣。從羯茶北行十日餘，至裸人國。向東望岸，可一二里許，但見嗷子樹、檳榔林森然可愛。彼見舶至，爭乘小艇，有盈百數，皆將嗷子、芭蕉及籐竹器來求市易。其所愛者，但唯鐵焉，大如兩指，得嗷子或五或十。丈夫悉皆露體，婦女以片葉遮形。商人戲授其衣，即便搖手不用。傳聞斯國當蜀川西南界矣。此國既不出鐵，亦寡金銀，但食嗷子諸根，無多稻穀，是以盧呵最為珍貴。(此國名鐵為盧呵。)其人容色不黑，量等中形，巧織團藤箱，餘處莫能及。若不

As I emphasized, this is a rather isolated passage insofar it makes pilgrimage in the sense of visiting sacred places as a main purpose for traveling its subject in a number of ways, but it also reflects the mixture of "genre", or rather of content and author's interest and intention: the motif of going to India and of visiting the sacred places is followed by a detailed description of the journey through South-East Asia and of some of the specific characteristics of the regions (e.g. their main products such as coconut, betel) in the typical style of a travelogue, and the pilgrimage to the Gṛdhrakūṭa and the Mahābodhi temple and the vow to the future Buddha Maitreya is followed by a list of the texts which Yijing took from India to Śrī Vijaya. The topical episode of an attack through brigands on the way to and from Nālandā, also found in other biographies, highlights the dangers, but also the devotion of the traveller.

The point at which I am getting here is not so much about the Chinese monks, but about their texts. They, rather than the individuals behind them, have been the main focus of the Western scholarly interest in the 19th century, but it is also no question that it was the scholars of this period who established the idea of pilgrimage and pilgrims in connection with the Chinese travellers and their records. This has, in my view, blocked their deeper understanding and the development of a more sophisticated interpretation and contextualisation of these texts and their content.

I now briefly want to investigate where and when the idea of the Chinese travelling monks being primarily pilgrims, and their writings being descriptions of pilgrimages or pilgrim records was established. The first Western scholar to use the term pilgrimage ("Pilgerfahrten") for the Chinese travellers to India seems to have been the German sinologist Karl-Eugen Neumann in his article "Pilgerfahrten buddhis-

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共交易，便放毒箭，一中之者，無復再生。從茲更半月許，望西北行，遂達耽摩立底國，即東印度之南界也，去莫訶菩提及那爛陀可六十餘驛。於此創與大乘燈師相見，留住一載，學梵語，習《聲論》，遂與燈師同行，取正西路，商人數百，詣中天矣。去莫訶菩提有十日在，過大山澤，路險難通，要藉多人，必無孤進。于時淨染時患，身體疲羸，求趁商徒，因不能及，雖可勵己求進，五里終須百息。其時有那爛陀寺二十許僧，并燈上人並皆前去，唯餘單己，孤步險隘。日晚晡時，山賊便至，援弓大喚，來見相陵。先撮上衣，次抽下服，空有條帶，亦並奪將。當是時也，實謂長辭人代，無諧禮謁之心，體散鋒端，不遂本求之望。又彼國相傳，若得白色之人，殺充天祭。既思此說，更軫于懷，乃入泥坑，遍塗形體，以葉遮蔽。扶杖徐行，日云暮矣，營處尚遠。至夜兩更，方及徒侶，聞燈上人村外長叫。既其相見，令授一衣，池內洗身，方入村矣。從此行數日，先到那爛陀，敬根本塔。次上耆闍崛，見圭衣處。後往大覺寺，禮真容像。山東道俗所贈紵絹，持作如來等量袈裟，親奉披服。濮州玄律師附羅蓋數萬，為持奉上。曹州安道禪師寄拜禮菩提像，亦為禮訖。于時五體布地，一想虔誠。先為東夏四恩，普及法界含識。願龍華初會，遇慈氏尊，並契真宗，獲無生智。次乃遍禮聖跡，過方丈而屆拘尸；所在欽誠，入鹿園而跨雞嶺。住那爛陀寺，十載求經，方始旋踵，言歸還耽摩立底。未至之間，遭大劫賊，僅免剚刃之禍，得存朝夕之命。於此升舶，過羯茶國。所將梵本三藏五十萬餘頌，唐譯可成千卷，多居佛逝矣。 I follow Wang's edition and punctuation (Wang 2009: 151ff.), with slight variations. See also the French translation of Chavannes 1894: 114ff.; Lahiri's English translation (Lahiri) is incorrect and flawed at places.

tischer Priester von China nach Indien" in 1833[56] in which he mainly presents and partly translated the travel record of Song Yun in the Luoyang-jialan-ji. The first translation of one of the texts, Abel Rémusat's "Foe-koue-ki, ou relations des royaumes bouddhiques, ou voyages des royaumes bouddhiques: voyage dans la Tartarie, dans l'Afghanistan et dans l'Inde, éxecuté, à la fin du IV e siècle, par Chy Fa Hian (traduit du chinois et commenté par M. Abel Rémusat. Ouvrage posthume, revu, complété, et augmenté d'éclaircissements nouveaux par MM. Klapproth et Landresse)", published Paris 1836, does, as many translators and authors after him, not use the terms pilgrimage or pilgrim in the title, while G.W. Laidlay's English translation bears the title "The Pilgrimage of Fa Hian" from the year 1848[57]. While some translators like Stanislas Julien (Xuanzang) and Édouard Chavannes (Yijing, Song Yun) seem to have been rather reluctant to use the term pilgrimage in their titles[58] it was well already established in the second half of the 19th century when the English translations of most of the texts were done by Samuel Beal who had started his series with the "Travels of Fah-Hian and Sung-Yun. Buddhist Pilgrims from China to India (400 A.D. and 518 A.D.)", published in 1869. Even the critical Thomas Watters, who avoided the term pilgrim in his paraphrase cum commentary "On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India" (published 1904 / 1905), used the term as the heading to his biographical sketch of Xuanzang and goes into a rather romanticized description of the monk's main motivation for the journey:

> But [Xuanzang] could not remain in China for he longed vehemently to visit the holy land of his religion, to see its far-famed shrines, and all the visible evidence of the Buddha's ministrations.[59]

To be fair to these early translators and scholars, one must assume that they used the words pilgrimage and pilgrim in a rather uncritical and unreflected way[60], but, as a result, the terms stuck to this group of texts to the present; this is reflected in the title and description of Sally Wriggins' popular book "Xuanzang. A Buddhist Pilgrim on the Silk Road". So the historian Tansen Sen's rather unreflective usage of the term pilgrimage versus secular missions in his otherwise well-informed book on Indo-Chinese economic and cultural exchange during the Tang period just seems to pay homage to – and reinforce - a well-established concept[61].

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56 Historisch-Theologische Zeitschrift 3, 11, Leipzig: 114-177.
57 The Pilgrimage of Fa Hian. From the French Edition of the ‚Foe Koue Ki' of MM. Remusat, Klaproth, & Landresse with Additional Notes & Illustrations, Calcutta 1848 (Delhi 1990).
58 The series in which the translations were published were, however, called *Voyages des pèlerins bouddhistes*.
59 Watters 1904-1905: 10f.
60 See, for example, the discussion of the entries on Pilgrimage in Hasting's *Encyclopedia or Religion and Ethics* in the Introduction.
61 Sen 2003.

From this point, my paper will mainly deal with this most famous "pilgrim", Xuanzang 玄奘 (600 or 603 (?)-664, travelled 629-645), and with his "Records of the Western Regions", the Datang-xiyu-ji 大唐西域記 (XJ), written by order of, and for, the Tang emperor, Taizong 太宗 (r. 626-649) in the first year after Xuanzang's return (with the assistance of the monk Bianji 辯機) and submitted to the throne in the year 646. The text has been treated as a pilgrimage record in the sense of a trustworthy travelogue and source on Buddhist India not only of the early 7th century, but, in some cases, as a kind of timeless document of Buddhism in the South-Asian subcontinent. This is, more often than not, done without taking into account aspects of the Chinese historical context, the purpose of the text and the intentions of its author(s). This rather romanticized reading of the text has, I argue, ironically, led to a very historicist usage of it as the source by which archaeologists discovered, and still try to unearth, long-forgotten Buddhist sites in India and in Central Asia[62]. One of the early champions of this endeavour was the British archaeologist and general Alexander Cunningham,[63] who lauded "the great extent and completeness of [Xuanzang's] Indian travels, which, as far as I am aware, have never been surpassed"[64].

The Xiyu-ji does, with one interesting exception, not give any detail of Xuanzang's travels as such[65]. The notion of Xuanzang as a great traveller and pilgrim is mainly informed by another source, the Datang-ciensi-sanzang-fashi-zhuan 大唐慈恩寺三藏法師傳, "Biography of the Tripiṭaka-dharma-master of the Cien-monastery of the Great Tang (Life)"[66], written by Xuanzang's disciple Huili 慧立 (active 629-665) in five fascicles and revised and extended by Yancong (in 688) more than twenty years later. This text gives a complete and extended life of the famous master, with the first five fascicles covering his journey, and is written in the style of the Chinese Buddhist monastic hagiographies, the first of which was the Gaoseng-zhuan 高僧傳,

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62 See Leoshko 2003 and Singh 2004. On a popular history of these discoveries see Allen 2003.

63 See Cunningham 1972 and 1871. On Cunningham and his use of Xuanzang see Leoshko 2003, p. 42ff.

64 Cunningham 1871, p. xxiv. This stands in strange contrast with Thomas Watters' 1904-1905: 15, later statement that Xuanzang "was not a good observer, a careful investigator, or a satisfactory recorder, and consequently he left very much untold which he would have done well to tell." Watters also blames Xuanzang for "[caring] little for other things and [wanting] to know only Buddha and Buddhism."

65 Imposing a first person agent ("From there I travelled ....") – as translations tend to do and have done – certainly supported the idea of the Xiyu-ji being a pilgrimage record, although in the original Chinese text there is, of course, formally neither a 1st person pronoun nor a 3rd person (e.g. "Xuanzang arrived in ...") expressed, nor is one implied as becomes clear in the few passages where Xuanzang speaks of himself in the 3rd person and only in very specific circumstances when he meets the Indian kings Harṣa of Kanauj (Kanyākubja) and Kumāra of Assam (Kāmarūpa). It is therefore impossible to apply such analytic-stylistic categories as "didactic / representative I" (Campbell 1991: 20f.) versus an experiential or individual "I" which differentiate a personal narrative from other intentionalities.

66 Already noticed by Waley 1952: 11. An example of scholarly use of the texts in this way is found in the relevant passages in Mayer's monograph on Xuanzang (Mayer 1992).

"Biographies of Eminent Monks", compiled by Huijiao 慧皎 (497-554)[67]. Although these two texts are completely different in genre, style and source value – in the words of the first translator Stanislas Julien the Biography "seems to me more animated and more attractive than the heavy and serious presentation of the Xiyu-ji, in which, strangely enough, one does see appear the great and impressive figure of the traveller only once." [68] – they have been blurred and mixed in the historical and modern perception and interpretation of Xuanzang to a degree that the Xiyu-ji's descriptive parts have been uncritically "updated" by the individual data from the Biography. It is in fact the Biography which describes Xuanzang as a devoted pilgrim. But even here the wish to visit the sacred places is not given as the reason for the decision to go the West:

> Having visited various teachers and learned their theories, the Master scrutinized their teachings and found that each of them specialized in some particular sect. When compared with the holy scriptures, [they] showed differences either vaguely or manifestly, so that he was at a loss to decide which of the theories he should follow. Thus he resolved to travel to the West to clear his doubts and to bring back the Saptadaśabhūmi Śāstra, which now known as the Yogācārabhūmi Śāstra, to resolve the doubts of all. He also said, "Since Faxian and Zhiyan, prominent figures of former times, could travel to seek the Dharma for the benefit of all living beings, why should there be nobody to follow in their footsteps, so that the line of noble tasks should be discontinued? A real man should have the ambition to carry forward their tradition."[69]

One can certainly read the Biography as a source depicting Xuanzang as a pilgrim in the metaphorical sense of life as a pilgrimage, but the text has more features that suggest a eulogizing hagiography, which shows the superiority of Huili's own master. This is especially true in cases in which both texts, the Biography and the Xiyu-ji, differ from each other either (by the Biography suppressing details given in the Xiyu-ji or by both texts presenting different versions of stories). The different purposes and intentions of the two texts is nontheless clear: the Biography wants to show the overall power of the Buddhist *dharma* through the life of a famous master, while the Xiyu-ji has two main purposes: to give – thereby fulfilling the order of the emperor – a full description of the Western Regions, and – this is Xuanzang's own intention – to educate the emperor by giving him examples of, in the Buddhist sense, good and

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67   On Chinese monk biographies see Kieschnick.

68   Julien 1857: Viii (translation Deeg).

69   T.2053.222.c.3ff.: 法師既遍謁眾師，飡備其說，詳考其理，各擅宗塗，驗之聖典，亦隱顯有異，　莫知適從，乃誓遊西方以問所惑，并取《十七地論》以釋眾疑，即今之《瑜伽師地論》也。又言"昔法顯、智嚴亦一時之士，皆能求法導利群生，豈使高跡無追，清風絕後？大丈夫會當繼之。"

bad kingdoms and rulers[70]. The predominance of the "royal" stories which are mostly missing in the Biography, the frequency of Aśoka monuments in India and the dialogue between Xuanzang and the Indian ruler Harṣa Śīlāditya underline this propagandist programme of Xuanzang's own record.

It is also the broader Chinese context which shows that the Xiyu-ji was not, or minimally was to a lesser extent, meant as a pilgrimage text: it had predecessors of its own genre, which had nothing to do with journeys to the sacred places, but rather with an encyclopaedic interest in topography, ethnography, etc.[71] It still is to be discussed how this type of literature, beside the intentional levels discussed here, fits into and developed in a wider framework of traditional Chinese literature about things exotic and strange[72], but it is clear that the motivation for writing them, and the form in which they were written, were definitely not connected to pilgrimage.

The earliest descriptive text[73] about the Western Regions seems to have been written by the famous scholar-monk Shi Daoan 釋道安 (312-385). In his catalogue Zongli-zhongjing-mulu 綜理眾經目錄 he listed one Xiyu-zhi 西域志 in one fascicle as the last of 214 works[74]. This work may be seen in connection with Daoan's interest

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70 Deeg 2009a.

71 It has to be admitted that this is not an easy task because of the fluidity and rather generic character of the titles given to these works which makes it sometimes difficult to attribute them clearly to a certain author. Xuanzang's XJ, for instance, is called Xiguo-ji 西國記, Records of the Western Kingdoms (Fayuan-zhulin 法苑珠林 [FZ], T.2122.321a.21, and also maybe in Yujia-lunji 瑜伽論記, T.1828.805c.26, although I am not able to verify the quotation herein), or Xiguo-zhuan 西國傳, Report on the Western Kingdoms (FZ: Zang-fashi-xiguo-zhuan 奘法師西國傳 at 273a.12, 273c.4, 274a.29; 279b.1, 296c.23, 332a.24; Jingtu-shiyi-lun 淨土十疑論 from the Song-period, T.1961.79c.12ff., also refering to XJ: T.2087.896b.20ff.; Shishi-yaolan 釋氏要覽, T.2127.306a.26). The same is true for the GFZ which was called Foguo-ji 佛國記, Tianzhu-zhuan 天竺傳 and Foyou-Tianzhu-ji 佛遊天竺記. The Zhonjing-mulu 眾經目錄 (T.2146.146a.21) by Fajing 法經 (active 594) refers to a synonymous Foyou-Tianzhu-ji 佛遊天竺記, Record of the Buddha's travels in India, in one fascicle as being the work of "sages of the Western Regions" (xiyu-shengxian 西域聖賢), but as all the other catalogues attribute such a work to Faxian, and as the title does not really fit to the list of legends of eminent persons which are given (Xiyu-shengxian-zhuanji 西域聖賢傳記, Biographies of sages of the Western Regions, like Kāśyapa / Jiaye 迦葉, king Aśoka / Ayu-wang 阿育王, Aśvaghoṣa / Maming 馬鳴, Nāgārjuna / Longshu 龍樹) this seems to be a misidentification by the cataloguer. Again, as for the title Tianzhu-zhuan, there is a reference to such a work in Kumārajīva's Da-zhidu-lun 大智度論 (T.1509.57b.13) which cannot be identical with Faxian's work.

72 For a detailed discussion of this genre of "anomaly accounts", traditionally called zhiguai 志怪, see Campany 1996, on the Buddhist tradition especially p. 321ff.

73 I am aware that this is a problematic statement, as in some cases we do not exactly know if what is referred to is a direct reference to a specific text in Chinese or to a non-Chinese work, as e.g. in the case of the Xiyu-zhuanji 西域傳記 obviously quoted by Paramārtha / Zhendi 真諦 (500-569) (Fahua-zhuanji 法華傳記, T.2068.49b.14, and 49c.29; 96c.26)

74 In his catalogue Chu-sanzang-jiji 出三藏集記 Sengyou 僧祐 (445-518) states for the section in Daoan's catalogue: T.2145.40a.07ff. ... 西域志一卷。 ... 西域志。雖非注經。今依安舊錄 附之于末。("... Xiyu-zhi in one fascicle (juan). Although ... [other mentioned texts and] the

in certain pilgrimage places, especially the so-called "shadow of the Buddha" (*foying* 佛影) in a cave near Nagarahāra (Haḍḍa, Southeast Afghanistan)[75]. Daoan could have retrieved the information about the Buddhist "Western Regions" from the Kaśmīran monks with whom he worked. This obviously prompted a series of reports about the "shadow" image from monks who undertook the journey to India.

Beside Faxian's GFZ there were other travelogues during the Jin-dynasty like the one by Fameng 法猛 which unfortunately was lost but must have probably very much looked like Faxian's[76]. Some of these early records are partly quoted in the Shuijing-zhu 水經注, "Annotations to the Water Classics", written by Li Daoyuan 李道元 around 500[77], so at least we know about their existence. Li obviously relied on several reports on India, maybe even on the one compiled by Daoan or his entourage: the GFZ, the lost description of foreign regions by the monk Zhi Sengzai 支僧載 with the title Waiguo-shi 外國事, "On Foreign Countries"[78], the Shishi-xiyu-ji 釋氏西域記, "Records of the Western Regions of Śākya", by Zhu Fawei 竺法維, the Guangzhi 廣志, "Extended Relations", by Guo Yigong 郭義恭, and the Fuotutiao-zhuan 佛圖調傳, "Records (or Biography) of Buddhadeva (?)".

It was, however, mainly under the reunified Sui-empire that a strong interest in foreign countries, especially the Western Regions, is reflected in a number of activities which, to my opinion, have been underestimated as models and sources for the (Buddhist) travel writing of the Tang period, the first example of which is, indeed, the Xiyu-ji. An eminent monk of the Sui-period, Yancong 彥琮 (557-610)[79], on the basis of information given by the Indian monk Dharmagupta / Damojueduo 達摩笈多 (active 590-619), wrote a record on imperial order, thematically arranged in ten chapters[80], called Dasui-xiguo-zhuan 大隋西國傳, "Record of the Western Kingdoms

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Xiyu-zhi are not a commentaries on *sūtras*, based now on the old catalogue of [Dao]an they are appended to its end."). See also Lidai-sanbao-ji 歷代三寶記, T.2034.76b.12., Datang-neidian-lu 大唐內典錄, T.2149.251a.1.

75 Zürcher 1972: 224.

76 See Sifenlü-xingshi-shao-zichi-ji 四分律行事鈔資持記 T.1805.403a.7: Jin-Fameng-youxiguo-zhuan 晉法猛遊西國傳, "Report about Fameng's, [a] Jin[-Dynasty Monk's] Travels to the Western Regions" (I read against the punctuation 西國。傳 of the T.-edition).

77 Li Daoyuan died 527: see Petech 1950, p. 1. The terminus post quem for the material incorporated into his commentary is the date of the original "Water Classic", the Shuijing 水經, which is not clear at all: Petech (loc.cit.), going against the traditional attribution of the work to the Han period, places it within the period of the Three Kingdoms (*sanguo* 三國; 220-265 A.D.). My assumption is that the text could have been written in the second half of the fourth century, and may well be connected with the interest which the famous Chinese monk-scholar Shi Daoan 釋道安 had in descriptions of India.

78 The only vague *terminus ad quem* for the dating of Sengzai is his explanation of the Indian word *krośa*, in which he mentions the Jin-dynasty (265-420): see Petech 1950, p. 40.

79 On Yancong see Held 1972.

80 XGZ, T.2060.435c.20ff.   以笈多遊履具歷名邦，見聞陳述事逾前傳，因著大隋西國傳一部，凡十 篇，本傳:一方物，二時候，三居處，四國政，五學教，六禮儀，七飲食，八服章，九寶貨，十盛列山河，國邑，人物。斯即五天之良史，亦乃三聖之宏圖；故後漢

(written under the) Great Sui", a.k.a. Xiyu-zhuan 西域傳[81]. This seems to have been an important move towards the first officially written record on the Western Regions (Central Asia including India), which was not so much concerned with Buddhist legends, but meant to retrieve intelligence, general information about all aspects of the kingdoms of the Western Regions and was written very much in the style of parts of the imperial histories. This certainly is underlined by the fact that Yancong cooperated with the high Sui-official Pei Ju 裴矩, an advisor of emperor Yangdi 楊帝 (r. 604-617) on matters of the Western Regions[82]. Pei Ju, as a collector of "intelligence regarding Inner Asia" and as an "indefatigable geographer and ethnographer"[83] authored a work Xiyu-tuji 西域圖記 (in three fascicles), which

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《西域傳》云:'靈聖之所降集，賢懿之所挺生'者是也。詞極綸綜，廣如所述。
("Because [Dharma]gupta had traveled through famous regions, and had reported information exceeding [what had been reported] in former reports, [Yancong] wrote a Dasui-xiguo-zhuan in ten chapters recording truly: 1. products, 2. seasons, 3. dwellings, 4. governmental affairs, 5. teachings (religions), 6. etiquettes, 7. drinking and eating, 8. clothing, 9. jewelery [and] money, 10. mountains, rivers, kingdoms, cities [and] people. This is an excellent historical [work], even comparable with the Great Plan of the three saints (here probably the three 'cultural heroes' Yao 堯, Shun 舜 and Yu 禹); therefore this is what is said in the "Records of the Western Regions of the Later Han": "What the saints have bestowed, what the sages have produced ..." [Even if] these words are extremely comprehensive [they describe] what is widely said [in the record]."); my translation differs in some points considerably from Held 1972: 141f. The Datang-neidian-lu, T.2149.280a.24 and 332b.15, gives the ten sections as ten fascicles (*juan*). It is not clear if this is the same Xiguo-zhuan 西國傳 as mentioned in the Fahua(jing)-zhuanji 法華(經)傳記 (T.2068.79b.6), in a story about the Gomati-monastery in Khotan, or in the same text in a story about a monk rescuing a poisonous *nāga* in the mountains near Vārāṇasī from his pain inflicted by worms in his belly (80b.22), and another one about a foreign (*waiguo* 外國: Indian?) soothsayer (89b.16). In the same collection there is a quotation from a Xiyu-zhi about Mahāyāna Buddhism in Khotan and Karghalik (Zhegoupan-guo 遮呴槃國): 50.b.4ff. the origin of which is not clear. The mentioned Xiguo-zhuan seems, however, to be a different text concentrating on narratives: Sanbao-ganying-yaolüe-lu 三寶感應要略錄 (T.2084.827a.13.), quoting it as one of the sources for its story of the famous first Buddha-statue of king Udyana (Uḍḍiyāna) of Roruka, or other Indian stories taken from this source only (841a.26, 845a.17, 852c.17). Another similar collection mentioned in the Fahua-zhuanji is a Xiyu-zhuan 西域傳 (T.2068.73b.21).

81 XGZ, T.2060.437c.3. In the same passage (437c.5ff.) it is mentioned that on imperial order Yancong translated two works, the Sheli-ruitu-jing 舍利瑞圖經, "Sūtra of the Auspicious Images of the Relics", and the Guojia-xiangrui-lu 國家祥瑞錄, "List of the Auspicious Signs in the Nation", into Sanskrit (*? fan sui wei fan* 翻隋為梵) on behalf of a *śramaṇa* from Rājagṛha (Wangshe-cheng 王舍城) in ten fascicles which were then distributed to the kingdoms of the Western Region. This may be referring to another work ascribed to Yancong, the Xiyu-xuanzhi 西域玄志, "Mysterious Report on the Western Regions", in ten fascicles (FZ, T.2122.1022c.21, simply called Xiyu-zhi in the Datang-neidian-lu, T.2149.280a.24, and 332b.15) which – if it was really identical with the compilation in ten fascicles mentioned in Yancongs biography (see below) – would be the only example of a Chinese text or compilation (probably based on Indian sources) which was translated into an Indic language: T.437c.
82 On Pei Ju, his life and his political role, see Jäger 1920-1922, and Wright 1979: 127 passim.
83 Wright 1979: 127.

included maps of over forty kingdoms described[84]. According to Yancong's biography in the Xu-gaoseng-zhuan 續高僧傳 (XGZ), Yancong and Peiju co-authored a Tianzhu-ji 天竺記, "Records of India"[85], which was probably complimentary (this certainly seems to be suggested by the use of the word *zuan* 纘, "to continue, complement" in the biography) to Pei Ju's own compilation, which was mainly concerned with Central Asia. From this evidence[86] it is clear that the interest in Central Asia and India was not only motivated by religious devotion,[87] but by an imperial agenda in the context of the policy of the unified Sui-empire. And it is in this period that the collection of information about these foreign regions gained an official status, which can only be understood in a political – and this does include the aspect of Buddhist propaganda and of *captatio benevolentia* – and diplomatic context.

Compared to Yancong's and Pei Ju's works the Xiyu-ji, on initial inspection, appears as a step back to the older model of such records being mainly interested in matters Buddhist, but it had, on the other hand, the advantage of claiming eye-witness status. The Xiyu-ji thus probably superseded the earlier records to an extent that those were no longer valued and therefore lost over the time. But it is important that the Xiyu-ji is a text that bases its content, function and form on those earlier works[88], and that it was emulated by later records, which unfortunately did not survive.

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84 Recorded in the Suishu 隋書 and Xin-Tangshu 新唐書 and repeated in FZ (T.2035.312a.20ff.). As there is no mention of Yancong in these sources, expecially not in the Buddhist encyclopedia, this work is certainly not identical with the Tianzhu-ji as Held 1972: 131, implies. Furthermore, in the reference to Pei Ju's work the name for India is given as Bei-Poluomen 北婆羅門 (312a.29) instead of Tianzhu 天竺.

85 T.2060.437c.21f.勅又令裴矩共琮修纘《天竺記》，文義詳洽，條貫有儀。("Furthermore it was ordered that Pei Ju together with [Yan]cong should compile a "Record of India", the literary content [of which] was detailed and balanced, [and] the form [of which] was regular.") See also the German translation by Held 1972: 61f.

86 I would like to refer here to a similar propagandistic and ideological agenda behind a growing interest in Buddhist India and its history under the Sui which is reflected in Fei Zhangfang's 費張房 catalogue Lidai-sanbao-ji 歷代三寶記 (presented to the court in the year 597): see Deeg, 2010.

87 In Yancong's case this religious interest is reflected by his writing of biographies (*zhuan* 傳 or *benzhuan* 本傳) of the Indian monks Dharmagupta and Narendrayaśas / Naliantiyeshe 那連提耶舍 (517-589): see Held 1972: 130ff.

88 In his recent publications Chen Jinhua has pointed out in some of his publications the interpersonal and family ties between political important figures of the Sui and the Tang dynasty. The fact that there were some direct interpersonal connections between the diplomatic major players and the Buddhist monastics involved in the writing of records on foreign countries in the Sui and the Tang period has, to my best knowledge, not yet been highlighted, but may actually have had an impact on the writing of the XJ: Pei Ju still served from 624 to 625 as a great minister under the first Tang-ruler Gaozu 高祖 (r. 618-626), Yancong's nephew and disciple Xingju 行矩 (? -627) was friend with and summoned to the court by the influential Tang-minister Fang Xuanling 房玄齡 (578-648) (see his biography in the XGZ: T.2060.439c.9ff., and Held's translation: p. 137f.), who himself again was concerned with affairs related to the Western Regions and was also well acquainted with Xuanzang.

For instance, in the second year of the era Linde 麟德 (665) a Xiguo-zhi 西國志, "Memoirs of the Western Kingdoms", in 60 fascicles or *juan* (with 40 *juan* of illustrations) was compiled by a certain Huili 慧昱[89]. The only direct quotation we seem to have from this work is found in Fayuan-zhulin 5[90], where the same work also seems to be called Xiyu-zhi[91].

The report by the Tang envoy Wang Xuance's 王玄策, who was in India three or even four times on official missions plus pilgrimage, is another important work of this genre, which was lost probably because of the high esteem in which Xuanzang's XJ was held as soon as it was published. Wang Xuance's original report on his journeys, which was written between 661 and 666[92], the date of the official Xiyu-zhi 西域志, Memoirs of the Western regions, collated from Wang's and Xuanzang's travalogues, was called Zhong-tianzhu-xingji 中天竺行記, "Report on travels in central India", in ten fascicles. Other names for this work were Wang-Xuance-xingzhuan 王玄策行傳, "Report on the travels of Wang Xuance", Xiguo-xingzhuan 西國行傳, "Report on the travels to the Western kingdoms", and Xiyu-xingzhuan 西域行傳, "Report on the travels to the Western regions"[93]. Unfortunately his complete report, which, together with Xuanzang's Xiyu-ji, was the major source for the imperial compilation on the Western Regions, the Xiyu-zhi 西國志 from the year 666, has been lost[94] and we have to rely on the fragments scattered in Buddhist and secular sources. From the fragments of Wang's report, called Xiyu-zhi 西域志 in the Zhuyuan-falin or Xiyu-zhuan 西域傳 in Xuanzang's biography in the XGZ[95], it becomes clear that this has been a major source of information.

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89 Identical with the Xiyu-zhi mentioned for the third year – the era only had two years (!) – of Linde in FZ: T.2122.1024a.28ff. where the sixty *juan* report and the forty *juan* illustrations are listed separately.

90 T.2122.310b.9ff., about an miraculous legend about an *asura* (*xiuluo* 修羅) in a cave in Campā / Zhanbo 瞻波. A similarly structured work called Xiyu-zhi 西域志 is referred to in the Fozu-lidai-tongzai 佛祖歷代通載, T.2036.719a.9f., in connection with the refutation of the legend about Laozi converting the barbarians (Laozi-huahu 老子化胡).

91 See T.2122.559b.15ff., and 589a.2ff.

92 This is the *terminus ante quem*, which is given in T.2122.310b.25ff. 《西國志》，六十卷，國家修撰奉，勅令諸學士畫圖，集在中臺。復有四十卷。從麟德三年起首　至乾封元年夏末方訖。余見玄策，具述此事。 ("The "Memoirs of the Western Regions" in sixty fascicles have been compiled by the court [and] the emperor has ordered the scholars to draw the maps, and they were collected in the Central Pavillion (*zhongtai*, i.e.: the Department of State Affairs). And there were forty other fascicles. From the third year of [the era] Linde (= 666) until the end of summer of the first year of [the era] Qianfeng (666) [this] has been finished. I have seen [Wang] Xuance and have reported all these things [accordingly]."); for a French translation see Lévi 1900: 312.

93 See Lévi 1900: 297f.; Sun 1998: 3f.

94 See Lévi 1900: 298.

95 T.2060.455a.22.

A Tianzhu-ji 天竺記, "Record of India"[96], had been compiled by the Tang-monk Changmin 常慜 (7th cent.)[97]. Two passages from his report are given in the collection of miracle stories, Sanbao-ganying-yaolüe-lu 三寶感應要略錄 by Feizhuo 非濁 (active between 1032 and 1063) of the Liao 遼[98].

The encyclopaedist Daoshi 道世 (active 656-683), in fascicle 29 of his monumental Fayuan-zhulin, clearly expresses and demonstrates what a monolithic authority Xuanzang and his report had quickly achieved[99], a fact which is also underlined by the reproduction of some of Xuanzang's descriptions of the Central Asian areas in the dynastic histories. Compiling descriptions of the Western Regions on imperial command – as the "Records of the Western Regions" sections of the official dynastic histories – became quite "popular" after Xuanzang, and the layperson and envoy Wang Xuance again is a good example for this[100].

There obviously was a genre, into which the Xiyu-ji can be included, which makes it clear that at least this very text was not meant as an itinerary for pious Buddhists written by a self-sacrificing pilgrim-monk, as the romanticized view has it, but rather

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96 Also called Changmin-youli-ji 常慜遊歷記, "Record of the travels of Changmin" (T.2084.830b.16ff.).

97 The concrete life dates of this monk are not known but he traveled to India before Yijing (that is: before 685): see Yijing's hagiographical sketch in his Datang-xiyu-qiufa-gaoseng-zhuan 大唐西域求法高僧傳 (T.2066.3a.1ff.) according to which Changmin never reached India.

98 One is the story of two miraculous seated statues of Śākyamuni and Maitreya in a *stūpa* in the North Indian kingdom of Sengjiabuluo 僧伽補羅 / Siṃhapura (T.2084.830b.16ff.), and another one about a statue of Vairocana / Piluzhe'na 毘盧遮那 in the North-Indian kingdom of Bingsuojia 鞞索迦 (833b.16ff.).

99 T.2122.496b.23ff. 敬尋釋教，肇自漢明，終至皇唐，政流歷代年將六百。軺軒繼接，備盡觀方。千有餘國咸歸風化，莫不梯山，貢職望日來王，而前後傳錄差互不同；事迹罕迷，稱謂多惑。雖霑餘潤，幽旨未圓。夷夏殊音，文義頗備，推究聖蹤，難以致盡。故此土諸僧各懷鬱齰快。時有大唐沙門玄奘法師，慨大道之不通，愍釋教之抑泰。故以貞觀三年季春三月弔影單身西尋聖迹。 ("The veneration and search for the Teaching of Śākya[muni], starting with [emperor] Ming of the Han and finally continuing to the imperial Tang, has passed times and lasted for six hundred years. The envoys continuously connected [the realms], and [they] in detail observed the directions. The thousand kingdoms, following their customs, without hesitation climbed the mountains, and the tribute came to the imperial court on full-moon days, but the records [about the foreign regions] altogether differed from each other and were not the same; the traces of the events were rarely doubtful [but] the report were very misleading. Although there was special imperial favor the inner essence was not fully understood. The people of the realm have special sounds [of language] and the meaning [of their words] is rather elaborated, [but] it is difficult to completely investigate the sacred vestiges. Therefore every monk in this country [i.e. China] felt deeply annoyed. At that time there was a great *śramaṇa* in [the period of] the Great Tang, master of the dharma Xuanzang, who deplored that the Great Way was not really understood, and grieved because the Teaching of Śākya[muni] was [so] restrained. Therefore, in the third year of the [era] Zhenguan (629), in the last and third month of spring he alone and solitarily went to the West in search of the sacred traces.")

100 T.2122.703c.18ff.

was rather a solid piece of intelligence about the Western Regions peppered with some propagandist and educational material for the emperor and his entourage[101].

Questioning the established view – based on a naïve reading of the Biography, which describes Xuanzang's departure from China as hindered by the Tang administration - that the traveller was driven by religious zeal, one could argue that he may well have left the country with not only the tolerance of the administration but with – in the light of the activities of gathering material about and the interest in the Western Regions in the late Sui and around the important figure Fang Xuanling 房玄齡 (578-648) – the semi-official support or admission of the court. And, if he did so, his journey (or even mission) can be seen as a combination of a quest for knowledge and learning and an attempt to serve the expansionist policy of the early Tang rather than interpreting it as a pure pilgrimage to the holy places of Buddhism.

The Chinese monks going to India were certainly *peregrini*, travellers and foreigners, in the original sense, and sometimes they were also pilgrims as well; but their records are in most cases intended to report on aspects other than visiting and venerating sacred sites and gaining merit from these visits – though the latter activities, of course, qualify as pilgrimage. They rather observed and described details in the tradition of Chinese travel and ethnographic genres. And even when they did describe the "Sacred Traces", the Holy places of Buddhism, it was – in a lot of cases – not so much in connection with their religious devotion and expectations, but to show that these sites really existed.

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101 See Deeg 2009a and 2012.

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A PORTRAIT LEFT BY FAXIAN ON HIS PILGRIMAGE TO INDIA[1]

BANGWEI WANG

Introduction

Whoever is familiar with the history of Buddhist pilgrimage and the Sino-Indian cultural relations knows the name of Faxian 法顯 and his contributions to the knowledge about the historical connection between India and China. As a pilgrim monk, Faxian started his travel to India in the year 399 CE and came back to China in the year 414 CE. His travel account called Faxian zhuan 法顯傳, "Biography of Faxian", Gaoseng Faxian zhuan 高僧法顯傳, "Biography of the Eminent Monk Faxian", or Foguo ji 佛國記, "Record of the Buddhist Kingdoms", is one of the most important works left by Chinese pilgrim monks preserved until today. Faxian also produced several translated Buddhist texts, of which some are very important, such as the Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra / Da banniepan jing 大般涅槃經 (T.7) or the Mahāsāṅghika-vinaya / Mohesengqi lü 摩訶僧祇律 (T.1425). Except for what is contained in the Foguo ji some more information about his life is provided in Sengyou's 僧祐 (445-518) Chu sanzang jiji 出三藏記集, "Collection Records of the Editing of the Tripiṭaka", and Huijiao's 慧皎 (497-554) Gaoseng zhuan 高僧傳, "Biographies of Eminent Monks", both Buddhist biographical works produced about one hundred years after Faxian's time.

Until recently it seemed that nothing else of and about Faxian could be found until in a Buddhist grotto near Lanzhou 蘭州 in Gansu 甘肅 a portrait was found together with an inscription which claims the picture to be of that of Faxian. The painting, so it was concluded, represents a portrait of Faxian offering to the Buddha. After a first moment of surprise serious questions and doubts come to the critical mind: Could this truly have been left by Faxian himself or was it the work of someone else? Does this indeed represent the pilgrim monk Faxian we know from our sources or someone else bearing the same name? This paper will discuss the material related to these questions; it will present evidence that, even after almost one thousand six hundred years, we still can look at an image of the famous Faxian that was drawn while he visited the site, or, more specifically, while he spent his first rain retreat on his journey to India in the monastery in Gansu.

Discovery in the Binglingsi Grottos in Gansu

Among the Buddhist grottos extant in China today, the Binglingsi 炳靈寺 Grottos in Yongjing 永靖, Gansu, belong to those of early ones or are even constituting the earliest Buddhist caves in China. Among the Binglingsi Grottos the earliest one opened was the one listed as no.169. The style of the paintings and statues are from the time of the Western Qin 西秦 dynasty (385-431), and therefore earlier than that of the very productive Northern Wei 北魏 dynasty (386-534). Furthermore, in this grotto no.169 an inscription dated to 420 CE was found, thus making the cave the earliest in China.

In niche no.12 of grotto no.169 there is a mural painting depicting the preaching of the *dharma* by the Buddha who is accompanied by two Bodhisattvas. To their side are two monks standing with the gesture of raised hands paying homage. Attached to this scene is an inscription indicating that one of these monks is Faxian. The entry in "The Complete Catalogue of the Binglingsi Grottos" gives the following description:

> Above the head of the Bodhisattva, left to the Buddha, two monk donors are painted. One is said to be "the portrait of Daocong". It is 20 cm high. Daocong has a round face, wearing a *kāṣāya* over the bare right shoulder and with black shoes on his feet. His appearance shows that he is quite young. Another monk donor is said to be Faxian, and the inscription says that this is "the portrait of Faxian doing offering". The portrait is 18 cm high, and the person represented has a high nose and deep eyes. He looks like a *huren* ("foreigner") and wears a *kāṣāya* over his bare right shoulder, with black shoes on his feet. Both are standing opposite to each other and look as if they are talking with each other. However, it is uncertain whether [the respective portrait] is indeed Faxian, the prominent Buddhist monk of the Eastern Jin. [2]

Both portrait and inscription actually have been discovered some years ago, and although they are mentioned in some scholarly publications, they do not seem to have been taken notice of by Western scholars so far. As mentioned above, the crucial question here is: Is this the Faxian that we know from Chinese Buddhist texts and translations? There are different opinions on this question which this article will attempt to answer.

Different Interpretations of the Portrait

Is the figure on the portrait in the Binglingsi cave no.169 called Faxian in the cartouche really the Faxian we know as a Buddhist pilgrim monk from China to

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2   Du, Wang 2006: 191-192: 佛左側菩薩頭頂繪二身供養僧人，題名'道聰之像'，高 0.20 米，面相豐圓，著袒右肩袈裟，足穿黑鞋，為一少年形象。另一供養僧人題名'法顯供養之像'，高 0.18 米，高鼻深目，為一胡人形象，著袒右肩袈裟，足穿黑鞋，與道聰像相對而立，兩人似談話狀。此法顯是否就是東晉時期的高僧法顯，不可確知。

India? The opinions of Chinese scholars on this differ considerably. Roughly speaking, there are four opinions.

The first one answers the above question with a clear "yes". This first has been suggested by Yan Wenru 阎文儒, a late professor of Peking University, although Yan was a little bit hesitant to clearly express his opinion.

The second stance is that the person depicted on the portrait is very likely that of the Faxian which we know. Jin Weinuo from the Chinese Central Academy of Fine Arts, for instances, states: "During this time there were a lot of the prominent Buddhist monks passing through. Faxian practiced his summer retreat from the sixteenth day of the fourth month to the fifteenth day of the seventh month at this place, that is in total the period of three months. Is it possible that he left something at the site of Binglingsi, just in the same way as that of Dharmapiya[3]? This is a question we have to ponder about. It looks very probably that the person [on the portrait] and our Faxian are the same."[4]

The third opinion is that it cannot yet be decided whether the portrait is indeed the historically known Faxian. We can see this expressed, for instance, in the paragraph from "The Complete Catalogue of the Binglingsi Grottos" quoted above.

The last answer to the question if we really have in front of us a portrait of the famous traveller Faxian is "no", and there are two reasons given. Firstly, grotto no.169 was built in the first year of the era Jianhong 建弘, i.e. 420 CE. This is clearly after the time when Faxian arrived in the Kingdom of Qiangui 乾歸 where the modern Binglingsi was located in that period. The other argument brought forward against an identification is that nothing is mentioned in the Faxian zhuan about Binglingsi or related place.[5]

I will address these opinions and discuss the respective and relevant arguments in the subsequent sections.

The First Section of the Travel Route of Faxian

In the very beginning of the Faxian zhuan the following is stated:

> While he was in Chang'an, Faxian deplored the mutilated and incomplete [state] of the Vinaya texts. In the second year of Hongshi, [which is] the Jihai [year of the sexagenary cycle], together with Huijing, Daozheng, Huiying, and Huiwei, he decided to go to India in search of the Vinaya. They started from Chang'an, then crossed the Long Mountain and arrived in the country of Qiangui, where they entered the summer retreat (varṣāvāsa). After the summer

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3   On Dharmapiya see below.
4   Jin 1989: 194.
5   Wei 2003: 130-131.

retreat, they went further to the country of Rutan. Then they crossed the Yanglou Mountain and arrived in the town of Zhangye.[6]

The country of Qiangui is generally the territory of the dynasty called the Western Qin 西秦 (385-431) in Chinese history. It was established by Qifu Qiangui 乞伏乾歸 (died 412), a chieftain of the Xianbei 鮮卑 people during the time of the Eastern Jin 東晉 dynasty (317-420). During the rule of Qifu Guoren乞伏國仁 (died 388), the old brother of Qiangui, the capital of the West Qin was located at Yuanchuan 苑川, and therefore Qifu Guoren was called "King of Yuanchuan". In the ninth month of the year 388, Qiangui moved the capital to Jincheng 金城, and in the first month of the year 400, he relocated the capital again to Yuanchuan.[7]

Hongshi is the reigning title of Emperor Yao Xing 姚興 (r. 393-415) of the Late Qin 後秦 (384-417), and the first year of Hongshi 弘始 corresponds to 399 CE. When Faxian arrived at the kingdom of West Qin, the capital of the kingdom was just located at Jincheng which is now generally identified at the town of Xigu, nowadays a district of Lanzhou 蘭州 (province of Gansu 甘肅). Though it is said Faxian entered his summer retreat in the Kingdom of Qiangui, i.e. on the territory of the West Qin, we do not know the exact place where he did so. The sentence that "[they] entered the summer retreat in the Kingdom of Qiangui" does not necessarily mean that Faxian resided in Jincheng. We only can deduce from it that it was within the territory of the Kingdom of Qiangui.

Thus one of the crucial questions to solve the overall question of the identification of the Binglingsi portrait is: Where did Faxian stay during his first summer retreat on his journey?

The Place and the Date

I think if we want to solve the problem of the identity of the Binglingsi portrait, we have to look not only at the external source evidence, but also investigate in those

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6   Zhang 2008: 2-3. 法顯昔在長安，慨律藏殘缺，於是遂以弘始元年歲在己亥，與慧景、道整、慧應、慧嵬等同契，至天竺尋求戒律。初，發跡長安，度隴，至乾歸國，夏坐。夏坐訖，前至褥檀國。度養樓山，至張掖鎮。 See also Legge 1886: 9-10, and Deeg 2005: 505-506.

7   Sima Guang 司馬光, Zizhi Tongjian 資治通鑒, Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1956, vol.8, fascicle 107, p.3385: 孝武帝太元十三年（388）：九月，河南王乾歸遷都金城。 "Thirteenth year of the Taiyuan era of Emperor Xiaowu (388): In the ninth month Qiangui, the king of He'nan, moved the capital to Jincheng."; fascicle 111, p.3507: 晉安帝隆安四年（400）：春，正月，......西秦王乾歸遷都苑川。 胡注：乞伏氏本居苑川，乾歸遷於金，今復都苑川。 "Fourth year of the Long'an era of Emperor An of the Jin (400): In spring, in the first month ...Qiangui, the king of the Western Qin, moved the capital to Yuanchuan. Hu Sanxing's commentary: The Qifu clan originally resided in Yuanchuan, then Qiangui moved to Jin[cheng], and then the capital was again Yuanchuan."

matters logically related to Faxian's trip. Let us first examine question of the possible place of Faxian's summer retreat.

It is true that while Faxian arrived in the kingdom of Qiangui in 399 CE, the capital, Jincheng at that time, was located at today's Lanzhou. However, this does not mean the territory of the kingdom of Qian'gui was limited only to the Lanzhou area. In fact, its territory was much more extensive, and included an area covering several tens of square kilometers around the city.

The Binglingsi grottos are located in today's Yongjing 永靖, Gansu, eighty kilometers to the west of Lanzhou. It was within the territory of the Western Qin, or the kingdom of Qiangui. Although in the Faxian zhuan it is stated that Faxian stayed in the Kingdom of Qiangui and the name Binglingsi is not mentioned at all, this does not mean that Faxian could not have visited the place. We can be at least sure of one thing, and that is that while Faxian travelled through the region there was no monastic site called Binglingsi; therefore this name cannot be mentioned, of course, in Faxian zhuan. Nevertheless, when Faxian stayed in the region of today's Binglingsi some of the grottos did already exist and were in use. Though we are not sure of the name of those grottos at that time, it is very probably that they were called Tangshu ku 唐述窟 and Shiliang ku 時亮窟, as it is described in the book Shuijing zhu 水經注, "Annotations to the Water Classics".[8]

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8   These two names, the earliest reference to the place we can find today, are mentioned in the second volume of the Shuijing zhu by Li Daoyuan 酈道元 (470?-527) of the Northern Wei 北魏 (386-534). In fact, as a name Binglingsi appeared quite late, after the time of Song 宋 (960-1279), probably derived from Tibetan. See Shuijing zhu jiaozheng 水經注校正, Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2005, pp. 43-44: 河水又東北會兩川，右合二水，參差夾岸連壤，負險相望。河北有層山，山甚靈秀。山峰之上，立石數百丈，亭亭桀豎。競勢爭高，遠望參參，若攢圖之托霄上。其下層岩峭舉，壁岸無階。懸岩之中，多石室焉。室中若有積卷矣，而世士罕有津逮者，因謂之積書岩。岩堂之內，每時見神人往還矣。蓋鴻衣羽裳之士，練精餌食之夫耳，俗人不悟其仙者，乃謂之神鬼。彼羌目鬼曰唐述，複因名之為唐述山，指其堂密之居，謂之唐述窟。其懷道宗玄之士，皮冠淨發之徒，亦往棲托焉。故《秦州記》曰：河峽崖傍有二窟：一曰唐述窟，高四十丈。西二里有時亮窟，高百丈，廣二十丈，深三十丈，藏古書五笥。"The river goes to the northeast, meeting with two other rivers and another two from [its] right shore. On both banks cliffs stretch consistently, riskily facing each other. On the north of the river there are several mountains. They are quite beautiful. At the tops of mountains, the stones rise, being hundreds *zhangs* high, slim and straight, as if competing with their heights. If one looking far away they are thick, like pictures above the clouds. Below them are steep rocks. By the banks and cliffs there are no steps. Among the rocks there are a number of caves. In the caves the rock layers look like overlapping scrolls, and very few people have reached the place. So they are called 'Overlapping Scrolls Rocks'. Within the cave halls sometimes people see supernatural beings coming and going. They in fact are those wearing clothes made of leathers, cultivating themselves and eating subtle substances. The secular people do not know that they are immortals but say that they are gods and ghosts. The Qiang people call ghosts *tangshu*, thus the mountain

The location of Binglingsi is totally compatible with the route of Faxian described in the Faxian zhuan. According to the Buddhist monastic rules, the *vinaya*, when a monk goes into summer or *varṣa* retreat, he would general select a place where the proper condition and living resources for a Buddhist monastic can be provided. Also, the place should be quiet enough for the retreat. Binglingsi undoubtedly was the most suitable place and in accordance to these requirements. During that time, a number of Buddhist temples and monasteries had been built together with the grottos. So we could say that Faxian taking today's Binglingsi as the place for his *varṣa* retreat when he arrived in the kingdom of Qian'gui would have been the most reasonable decision. Since the time of the Western Qin, the place of Binglingsi, though not carrying this very name at that time, was the largest Buddhist centre near Lanzhou and in the wider area. Faxian, on his way to the West in search of the *dharma*, definitely would have visited the place. In the same grotto in which the painting with the name Faxian is located (No. 169) one can find two other portraits of monk donors from the same period. One is of Tanmobi 曇摩毗, reconstructed as Dharmapiya, a great *dhyāna* (meditation) master from a foreign country. Another is of a *bhikṣu* Daorong 道融. From the Gaoseng zhuan, the "Biographies of Eminent Monks", we know of Dharmapiya, a well-known *dhyāna* master from the West, who arrived almost at the same date when Faxian travelled through.[9] The important position of the monastic site on the route between the West and the East can be seen from the fact that a very famous imperial envoy, Wang Xuance 王玄策 (fl. 7th cent.) of the early Tang 唐 (618-906), also left an inscription at the place in the second year of the era Yonglong 永隆 (681 CE). [10] Obviously the situation is that, whether Buddhist monks or laypeople, either travelling westwards or eastwards, many of the travellers passing through the region came to visit Binglinsi in some way of pilgrimage.

As already mentioned, the other counter-argument against an identification of the portrait with the historical Faxian is related to dating, a discrepancy between the

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is named Tangshu. The cave is called Cave of Tangshu, that means it is the residence of secrets. The people who are striving for the Dao, pursuing the mysterious tenet, wearing leather hats and shaving their hair, go to the place and stay there as well. Therefore, Qinzhou ji, the Records of Qinzhou says: By the cliffs of the river gorge there are two caves. One is called the Cave of Tangshu, which is forty *zhang*s high. Another one, located two *li* to the west, is called Cave of Shiliang, which is a hundred *zhang*s high, twenty *zhang*s broad, thirty *zhang*s deep, with five ancient books inside."

9   In the Gaoseng zhuan, T.2059.397a, Dharmapiya or Tanmobi is translated as Tanwubi 曇無毘. 《高僧傳》卷十《玄高傳》：時乞佛熾槃跨有隴西，西接涼土。有外國禪師曇無毘來入其國，領徒立眾，訓以禪道。"During that time the territory of the Kingdom of Qifu Zhipan covered the Longxi area which was located to the west of the Liang area. A *dhyāna* master called Tanwubi from foreign country arrived in Qifu Zhipan's kingdom. Leading a group of disciples, he gathered the people and trained them in the way of meditation."

10   The inscription by Wang Xuance is found in grotto no.54: Du, Wang 2006: 65.

monk's residency and the usually given date of the grotto in which the picture was found. The date for Faxian's summer retreat in the Kingdom of Qiangui can be determined: it lasted from the sixteenth day of the fourth month to the fifteenth day of the seventh month of the lunar calendar in the first year of Hongshi, i.e. 399 CE. The earliest inscription found in grotto no.169, however, is dated to the first year of Jianhong, that is 420 CE. Since it is certain that Faxian arrived at the place twenty one years before the first year of Jianhong, the crucial question here is: could the grottos not have existed before Faxian arrived?

The answer to this question is, I think, no. To build a grotto or a group of grottos requires a long period of time. Generally first with a small one was built, which then was gradually expanded, in most cases extensions and elaborations being made several times. It is more than likely that the same happened at Binglingsi. In this respect a very important piece of evidence, though more or less being neglected by scholars, is the inscription found in niche no.6 of grotto no.169 where it says "so ... the excellent masters [and] let the brightness of the divine images shine again".[11] The words "shine again" (*chong hui* 重暉) refer to the place before the inscription was added and indicate that there were the images of the Buddha. So it is difficult to believe that before the first year of Jianhong, i.e. 420 CE, no grotto at all existed at the place of the present grotto no.169.

Furthermore, the period of Faxian's stay in the Kingdom of Qian'gui, three months, seems long enough to increase the possibility that he really visited the monastic site of Binglingsi.

The fact that the Faxian zhuan does not mention the site of Binglingsi or some related or similar place does not speak against an identification of the place of Faxian's summer retreat with the monastic predecessor of Binglinsi. One has to keep in mind the style of Faxian's report: the accounts in the Faxian zhuan on some places are quite detailed, while in some cases they are kept very short and simple, especially when the place – like Qiangui – was not yet connected with a Buddhist legend. On his stay in the kingdom of Qiangui Faxian only provides one sentence of six Chinese characters: 至乾歸國夏坐 ("[they] arrived in the kingdom of Qiangui and spent the summer retreat."). With such a simple account one cannot expect specific information on a place like Binglingsi which at that time was probably just being built up and extended over time.

The Appearance as a Foreigner

Some scholars who doubted the identity of the Faxian in the portrait and the historical Faxian have said that the Faxian we see in grotto no.169 looks more or less like a *huren* 胡人, that is a barbarian or a foreigner who is not ethnically Chinese, i.e. Han

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11 The Chinese reads: 乃□斑匠，神儀重暉. The inscription is dated exactly to the 24th day of the third month of the first year of Jianhong; cf. Dong 1989: 171.

漢. The conclusion drawn from this is, since the historical Faxian, according to his biography in the Gaoseng zhuan, hailed from Pingyang 平陽[12] (approximately the southern part of present Shanxi 山西 Province with today's Linfeng as its centre) and was definitely Han-Chinese by birth, that the figure in the painting cannot be the Faxian we know. I, however, think that in many cases it is not easy to say just on the basis of e.g. facial features whether a person in a picture looks like a *huren* or not, if the very evident features (costume, etc.) for such an identification are not given. Faxian was of course a Han, and it is true that the appearance of Han people is different from the *hu* people. But I think that it is justified to ask how certain we can be in identifying an ethnic origin of a person – Han or *hu* – in case of a rather simply sketched picture like the one we are dealing with. Just as today, the difference between certain types of Chinese or foreign people sometimes is clearly distinguishable, sometimes blurred, and in some cases it may even be difficult to tell the difference.

Another reason which lets me believe that the Faxian depicted is not a *huren* is the name. *Hu* people generally use *hu* names or names of foreign origin, although these are expressed by Chinese characters. Indeed some *hu* monks and people have Han names, but those Han name are easily recognizable, e.g. Tanwuchen 曇無讖, or Chen Zhendi 陳真諦, and in many cases can be re-translated back into their originals. This is not the case with the name of Faxian.

A minor aspect is the age of the monk which we can derive from the picture. The age of Faxian in the picture is quite compatible to the age which the monastic traveller had when he passed through the region, and which we know from the Faxian zhuan and other records.

Another Faxian?

There is another local source and evidence which needs to be discussed. In grotto no.169, on the same wall as the one on which the mural painting of Faxian is found, there are a number of inscriptions. In one of these inscriptions, among a group of donor names, we see the name of Faxian occurring again. The inscription reads as follows:

古鄑信士罗尚錦进香（1）
山西信士王道进香（2）
信士刘良臣男刘应熊（3）
衡州人纥奚河曹供養佛早得家保佑還麗要遇（4）
来文鄉供養（5）
回慈（6）
恒州道人法顯康樂而也禮（7）
拜佛時（8）
沙彌弘慈之像（9）
秦州道人道聰供養佛時（10）

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12 T.2059.337b.19; see also Chu sanzang jiji 出三藏記集, T.2145.111b.27.

河州安鄉縣□于此一心禮佛（11）
杨□后記（12）¹³

Luo Shangjin, a good believer, offering incenses（1）
Wang Dao..., a believer from Shanxi, offering incenses（2）
Liu Liangche, a believer, and his son, Liu Yongxiong（3）
.......(4)(5)(7)
Faxian, a *daoren* of Hengzhou, being happy and worshiping（7）
the Buddha（8）
.......(9)
Daocong, a *daoren* from Qinzhou, worships the Buddha（10）
.......(11)(12)

Strangely enough we see the name Daocong道聰, the same name as the one linked to the other monk's portrait on the same wall, mentioned as well. Here he is said to come from Qinzhou, an area located around today's Tianshui 天水 in southeast Gansu province.

Again, the question raises itself: is the Faxian of this inscription the one we know from the other sources, or is it yet another Faxian?

Judging from their contents, the two inscriptions bearing the name Faxian were written in different times. The place name Hengzhou 恒州 appearing here as the place of origin for Faxian creates a problem. It started to be used as a name of a prefecture in mediaeval China in the eighteenth year of the era of Taihe 太和 (494 CE) of the Northern Wei 北魏, that is, considerably after the time Faxian had stayed there. The territory of Hengzhou covered the northern part of today's province Shanxi. However, the birth place of Faxian, Pingyang平陽 / Linfen 臨汾, is located in the south, not in the north of Shanxi.

This problem is not easily solved. However, one possibility I can think of is that the name of Faxian – as well as that of Daochong – was written down again by someone in almost a century later. This kind of graffiti is not easily intelligible and contextualized; for instance, the meaning of the Chinese words *kangle erye* 康樂而也, occurring after the name Faxian, is very ambiguous and difficult to understand. Thus my translation above is somehow tentative and does not really help to clear the circumstances and historical situation either of the longer inscription nor the possibly older portrait cum inscription next to it.

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13 Du, Wang 2006: 192.

Conclusion

Based on all evidences and concluding from my discussion, I think that the picture left on the wall with the name of Faxian as donor in the grotto no.169 of Binglingsi, is the historical Faxian we know from other sources. Its appearance cannot be a coincidence since the place and the date are so compatible to all records of Faxian, and it is difficult to explain the existence of the portrait and the inscription in other historical terms. The Faxian we see in the picture therefore, though not necessarily representing the real appearance of Faxian, must be considered to represent the historical Faxian of that time.

As one of the most prominent pilgrim monks in Chinese Buddhist history, Faxian, in his record, gives us a good example of great modesty and religious devotion. He left us his account of a historical pilgrimage experience which is, at the same time, a very valuable source for our understanding of Buddhism in ancient Central and South Asia in the early fifth century. As this refers to a period more than one thousand and six hundred years ago and nothing excepting Faxian's travel record and the texts he translated from Indic languages into Chinese are left of him, how could we have expected to discover a more direct and individual evidence of this extraordinary man? Now, almost like a miracle, and if we accept the presented conclusion that it is indeed the portrait of Faxian which is found on the wall of the grotto in the Binglingsi, we are confronted with what became the model of a *dharma* searcher and pilgrim not only for us, but also to his great successors, Xuanzang 玄奘 (600 or 602-664) and Yijing 義淨 (635-713), who both praise him as having "opened the passage" to the sacred places of Buddhism.

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THE CONSTRUCTION AND DISSEMINATION OF A NEW VISUAL IDIOM – THE WHITE-ROBED GUANYIN (白衣觀音) AND THE UPPER TIANZHU MONASTERY (上天竺寺) IN HANGZHOU

BERNADETTE BROESKAMP[1]

What gave rise to the creation of the native Chinese iconography of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara as the White-Robed Guanyin? The following article intends to answer the question through an investigation into the historical and buddhological components involved.

For nearly a thousand years, the Upper Tianzhu Monastery (Shang tianzhu si 上天竺寺) outside of Hangzhou 杭州 has been a major Buddhist pilgrimage site in China, owing its popularity to the efficacious workings of a single and "miraculously created" sandalwood statue of Guanyin *pusa* 觀音菩薩 (Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara).

Since the latter half of the eleventh century, this sandalwood icon has been known to us through poems of the eminent Song dynasty literati-official, Su Shi 蘇軾 (often referred to as Su Dongpo 蘇東坡, 1037-1101), who was a friend of the charismatic abbot Biancai Yuanjing 辯才元淨 (1011-91) of the Upper Tianzhu Monastery.[2] In his poems Su Shi addressed the central icon of the Upper Tianzhu Monastery as *baiyi xianren* 白衣仙人 ("White-Robed Immortal") or *baiyi dashi* 白衣大士 ("White-Robed Mahāsattva", or "White-Robed Great Being") indicating that the deity was clad in a white robe. Though these epithets do not indicate the deity's gender, modern English translations commonly use the term "White-Robed Goddess" instead, concluding that the term clearly bespeaks the female manifestation of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara so popular from the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) onwards. This point alone would not be worth a discussion, had the Upper Tianzhu Guanyin not been the very first highly venerated White-Robed Guanyin statue that we know of in Chinese history and the Upper Tianzhu Monastery not the site where the cult of the White-Robed Guanyin started out to become the most popular cult in China, finally

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embracing all faiths. We may doubt that it was merely a matter of coincidence that the most admired Song dynasty poet was the first to mention the deity in his poems, thereby spreading the knowledge about the Upper Tianzhu sandalwood icon among the educated classes.

What caught my interest in this particular case was not the mentioning of a "spontaneously formed" or "self-made" (*zizuo* 自做) sandalwood icon of Guanyin – there are, of course, many – but the instance that although the icon's iconography was not the commonly known and inherited one, within a few decades it reached such a widespread popularity that it nearly replaced the former standard iconography of Guanyin[3] in the Chinese mind-set. The scholarly focus on the deity's later gender transformation was of no help in disentangling the bundle of conjectures about the creative process behind this novel iconography.[4]

The case is highly problematic insofar as we are confronted with a huge list of written sources about the benefits of the Upper Tianzhu temple's sandalwood statue throughout the past thousand years, but the icon itself has not come down to us, nor any description or depiction of it. The actual appearance of this statue is entirely left to our imagination. The whole situation is even more blurred by the fact that there exist no firmly dated early icons of the White-Robed Guanyin anywhere. Scholars of Chinese Buddhism have to rely on the assumptions of art historians concerning undated images for their theory of Guanyin's iconographic transformation, but these may be weak and the attributions inappropriate.

The White-Robed Guanyin has, moreover, become a prominent example for the popular theory of *sinicization* or *domestication* of Buddhism in China. This theory of how Indian Buddhism was transformed into a Chinese one, has been criticized by Robert Sharf who instead opts for an "understanding of local social and institutional structures, cosmology, metaphysics, attitudes toward the spirit realm and the afterlife – in short, the local *episteme*"[5] to use a more differentiated and historically embedded approach in analyzing the spread of Buddhism in all its facets, particularly its visual programme, in China. This is, in fact, the path I am going to explore here. By way of introduction I should mention another obstacle which seems to have curbed a

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3   Although many different forms of Avalokiteśvara have been depicted, his standard iconography, known from the Tang dynasty onwards, showed Avalokiteśvara holding a willow twig in his right and a water vessel in his left hand. The items were presented to him by the people of Vaiśālī as described in the "Dhāraṇī Sūtra Invoking the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara to Dissipate Poison and Harm" (Qing Guanshiyin pusa xiaofu duhai tuoluoni zhou jing 請觀世音菩薩消伏毒害陀羅尼咒經), T.1043.34c.14. This most popular iconographic form underscores the healing mission of Avalokiteśvara. The willow twig supplanted the lotus flower as his distinct attribute already during the Sui dynasty, see Wong 2007: 264. Daniel Stevenson writes that the term *yangzhi* 楊枝, meaning „willow sprig", was used in Chinese to translate the Sanskrit term *dantakāṣṭa*, which designates a soft branch from a banyan tree to clean teeth, see Stevenson 1986: 94-95.

4   1986: 17-80; Yü 2001; Campany 1993: 233-272; Tay 1976: 147-177.

5   See Sharf 2002: 23.

thorough understanding of the White-robed Guanyin's visual concept: our modern misinterpretation of what is *feminine* in shape and what not. Aesthetic perceptions of presumed differences in physiognomy are a product of a culturally fixed set of values and not universal. Nevertheless, these values seem to have pushed the debate heavily in one direction without generating convincing results.[6] Despite the fact that there is no visual evidence, Chün-fang Yü, for instance, was convinced that Guanyin in a feminine guise was already in existence during the Tang dynasty (618-906 C.E.),[7] whereas Rolf A. Stein claimed more reasonably that the feminine form of Guanyin did not appear before the end of the eleventh century.[8] Their text-oriented approach, however, fails to answer the question of the obviously abrupt change in the visual programme of this deity and to relate this fact to a specific time frame within Chinese history and to a local religious or ideological environment.

Iconographic traits of an icon do not appear out of nowhere and their persistence cannot be underestimated. They follow a prescribed set of rules which give intrinsic meaning to the icon and these traits are not arbitrarily exchangeable but compulsory. The implementation of a new iconography, therefore, means nothing less than a change of identity, as these elements convey symbolic values and manifest certain qualities that are essential for the interpretation of a new conception of a deity. Instead of trying to find the right Buddhist scripture which offers us the proper iconographic description we are looking for, the question should be directed at an interpretation of the consciously chosen new iconographic formula and its underlying principles in accordance with the historical context from which it most probably could have arisen.

Starting with an investigation into the visual material, I want to address the following questions from an art historian's perspective. In which context could the new visual identity for the Bodhisattva Guanyin be created and, more importantly, accepted by the populace? What were the mechanisms behind these changes, which presumably started around the turn of the tenth to the eleventh century? What made a new pictorial programme necessary and which factors were decisive for this development? Applying the "hermeneutics of suspicion"[9] to written sources, and with an iconological approach to the extant visual material, I hope to settle the question of the establishment and popularization of the White-robed Guanyin's iconography in this paper.

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6   See for instance the statement in Yü 2001: 248: "The White-robed Kuan-yin, on the other hand, looks decidedy feminine. In fact, not only Kuan-yin, but bodhisattvas in general have looked rather feminine since the Tang."

7   See Yü 1992: 197.

8   See Stein 1986: 22. He quotes a story from Hong Mai's 洪邁 (1123-1202) Yijian zhi 夷堅志, chap. 50, in which Guanyin appears explicitly as a female in a dream.

9   Paul Ricoeur coined the phrase known in English by the translation of his book on Sigmund Freud, see his Freud and Philosophy. An Essay on Interpretation (Ricoeur 1970).

Separating Facts from Fabrications: a Critical Look at Local Records

Before turning to the specific ideology which caused the change of identity in the visual conception of the Bodhisattva, we must take a closer look at the local and monastic records. We can then deconstruct the repetitively propagated fabrications concerning the historicity of the efficacious White-Robed Guanyin icon at the Upper Tianzhu monastery.

As the name itself reveals, the foundation of the Upper Tianzhu Linggan Guanyin Monastery[10] was intimately connected to and legitimized by the discovery of the mysterious sandalwood icon. The major events are presented in chapter 80 of the local Hangzhou gazetteer Xianchun Lin'an zhi 咸淳臨安志 as follows:[11]

上天竺靈感觀音寺

後晉天福四年僧道翊結廬山。中夜有光就視得奇木。命孔仁謙刻觀音像。
會僧勳從洛陽持古佛舍利來因納之頂閒妙相具足。錢忠懿王夢白衣人求治
其居。王感寤乃即其地創佛廬號天竺看經院。咸平初 郡守張去華以旱迎大
士至梵天寺致禱即日雨自是遇水旱必謁焉。天聖中僧詵夢像浮空而行出小
山曰吾欲憩此 明日僧寂至語夢協乃謀徙。今處乳寶峰鑫其前白雲獅子中印
諸峰左右環拱。嘉祐末守沈禮部文通以為天竺起於司馬晉時踰七百載而觀
音 發跡西峰甫及百年遂分為二所謂上天竺也。[...]

靖康初郡迎大士禱雨於法惠寺屬有狄難僧道元祕大士像於井。[...] 賊退瓦
礫中忽鏗然有聲始知井所在得聖像歸之院。

Upper Tianzhu Efficacious Guanyin Monastery:
In the 4th year of the Tianfu period of the Later Jin (939 CE) the monk Daoyi settled down in a mountain hut. In the middle of the night there was a beam of light and he immediately inspected the strange wood [it came from]. He asked Kong Renqian to carve a Guanyin image. He met monk Xun who came from Luoyang carrying an old Buddhist relic which he put into the wonderful image's crown to [make it] complete. The king Qian Zhongyi[12] dreamt of a white-robed person requesting a place to stay.

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10 The title "Efficacious Guanyin" (Linggan Guanyin 靈感觀音) was conferred upon the monastery in 1065 CE, see the record of Bao Qinzhi noted in Xianchun Lin'an zhi ("Lin'an gazetteer from the Xianchun era"), chap. 80: 16b. The gazetteer was compiled by the prefect Qian Yueyou 潛說友 in 1268.

11 Xianchun Lin'an zhi, chap. 80: 14b-15b.

12 The last Wuyue king Qian Zhongyi (Qian Chu 錢俶) reigned from 947-978 CE. Sources let modern scholars to assume that the White-Robed Guanyin was venerated even before 940 CE, see, for example, Howard 1985: 11; Choe 1991: 90, though neither the records of Tang dynasty painting, the Lidai minghua ji 歷代名畫記 (preface from 847 CE), the Tang chao minghua lu 唐朝名畫錄 nor the Yizhou minghua lu 益州名畫錄 (with a preface of 1005 CE) mention the White-Robed Guanyin as a subject for painting.

Moved and enlightened [by the dream], the king initiated the construction of the Buddhist hut called Tianzhu kanjing yuan as a place for him [to stay]. With the onset of a drought in the beginning of the Xianping period (998 CE) the county commissioner Zhang Quhua welcomed the *mahāsattva* arriving at the Fantian[13] temple and devoted prayers [to him]. That very day it rained. Since then, when there is flood or drought, to pay a visit [to the *mahāsattva*] is a must.

In the middle of the Tiansheng period (1026-1027 CE) the monk Shen dreamt of the image floating in the air, walking up the little mountain saying 'I wish to rest here'. The next day the monk went alone [to the place] described in the dream to assist and plan a change of his [i.e. the image's] residence. Where he resides today, the Rudou hill is in his front, the Baiyun, Shizi[14] and Zhongyin[15] hills to the left and right encircle him saluting. At the end of the Jiayou period (1063 CE) the commissioner Shen [Gou] communicated to rite minister Wen that the Tianzhu [temple] arose from Sima Jin's[16] time over 700 [years ago] and Guanyin manifested traces on the western hill just a hundred years ago. Then, [the Tianzhu monastery] was divided and the second one was called Upper Tianzhu. [...]

At the beginning of the Jingkang period (1125 CE) the county welcomed the *mahāsattva* at the Fahui temple to pray for rain. Due to the difficulties with the barbarians, the monk Daoyuan secretly put the image of the *mahāsattva* into a well. [...] The thieves withdrew; suddenly a voice like a *jingling* [bell] came from the middle of the rubble. So they got to know that the well was the location of the holy image and returned it to the temple.

The text obviously presupposes knowledge about the site which needs to be explained here in order to fully understand the context. The Lower, Middle and Upper Tianzhu temples are located in the Western Hills outside of Hangzhou called Wulin mountains. From the sixth century onwards the little limestone hill right in the centre of the Wulin mountains was venerated by Buddhists as the "Peak That Arrived Flying" (Feilaifeng 飛來峰, also called "Central India Peak", Zhongyinfeng中印峰), and was apparently recognized as a "physical outpost" of the Indian Gṛdhrakūṭa mountain,

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13 This temple in the palace grounds was originally named Baota 寶塔, but also Nanta si 南塔寺, Shijia zhenshen sheli ta 釋迦真身舍利塔 and Hangta si 杭塔寺. The name was changed to Fantian si 梵天寺 in 1064-67 CE.

14 These names are also mentioned in Qisong's 契嵩 (1007-1072) description of the Wulin mountains; see his record Wulin shan zhi 武林山志 in Tanjin wenji 鐔津文集, chap. 12, T.2115.710a.7.

15 The small hill is also called Feilaifeng 飛來峰 ("Peak That Arrived Flying"), and believed to be a peak from the Gṛdhrakūṭa mountain in India, see Shahar 1992: 205.

16 The Jin dynasty (265-420 CE) rulers' family name was Sima. The monasteries at the site are believed to be foundations of the Western monk Huili 慧理 who allegedly came to Hangzhou in 326 CE; see Xianchun Lin'an zhi, chap. 80: 1a, and Shahar 1992: 194.

where according to Mahāyāna tradition Buddha Śākyamuni expounded important *sūtras*. The foremost of these was the Lotus-sūtra, the core text of the Tiantai 天台 school. To mention the sacred Feilaifeng site, which must have been the location where the piece of sandalwood was purportedly found, was not necessary but definitely instrumental in legitimizing the image and its novel iconography.

Apart from the legendary discovery of the sandalwood icon, the basic constituents of the record are accumulated fragments incongruent with other historical sources presented in the same chapter of the gazetteer Xianchun Lin'an zhi. First of all, throughout the Wuyue 吳越 period (907-978 CE) the Tianzhu temple's name was "Five-Hundred Arhats Cloister" (Wubai luohan yuan 五百羅漢院) and it was only renamed by imperial decret to Tianzhu in 1020 CE in response to the request of Tiantai monk Ciyun Zunshi 慈雲遵式 (964-1032) who had been nominated as its abbot in 1015 CE.[17] The construction of a building called *kanjing tang* 看經堂 ("Hall for Reading the Scriptures") was part of the expansion work at the Tianzhu monastery during his ambitious abbacy. Furthermore, a record written by Bao Qinzhi 鮑欽止 at the end of the eleventh century says explicitly that on behalf of the imperial court the Tianzhu monastery was divided into two, the Upper (上) and Lower (下) monasteries in 1023 CE, and from this time the Upper Tianzhu monastery was the location of the Guanyin image.[18] Bao Qinzhi's record is also the earliest to mention that the new additional title "Efficacious Guanyin" (Linggan Guanyin 靈感觀音) was conferred upon the monastery in 1065 CE. Presented in this way, the statement implies that the sandalwood icon of Guanyin was previously located at the Lower Tianzhu monastery, and what was later called the Upper Tianzhu temple may originally have been just a remote hut at some distance from the monastic compound used by Tianzhu monks to pursue studies and meditation practices in isolation.[19] The other incident concerning the mysterious recovery of the Guanyin icon sometime after 1125 CE may mask the fact of the original wooden icon's first loss and the installation of a substitute as compensation.[20] The substitute carved around 1125 CE could indeed have had a more

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17 In 1015 CE, the name of the monastery was Lingshan 靈山. See the entry on the Lower Tianzhu Lingshan monastery 下竺靈山教寺 and Hu Su's 胡宿 (996-1067) record in Xianchun Lin'an zhi, chap. 80: 4a and 6a.ff.

18 See his record in Xianchun Lin'an zhi, chap. 80: 16b: 粵自晉末嘗為道場逮 聖朝天聖始 分上 下方而觀音像所在歷載 "It is said that since the end of the Jin it was a ritual place until the imperial court – in the beginning of the Tiansheng era (1023 CE) – divided the upper from the lower (Tianzhu) site and which from then onwards was the location of the Guanyin image." Though his record, written on behalf of the Hangzhou prefect Chen Xuan 陳軒, is the earliest record that has come down to us, it does not mention the predecessor Zhang Quhua who allegedly welcomed the Guanyin image at the Fantian monastery in 998 CE.

19 The whole situation is quite confusing because scholars in general thought of the Upper Tianzhu monastery as being an independent one which was established earlier.

20 This was not the only loss to occur. According to the record of Huang Jin 黃溍 (1277-1357) the temple burned down again in 1337, see DeBlasi 1998: 170, and again in 1360, whereafter the grand councilor offered gold as reward to the person who recovered the image, see Yü 1992: 209.

feminine appearance due to the legend of princess Miaoshan that had become so popular by then.[21]

When one analyzes the contextual setting of the early eleventh century, the Lower Tianzhu monastery, and especially its abbot Ciyun Zunshi, play a major role. As one of the two most celebrated Tiantai reformers, Ciyun Zunshi is well known for his Guanyin veneration and repentance practices. In 999 CE, during his tenure as abbot of the Baoyun Monastery 寶雲 (990-1002) in Mingzhou (modern Ningbo), he ordered the carving of a sandalwood Guanyin image and promoted the deity's worship as a means to transform vernacular religious practices.[22] Zunshi personally left a record about the icon's consecration procedure, but this does not contain any comment on the circumstances of its execution. These are however vaguely summarized in the much later "Record of the Venerable Siming's Teachings and Practices" compiled by the Tiantai monk Zongxiao (宗曉, 1151-1214):[23]

三師住寶雲。自幸得觀音幽贊。命匠造旃檀大悲像。像成工有誤折手執楊
枝。師驚且恐。即自接之。不施膠漆而泯合如故。即撰一十四願文。其略
曰。己亥咸平二年四月。四明沙門遵式刻像。懼晦于後世。手題記云。沈
淨月刻相貌。章淨修等須像財物。像成立于大法堂。召僧百人。奉行經法
而證之。

Third:[24] The master lived at Baoyun [monastery]. Believing that [he] enjoyed discreet patronage from Guanyin, he called a craftsman to make a sandalwood icon of Dabei (Great Compassion [Guanyin]). When the image was completed, the willow twig held in the hand [of the image] was broken by mistake. The master was alarmed and frightened, but then accepted it. Without needing any glue or lacquer, [the broken] part was restored as if it had never been broken. Then [he] composed votive verses containing fourteen vows. His summary says: Second year, fourth month of the Xianping era (999 CE). The Siming śramaṇa Zunshi carved the image. Fearing that the later generations might not know [who made the image, he] inscribed this: Shen Jingyue carved the countenance; Zhang Jingxiu and others adorned the image with various accessories. The icon was installed in the Great Dharma Hall. He [Zunshi] summoned the monks, a hundred men [in all]. They professed to follow the Buddhist law and confirmed it.

The information given here is quite astounding and possibly close to the truth, as Zunshi is not depicted as being overconfident about his deeds but full of doubts. The modifications in the icon's appearance that were executed by Zunshi are clad in cryptic words. Assumptions about the result are, therefore, highly hypothetical. A

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21 See Dudbridge 1978.
22 Stevenson 1999: 345. The intention was to eradicate popular blood sacrifice to local gods and ancestors through the promotion of Buddhist repentance practices.
23 Siming zunzhe jiao xing lu 四明尊者教行錄, T.1937.933a.4-14.
24 The whole entry lists four numinous traces from Ciyun Zunshi's life.

comparison of two Guanyin images, one with the standard Wuyue iconography at Hangzhou's Ciyun cave (plate 1) and the White-Robed Guanyin at the Yanxia cave (plate 2) possibly sheds light on how we are to understand the hints provided by Zunshi's record. The standard Wuyue iconography depicts Guanyin with a raised right hand grasping the willow twig in front of his chest whereas the White-Robed Guanyin representation holds both hands together and lowered in front of the body. This kind of modification is not too difficult to carve and the concept itself was already known from *arhat* and *bodhisattva* depictions from the Tang dynasty onwards.[25] We may surmise that the sandalwood icon finished by Zunshi at the Baoyun monastery was initially wrapped in a white silk cowl laid over head and body to cover the modifications in its iconography.

In his record on the Lower Tianzhu monastery, the prefect of Hangzhou, Hu Su 胡宿 (996-1067), wrote that Zunshi made another sandalwood image of Guanyin and installed it in the centre of the *samādhi* hall.[26] Apart from this meagre information there are no further references anywhere about the icon. It seems to be the case that information concerning Zunshi's role was carefully played down or deliberately avoided in order to leave room for the establishment of a streamlined myth and the circulation of the story about former king's dream of the white-robed deity visiting him.

Regarding the innovative visual concept, it seems likely that, in addition to certain Dhāraṇī texts, a variety of visual imagery from the North-western regions were influential in shaping Guanyin's new guise in southeastern China. This influx of imagery from Central Asia presumably became available after the unification of the empire under the Song dynasty in 960 CE and 978 CE, respectively, in the Wuyue region. The earliest extant examples of this new visual concept of Guanyin are two small clay figurines (plate 3) excavated from a relic chamber on the third floor of the Ruiguang pagoda 瑞光塔 in Suzhou together with a wooden box that holds an inscription dated 1013 CE.[27] The two identical figurines are meticulously painted and show the standing bodhisattva with a white head cowl covering the body down to the knees and colourful clothing beneath it. They keep their hands lowered and crossed at the wrists, clasping prayer beads in front of the body like the White-Robed Guanyin sculpture in the Yanxia cave (plate 2). Their existence strongly suggests the spread of a new Guanyin cult which could well be connected to Zunshi's stay in Suzhou in 1015 CE, where he delivered several lectures at the Kaiyuan monastery attended by thousands of listeners.[28]

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25 See Wang 2005: 335, fig. 6.11.a (Longhu pagoda), and 138, fig. 3.4, (Dunhuang Mogao cave no. 217). Cave 217 was excavated after 708 CE, see Wang 2005: 139, and 412, note 83.

26 See Xianchun Lin'an zhi, chap. 80: 6b: 又造旃檀觀音 像置三昧堂中 慈相穆 如智者之遺法 也 "He again made a sandalwood image of Guanyin and installed it in the centre of the *samādhi* hall. Its compassionate appearance is as profound as the *dharma* transmitted by Zhiyi."

27 Suzhou Museum 2006: 186. The clay sculptures are 38 cm in height.

28 Stevenson 1999: 348.

To sum up, the entire narrative about the Upper Tianzhu Monastery's foundation lacks historicity and seems to have been consciously construed by Tiantai monks to legitimize the existence of a venerated icon with unfamiliar iconographic traits. The spreading of this patched version was facilitated by the fact that books dating to the end of the Tang dynasty and the Five Dynasties period in the imperial library had fallen victim to a fire in the early spring of 1015 CE.[29] This incident and the lack of historical material made the Wuyue kings ideal subjects for portrayal in later Buddhist historiography as exemplary pious Buddhist disciples, who could be employed as proponents of Guanyin's new guise. In order to better understand the evolution of the new engulfing Guanyin imagery, we have to refrain from two premises: the first being the notion that the so-called White-Robed Guanyin was per se a female deity, and the second to take writings about dreams and visions as factual truth rather than as intentional retrospective projections in later Buddhist historical documents.

The Source of Discussion: Two Different Guanyin Sculptures at the Yanxia Cave

The Yanxia cave 煙霞洞 in Hangzhou's Southern Hills 南山 has two life-size sculptures of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (plate 2 and 4) standing on small plinths a meter above ground level on each side of the entrance patio.[30] Because there are several inscriptions dating to the Wuyue period (907-978 CE), all the high relief sculptures were generally believed to be carved in the same period.[31] This assumption is neither supported by iconography nor by style. Monumental stone sculptures from the Wuyue kingdom form a coherent and homogenous corpus of artwork with a distinct stylistic pattern and iconography in which an earlier and a later phase can clearly be distinguished. The popularity of Avalokiteśvara in the Wuyue kingdom is attested by several images of different sizes carved in stone in high and low relief. Early Wuyue carvings favour the Bodhisattva as a solitary iconic figure and not necessarily as a member of the "Pure Land Triad" (Buddha Amitābha with Mahāsthāmaprāpta and Avalokiteśvara) which is more common in the later phase.[32]

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29 Kurz 2003: 194. Kurz writes that also Ouyang Xiu had to rely on oral information from relatives in Jiangnan to write his "Historical Records of the Five Dynasties" (Wudai shiji 五代史記) and the "New History of the Five Dynasties" (Xin wudai shi 新五代史), see p. 197.

30 There are remains of narrative scenes carved in low relief on the right side of the entrance, unrelated to the sculptures in high relief which have mostly obliterated them. These small-size reliefs indicate that the original composition and structure of the cave's artwork was reworked at a later time.

31 An inscription once mentioned the donor Wu Yanshuang 吳延爽, brother-in-law of king Qian Wenmu 錢文穆王 (r. 932-941) of Wuyue 吳越, who had an arhat carved in a niche. No inscription or source ever mentioned the monumental Guanyin sculptures. See Howard 1985: 10.

32 In the middle of the tenth century another variant of the Avalokiteśvara image in *rājalīlāsana* posture became prominent as a solitary figure in Wuyue. This type is commonly called "Water-moon Avalokiteśvara" (Shuiyue Guanyin 水月觀音).

Though Avalokiteśvara is depicted holding his standard attributes, the willow twig and the water vessel, some peculiarities make the Wuyue images distinct. They show Avalokiteśvara in *padmāsana* on a stepped lotus pedestal with a tiny water vessel on the palm of his left hand in his lap and holding the willow sprig in his raised and twisted right hand close to the chest while the twig leaves cover his right shoulder (plate 1).[33] This Wuyue depiction of Avalokiteśvara was still appreciated during the early Song dynasty (plate 5).[34] Since they are inconsistent in style and concept with the Wuyue remains at other sites around Hangzhou, both Yanxia Avalokiteśvara sculptures must have been carved in a later period.[35] A proper dating of these sculptures is, therefore, crucial to the whole topic discussed in this paper.

In addition to the above-mentioned Wuyue period donor inscriptions and the legend about the origin of the *arhat* sculptures in the Yanxia grotto,[36] chapter 78 of the "Lin'an Gazetteer from the Xianchun Era" (Xianchun Lin'an zhi 咸淳臨安志)[37], contains an entry on the renaming of the Yanxia Cloister into Qingxiu Cloister 清修院. On this basis we can conclude that the life-size Avalokiteśvara sculptures were carved around 1065 CE.[38] This fact has been ignored until now.

清修院

廣順三年吳越王建舊額煙霞。治平二年改今額有煙霞洞大如屋窈深莫見其極後晉開運元年僧彌洪遇異人指示其處中有石刻羅漢六尊錢氏別刻十二尊足成之洞有巖曰象鼻有石垂下若手曰佛手巖

33 There is no extant Wuyue stone sculpture of Avalokiteśvara that still preserves the proper attributes without deterioration. The earliest monumental solitary sculpture is at Shilong cave, very close to the Ciyun cave which Angela Howard dates to 942 CE, see Howard 1985: 11. My own investigation shows that the Ciyun cave cannot have been constructed before 965 CE.
34 The low relief carving of Avalokiteśvara is found in the vicinity of the Tianzhu monastery at Feilaifeng 飛來峰, Hangzhou, dated by inscription to 1022 C.E. It should be noted that unlike Wuyue Bodhisattva images, this one is clad in a long shawl that covers the arms completely, a feature that became popular in Northern China during the tenth century, see the three bodhisattvas at Dunhuang Mogao cave 220, north wall of the passageway, renovated 925 CE, published in Ning 2004: color plate no 12.
35 The emotional quality in facial expression as seen in the Yanxia Guanyin sculptures was nowhere achieved in Wuyue stone carvings. There is no reason to assume that professional artisans could switch the style and content in which they were trained, and produce monumental artifacts in such high quality without long-term preparation in artistic skills. The ideology behind such sculptures also presupposes the presence of an established authority who promoted this new ideology.
36 The story is about the monk Mihong 彌洪 who "opened up the mountain" (*kai shan* 開山) for Buddhist practices and found the cave, see the entry on Yanxia dong in Xianchun Lin'an zhi, chap. 29: 6a.
37 The gazetteer was compiled by Qian Yueyou 潛說友 in 1268. Reading the gazetteer, it becomes quite clear that Qian Yueyou relied solely on other written sources and never visited the places he describes himself. Had he done so, he could not have ignored the impressive Guanyin sculptures at the cave's entrance.
38 Xianchun Lin'an zhi, chap. 78: 11b.

Qingxiu cloister:

In the third year of Guangshun (953 CE) the Wuyue king established the [cloister] formerly called Yanxia. In the second year of the Zhiping era (1065 CE) it was given the present name. The Yanxia cave is huge as a house. It is so obscure and deep [inside] that its farthest end cannot be seen. In the first year of Kaiyun era of the Later Jin (944 CE) the monk Mihong met an extraordinary person who showed him his place which had stone carvings of six *arhat*s inside. The [ruling] Qian clan had another twelve images carved to complete it. The cave has a boulder called 'Elephant's trunk' and another one hanging down like an arm, hence the name 'Buddha's hand boulder'.

An imperial edict renaming a site was usually presented with a lavish donation of money to refurbish it properly. The date 1065 CE is of special interest as it actually coincides with the efforts of Shen Gou 沈遘 (1028-1067)[39], the prefect of Hangzhou in the early 1060s, to strengthen the Tiantai school's 天台宗 position, which in contrast to the favoured Chan school 禪宗 did not receive much assistance from the Imperial court. It was Shen Gou who petitioned the imperial court to convert the Upper Tianzhu Monastery from a Meditation *(chan* 禪*)* back into a Teaching *(jiao* 教*)* institution affiliated to the Tiantai school. He also recommended the monastery to be named Efficacious Guanyin Monastery (Linggan guanyin si 靈感觀音寺). These endeavours were all due to the perceived efficaciousness of the sandalwood icon, which, according to the monastery's record, saved the people of Hangzhou from flood in 1065 CE.[40] Shen Gou removed the Chan Buddhist abbot from the Upper Tianzhu monastery and replaced him with Biancai Yuanjing, a second-generation *dharma* heir of Tiantai master Ciyun Zunshi 慈雲遵式 (964-1032), the famous former abbot of the Lower Tianzhu 下天竺寺 Monastery nearby. He received further assistance from prime minister Zeng Gongliang 曾公亮 (998-1078) who personally donated a large amount of money to the monastery in 1065 CE. In fact, the sources document a concerted action to give prominence to the Tiantai school. The Yanxia grotto's White-Robed Guanyin sculpture neatly fits into this framework. Most probably it represents a contemporaneous version of the genuine sandalwood icon at the Upper Tianzhu Monastery. This icon must have held an elevated position exclusively in the Tiantai school's religious concepts and practices during the eleventh century. The question arises as to why there are two different life-size sculptures of Bodhisattva Guanyin opposite each other at the entrance to the Yanxia cave. It may be surmised that such a unique representational entity served a specific ideological purpose. Both sculptures carry a depiction of Buddha Amitābha in their crowns and thus their identity cannot be doubted. Both represent the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. It now becomes clear that a replacement of the deity's two intrinsic

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39 See his biography in Songshi 30.331.10652-3.
40 See Yü 2001: 361.

iconographical "markers" had taken place. The one on the right side of the entrance (plate 4) carries the age-old, conventional attributes – the willow twig in his right and a water vessel in his left hand – while the other (plate 2) is endowed with two entirely different attributes in a novel combination: a lengthy shawl or cape worn over head and crown while fully covering the arms down to the wrists, and prayer beads (*shuzhu* 數珠, "counting beads")[41] in the lowered hands, in this case provided with long finger nails, a feature characterizing male members of the Chinese literati class (plate 6).[42] If the proposed date of 1065 CE for the carving of the Yanxia cave Guanyin sculptures is accepted, and the other governmental activity promoting the Tiantai school in those days is acknowledged, an answer to our question could be that the sculptures are a monumental visual statement of a keenly anticipated imperial approval of Avalokiteśvara's new iconography as equal to the ancient one.

This interpretation has consequences on a wider scale. It means that the concept of the White-Robed Guanyin in reality became popular in the first half of the eleventh century. The idea that it had already been in vogue since at least the early tenth century has to be questioned. Furthermore, the historical context, as discussed here, directs the focus on to the Tiantai school and its eminent reformers, Ciyun Zunshi and Siming Zhili 四明知禮 (960-1028) who shaped and popularized Tiantai practices in a way never seen before.

Several Steps back in History: Traces in the Development towards the New Conception

Before turning to a discussion of the local *episteme* in Hangzhou in the early eleventh century, I wish to argue against the notion that the concept of the White-Robed Guanyin was meant to replace or transform an ancient vernacular Chinese cult in which a female deity played the central role.[43] On the contrary, I am convinced that, from its very beginnings, Guanyin's novel appearance conveyed inherently and exclusively Buddhist ideals. To better understand the process of visual transformation we can turn first to possible Indian origins and analyse the impetus from those sources.

The distinction between two categories – purity and impurity – plays an important role in the ancient Indian value system and has left its impact on all Indian religions. Deduced from this concept, the colour white, which is also associated with god Brahma and called *brāhmana-varna,* symbolically represents the highest stratum in different units of classification as it qualifies the level of purity achieved on a societal or spiritual level.[44] Buddhist texts employ the polarity of white (*śukla*) and black

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41 Also called *fozhu* 佛珠, "Buddha beads", or *nianzhu* 念珠, "reciting beads", skt. *akṣamālā.*
42 The pre-eminence of the Confucian literati class in Northern Song society cannot be underestimated, see Welter 2006.
43 This is argued by Yü 2001: 407-419, who proposes as antecedents indigenous goddesses such as Nüwa 女媧, and by Idema 2000: 205-226.
44 See the discussion on colors in the Nātyaśāstra by Kintaert 2005.

(*kṛṣna*) symbolically for the categories pure-impure (*anāsrava-sāsrava*; *śubha-aśubha*), good-evil (*kuśala-akuśala*) and relate these pairs to basic Buddhist notions of happiness and suffering (*sukha-duḥkha*).[45] In accord with the belief in transmigration, white connotes furthermore disconnection from mundane life, renewal and new existence as additional meanings linked to the notion of purity. In succession, all Indian religions have developed sets of purification rituals which form the core of diverse religious practices and in this way strict asceticism is esteemed the ultimate form of religious purification practice.[46] In this perspective, an undyed and stainless piece of cloth worn by a Brahmin ascetic underscores in visual terms the aspect of untaintedness by worldly contaminations and the aim to eliminate karmic bonds. Integrated into Buddhist narratives, this pre-Buddhist ascetic ideal, for instance, plays a central part in the Mahājanaka-jātaka – visually presented in a wall painting in Ajanta cave No.1 – where a white-robed ascetic, holding prayer beads in his left hand, gives instructions about renunciation to the king (plate 7). It should not come as a surprise then, that in ancient India Buddhist lay practitioners (*upāsakas, upāsikās*), following a set of disciplinary vows, wore white robes to indicate their determination to follow an ascetic lifestyle close to that of Buddhist monks.[47] As early as the time of emperor Aśoka lay devotees were called the "white-robed ones".[48]

Still the question remains: how to relate this ascetic concept to Avalokiteśvara, the *bodhisattva* of compassion? A fragmented Sanskrit manuscript, written in Central Asian Brāhmī script on birch-bark, provides us with a missing link. Discovered in a cave at Qizil on the northern route of the Silk Road by Albert von Le Coq in 1906 and translated into German by Dieter Schlingloff in 1961,[49] this treatise, though clearly belonging to the Hīnayāna school of the Sarvāstivādins, introduces new methods of visualization practices unknown to earlier Buddhist meditation concepts and explicitly mentions the visualization of a white-robed (*avadāta*) woman as the embodiment of compassion (*karuṇā*) in the heart of the practitioner in three different instances.[50] In visual terms, this Hīnayāna concept of compassion was obviously based on the Indian white-robed female lay devotee. The idea that the one who restrains personal consumption cultivates compassion with all sentient beings is a logical consequence and seems to have been prevalent from early beginnings.

The Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra provides us with yet another famous serene white-robed exemplar in a Mahāyāna context. According to this *sūtra*, the 120-year-old

45 See Slavik 1994: 42.

46 For a discussion of the sources for Indian asceticism see Bronkhorst 1998.

47 The Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra (Dazhidu lun 大智度論 T.1509, *juan* 13: 158c.15-160c.16, explains the precepts for the "White-Robed Ones" (*baiyi* 白衣, *avadātavasana*); on the five vows an *upāsaka* observes all the time (159c.23-160a.4) and the eight vows observed on the six fasting days each month (159b.25-159c.13) see Seiwert 2003: 153.

48 See Guruge 1994: 44-45.

49 See Schlingloff 1964.

50 See Schlingloff 1964: 136-137, 144 and 171.

Brahmin ascetic Subhadra was the last man to be converted by Buddha Śākyamuni as he lay on his deathbed. Due to his powers accumulated from life-long ascetic practices, Subhadra achieved enlightenment and entered *nirvāṇa* even before Śākyamuni by inflaming himself from within.[51] In many Gandhāran relief stelae depicting the *parinirvāṇa* scene, a completely muffled Subhadra, sitting in deep *samādhi* on the floor, is placed prominently in front of Śākyamuni's deathbed (plate 8). It is this pictorial motif that became the prototype of an ascetic in Central Asia and China, a figure clad in white robes with his head wrapped in a scarf or cowl.[52] The head covering became an appropriate sign for deep meditation,[53] whereas the white dress covering the whole body represented the ascetic life-style and the achieved state of purity resulting from it.

Though we have no pictorial evidence, it seems likely that at quite an early stage these different entities were fused with the ideological conception of Avalokiteśvara in Central Asia. As early as the sixth century the Buddhist scripture "Dhāraṇī Miscellany" (Tuoluoni zaji 陀羅尼雜集, T.1336) describes a manifestation of Avalokiteśvara as "white-robed" *(baiyi* 白衣), sitting on a lotus with his hair piled up high and holding a lotus flower in one hand, a water vessel in the other.[54] Despite the lotus flower, which is already the symbol of utmost purity, the three other mentioned characteristics, the white (loin) cloth, the piled-up hair and the water vessel *kamaṇḍalu* clearly describe the appearance of an Indian ascetic. The same text tells us that images representing this manifestation were used in specific *dhāraṇī* rituals to remove karmic bonds as well as physical ailments.[55] Regarding ritual practice, the later "Dhāraṇī sūtra of the Thousand-eyed Thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara"[56], translated by Zhitong 智通 during the Zhenguan reign period (627-49 CE) of the Tang dynasty,

51 See the translated versions in Waldschmidt 1948: 224-238.
52 The depiction of a covered head in this case must have been a necessary adaptation to the conditions of the barren Central Asian environment with no trees beneath which to practice long sessions of meditation. See the identical depiction of Subhadra in the Dunhuang mural from the Sui dynasty (581-617), cave 29, published in Baker 1998: 71, pl. 4, and the discussion in Ebert 1985: 85.
53 I thank Petra Roesch for pointing this out to me.
54 See chapter 6 of the Tuoluoni zaji 陀羅尼雜集, T.1336.612b.17-19: 行此陀羅尼法。應以白淨若細布。用作觀世音像。身著白衣坐蓮華上。一手捉蓮華一手捉澡瓶。使髮高豎。 "Follow this dhāraṇī method. [You] need a white, clean, fine cotton cloth. Use it to create an image of Guanshiyin. The body is clad in white clothes sitting on a lotus flower. One hand holds a lotus flower, one hand a water vessel. Show the hair piled up high." The identical phrase is again used in chapter 10, T.1336.635a.23-24. This source was already mentioned by Stein 1986: 28, and Yü 2001: 169-172. We should be clear that the Indian idea of "white-robed" indicates the men's loincloth and nothing else, whereas in China it could only be imagined as something covering the whole body.
55 Some small gilded bronze statuettes from the early sixth century showing Avalokiteśvara standing with a lotus stalk and a water vessel are still extant.
56 T.1057, Qianyan qianbi Guanshiyin pusa tuoluoni shenzhou jing 千眼千臂觀世音菩薩陀羅尼神咒經.

advised practitioners explicitly to put on white clothes when holding the "Feast of the Eight Precepts" *(bajiezhai*/八戒齋*)* on the fifteenth day of every month, promising that chanting Avalokiteśvara's "Great Compassion Dhāraṇī" (Dabei zhou 大悲咒*)* 108 times will eradicate all sins and hindrances.[57] In the fourth chapter of Atikūṭa's Dhāraṇīsamgraha,[58] Avalokiteśvara's eleven-headed manifestation further expounds powerful spells which, he declares, he obtained as an *upāsaka* in a far distant era, and in the course of lecturing he instructs the practitioner to use prayer (i.e. counting) beads for effectively reciting the spells.[59]

These examples demonstrate that all necessary components for creating the novel iconography can already be traced in texts of the early Tang dynasty. Yet we cannot assume that visionary descriptions in texts imply the presence of a contemporary visual medium in Chinese sanctuaries of the kind we know from much later periods in Chinese history. Though Avalokiteśvara appears already as a white-robed person in a dream in Sengyou's 僧祐(445-518) biography of Guṇabhadra (394-468),[60] we should acknowledge the difference between the appearance of a deity in written narratives and the prescribed standard iconographical rendering of an icon to be venerated by the public. The only extant but deteriorated scroll paintings from Murtuk (plate 9) and Toyok in Central Asia that show a completely muffled white-robed emanation of Avalokiteśvara as a secondary figure to the central standard iconic image of the Bodhisattva most probably date to the 10th-11th centuries.[61] We have no evidence of earlier images depicting a white-robed manifestation of this kind in connection with Avalokiteśvara.[62]

In many Chinese Buddhist scriptures, such as the Lotus-sūtra, Avalokiteśvara functions as an exterior savior to the threatened devotee whose supplications he hears and responds to. In no way is his compassionate attitude based on the cultivation of ascetic practices, an idea undisputed in India. To fully comply with the complex, genuinely Indian notion of this bodhisattva and to convey his ascetic character in visual terms was, indubitably, a great challenge to Chinese artists as there did not exist any such visual "terminology". Though they emulated in detail the Indian model during the Tang dynasty (618-907), the visual idiom and its encoded meanings may not have been grasped thoroughly due to a lack of familiarity with the Indian concept

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57 T.1057.85a.18-23, see McBride 2008: 71.
58 Tuoluoni ji jing 陀羅尼集經 ("Collection of Spells"), T.901, compiled ca. 654CE.
59 T.901.813a.4-5, and T.901.813a.27-28.
60 Chu sanzang jiji 出三藏記集, juan 14, T.2145.105c.23; see the discussion in Stevenson 1987: 225.
61 I thank Lilla Russell-Smith for this information based on recent research.
62 In Dunhuang Mogao cave no. 61, integrated into a scene depicting Wutai shan, we find a narrative depiction of Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī dressed in white garments and head-cover like a lay practitioner while meeting the Indian monk Buddhapāli. The cave was excavated between 947-951, see the discussion in Heller 2008: 29-50; see the depiction of the detail from the Wutai shan map, p.45, fig. 2.6.

behind it. Asceticism as an ultimate value and the visual allusions to Indian asceticism could be apprehended only with difficulty and not easily transplanted into Chinese culture. This is especially true for the transmission of the visual forms. To the knowledgeable reader, the tendency towards emphasizing the ideal of personal efforts and restraint was already discernible in early Buddhist scriptures by the subtle change in the perception of Avalokiteśvara's embodied virtues which differ conspicuously in the two most influential *sūtras*, the Lotus and the Avataṃsaka. The primary difference lies in the proposed methods to achieve salvation, which puts "the active way of learning and meditation of the Gaṇḍavyūha (a section of the Avataṃsaka), and the passive way of faith and devotion of the *Lotus*" as polarities into tension.[63] Needless to say, the popularity of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara in China is generally accepted as deriving mainly if not solely from his salvific capacities displayed in the Lotus-sūtra. Yet, the Lotus-sūtra also emphasizes merit-gaining through cultivating compassion as an essential part of Buddhist practice.

It was the precarious situation during the late ninth and tenth century that finally reorientated the remaining Buddhist monastic communities in China. The unstable social and political constellations started with the Huichang 會昌 persecution of Buddhists in 845 CE and continued with constant turmoil towards the end of the Tang dynasty (906 CE) and between the contesting rulers of the smaller states thereafter.[64] Buddhist traditions were broken and scattered, and monastic libraries burned down. The vacuum left by these turbulent times fuelled quite contrary approaches to the common Buddhist heritage; the dominant Fayan Chan school 法眼禪宗 in the Wuyue kingdom supported the reassessment of Buddhist teachings, culminating in a reformulation of and a stronger emphasis on religious practices in the later half of the tenth century. By contrast, the Linji Chan school 臨濟禪宗 preferred a strict rejection of traditional teaching methods and practices, emphasizing their mode as antinomian and antischolastic.[65] As we will see, this was also the period in which new visual concepts of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara could arise beyond the former limitations.

The struggle to create an all-encompassing visual expression of Avalokiteśvara's qualities becomes obvious in a painting from Dunhuang dating approximately to the mid-tenth century (plate 10). We are confronted with a conflation of Avalokiteśvara's inherited and novel aspects into a single visual idiom, suggesting a context in which the supposedly unfamiliar concept of a White-Robed Avalokiteśvara was not fully accepted without the inherited attributes, still indispensable for the correct identification of the deity.[66] In opposition to this holistic or integrative visual concept of the

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63 See Läänemets 2006: 331-332. Läänemets emphasizes the personal efforts of the practitioner as the decisive moment in the Gaṇḍavyūha in marked contrast to the Lotus-sūtra, which postulates the hearing of Avalokiteśvara's name as the most effective way to salvation.

64 The Zhejiang region, furthermore, faced a peasant rebellion in 859 and the rebellion of Huang Chao 黃巢 (874-884).

65 For a thorough analysis, see Welter 2006.

66 This unique presentation of Avalokiteśvara retains the attributes of his ancient visual concept in

bodhisattva exists what we might call a conceptual counter-image of Avalokiteśvara, stemming from approximately the same time but from the south-eastern Wuyue kingdom. This unique, diminutive sandalwood shrine (plate 11) dating to 961 CE at the latest shows Avalokiteśvara as the central icon without the commonly known attributes. Instead, he holds prayer beads in his slightly raised hands and is clad in a long shawl which does not cover his crowned chignon. This peculiar shrine is exceptional as it does not correlate with stylistic idioms in Buddhist art known from this region and the Wuyue period in particular; yet it conveys stylistic features that remind us of tenth-century wall and scroll paintings from the north-western region of China.[67] The little child pilgrim Sudhana depicted to the left of Avalokiteśvara links this small shrine to the Gaṇḍavyūha section of the Avataṃsaka sūtra which emphasizes personal efforts on the part of the practitioner in his pursuit of enlightenment.[68] The prayer beads as a visible attribute represent these personal efforts and are immediately understood as such by the ardent disciple. This indispensible tool for prayer sessions indicates perfectly penance practices which consist of, among other activities, the continuous chanting of shorter *mantras* and longer *dhāraṇīs*.

The discovery of the small Guanyin shrine provides us also with new information about the Chan Buddhist state preceptor of the Wuyue kingdom, Tiantai Deshao天台德韶 (891-972), who supervised the ongoing construction of the Huqiu pagoda in Suzhou where the Guanyin shrine was found in a relic chamber. We know scarcely anything about his teachings as he did not leave written documents behind like his famous disciple, the scholar-monk Yongming Yanshou 永明延壽 (904-975), whose ample commentaries on Buddhist teachings had a great impact on later generations.[69] Both had been disciples of the Chan master Fayan Wenyi 法眼文益 (885-958) who was particularly influenced by Huayan 華嚴 (Avataṃsaka) teachings.[70] An entry on Tiantai Deshao's disciple Shiyun 師蘊 in Zanning's 贊寧 (919-1001) Song Gaoseng zhuan 宋高僧傳 (dated 988 CE) mentions that they visited Mount Wutai 五臺山 (here called Qingliang shan 清涼山) together during the Longde 龍德 era (921-922 CE) of the Liang 梁 Dynasty.[71] It seems quite probable that the small shrine was

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China (emblem of Buddha Amitābha in the crown, the willow twig and the water vessel) and combines them with a white outer robe covering his crest and full body (a visual idiom of the White-Robed Guanyin) like a monk's *kāṣāya* while sitting leisurely in front of a large full-moon disc encircling his entire body (a visual idiom of the "Water-Moon Guanyin").

67 See examples from Dunhuang (Ning 2004: 28, plate 12) and Shanxi (Chai 1997: 167, plates 25, 26).

68 A jade Sudhana figure was excavated from the underground chamber of the Leifeng Pagoda 雷峰塔 in Hangzhou dating to the Wuyue period, see Zhejiangsheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 2002: 4-32.

69 For more information see Welter, Albert 2011. Yongming Yanshou's Conception of Chan Orthodoxy in the Zongjing Lu.

70 Brose 2009: 246. Since the Tang dynasty the Wutaishan area has been the centre of Huayan teachings.

71 See Brose 2009: 187, note 331, and Song Gaoseng zhuan, juan 23, T.2061.860a.16-17.

originally carved in the Wutaishan region and taken back to Wuyue as a pilgrimage item, either by Tiantai Deshao himself or by some other Wuyue monk.

In 953 CE, Deshao had lost texts of the Buddhist Tiantai tradition brought back from Japan to China and reinvigorated the Tiantai school with its focus on the Lotus-sūtra, Avalokiteśvara veneration and repentance practices.[72] The importance of Tiantai repentance practice was significant for Yongming Yanshou as well who is known to have recited Avalokiteśvara's "Great Compassion Dhāraṇī" six times a day.[73] Their activities make it clear that the distinction between different Buddhist schools in the Wuyue kingdom can by no means be drawn as sharply as later sources try to make us believe. On the contrary, there was in fact mutual influence driven by the intention to preserve the full range of Buddhist teachings and practices.

More than just a Strategy for Survival: Tiantai Reforms in the Early Song Dynasty

The surrender of the Wuyue kingdom to the Song empire in 978 CE had a huge impact on the fate of Buddhist institutions centred in Southeast China as the imperial court, located in Kaifeng in the North, brought the former direct access to political and financial patronage to an abrupt end. The newly established ruling elite of non-local Confucian bureaucrats was more or less hostile towards the "foreign" Buddhist religion and its institutions. The situation became worse after a riot organized by a Buddhist monk in Hangzhou in 985 CE.[74] In spite of this general aversion to Buddhist institutions, the Linji Chan school remained unaffected and was even promoted by the powerful Song official Yang Yi 楊億 (974-1020) at the imperial court.[75] In a political climate in which the ruling class preferred a Buddhist school which pursued teaching concepts that entirely contradicted and even abolished core values of the Tiantai school like traditional scholasticism and ritual practices, the difficulty in preserving the Tiantai school's heritage must have been palpable for those concerned.[76]

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72 See the article of Brose 2006 (2008): 21-62.
73 "The Record of Self-Cultivation of Chan Master Zhijue" (Zhijue chanshi zixing lu 智覺禪師自 行錄, XZJ.1232) lists 108 daily acts among which the recitation of the "Great Compassion Dhāraṇī" serves "to repent for the sins of all sentient beings in the Dharma Realm, which they commit with their six senses", see Yü 2001: 275, and Reis-Habito 1991: 43-44, as well as Reis-Habito 1993: 320.
74 Huang 1999: 295.
75 The Jingde chuandenglu 景德傳燈錄 ("Jingde-Era Lamp Transmission Record", T.2076), originally compiled by the Wuyue monk Daoyuan 道原 of the Fayan Chan school in 1004, was edited under the supervision of Yang Yi and issued in 1009. Contrary to Daoyuan, Yang Yi conceived Chan Buddhism as "a special practice outside the teaching" (jiaowai biexing 教外別 行), see Welter 2008: 38.
76 The bureaucrats wielded more political power when emperor Zhenzong ascended the throne in 998 CE. In the words of Albert Welter, this new breed of officials was "less enamored with the stuffy ritualism associated with older Tang Buddhist traditions, more enticed by the punchy

Despite the officials' critical attitude, however, the co-operation on a local level among government bureaucrats and Buddhist clergy worked smoothly to the benefit of the people.[77] In fact, the impact that Buddhist monks had on the morality of the common people was appreciated by Confucian scholars; in this regard especially, the Tiantai tradition contributed a wider range of communal religious practices that integrated lay practitioners than any other Buddhist school.

Based on the Lotus-sūtra's teachings, the cultivation of compassion was promoted by the Tiantai school and taken as the paramount means of ensuring salvation. Since the time of its founder Zhiyi 智顗 (538-597), the Tiantai school had advocated the conferral of bodhisattva precepts on lay practitioners and emphasized repentance rites (baichan 拜懺) as a useful means to generate self-cultivation. Among other ritual manuals, Zhiyi composed the "Repentance for the Invocation of Avalokiteśvara" (Qing Guanshiyin chanfa 請觀世音懺法)[78], a rite lasting forty-nine days for monks and twenty-one days for lay practitioners. During this procedure the performer identifies himself with the compassion and omniscience as powers of salvation of the bodhisattva and removes not only his own obstructions but those of all sentient beings in the six realms.[79] Zunshi elaborated and expanded this rite, which had once effected his cure from a severe illness and had also contributed to his enlightenment experience. He published a new and longer version of this repentance rite soon after the consecration of the first sandalwood sculpture of Guanyin that he had ordered.[80]

Both eleventh-century Tiantai reformers, Siming Zhili and Ciyun Zunshi, composed extensive ritual tracts, which upon close examination express a variety of their concerns. While many of Zhili's writings belong to the category of defining and defending Tiantai orthodox teachings against other interpretations within the Tiantai school itself, Zunshi's work devises practical schemes for Tiantai orthopraxy by expanding inherited ritual tracts and creating new ones. Their personal comments attached to some tracts reveal a clear insight into the normative crisis they were facing and a firm intention to determinedly tackle the challenges of their age. Lamenting the decay of Buddhist moral values and discipline within monastic communities, they were deeply, and with good reason, concerned about the survival of Buddhist practices in general. Though written some decades later, Su Shi's highly critical résumé of the Buddhist clergy of his time is quite illuminating and sums up how much Buddhist core values were being neglected:

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rhetoric and enigmatic exchanges attributed to the new Chan-style dialogues". See Welter 2006: 171.
77 See Halperin 1997: 292-296.
78 In the Guoqing bailu 國清百錄, T1934.795b.16-796a.3.
79 Stevenson 1986: 74, note 92.
80 "Samādhi Rite for the Dhāraṇī that Eliminates Poison and Harm by Invoking Avalokiteśvara" (Qing Guanshiyin xiaofu duhai tuoluoni jing sanmei yi 請觀世音菩薩消伏毒害陀羅尼三昧儀, T.1949).

> To fast and observe the monastic rules, to recite the scriptures, to construct pagodas and temples – these are the activities through which Buddhists should spread their teachings day and night. But presently many disciples consider it better to cultivate no-mind than to fast and observe the monastic rules, better to 'be free of words' than to recite the scriptures, and better to 'do nothing' than to construct pagodas and temples. Inside themselves they have no-mind, their mouths have no words, and their bodies no actions. All they do is eat to the full and relax. Thus they greatly cheat the true intentions of the Buddha.[81]

Realizing that the preservation of Buddhist practices were not even guaranteed within monastic communities, Zunshi and Zhili felt the necessity to entrench them in the everyday life of lay practitioners. The greatest challenge the Tiantai monks were facing was the prevalent *Zeitgeist* of the early Northern Song period, shaped by the newly established meritocracy of literati officials. According to their understanding, the dominant scholastic Buddhist schools of the former Tang dynasty (618-906 CE), the Huayan and Tiantai, had been involved in the weakening of society and the demise of the dynasty.[82] Lavishly sponsored by a Tang court and aristocracy inclined to opulence and grandiosity, these Buddhist schools were remembered for conducting pompous state rituals and maintaining vast monastic estates. The literati elite of the early eleventh century sought to distinguish clearly between all facets of the Song dynasty's "culture" (*wen* 文) and the aristocratic culture of the Tang,[83] which for the Song represented degenerate self-indulgence and deceit. This approach contributed to a rejection of the sensuous allure of Tang aesthetics during the early Song dynasty and the promotion of a refined but unostentatious aesthetic as the characteristic idiom of Song culture, preferring to admire an austere demeanor instead.[84] All efforts made by the Tiantai monks Zunshi and Zhili to redefine Buddhist values and practices have to be viewed in the light of these premises. Following the guidelines of the ruling Song culture they reformulated the central ideas already inherent in the Buddhist value system, but adapted and shaped them by using innovative means and expressions. Their intention was to preserve Buddhist scholastic studies and repentance practices while stressing austerity and discipline as central aspects of the Tiantai Buddhist path in contrast to the Linji Chan school which not only repudiated scholastic studies and ritual practices but enforced discipline in lifestyle as well.

Already in 996 CE, Zunshi tried to revive the idea of a Pure Land society comprising exclusively members of the local Chinese elite in biannual gatherings at the Baoyun monastery in Mingzhou, but these gatherings ceased immediately after

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81 Translated in Egan 1994: 165-166. Quote from the Yanguan dabei ge ji 鹽官大悲閣記, Su Shi wenji 蘇軾文集 12.387.

82 Welter 2008: 6.

83 Welter 2006: 215.

84 See Egan 2006: 4.

he left Mingzhou in 1002 CE.[85] His subsequent promulgation of Guanyin repentance practice could well have been a result of that failure, implying a turn towards the less sophisticated common lay practitioners. In the following years he developed a range of new ritual manuals for compassionate activities connected to the Guanyin cult. Among these are several versions of the rites of "feeding the hungry ghosts" (*shishi egui* 施食餓鬼), and the "release of living creatures" (*fangsheng* 放生). In later comments on Buddhist festivals, Zunshi criticized ordinary people who saw annual Buddhist performances as useful rites for mourning their family ancestors instead of as rites having a soteriology of their own, intended as pure charity generating the Mahāyāna spirit of universal compassion.[86] The obvious lack of understanding of Buddhist ethics presumably caused Zunshi and Zhili to start out with an ambitious project, having as its goal nothing less than the transformation of the entire society by transforming each individual into the Bodhisattva Guanyin. While essentially adhering to Tiantai principles, this idea implied a "verbal" reorientation of Zhiyi's original concept of spiritual development as a series of six stages through which a practitioner progressively achieves the realization of his own innate Buddhahood.[87] Zhili gave this idea a more concrete form by stating explicitly in his "Repentance Ritual of the Thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara" that "We must know that the Great Compassion Guanyin is our original nature. As we now wish to return to this origin, we praise the origin and take vows."[88] Bodhisattva Guanyin once again took a pivotal role in the proliferation of Tiantai Buddhist values and practices, but with certain amendments regarding his renewed identity. The striking element in the conception of Bodhisattva Guanyin now emphasized by the Tiantai school was the ascetic quality of his character as an inevitable requirement for generating purity and compassion. A few decades ahead of Zunshi, the eminent Wuyue scholar-monk Yongming Yanshou had already stated that the bodhisattva vocation required both assiduous ascetic discipline and compassionate activities to achieve progress on that very path.[89] Ascetic discipline in this context comprised daily meditation sessions and repentance practices as well as fasting (only one vegetarian meal in the forenoon).

The *bodhisattva* ideal itself required an expressive visual form capable of transmitting the important characteristics ascribed to Guanyin as immediately tangible to the practitioner. This was obviously not ensured by the inherited traditional

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85 Pure Land practice, i.e. the determined focus on rebirth in the Pure Land of Buddha Amitābha, was initially not part of Tiantai practice but incorporated by Zunshi and Zhili as a proper and already popular means. The gathering emulated Huiyuan's 慧遠 (336-416 CE) establishment of a Pure Land society, see Zürcher 1959: 219-33. In 978 CE, emperor Taizong granted Huiyuan the title *yuanwu* 圓悟 ("Perfectly Enlightened") which led to a resurgence of such religious communities, see the discussion in Getz 1994: 239-244.

86 Stevenson 1999: 364-365.

87 Mohe zhiguan 摩訶止觀, chap. 1, T.1911.10b, see Getz 1994: 209.

88 Qianshouyan dabei xinzhou xingfa 千手眼大悲心咒行法, T.1950.974c.14-15: 仍須了知大悲觀音即我本性。今欲復本故稱本立願。 See also Yü 2001: 287, and Reis-Habito 1993: 333.

89 See Getz 1999: 484.

visual concept of Guanyin which stressed his royal character and healing powers represented by a willow twig and a water vessel. (plate 4). The new compelling image of the White-Robed Guanyin combined the ideas of royal power, ascetic prowess and altruistic compassion and fully resonated with the Tiantai religious ethos of the early eleventh century. The White-Robed Guanyin can be termed the visual epitome of Tiantai lay orthopraxy and, therefore, a reflection of the practitioner who envisions his own innate being, towards which he strives, in the image. The outward projection enhanced his inward striving to enact the part of Guanyin and become a "real personification" of the *bodhisattva*. In his ritual tracts Zunshi based his reasoning regarding the dynamics of ritual efficacy on the Chinese understanding of reciprocal action, i.e. of "stimulus" (*gan* 感) on the part of the practitioner and "response" (*ying* 應) on the part of the *dharma* principle which generates benefit in every sense.[90] This concept is rooted in the ancient Chinese perception of "cosmic workings" as expressed in the term *ganying* 感應 which is usually translated as "sympathetic resonance".[91] Mundane benefits and otherworldly protection for the living and the deceased had been earned from cosmic powers or harmful ghosts in exchange for offering sacrifices. The replacement of this with a Buddhist system of ritual performance and moral behaviour conducted by lay practitioners could enter popular consciousness and thereby transform the general idea of efficacious ritual action, now endowed with a decidedly moral overtone.

It is unlikely that Zunshi's and Zhili's ideas could have been disseminated beyond their own region and in such a short period, had there not been another ambitious and highly knowledgeable agent at hand, who understood that the essential values of the Tiantai school are beneficial for the whole society. This agent was Wang Qinruo 王欽若 (962-1025), the prefect of Hangzhou in 1019-1020 CE and former chancellor of emperor Zhenzong 真宗 (r. 997-1022). Though previously more inclined to Daoism, Wang Qinruo became a fervent missionary for the Tiantai school and did not hesitate to make use of religious manipulations.[92] His past involvements at court probably enabled him to play a decisive role in creating the lore of the miraculously appearing and wonder-working sandalwood sculpture of the White-Robed Guanyin and in establishing the Upper Tianzhu monastery as a pilgrimage site. Deeply impressed by Zunshi, he became his powerful supporter at court and even persuaded the emperor

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90 Stevenson 1999: 382. Modern usage would term it as "you receive nothing by giving nothing," or more drastically as "no pain, no gain."

91 Originally a theory of portents, it later embraced all kinds of impulses that work as stimuli (*gan*) which set off responses (*ying*) from cosmic forces, deities etc. See the long discussion in Sharf 2002: 77-133; also Campany 1993: 264-65.

92 See Huang 1999: 303, and Stevenson 1999: 399, note 30. Wang Qinruo had helped Emperor Zhenzong to consolidate the dynasty by manipulating heavenly portents during the *fengshan* 封禪 ceremony on Mount Tai in 1008 CE. In this case revelatory dreams on the part of the emperor and the miraculous appearance of heavenly documents were as significant as the dream of the Wuyue king about the white-robed person visiting him and the miraculous appearance of the sandalwood icon.

to turn the Tianzhu monastery into a public monastery, to declare West Lake of Hangzhou a protected site for the release of living creatures, and finally, to officially incorporate Tiantai scriptures into the Buddhist canon.[93] Through Wang Qinruo's efforts Zunshi received the honorific title "Cloud of Loving Kindness" (ciyun 慈雲) from the emperor. Wang Qinruo and his wife donated over six million in cash to help expand the main temple hall of the Tianzhu monastery and other eminent scholar-officials followed suit with generous donations.[94]

In 1015 CE, when Zunshi was installed as abbot of the Lingshan monastery 靈山 寺 (later Tianzhu) in Hangzhou, the monastery was in a ruined state. Founded during the Sui dynasty by Zhenguan 真觀 (538-611), an eminent disciple of Tiantai founder Zhiyi, Zunshi felt blessed because he was able to promote again Tiantai teachings at this important sacred site.[95] Despite some local funding from the Hangzhou community, the reinstallation of Tiantai Buddhism that Zunshi had in mind was a difficult and almost impossible matter.

The attraction of a charismatic abbot was not enough to ensure continuity and sustainability of a monastery on a long-term basis. The mundane concern of establishing a consolidated economic perspective for the Tianzhu monastery to function even after their teacher's demise might not have been Zunshi's primary issue at all, but a farsighted literatus like Wang Qinruo, well-versed in financial and historical matters, had a different way of looking at the circumstances and of solving problems.

Having supervised the compilation of the important encyclopedia Cefu Yuangui 冊府元龜 until 1013 CE, Wang Qinruo had acquired detailed knowledge of an internationally famous pilgrimage site in Jiangsu which had flourished from the time of the later Tang dynasty. There, people venerated a Sogdian monk named Sengqie 僧伽 (628-710) in Sizhou 泗洲, who reputedly had numinous powers and founded the Puguangwang monastery 普光王寺, where his body had been preserved in lacquered form.[96] This Sengqie cult was an important financial asset to the city, because taxes had to be paid by every pilgrim on passing the Sizhou transit point located on the Grand Canal which connected North and South China.[97] Like Sizhou, Hangzhou as a trading centre was easily accessible via the Grand Canal and river systems and was, from that point of view, an ideal site for establishing another hub for pilgrims. Wang Qinruo donated a statue of Sengqie, who was venerated as an incarnation of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, to the Tianzhu monastery and Ciyun Zunshi subsequently composed a ritual manual.[98]

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93 Huang 1999: 304.
94 Huang 1999: 304.
95 Stevenson: 1999: 348-349. This information we get first-hand from Zunshi's letter to Zhili, see Tianzhu chanzhu shang Siming fashi shu 天竺懺主上四明法師書 in Siming zunzhe jiaoxing lu 四明尊者教行錄, chap. 5, T.1937.907a.4-8.
96 Barrett 2005: 105-106.
97 Barrett 2005: 110.
98 Huang 1999: 304.

From Veneration to Practice: Shaping anew Tiantai's Lay Identity

When we acknowledge that the White-Robed Guanyin was a template for the Tiantai lay practitioner to identify with, we may question how Zunshi was able to convince devotees to follow the ascetic example of Bodhisattva Guanyin and practice austerities on a daily basis. How did he succeed in making this ascetic ideal an attractive model to be pursued by many people from the more wealthy classes of society?[99] The Tiantai accentuation of the *upāsaka* precepts in the early eleventh century obviously implied a continuous observance of the eight precepts instead of the usual five (*pañcaśīla*); the eight precepts needed to be observed by pious devotees only on *upavasatha* (*uposatha*) days and included fasting after noon and sexual abstinence.[100] The key to Zunshi's success in popularizing the tightening of lay practitioners' discipline, thus turning the tide from consumption to abstention as the most appropriate means for attaining salvation, is given in the manual he composed for the "Ghost-Feeding" ritual. No pre-Song Tiantai liturgies for this ritual are recorded and Zunshi was the first to make use of this means in the Tiantai context.[101] He chose the "Ghost-Feeding" ritual in reaction to the common practice of appeasing resentful ghosts and deceased ancestors with lavish meat and wine offerings.[102] In his version of the "Food-Bestowal Liturgy", the practitioner invokes Bodhisattva Guanyin first. The invocation causes the visualization of the *bodhisattva* who is none other than the practitioner himself and, self-assured of his innate Guanyin capacities, he pronounces the following sentence during the short ritual conducted by himself:

我此施食功德如世尊言即與供養無量百千俱胝恒河沙諸佛正等無異[103]

> The merit of my bestowing of food is, as the World-Honored One said, the same as [the merit] of making offerings to Buddhas [equal in measure] to the immeasurable sand-grains of innumerable hundreds of thousands of [grains] of the Ganges river – equal and not different.[104]

Remarkable in this case is the implied empowerment of the lay practitioner whose compassionate activity of bestowing a small amount of food on the hungry ghosts is compared to immeasurable offerings to innumerable Buddhas. In an economic sense, this relatively minor deed was highly efficacious. A side effect of the ritual was the

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99 Ascetic practice was only interesting for those who could make choices and not for those in society who were already on the verge of starvation. See the discussion in Stark 2003: 5-19.

100 The rules for fasting by lay Buddhists (*upāsaka, upāsikā*) who follow the five commands (*pañcaśīla*) are described in Xi Chao's 郗超 (336-377) Fengfa yao 奉法要 translated by Zürcher 1959: 164-165.

101 Lye 2003: 281.

102 On local cults see von Glahn 2004.

103 Zunshi's liturgies are gathered in his "Golden Garden Collection", Jinyuan ji 金園集. The quotation is from chap. two, XZJ.950.11c.14.

104 Translation by Hun Yeow Lye 2003: 290, with modifications by Max Deeg.

liberation of deceased kin and the increasing of one's lifespan.[105] Merit-making in the Tiantai context was now interpreted in an entirely different way: the practitioner did not merely continue venerating Buddhist icons by making flower and incense offerings, participating in communal prayer sessions under spiritual guidance, but enacted *bodhisattva* Guanyin within himself to liberate hungry ghosts and contribute to universal welfare without a monk as mediator, performing the ritual on his own behalf. A related form of self-identification with an enlightened being was earlier used in esoteric Buddhist rituals, but Zunshi transformed it for and applied it to the Tiantai context. Though the fully ordained monk retained the authority to determine and teach Buddhist orthopraxy, lay ritual practices – at least the "Feeding Ghosts" rituals – were appreciated as equivalent to those of the monks. This idea had lasting consequences as its promulgation promised independent efficacious religious practice conducted by a lay practitioner.

Fasting practice (*zhaijie* 齋戒) as a requirement enabled even humble persons to pursue an efficacious religious life by making use of their saved food surplus to conduct "Feeding Ghosts" rituals as an act of compassion. Such a practice elevated their status not only within the religious community, but also within society in general. Females who abstained from meat and kept to a vegetarian diet were regarded as particularly virtuous by Confucians as female thrift was a sign of household prosperity.[106] On a societal level the proposed Buddhist ideal of prudence and the restraint of personal consumption coincided with the officials' concept of Song culture. Though the primary Buddhist intention was actually immaterial merit-making for attaining salvation, it did also generate mundane remunerations, when such an ascetic ideal was followed on a grander scale in society. In the terminology of modern economics, sustained growth is only possible if the practice of deferred gratification is accepted, i.e. the willingness to sacrifice current satisfaction for future gain.[107] Throughout history, Buddhist monastics lived according to this principle and served as exemplars for the lay community.[108] The shift in Buddhist lay practitioners' behaviour from more passive veneration to active ritual practice, including an ascetic lifestyle similar to that of the monks and nuns, raised the lay people's status within the Buddhist community as it put power and authorisation into the hands of lay devotees. Such a new religious role model was obviously attractive for the self-aware literati class used to decision-making on their own and concerned about independence from monastic services.

Despite being the "high potentials" in society, the Song literati elite lived in great uncertainty, always exposed to sudden changes in court politics which could

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105 Lye 2003: 288 and 295.
106 Lu 2002: 78.
107 Krugman 1994: 78.
108 Stephen Teiser 1988: 204-205 writes that "because they have renounced the family, monks are able to enrich family life. Having dedicated themselves to an ascetic way of life that claims to

negatively affect the lives of all members of their family.[109] The awareness that even high positions at court could not prevent them from ending up as victims of political intrigue, naturally made these elites more inclined to financial prudence than to the display of their high status through lavish consumption. The acceptance of prudence and restraint as important moral values shared by all members of a family clan contributed to sustainability by preserving their wealth for generations. Observing vegetarian fasts was at times so popular among the Song populace that some officials felt rather threatened by the pervasive existence of such religious fervour.[110]

Constant restraint of personal consumption is rather difficult to sustain unabated as is the yearning for attainments beyond present temporal existence. Without a rigid system of daily practices consisting of long prayer and meditation sessions it is nearly impossible to endure such hardship. We can assume that in the early Song dynasty lay devotees put on a white piece of cloth for conducting rituals and prayers to clearly distinguish these activities from profane ones and thus develop awareness of their innate Guanyin-hood. Regular gatherings at monasteries were undoubtedly essential to recruit spiritual guidance and foster communal support by group membership. A pilgrimage experience to the origin and focus of this Tiantai path of practice, to the White-Robed Guanyin sandalwood statue at the Upper Tianzhu temple in Hangzhou, may in many cases have inspired the pursuit of a religious life which promised worldly and other-wordly remunerations. Both Zunshi and Zhili emphasized that the quantity of invocations and recitations, conducted not as mere mechanical repetitions but with a sincere and attentive attitude, could multiply the efficacy of religious practice.[111]

The increasing popularity of these practices most probably also account for another phenomenon, namely the sudden disappearance of Buddhist stone relief niches dedicated by lay devotees to enhance the karma of their deceased kin. As soon as lay Buddhist practices were regarded as sufficiently efficacious, they supplanted donations of comparatively expensive small-scale Buddhist artwork in stone.

Conclusion

The early eleventh century was a decisive period for Chinese Buddhism in shaping somewhat opposed strands of Buddhist religiosity. Antonello Palumbo observed of the struggles between Buddhists and Daoists in early medieval China that "religious polemics produced religious identities; (and) the latter emerged at the end of a process started by and through the former".[112] This characterizes the situation of the eleventh century very well, though in this case the competing parties were two Buddhist

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deny the principle of procreation, monks contribute a regenerative force to that very world they appear to transcend."
109 Halperin 1997: 33.
110 Lu 2002: 97.
111 Getz 1994: 319.
112 Palumbo 2010: 6.

schools – Tiantai and Linji Chan – struggling for recognition and support by those in power. The general and local contextual settings of that period allow us, in combination with an iconological investigation and a critical analysis of style in Buddhist artwork, to draw conclusions about certain creative steps that made an implementation of the new visual idiom for the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara possible. The arguments presented here advocate that the new Tiantai idiom of the White-Robed Guanyin was not achieved by transforming or including a non-Buddhist deity in an attempt to render the "foreign" religion more attractive to the local populace. The change in Guanyin's visual imagery was rather generated from genuine Buddhist concepts and articulated exclusively Buddhist ideals which lie at the core of Tiantai teachings at the turn of the millennium. Two decisive components of Avalokiteśvara's identity, compassion and asceticism, were conveyed in the visual formula of the White-Robed Guanyin in terms which could more easily be understood and emulated by the lay practitioner familiar with Tiantai Buddhist practices. Tiantai practice especially attracted women to pursue their religious dedication more fervently as "it provided a means for women to speak out and gain control over themselves and their surroundings".[113] The practice laid the foundation for women to enact Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara within themselves, and resonant with this ideological concept it was only a small step to create an imagery of the White-Robed Guanyin in feminine guise. The White-Robed Guanyin as the embodiment of Buddhist moral cultivation was highly appreciated by the Song literati elite who supported and promoted the proliferation of the renewed Tiantai Guanyin cult as a suitable means for self-cultivation throughout China.

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PHRA THAEN SILA-AT: FROM *PAÑCABUDDHABYĀKARAṆA* TO PILGRIMAGE

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Introduction

Phra Thaen Sila-at has been a sacred site and a place of pilgrimage for the Thai since ancient times.[1] It features in a Buddhist narrative, the Prophecy of the Five Buddhas (*pañcabuddhabyākaraṇa* ปัญจพุทธพยากรณ์), and archaeological evidence found at Wat Phra Thaen Sila-at and in its vicinity indicates that the area has been important since at least the Sukhothai period (thirteenth century on). Several ancient *chedi*s (*cetiya, stūpa*) in Sukhothai style can be seen at Wat Phra Yuen, which was originally part of the same complex as Wat Phra Thaen Sila-at. In addition, Thung Yang, where Phra Thaen Sila-at is located, is mentioned in Sukhothai stone inscription no. 38 (จารึกลักษณะโจร), dated CE 1397.[2]

Regardless of the archeological and narrative evidence, textual sources for Phra Thaen Sila-at as a pilgrimage destination only begin to appear clearly at the end of the Ayutthaya period, in about the seventeenth century. They then continue through the Thonburi (1767–1782) to the Rattanakosin eras (1782 to present). These sources indicate that rulers of Ayutthaya, Thonburi, and Bangkok, along with important members of the royal family and high-ranking monks, travelled to pay homage to Phra Thaen Sila-at.

Despite its evident significance as a site which attracted pilgrims from afar for several centuries, little has been published regarding Phra Thaen Sila-at. In this paper, we discuss the history of Phra Thaen Sila-at according to legends and available historical evidence, to demonstrate how it was one of Siam's important pilgrimage destinations, comparable to the well known footprint of the Buddha, Phra Phutthabat, in Saraburi province, or to Phra Thaen Dong Rang, the site of the Blessed One's Parinirvāṇa, in Kanchanaburi province.

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1   The name means "sacred throne made from a stone slab" (Thai *phra thaen* พระแท่น + ศิลาอาสน์ = Sanskrit *śila-āsana*).
2   For the date see Griswold, Nagara 1992: 124, note 8.

Phra Thaen Sila-at in the *Pañcabuddhabyākarana*

Pañcabuddhabyākarana, the "Prediction Concerning the Five Buddhas," is a short Pali text that is unique, as far as we know, to Thailand. Its contents, which draw on the story of the White Crow, popular in the Tai-Lao world,[3] suggest that the text may have been composed at Thung Yang. When the "Fifty Jātakas" (Paññāsa-jātaka), a collection of non-canonical or non-classical *jātakas*, was translated by the Vajirañāna Library in 2482 (1939), Pañcabuddhabyākarana was included as a supplement at the end of volume 2.[4] The story was published in romanized Pali with a French translation by Ginette Martini (Martini 1969). Here we summarize the relevant part of the narrative.

At one time, there were five *bodhisatvas*: Kakusandha Bodhisatva, born as a wild chicken; Konāgamana Bodhisatva, born as a serpent (*nāga*); Kassapa Bodhisatva, born as a turtle; Gotama Bodhisatva, born as a bull; and Si Ariya Maitreya Bodhisatva, born as a royal lion (*rājasīha* ราชสีห์). Each of them cultivated the perfections at different places. After some time, the five *bodhisatvas* came together to observe precepts at Mount Kandara (Pali Kandarapabbata, Thai Kantharabanphot). The five *bodhisatvas* made a vow that if any of them had the chance to gain Buddhahood, that one must announce the fact at this place.

When Kakusandha Bodhisatva gained awakening, he came to sit on a stone slab at Mount Kandara. He stroked his head, and bestowed some of his hairs on a group of *arahants*, who took them to King Asoka. King Asoka installed the hair relics at Thung Yang (Pali, Duṅyanti-ṭhāne, Thai Phranakhon Thung Yang). Afterwards, hair relics of all five Buddhas would come to be kept here as well.

Then in the time of Gotama Buddha, the Blessed One came to sit on the same stone slab at Mount Kantharabanphot outside of the city of Thung Yang, accompanied by five hundred *arahants* (พระขีณาสพ). When it was time to eat, the venerable Ānanda invited them to go to the outskirts of Phra Thaen Sila-at, Thung Yang, behind, to the place where the five Buddhas had once gathered.

When they had finished eating, a giant *yakṣa* came to offer a crystal vessel (คนที แก้ว). Along the way, the giant had stepped on four large ants. The Buddha, then, predicted that when two thousand years of the *sāsana* had passed, these four big ants would be born as kings of this city, and would become patrons of the *dharma*. At the same time, a golden deer and wild animals came to see the Buddha. The Buddha

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3   For a sermon version published by S. Thammaphakdi, translated by Bruce Evans, see Fragile Palm Leaves Newsletter, Vol. 4, Sept. 1998:10-12. For a translation from a northern Thai manuscript, see Swearer 2004: 197-205.

4   The Pali has now been published in Paññāsajātaka, Phak phasa thai bali, published to celebrate the seventh twelve-year cycle of King Bhumibol Adulyadej on 5 December, 2011, sponsored by the Omsin Peua Sangkhom Foundation, printed by Plan Printing Chamkat, 2554 [2011] ปัญญาสชาดก, ภาคภาษาไทย บาลี, มูลนิธิออมสินเพื่อสังคม จัดพิมพ์เฉลิมพระเกียรติพระบาทสมเด็จพระ ปรมินทรมหาภูมิพล อดุลยเดช เนื่องในโอกาสพระราชพิธีมหามงคลเฉลิมพระชนมพรรษา ๗ รอบ ๕ ธันวาคม ๒๕๕๔.

predicted that these animals would become humans and together would support Buddhism at this place, Phra Nakhon Thung Yang. Thus, this place would be regarded as a propitious site.

In that age, two thousand years hence, there will be two kings; one named Sriratchawong (Srirājavaṅś สริราชวงศ์), who will rule in this city, and another named Changkothibodi (Caṅkodhipati จังโกธิบดี), who will rule in Lavo (ละโว้). These two kings will help to raise up a Buddha image, four *wā* in height,[5] which will have sunk in the Nan River, and then install it at Mount Kaṇḍara, the place where the Buddhas once stayed.

During the same period, there will be a king named Dhammāsoka Rāja who will come to visit this city and bury relics of the Buddha here. At that time, there will be a Mahāthera named Mahā Kālideyyathera (มหากาลิเทยยเถร) who will find the relics of the Buddha at this place, to which he will pay homage and build a *stūpa*.

For this reason, the Buddha said, if anyone having faith comes to pay homage at these three places, that is the place of the relics of the Buddha, the place of the Buddha image, and the place of the stone slab where the Buddhas sat (that is, Phra Thaen Sila-at), they will gain great benefit. They will live without sickness or accident, have a long life, and when they pass away from this world, they will be reborn in the Heavens of the Sensual Realm up to the level of Paranimmittavasavatti. When they pass from this heaven, they will return to be born as a human and will then reach *nirvāṇa*.[6]

As a result of this prediction in the Pañcabuddhabyākaraṇa, the stone slab Phra Thaen Sila-at, Thung Yang, became an important place of pilgrimage for Thai Buddhists from then until the present. Furthermore, since Phra Thaen Sila-at has a legend related to the five Buddhas, today there are paintings of the five Buddhas inside the assembly hall (*vihāra*) there.

In addition to the Pañcabuddhabyākaraṇa, in the Northern Chronicles there is the legend of Bā Dhammarāja (บาธรรมราช) who built "Uttaragāma, the 'Northern Settlement' (อุตรคาม), which is the city of Thung Yang, and named it, Kamboja-nagara (กัมโพชนคร)."[7] However, since this legend does not mention Phra Thaen Sila-at directly, we do not discuss it here.

Phra Thaen Sila-at during the Sukhothai period

In written sources from the Sukhothai period, there is no mention of Phra Thaen Sila-at, only mention of Thung Yang as a city within the sphere of influence of Sukhothai, as seen in Sukhothai Inscription No. 38 (จารึกลักษณะโจร), one part of which says:

... กลางเมืองสุโขทัยอันเป็นประธานกึ่งในเมี(อง)...ที่เนปร เชลียง กำแพงเพชร ทุ่งย้าง ปากยม สองแคว ...

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5   wā วา: a linear measure equivalent to two meters.
6   Fine Arts Department (Krom Silapakon) 2549 [2006]: 687-697.
7   Fine Arts Department (Krom Silapakon) 2542 [1999]: 87.

... in the center of Sukhothai which is midway between the cities ... such as Chaliang, Kamphaengphet, **Thung Yang**, Pak Yom, Song Kwae (Phitsanulok) ... [emphasis added].[8]

The city of Thung Yang was an important city of Sukhothai because of its location: it controlled the route to the northeast from Sukhothai towards Nan and Luang Prabang, and linked up to the southeastern route that passed the city of Tron (ตรอน) going to the Kwae Noi River. In addition, the route to the city of Chattrakan (ชาติตระการ) on the way to Nakhon Thai (นครไทย) and beyond to Vientiane (เวียงจันทน์) and the Mekong River valley, passed Thung Yang.[9]

While there is no mention of Phra Thaen Sila-at in the Sukhothai inscriptions, there are three Sukhothai-style inscriptions at Wat Phra Yuen, which, as mentioned, was at that time part of Wat Phra Thaen Sila-at. This suggests that the area of Phra Thaen Sila-at has been an important Buddhist site since the Sukhothai period. In addition, in the area nearby, Phra Borommathat Thung Yang was built during this period, further indicating the early importance of Thung Yang. However, in the Ayutthaya period during the reign of King Boromatrailokkanat (สมเด็จพระบรม ไตรโลกนาถ), the city declined in significance when the centre of influence shifted to Phichai (พิชัย), with the result that the name "Thung Yang" disappeared from lists of important cities during the Ayutthaya period. However, nearby cities were listed, including Phichai as a second-tier city (เมืองโท), with the cities of Bang Pho (บางโพ) and Fang (ฝาง) as tributaries (เมืองขึ้น).[10]

In any event, Thung Yang and Phra Thaen Sila-at remained an important Buddhist pilgrimage site, as can be seen from the Ayutthaya chronicles which state that King Boromakot (พระเจ้าอยู่หัวบรมโกศ) went to pay homage at Phra Thaen Sila-at. Also, a renovation inscription in the Vihāra of Phra Thaen Sila-at mentions the city of Laplae (ลับแล) and Thung Yang, as we will see below.

Phra Thaen Sila-at: Pilgrimage Site during the Ayutthaya Period

There is no evidence, textual or otherwise, from the early Ayutthaya period regarding Phra Thaen Sila-at. However, there is mention of "Mueang Thung Yang (เมืองทุ่งยั้ง)" in "Phra Aiyakan Lakpha Luk Mia Phukhon Than (พระไอยการลักภาลูกเมีย ผู้คนท่าน)", written in 1899 BE (1356 CE) during the reign of King Ramathibodi I (รามาธิบดีที่ ๑ or King U Thong พระเจ้าอู่ทอง), which states that "Thung Yang" was a city outside of Ayutthaya, included under the control of Sukhothai. The Phra Aiyakan states:

... อย่าว่าข้าหนีเจ้าไพร่หนีนายแลเขาลักไปขายถึงเชลียง ทุ่งย้าง บางยม สหลวง สอง แก้ว ชาดงราว กำแพงเพช สุกโขไท ใต้ล้าฟ้าเขียว ขาดจากมือเจ้าทาษเจ้าไพร่ไปไกล

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8   Fine Arts Department (Krom Silapakon) 2527 [1984]: 157. Translation from Griswold, Nagara 1974.

9   Srisakara Vallibhotama 2532 [1991]: 213-214.

10 Winai Phongsiphian 2546 [2000]: 338.

จะมาพิภาษฉันเมืองเพชบุรีย เมืองราชบุรีย เมืองสุพรรณบุรีย สพงครอง พลับแพรกศรี
ราชาธิราช นครพรหม นั้นบมิชอบเลย ...

... if a slave escapes from his master or a commoner (*phrai* ไพร่) flees his
overlord (นาย), and goes to be sold in Chalieng, **Thung Yang**, Bang Yom,
Sat Luang, Song Kaeo, Chadong Rao, Kamphaengphet, Sukhothai or any
other place, far beyond the control of the slave's master or commoner's
overlord, to bring an accusation in the cities of Phetchaburi, Ratchaburi,
Suphanburi, Saphong Khrong, Phlap Phraek Si Rachathirat, Nakhon
Phrom is not allowed ... [emphasis added].[11]

References to Phra Thaen Sila-at as a site of pilgrimage in the Ayutthaya period first
appear in the Royal Ayutthaya Chronicles, Phonnarat Edition (ฉบับสมเด็จพระพน
รัตน์). This narrative describes how King Boromakot (พระเจ้าอยู่หัวบรมโกศ), the
thirty-second king of Ayutthaya, travelled both by boat and land to pay homage to
Phra Thaen Sila-at. He travelled from Ayutthaya by way of Phitsanulok to pay respect
to the two celebrated images Phra Buddha Jinarāja and Phra Buddha Jinasīha, and
then went to Thung Yang to pay homage to Phra Thaen Sila-at. After that he continued
to the city of Sawangkhaburi (สวางคบุรี), before returning to Ayutthaya, as detailed in
the Chronicles:

"... ครั้นลุศักราช ๑๑๐๒ ปีวอก โทศก ถึง ณ เดือนสิบสอง สมเด็จพระเจ้าอยู่หัวเสด็จ
พระราชดำเนิรเปนขบวนพยุหบาตราใหญ่ทั้งทางบกทางเรือพร้อมจัตุรงคโยธาหาร
สารสินทพอเนกนาๆ แลนาวาเปนอันมาก เสด็จขึ้นไป ณ เมืองพิศณุโลก นมัศการ
พระพุทธชินราช ชินศรี แล้วเสด็จพระราชดำเนิรขึ้นไป ณ เมืองพนมมาศ ทุ่งยั้ง นมัศ
การพระแท่นสินลาอาษณ์ แลพระมหาธาตุ ณ เมืองสวางคบุรี ให้มีงานมหรรศภสม
โพธแห่งละสามวัน แล้วเสด็จกลับยังพระมหานคร ..."

... When the Royal Era reached 1102,[12] the year of the monkey, second of the
decade, during the twelfth month, His Majesty set out in a royal procession
forming a parade proceeding in great military formation both by land and by
barge, accompanied by the four divisions of His many different brave warriors,
elephants, and noble horses and by boats in great numbers. His Majesty went
to the city of Phitsanulok to venerate Phra Buddha Jinarāja (พระพุทธชินราช)
and Jinasīha (ชินศรี). Then His Majesty went in royal procession to **Si Phanom
Mat Thung Yang**[13] to venerate **Phra Thaen Sila-at** and Phra Mahathat (พระ
มหาธาตุ) at Sawangkhaburi (สวางคบุรี)[14] and had festivals to celebrate held for
three days in each place, and then he returned to the Phra Mahanakhon
(Ayutthaya) ... [emphasis added].[15]

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11 Fine Arts Department 2539 [1996]: 2.

12 2283 BE [1740 CE].

13 Today, Thung Yang is located in the province of Uttaradit.

14 Today Sawangkhaburi is known as Fang (ฝาง) and is located in the province of Uttaradit.

15 Translation adapted from *The Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya* 2000: 434.

While the Ayutthaya Chronicles only mention pilgrimage of the King of Ayutthaya to Phra Thaen Sila-at this one time, another important piece of evidence that reveals the significance of this site during King Boromakot's reign is the foundation inscription of the Vihāra to built to shelter Phra Thaen Sila-at in 2297 BE (CE 1754).

This inscription mentions Ok Phra Si Ratchachai Mahai Surinthaburintha Phiriya Phaha Thainam (ออกพระศรีราชไชยมหัยสุรินทบุรินทพิริยะพาหะท้ายน้ำ), promoted to be Phaya Sawankhalok (พญาสวรรคโลก), came to inspect and saw that the *vihāra* sheltering Phra Thaen Sila-at was in a state of disrepair. He asked permission from the king to renovate the building, as mentioned in the inscription:

...ให้ขึ้นมาเปนพญาสวรรคโลก
จึงขึ้นมาตรวจการเหนพระวิหารร่มแท่นศิลาอาศน์ชำรุดจึงบอกเข้าไป
ขอพระราชทานทำฉลองพระเดชพระคุณ
จึงมีพระราชโองการมาณะพระบันทูลสุรสิงหนาฎตำรัสเหนือเกล้
ให้มีตราพระราชสีห์ขึ้นมาให้ทำและให้เมืองลับแล เมืองทุ่งยังช่วย ...

... after being promoted to be Phaya Sawankhalok, he went to inspect the Vihāra that shelters Phra Thaen Sila-at, which was in a state of disrepair, so he went to request permission from His Majesty. Thereafter, a royal edict was issued under the "seal of the royal lion" (*trā phra rājasīha*, ตราพระราชสีห์) giving permission to undertake the work and to have the cities of Laplae and Thung Yang give assistance ...[16]

From this, we can see that toward the end of the Ayutthaya period, Phra Thaen Sila-at of Thung Yang became an important pilgrimage site for the king and the people. As stated in the Ayutthaya Royal Chronicles, King Boromakot came to pay homage to Phra Thaen Sila-at, and during his reign the Vihāra of Phra Thaen Sila-at was renovated.

Phra Thaen Sila-at: Pilgrimage Site during the Thonburi Period

In the Thonburi period, there is mention of the city of Thung Yang when King Taksin went to fight Chao Phra Fang. After suppressing the ruler of Fang, King Taksin ordered the reformation of the Northern *sangha*. As a part of this reformation, King Taksin invited Phra Phottiwong to go to oversee the Northern *sangha* at the city of Si Phanom Mat Thung Yang.

After that, King Taksin went to pay homage to Phra Borommathat (พระบรมธาตุ) at the city of Sawangburi (สวางบุรี) and Phra Thaen Sila-at. This is mentioned only in the Royal Chronicles, Royal Autograph Edition (พระราชหัตถเลขา), but not in other Thonburi Chronicles, such as the Phanchanthanumat (Choem) (พันจันทนุมาศ (เจิม)) Edition or in the Royal Chronicles, British Museum Edition. The relevant chronicle states:

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16 Committee for the Publication of Historical Works 2510 [1967]: 75.

...จึงเสด็จพระราชดำเนินไปยังเมืองศรีพนมมาศทุ่งยั้ง   กระทำสมโภชพระแท่นศิลา
อาสน์สามวัน ...

... He traveled to the city of **Si Phanom Mat Thung Yang** to organize a celebration of Phra Thaen Sila-at for three days ... [emphasis added].[17]

On this royal excursion, the future King Rama I (พระบาทสมเด็จพระพุทธยอดฟ้าจุฬา โลก), when he held the position of Phraya Aphaironarit (พระยาอภัยรณฤทธิ์), and Prince Surasih (สมเด็จกรมพระราชวังบวรมหาสุรสิงหนา), when he was ranked as Phraya Yommarat (พระยายมราช), would probably have accompanied King Taksin to Phra Thaen Sila-at.

Phra Thaen Sila-at: Religious Site in the Rattanakosin Period

As seen above, Phra Thaen Sila-at was considered a sacred site at least since the Sukhothai and Ayutthaya periods. In the Rattanakosin era, Phra Thaen Sila-at continued to be regarded as an important place of pilgrimage. King Rama I, when he was in the service of King Taksin, most probably would have had the chance to pay homage to Phra Thaen Sila-at in 2313 (1770). In addition, when the Northern Chronicles were compiled during the reign of King Rama I, there was mention of the history of Thung Yang.[18]

However, evidence of pilgrimages by the king and members of the royal family during the Rattanakosin period only clearly appears in the reign of King Rama III, when Prince Mongkut (the future King Rama IV), then the monk Vajirañāṇathera, went to the North in 2376 (1833). This is mentioned in his biography written by the Prince Patriarch (Somdet Phra Mahāsamana Chao Kromphraya Pavaret Wariyalongkon สมเด็จพระมหาสมณเจ้า กรมพระยาปวเรศ วริยาลงกรณ์):

... เมื่อศักราช ๑๑๙๕ ปีมะเส็งเบญจศก จะเสด็จขึ้นไปประพาสเมืองเหนือนมัสการ เจติยสถานต่างๆ ครั้นถึง ณ วัน เสาร์ เดือนยี่ ขึ้น ๘ ค่ำ เวลาบ่าย เสด็จออกจากวัดสมอ ราย จะขึ้นไปเมืองพิจิตร ... ประทับแรมไปตามระยะทาง เมื่อ ณ วันอังคาร เดือนยี่ ขึ้น ๗ ค่ำ ประทับอยู่หน้าวัดมหาธาตุเมืองไชยนาท ...
ครั้น ณ วันเสาร์ เดือนยี่ แรม ๒ ค่ำ ถึงเมืองพิษณุโลก ประทับอยู่หกวัน ปิดทองสมโภช พระชินราช วันที่เจ็ด เสด็จออกจากเมืองพิษณุโลก
ณ วันพุธ เดือนยี่ แรม ๑๓ ค่ำ เสด็จไปพระแท่นศิลาอาสน์กลับมาในเวลาเย็น
ณ วันพฤหัสบดี เดือน ๓ ขึ้น ๑ ค่ำ เสด็จไปวัดพระฝาง ค้างอยู่คืนหนึ่งกลับลงมา
ครั้น ณ วันเสาร์ เดือน ๓ ขึ้น ๑๔ ค่ำ จะเสด็จไปเมืองสวรรคโลก แวะนมัสการพระแท่น อีกครั้งหนึ่ง ...

... In 1195, the year of the snake, he plannèd to tour the north and visit several sacred sites. Then on Saturday, the fourth day of the waxing moon, in the

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17 Today Sawangkhaburi is known as Fang (ฝาง) and is located in the province of Uttaradit.
18 The Fine Arts Department 2535 [1991]: 179.

afternoon, he went from Wat Samorai (สมอราย) on the way to the city of Phichit, spending the night along the way. On Tuesday, the seventh day of the waxing moon, he stayed in front of Wat Mahathat, Chainat (ไชยนาท).

Then on Saturday, the second day of the waning moon, he arrived in Phitsanulok and stayed for six days, applying gold leaf to celebrate Phra Jinarāja (พระชิน ราช). On the seventh day, he left from Phitsanulok.

On Wednesday, the thirteen day of the waning moon, he went to Phra Thaen Sila-at and returned in the evening.

On Thursday, the first day of the waxing moon, he went to Wat Phra Fang and stayed there for one night, then returned.

On Saturday, the fourteenth day of the waxing moon, he planned to go to Sawanakhalok (สวรรคโลก) and on the way, stopped to pay homage again to **Phra Thaen Sila-at**...[emphasis added].[19]

As we can see, the Prince Patriarch's biography of King Rama IV relates how King Rama IV went to pay homage to Phra Thaen Sila-at two times during his visit the North.

After King Rama IV's visit, several kings and many members of the royal family also went to Phra Thaen Sila-at. For example, Prince Damrong Rajanubhab went to pay homage to Phra Thaen Sila-at in 2441 (1898). In May, 2444 (1901), Prince Naris went to examine and repair the replica of Phra Buddha Jinarāja in Phitsanulok. As part of this trip, Prince Naris went to Phra Thaen Sila-at, as described in his "Journal of Travels to Phitsanulok" (จดหมายระยะทางไปเมืองพิษณุโลก):

... ตัวพระแท่นศิลาอาสน์นั้น ประดิษฐานอยู่ท่ามกลางวิหารภายในบุษบก พระแท่นนั้น มีขนาดวัดได้กว้าง ๒ เมตร ๑๔ เซนต์ ยาว ๓ เมตร ๔๙ เซนต์ มีความเสียใจที่ไม่ใช่ศิลา เป็นก้อนด้วยอิฐปูนเป็นฐานบัลลังก์ทำลายอย่างปั้นไม่เป็นปิดทองล่องชาดพื้น ข้างบนปิด ด้วยแผ่นโลหะปิดทอง กลางเจาะรูปเป็นที่ทิ้งเงินเรี่ยรายลงในพระแท่น ...พระแท่นศิลา อาสน์นี้ แต่เดิมเข้าใจว่าเป็นพระแท่นที่ปรินิพพานประมูลพระแท่นดงรัง แต่ที่จริงหา ใช่ไม่ เป็นพระแท่นที่มานั่ง ...

... Phra Thaen Sila-at is located in the middle of a *vihāra* underneath a *busabok* (บุษบก).[20] The stone slab is two meters, 14 centimeters wide and 3 meters, 49 centimeters long. I was disappointed to learn that it is not made from stone, but built from brick and cement, and the base is decorated with crude stucco covered with gold leaf and vermillion. On top is metal covered with gold leaf. In the middle there is a hole for people to make merit by throwing coins to this stone slab ... Phra Thaen Sila-at. Originally, I understood that the Buddha

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19 Pawaret Wari Ya Long Kon, Somdet Phra Mahasamana Chao Krom Phaya 2547 [2004]: 75-76.

20 *busabok* บุษบก: pavilion with peaked roof supported by four posts, over a seat for sacred images or high-ranking monks or nobility.

passed away on this stone slab, but actually not, this is just the stone slab upon which he came to sit ...[21]

In 2444 (1901), King Rama V and Queen Saovapa Pongsi traveled to pay homage to Phra Thaen Sila-at. Then, in 2448 (1905) King Rama V had King Rama VI, when he was the crown prince, go to the cities in the northwest in order to familiarize himself with government affairs in the Northern provinces. During this trip, King Rama VI went to pay homage to Phra Thaen Sila-at. He wrote about his visit in his "Northwestern Verses" (Lilit Phayap ลิลิตพายัพ):

ที่สิบห้าพฤศจิกา	ทรงอาชาแช่มช้อย
ราชญาติอมาตย์ต้อย	ไต่เต้าตามเสด็จ ประพาสนา ฯ
ยอกรก้มเกศเกล้า	วันทา
แทบพระแท่นศิลา	อาสน์น้อม
ผิวะโฉมวรนุชมา	กับพี่
พี่จักพานุชค้อม	เข้าคู่ถวายกรฯ

On the fifteenth November	Riding a horse so gracefully
Royal family and nobles so closely	Followed the king on his travels.
Raising hands, bowing their heads	Paying homage
Before Phra Thaen Sila	At, reverently.
If my lovely young one	Had come with me
I would take my dear to bow	Bending knee, raising hands, in respect.[22]

In 2450 (1907), King Rama VI, when he was still crown prince, visited Kamphaengphet, Sukhothai, Sawankhlok, Uttaradit and Phitsanulok to inspect ancient monuments and to investigate the stories and legends of those cities. When he left from Sawankhalok, he went to pay respect once again to Phra Thaen Sila-at. This time he followed the local route that the ordinary people used; this allowed him to become familiar with the pilgrimage route taken by local people. The account appears in his "Visiting the City of Phra Ruang" (that is, Sukhothai) (Thiao Mueang Phra Ruang เที่ยวเมือง พระร่วง):

... ครั้นวันที่ ๑๕ กุมภาพันธ์ เวลาเข้า ๘ โมงเศษออกจากที่พักริมวัดน้อย ข้ามลำน้ำยม ไปฝั่งเหนือ   แล้วจึงขึ้นม้าเดินทางไปตามทางที่ราษฎรเดินไปขึ้นไหว้พระแท่นศิลา อาสน์ เดินไปจากฝั่งน้ำได้ ๔๐ เส้นเศษมีศาลาเล็กๆ หลังหนึ่งปลูกไว้เป็นที่พักคนเดิน ขึ้นพระแท่น ที่ระยะ ๑๐๐ เส้นมีศาลาอีกหนึ่งค่อนข้างจะเขื่อง ที่ระยะ ๒๐๐ เส้น มีศาลา แฝดกับสระน้ำเป็นที่ทุ่งโถง ต่อนั้นไปอีก ๙๐ เส้นเศษถึงหนองไก่ฟุบ ทางเดินแต่ ลำน้ำยมไปถึงที่นี่นับว่าอยู่ข้างจะสะดวก   เพราะผ่านไปในป่าโดยมากแดดไม่ค่อยจะ ร้อน ม้าขี่วิ่งบ้างเดินบ้างชั่วโมงเศษเท่านั้น กินกลางวันแล้วขี่ช้าง เดินตามทางขึ้น พระแท่นต่อไปทาง ๒๕๐ เส้นถึงด่านแม่คำมัน พรมแดนเมืองสวรรคโลกกับเมืองพิชัย

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21   Prince Naris 2506 [1963]: 44-45.
22   King Rama VI 2516 [1973]: 30.

ต่อกัน พักแรมที่นี้ซึ่งมีศาลาที่พักคนเดินขึ้นพระแท่นอยู่หลังหนึ่ง ในคลองแม่คำมันมี
ปลาชุมเพราะน้ำมีอยู่ตลอดปีไม่แห้งเลย ลำน้ำนี้ได้น้ำจากห้วยช้าง ซึ่งไหลมาจากเขา
ทางเมืองลับแล

รุ่งขึ้นวันที่ ๑๖ กุมภาพันธ์ เวลาเช้า ๔ โมงเศษ ออกจากด่านแม่คำมัน ขี่ม้าตามถนนไป
พระแท่นอีก ทางไปในทุ่งโดยมาก การเดินทางอยู่ข้างจะร้อนกว่าวันก่อนนี้ ผ่านศาลา
ที่พักกลางทางหลังหนึ่ง เมื่อจวนถึงพระแท่นเดินไปบนถนนซึ่งถมเป็นคันสูงข้ามทุ่ง
เพราะตรงนี้เป็นที่ลุ่ม ไปหมดถนนเพียงบ่อห้วยดุม ที่ใกล้บ่อมีศาลาที่พัก แต่ไม่พอกับคน
ที่มาไหว้พระแท่น เพราะฉะนั้นได้เห็นซุ้มปักเป็นที่พักชั่วคราวอยู่มาก เวลาเช้า ๔ โมง
เศษ ถึงวัดพระแท่นศิลาอาสน์ เป็นเคราะห์ดีที่ได้ไป พอเวลาเทศกาลราษฎรขึ้นไหว้
พระแท่น กำหนดวันขึ้น ๑๓ ค่ำ ๑๔ ค่ำ ๑๕ ค่ำ เดือนสาม วันที่ ๑๖ กุมภาพันธ์นี้ ตรง
กับวันขึ้น ๑๕ ค่ำ จึงได้เห็นคนอยู่มาก ที่ถนนตรงหน้าพระแท่นออกไปมีร้านตั้งขาย
ของต่างๆ คนเดินไปมาเบียดกันแน่นคล้ายที่พระพุทธบาทในเวลาเทศกาล อยู่ข้างจะ
ครึกครื้นมาก ได้ฉายรูปหมู่คนไว้ดูเล่น แล้วจึงเข้าไปนมัสการพระแท่น พระแท่นศิลา
อาสน์นี้ผู้ที่ไม่เคยไปมักอยากไปมาก แต่ครั้นเมื่อไปถึงแล้วคงรู้สึกเสียใจ ตัวพระแท่น
เองก็ไม่เห็น เพราะมีเป็นพระแท่นทำด้วยไม้ครอบศิลานั้นอยู่ มีของดีอยู่แต่บานประตู
ซึ่งคล้ายบานประตูวิหารพระพุทธชินราชที่เมืองพิษณุโลกนั้นมาก ...

... On February 15, in the morning, shortly after 10 am, we set out from our
residence near Wat Noi, crossing to the north bank of the Yom River, where
we mounted horses to follow the local route that people use to go to pay
homage to Phra Thaen Sila-at. From the bank of the river around 40 *sen* (เส้น),[23]
there is a small pavilion built for travellers who want to go to Phra Thaen Sila-
at, and at the distance of 100 *sen* there is another pavilion that is quite large. At
a distance of 200 *sen* there are twin pavilions and a wide pool. Then, going
around 90 *sen*, we reached Nong Kai Fup (หนองไก่ฟุบ). The route from the
Yom River to here is quite pleasant because it passes through the forest so we
did not suffer being under the hot sun. Riding the horses, sometimes trotting,
sometimes walking, took a bit more than one hour. We had lunch there and
then we rode elephants, following the route to Phra Thaen, 250 *sen*, reaching
Dan Mae Kham Man (ด่านแม่คำมัน), the boundary of the cities of Sawankhalok
and Phichai. We stayed here one night as there is a pavilion for people going
on pilgrimage to Phra Thaen. In the Mae Kham Man canal there are many
kinds of fish because this canal has water all year and round and is never dry.
This canal receives water from Huai Chang (ห้วยช้าง) which flows from the
mountain at Laplae.

The next day, February 16, around 10 am, we left Dan Mae Kham Man, again
riding horses on the way to Phra Thaen Sila-at. The route is mostly through
fields, so the trip today was hotter than yesterday. We passed one pavilion for
travelers. When we had almost reached Phra Thaen, we had to go on foot on

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23 *sen* เส้น: a distance equivalent to 40 metres.

the road which crosses higher than the field because this area is quite low lying. The route ends at Bo Hua Dum (บอหัวดุม). Near Bo Hua Dum, there is a pavilion but it is not large enough to serve all the people who go to pay homage at Phra Thaen. For this reason, we saw many tents set up as temporary pavilions. Around ten the next morning, we reached Wat Phra Thaen Sila-at. It was our good fortune that we came here when the festival was being held for the people to pay homage to Phra Thaen. The festival takes place on the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth day of the waxing moon of the third month; today, February 16, is the fifteenth day of the waxing moon, so we could see a large crowd of people. Along the road in front of the entrance to Phra Thaen, there were many types of stalls selling goods, with a great throng of people walking back and forth, similar to the festival time at Phra Phutthabat (พระพุทธบาท), all rather fun and lively. I took some photographs of a group of people, then went inside to pay homage. Phra Thaen Sila-at is a place that people who have never been there before would like to go to see very much. However, if they go there, they might be disappointed, because it is hard to see the "Phra Thaen" – the sacred dais/platform – since it is hidden under a wood covering. However, one interesting point is a door that is similar to the door of the *vihāra* of Phra Buddha Jinarāja in Phitsanulok ...[24]

King Rama VI went again in 2452 (1909) to oversee a ceremony to raise the roof finial (*chofa*) during the building of a new *vihāra* for Phra Thaen Sila-at, built to replace the original building that had burnt down on 5 March 2451 (1908).

Other members of the royal family who visited Phra Thaen Sila-at include Prince Bhuvanadh, Prince of Phitsanulok (สมเด็จฯ เจ้าฟ้ากรมหลวงพิษณุโลกประชานาถ), who went to pay homage and offered a pulpit with the royal seal of King Rama V[25] and a bronze statue of King Rama V (พระบรมรูปสัมฤทธิ์รัชกาลที่ ๕) in 2453 (1910); Prince Boriphat Sukhumbhand, Prince of Nakhon Sawan (สมเด็จฯ เจ้าฟ้ากรมหลวงนครสวรรค์วรพินิต) who went in 2455 (1912); and Queen Rambai Barni (สมเด็จพระนางเจ้ารำไพพรรณี พระบรมราชินี) who went in 2492 (1949).

In the present reign, King Rama IX Bhumibol Adulyadej went with Queen Sirikit to pay homage to Phra Thaen Sila-at on 17 March 2501 (1958), and Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn went there in 2536 (1993). Princess Galyani Vadhana went to pay homage to Phra Thaen Sila-at on 25 December 2547 (2004) and Prince Vajiralongkorn went to oversee a finial raising ceremony for the Vihāra of Phra Thaen Sila-at on 30 December 2550 (2007).

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24 King Rama VI 2526 [1983]: 191-192.

25 *thammat cho. po. ro.* ธรรมาสน์ จ.ป.ร.: a pulpit in the form of an elaborately carved seat, with the royal seal of King Rama V.

From the above, we can see that Phra Thaen Sila-at has been an important site of pilgrimage for kings, members of the royal family and commoners from the Ayutthaya period up to the present.

Phra Thaen Sila-at: pilgrimage site for members of the Sangha

Phra Thaen Sila-at has been a popular pilgrimage destination for members of the Thai Sangha. Numerous monks, including the Supreme Patriarch (สมเด็จพระสังฆราช) and senior ranking monks (สมเด็จพระราชาคณะ), have paid homage to Phra Thaen Sila-at. One example point is King Rama IV when he was ordained as a monk during the reign of King Rama III, as previously mentioned.

In 2427 (1884), Mom Chao Phra Somdet Phra Buddhachan went on pilgrimage to Phra Thaen Sila-at, as mentioned in "Verses on Mom Chao Phra Somdet Phra Buddhacharn's Ascetic Journey" (Lilit Mom Chao Phra Somdet Phra Buddhacharn Sadet Thudong ลิลิตหม่อมเจ้าพระสมเด็จพระพุฒาจารย์เสด็จธุดงค์). Mom Chao Phra Somdet Phra Buddhacharn (That) (หม่อมเจ้าพระสมเด็จพระพุฒาจารย์ (ทัด)), the former abbot of Wat Phra Chetuphon (Wat Pho) (วัดพระเชตุพนวิมลมังคลาราม) in Bangkok, when he held the rank Phra Phutthuppabat Pilan (พระพุทธุปบาทปีลันธน์) and was staying at Wat Rakhang (วัดระฆังโฆษิตาราม), described Phra Thaen Sila-at as follows:

พระ พุทธองค์สี่สิ้น	นิพพาน
แท่น ที่ประดิษฐาน	อยู่ได้
ศี พรรณประดับกาญจน์	งามเลิศ แลนา
ลา กลับแลเห็นให้	วิจิตรแล้วเหลียวดู
มณฑปประดับแก้ว	กระจกสี
ปิดสุวรรณรุจี	วิจิตรพร้อม
ยอดแหลมแกมมณี	งามเลิศ
รอบแท่นกลีบบัวล้อม	ประเสริฐแล้วงามดี ฯ
เขียนชาดกพุทธเจ้า	ฝาผนัง
สื่องค์สมหวัง	ตรัสรู้
เป็นไก่นาคราชยัง	กับเต่า โดนอ
อีกราชสีห์เป็นผู้	จะตรัสได้ภายหลัง ฯ

Phra Are the Four Buddhas	Reaching *nirvāṇa*
Thaen Is the stone slab	Remaining there
Si- Which is elaborately gold adorned	Beautiful, most excellent
-La While leaving, turning to gaze	Once again
The mondop, crystal adorned	Coloured glass
Gold leaf, covering brightly	Wondrously beautiful
Pointed spire, diamond decorated	Supremely graceful
Encircling the dais, lotus petals	Excellently refined

*Jātaka*s painted	As murals
The Four Buddhas who have fulfilled	Awakening
Were chicken and serpent king	Turtle and bull
But the royal lion is	The one who will awaken later on.[26]

Prince Patriarch Kromphraya Vajirañāṇavarorasa (สมเด็จพระมหาสมณเจ้า กรมพระยา วชิรญาณวโรรส) went to venerate to Phra Thaen Sila-at when he travelled to inspect the *saṅgha* in the Northern region in 2457 (1914). Now the pilgrimage, at least for the high-ranking, is no longer by horse or one foot, but by car. The Prince Patriarch noted in his journal:

... แล้วเสด็จโดยรถยนต์ ไปทาง ถนนศรีพนม ถึง วัดพระแท่นศิลาอาสน์ เข้า ๔ โมงเศษ เสด็จเข้าในพระวิหาร ซึ่งเป็นที่ประดิษฐาน พระแท่นศิลาอาสน์ ทรงถวายสักการะเป็นพุทธ บูชาแล้ว เสด็จจากพระวิหาร มาประทับเสวยเพลที่ศาลาใหญ่....

วัดพระแท่นศิลาอาสน์ ตั้งอยู่บนที่เป็นเนินสูง มีหินแลงมาก พระวิหารซึ่งเป็นที่ประดิษฐาน พระแท่นเป็นของใหม่ ยาว ๕ ห้อง ของเดิมไฟไหม้เสียแล้ว ตัวพระแท่นเองไม่มีชิ้นอะไร ปรากฏ ก่ออิฐถือปูนปั้นลายปิดทองพื้นบนดาดปูนทาสีแดง เป็นของปฏิสังขรณ์ขึ้นใหม่ เอี่ยม ส่วนยาว ๖ ศอก ๖ นิ้ว กว้าง ๕ ศอก สูง ๒ ศอก ๓ นิ้ว มีเจาะเป็นช่องกลมไว้กลาง พระแท่น สำหรับชนผู้เลื่อมใสศรัทธาจะได้เอาทรัพย์ทิ้งลงไปในช่องนั้น. ...

... then we went by motorcar using the route to Sri Phanom (ศรีพนม), arriving at Wat Phra Thaen Sila-at at around ten in the morning. We went inside the *vihāra* where Phra Thaen Sila-at is located. We paid homage to the Buddha, then went out from the *vihāra* and had lunch at the main pavilion.

Wat Phra Thaen Sila-at is located on a high hill full of laterite. The Phra Vihan, which is where the Phra Thaen sacred dais/platform is located, is a new *vihāra* with five bays. The original one burnt down, with nothing left of the body of the dais, now built from brick and stucco, covered with gold leaf and vermillion. This new one is six *sok* (ศอก)[27] long, five *sok* wide, and two *sok* tall. There is a hole in the middle of the stone slab for people who would like to make merit by throwing valuables into the hole ...[28]

Apart from Prince Patriarch Kromphraya Vajirananavarorasa, the Supreme Patriarch and other high-ranking members of the *saṅgha* have paid their respects to Phra Thaen Sila-at. For example, Somdet Phra Ariyavongsagatanana (Plot Kittisobhana) (สมเด็จ พระอริยวงศาคตญาณ (ปลด กิตติโสภโณ)) went in 2494 (1951); Somdet Phra Ariyavongsagatanana (Chuan Utthayi) (สมเด็จพระอริยวงศาคตญาณ (จวน อุฏฐายี)) went in 2513 (1970); Somdet Phra Yan Sangwon (Charoen Suwatano) (สมเด็จพระ ญาณสังวร (เจริญ สุวัฑฒโน)) went in 2515 (1972) and 2524 (1981); Somdet Phra

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26 Pawaret Wari Ya Long Kon, Somdet Phra Mahasamana Chao Krom Phaya 2547 [2004]: 208.

27 *sok* ศอก: a cubit, now fixed at 50 centimeters.

28 Vajirananavarorasa, Somdet Phramahasamanachao Kromphraya 2537 [1994]: 190–192.

Ariyavongsagatanana (Wat Wasano) (สมเด็จพระอริยวงศาคตญาณ (วาส วาสโน)) went in 2521 (1978); Somdet Phra Buddhachinawong (Prachuap Kanatacharo) (สมเด็จ พระพุทธชินวงศ์ (ประจวบ กนุตาจาโร)), of Wat Makut Kasatriyaram (วัดมกุฏกษัตริยา ราม) went there in 2544 (2001) and Somdet Phra Yanavarodom (สมเด็จพระญาณ วโรดม), of Wat Thepsirin (วัดเทพศิรินทราวาส) went in 2547 (2003).

We do not have much evidence of the degree to which Phra Thaen might have attracted pilgrims from neighbouring countries. A rare example is that of a Khmer monk, who in the second half of the nineteenth century set out on pilgrimage for the famous Jetavana in Śrāvastī, where the Buddha had spent over twenty years of his teaching career. Accompanied by three fellow monks, he first went to the "Buddha's Shadow," a pilgrimage site in Central Thailand. He then went to Phra Thaen Sila-at. After that his route is not clear, but he apparently continued to Lower Burma, and eventually reached his goal – though it is impossible to say where, or even what, was the highly impressionistic Jetavana that he described. Fortunately, when he returned to Cambodia, he wrote an account of his journey, which has been preserved in a palm-leaf manuscript. From this we know about the journey of the Khmer pilgrims.[29]

Conclusion

From this account, we can see that Phra Thaen Sila-at has been a sacred place and a site of pilgrimage since ancient times as first mentioned in Pañcabuddhabyākaraṇa. In addition, there is archaeological evidence from the Sukhothai period indicating that this area has been an important Buddhist site since that time.

However, we only begin to have written sources regarding pilgrimages to Phra Thaen Sila-at during the reign of King Boromakot at the end of the Ayutthaya period. Similar written records continue into the Thonburi and Rattanakosin periods, from which we can see that many kings and members of the royal family have made pilgrimages to Phra Thaen Sila-at.

Furthermore, Supreme Patriarchs and high ranking members of the *sangha* have visited Phra Thaen Sila-at. Therefore, it can be said that Phra Thaen Sila-at can be considered one of the significant pilgrimage sites in Thailand, along with Phra Phutthabat in Saraburi and Phra Thaen Dong Rang in Kanchanaburi.

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29 de Bernon 2012: 177-193.

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SOME PECULIARITIES OF THE UYGUR BUDDHIST PILGRIM INSCRIPTIONS

TIBOR PORCIÓ

Introduction

According to the Nikāya-tradition as reflected in the Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra, the relics of an enlightened person should be placed in a *stūpa*, and visiting and venerating it will bring welfare and happiness to the worshippers. It is a well-known fact that Buddhist pilgrimage is common in both Nikāya and Mahāyāna Buddhism, and the sites where relics are held were, and are, of particular importance. According to a Chinese source, the Beiqi shu 北齊書 ("History of the Northern Qi"), in 574 A.D. the Emperor of the Northern Qi 北齊 (550-577) presented a text of this very *sūtra* (called Niepan jing 涅盤經) translated from Chinese into "the Türk language (*tujue yu* 突厥語)" to the Türk ruler, Tatpar Khagan (r. 572-581).[1] If we can give credit to this report, this Parinirvāṇasūtra would have been the very first Buddhist work in an "imaginary" library of the Turkic speaking peoples of Central Asia.[2] Unfortunately, neither the text itself, nor a corroborative evidence for the act of donation can be recovered. We know, however, that a dogmatically developed version of an earlier Nikāya text was translated into Uygur, namely from Chinese, but it has nothing to do with the alleged translation of the year 574.[3] We also know that the territories where the Uygur Buddhist culture once flourished were rich in sacred sites such as *stūpas*, shrines, temples and monasteries. Obviously, it is not too daring to state that pilgrimage among the Uygur Buddhists was considered a meritorious act, like elsewhere in the Buddhist world. On the other hand, for a historian, the topic of Uygur pilgrimage is a very challenging one. The reason is very simple: the scarcity

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1   Gabain 1954: 164, Klimkeit 1990: 55, Liu Mau-Tsai 1958: 34, Zieme 1992: 10-11.
2   Some scholars have questioned the reliability of this Chinese account (Gabain 1954: 163; Klimkeit, 1990: 54; Elverskog 1997: 5). Firstly, we do not have any evidence from the first Türk empire (6th-7th centuries A.D.) to speak of Turkic as a written language. The only text which has come down to us from this period is a Sogdian inscription (the so-called Bugut inscription, dated between 580 and 590; see Kljaštornyj, Livšic 1972, and more recently Yoshida, Moriyasu 1999). Secondly, it is hard to imagine that the Turkic religious vocabulary at that time would have been applicable to express the subtle concepts and complicated terminology of Buddhism (Klimkeit 1990: 55). Therefore, it is more plausible that − if the *sūtra* was actually a translation into the "language of the Tujue" − the target language was Sogdian, i.e. the official language of the first Türk empire (Tremblay 2007: 108).
3   Elverskog 1997: nos. 1, 32., see also Zieme 1992: 11-12.

of data. Since there are no autochthonous written sources comparable to the accounts of the famous Chinese travellers and / or to the Tibetan pilgrimage manuals, our main written sources are the extant inscriptions made by Uygur Buddhist pilgrims. This corpus consists of − mainly fragmentary − graffiti on sacred monuments or on the walls of religious edifices found in the Autonomous Region Xinjiang 新疆 and Gansu 甘肅 province of today's China. In the present paper I would like to highlight some of the peculiarities of these inscriptions, based on the editions that have been published (and have been available for consultation)[4]. By doing so, I hope to show that despite their "little content", they provide much more information than it might appear at first sight or as had been considered in previous studies. In addition to the fact that they are valuable historical sources in many ways, they can also be used as contributions to our conceptualisation of Buddhist pilgrimage in general, and as sources of Uygur Buddhist practices, in particular.

A brief survey of editions

Albert Grünwedel's famous study of the Third Prussian Turfan Expedition (January 1906-April 1907) appeared in 1912. In describing a wall painting of the "Halle 9" of the Bezeklik Caves,[5] he noted that there were several "scribbles" ("Kritzeleien") in Uygur script next to the image of a brahmin, apparently made by visitors.[6] It was his fellow-explorer, Albert von Le Coq who first called these "scribbles" found on the wall paintings of the Bezeklik and Kocho caves "pilgrim inscriptions" in his study containing the results of the Second Prussian Expedition (1904-1905) led by himself. He was also the first to take up the endeavour of transcribing and translating some of these inscriptions.[7] Thus he recognized that their content had, in contrary to the expectations, no particular connection with the content of the images on which they were written and, therefore, he judged their importance as marginal. In his opinion, the most important that could be said about them was that they all date from a later

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4   "Since two relevant works known to me have appeared only after the completion of this paper, they cannot be dealt with here: Matsui, Dai 2013. "Notes on the Old Uigur Wall Inscriptions in the Dunhuang Caves [in Japanese]." *Studies in the Humanities* (*Volume of Cultural Science*) 30: 29-50., and Maue, Dieter 2014. *Alttürkische Handschriften: Dokumente in Brāhmī und Tibetischer Schrift*. Teil 2. Digitale Internetversion"

5   According to the presently used numbering Grünwedel's no. 9 corresponds to Bezeklik 20 (Moriyasu, Zieme 2003: 470, n. 12) or to 21 (?): cf. Matsui 2011: 147.

6   "An der äußeren Türw[and] fand ich noch einen nach innen gewendeten, gehenden Brāhmaṇa, er trägt Tigerfell als Kleid und Fellwadenstrümpfe, hält in der R[echten] einen Rosenkranz, in der L[inken] eine Blume. Daneben sind zahlreiche uighurische Kritzeleien: Dhāraṇīs, Besucherinschriften usw." (Grünwedel 1912: 259); quoted also in Zieme 1985: 190 (text 60e).

7   (Le Coq 1913: 34, 36) In some wall paintings both in Kocho and Bezeklik there where cartouche inscriptions in Brāhmī written in corrupt Sanskrit that he transcribed and translated. It is not very clear, however, by whom they were written (plausibly by Uygurs) or on what occasion (see e.g. Le Coq 1913: 28). He found also pilgrim inscriptions in Brāhmī, but unfortunately illegible, and in Chinese as well, that he translated into German (1913: 9).

period.[8] Besides that they were often difficult to read, this might be a reason why he lost his enthusiasm about dealing with pilgrim inscriptions in his subsequent study series on the results of the Royal Prussian Turfan-Expeditions.[9] Later, he only gave the partial transcription of a cartouche-inscription on a wall painting with a hell scene in a Bezeklik cave-temple, without attempting to translate it.[10] In the Turfan Studies (including Uygur Studies), for obvious reasons, the focus was (and still is) on murals, artefacts and manuscripts of which the major part was discovered or acquired by European and Japanese expeditions in the ancient cities of the Tarim basin and in northwest China between the last decade of the 19th and the second decade of the 20th centuries. After Le Coq's initial studies, "the scribbles" attracted no scholarly attention for a long time.[11] As Georg Kara formulated in 1976, the deciphering of the (pilgrim) inscriptions requires much efforts, but brings little results.[12] He made this remark in a short article, where he reproduced, translated and commented three short Uygur pilgrim inscriptions on the basis of photographs taken by the Pelliot Expedition in the Dunhuang 敦煌 Cave no.70.[13] These three, or more precisely two and half, where found on a wall painting, on both sides of the head of a Buddhist deity, scratched into the plaster by the same person, a certain Buyan Kaya coming from the town of Suzhou 蘇州 (Uyg. *Sügčü*). All these "scribbles" where written in Old Uygur language, two in Uygur script whereas the additional "half" with 'Phags pa characters, thus clearly placing the inscriptions in the Yuan 元 period (according to Kara, to the 14th century). The first one was composed in stanzaic alliteration, just like the one referred to by Grünwedel or those expounded by Le Coq. This feature of the "texts", which seems to have been completely overlooked by the previous editors, attracted the interest of Peter Zieme, who (re-)edited the pilgrim inscriptions of Bezeklik noted

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8   "Auf dem elfenbeinfarbenen Hintergrund sind hier und da Lotusblumen mit oder ohne Rankenwerk als Raumfüller eingezeichnet; außerdem haben Pilger oder andere müßige Personen hier und da allerhand Kritzeleien angebracht. Zur Zeit des Fundes wurden diese Sgraffitti für wichtig gehalten, ihre oft schwierige Lesung hat bisher noch nichts von Wichtigkeit ergeben. Wichtig ist nur das indirekte, aus der Schrift und den Formen erfolgende Ergebnis, daß diese Kritzeleien einer späten Zeit entstammen." (Le Coq 1913: 34)

9   Le Coq 1922-26, 1928.

10 "Die Aufschrift auf der mittleren Tafel, von Hause aus ungemein roh und ungeschickt geschrieben, ist von muhammedanischen Plünderern so stark beschädigt worden, daß wir eine Lesung nicht vornehmen wollen; ebenso wenig halten wir es für der Mühe wert, die Kritzeleien auf den zwei Kartuschen zur Linken zu entziffern. Die große Aufschrift auf der Kartusche ganz r[echts] ist ebenfalls schlecht geschrieben, wir lesen wie folgt: [...] Eine Übersetzung dieser späten Aufschrift versuchen wir nicht." He dated the fresco to the 9th-10th centuries (Le Coq 1924: 28).

11 There were inscriptions found on or beside wall paintings not only in Uygur, but in other languages as well, such as Chinese, Mongolian, Tibetan, Sanskrit and Tangut, but their attraction for the academic field developed somewhat similarly as in the case of the Uygur inscriptions. For references see Matsui 2008: 17, n.1.

12 Kara 1976: 55.

13 Pelliot 1924: plates CCCLXVI and CCCLXVII. On the discovery of the Dunhuang Buddhist Caves and on later excavations in the sites see Shichang 1995.

by the German explorers and included them in his studies on the strophic alliteration as observed in Uygur Buddhist texts.[14] He disputed Le Coq's view about the values of these wall inscriptions[15] and drew the attention to that they contain "important information"[16] – even if their relation with the frescoes was, litarally, superficial. Some Uygur pilgrim inscriptions in Brāhmī, copied ("Abklatsch") and brought back by the German Turfan expeditions (mainly the fourth) from Kumtura, Kizil and Kocho, appeared in the voluminous work by Maue.[17] In this he gave transliteration, transcription, and (German) translation of the short texts, together with their photographic reproductions.

In the works mentioned, except Kara's article, this type of inscriptions make up only a small proportion of the actual corpus or are secondary to the subject matter. In the light of this, the study by James Hamilton in collaboration with Niu Ruji[18] was "epoch-making".[19] In their article in French they transliterated, transcribed, translated and commented on twenty of the Uygur graffiti from the Yulin 榆林 Buddhist caves, and in the end of their paper they appended a glossary together with the photographic reproductions of the inscriptions on which their reading was based.[20] These inscriptions date from the 13th to 15th/16th centuries and were written down by pilgrims coming mostly from neighbouring regions such Shazhou 沙州, Suzhou and Kamil (Hami 哈密).[21] In September 2006, the Japanese scholar, Matsui Dai visited the Yulin caves and thus was able to investigate some of the Uygur inscriptions *in situ*. Based on his direct investigation, he revised three inscriptions from among the ones dealt with by Hamilton and Niu.[22] His article also highlighted two important

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14 Zieme 1985: 189-192. The text no.60d is from Toyok. The text nos.59, 60a have been recently re-edited and partially revised, with facsimiles in Matsui 2011: 143-148. On Toyok and its Buddhist caves in geohistorical context see Matsui 2010: 703-704.

15 See note 8.

16 "[...] doch glaube ich, daß sie [die Aufschriften auf den Wandgemälden] z. T. recht wichtige Informationen enthalten. Nicht erwarten kann man von ihnen allerdings Aufschlüsse über den Inhalt des Dargestellten, dazu sollten die Bilder allein sprechen. Es sind wohl meist Pilger, die diese Verse aufgeschrieben haben. Ob diese sie auch verfaßt haben, ist nicht bekannt, wohl aber anzunehmen." (Zieme 1985: 190).

17 Maue 1996: 201-5, texts nos.72-77.

18 Hamilton and Niu 1998: 127-210.

19 So called by Matsui 2008: 17. Unfortunately, the Chinese inscriptions and those written in Brāhmī script were ignored in their study.

20 In the same year they published the Chinese version, joined by Yang Fuxue, but with a reduced number of texts (12), and later Niu Ruji (Niu 2002) re-edited fifteen out of the already published twenty. These articles, unfortunately, has not been accessible to me, for references see Matsui 2008: 17-18; "However, all of the Uigur inscriptions dealt with in these Chinese articles had been already edited in Hamilton and Niu 1998, and the readings are substantially unchanged, except a few philological remarks." (Matsui 2008: 18).

21 Hamilton and Niu 1998: 128.

22 Matsui 2008: 17-33. The three inscriptions belong to the Yulin Cave 12, and were indicated by the letters H, J and L in Hamilton and Niu 1998. In an earlier article he already revised the

factors: firstly, the photo-based readings should be treated with caution; secondly, documenting and studying the inscriptions on spot is an urgent matter, since they are fading away day by day.[23] In his subsequent publications Matsui continued to draw upon pilgrim inscriptions,[24] and not least due to his findings it became clearer than ever before that the surviving inscriptions by the Uygur pilgrims are unavoidable sources for reconstructing the traffic sphere of the pilgrimages as well as the religio- and socio-cultural interactions between Uygurs, Mongols, Chinese and Tibetans in the Mongol era. As we can see, the recognition of these was a long gradual process. And it is for sure, that the aforesaid editions contain only a part of the extant Uygur pilgrim inscriptions.[25] It can be a future task to collect the whole of them into one volume. In addition to it, they often appear in the vicinity of other inscriptions, such as Chinese, Sanskrit (Brāhmī), Tangut or Tibetan, sometimes from different periods.[26] A comparative study of these different pilgrim inscriptions – similarly to the way as has been carried out on the colophons by Kasai[27] – is also a desideratum. Needless to say, such an enterprise is beyond the scope of this paper – and of my expertise. Matsui has noticed that the Uygur inscriptions have some features deviating from the rest and in this way they form a unique group.[28] It is important to add that Uygur pilgrims left scribbles not only in the shape of wall-graffiti but on Buddhist manuscripts held in the library of the given pilgrimage place as well.[29]

Locations

The aforesaid editions contain all together 33 Uygur inscriptions. The simplest way to distribute them is according to the sites where they have been found, which are

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Inscription S and T (Matsui 2008: 170, n.44).

23 2008: 29.

24 E.g. Matsui 2008, 2008, 2011.

25 Cf. Matsui 2008: 169, with n.37.

26 See note 10.

27 Kasai 2008: 22-44.

28 "[...] in the Buddhist sites of East Turkestan, we have not yet any similar wall inscriptions written by Chinese and Mongolian pilgrims. They would suggest it was not the Chinese nor the Mongols but the Uigurs – in a precise sense, the Uigur-speaking-writing people – that played the main role in the Buddhist pilgrimage between the Gansu province and the East Tienshan or East Turkestan." (Matsui 2008: 28-29).

29 It is attested by a group of texts written on the verso side or the margin of the scroll of some Chinese Buddhist sūtras, and all of them dates back to the mid 13th century. They became titled by Matsui as "Sivšidu-Yaqšidu-manuscripts", because "[S]ome texts of the Sivšidu-Yaqšidu-manuscripts are inscriptions written by Sivšidu, Yaqšidu and their colleagues in memory of their pilgrimage and meditation at Buddhist caves, or their reading Chinese sutras." (2010: 698). On this basis these particular texts can be sorted into two categories, namely, of pilgrim inscriptions (in manuscript forms) and of reader-colophons. In the present paper, however, I confine myself to discuss basically the graffiti, and refer to the manuscript forms only occasionally.

from the West to the East as follows: Kızıl (1)[30] – Kumtura (3) – Kocho (1) – Bezeklik/Murtuk (4) – Toyok (1) – Dunhuang (2+1) – Yulin (20).

Script and language

After their locality, the easiest distinction concerns the script and the language. Naturally, the graffiti were written predominantly in the Uygur script, which is a modified form of the Sogdian cursive script, and in which the majority of Uygur Buddhist manuscripts came down to us. The Brāhmī script was also very popular and extensively used in Uygur Buddhist circles as evidenced by the (few and fragmentary) surviving documents.[31] In miniature, the wall inscriptions reflect the same. Inscriptions in Uygur and in Brāhmī scripts are prevalent from Kizil to Dunhuang, while graffiti in 'Phags pa or in Tibetan scripts seems to have been relatively rare. The single graffito in 'Phags pa script is a very laconic and simple sentence, *män bu-yän qa-yä*, "I, Buyan Kaya [wrote this]",[32] appended to the Uygur lines by the same scribe, apparently, to show his literacy. The two graffiti in Tibetan script noted in Hamilton and Niu[33] are not in Uygur but in Tibetan, and are simply the translations, respectively, of the Uygur inscription next to them, or the other way around. The inscription of Yulin Cave No. 25 reads in Uygur: *män kamıl-lıg yaŋı tsunpa yükünürmän*; in Tibetan: *iy cu pa btsun pa [sar] pa phyag 'tshal lo*,[34] both meaning "I, the fresh monk from Kamil, pay homage", where Uyg. *kamıl* ~ Tib. *iy cu*,[35] +*lıg* ~ +*pa*, *yaŋı* ~ *sar pa*, *tsunpa* = *btsun pa*, *män ... yükünürmän* ~ *phyag 'tshal lo*. Whether he was a newly ordained or a new-comer monk in Yulin, albeit the former seems to be more plausible, we are not in the position to decide, since the *yaŋı tsunpa* ~ *btsun pa sar pa* allow for both interpretations.[36] Either way, he was not a "pilgrim" in the classical sense.[37]

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30   The figure in brackets indicates the number of edited inscriptions.

31   Maue 1996, Róna-Tas 1991: 63-91.

32   Kara 1976: 56, 59.

33   1998: 166-7, inscriptions S, T.

34   Hamilton and Niu 1998: 166; for the French translation see also there. Almost the same, and very likely by the same person, is the inscription in the Cave No. 36 (T): Uyg. *yaŋı tsunpa yükünürmän* ~ Tib. *btsun pa sar pa phyag 'tshal lo* (Hamilton and Niu 1998: 167). In the Tibetan, the editors transcribed wrongly *gra pa* for *sar pa*; cf. also Matsui 2008: 170 note 44.

35   Hamilton and Niu read *iy-rgu* to render Yiwu 伊吾, a Chinese name of Kamil (Hamilton and Niu 1998: 167). It was rightly corrected for *iy cu* < Chin. Yizhou 伊州 in Matsui 2008: 170, n. 44; see also Matsui 2008: 19.

36   Curiously enough, the scribe uses the Tibetan word *btsun pa* (which is ultimately the rendition of the Sanskrit *bhadanta*) in his Uygur sentence, instead of the regular Uygur term *toyin*, "monk" (a loan-word from Chinese 道人 *daoren*). Tib. *bstun pa* / Skt. *gaumin*, *bhadanta*, "monk; ordained male practitioner" (Tsepak 1986: 326); the Mongol Mahāvyutpatti translates *bhadanta* ~ *btsun pa* with the Uygur loan *toyin* (Ishihama, Fukuda 1989: nos. 8641, 9155). The last one (no. 9155) is listed in the 'Dul ba las btus pa'i skad thor bu ("Short Phrases Collected from the Vinaya") section.

37   Without entering into the problem of definitions, i.e. how we distinguish between "pilgrim" and

We have an example from Bezeklik for the use of Chinese as well, where the final line is in Chinese added to a quatrain written in Uygur script and language:[38]

wo Damoshiluo dizi xie yi 我達摩實囉弟子寫矣

I, the disciple [of?] *Darmašila (< Skt. Dharmaśīla)[39] have written [this].[40]

Some of the pilgrim inscriptions in Brāhmī script in Maue 1996 are stone carvings,[41] some are graffiti.[42] As for their languages, we can distuinguish three types: monolingual Uygur,[43] monolingual Sanskrit[44] and Sanskrit-Uygur bilingual.[45] Naturally, the length (and, consequently, the content) of an inscription did not depend solely on the intention of the scribe, but also on the available space, especially in case of cartouches. It could also influence the choice of script, as was rightly noted by Maue with reference to the Uygur monolingual "inscription 72", where, because of the limited space, the predicate *yükünürm(ä)n*, "I pay homage", is appended vertically in Uygur script to the horizontal Brāhmī text.[46]

For denoting the act of "inscribing" proper we find three different verbs in the corpus. With two exceptions, wherever expressed,[47] *biti-* is used, a very common and general Uygur word, meaning "to write".[48] The two exceptions, *čïz-* and *il-* are more specific or poetic. The former verb meant originally "to scratch", hence "to draw (lines, characters etc.)".[49] In connection to this, it is worth mentioning that the inscription (from Kizil) in which it appears is a stone carving and written in Brāhmī script. Thus, it can be interpreted either as "to engrave" or "to draw". On the one hand, the technique of writing and the script used together might have determined the usage of this – otherwise quite rare – word: [50]

"visitor", suffice it to note here that "pilgrim inscriptions" constitute only a subcategory of the more general "graffiti inscriptions". Nevertheless, most of the graffiti referred to in this paper belong unmistakably to that subcategory.

38 Without the Chinese in Zieme 1985: 191, text 60a. For the whole inscription with comments see Matsui 2011: 145-148.

39 Or Darmaširi (?), cf. Matsui 2011: 148.

40 Here I would like to express my thanks to Max Deeg for providing me with the reading and translation of the Chinese sentence. He also informed me that, based on the hand writing, the scribe did not write Chinese very comfortly; he was most likely of Uygur origin.

41 Texts 72, 73, 74 and 77.

42 Texts 75 and 76.

43 Texts 72, 73, 75, 76.

44 Text 77.

45 Text 74.

46 1996: 201.

47 Kara 1976: 56; Hamilton and Niu 1998: G.3, H.10, K.10, O.4, P.5, Q.5; Matsui 2008: H.10.

48 For opinions on the origin of the Turkic verb see Róna-Tas, Berta and Károly 2011: 124.

49 Clauson 1972: 432a, Erdal 1991: 185, 597.

50 Erdal 1991: 597. Its reflexive form *čïzïn-* "to draw or write for oneself" is a hapax legomenon, occurring in the colophon of an Uygur *avadāna* connected to the Avalokiteśvara-sūtra, cf. Kasai 2008: 218.

oya toş ci-z ti(-)m (Ötöš/Ödüš čizdim)

I, Ödüš, have [this] drawn/engraved.[51]

On the other hand, it is attested to have been used for "inscribing" in manuscript, too.[52] Because of the profane name *Ödüš*, this inscription instances that Brāhmī was known and practiced outside the monastic circles, too.[53]

The latter verb, *il-* "to catch, cling, attach",[54] occurs in the inscriptions (written in Uygur script and language) edited by Zieme. In one of them (see below) it appears in its primary meaning, with negative conditional suffix (*-mAsAr*), joint to 2nd person (*sän*). The part of the text in question (unfortunately fairly damaged) reads: *kö/ü[//: ??] ilmäsär-sän* "if you do not attach [your mind?]". On the cases where it refers actually to the act of "inscribing", Zieme remarks: "Dem Kontext zufolge hat das Verb *il-* 'anheften' [...] hier die specielle Bedeutung '(eine Inschrift) anheften', 'anschreiben'".[55] One of its attestations is on the cartouches of a wall painting in Bezeklik,[56] as the clause of a quatrain (plus one by a different hand) graffito:

biz darmaširi taypodu iki kulut-lar ilä tägindimiz

We, the two servants [i.e. disciples],[57] Dharmaśrī and Taypodu,[58] have humbly appended [this].[59]

The direct object of the verb is explicit in another inscription in Toyok, found also on a wall painting:

51 In Maue's translation: "Ich, Ötöš, habe [das] eingeritzt." (Maue 1996: 202). For further attestations of the personal name Ödüš, which seems to be feminine, see Kasai 2008: 251-2, 255, 270; Rybatzki 2006: 135, 413; Zieme 1977 (1978): 83.
52 *(T)ïyoq kizil tisär nägü bolur ärki tip qulutï sivšidu čizti(m)* "'How is the Tïyoq valley?' Thus saying, I, [the Buddha's] servant Sivšidu, drew (= wrote) [this inscription]' [...]" (Matsui 2010: 703).
53 Maue 1996: 202.
54 *il-*, "to catch (sg. with the hand, a hook, a noose etc.)" (Clauson 1972: 125). There he noted its semantical connection to the Buddhist Sanskrit term *āsajya*, "clinging". On the Turkic verb and its derivates see Erdal 1991: 158, 189, 272 et passim.
55 Zieme 1985: 190, n. 59.10. Here he refers to another occurrence of the verb in the same context in another wall inscription of Bezeklik, too.
56 Le Coq 1924: plate 19.
57 The Uygur term *kulut* is a derivation from *kul* "slave" with the plural ending *-t*, but it lost the plural connotation. In Buddhistic context it may correspond to Skt. *dāsa*, but its usage in Uygur documents is often similar to the use of *boku* 僕 "slave" in Japanese, as a male first-person pronoun, cf. Moriyasu 2011: 63.
58 These two names have several attestations, they also appear together elsewhere, see Matsui 2011: 150. Attached to the name, *-du/tu* is abbreviation of the Buddhist title *tutung* (< Chin. *dutong* 都統) "headpriest" (Matsui 2010: 698).
59 In Zieme's translation: "[...] Dharmaśrī und Taypodu, die beiden Sklaven, (dies) ergebenst angeschrieben" (Zieme 1985: 190). In VATEC glossary for *il-* the meaning "festhaken" is given, and here we find that in this part "angeschrieben" has been emended to "hinzugefügt" (http://vatec2.fkidg1.uni-frankfurt.de/vatecasp/Berliner_Texte_13.22-60.htm#132457).

biz šapindu iry-a iki šabi-ky-a-lar bir padak ildim

We, Šapindu [and] Īrya, the two humble novices.[60] I have appended [this] single stanza.[61]

To what these lines were "appended/attached" is implicit in all these instances: it should be the frescoes (but not their content). We, modern readers, might think that by this activity they mutilated the paintings. Obviously, if these devotees would have felt the same, now we could not read their insciptions. There is a hint, however, implying that they, or at least some of them, had ambivalent feeling about it, as the following example testifies, albeit indirectly, for it was written not on a fresco but a Chinese *sūtra* scroll (which is, in this respect, not a big difference):

tavgač kün-tä bitimäk tamuluk bolgu kılınč ol tep sakınıp män [...] bitidim

"Writing on the Chinese scroll is a behavior to be reborn in Hell, thus thinking, I [three proper names] wrote [this]".[62]

Inscription as memory (*ödig*)

We can agree that inscribing on a sacred monument, regardless of the contents, is rather a profane act. These pious scribes, in fact, did not want to hide either that they were driven by a quite worldly − and as such very human − intent (just like those travelers, whose signs we can generally observe in turistic places today): to leave a memory. In some inscriptions it is specifically admitted by such phrases like *ödig*[63] *bolzun* "may it be a memory!"[64], or *ür turzun* "may [this inscription] be long-standing!".[65] In these cases the purpose was not only that of producing graffiti; these

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60 Uyg. *šabi* < Ch. 沙彌 *shami~* Skt. *śrāmaṇera*.
61 Uyg. *padak* << Skt. *pādaka*. In Zieme 1985: 192: "Wir, Šapindu und Ī ry-a, die beiden Šabilein, (diesen) einen Vers (*pāda*) habe ich angeschrieben", revised in VATEC as "Wir, Šapindu (und) Ī rya, die zwei kleinen Novizen, habe eine Strophe hinzugefügt" (http://vatec2.fkidg1.uni-frankfurt.de/vatecasp/Berliner_Texte_13.22-60.htm#132871).
62 Matsui 2010: 706, ll. 5-6. We may also cite another inscription, which reads *män tıyoklug sävinč irik[ip]*, translated by Matsui as "I, Sävinč of Tïyok, [wrote this inscription] disgustedly" (Matsui 2010: 703, n. 2). Still, I do not consider this instance as very corroborative, for the verb *irik-* can signify "to be disgusted, bored" (Clauson 1972: 226), hence there is nothing in the given context against the interpretation of *irikip* as "being bored" instead of "disgustedly".
63 The word is rendered in VATEC as 1. Überlieferung 2. Bericht 3. Verzeichnis; by Hamilton and Niu as "mémoire, souvenir" (1998: 161, 195). In the Old Turkic Xuanzang-Biography *ödig* corresponds to the Chinese *ji* 記 "record; memorandum, memoir", a term which is also found in the title of Xuanzang's Datang xiyu ji ("Records of the Western Regions"). On the possible etymon of the Turkic noun see Röhrborn 1991: 192-193; cf. also Erdal 1991: 443-444.
64 See in Hamilton and Niu 1998: 160-161 (Q.5); Matsui 2008: 18-19 (H.10).
65 See in Hamilton and Niu 1998: 157 (O.4).

phrases (or their variants) appear to be clichés that can be met in texts of other genres, as i.e. the Sivšidu-Yaqšidu-manuscripts[66] or a reader-colophon bear wittness.[67]

Style

A group of inscriptions is characterized by the well-known Old Turkic stanzaic alliteration, i.e. words rhyme at the beginning of stanzas and not at the end, and the alliteration was not auditive but visual.[68] Therefore, it concerns only those which were composed in Uygur script (and language). Despite the strict formal rules of poetry, it seems that these verses display greater diversity in content and structure than those which do not follow any poetic license, ranging from pious aphorism to mocking (and even obscene) notices. An example for the former reads: [69]

*köngül-ü [ ] l [ ] u[] / **kö/ü**[ ] ilmäsär-sän / **köz** yumup kösül[ü]p y(a)tmıš-ta / **köp**-kä kölgülük (külägülük?) bolur s(ä)n yamu / pi ıt [y]ıl-ı*

If [your] mind ... you do not attach, when you close your eyes, stretch yourself out and lie down (i.e. when you die), [70] you will certainly be hobbled / worthy of being praised (?) by many. In the Bing(丙)-Dog-Year ...[71]

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66 Cf. *iki käzig ödig kıltım ödig ol* "[I] made two lines of memory. This is memory", *ödig bolup ür ky-ä turzun tep ödiglätim* "'[This writing] shall be memory and stay [here] quite long!', thus saying, I recorded [it]." (Matsui 2010: 706, l.17, 708 ll.3-4).

67 *män Toŋa Buk-a šabi okiyu tägindim, sadu sadu bolzun, kutlug bečin yıl ikinti beš yaŋık-a saču balık-ta ödig kılıp bitidim, kenki körgü bolzun tep*, translated by the editor as "Ich, der Novize Toŋa Buka, habe (es) ergebenst gelesen. Es möge *sādhu sādhu* sein! Am 5. Tag des 2. Monats im gesegneten Affen-Jahr habe ich in der Stadt Sha zhou eine Liste gemacht und (es) geschrieben, damit Spätere (es) sehen mögen." (Kasai 2008: 218-9, 118b). Instead of "eine Liste machen" the phrase *ödig kıl-* can well be translated as "to make a memory" in view of the first example of the previous note.

68 Therefore it can be labeled as "eye rhyme" (Erdal 2004: 53, n. 84, 533-4.) The most elaborate work on this topic is Zieme 1991, and see also Erdal's review on it 1993.

69 The initial alliterating syllables are highlighted in bold characters.

70 For this figurative meaning of *kösül-*, "to stretch out one's legs", see Clauson 1972: 750.

71 The year of *pi ıt*, "Bing 丙-Dog", is identified by the editor as 1226 AD (Zieme 1985: 192). Unfortunately, the inscription is too damaged to comprehend clearly. Zieme's first interpretation was as follows: "Wenn [dein] Sinn [   ] wenn du nicht heftest (?) [   ] wirst du, wenn du die Augen schließt und dich ausstreckend niederlegst (Hend.), gewiß an viele (?) gebunden (?) sein." (Zieme 1985: 191, text 60c) It was later improved into "Wenn du dein (?) Herz [   ] nicht festhakst, wirst du, wenn du die Augen schließt, dich ausstreck[s]t (und) n[i]ederlegst, gewiß an vieles anzuspannen sein!" (http://vatec2.fkidg1.uni-frankfurt.de/vatecasp/Berliner_ Texte_13.22-60.htm#132746). We see that the interpretation of köpkä *kölgülük bol-* as "to be hobbled by many" poses difficulties, not only by its fragmentary context. I think that the word *kölgülük* (*köl-* in the meaning "to harness, to hobble") is a scribal error for *külägülük* (*külä-*, "to praise"), thus the clause can be translated less ambiguously as "you will certainly be worthy of being praised by many". We find a similar phrase in a similar context in the Old Turkic Kšanti Kılguluk Nom Bitig: *yaŋı kılınčıg kılmasarlar : alku burhanlarka öggülük külägülük bolgaylar*, "wenn sie eine neue (schlechte) Tat nicht begehen, dann sind sie es wert, von allen Buddhas

And for the latter:

makešvare täŋri-kä yükününgäli kälmišiŋ-kä / maŋgal kut ažun berzün temišiŋ-
kä / makešvare täŋri bašlap munča terini kuvrag-ı birlä / mayakanzun yamu [
]i säniŋ agızıŋ-ka

As you have come to salute the god Maheśvara, as you have uttered: "May he
give [us] a felicitous₂ life!", may the god Maheśvara together with all that
assembly poop into your mouth [...][72]

Alliterative verses can also be found among the manuscript inscriptions[73] and many
more among the colophons.

The inscription as 'colophon'

The function (as *ödig*) and the style are not the only similarities that we can observe
between pilgrim inscriptions and colophons. In a manner, the pilgrim inscriptions can
also be regarded as "colophons" or postscripts to pilgrimage. Even if we take solely
the meaning of the Greek *kolophōn* 'summit, finishing touch', taking the term as has
been used in modern bibliographical studies and in codicology, we can rightly say so,
since most of the inscriptions seems to have been made as a "finishing touch", i.e. just
before the departure, as, e.g., in the following example:

män sügčü-lüg yıgmıš kay-a šabı baxšı xu-a baxšı birlä on kün dyan olorup
bardımız ...

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gepriesen und gelobt zu werden." (Wilkens 2007:104-105, ll. 0816-7). We may also adduce to
a similar compound: *kamagka ayaguluk bolgaylar* "sie werden von allen verehrte (Menschen)
sein" (Gabain 1950: 78).

72 In Zieme's translation: "Für dich, der du gekommen bist, um dich vor Gott Maheśvara zu
verneigen; für dich, der du gesagt hast, die Existenz möge Ruhm und Glück geben; für deinen
Mund, [daß er sage:] 'Mit solchen Scharen (Hend.), beginnend mit Gott Maheśvara, möge man
(?) sich gewiß *mayaqan-*(?)'". (Zieme 1985: 191-2, text 60b). This has been revised as into
"Dafür, daß Du gekommen bist, um Dich vor Gott Maheśvara zu neigen, dafür, daß Du gesagt
hast: 'Die Daseinsform möge Glück (und) Heil geben!', für Deinen Mund, (daß er gesagt hat:)
'Angefangen bei dem Gott Maheśvara – mit solcher seiner Gemeinde (und) Schar möge man sich
gewiß   äußern   [*mayaka-*(?)]!'"   (http://vatec2.fkidg1.uni-frankfurt.de/vatecasp/Berliner_
Texte_13.22-60.htm#132657). For *mayaka-*, "to defecate", see (Clauson 1972: 772; Zieme 1985:
191-2); Zieme found this unacceptable in the context. *mayakan-:* is a hapax here, and with regards
to this attestation Erdal has noted: "We have to face the fact that this verse is obscene and
irreverent; obscene graffiti have always been a commonplace [...]" He translated the last sentence
as: "May the god Maheśvara together with all that assembly[2] of his defecate into your mouth [...]"
(Erdal 1991: 593). To tell more about the humorous (be it ironic or sarcastic) undertone of some
of these pious inscriptions, we would need a few examples more; cf. also note 62.

73 Matsui 2010: 706, ll. 14-15.

I, Yıgmıš Kay-a from Suzhou, together Šabı *bahšı* and Xua *bahšı,* having
meditated[74] ten days, we left ...[75]

Most of the colophons are unique on their own,[76] that is to say, unlike the main text
to which they were added as a "postscript", they bear "individualistic" characters. In
a certain sense, to leave a memory is also "individualistic". Yet, as many examples
show, they were not formulated at random. Basically, there are four types of the
Uygur manuscript colophons, according to the actors who, in various ways,
participated in the creation or use of a Buddhist text: author, translator, sponsor,
scribe and reader. Among these, the sponsor-colophons are the longest and contain
the most comprehensive information.[77] It has been observed that the Uygur Buddhist
colophons in general, and the sponsor-colophons in particular followed a certain
pattern both in their components and in their arrangements. By period they can be
divided into two groups: the ones dating from the pre-Mongol (10th-11th centuries),
and the others belonging to the Mongol period (13th-14th centuries).[78] With regard to
some sponsor-colophons from the Mongol period, Zieme has noticed that they
contain the same elements in the same order.[79] On the basis of formal features we can
distinguish prose and verse colophons. While prose colophons, which are mainly
short, are attested in Buddhist works from all epochs of the Uygur Buddhism, the
verse-colophons can only be found (with two exceptions)[80] in the texts from the
Mongol period.[81] In general, the longest and most detailed part of colophons from
both periods is the "Transferring merit" (*puṇyapariṇāmanā*).[82] Besides the extensive
use of strophic alliteration, the colophons from the Mongol period differ also from
the earlier ones in their preference of subjects to whom the merit is deflected. While,

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74 *dyan,* "meditation" < Sogdian *dy'(')n* or Tokharian A/B *dhyāṃ* < Skt. *dhyāna; dyan olor-,* "to
    meditate", cf. the index to the Kšanti Kılguluk Nom Bitig (Wilkens 2007: 361). This is an
    example of set expression, consisting a foreign noun and Turkic verb, literally "to sit (in)
    meditation"; on Old Turkic set combinations see Erdal 2004: 532.
75 Hamilton and Niu 1998: 131-132. For further inscriptions, where it is expressed explicitly that
    it was written down in the moments of "leaving or returning (home)", by the usage of *bar-,* "to
    go, to leave", or *yan,* "to return", see Zieme 1991: 192 (text 60e); Hamilton and Niu 1998: 131-
    2 (text B), 141-2 (F), 158-9 (P), 160-2 (Q); Matsui 2008: 18-21 (H), 22-5 (J); or in another way
    of expression rendered as *az-kı-ya olorup ... bitidim,* "having stayed a while ... I wrote", with
    olor- meaning "to sit, stay, abide", cf. Kara 1976: 55-56.
76 Kasai 2008: 7.
77 Kasai 2008: 7-8.
78 There is one exception from 1687/1688 (Kasai 2008: 8, n. 7.).
79 He termed these elements in German as follows: A. Einleitungsformel, B. Datum, C.
    Auftraggeber, D. Anlaß, E. Verdienstzuwendung (E.1. an die Schutzgottheiten, E.2. an die
    Herrscher, E.3. an die Familienmitglieder, E.4. für die Auftraggeber selbst), F. Wünsche und
    Ziele, G. Abschlußformel, c.f. Zieme 1991: 48-89.
80 Both are colophons to the Maitrisimit nom bitig (Kasai 2008: 12, n. 32, 181, 194; Elverskog
    1997: no. 81).
81 Zieme 1992: 46; Kasai 2008: 12.
82 Kasai 2008: 13.

e.g., the family members and relatives remained important, the emphasis on protective deities was shifted onto the Mongol royal family.[83] However, the fundamental structure of colophons from both epochs is more or less the same. This means, that the model which served as the basis for the Uygur Buddhist colophons must have been in existence in the 10th century[84] – i.e. in the period when the Buddhism became the dominant religion among the Uygurs –,[85] or, more likely, antedated it.

By far the most comprehensive and exhaustive treatment of the Uygur Buddhist colophons is Kasai 2008. Having followed in the footsteps of Zieme,[86] she analysed and systematized the structure of the colophons. In quest of the original model for Uygur colophons and of the possible external influences on their formation and development, she examined the characteristics of different colophon traditions available to the Uygurs in Central Asia, such as Sogdian, Tokharian, Tangut, Tibetan, Mongol and Chinese, and compared them with the Uygur.[87] I would like to highlight here two of her important findings: 1. there is no trace of a common Central Asian transmission-line concerning the colophons; 2. among them the Sogdian and the Chinese colophons show considerable similarities with the Uygur.[88] It may imply that the colophon pattern adhered to by the Uygurs was rather an adoption than a genuine invention – which can, indeed, be generally said about Uygur Buddhism, too.[89] This would also fit well to our knowledge on the emergence of Turkic Buddhism: the Sogdians and the Chinese played an active role in the conversion of the Turkic speaking peoples in Central Asia to Buddhism.[90] Furthermore, the vast majority of the extant Uygur texts were translated from Chinese.[91] A closer analysis, however, reveals that there is no direct relationship between the Sogdian and the Uygur colophons. Their apparent similarities are due to the fact that both groups evolved under Chinese influence, but independently from each other. The structure of the Uygur colophons seems to reflect a strong influence of Buddhism flourished in Dunhuang.[92] The relationship between the sponsor-colophons of the Uygur and of the early Chinese Buddhist texts from Dunhuang is obvious by their shared formal features. However, their "Transferring merit" section is significantly different. Whereas, in the Uygur model the merit is deflected in almost all cases firstly onto the protective deities, and then to the rulers etc., in the Dunhuang Chinese texts it is confined exclusively to the sponsor(s). Yet, as has been pointed out by Kasai, this

83 Kasai 2008: 20-22.
84 Kasai 2008: 37.
85 Elverskog 1997: 7-8.
86 See above, note 80.
87 Kasai 2008: 22-44.
88 Kasai 2008: 36.
89 Kasai 2008: 37.
90 Tremblay 2007: 107-114.
91 Elverskog 1997: 10.
92 On the relationship of the Uygurs with Dunhuang see Rong 2001.

deviation cannot be taken as an internal Uygur development. It is an adaptation, too, of which the underlying pattern can be detected in a different genre of Chinese Dunhuang textual sources, namely 願文 *yuanwen*, "vows". On the one hand, their overall structure is quite different from that of the colophons. On the other hand, the structure and the wording of their "Transferring merit" passage are so close to what we find in the corresponding section of Uygur colophons that it can hardly be regarded as mere coincidence. The principles according to which the "Transferring merit" of the *yuanwen*-texts should be arranged were laid down in the 9th century as the latest.[93] For the sake of brevity I refrain here from reproducing the comparative chart by Kasai, which includes the structural elements of Uygur, Chinese and Sogdian colophons and those of *yuanwen*.[94] Suffice it to say that the pattern of the Uygur colophons, both in content and structure, can well be explained as being a combination of patterns to be found in the above mentioned two separate Dunhuang Chinese literary sources. In the Uygur colophons, however, there are two additional elements which have no counterparts elsewhere: the introductory formulae *ymä*, "and, well"[95], and the closing formulae *sadu sadu* (< Skt. *sādhu sādhu*), "good! good!".[96] In this we may see an Uygur endeavour to put the composition into frames (i.e. frame structure), and, by doing so, to evolve an own distinctive style. This type of shaping seems to have taken place in the late 10th century, or definitely not later than the beginning of the 11th century. This style, indeed, was applied not only (or maybe not even primarily) to colophons, but to texts related to other Buddhist practices, too. Some of the Uygur Stake and Banner Inscriptions, composed according to the same pattern as the colophons, can safely be dated to this period.[97] Similarly to the case with the colophons, we can assume that they took shape under Chinese influence.[98]

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93 Kasai 2008: 42, n. 189.
94 Kasai 2008: 43, table 1.
95 Zieme 1992: 48; for further variations see also there (n.218-220). (Indicated by the letter A; see above, note 79.)
96 Zieme 1992: 88. (Indicated by the letter G; see above note 79)
97 There are five extant wooden stakes with inscriptions that can be attributed to the Uygurs, and all were unearthed from Turfan (Moriyasu 2001). Four are written in Uygur and one in Chinese (Stake II). The latter one was dedicated by an Uygur prince and dates from A.D. 983 (151-2, 154-5). The most plausible date for Stake I and Stake III is 1008 and 1019 respectively, and Stake IV is probably also from the 11th century. Stake V is from the 13th-14th centuries, therefore latter is an important proof for the continuity of the tradition of dedicating stake inscriptions up to the Mongol period (152-157). As to the purpose of stakes bearing inscriptions, Moriyasu concluded that they were prepared to be "driven into the ground of temple yards during the ground-breaking ceremony as a symbol or monument of the foundation of a *stūpa* or temple, while they served at the same time for purifying the building site or pacifying underground demons. So the Stake Inscriptions were made to commemorate the establishment of *stūpas* or temples by the Uighur donators." (174). The earliest Banner inscriptions are also from the same period, i.e. from the late 10th or the early 11th century A.D., see Moriyasu and Zieme 2003.
98 The structure of the Uygur Stake I (A.D. 1008) seems to differ from the Chinese Stake II (A.D. 983) in adding the introductory formulae *ymä* and the closing formulae *kutadmış kutadmış*,

Not all colophons – for various reasons – contain all elements of the traditional pattern.[99] It is even more the case with the pilgrim inscriptions, and not only because of incomplete preservation. It goes without saying, the colophons and the inscriptions are, by fundament, the outputs of two distinct activities and of different occasions, therefore they have their own distinctive characteristics, respectively; i.e. they contain elements without a direct counterpart in the other. However, it is not impossible to match, at least tentatively, some of these elements. For instance, the element "naming of the sponsor(s)" of a colophon may be matched with the "naming of pilgrim(s)" to be found in inscriptions. Furthermore, the scribe of a graffito had to face relatively more limitations in terms of space and time; e.g. the length of a graffito depended not only on the inspiration of its author but was certainly determined by the available space to write on, especially when it had to be put within the frames of a cartouche of a wall painting.[100]

The inscription Q from Yulin Cave no. 25 is one of the graffiti available as complete and can be used as an example for demonstrating some of the features in question:[101]

1. *kut-lug yont yıl tokzunč ay-nıŋ yegirmi*
2. *säkiz-kä bo kut-lug tag süm-kä ölǰäy tömür*
3. *darm-a širi biz šaču-tın yüküngäli kälip*
4. *yükünüp yanar-ta kač kur qıy-a*
5. *bitiyü tägintim kenki körgü ödig bolzun*
6. *bo yükünmiš buyan-larımız-nıŋ tüš-indä*
7. *közünür közünmäz ažun-lar-takı ayıg kılınč-larımız*
8. *arıp alku tınl(ı)g-lar birlä tärk tavrak burxan*
9. *kut-ın bulmaklar-ımız bolzun sadu sadu bolzun*[102]

"blessed! blessed!", a phrase basically equating to *sadu sadu* mentioned above; cf. Moriyasu 2001: 151, 161-162; Moriyasu noticed that there are some parallelism between the Stake Inscriptions and colophons (2001: 190, n.102), later Kasai has pointed out that the structure of Stake I and III (in Moriyasu 2001: 161-164, 186-191), just as the Banner inscription no. III 533 (in Moriyasu and Zieme 2003: 463) show a close resemblance to that of colophons (2008: 37 with n. 139).

99 Kasai 2008: 38.

100 As mentioned earlier, the disposable space also could have, occasionally, had an effect on the choice of script.

101 Edited in Hamilton and Niu 1998: 160-162. This inscription was first published in facsimile in Warner 1938: plates XIV- XV. Without facsimile it was transcribed, translated, and annotated in Yang 1994: 101-103, on which Hamilton and Niu refrained from commenting (1998: 161), and herewith I follow them.

102 The editors' translation is: "1. Le vingt-huit de la neuvième lune de la bienheureuse année du 2. Cheval, à ce bienheureux temple de montagne, nous, Ölǰey Tömür et 3. Dharma Širi, sommes venus de Shazhou pour nous prosterner, 4. et nous étant prosternés, au moment du retour, (moi,) Qač Qur qıy-a, je me suis, 5. je me suis permis d'écrire (ce texte). Que ce soit un souvenir pour les 6. jours futurs. Comme fruit de nos puṇya (acquis par) cette adoration, 7. que nos mauvaises

'$_{1-2}$On the 28th day of the 9th month of the fortunate Horse Year,[103] $_{2-3}$we, Öljäy Tömür and Darm-a Širi came from Shazhou to this sacred mountain temple[104] in order to worship (*yüküngäli*). $_{4-5}$After having worshipped (*yükünüp*), [in the moment] of returning [I,] Kačkur *kıya*,[105] have humbly written [this text]. May it be a memory to be seen in future![106] $_6$As the fruit of our merits (*puṇya*) [gained by] this worship (*yükünmiš*) $_7$may our bad *karma* of the visible [i.e the present] as well as of the invisible [i.e. past and future][107] existences, $_{8-9}$be cleaned, and, together with all sentient beings, may us attain the Buddhahood quickly$_2$! *Sādhu, sādhu* may it be!

The following schema illustrates the sections of this inscription which can paired with structural elements of colophons:

			Colophon
–	–	–	A. Einleitungsformel
Date	ll. 1-2	→	B. Datum
Pilgrims	ll. 2, 3, 4	*→	C. Auftraggeber
Motivation	l. 3	→	D. Anlaß
Transferring merits	l. 6 (?)	?	E. Verdienstzuwendung
Wishes and aims	ll. 7-9	→	F. Wünsche und Ziele
Closing formulae	l. 9	→	G. Abschlußformel

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actions dans les existences déjà vécues et encore à 8. vivre soient purifiées, et que nous puissions trouver 9. rapidement, avec tous les etres vivants, la béatitude du Bouddha. Que ce soit sādhu, sādhu."

103 According to the editors this date can correspond to either November 5, 1390 or October 24, 1402, or, with less probability, October 11, 1414. (161)

104 *süm(-ä)* < Mong. *süm-e / süme*, "Buddhist temple, monastery", see Matsui 2008: 21. In inscription I.4. it appears in synonym compound *buxar süm*, where the first is the Mongolian form of Skt. *vihāra*, cf. (Hamilton and Niu 1998: 148); *tag*, "mountain", precedes *buxar* in P.2 and *süm(-ä)* in E.6,8 and in this very inscription, signifying "temple or monastery in the (inside of) mountain". In an inscription from Dunhuang, where the place of pilgrimage is also indicated, Kara read [...] *burxanlïg bu tur-a odura az-qï-ya olurup*, "...en séjournant un peu dans cette ville pieuse", on which he comments: "Au lieu de *tur-a* 'ville fortifée' on pourrait également lire *tag* 'montagne'" (Kara 1976: 55-56). The latter reading is possible and, in the light of the previous examples, more probable; *odura ~ otra* signifies "the middle, or centre, of anything" (Clauson 1972: 203-4, s.v. *ortu*).

105 On the personal names appearing in this inscription see Hamilton and Niu 1998: 127-210.

106 Hamilton and Niu read *kenki künkä*, "pour les jours futurs". After having checked on the photograph used by them, I propose the reading *kenki körgü*, "seeing later". This latter phrase is well attested, see e.g. the colophon cited here in note 67, or Matsui 2010: 709, 34.2; cf. also its variant in inscription H.9 *ken körmiš-tä*, "in looking later" (Matsui 2008: 18).

107 In the edition the expression *közünür közünmäz* is commented upon as follows: "[...] participes aoristes du verbe *közün-* 'etre visible, etre présent, etre apparent' doivent signifier ici '(existence) présentes, déjà vécues, et pas encore présentes, encore à vivre'." (Hamilton and Niu 1998: 162).

The pilgrim inscriptions in general omit any opening formulae, but occasionally include the closing formulae just as our example above. The date is sometimes put at the end. The names of pilgrims are often enumerated in the inscriptions, sometimes adding their native place. We may assume that the person(s) who sponsored the pilgrimage was (were) among the participants – although, to my best knowledge, it is never indicated explicitly–, especially when they were high dignitaries or well-off lay-disciples.[108] Thus, we may not be wrong to take this element as the counterpart of *"Auftraggeber"* (C). The *"Anlaß"* (D)[109] may vary in each cases according to the actual occasion. Here the purpose or motivation of pilgrimage is "to worship" (*"yüküngäli"*), which is very common and general in inscriptions. However, it is clear, that the fruit of worshipping is *puṇya*, and in this way it is not different from the *"Anlaß"* of colophons or the Stake and Banner inscriptions, since the ultimate motivation in all cases is to accumulate religious merits. Some inscriptions are more explicit on the purpose of, or on the activities performed during the pilgrimage. Thus we find, visualization and praising the Buddha,[110] taking (*dharma-*) instructions,[111] meditating[112] or with more details, as, e.g., in the following inscription:

> bo aryadan oron-ta kälip : čodpa b(e)rip yükünüp küši köy(ü)rüp yantım

> I came to this monasterial place, made a religious offering, worshipped, burnt incense, and returned [home].[113]

As for *"Verdienstzuwendung"* (E), in our inscription it is not stated in a clear-cut way, however, the context implies that the accumulated merits were wished to bring benefit to all sentient beings. In contrary to the colophons, merit is rarely transferred to gods. There is only a single example but without naming any deity:

> äv-imzkä yanıp barır-ta mn [   ] ädgü täŋrim-lärkä buyan ävi[rürmn]

> When I will return to our home, I shall transfer the *puṇya* to my kind goddesses'.[114]

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108 See especially the inscriptions H, J, L of Yulin caves, in Matsui 2008.

109 See Zieme 1992: 61-63; Kasai 2008: 14.

110 *burxan-ım biz-lär-kä körgü bolz-un ögtilz-ün*, translated by the editor as "que mon dieu nous regarde! qu'il soit glorifié!" (Kara 1976: 55); or it can be interpreted otherwise: "may my Buddha be seen and praised by us!".

111 Zieme 1985: 192, 60d.14; also from Toyok, there is a similar manuscript inscription in Matsui 2010: 709, ll.11-12: *bošgut algalı kälip*, "coming to take the instruction".

112 Hamilton and Niu 1998: B.5-6.

113 Yulin Inscription J.5-6. In connection to *čodpa* Matsui has remarked that "it is more likely that Uig. *čodpa* should be derived from Tib. *mchod-pa*, and be translated 'sacrifice'." (Matsui 2008: 24). I would not that specific, because the phrase *čodpa ber-* is obviously is calqued on the Tibetan expression mchod *pa 'bul* "to make a religious offering" (where Tib. *'bul* =~ Uyg. *ber-* "to give, to present and the like"), hence in the given context nothing indicates that it was a "bloody sacrifice".

114 Cf. Zieme 1985: 192, 60e25-26.

In general, we can establish that this element in inscriptions − wherever it is written (and extant) − is much less elaborated compared to the colophons. In the following example the merit is transferred to family members, namely to the parents:

buyanı ögüm kaŋım-ka tägzün

May the merit (of worship) reach my mother and father.[115]

Zieme has classified *"Wünsche und Ziele"* (F) as observed in colophons into two categories: (F.1) those for the period of worldly existence and (F.2) those for the time after death.[116] The examples of the first category, adduced by him, express concerns of mundane disasters and dangers, such famine, bad weather, shortage and sickness, and wishes for good weather, prosperity and health and so on.[117] According to him, the "wish for attaining Buddhahood" falls into the second category, even it may well refer to the present period of life −as he also noted.[118] It is not my *"Ziel"* here to refine these categories; what concerns us here is the way it is phrased in the colophons: with the use of adverbs signifying "without delay", "very quickly", or "instantly".[119] In our example above it is expressed by *tärk tavrak* (hendiadys), "quickly". It is important to add that we do not find in the pilgrim inscriptions any mundane wish; be in this life or after, they all regard to religious or spiritual aims.

Concluding remarks

I have not dealt here with the toponyms of inscriptions and, in connection with this, the 'traffic sphere' of Uygur Buddhist pilgrimages,[120] nor have I discussed the personal names appearing in the inscriptions, for both would have been too challenging, and requires further research by the author" by "all these would have pushed the scope of this paper. I have also excluded the problem of dating these graffiti. Among those which could have been dated more or less precisely, the oldest is the inscription in Bezeklik Cave No. 2, which dates to 1226 A.D.[121] The newest seem to belong either to the late 14th or to the first decades of the 15th century.[122] That

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115 Yulin Inscription F.: the editors erroneously read and transcribed TYKZWN / *tegzün* for T'KZWN / *tägzün*, i.e. the vowel sign in the first syllable should be *alif* ['] and not *yod* [Y] (cf. Hamilton and Niu 1998: 142). The formulation, however, is quite similar to what we can read in a colophon: *öglüg: kaŋ-lıg iki ı-dok-larım-ka buyan-ı tägzün*, "... möge das Verdienst meine zwei Heiligen, meine Mutter und meinen Vater, erreichen." (Kasai 2008: 245, 130.2-3).

116 Zieme 1992: 83.

117 Zieme 1992: 84.

118 Zieme 1992: 85.

119 For attestations see Zieme 1992: 85. Cf. also in a Banner Inscription "May I be released quickly from [the misery of] *saṃsāra* by the strength of my good deeds." (Moriyasu and Zieme 2003: 466).

120 On this important subject see Matsui 2008.

121 Zieme 1985: 60c.

122 Cf. Yulin inscriptions D, O, P and Q in Hamilton and Niu 1998.

is to say, none of the known Uygur Buddhist pilgrim inscriptions can be dated prior to the Mongol period. As we have mentioned, the Sivšidu-Yaqšidu manuscript inscriptions can also be dated to this period. On the one hand, this certainly does not mean that Uygur Buddhists started visiting sacred places and monasteries only under Mongol rule. On the other hand, it certainly tells us that it was under Mongol rule that the Uygurs - and this is corroborated by other historical sources - were positioned to play a dominant role in the socio-religious life in the regions under consideration.

My main objective has been to challenge the − still prevalent − view which regards these graffiti as simple old touristic "scribbles" with silly content. As we can see, the scribes (or the authors) of these inscriptions − not only of the ones composed in strophic alliteration − were clearly literate and well versed. Therefore, it is not very surprising that the majority of the inscriptions demonstrate clear signs of having been influenced by the literary or textual tradition. This is manifest in their similarities to colophons and other Buddhist inscriptions, which include parallels in content, structure and phraseology. Although they are often fragmentary, damaged and difficult to read, they still can provide us with many pieces of valuable information. As it has been expressed aptly by Jason Neelis:

> ... epigraphic materials offer useful perspectives on Buddhist practices, patterns of mobility, and everyday concerns of individual agents of transmission in specific places and times.[123]

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123 Neelis 2010: 54.

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THE COMPLEXITY OF TIBETAN PILGRIMAGE

CHARLES RAMBLE

Introduction

Paulo Coelho's *The Pilgrimage* tells the story of an inner voyage undertaken in the course of a physical journey to Santiago de Compostela. Not long after the inception of the long walk there is an incident in which the author and his spiritual mentor, Petrus – a senior fellow-member of a the mystical order known as Regnum Agnus Mundi (RAM) – encounter two boys kicking a football about near the pilgrim trail. The ball is miskicked and passed to Coelho, who is about to return it to the players when something in Petrus' demeanour suggests to him that he should not do so. The boys ask politely for their ball to be returned, and one of them becomes tearful when Coelho continues to demur. At last the frustrated children offer to reveal the location of a hidden relic, and as soon as they have secured the return of their ball, make good their escape from the two duped pilgrims. Petrus later explains the occult significance of the episode: that Coelho's reluctance to return the ball was due to his (Coelho's) unconscious awareness that his inner devil had manifested in the boy; and that there really *had* been a relic, because "a devil never makes false promises".[1]

The episode could be taken simply as a particularly bizarre instance of the kind of misunderstanding that might happen in any intercultural encounter; but a factor that is clearly relevant in the present case is the place itself. The attitude of either party is conditioned by the significantly divergent understandings of where exactly it is they are. While the two pairs are obviously sharing roughly the same set of geographical coordinates, for one pair these coordinates mark a makeshift football pitch, and for the other they are a section of a mysterious highway in which any number of praeternatural denizens might lurk in wait.

The point I wish to make is this: Coelho is the pilgrim in this story, and as students of pilgrimage we are likely to give his narrative about the place and the journey more attention than we would that of the footballers. The result of privileging this one perspective is the depletion of a complex phenomenon to a single strand, since we would be ignoring the complementary or rival narratives that are running concurrently with the official account. It is precisely the multi-strandedness of pilgrimage that I wish to examine in the present article. I propose to do so by excerpting passages from selected examples of pilgrimage-related literature and juxtaposing them with

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1   Coelho 1992: 67-71.

alternative perspectives on the same location or activity. Not only is pilgrimage complex, but it is complex in different ways: there may be rival conceptualisations of the same place; a single place may be characterised differently by different commentators, or else the same individual or group may maintain a multiple view of the process or locus of pilgrimage. While the diversity may consist of a plurality of religious interpretations – a type of polysemy that is particularly well documented in the scholarly literature, especially in the field of 'contested landscapes' – we are also likely to find a superimposition of spiritual and worldly (for example, commercial) interests. In most cases the 'profane' perspective is explicit, but in certain instances, as we shall see, it has to be read between the lines of the official account.

In much the same way as we benefit from seeing the plurality of perspectives on a single location, an overly strict selectiveness with regard to what constitutes pilgrimage literature might also result in an artificially narrow, decontextualised image of the activity. There is, in fact, no one Tibetan genre that can be regarded as "pilgrimage literature". The most obvious candidates – the *dkar chag* ('register'), the *gnas bshad* ('guide-book') and the *lam yig* ('passport') – are three of the four forms (the fourth being *go la'i kha byang*, 'global-description') that Wylie singled out as constituting the corpus of Tibetan geographical writing.[2] Other genres for which I hope to justify inclusion in the pilgrimage complex might be tantric literature, hagiography, biography and travelogue. The way in which they relate to one another in the context of pilgrimage could be represented roughly with the use of a Venn diagram, as follows:
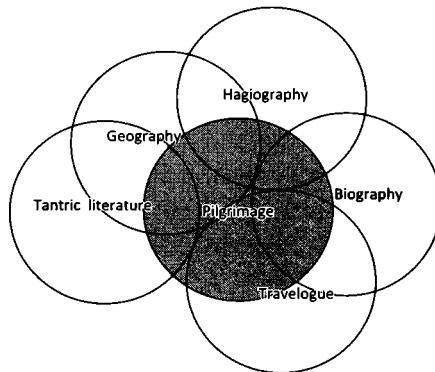
Let us return briefly to the path to Santiago de Compostela. In considering the divergent perspectives of Coelho and Petrus on the one hand and the two footballers on the other, I suggested that the differences might be due in part to the place itself. A few words should be said here to clarify how this might be the case.

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2   Wylie 1995.

To begin with, it could be objected that there is nothing inherent in the place that it should determine these different perspectives. After all, the meanings that the location has are nothing more than the projections of the protagonists' preoccupations: the boys want to play football, whereas Coelho on his own admission, and Petrus by implication, have been reading Carlos Castaneda.

According to a certain theoretical position that has widespread support, the relationship between humans and their physical environment is not one of subject and object; the distinction implicit in the latter is false, and we should understand that the two – a person and the place he or she inhabits – are mutually constitutive. This 'strong' phenomenological view, advocated particularly in the work of Tim Ingold (1990), proposes that an individual's knowledge of a place derives from physical interaction with it, and not from theoretical constructs independent of such direct experience. The implications of this position are discussed in an important study of the urban environment of contemporary Lhasa by Kabir Heimsath, who goes on to present a summary of the criticisms it has attracted, and to assess the limits of its applicability. The position that "place and knowledge are inextricable" has "been put to valuable, if often implicit, uses within Tibetan studies in which people, landscape and deities blend through mutually constitutive pilgrimage practices...". However, this place-based phenomenological approach "runs into problems when there is no clear and stable relationship between a person and a place and thus also no clear homology between society and culture.[3] Heimsath's point has important implications for the study of pilgrimage. Pilgrims, by definition, do not live in the localities they visit, and arguments – notably on the part of Gosden (1994) – against the phenomenological approach are surely fatal in the case of pilgrimage.[4]

The inherent qualities of a space may well be influential in the first instance by virtue of their impressive or constraining physical features. However, the *particular* meanings invested in the space and its features, and the sanctioned modes of being in it, will be largely a matter of culturally (including politically) inspired attribution. These representations are canonised and naturalised to the extent that anyone who has undergone the corresponding socialisation is unlikely to be able to perceive the place as a meaningless topography. In the episode with which this article opens, it may well be the case that the relationship of the boys to their locality is of the mutually constitutive variety; but it is certainly the case that Coelho's and Petrus' relationship to it is not.

These observations lead to a second consideration: notably, the plural identity of the location in which the two parties encounter each other. The point requires a clearer definition of certain crucial terms related to locality. Heimsath makes the important point that the words *space* and *place* are given significantly different meanings in the works of certain authors.

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3   Heimsath 2012: 6-7.
4   ibid.: 8.

In the standard anthropological formulations 'place' denotes the human perception and experience of an abstract 'space'. 'Place' holds meaning, identity, culture, etc. for people while 'space' remains an objective, impersonal, and empty category in this formulation...".[5]

In the writing of contemporary geographers, Heimsath points out, the meanings of the two terms are exactly reversed. In the present article I shall follow the anthropological convention, whereby space signifies a natural location and place the cultural significance accorded to it.

The secondary literature on Tibetan pilgrimage and sacred geography abounds in examples of a given space being perceived and treated as two or more quite different places. Most commonly, a single mountain may be the abode of a territorial *yul lha* to whom locals pay pagan reverence, often with blood sacrifices, and which lamaist pilgrims from far afield might revere, with circumambulations, as the citadel of a Buddhist or Bonpo *yi dam*. Shardung Ri, a mountain in Amdo sacred to the Bonpos, was converted to a shrine of the Maoist civil religion on the grounds that the Long March once paused there (it actually bypassed the site by 170 kilometres);[6] the Halesi-Māratika caves, in eastern Nepal, are the subject of an acrimonious set of competing claims, with sectarian, ethnic and economic currents, on the part of at least four different communities;[7] Kailash is only one of numerous polysemous mountains held sacred by a multiplicity of faiths, each for its own reasons; and so on.

For a single space to be a plurality of places does not require the ideological investment of a corresponding number of interest-groups: a patch of monastery ground daily trodden by monks who do not give it a second thought can be ritually transformed into a mandala for tantric divinities represented by the same monks dressed as masked *'cham* dancers. A particularly vivid illustration of this phenomenon of what we may call single-sited multilocality, together with the procedures adopted in order to generate this, is to be found in the context of certain local cults in Nepal's Mustang District. The main triad of territorial gods in the community of Te features a divinity called Shartsenpa, whose principal shrine is a cairn that stands above the village on a trail leading to the pastures. There are in fact two trails from the village to this point: the trail that is used for everyday purposes is an easy route known as Gyamsampa, the "New Road", and villagers driving their animals to graze will pass by the cairn with little more attention than they would give to any other pile of stones. Shartsenpa must be worshipped once a month by village officials who make a fumigation offering at the shrine. To reach the location, the officials must follow a longer, more dangerous route known as the "Fumigation Road" (Sang Tepe Gyam),

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5   ibid.: 14.

6   Huber 2006.

7   Buffetrille 2012. The bibliography of this work provides references to the author's earlier studies on this pilgrimage site.

and failure to use this older trail will result in their being fined. Both the trails lead to the same *space*, marked by the cairn, but the *places* that are reached are different: in one case the cairn is a heap of stones, and in the other it is the very presence of the territorial god Shartsenpa.[8]

Let us now examine some examples of the literary genres comprising the Venn diagram of pilgrimage literature. To begin at the top, so to speak, there is a well-developed reflection of the status of pilgrimage to be found in some of the higher tantras. As one might expect, the Kālacakratantra has little time for the practice of making physical journeys to the sacred places of the Indian subcontinent: insofar as there are exact correspondences to each of these sites – as well as to vaster cosmic phenomena – within the components of one's own body, one might as well stay at home and cultivate the means to undertake an inner voyage around these nodes. These various sets of correspondences are clearly set out in tabular form in Vesna Wallace's study of the text, the Inner Kālacakratantra.[9] The Kālacakra tradition

> rejects the inherent sacredness of one place or one human being over another. It suggests that all regions of the world and all human bodies are equally sacred. This view of the human body as containing within itself all the pilgrimage sites is not unique to the Kālacakra tradition. It is also found in other anuttara-yoga-tantras and in the literature of the Sahajayāna. For example, the well-known Sahajīya poet, Sarahapāda, affirms in his Dohākoṣa that he has not seen another place of pilgrimage as blissful as his own body.[10]

A similar depreciation of the qualities of physical sacred places is to be found in twentieth-century work by the Bonpo scholar Tenzin Namdak. Invoking the authority of the Zur byang (a work by Blo ldan snying po, b. 1360), Tenzin Namdak proposes a hierarchical list of religious activities arranged according to the spiritual accomplishments of those for whom they are prescribed. Pilgrimage features at the bottom of the list, as a preparatory exercise recommended for those "who are unable to undertake these [more challenging] religious activities".[11]

Insofar as it is presented as a classical pilgrimage guide of the *lam yig* or *gnas bshad* variety, the work describes the author's itinerary through Tibet and northern Nepal, and cites scriptural works concerning the special qualities of the places he visits. Nevertheless, it is clear that Tenzin Namdak adopts a discreet distance from the extravagant and inspirational claims made in such works for the properties of these sites, and even their identification as the citadels of particular tantric divinities. Compare these two excerpts on the subject of Kongpo Bonri, the main power-place

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8   Ramble 2008: 204-205.
9   Wallace 2001. See especially pp.78–86, tables 5.7–5.11.
10 ibid.: 77.
11 Bod yul gnas kyi lam yig: 6.

of the Bon religion. The first is from the *dkar chag* of Bonri, the second from Tenzin Namdak's "Guide for the Blind:"

> ...The Teacher raised [the mountain] with his hand and set it to the left, and from his heart there emanated a ray of brown light the length of an arrow which penetrated the hundred million realms and produced a mountain like a [heap of] blazing jewels, created with the forms of a circle, a square, a semicircle and a triangle. It appeared as gTso mchog mkha' 'gying standing in union with his consort (6b), having three faces, six arms, and two legs, one drawn up and the other extended, entwined in an embrace with his consort, with the wings of a garuda and the tent of a fire-mountain, and complete with terrifying and wrathful attributes. There appeared circular, square, semicircular and triangular [natural features] with the form of his divine entourage.
>
> With his two legs in the extended posture he trod down the noxious serpent spirits and goblins as well as the black hill of the demons, which was like the platform for his feet. It became a sign of his subjugation of the demonic realm and came to be known as 'the Great Mind-Emanation Bon Mountain'.[12]

And now Tenzin Namdak's prescription for circumambulating mountains such as Kongpo Bonri:

> When you walk around places such as the Bon Mountain of Kongpo, since they are receptacles that have been blessed by the Enlightened Teacher, you should imagine that while performing your circuits you are walking around the Enlightened One. It is not merely a matter of making prostrations and circumambulations while bearing in mind the local genii, territorial gods and swastikas of these places: whatever sacred receptacle you visit you should consider that it is this or that Enlightened One, and be reverent and rejoice. This is what is important.[13]

The second excerpt represents a significant shift in emphasis: the importance of the mountain is not that it is an actual mandala of gTso mchog mkha' 'gying, with remarkable properties, but an aniconic screen on which pilgrims should project their inner devotion and aspirations.

Pilgrimage narratives: information or inspiration?

Tibetan pilgrimage narratives have not always been kindly treated by Western scholars. Tucci's frustration with the genre is a case in point:

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12 Bon ri dkar chag fols. 6a-6b. For the Tibetan text, see Ramble 1997 Appendix A. Where the Tibetan text of the excerpts cited in the present article has already been published, it will not be reproduced here.

13 Bod yul gnas kyi lam yig: 55.

These itineraries of the Tibetan monks are far from that exactness which we admire in the writings of the Chinese travellers....Not only does a great deal of legendary and fantastic elements permeate their descriptions, but the itinerary itself can hardly be followed from one place to another.[14]

Among the deficiencies for which Tucci takes the Tibetan authors to task are the inconsistent transcription of names, the proliferation of errors due to the slipshod work of copyists, the fact that direction of travel is rarely given, distances are never registered except in days, and that whereas "in some cases the places are mentioned one after another; in other cases our pilgrims seem to forget the intermediate halts and record only the starting-point and the place of arrival".[15]

The Tibetan accounts may not have the precision of their Chinese predecessors, but perhaps Tucci is being too harsh. Brenda Li's study of the travels of Khyung sprul 'Jigs med nam mkha'i rdo rje in the early twentieth century, and those of O rgyan pa in the thirteenth, demonstrate that these works do contain a great deal of reliable information concerning routes, sites, toponyms and suchlike – often corroborated, in the case of the latter, by Persian and European sources.[16] These pilgrimage accounts may also contain precious ethnographic vignettes of communities encountered in the course the authors' travels. Surely one of the most interesting in this regard is the autobiography of dKar ru Grub dbang bsTan 'dzin rin chen (b. 1801), whose keen observations offer valuable insights into life in the Nepal Himalaya more than a century before the first professional anthropologists entered the country.[17]

Now, the narratives produced by the authors mentioned above are not free-standing pilgrimage accounts but biographical works. Insofar as pilgrimage guides are themselves often compilations of excerpts from a number of biographies and hagiographies, life writing must also be considered an important literary genre for a broader understanding of the practice: while the compilation of excerpts tends to be piecemeal, the biographies they cannibalise generally give important information about the circumstances in which the journeys were made, and the authors' motivations for undertaking them in the first place.

If Tucci's complaint about Tibetan pilgrims' cavalier treatment of concrete information is partly justified, that is because the main purpose of these authors was less to deliver accurate route descriptions than to instill devotion in their readers through their depiction of the wondrous places they visited. Such accounts may stand in stark contrast with more prosaic representations, albeit by self-styled pilgrims.

This sort of contrast is vividly illustrated by the accounts of visits to Amritsar, in Punjab, made by two travellers from eastern Tibet a few years apart from each other.

14 Tucci 1940: 61.

15 ibid.: 61.

16 Li 2008; 2011.

17 Ramble 2008b.

The first is by a certain rKyang btsun Sher rnam, a Bonpo from Khams who visited the sacred sites of India in the mid-1940s. He returned to Tibet via Mustang, and left a draft of his account in the Bonpo village of Lubrak, where he stayed to write up a fair copy of his travels that, to the best of my knowledge, has never come to light.

The part of the journey with which we are concerned[18] takes him by train via Lucknow, and then on to Haridwar. After a brief visit to the city (*rgyal sa*) of Dehradun (Ghu ru sDe ra 'dun), a place blessed by Padmasambhava, he travels on to "rGya mkhar ba chod, known as A 'bar".[19]

A 'bar is Amritsar, and the rGya mkhar ba chod with which he identifies it is nothing less the palace built by Mi lus bsam legs, the Royal *gshen* who, according to Bonpo tradition, was the revealer of the Mother Tantra (*Ma rgyud*). The focus of the writer's interest is the Golden Temple of the Sikhs, a building situated in the middle of the town, "standing on the firm foundation of an island in a lake". Engraved swastikas are displayed, it has arched doors on each of its four faces and is set with a variety of precious stones, too numerous for him to list by name. After describing the impressive appearance of the place at some length, the author compounds his identification of the Golden Temple as a Bonpo holy place by conflating the Sikh priesthood with that of his own faith:

> Their principal *gshen* is the Subduing *gshen* with the 'bird-horns'. His secret name is Guru Nanak. His teachings were the Bon of Relative and Absolute Truth. He holds in his hand the Sword of Wisdom... This place was established as a citadel for the life-force of the eternal [Bon] tantras until such time as the future teacher should come. The essence of the sect is the sphere of supreme Bon. These are the haunts of the saints of the Supreme Secret *Ma rgyud*. At this holy place the oceanic assembly of the tutelary gods and buddhas, the divine community of the nine tiered ways, gather like the clouds. On the fifteenth, thirtieth, eighth [and twenty-second of each month] and on the special days of the *Ma rgyud*, the right kind of people, faithful and endowed with merit, may see the face and body of the Royal gShen himself.[20]

The basis of the association seems partly to be similarities in the appearance of the Sikhs and the descriptions of certain ancient Bonpos. Like some of the latter, Sikhs are conspicuous for their beards and elaborate headgear. While the 'bird-horns' are a distinguishing feature of the eighteen kings of Zhang-zhung, they were also apparently an insignium of early Bon priests.[21] The corresponding item in the case of Guru Nanak is undoubtedly the Khanda, the crescent horn-like motif of two crossed kirpans

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18 A more extensive account of his travels may be found in Ramble 1998: 23-25.
19 rGya gar gnas kyi dkar chag: 15.
20 ibid.: 16.
21 Norbu and Prats 1987: 71-73; 127-128; Vitali 2008. For the relevant sources see Norbu and Prats 1987: xix; a priest called sTag lo Bya ru can is also mentioned in Karmay (1972: 45-46).

that appears in the Sikh crest, while the 'sword of wisdom' is surely the kirpan itself. The identification of the Golden Temple with rGya mkhar ba chod apparently enjoyed a quite widespread popularity among Bonpos.

Among other things, this excerpt offers a vindication of Heimsath's scepticism of the 'mutual constitutiveness' of place and person in the case of pilgrimage. rKyang btsun's vision of the Golden Temple has little to do with either devotional or historical local knowledge, but represents the imposition of a scheme conceived a long way from Amritsar, and fabricated out of Bonpo piety and the literary conventions of pilgrimage writing.

Another Tibetan account of Amritsar that it may be instructive to juxtapose with rKyang btsun's is contained in a Tibetan work with a bilingual title: "Phyi lo 1944 nas 1958 bar bod dang bal po rgya gar bcas la gnas bskor bskyod pa'i nyin deb; A Pilgrim's Diary: Tibet, Nepal and India 1944-1956" (short title: "A Pilgrim's Diary").

Tucci would have approved of "A Pilgrim's Diary". In 1944,[22] in his 49th year, the author, Tshongpon Khatag Zangyag (1896–1961), set off from his native Zalmogang, in Kham, through Central and Western Tibet and subsequently into Nepal and India. Although the title implies that the journey is a pilgrimage, the author's attention is given to a far wider range of concerns that is typical of such works. The journal format – it is evident that the writer was assiduous in keeping notes about his daily activities – offers a clear temporal structure, and while the main focus is on the religious monuments seen in the course of each day, there is a good deal of incidental information that does not characteristically feature in pilgrimage narratives. The descriptions are factual, leaning more towards history and iconography than to the metaphysical, and the meticulous record of donations he made to each religious institution reminds us that though Khatag Zamyag may have been a devout Buddhist, his title of Tsongpon (*tshong dpon*) – 'master merchant' – was by no means merely decorative. There is a great deal of other incidental information that makes this diary far more than just a catalogue of worthy sites: how the author successfully evaded brigands on several occasions; spent several days in an outcaste community; saved deer from hunters; fulminated against the trade tariffs imposed by the Central Government; stitched up the face of a beggar-woman who had been savaged by a dog – this backdrop of quotidian miscellanea paints a scene of daily life in Tibet on the eve of its Peaceful Liberation far richer than we might find even in works that purport to do precisely that. However, it is not the emerging picture of Tibet in the 1940s that concerns us here, but rather the fact that the protagonist's 'pilgrimage' is at once a religious and worldly journey. For this reason among others, it would be most appropriate to consider this work not as pilgrimage literature strictly speaking but rather as travelogue.

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22 The date given on p. 13 is actually Earth Monkey (1908), which is surely an error for Wood Monkey (1944).

The following passage is a typical instance of his superimposition of the worldly and the spiritual, while providing a wonderfully sober counterpoint to the conventionally fantastic lyricism of his Bonpo contemporary, rKyang btsun, on beholding the city of Amritsar. The passage comes after an extensive description of the Buddhist sites of Varanasi and adjacent areas.

> We spent one night in a pilgrims' resthouse in Varanasi, and on the following day went to visit the market and the silk factories and relaxed a little bit. We then returned, and in the evening bought tickets for a train that left at eleven o' clock. We changed trains at Bareilly, and then went on to Amritsar, a journey that took altogether four days and nights.

> This is a place that has been blessed by Guru Nanak, who is a teacher of the Sikh religion. They have a tradition of distributing two pieces of bread twice each day. At that holy place, the outer, middle and inner parts of that place are made of stone. In the middle there is a very limpid lake, and the doors of that temple are made of pure silver, and the upper parts of that temple comprise four chapels that are made entirely of copper and gold.

> Inside, the Sikh priests were reading the scriptures representing the utterances of Guru Nanak, that are their foremost sacred receptacles. People were coming in through the four entrances to make offerings of flowers and other items, and we tried our best to do as they did. Inside one temple there were ornaments that are said to be the ornaments worn by the divine consort Mandarawa, and in another temple we saw objects that are said to be the possessions of O rgyan rin po che.... In the evening we bought tickets and went on our way in a small train.[23]

The fusion of the economic and religious spheres in Khatag Zamyag's pilgrimage presents the perspective of the user – the man on the road, so to speak; but the two spheres might be combined in a genre of literature that, to the best of my knowledge, has been given little attention in the domain of pilgrimage. That is, documentation dealing with the infrastructure, the material and administrative aspects of travel.

Managing pilgrimage and trade in Western Tibet

Some idea of the importance of this aspect of pilgrimage can be obtained from administrative records concerning the regulation of cross-border traffic between Tibet and India. Original documents of this sort are not available to me, but summaries of such resources are to be found in a compilation from Western Tibet, entitled "The Garland of Precious Treasure: An extended account of such things as the political

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23 "A Pilgrim's Diary:" 145-146.

history of Tibet's Ngari Korsum in recent times, the situation of several restored monasteries, and the development of contemporary society."[24]

As is unfortunately the case with many such recent gazetteers from different regions of Tibet, the "Big History" is vague about the period and nature of its sources, stating only that its content is based on local documents from different periods and on the oral testimony of elderly people who once plied these trade-and-pilgrimage routes. We therefore have no idea from this summary about any developments that might have occurred between the late seventeenth and mid-twentieth centuries. Nevertheless, we do obtain an idea of some conventions that operated at certain times over this period with regard to the regulation of religious and commercial cross-border traffic. The "Big History" contains a wealth of detailed information about the locations of trade marts, the trajectory of various trade routes, the kinds and quantities of commodities bartered and so forth, but since this material is not our main concern here I shall simply give an overview of the section and focus on the information relating to the structures for the management of trade and pilgrimage.

The point of departure is 1683, when Ladakh was expelled from Western Tibet by Central Tibetan forces under the command of the Mongol general dGa' ldan tshe dbang. The conclusion of hostilities resulted in the establishment of boundaries, and the formulation of strategies for maintaining what would subsequently become part of the international Indo-Tibetan border. Trade agreements were established between the various enclaves on either side of the border. To take the example of one enclave on the Tibetan side, Ruthog had such agreements with Ladakh, Garsha and Khunu in India. The largest number of registered trading parties came from Ladakh – over 100 households from 84 communities, with between five and eight individuals per household. Garsha and Khunu had a smaller representation, with 60 and 10 households respectively. In each case there were a number of different recognised routes. The exchange ratio for different commodities was fixed, and undercutting was illegal. The main occasion for trade into Tibet was a month-long mart in June and July.

Tibet concluded agreements with three different polities: Khunu, Ladakh and Triri, whose respective kings at the time were sKyer seng, bDe legs rnam rgyal and Padam Singh. Tibet also had agreements with enclaves with which it did not share a border, such as Rampur, which every three years (the "Big History" is not quite clear on this point) would send emissaries to Tsarang with gifts of incense, aloes, three or four rolls of fine muslin, a gun and a sealed letter. Tsarang, in turn, sent Rampur a horse, together with a sealed letter and a ceremonial scarf. From the part of their hosts, the emissaries from either side were entitled to horse transport (*rta 'ul*), pack

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animals, milk, tsampa, tea, lodging and firewood. Representatives from the Tibetan and Indian sides would periodically travel the route to ensure that traffic was moving smoothly and that all parties involved in its use and maintenance – and especially their own expatriate communities – were happy and flourishing. The work refers to the custom whereby trading partners on either side of the border would break a rock in two and each keep a piece, but does not explain the purpose of this procedure. Here we are fortunate to have an account by an Indian author writing in the 1930s. Trade was based on cross-border partnerships that were perpetuated over generations, and the half-stones served as guarantees of the bearer's genuineness: "An ordinary stone is broken into two parts, one portion remaining with the [Tibetan] correspondent and the other with the [Indian] Bhotiya. The representatives to the two men are to be recognized by these tokens. If the two parts fit together the representatives' bona fides are established" (Pant 1988 [1935]: 218)."[25]

The border arrangements were written on copper plates. While – as one might expect – the agreements were concerned primarily with trade, a certain amount of attention was also given to pilgrimage connections (*gnas 'brel*), monastic affaris (*chos 'brel*) and cross-border kinship ties (*nye 'brel*). It appears to be the case that reciprocal arrangmenets operated between enclaves. Thus when pilgrims from rTsa rdzong travelled to Rewalsar (mTsho padma), the people of Khunu were obliged to provide them with accommodation and other facilities. It is not actually stated explicitly, but we may suppose that corresponding hospitality was provided by Tibet for Indian pilgrims to such places as Pretapuri and Kailash. These pilgrimage connections, the "Big History" states, contributed to the development of close ties between the communities on either side of the border.

The information about pilgrimage management given here is certainly slender, but it is worth mentioning if only because of the general paucity of such material. Scholarly interest in Tibetan (and presumably other traditions of) pilgrimage have understandably tended to concentrate on the more obviously religious and experiential dimensions of the practice, but to comprehend the activity as a *fait social total*, the effort of tracking down and analysing documentation on the material and administrative aspects of the tradition would surely be rewarding.

Control by groups of individuals over certain nodal pilgrimage sites can yield rich rewards in terms of political power, prestige or wealth. Well-known historical demonstrations of this fact are to be found throughout South Asia, though instances of such appropriation in the Tibetan world have formed the subject of relatively few studies.

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25 I am indebted to John Bray for drawing my attention to this work.

Virtuous works: reading between the lines

The last example I wish to examine also falls into the 'administrative' category, in that it deals with the disbursement of government funding for the development of a famous pilgrimage site in highland Nepal. Like the previous example it concerns the intersection between the commercial and the spiritual, but here the relationship between the two is less explicit and more insidious. The case dates from the late 1950s and relates to the infrastructural development of Muktinath, a sacred site located in the southern part of Nepal's Mustang District. Known in Tibetan as Chu mig brgya rtsa, the Hundred and [eight] Water-spouts, Muktinath is sacred to Buddhists but especially to Hindus, who come to visit it in increasingly large numbers (thanks to recently-opened road access) from throughout South Asia. Until recently, access to the shrine entailed a walk of almost a week from Pokhara, and since the nearest villages are at some distance from the site, pilgrims would often have a hard time of it with inadequate lodging and unfamiliar cold.

For much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Mustang had been under the effective control of the customs contractors, who had the title of *subba* and exercised a considerable degree of jural and economic authority. The majority of the *subba*s were Thakalis of the Serchan family, with their homeland about a day's walk to the south of Muktinath. The document in question, which is contained in the archive of Baragaon, was issued in 1958 by the *subba* Lalitman Serchan. The government of Nepal and a number of private patrons have given funding for the provision of basic facilities for long-distance pilgrims, and the document is at once a sort of project report and an appeal for further endowments. The first eighteen lines or so summarise the well-known myth of the founding of Muktinath[26] and extol the spiritual qualities of the place before coming to the main matter of concern:

> The fine qualities of this place with regard to accumulating merit and wisdom are continuing to increase, and there is no doubt it will eventually cease to abide here and will be transferred to the sphere of transcendence – this much is clear from numerous scriptures. And nowadays there are people who, naturally, hope to find shelter, clothing, and a mat to lie on, but since there are no villagers near the site there is no one who can provide mats or clothing, with the result that the indigent or the unwell who have travelled great distances experience considerable hardship. ...In the ninth month of the Fire Monkey year (1956), the Thak *subba* Lalitman led an appeal to the local community, to the effect that "You six villages are in possession of a pilgrimage site so exalted and blessed the like of which is not to be found anywhere in India, Tibet or Mongolia." [A committee was formed consisting of] three piously

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26 For a description of the shrine of Muktinath from about the time this development project was conceived, see Snellgrove 1981: 119-201; for the text and translation of the foundation myth, see Snellgrove 1979: 106ff.

inclined people from each village, a doctor to provide medical assistance, and us [two] officials – about twenty-one people; for all those pilgrims from different places who travel to this holy site, a guest house, beds, mattresses, pillows, clothing, and someone who has knowledge about all necessary medical attention and especially as the means of supporting devotional activities as fully as possible, His Majesty's Government and certain prominent individuals provided support. In the ninth month of this Fire Bird year (1957), a guesthouse, fifty beds, 300 mats and pillows as well as clothing were made available, and we request individuals to provide donations like droplets in the ocean in the future. If this happens, there will be a progressive annual development at this sacred place, and for this we are sincerely grateful.

(The members of the 21-man committee are listed)

The list of names given above shows the president (*sku ngo*), the overseer (*las dpon*), and the doctor, as well all the other pious officers who were appointed from the respective villages. Last year, in the ninth month of the Fire Monkey year (1956), the chairman presented each of them with an auspicious white scarf; and this year, from the first part of the third month of the Fire Bird year (1957) of the sixteenth Prabhava Cycle, 100 workers per day, and never fewer than fifty, completed the construction of the guesthouse in the ninth month. With this, thanks to the benefaction bestowed by His Majesty's Government of Nepal in response to our appeal, the pious task was brought to a successful conclusion. Small contributions were also made for the workers, and moreover, with the donations made by the high and lowly alike the expenditure ran to many thousands of rupees. It is our wish that further benefactions for this sacred enterprise may enable it to continue to flourish in the future.[27]

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27 In the (unedited) line-by-line text of this passage given here, the following conventions have been adopted: single underlining denotes an insertion above the line; double underlining an insertion below the line; Z stands for the *che rtags* symbol; text in square brackets [...] indicates lacunae that can be filled with reasonable certainty from the context; text in round brackets (...) represents the full-length rendering of contracted forms (*bskungs yig*) that are reproduced as precisely as possible immediately beforehand.

18. ... / tshogs sogs sgrib sbyong sa lam gyi yton (yon tan) kyang gong nas gong 'phel du brgyur nas thar mi gnas pa'i myang 'das kyi go 'phang kyang 'khrod par the tshom medr (med par)

19. mdo brgyud mang por gsal bas yang 'ding sang snying mi rang mdangs kyi mi rnam 'phal cher gnas dgos gdan sogs la re ba byed mi yod kyang / gnas 'dir grong mi sogs med par gdan gos dbyar mi

20. yang med cing / thag ring 'brul ba nyam thag rnam dang nad pa sogs 'byung pa rnam la 'o rgyal chen po dang / gzhanng (gzhan yang) gnas 'dir gra grigs byed gos gos gi sku brag sogs phebs kyang / gnas sa bya tho

21. bas kho gos gis rgyus yod byed mi sogs gang la yang phan 'phyir du / me pho spres lo'i zla dgu pa'i nang du thags krugs cad su pa la sli sman gis dbu 'dren dkas bskul ste khyed rang yul 'tsho

On the evidence of this document, then, the *subba* acted as the conduit for government funding with which to build a lodge and to provide beds and bedding for pilgrims. A committee of local representatives was constituted, and the virtuous local population provided labour for which they received pecuniary tokens of appreciation, even though they had no expectation of being reimbursed for their work. "Many thousands" of rupees were spent on the construction, and the members of the committee were honoured with ceremonial scarves. The document does indeed have the binocular perspective of the temporal and the spiritual, but the two aspects are so much in unison that they cannot really be said to give the three-dimensional vision that more dissonant voices might provide.

These events took place almost sixty years ago, before the living memory of most people in the Muktinath Valley, and within a decade or two from now all that will have survived of this episode is this testimony of harmony and piety. All the members of the twenty-one man committee are dead – except one. The sole survivor is a certain Pema Wangdrak from the village of Chongkhor, who is now in his 80s and has a very lucid memory of this particular project. It is on his unwritten recollections of the episode that we must depend for a perspective that enriches the dull harmony of the official narrative.

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22. *drug gnas chen 'di ltu (lta bu) rgya bod hor gang las kyang khyadr (khyad par) 'du 'phag bzhing sbyin rlabs cheno (chen po) dug pas / yul so so nas mi dge semsn (sems can) gsum res dang / sman bcos byed pa'i sman pa gcig /*

23. *sku ngo bcas khyun sdom mi ngo nyiu (nyi shu) rtsa gcig rtsam gyi gnas 'dir phyogs mi mtha' tad kyi gnas bskor ba rnam la / mgron khang khri'u shing / gdan / sngas / gos / sman khos bya gang rig gi rgyus*

24. *yod bcas dang / khyadr (khyad par) gnas 'dir phyag chod sogs gang zabs byed rgyu'i rgyu yi brten phyir du si ri gor brgyal dang mi grag so'i snangs sbyin 'brel pa bcas nas / 'di lo me bya zla dgu pa'i tshe nang mgron khang*

25. *khri'u shing 50 sngas gdan 300 gos bcas legs par 'grub shing / rjes sor so so nas rgya tsho chu thigi (thig gi) 'brel ba gang zab re snang rog Zzhu zhu / 'di ltar 'byung na gnas phyog 'dir lo rim bzhin dar rgyas su bsgyur bar (25b) dug pas thugs byag Zzhu zhu mkhyeen (mkhyen mkhyen) mkhyeen (mkhyen mkhyen) /...*

31. *'di ltar gong bsal ming byang nang ltar gis sku ngo las dpon sman pa rnam [dang?] las byed dge sems can sha stag rnam yul so so nas gdam kha byas nas na ning me spre zla dgu ba'i nang du smonm (smon lam)*

32. *'debs rten 'brel gi dar kha re sku ngo nas snang ba yin bzhin / 'di lo rab 'byung bcu drug 16 gi nang tshan me bya lor zla 3 ba'i yar ngo nas bzung ste las mi nyin re bzhin brgya 100 dang lditr ('di ltar) nyung*

33. *yang lnga bcu 50 las mi nyung bar byas nas zla dgu pa'i nang 'du mgron khang legsr (legs par) 'grub / de thogs la si ri gor brgyal la snyan Zzhu phul nas sgangs sbyin dang de ltar dge ba'i las grub pa legs 'byung gsung nas / so*

34. *re kyang snang 'byung / ma tshad da lta thub la 'byung pa'i bzhal 'debs tho dman mang po nas 'byung pa'i thogs nas 'gro tshong stong stong phrag mang po song dug shing / slad nas rnam dkar gis las*

35. *la 'brel ba jitr (ji ltar) 'byung ba rten nas gong nas gong 'phel du byed rgyu yod pa 'zhu zhu /*

According to Pema Wangdrak, the 'voluntary' labour of the local population was largely coerced, and the 'small contributions' were so small as to be derisory. The oppressive Rana regime under which the *subba*s had flourished had been ousted six years previously, and Nepal was now enjoying a period of democracy under the rule of the Congress Party. But *subba* Lalitman was closely associated with the Congress Party, and the power of the *subba* was still something to be feared in Mustang. The ceremonial scarves with which the committee were honoured were regarded by all the recipients as a contemptuous substitute for the honorarium they had been expecting. Only a relatively small part of the construction costs were used for the designated purpose – the *subba* kept the rest – with predictable consequences for the resilience of the lodge. All that is generally known is that within a year or two of the building's completion the roof began to leak, and before long, fell in altogether. No maintenance was carried out, and after a decade the house was reduced to a derelict shell.

Conclusion

Pilgrimage is a physical activity intended as a discipline for those whose low level of spiritual achievement requires that they engage in such bodily routines; for more accomplished aspirants, it offers the opportunity to frequent powerful places whose inherent qualities ensure higher-yield meditation. While a narrow focus on emic theories of pilgrimage is likely to yield characterisations of this sort, the guide-books to individual power places will provide the diversity of features that such extrapolations obviously lack. Nevertheless, it has to be admitted that – as in the case of hagiographic literature, and with the same occasional exception that adds welcome contours – *gnas bshad* are largely formulaic, and differ from one another mainly in matters of local detail.

While the Tibetan term for pilgrimage, *gnas skor*, is explicit enough with regard to the activity it designates ('going around places'), this does not mean that the study of the institution should be confined to its narrowest definition. Any more than a study of marriage should – or could – ignore the domains of kinship, social hierarchy or domestic economy. Thinking outside the confines of the core activities of pilgrimage is of course nothing new in Tibetan Studies, as even the few examples of recent scholarly literature cited above will surely have made clear. The present contribution, I hope, will have helped to emphasise the worthwhileness of a catholic approach to the question of which literary genres an investigation of the phenomenon might embrace. A *gnas*, after all, is a place, not just a space, and it is only this kind of inclusiveness that will permit us to appreciate the density of the places around which Tibetans go.

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THE PILGRIMAGE TO MOUNT KHA BA DKAR PO: A METAPHOR FOR *BAR DO*?[1]

KATIA BUFFETRILLE

Introduction

Following the then Party Secretary Hu Yaobang's visit to Tibet and the liberalization that ensued, the Land of Snows underwent many changes in the 1980s. The opening of the country to foreigners made it possible to conduct fieldwork, albeit for short periods only, resulting in new perspectives in Tibetan Studies. Several researchers directed their interest towards Tibetan pilgrimages, in particular pilgrimages around sacred mountains. The first studies based on ethnography and textual studies appeared in the 1990s.[2]

All these works underline the salience of elements of the landscape which, for pilgrims, relate to *bar do* and the hells.[3] But nowhere did this fact appear so clearly to me as during the three circumambulations of Mount Kha ba dkar po I did in 2003 and 2004.

The aim of this article is to study Tibetan popular beliefs about death, *bar do* and the hells in connection with the Kha ba dkar po pilgrimage and to show how the feelings Tibetans have about death and the after-life find physical expression in the landscape. It also proposes an interpretation of some features of the landscape as metaphors of the *bar do*. It is suggested that the proximity of Kaḥ thog monastery could explain the abundance of these features in this particular pilgrimage.

Mount Kha ba dkar po, "White Snow" (Mountain)

Mount Kha ba dkar po forms the divide between the Mekong and Salween river basins on the border between Yunnan and Tsha ba rong. At 6740 m, it is the highest mountain in modern Yunnan province and the most sacred of all mountains for the

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2   For a general overview on studies of Tibetan pilgrimage, see Brïnder 2008: 3-11.
3   I discussed this theme in my unpublished Ph.D. Thesis 1996: 365-372 but in less detail.

Khampas, who consider it as their most important territorial god (*yul lha-gzhi bdag*).[4]
Till now the mountain is "unconquered": the various expeditions that tried to climb it
in the 1980s and in the 1990s never reached the top due to difficult weather conditions.
A major accident occurred in 1991 when a joint Sino-Japanese team of seventeen
climbers perished, killed by an avalanche. Tibetans explain all these events as the
result of Kha ba dkar po's anger at the violation of his territory.[5] Since 2001, permits
to climb have no longer been issued. Rin chen rdo rje, a medical doctor from Bde
chen, who compiled and wrote several texts on this mountain expressed in a poem the
feeling the Tibetans have of the inviolability and sacredness of Kha ba dkar po:

> Being spontaneously erected, the silvery snow mountain has the nature of a
> *stūpa*,
> Being spontaneously untamable, the blue juniper has the symbolic form of the
> [mountain] deity,
> Being uncontrollable, the river has the nature of the oblation water,
> Being unbeatable, the *lha*, *klu* and *gnyan* have the nature of guards [of the
> mountain].

> In such a supreme sacred place as Kha ba dkar po, the *btsan* of Rong,
> Humans with physical form have climbed on the head of the Lord of snow.
> The *stūpa* [performed then] all sorts of magical displays, [and] snow-dust
> spontaneously piled up into a heap.
> [Therefore] men were buried in the deep snow in one instant.[6]

The "opening" of Kha ba dkar po pilgrimage

Like all pilgrimages in the Tibetan world, Kha ba dkar po pilgrimage is said to have
been "opened" one day by a specific person.

According to several written sources,[7] the individual responsible for "opening"
the pilgrimage is Kha ba dkar po Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho dpal bzang po.

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4   Like other mountains (for example A myes rma chen), Kha ba dkar po is a mountain on which
    the two concepts, *yul lha* (mountain territorial god) and *gnas ri* (mountain holy place) are
    superimposed. I will deal with the subject in another article.

5   I hope to publish soon the translation of all texts on Kha ba dkar po published by Rin chen rdo
    rje and Tshe ring chos 'phel: 1999 and 2006. For a survey of all attempts, see Rin chen rdo rje
    1999: 71-78.

6   *Bzhengs mi dgos gangs ri dngul mdog mchod rten rang bzhin/ bcag[s] mi dgos shug pa g.yu
    mdog phyag rgya rang bzhin/ bsham mi dgos gtsang po chu yi yon chab rang bzhin/ dgra mi
    thub lha klu gnyen [gnyan] gsum sku srung rang bzhin/
    Rong btsan kha ba dkar po khyad par gnas mchog la/ gzugs can mi yis gangs rje'i dbu la 'dzegs
    pa na/ rang grub rdul brtsegs mchod rten rdzu 'phrul sna tshogs kyis/ mi rnam skad cig nyi du
    gangs sgam nang du sbas/* (Rin chen rdo rje 1999: 71).

7   rGyal ba kah thog pa'i lo rgyus mdor bsdus (1996), "Short history of Kah thog [monastery]"
    written by 'Jam dbyangs rgyal mtshan; also in the pilgrimage guide (*gnas yig*) composed by Si

There seem to be few Tibetan sources on this personage. The "Short history of Kaḥ thog [monastery]" tells us that he was born in Tsha ba sgang and trained at Kaḥ thog monastery.[8] There he met Mkhas grub Ye shes rgyal mtshan (1395-1458),[9] the last in the "Thirteen generations of the *gurus* of Kaḥ thog" (*Dpal rgyal ba kaḥ thog rdo rje ldan gyi bla rabs bcu gsum*) according to one way of counting. As for Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho, he belongs to the next series of abbots called the "Thirteen generations of Attendants" (*Drung rabs bcu gsum*).[10] He studied with disciples of Ye shes rgyal mtshan,[11] through whose teachings he became a master of the "Spoken Teachings," *Rnying ma bka' ma*. A great master of meditation, he was the first one to open the door of Kha ba dkar po. He also established numerous religious foundations in the area, among others a new retreat center in Kha ba dkar po where he brought the Jo bo Nam mkha' bkra shis which became its central icon; he also founded several religious establishments in Bu 'bor, Tsha ba sgang, and 'Jang yul.[12] He is the author of several works, among them commentaries and synopses of the major Mahāyoga Tantra.[13] After a life dedicated to religious activity he passed away at a ripe old age (date unknown).[14]

Another tradition, perhaps more "popular", attributes the opening of the pilgrimage either to the 2nd Karmapa Karma Pakshi (1204-1283),[15] or to the 3rd, Rang byung rdo rje (1284-1339).[16] The traces of the activities of the 2nd and 3rd Karmapa worshipped at several places along the pilgrimage path of the outer – but also of the inner – *skor ra* in the form of footprints, handprints and springs, took place almost a century before the opening by Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho. So, were there two openings,

tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho (1880-1925) Rab byung bco lnga pa'i khrag skyug ces pa chu phag (1923) lor/ mdo khams dang rgya yi gnas skor 'ga' la phyin pa'i lam yig 'khrul snang las sbyong gsal ba'i a dar sha. "A guide to several places of pilgrimage in Kham, Amdo and China, a clear mirror that purifies the karma of delusory appearances. [Written] in the water-pig year, the 57th year of the 15th rab byung (1923)." Lastly, on an inscription outside Rba lcog dgon pa, a monastery located on the inner circumambulation route.

8   An influential Rnying ma monastery of Kham built in 1159 by Kaḥ thog pa Dam pa bde gshegs (1122-1192).

9   Dudjom Rinpoche 1991: 696-697; Crystal mirror: 196-97; Ehrhard 2003: 9 and 12; 'Jam dbyangs rgyal mtshan 1996: 51-55.

10 About the period in the history of Kaḥ thog's abbatial administration, see Cuevas 2003: 142-147; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991: 688-699; Ehrhard 2003: 9-10; 'Jam dbyangs rgyal mtshan 1996.

11 Dpal 'bar ba Nam mkha' rgyal mtshan and Nam mkha' dpal.

12 'Jam dbyangs rgyal mtshan 1996: 73.

13 See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, I: 697, and Crystal Mirror 1995-11: 196.

14 'Jam dbyangs rgyal mtshan 1996: 73.

15 Karma Pakshi was ordained at Kaḥ thog monastery where he studied with Spom brag pa (1170?-1249), a disciple of 'Gro mgon ras chen (1148-1218), himself a disciple of the 1st Karma pa Dus gsum mkhyen pa (1110- 1193). See Kapstein 2000: 99, and Manson 2009: 31-32.

16 For a short summary on the life of the 2nd and 3rd Karmapa, based on data drawn from various Tibetan sources that are not cited, see Douglas-White 1979: 40 and 46, and Thinley 1980: 47-58. For an exposition of Karma Pakshi's life based on accurately identified Tibetan sources, see Manson 2009: 25-52.

as sometimes happens,[17] or do these two traditions imply a rivalry between Bka'
brgyud pa and Rnying ma pa for the authority over the site?

Written sources attribute the composition of a pilgrimage guide (*gnas yig* or *lam
yig*)[18] to both Karmapa.

In his Karma Pakshi rnam thar, "Biography of Karma Pakshi", Rang byung rdo
rje (2006: folio 4a) writes: "This Kha ba dkar po, the *btsan* of the Rong [country], is
the palace of both, mundane and transcendental deities. There is even a pilgrimage
guide (*lam yig*) of [Mount] Kha ba dkar po, the *btsan* of the Rong [country];"[19] but
he does not specify who wrote it.

The 2nd Zhwa dmar pa, Mkha' spyod dbang po (1350-1405), in his Lha'i rnga
chen ("The great divine drum", 1978, vol. 2, f. 11b.3) repeats Rang byung rdo rje's
first sentence without referring to any text written by the 2nd Karmapa.

The Lho rong chos 'byung by Rta tshag Tshe dbang rgyal. (1446-1451) mentions
the 2nd and 3rd Karmapas' presence at Kha ba dkar po but not any text written at that
time (1994: 235, 258).

In the Karma kam tsang gi brgyud pa rin po che'i rnam thar, "Biographies of the
precious lineage of the Karma pa school" ('Be lo Tshe dbang kun kyab 1998: 107),
Situ Panchen Chos kyi byung gnas (1700-1774) claims that, while he was at Kha ba
dkar po, Karma Pakshi wrote (*mdzad*) a *lam yig* and Rang byung rdo rje wrote a *gnas
yig* (Situ Panchen Chos kyi byung gnas 1998: 567-607).

The biography of Karma Pakshi by Sman sdong Mtshams pa Karma nges don
bstan rgyas (b. 1770) only mentions the presence of Karma Pakshi at Kha ba dkar po
for a few months and the fact that he wrote a *lam yig* (f. 33a; Epstein 1968: 30).[20]

Lastly, in Dpal karma pa kyi phreng rim byon gyi mdzad rnam, "Successive
biographies of the glorious Karma pa" (1997: 68, 84), Ldan ma 'Jam dbyangs tshul
khrims repeats exactly what Situ Panchen claimed in the volume quoted above.

As far as I know, none of these guides have come to light. Moreover, one knows
that it is necessary to be cautious concerning the attribution of texts to the 2nd or 3rd
Karma pa. Indeed, Karma Pakshi often refers to himself as Rang byung rdo rje (his
secret name) in his autobiography, *rang rnam thar* (1978, more than 50 instances).
As for the *lam yig* he is said to have composed, he does not give any information
about it although he mentions his presence in the area of the Kha ba dkar po (folio
97). Kapstein's work (2000: 97-106) has already shown that a text attributed to Rang

17 Thus Tsa ri was opened first by Padmasaṃbhava, then by Skye bo Ye shes rdo rje (Huber 1999:
    63-66). Also, according to Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin nor bu, Mkhan pa lung (Nepal) was opened
    first by Rig 'dzin rgod ldem (14th century) and then by Rig 'dzin Nyi zla klong gsal in the 17th
    century (Diemberger 1992: 3-15).

18 For the differences between a *gnas yig* and a *lam yig*, see Vostrikof 1970: 217-232; Wylie 1965:
    17; Buffetrille 2000: 3-7; Bründer 2008: 13-14.

19 *Rong btsan Kha ba dkar po gangs ri de/ ye shes pa dans 'jig rten pa rnams yi zhal yas khang
    dang pho brang yin bar 'dus/ Rong btsan Kha ba dkar po'i lam yig gcig kyang yod/*

20 I am grateful to Larry Epstein for kindly sending me a copy of his Master's Thesis.

byung rdo rje (the 3rd Karma pa) was in fact composed by Karma Pakshi.[21] He underlines that this is a contemporary misattribution, not a traditional one (*ib.*: 100).

As for Rang byung rdo rje, I know of one Kha ba dkar po bstod pa, "Praise to Kha ba dkar po", vol *ca* of his *gsung 'bum*. Also, one *bsang yig* untitled *gnas mchog kha ba dkar po'i bsang yig dngos grub char 'bebs*, "A manual of fumigation rites for the excellent holy place Kha ba dkar po, a rain of *siddhi*" and a Glegs bam *gnas yig*, "Pilgrimage guide of Glegs bam", have been published recently (Rin chen rdo rje dang Tshe ring chos 'phel 1999: 1-6, 2006: 108-114).[22]

Therefore, it seems impossible at the present time to confirm that Karma Pakshi's *lam yig* and Rang byung rdo rje's *gnas yig* ever existed.[23]

Kha ba dkar po's pilgrims

2003 was a water-sheep year, supposed to be the most auspicious one for the Kha ba dkar po pilgrimage, since it is said to be the mountain god's birth year and the sixtieth year in the Tibetan sexagenary calendrical system. This pilgrimage was being revived for the first time since the Chinese occupation of Tibet, so the question of the number of pilgrims who would show up was an interesting one. It is always very difficult to determine how many people are doing a pilgrimage in a given year, but the problem was solved in this case thanks to a Hong Kong NGO,[24] which set up a teahouse and a clinic next to a bridge over the Mekong, a compulsory passage for all pilgrims. From June to December 2003, teams of Chinese and Tibetans counted pilgrims every day from 6AM to 8PM and arrived at a total of 67 152.[25] Among these, 2193 were monks and nuns.

Buddhists and Bonpos alike circumambulate the mountain, each in the direction conforming to their respective traditions. Most of the pilgrims were Khampa, which confirms Kha ba dkar po's status as a local deity.[26] Many among them did this long and difficult pilgrimage in seven days only, which requires walking between 15 and 18 hours a day.

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21 "Rang byung rdo rje is the name of all Karma pas", according to the late Ven. Gnas nang Dpa' bo Rinpoche (quoted by Kapstein 2000: 243, n. 54). See also Berounsky 2010, 3/2: 25.

22 Glegs bam is a hamlet of about thirty households on the inner *skor ra* of about thirty households composed of a lower and an upper part. A footnote (ib. 108) says that the original text disappeared during the Cultural Revolution. But an elder of Glegs bam, Blo bzang bstan 'dzin, remembered the guide having read it and recited it to Rin chen rdo rje who transcribed it.

23 This paragraph on Karma Pakshi's lam yig and Rang byung rdo rje's *gnas yig* is the result of discussions and exchange of material with Charles Manson (Oxford).

24 I am very grateful to Wong How Man and the staff of the NGO China Exploration and Research Society, for the help they gave me and for sharing their information about the pilgrims' number.

25 June: 1901; July: 2712; August: 3295; September: 7878; October: 27 757; November: 17 229, December: 6380. October 2004: 3,854.

26 On this, see Buffetrille 1996: II, 193-212 and 1998: 18-35.

However, whereas at Tsa ri,[27] another difficult pilgrimage on the border between India and Tibet or at A myes rma chen (Amdo), one circumambulation (*skor ra*) is sufficient to be purified from sins (*sdig pa*) and defilements (*sgrib*), at Kha ba dkar po many ritual circuits are required. A large number of pilgrims hope to do as many as thirteen *skor ra* in one lifetime, a number that appears with great frequency in Tibetan non-Buddhist cosmology, history and religion.[28] But whatever the final number, it must always be an odd number because, say the pilgrims, even numbers represent processes that have come to an end and no longer bear fruit. In contrast, odd numbers being "incomplete" are full of potential and continue to produce positive effects. Thus 3, 9, and – above all – 13 are lucky numbers in Tibetan tradition.

All along the way, pilgrims perform various actions associate with death and after-life. This raises the issue of the relation between pilgrimage and the after-life as well as that of the concepts Tibetans have about their landscape.

Tibetan concepts relating to pilgrimage and death

Zhabs dkar, a great Tibetan *yogin* of the 19th century (1781-1851), coming back from Tsa ri, expressed his thoughts in a song which draws a parallel between the difficulties of circumambulating the mountain and the numerous traps that the deceased encounter in *bar do*.

> When I made the pilgrimage of the Tsa ri ravines,
> When traversing with difficulty the treacherous paths,
> The rivers and bridges of the land of Lho,
> It occurred to me that it must indeed be like this
> When travelling the perilous paths of the *bar do* (Ricard 1994: 254).

This description can be applied to Kha ba dkar po pilgrimage as is shown by the following narratives.

In Bodnath, in November 1994, I met Mkha' 'gro, the "secret wife" (*gsang yum*) of Mkhyen brtse Rinpoche. She was born in Kham and had done the Kha ba dkar po pilgrimage in 1931 (an iron-sheep year) in seven days, when she was thirteen years old. She had vivid but frightening memories of her pilgrimage and spoke about in a way similar to Zhabs dkar:

"It is a very dangerous pilgrimage. There are only ravines, no vegetation. We had to cross many high barren passes full of brigands, and cross rivers hanging onto a rope. Everywhere, you saw very steep cliffs. The paths were very narrow and it was always raining. When sleeping at night, one had to tie oneself to a tree in order to avoid falling into a precipice. The forests were deep and full of wild animals."

Even if all pilgrimages around sacred mountains do not present the same difficulties as those of Tsa ri and Kha ba dkar po, mountains frequently offer a rough

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27 Tsa ri is a famous pilgrimage place in south-east Tibet. See Huber 1999.
28 Ekvall 1959: 188-192.

landscape: vertiginous paths are always numerous, snowstorms are frequent and the roaring of thunderstorms is regularly heard.

But what is the reason for Zhabs dkar to make such an explicit relation between the pilgrimage to Tsa ri and the *bar do*, the intermediate state between death and rebirth?

As is well known, when a person is approaching death, it is customary for relatives to call a lama to recite the texts of the Bar do thos grol, "Liberation upon hearing [the instructions] during the intermediate state between death and rebirth".[29] These texts belong to the *Kar gling zhi khro* cycle, the "Cycle" of peaceful and wrathful deities of Karma gling pa", a famous treasure-revealer (*gter ston*) of the second half of the 14th century.

According to Tibetan Buddhism, after the death, the consciousness (*rnam shes*) wanders in the intermediate state during 49 days before entering into the next life. The aim in reciting these texts is to guide the consciousness through a process of purification in the *bar do* until its integration into a new existence. Indeed, while Tantric adepts and scholar monks aim at escaping from the cycle of the existences (*saṃsāra*), ordinary people know that such a goal is beyond them. Rebirth is then a difficult voyage into the unknown, a process over which they have no control, entirely determined by the individual's *karma*. Everyone knows that to cross the *bar do* will be a fearsome passage during which, unable to recognize the manifestations of actual reality (*chos nyid*), he will be confronted by terrifying visions and overcome by fear, feelings that can be also experienced during a pilgrimage around sacred mountains as expressed by Mkha' 'gro.

Indeed, one striking feature in the pilgrim's description of his experience is its similarity with the terms encountered in the texts of the Bar do describing the dangers of the intermediate state. And likewise, the pleas addressed to the Buddhas by the dead could be those of a traveller confronted by a formidable nature:

"May I be rescued from the fearsome passageways of the intermediate state? (Gyurme Dorje, translator 2005: 238); You will imagine that you are being pursued by terrifying wild animals. You will imagine that you are being pursued by hordes of people, and [that you are struggling] through snow, through rain, through blizzards and through darkness. There will be the sound of mountains crumbling, of lakes flooding, of fire spreading and the roar of fierce winds springing up. Terrified, you will try to flee wherever you can, but your path ahead will [suddenly] be cut off by three precipices... (ib. 277-278); the experience will arise of being pursued by whirlwinds, blizzards, hail, or fog; and a crowd of people and you will be trying to escape (ib. 286)"

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29 There are several translations of these texts. See Cuevas 2003: 3-14, for a review of them and Cuevas 2003 for the study of the formation and transmission in Tibet of the Bardo thos grol.

A parallel can thus be made between the vocabulary employed for the journey of the consciousness through the *bar do* and that of pilgrims through the rough topography of the mountains. The "journey" of the consciousness is not without reminders of the journey undertaken by the deceased in non-Buddhist Tibetan beliefs. According to Dunhuang texts, the deceased had to reach the "country of the dead" (*gshin yul*), the "country of joy and happiness" (*dga' skyid yul*), a transitory place where men wait for "resurrection". But the way to that country was full of pitfalls: perilous paths, passes, mountains and rivers (Stein 1971: 496ff.; Macdonald 1971: 365). To succeed, the deceased was not alone: an animal, in general a horse, sheep or yak was sacrificed in order to guide him, in the same way as the lama acts as the guide of the consciousness by reading aloud the Bar do thos grol. This suggests that the belief that the deceased is guided through all the pitfalls of the after-world has endured for many centuries.

My observation of the pilgrims going around Kha ba dkar po mountain suggest that they make use of features in the landscape to enact the drama of the perilous way through the *bar do*, as if the performance of facing in real life the dangers described in the book will mitigate them

Two kinds of ritual actions are performed: those done for oneself and those done for others.

Actions for oneself

As is well known, in Buddhism the karmic theory of moral retribution is central in defining the nature of the after-life. Consequently, one's fate after death is decided by one's moral conduct in previous lives. Purification of sins became an important rite as much for the living as for the dead. The Bar do thos grol emphasizes the importance of ritual actions and prayers for the purification of sin, and the pilgrim put this belief into practice in a concrete way during pilgrimages around sacred mountains.

The difficult paths the Bar do thos grol speaks of are given a peculiar form in the context of pilgrimage. As on most pilgrimages routes, and even more so around Kha ba dkar po, pilgrims crawl through narrow passages between or under rocks. Called "Narrow path of the intermediate state between death and rebirth" (*bar do 'phrang lam*) or "Pathway to hell" (*dmyal lam*), their very names highlight their relation to the after-life. Going through these narrow spaces is said not only to purify the pilgrim of his sins but also to help him in overcoming his fear of *bar do* and assure him an easy journey through the intermediate state between death and rebirth. Those burdened by sins and defilements are supposed not to be able to pass through them, so the exercise determines if one can be purified. The notion of ordeal is present and with it that of supernatural sanction. The fear the pilgrims feel when confronted by such trials is real and as high as the stakes. This appears in the (temporary) relation the pilgrims establish between themselves at that time and the help they give to each other to succeed in this difficult crossing. Contrary to what had been stated by Turner (1974; 1978: 250-255), Tibetan pilgrims do not leave the structure of society behind to

create a new type of relation, which leads to the emergence of what he calls *communitas*. Pilgrimage is a collective activity in the Tibetan world: in general, a group of persons from the same family, from the same village, the same encampment, or the same monastery gather to do the pilgrimage together. Pilgrimage groups as a rule do not mix with one another. According to my observations, if there is an exchange from time to time, it is usually at the individual level, often in the form of a question to a local monk or inhabitant; also at the time of going through these difficult pathways, a mutual assistance, a communion, exists between pilgrims. So, the quality of *communitas* that Turner observes in all the pilgrimages he studied is not present in the Tibetan world.

During this trial, the idea of (re)birth is also present – reflecting the belief that one will be reborn after the seven weeks spent in the *bar do* – as expressed by a Bhutanese pilgrim in the following words "Going out from it is like going out from the mother's womb".[30]

Another common feature along the Kha ba dkar po circumambulation path are the stones – said to be loaded with the pilgrims' sins – that are seen hanging from trees. In fact, the deceased is perceived as a receptacle of virtues and sins accumulated during his or her previous lives that can be counted and weighed. And the judgement that Gshin rje, the Lord of the Dead, (Skt. Yama), pronounces and that seals the fate of the deceased is metaphorically described as the weighing of small stones. Every pilgrim, even illiterate, knows through the stories that circulate and through the hearing of the Bar do thos grol that the Lord of the Dead will weigh his sins by means of white and black pebbles. He knows also that the Lord will be helped by the two spirits who were born at the same time as the deceased and who stayed with him all through his life: the divine spirit, *lhan cig skyes pa'i lha*, will count the virtuous actions with white pebbles and the demonic spirit, *lhan cig skyes pa'i 'dre*, will count the sinful actions with black pebbles. Once this is done, the god will look in the "mirror of karma" (*las kyi me long*) in which all the deceased's deeds, both good and bad, will be viewed. No cheating is possible and thus there is no way to escape the Lord's judgment. And as might be expected, the presence of Gshin rje is asserted along the Kha ba dkar po pilgrimage under various forms such as a rock said to be the god's "spontaneously appeared reliquary" (*sku gdung rang byon*)[31] and also "in all kinds of prints of [the Lord's] body and feet".[32]

The fear of this frightening meeting is expressed in an even clearer way along the ritual path of Mount A myes rma chen in Amdo. All pilgrims stop at a place called "The scales and the mirror of Gshin rje [Lord of the Dead]", Gshin rje rgya ma dang me long. There, men and women pass through a narrow path (*dmyal lam*). Then the men (I saw only men doing that) hang from a protrusion of the cliff to weigh their

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30 Stein 1988: 14. My translation.
31 Rin chen rdo rje 1999: 34.
32 Rin chen rdo rje 1999: 36.

sins, head hanging down in order to see the "Mirror" (*me long*), a rocky mountain on the other side of the valley.

Fastening stones to a tree or hanging one's head off a rock are two ways of purifying one's sins in order to ease the meeting with the Lord of the Dead. This appeared clearly to me during two pilgrimages around Mount Kailash (Gangs Rinpoche). In 1990, on the second day, I arrived close to a rock of about two meters high and seventy centimeters wide that the pilgrims said was related to Gshin rje. There the male pilgrims only[33] held it tightly between their legs and arms, tipping their heads back. Several years later, in 1996, small stones, sometimes tied together, could be seen hanging from this same rock, as observed in the trees at Kha ba dkar po, as well as at Rkong po Bon ri, where Charles Ramble saw a tree bearing the name "The place for fixing sin stones", (*sdig rdo rtag (btags) sa*).[34]

This encounter between Gshin rje and the deceased is described in the Bar do thos grol, a text dating from the 14th century.[35] It is present also in an old Dunhuang document studied by Lalou, the PT 239, the Buddhist component of which cannot be denied. But there, the god is Indra and not Gshin rje; and the very brief judgment does not lead to punishment.[36]

Above all, the texts in which this episode is described at length are the *'das log* narratives, a cycle of "popular" texts that became an established literary genre in the 16th century.[37] These stories became widespread thanks to their recitation by *manipa*, wandering storytellers.

As is well known, the *'das log*[38] (lit. "One who has returned from the netherworld") are ordinary human beings (sometimes a male, but often a female),[39] who "die" following a sickness and then travel in the *bar do* and the netherworld led by a guide (in general their tutelary deity, *yi dam*) in the same way as the deceased of the Dunhuang documents is guided by an animal, or the consciousness of the deceased

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33 To this day, I don't know if only men can perform this rite or if I did not have the opportunity to see women also doing it.

34 See Ramble 1997: 184.

35 Cf. Cuevas 2003. The god, under his Sanskrit name Yama, appears as early as in the Ṛg Veda in which "he is the first being to die, thus to discover the path to the empire of the dead where he reigns as king..." (Gonda 1979: 221, my translation). Later, in the beliefs of the last centuries B.C.E., we find Yama judging the dead and punishing the sinners (ib. 273).

36 Lalou 1949: 42-48, particularly p. 46. See also Stein 1970: 155-185 for a study of the second part of this manuscript (London, Stein 504) "qui s'efforce d'adapter le rituel funéraire bon-po au bouddhisme, de l'épurer en mettant le fidèle en garde contre certains élements ou en les interprétant symboliquement dans un sens bouddhique," ib. 157.

37 Pommaret 1989: 86.

38 On the *'das log*, see Stein 1959: 324; Epstein 1982: 20-85; Pommaret 1989, 1997: 499-510; Cuevas 2007: 297-326; 2008.

39 A *'das log* is often said to be an ordinary person but, according to Chagdud Tulku speaking about the *'das log* in general and in particular about his mother Dawa Drolma [1995] 2001: XIX, "the experience itself being a sign of great meditative realization, ...they could not have been truly ordinary [person]."

follows the instructions read aloud by the lama. This similarity is not surprising in view of the fact that many indigenous elements are preserved in the Bar do thos grol and considering the great influence these texts exerted on the *'das log* stories (Pommaret 1989; Cuevas 2003, 2008).

Once in the hells, the *'das log* encounter dead people who are often known to them and who tell them about their sins and ask them to request their relatives to perform virtuous acts for their benefit. The *'das log* also face Gshin rje rgyal po, the Lord of the dead, who gives them messages for the living beings admonishing them to follow a virtuous path. Back on earth, they relate their after-life experience, which become popular teaching devices. Indeed, "the *'das log* illustrate and bear witness to the Buddhist moral world in a form directly accessible to ordinary villagers" (Williams 2007: 114).

Let us turn back now to the pilgrim doing his circumambulation around Kha ba dkar po. We can say that the journey the consciousness undertakes after death is transposed on to the landscape. The pilgrim is not content to pray for an easy journey through *bar do*. He enacts concretely what his immaterial consciousness will have to do in the after-life. Through these "training" rites, he expects to soothe the future sufferings of his consciousness. He performs in a concrete manner and by way of anticipation what his consciousness will have to undergo later. Underlying these rites is the assumption that "if my body succeeds in doing that, my consciousness will succeed also", in other words, through what could be seen as a synecdochical operation, the consciousness or the immaterial body is made identical to the physical body. By overcoming these concrete, material trials, the pilgrim wards off the fear he has of the immaterial test his consciousness will have to go through. To succeed will assure him an easier after-life. What he is experiencing is a concrete rehearsal of the immaterial travel of the consciousness, in the hope that this will ease his crossing of the *bar do*.

But the pilgrim is not only acting for his own benefit. He accomplishes many rites directed to the benefit of others.

Actions for others

According to my observations of pilgrims, the idea that the helpless dead can benefit from virtuous actions performed by their living relatives is widespread.

Mountain passes are understood in the Tibetan world to be auspicious sites infused with sacred power. This is confirmed at Kha ba dkar po by the various rites performed at passes:

The most famous pass of the pilgrimage is the "Stairway of stones" (Rdo skas la). It is not the highest (4487m) but it is the most fearsome pass, as expressed by pilgrims through the prayers they utter the night before crossing it. Even Bacot – who did the pilgrimage in 1907 in the anticlockwise direction to escape a confrontation with the

Chinese authorities – gives a frightening description of it: "An abrupt and vertiginous wall, 300 or 400 meters high and dangerous in all weather. In summer, stones roll down. In spring and autumn, when there is still – or already – snow, pilgrims of a rare merit arrive in groups, tied together with a rope, like climbers. But if one of them happens to lose his footing, the others willingly let themselves be dragged into the abyss, happy to secure a reincarnation of the first order by such a meritorious death" (my translation).

At the top of the pass, flags are put up on both sides of the path: on the right, pilgrims offer "wind horse" (*lung rta*) in order to increase their "good fortune" in this life,[40] and on the left side they put up, tied generally to a bamboo or sometimes to a stick, white flags inscribed with the six-syllables formula and the name of the deceased person. These white flags are called *mani mtho rtse*, "[flags with the] *mani* [*mantra* put] in high [places]". Rdo skas la is the pass where it is recommended to offer them. The position of these two kinds of flags marks the sharp distinction between the living and the dead.

At other passes such as Mtho la (3280m) or Lho 'od gsal la (2990m), clothes are hung up on trees as offerings for dead relatives, friends and all beings who might need them in the *bar do* or the hells (*dmyal lam*), so the pilgrims say. For pilgrims the border between *bar do* and the hells is a blurred one; a confusion which is shown also by the names given to the narrow passages between rocks: "Narrow path of the *bar do*" (*bar do 'phrang lam*) or "Passages to hell" (*dmyal lam*). The conflation of these two concepts can be explained by the fact that both are "places where the dead suffer the effects of previous actions while en route to their next place of birth. The two terms essentially came to refer to the same scenario" (Cuevas 2007: 303).

The Lho 'od gsal pass is also noted for its *mani mtho rtse*, but its most remarkable feature is the presence of huge heaps of roasted barley flour (*rtsam pa*), on which are laid hundreds of bowls: they were full of *rtsam pa*, butter and fruits in 2003 but were almost empty in 2004 when there were fewer pilgrims. All pilgrims add their share of flour and bowls in order for the dead to receive the vessels and food they need in *bar do* or the hells. This amazing number of bowls had struck Bacot (1909: 19) and Kingdon Ward ([1913] 1971: 101). The latter makes clear that the bowls were empty, but he did the pilgrimage in June 1911, an iron pig year (an ordinary year), and at a less favourable period of the year.

For pilgrims, these offerings are made to the dead who need them whatever realm they are in. In fact, one of the realms in which dead are in a particular need of food and clothes is that of the *yi dvags* (Pali: *peta*; Skt.: *preta*). The notion of *preta* was present already in Brahmanism and early Buddhism.[41] The Petavatthu, (lit. "Stories of the Departed"), an anthology of short stories purportedly *buddhavacana*, "'Sayings' ascribed to the Buddha," (Hold 1981: 10), attests the belief that the dead can benefit

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40 Concerning the "Wind horse and the well being of man", cf. Karmay 1998: 413-423.
41 See Hold 1981: 1-28.

from the living in the after-life. But this is accomplished through the transfert of merits and not by offering food and clothes to the deceased. The *peta* requests the living to offer a gift to the *sangha* and to transfer the merit derived from that virtuous action to him (Holt 1981).

The realm of the *pretas* is also mentioned in some Dunhuang documents, like the PT 239.[42]

One wonders if the *pretas* were introduced in some non-Buddhist beliefs in order to give them a Buddhist connotation? In fact, the idea that the dead must be fed by the living belongs to beliefs expressed in several funeral texts from Dunhuang (Stein 1970, 1971: 499; Macdonald 1971: 365-366) where it is said that the deceased awaits his rebirth in the "Country of joy and happiness" at the beginning of the next cosmic cycle. According to Macdonald (1971: 366), in order to make his life comfortable, rituals in which relatives offered food and clothes were performed periodically. Some Dunhuang texts show that Buddhists at the time (8th-10th century) regarded these practices as Bon po (Stein 1970: 167).

A passage from a 14th century's text, the Rgyal po bka' thang (Gu ru O rgyan gling pa n.d.: 187-189)[43] gives interesting details on Srong btsan sgam po's funerals. Let's remember that some parts of the Bka' thang sde lnga, which includes the Rgyal po bka' thang "belong to an epoch earlier than the times when, according to tradition, the work was discovered or, according to us, finally compiled" (TPS [1949] 1980: 112).

This part of the text suggests that the Interior Ministers (*nang blon*) were to guard the king's tomb while living in its precinct. They took the form of the dead (*gshin po'i tshul bzung*) and were cast out from the human community. If people or livestock were wandering outside the tomb, they were seized by the keepers of the tomb, became their servants, and could not return to the company of the living.

There was a special day for worshipping Srong btsan sgam po's tomb: it was the day on which the king departed for heaven. On that occasion, the royal lineage, the servants and the retinue made lavish offerings of food, wealth, clothes, horses, cattle, livestock and items of worship to the dead, requesting the keepers of the tombs to go away. Once the offerings were done, they departed. The keepers of the tomb would then return and enjoy the offerings and the leftovers. They made use of the clothes, and planted the crops necessary for their subsistence. They had no fear, no military duties or other works, were not poor and were happy.

This text not only shows the great abundance of offerings of food and drinks made to the dead king on a special date but also that a special territory limited by boundaries

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42 Lalou 1949: 44, "Ô trépassé, écoute! À 500 *yojana* sous ce Jambudvipa, est le monde des *preta* où souffrent ces êtres affamés, grelottant de froid, qui pendant plusieurs centaines de milliers d'années sont sans portion de nourriture, n'ont même pas une goutte de salive à lancer, sont sans vêtements alors qu'il tombe du ciel une cruelle grêle de fer..."

43 This text was the object of study in the context of a seminar held by Charles Ramble, École pratique des Hautes Études, 4E Section, January 2011. See Snellgrove-Richardson 1968: 52-53, and Haarh 1969: 350-352, for the translation of this passage.

was created with people attached to it and governed by special laws allowing them a pleasant life.

During the pilgrimage, pilgrims not only feed and dress their dead, they also put up *mani* flags at passes while reciting the six-syllables formula, *oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ*, in order to help them to attain liberation. It is well known that one of the most common interpretations of the late tradition attributes to each of the six syllables the power to deliver from each of the six paths of transmigration (*saṃsāra*).

At a sacred site, close to Lha khang rwa temple, there is a big rock marked with holes the size of a tennis-ball and filled with white powder. Called "Drum of hell" (*dmyal rnga*), all pilgrims stop at this place. They pound each successive cavity with a stone while reciting the six syllables formula in the hope that their relatives and all the beings in the lower realms will be liberated on hearing the Avalokiteśvara *mantra*.

The power of this *mantra* is mentioned already in PT 239. In direct speech – a feature it shares with the Bar do thos grol –[44] the deceased is warned about the three evil destinies into which he can fall, and told of the three saviour bodhisattvas, with Avalokiteśvara on the same level as the other two, whose *mantra* he can recite for salvation. But the Avalokiteśvara *mantra* is not the six-syllable formula, which, according to Lalou, confirms Pelliot's view: "he asserted that the famous formula was not attested before the year 1000" (Lalou 1949: 42). Nevertheless, recent research by Imaeda shows that the formula would have been known in Tibet at least at the beginning of the 9th century, the presumed time of the Tibetan translation of the Kāraṇḍavyūha sūtra (Za ma tog bkod pa) in which the formula is set forth (Imaeda 1979: 72). Moreover, a similar formula appears in a undated Dunhuang document, the Dug gsum 'dul ba, "Taming the three poisons", that warns the adepts of the pre-Buddhist religion not to do harmful acts, like animal sacrifices, but instead to "lead the [dead] relative by means of the White religion (Buddhism) and bring him to the country of gods, the country of peace and happiness (*lha yul bde skyid yul*). The false guides (*log pa*) that make [the dead] fall into the evil paths are the three poisons, namely: attachment (*'dod chags, rāga*), hatred (*zhe sdang, dveṣa*) [and ignorance (*gti mug, moha*]" (Imaeda 1979: 74, my translation). The author provides three formulas to purify the three poisons, the ignorance being purified by *Oṃ ma ṇi pad me hūṃ myi tra sva hā*.[45]

One of the most important features of the *'das log* stories is the importance of the cult of Avalokiteśvara and the benefits the recitation of the six-syllable formula can bring to oneself and others.[46] The rites the pilgrims perform (the "drum of hell", the display of *mani* flags, etc;) show that they are well aware of the power of the mantra.

The *ma ṇi* flags also play a significant role in these narratives where they are called *jo dar*,[47] "Prayer flag of the Lord [Mahākāruṇika]". Their origin is attributed

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44 Imaeda 2008: 202; 2010: 155.

45 In his later life, Karma Pakshi incited people to sing the *ma ṇi mantra* (Manson 2009: 42).

46 Pommaret 1989: 103-105.

47 See Tucci 1966: IX; fig. 11 for a drawing of the *jo dar*.

to Byang chub seng ge, a 18th century *'das log*.[48] These flags, which are put in the cemeteries to benefit the dead,[49] are said to be a mean of cleansing the deceased of his sins and helping him to be delivered from *bar do* or the hells[50], which is precisely the reasons the pilgrims gave me at Kha ba dkar po, while setting them up at a pass, which gives an indication of how widespread these stories are.

There is another act pilgrims perform either for themselves or for their dead.

It has been seen how important it is for pilgrims to make several circumambulations around Kha ba dkar po. However, for those who have not enough time, who are sick, and also for those who are already dead, there is the possibility to have a substitute (*tshab* or *kodug* in local dialect) who will transfer the merits of the circumambulation to the "buyer".[51] Several mentions of substitutes are found in the Western literature: Sven Hedin ([1951] 1991, II: 202) met a monk carrying a sick child in a basket on his back on the *skor ra* of Mount Kailash in 1909. The parents had given him enough barley flour for two days in order for him to carry the child hoping that he would recover his health. While being aware through pilgrim narratives[52] of the existence of substitutes in pilgrimage, I was never confronted with this phenomenon during the many pilgrimages around Rtsib ri, Kailash or A myes rma chen I did. Nevertheless, this tradition is still alive, as S.G. Karmay told me in 1992. While doing the Rkong po Bon ri pilgrimage in 1987, he met two young women who offered him to do two circumambulations in his name on payment in cash. He gave each of them twenty *yuan* (about seven Euros at that time).[53]

As for my experience at Kha ba dkar po, a couple from Lhasa came one day to the tea-house. The man wanted the benefits of three circumambulations while doing only one and his wife wanted the merits of five. They offered 550 *yuan* (60 Euros) for each circumambulation plus the shoes and the food and easily found villagers as substitutes. Another substitute was doing two circumambulations for an old couple of his village and was paid 300 *yuan* (32 Euros) for each.

I did not meet substitutes doing circumambulations for a dead person but I was told that this could occur. This custom exists in Dolpo (Nepal) as well, where those who do substitute for a living have a low social status, close to that of a beggar.[54]

Unlike the Tsa ri pilgrimage where "the clients gained a share of the merits" (Huber 1999: 214), the substitutes I met at Kha ba dkar po assert that the full merits

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48 See Pommaret 1989: 105; Cuevas 2008: 106-122.
49 Tucci 1966: 185-186.
50 Pommaret 1989: 38, 42, 44, 48, 50, 53, 55, 60.
51 See Wezler 1997 for a discussion on the gaining of merit through the agency of others in a Hindu context.
52 On Tibetan substitution pilgrimage in Lhasa, see Waddell [1895] 1972: 319; in Dolpo, Nepal, Jest 1985: 13; at Tsa ri, Huber 1999: 214. According to Bacot 1909: 9, a sheep can act as a substitute. It has its ears decorated with roses and being sacred, it cannot be killed anymore.
53 Communication S.G. Karmay (August 1992).
54 Information Geshe Nyima Woser (February 2011).

are transferred to the donor. Moreover, on his return the substitute has to bring back one bamboo for each circumambulation to the household of the "buyer."

In fact, these bamboos are one of the main elements of Kha ba dkar po pilgrimage. They are cut in a glade named "Honey rain", Sbrang char. According to Bdud 'dul rdo rje,[55] the bamboos are the "soul trees of the *ḍākinī*" (*mkha' 'gro ma bla shing*)[56] and as such, are a powerful item of the pilgrimage. The tradition is very vivid and all pilgrims know where to cut them. Each cane, which is simply called *gato* (stick in the local dialect), must have an odd number of knots, in general five, seven or nine, for the reasons given above. Its function is not only to prevent the pilgrim from falling on this arduous way; it is also and above all the receptacle in which the pilgrim pours some holy water and some earth collected along the pilgrimage path, all substances loaded with the power of the sacred mountain. Each pilgrim brings back his bamboo cane to his home and often others for relatives and friends.

In Bde chen and Tsha ba rong, the bamboo staves are then placed around the main pillar of the common room, so that it often disappears beneath them. It also happens, as I observed in a house in Aben, a village along the ritual path, that they form a second ceiling held firm by beams. People attribute great powers to them: they are put in the fields when the corn is not growing well, and in case of heavy rains threatening landslides, these bamboos are put in the place where it is feared the disaster may happen. As at Tsa ri, they are cut in a special place, but I never heard at Kha ba dkar po about their use as "protective knots" or bangles for medical help (Huber 1999: 114-115).

The fear people feel is not only directed towards *bar do* and the hells but also towards the dead. As everywhere in the Tibetan world, the doorway of the houses is low, to prevent the *ro langs*,[57] "a zombie activated by an evil demon" (Wylie 1964: 72) from entering, since it cannot bend. In addition, black circles are drawn on all the doors to prevent the dead from coming back.

One more characteristic of Kha ba dkar po pilgrimage must be mentioned. While not directly related to after-life or death according to my informants, it nevertheless has its place in this article. As said above, lay people do not expect to reach enlightenment in this life. They know that they will not escape from the cycle of rebirth in this life and this is also expressed in the landscape: just before arriving at passes, but particularly before the two highest ones, Rdo skas la and Shog la (4815m), many small constructions made of three vertical stones and one horizontal one serving as roof may be seen along the way. They are called "houses" (*khang pa*), and cigarettes, alcohol, money or grains are put inside. A. David-Neel (1927: 30) who

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55 Bdud 'dul rdo rje (1615-1672) was a famous gter ston from Sde dge and the founder with Klong
    gsal snying po (1625-1692) of a new monastery at Kaḥ thog site 1656.

56 Buffetrille 2000: 192-193. See also Rin chen rdo rje and Tshe ring chos 'phel 1999: 35.

57 On ro langs, see Wylie 1964: 69-80; Pommaret 1989: 23-24; Childs 2004: 157-161; Cuevas
    2008: 93-104.

took this way in October 1923 while trying to find unfrequented paths to Lhasa characterized them as "altars" containing "various small offerings made to the spirits", and Bacot (1988: 192) described them as "niches where offerings are displayed". A pilgrim whom I asked about the meaning of these "houses" told me that "they were built by Tibetans who wanted to be reborn in this area where climate and landscape are pleasant, where all kinds of fruits and vegetables grow and where many animals live" – a description that reminds one of the "hidden valleys", *sbas yul*, said to have been sealed by Padmasaṃbhava in order to be discovered by a treasure-revealer (*gter ston*) at a time "determined" in prophecies. But a local scholar rejected this explanation in favour of another one, in fact quite similar but with a Buddhist connotation: the pilgrims build these houses in the hope of being reborn in this place that is the paradise of Bde mchog (Cakrasaṃvara). Nevertheless, several other pilgrims, more down-to-earth, explained to me that they were building the house they hoped to have in their next life. This explanation makes sense when one sees some of these houses with two, sometimes three stairs linked by a small ladder made of the branch of a tree in which notches have been cut, thus demonstrating that purely spiritual benefits are not always the primary goal of the pilgrims.[58]

The pilgrimage to Mount Kha ba dkar po: a metaphor for bar do?

Most of the rites pilgrims perform during the Kha ba dkar po pilgrimage are to be related to after-life and death. Tibetans conceived the hereafter as a region that they transposed on the real landscape. *Bar do* takes a form in the mind of Tibetans based on texts like the Bar do thos grol and the *'das log* stories which are precise, detailed and can be easily transferred on a familiar environment such as the landscape surrounding sacred mountains.

These Tibetan beliefs are related to concepts that existed in the pre-Buddhist religion. They have survived and, under the influence of Buddhist religious masters, have been adapted in texts that form the eschatological framework of Buddhism.

All Tibetans make the analogy between the pitfalls of pilgrimages around sacred mountains and those of the *bar do*, be they literate, illiterate, lay people, common or high monks or advanced practitioners. While I am aware that it is not possible to draw a clear line between elite and "popular" rites, differences do exist, it seems to me, in the behaviour of the pilgrims according to who they are: I never saw educated

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58 Only after this article was finished and sent to the editor, did my reading of Kunsel Palmu's M.Phil. Thesis on *Tibetan Mortuary Traditions in Contemporary Lhasa* give me a clue as to the significance of these small "houses", and reveal that it is a tradition linked to *bar do* and death. On p. 96, a picture (fig. 13) shows one of these small "houses" with a caption that reads: "small 'house' for the consciousness of the deceased built by bereaved families. This is understood as the stop for the consciousness of the deceased when it arrived to the charnel ground." At Kha ba dkar po, the tradition of building these "houses" has thus endured but the significance may have diverged from its original meaning. Further research on this subject is therefore required.

religious people such as scholar monks or *sprul sku* going through a "Pathway to hell" (*dmyal lam*), hanging up stones to a tree, or offering barley flour and clothes for the dead. These rites are usually followed by laypeople or monks whose knowledge of the doctrine is limited. For their part, scholar monks, lamas and Tantric adepts are used to meditating and expect to recognize the clear light of the true nature of mind and thus attain liberation.

Buddhist narratives regarding pilgrimages, mainly pilgrimage guides, written by learned monks, do not describe pilgrimage as an experience similar to that of the consciousness going through *bar do*. Moreover, the features of the landscape that may recall the after-life are rarely mentioned. I have shown elsewhere,[59] in describing the subjection of indigenous deities and the installation of the *maṇḍala* of a Buddhist deity (always Bde mchog, as far as I know) on the landscape, and in portraying elements of the landscape similar to Buddhist symbols or ritual objects, that these texts participate in the transformation of a mountain "territorial god" (*yul lha*) into a "Buddhist holy mountain" (*gnas ri*). These texts have an ideological vocation, which is to tie Buddhism and its pantheon to a Tibetan landscape already imbued with traditional beliefs and to replace the old representations that the ordinary pilgrim has by Buddhist ones.

We might say that in the same way as texts on *bar do* recreate the circumstances of the consciousness's journey, pilgrimages around Kha ba dkar po (and to sacred mountains in general) represent for pilgrims the physical experience of *bar do* through some features of the landscape that can be termed as visual metaphors for *bar do*.

The work of Lakoff and Johnson ([1980] 1985) helps to understand the central role of metaphors in Tibetan pilgrimages to sacred mountains. These authors for whom "the essence of metaphor is that it allows understanding one kind of thing (and experience of it) in terms of another" (1980: 15, my translation) have shown the importance of metaphors in our daily life, pointing out that without metaphors, we would be unable to speak about our experiences. They made clear that it is necessary to refer to concrete things in order to think about abstract ones. We may thus consider their work as a methodologically important contribution that brings the functioning of a fundamental cognitive process to light and that can be applied to our specific case.

Therefore, if we think these narrow passages between rocks are just small tunnels, we may regard them, for example, as a playground for children. But if Tibetans think of them as "Narrow path of the intermediate state between death and rebirth" (*bar do 'phrang lam*) or "Pathway to hell" (*dmyal lam*), the very names will structure their representations of them and will guide their behavior.

It is because Tibetans think of their consciousness in terms of their body that they can represent in a concrete way what the consciousness is supposed to perceive after death. And it is for the same reason that the Tibetan conception of the after-life is metaphorically structured by concrete features in the landscape of sacred mountains.

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59   Buffetrille 1996, vol. II, 226-250, and 1998: 21-24.

This conceptual system allows Tibetans to experience through pilgrimage the future perilous journey of their consciousness through the *bar do*, enabling them to tame the fears they have of this difficult, dangerous but inevitable passage through the intermediate state between death and rebirth.

Conclusion

A question has still to be raised. Why are there so many features related to *bar do* and the hells along the Kha ba dkar po pilgrimage? I am aware that this study has been conducted after a long period of time during which all religious practices were forbidden. But this is also the case throughout Tibet. Is the Kha ba dkar po landscape particularly favourable to such a transposition because of its physical aspect? Is it because of the presence of the Lam rtsa bridge? The *'das log* narratives always mention a bridge over a turbulent river that marks the transition between the world of living beings and that of *bar do* or the hells[60] (Pommaret 1989: 71-72, Cuevas 2008: 116). And at Kha ba dkar po, all pilgrims have to cross the turbulent Mekong over the Lam rtsa bridge. Somehow, it marks the transition between the ordinary world of living beings and the sacred world of the mountain where, as in *bar do*, the pilgrims cleanse their sins as those of their dead relatives' before experiencing a new rebirth.

Regarding the particular abundance of features related to after-life and death at Kha ba dkar po, I would like to suggest a hypothesis that naturally calls for further research.

We saw above how the landscape was used in the process of Buddhicization of a mountain territorial god and how the pilgrimage guides had a determinant influence on the pilgrims' perception of this landscape. Tibetan sacred dances (*'cham*) are also performed with the goal of teaching the spectators. Thus, a dance like the history of the hunter, established by Karma Gling pa (the treasure-revealer of the *Kar gling* cycle), has a didactic aim, which is to prepare one for the visions he will have to cope with at the time of death (Ricard 1999: 114-116). In the same way, Kha ba dkar po pilgrimage prepares the pilgrims for the frightening crossing of the *bar do*.

The Kha ba dkar po pilgrimage is said to have been opened by Kha ba dkar po Nam mkha' rgya mtsho, who studied at Kaḥ thog monastery in Kham Sde dge in the 15th century. This monastery, as Cuevas' work shows (Cuevas 2003: 129; 68), played a prominent role in the spreading of the *Kar gling* cycle[61] – to which the Bar do thos grol belongs – throughout Tibet. Besides, it is quite likely that the Kaḥ thog monks went to Kha ba dkar po on pilgrimage, this mountain being the most sacred one for the Khampa people.

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60 Pilgrimages present the ternary schema of the rites de passage established by Van Gennep [1909] 1981: rites of separation-marginal rites-rites of aggregation. See Buffetrille 1996, II, 393-395.

61 Kar gling zhi khro: Peaceful and wrathful deities of Karma gling pa. rGya ra ba was the first to systematize the Kar gling teachings and to institutionalize the liturgy based on them.

Would it appear unreasonable to imagine that, in the same way as the authors of texts use writing to convert a pre-Buddhist landscape in a Buddhist one, or the monks perform sacred dances to teach the laypeople, the scholars monks, and in the case of Kha ba dkar po, the Kaḥ thog monks might have participated in the inscription of the *bar do* in the landscape, to encourage pilgrims to regard physical features of the landscape as concrete projections of the after-life?

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PILGRIMAGE TOURISM NETWORKS: PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES IN NEPAL

HIM LAL GHIMIRE

Background

Pilgrimage tourism now has a higher scope in Nepal. Indeed, Nepal has become a popular destination for pilgrimage tourism with her large number of Hindu and Buddhist pilgrimage sites, shrines and temples. Pilgrimage sites (*tīrthas*) help one gain enlightenment (*nirvāṇa*) and achieve liberation (*mokṣa*). Pilgrims aspire to achieve salvation by visiting holy shrines for release from the temporal world. However, the tourism policy of Nepal and tourism organizations could not address this adequately. Nepal is a secular country[1] with two main religions: Hinduism and Buddhism. Both live in harmony with each other and share several common deities and celebrate many festivals jointly. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the potential of pilgrimage tourism and the challenges in developing pilgrimage tourism networks in Nepal. Furthermore, the paper will discuss the famous pilgrimage sites: Muktinath, Pashupatinath and Lumbinī and their associated networks.

Methodologically, this work is based on both primary and secondary sources such as books, journal articles and the internet; as well as field studies, site observations, interviews and interactions with tourists/pilgrims, interviews with key persons and sacred specialists, and interaction with more general stakeholders. As this paper is also a part of the author's PhD research, several techniques, methods, models, and software are used[2]. The author had made several visits to Lumbinī and Paśupatināth, one visit to Muktināth and visits to other important pilgrimage sites. The comments and suggestions result not only from the LIRI pilgrimage conference in Lumbinī, but are also outcomes of other national and international workshops and conferences.

Pilgrimage tourism: Old but new phenomena

The terms *tīrthayātra*, "pilgrimage", and tourism are both related to travel. The word "pilgrimage" is derived from the Latin word *peregrinus*, i.e. stranger, and it eventually means "visitor to a sacred place". In a simplified way one could say that tourism is a

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1 Formerly Nepal was a Hindu Kingdom and it was only with the interim constitution in 2006 that Nepal was declared a secular country.
2 Ghimire, 2013a

secular activity while pilgrimage is a sacred act. Tourists derive mental relaxation from novel sights whereas the devotees aim for spiritual enlightenment from pilgrimage[3]. The history of modern tourism is not as long as pilgrimage tourism – the oldest concept or original "art", or way, of travelling. Pilgrimage tourism is a significant type of tourism and the pilgrimage to the sacred and holy places like Lumbinī for Buddhists, Paśupatināth for Hindus, Jerusalem for Christians, Mecca and Medina for Muslims induced modern tourism in society[4]. Religious tourism is among the least explored tourist activities in the world of modern tourism[5]. The devotees make pilgrimage to holy places to fulfil their wishes and get the fruits of this virtuous action.

The Buddha advised his followers to go on pilgrimage, without which there is no release from grief. So let a man be a world-knower, a wise one, a world-ender[6]. Hindus believe that a person who travels is a pure mendicant. That is why tourism has been a part of life, whether it may be religious, cultural, or natural. The wisdom gained from travel is higher than wisdom gained from books. Hindus, after their fortieth year, have to travel for research, study, and widening of knowledge. *Dharmadeśana*, listening to or attending religious or spiritual discourses by a Guru (teacher) at pilgrimage sites, has been a part of life[7] for centuries, if not millennia.

Regarding the Hindu pilgrimages, *tīrthayātra* aims to secure coordination between pious life and wisdom, the highest *jñāna*. The pilgrimage rules mainly lay emphasis on fasting, sexual abstinence, the rejection of soft beds and the aid of any vehicle for making journeys (and often include the requirement to walk without shoes during the *tīrthayātra*[8]). A tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist[9]. Pilgrimage can have very positive effects on communities and is a well-known phenomenon in religion and culture; it exists in all the main religions of the world[10]. Pilgrimage is a complex term and the following definitions help to clarify it. It is not surprising that a human activity as complex and varied as a pilgrimage has no universally accepted definition. Barber[11] defines pilgrimage as a journey resulting from religious causes, externally to a holy site, and internally for spiritual purposes and understanding. The ideal pilgrimage is an expression of human aspiration for perfection. Myths and legends associated with sacred journeys define the ideal and offer symbols for its

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3   Gurung 1998: 21-35.
4   Ghimire, 2004a: 95, and Ghimire 2011: 44-52.
5   Vukonic 1998: 83-94.
6   Kunwar 1997: 161-165.
7   Personal interview with Yogi, 2008. In Hinduism, life has been divided in four phases such as *brahmacaryā, gṛhastha, vanaprastha* and *saṃnyāsa*.
8   Kunwar 1997: 161-165.
9   Turner & Turner 1978; Collins, Kreiner et.al. 2006.
10 Collins, Kreiner et.al. 2006.
11 Barber 1993: 1.

enactment[12]. The origin and evolution of the *tīrthayātra* tradition of Hindus seems to be as old as their civilization or perhaps older than that[13]. Hinduism is the oldest religion and the art of travelling has been a part of life. Hindus believe that the places of pilgrimage yield a special advantage for a devotee in quickly advancing his spiritual life. Krishna says in the Bhagavatgītā that he lives wherever his devotees are chanting the glories of his transcendental activities. Faithful Hindus visit holy places for perfection of spiritual realization[14].

The greatest pilgrimage sites are often a combination of a number of sacred elements like temple, pond, holy river, holy tree etc. The Paśupatināth temple in Nepal is a combination of the temples, the holy Bāgmatī River, and festivals (*jātra*). Lumbinī is a combination of temples, monasteries, a pond-river and holy trees. Likewise, Muktināth is also a combination of temples, holy trees, 108 waterspouts and ponds. One of the most important pilgrimage sites in India, Kāśī, offers the combination of a holy river Gaṅgā and the Kāśī Viśvanāth Temple. Water is generally attached to Hindu sacred sites, either in the form of lakes or springs, or as a river source, ford, or confluence[15]. Hindus believe that the human body should be purified and cleaned before performing any rituals. Bathing (*snāna*) at religious sites is always meritorious to the Hindus, and purification by bathing or drinking sacred water (*jala*) from the holy river or pond or spout is a principal part of each pilgrim's quest. *Snāna* purifies the body, whereas worship and meditation purify the mind during pilgrimage.

Hinduism is actually known as *sanātana dharma* because it is the ancient religion and has never changed. Hindus have different rituals from birth to death and even after the death at pilgrimage sites. *Śrāddha karma* is a ritual done after death every year to remember parents, grand-parents, and relatives. Pilgrimage visit develops positive thinking for the pilgrims. Hindus visit pilgrimage sites to perform a *śrāddha* ritual (*tarpana* and *piṇḍa dāna*) in the name of the Gods, the *ṛṣi*s and the ancestors (*pitṛ*). Gods and ancestors are abstract entities to whom they offer respect and worship[16].

The early Buddhist pilgrims endured tremendous hardship, and some of them changed the course of history[17]. For the majority of Buddhists[18], going on a pilgrimage to the holy places mentioned by the Buddha, is a once-in-a-lifetime undertaking. A pilgrimage is a journey to a sacred place as an act of devotion and faith. Faith (*śraddhā*) is the professing of confidence in and the sense of assurance based on understanding that one places on the Buddha, *dharma* and *saṅgha*. As ignorance is the root cause of impure mental states, *śraddhā* is a tool or moral mental state, because its chief characteristic is the purification of the mind. Thus a pilgrim is not an ordinary

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12 Kunwar, 2006:245; Ghimire, 2013:79
13 Kaur 1985.
14 Rakesh 2002: 1.
15 Patnaik 2008: 102.
16 Personal interview with Hindu priest and philosopher Krishna Khanal,2009.
17 Szostak 2007.
18 San 2002: 11-13; Ghimire 2011: 45.

tourist, who travels for the pleasure of sightseeing and enjoyment. Unlike sensual delights, the sight of the holy shrines does not arouse craving, but acts as an object to create the condition of wholesome mental states in a pilgrim's mind.

After the *parinirvāṇa* (physical death) of the Buddha, the relics of his body were collected from the funeral pyre and divided into eight parts. The holy relic was distributed to the claimants, and *stūpa*s were erected with relics enshrined in them. The practice of pilgrimage in Buddhism probably started with visits to these places, and the purpose might have been aspiration for rebirth in a fortunate condition, as well as to pay homage to the great master. Thus the custom of pilgrimage has been widespread among Buddhists for many centuries[19].

Like all meritorious actions (*puṇyakarma*), the potency of one's volition depends on the intensity of the four bases of success (*ṛddhipāda*), such as: desire-to-do (*chanda*), mind (*citta*), effort (*vīrya*) and knowledge (*vimāṃsa*). It could be superior, medium or inferior when these four bases are strong, medium or weak respectively. A strong desire stems from one's devotion to undertake a pilgrimage in order to heed the Buddha's advice. When the mind or will is strong, it is not easily distracted from its objective, nor discouraged by the rigours of the journey. Effort means the energy to undertake the journey, which in olden days meant travelling long distances on land, sea or across desert. Nowadays travelling has become comfortable, but preparations are essential, especially finding out the significance of each holy shrine. With this knowledge, one is able to associate each place with a certain event in the Buddha's life and form a mental picture to condition the arising of wholesome mental states when visiting those places. This success comes from one's prior effort in preparing for the pilgrimage[20].

Pilgrimage is also an act of renunciation whereby a pilgrim does not crave for luxury, but is contented with simple and clean accommodation, food and transport. This state of mind, which is free of greed, enables one to endure any discomfort without complaint but with patience and loving-kindness. In the course of visiting the sacred places, one feels that one is in the Master's presence and this fullness of faith conduces to joy and the observance of morality, the foundation of all merit. Many pilgrims take the opportunity to perform *dāna* (offering) out of reverence and gratitude to the *saṅgha*, who take care of the holy places. The holy shrines are also conducive places for pilgrims to reflect on the Buddha's virtues and practice mindfulness to develop wisdom. These are various practices by which one can show veneration at the holy shrines in addition to the normal acts of devotion like the offering of flowers, lights, incense, and worship *pūjā*. Indeed, one can develop the perfections and earn much merit while going on a pilgrimage. But it should not end when one has returned home. After the journey is over, one should always try to recollect the joyful moments spent at holy places to keep them vivid in one's memory.

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19 Buddhanet, 2010; Ghimire, 2011: 46; Ghimire, 2013:79.
20 San 2002: 14; Ghimire 2011: 46.

Such recollection is productive of joy and is a skillful means of re-enforcing one's good *karma* already acquired. In times of sickness, fear and worry, or sorrow, one can easily dispel these negative mental states by rejoicing in one's wholesome actions during the pilgrimage. There are a number of aspects of the pilgrimage which are rich in symbolism – particularly its association with death. The clothing worn and items carried by a pilgrim indicate his or her reclusive life[21].

Pilgrimage in a group to the holy shrines is one of the best ways to cultivate religious fellowship. During pilgrimage, members of the group will have an opportunity to interact closely and get to know each other well under conditions whereby loving-kindness, appreciative joy, generosity and faith prevail. The bonds of comradeship formed through the performance of meritorious actions together will endure long after the pilgrimage is over and members will cherish fond memories of each other whenever they recollect the happy moments spent at the holy places. The wisdom gained from pilgrimage is supposed to be higher than wisdom gained from books.

The Hindu practice of clockwise circumambulation is a ritual practice carried out when going around sacred burial pyres, temples, altars, and *stūpas*. Clockwise circumambulation is a style of veneration widely used in also in Buddhist ritual in pilgrimage sites. It is, indeed, generally agreed that the circuit or multiple-site type of pilgrimage has flourished most widely in Asia. Certainly, one does not find in Christianity or in the world of Islamic pilgrimage[22].

Possibilities for pilgrimage tourism in Nepal

Nepal is a country with a unique and diverse history and culture. It has been blending and carrying its history for thousands of years. Its archaeological remains, structures, temples, monasteries, *stūpas*, legends, religious books, rituals, caste / ethnic groups and languages, and festivals are more than enough to prove its multicultural and religious authenticity[23]. Nepal has become a popular destination for pilgrimage tourism with her large number of Hindu and Buddhist pilgrimage sites, shrines and temples. Nepal is a country of temples and is full of world-class pilgrimage destinations[24]. Nepal has several ancient pilgrimage sites. Each temple is attached to a legend that glorifies the miraculous powers of its deity. Nepalese people have religious tolerance and communal harmony among Hindus, Buddhists and the people of other religious faith. A tourist to Nepal long ago called it a home of gods and a land of festivals. Nepalese go to holy places for pilgrimage not only in their own country but also to famous holy places in India. Likewise millions of Indian pilgrims come to

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21 Reader, 1993:107; MacGregor, 2002:11.

22 Hoshino, 1997: 279

23 Kunwar & Ghimire, 2012:1

24 Ghimire 2004a: 95.

Nepal every year. Nepal is the land from where Hinduism and Buddhism originated and the only country in the world with a unique blend of diverse religions living side by side in peace and harmony. There are many common pilgrimage sites and festivals commonly celebrated by them. Everywhere there are temples, *gumbas, stūpas*, and *kundas* famous for pilgrimage purposes. That's why there is higher potential of pilgrimage tourism in Nepal.

Pilgrimage networks: Approach for higher returns

Pilgrimage networks could be one of the important means to get more benefit, spiritually and economically, from tourism in Nepal. They would help to attract more pilgrims and increase the length of their stay so that they could contribute significantly to the economy and stimulate employment. Each site on multiple-site routes is equally important in terms of completing the route[25]. The network could be among Hindu pilgrimage sites, Buddhist pilgrimage sites and between both types of sites. For this, strong linkages should be developed with all basic amenities (infrastructure, facility, publicity), and there should be a development of common network packages. Moreover, strong initiatives should be taken by the government and stakeholders to coordinate and develop networks including pilgrimage sites in India and other countries[26]. One of the important networks, which involves both Hindu and Buddhist pilgrims, could be a network between Muktināth, Paśupatināth, and Lumbinī.

1. Muktināth: Buddhist-Hindu holy shrine

Muktināth (the god of salvation) or Chumig Gyatsa, as the locals call it, is an important holy shrine for both Hindus and the Buddhists. *Mukti* can be seen as equivalent to *nirvāṇa* or the status of liberty, and *nātha* means "saviour, god". It is a religious centre and a melting pot for Hinduism and Buddhism, where the two religions bond creating peace, tranquillity, and harmony. Muktināth known as a centre of salvation (*muktikṣetra*) is situated in the high Himalaya of north central Nepal[27]. It is believed that all miseries and sorrows are relieved once you visit this temple. For Buddhists, it is the home of *ḍākinīs* or goddesses known as sky dancers and it is one of their most important tantric shrines. They also believe that Guru Rimpoche (Padmasaṃbhava) the founder of Tibetan Buddhism, meditated here on his way to Tibet. This is probably the only Hindu temple, which is cared for by Buddhist nuns, where prayers are performed not by a Hindu priest but a Buddhist priest. One can only enter the holy temple after bathing in the 108 ice-cold waterspouts and dipping into the two freezing cold ponds right in front of the temple. After the freezing cold bath, which supposedly cleanses off all sins, one is allowed to enter the temple and pay homage to the gods and goddesses.

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25 Reader & Swanson, 1997: 240.
26 Ghimire 2011: 50.
27 The altitude of Muktināth is ca. 3,749 meters (12,000 ft.) above sea level.

The most important temple is the Viṣṇu Mandir, a pagoda-like three-tiered structure topped with a gilded brass pinnacle. There is an image of Viṣṇu (Avalokiteśvara in the Buddhist pantheon) inside the temple. Central to this temple is a black ammonite fossil that is one of the natural features for which Muktināth is so well known. Other images in this temple include the Hindu goddesses Lakṣmī (Goddess of fortune, wealth and Viṣṇu's consort), Sarasvatī (goddess of art and learning and Brahmā's wife), and the mythical bird Garuḍa (Viṣṇu's mount)[28]. The fame of Muktināth as a Hindu pilgrimage site is renowned. The strong and faithful devotees have been attached to it continuously for centuries from all over South Asia. The site was recorded as one of the principal goals on the "grand pilgrimage of India" two thousand years ago in the *tīrtha yātra* or pilgrimage section of the Mahābhārata[29].

Muktināth, is also known as the place where one can find all five elements[30] coming together in their distinct form. The Jwala Mai temple situated near Muktināth temple is the place where all these elements come together to form the eternal flame that lies on top of water. According to the locals, this flame has been lit by the god Brahmā when he conducted the first universal prayer. It is the holy shrine, which is said to have risen on its own and is also one of eight such shrines[31]. It is also one of 108 Vaiṣnava shrines. The Hindus believe that the Muktināth stream which descends and submerges into the Kāligandakī is known to be the source of all *śilā*s and *śāligrāma*s which are actually fossil stones, supposedly an incarnation of the god Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu takes up various forms and *avatāra*s and *śāligrāma* is one of them.

Besides Muktināth temple, Mharme Lha Khang Gomba, the monastery dedicated to Guru Rimpoche (Padmasaṃbhava) with his huge image situated to the North of Muktināth and Mebar Lha Gomba, the monastery of "miraculous fire", with the main deity Chenrezig, under which natural gas is continuously burning is situated in the South of Muktināth temple. Gomba Samba, a newly built monastery with main deities Śākyamuni, Chenrezig and Guru Rimpoche situated at left from entrance gate of Muktināth temple complex. Muktināth is considered to be one of the twenty-four Tantric places in the Tibetan Buddhist faith.

In addition to Lord Nārāyaṇa, Lakṣmī and Bhūdevī the temple depicts brass images of Goddess Sarasvatī and Janakī and Garuḍa, Lava-kuśa and the seven ṛṣis. Hindus worship the monastery of "miraculous fire" as Jvala Mai (Goddess of fire). Muktināth temple area also consists of the replica of four *dhama*s Kedarnāth, Badrināth, Dvarikanāth, Jagannāth and Rameśvar temples and Viṣṇu Pāduka for completion of pilgrimage process of Hindus.

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28 Messerschmidt, 1989: 107.
29 Bhardwaj, 1973; in Messerschmidt & Sharma, 1982: 140.
30 The five elements from which, according to the South Asian tradition, everything is made are water, fire, earth, air and sky.
31 The other seven shrines are: Śrīraṅgam, Śrī Mushnam, Tirupati, Naimiśaraṇyam, Thottadri, Puṣkaram and Badrināth.

True pilgrimage is for purists and the whole trip may take many weeks, or months. Dedicated pilgrims go through the difficulties of the trail just as their ancestors did for well over twenty centuries. Pilgrimage to Muktināth is the culmination of a long process of thought and action, praise and pain, sore feet and sacred venture into the highest mountains on earth. The process is both a *tīrthayātra* – an arduous, long-distance religious journey – and a zone of holiness, a sacred field (*kṣetra / chetra*) for salvation. Virtually everyone bathes at Muktināth even though the water is very cold. Usually Hindu devout undress with thin cotton clothes and bath, however local Tibetans (*Bhoṭia*) visiting the shrine typically do not undress, and only sprinkle a few drops from some or all of the spouts, and perhaps drink a little of the water which is a part of pilgrimage process. Before entering the water, all pilgrims are obliged to donate a few *paisa* (coins) to the Tibetan Buddhist nuns of the Nyingmapa sect who see to the upkeeping of the shrine complex throughout the year. Water is one of the transcendental aspects of Muktināth, and as a water-oriented site, it fits the definition of a *jala-tīrtha*. Hindu devotees leave Muktināth with small vials of the holy water (*jala*) to take back to their relatives and friends who have remained at home. The water is believed to have curating and spiritually cleaning power. Likewise, Hindu pilgrims perform *śrāddha*[32] in the morning before eating or they do whole day fasting. Muktināth is famous for such activities and they rose before dawn to bathe at the 108 water spouts, to pray, and to give offering to Viṣṇu. For Hindus, beside the natural fire representing Brahma and the holy water, the central meaning of the Muktināth area is the veneration of Viṣṇu in the form of ammonites (*śilā*) called *śāligrāma*. There are many stories which tell of Viṣṇu turning into stone and all of them are closely connected to the holy Kālī Gandakī River.

Kagbeni: This is another important pilgrimage site on the way to Muktināth, the valley down the mountain at the point where the Muktināth River joins the Kālī Gandakī River. Hindu pilgrims perform *śrāddha* and offer *piṇḍa* at Kagbeni. This place is equally important for Buddhists also. More than 570 years old monastery Kag Chode Thupten Samphel Ling Shakya Monestry in Kagbeni is one of the important attractions for Buddhists and tourists.

Jomsom: Jomsom (2713m), the district headquarters of Mustang is important for its strategic position along the popular Annapurna (Circuit) Trek route. It is also the starting point for many interesting treks like the Kagbeni, Marpha, Muktināth and Mustang treks. The Jomsom Trek is known for splendid mountain views and the deepest gorge in the world lies here along the Kālī Gandakī as the river passes between two eight thousanders, Mt Annapurna and Mt Dhaulagiri. From Jomsom

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32 *śrāddha* (obsequy / rites) is performed by the son and widows of deceased husband. Usually, the sons shave their head, and prepare *piṇḍa,* an offering of clarified butter and rice grains mixed with sesame seed, barley, and some sacred grasses.

one can enjoy the views of the Nilgiri peaks as well as Dhaulagiri, the sixth highest mountain in the world.

Marpha: Marpha is an important village on the way to Jomsom. It is very famous for its apple garden. The Buddhist monasteries and traditional culture of local people are additional attractions of this place.

The Rupse waterfall (Jharna), Lethe, Ghasa, Tatopani, Beni, Lumle are places famous for their natural beauty and overnight stations on the way to Muktināth from Pokhara.

Mode of travel: There are different means of transportation to go to Muktināth:

Trekking: It is one of the best trekking routes (Annapurna circuit) for both pilgrims and tourists. The treck can be started from Beni or Nayapul or from Jomsom.

Road: Beni is connected by a black-topped road from Kathmandu via Pokhara but Beni to Muktināth the road is rough. One can use either public or private vehicles or ponies to reach Muktināth.

Air service: There are several flights of different airlines from Pokhara to Jomsom and then one can use local vehicles or walk to Muktināth from Jomsom. Charter helicopter service is available from Pokhara to Muktināth.

Service: There are star hotels and nice guest houses on the way to Muktināth from Pokhara. Most of the hotels along this route are run by people of the Thakali tribe. The Thakalis are very famous for good food and hospitality. Besides this, there are pilgrimage rest houses (*dharmaśālās*) and monasteries for pilgrims. *Dharmaśālās* provide lodging and food with free of cost. The way to Muktināth is well facilitated with telephone and internet service, health posts and post offices, police stations and ACAP tourist information centers and electricity.

Season: The most suitable time to visit Muktināth is from March-May and September-October. December and January are for the diehard when the region receives heavy snowfall. June-August is the rainy season. Though pilgrimage to Muktināth is equally important throughout the year round, the special days are Janai Pūrṇimā and Rām Navamī.

Climate: Muktināth and its high valley are located in the Mustang district. The climate and landscape are similar to those of the Tibetan Plateau as it is situated in the rain shadow of the Greater Himalayas. Flowing through the region from north to south and forming deep gorges is the Kāli Gandakī River. The maximum temperature in summer (March to August) is 16^0C-18^0C whereas the minimum is 6^0C-8^0C.

Likewise, the temperature fluctuates between 4^0C to 16^0C in the period from September to November. In winter (December to February) the maximum temperature is 4^0C-6^0 C and the minimum is 0^0C-8^0C.

2. Lumbinī: An international pilgrimage destination

Lumbinī is the birthplace of the most illustrious son of Nepal[33] – Lord Buddha; it is the place where the newly born Prince Siddhārtha, the later Buddha, took his seven steps and uttered his epoch-making message to the suffering humanity. UN Secretary General U Thant's pilgrimage to Lumbinī in 1967 was taken as a milestone in the history of Lumbinī. The historic events held in Lumbinī reconfirmed and enhanced Lumbinī's status as the Fountain of World Peace and sacred pilgrimage shrine of the Buddhists and all peace-loving people and a symbol of international brotherhood, peace and prosperity, and helped to project it as a World Peace City and a most important touristic destination in the world.

Geographically Lumbinī, the world class Buddhist pilgrimage destination and internationally recognized world heritage site, is situated in Rupandehi district of southern Terai at an altitude of 105m above sea level and around 300 km southwest of Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal. There are regular flights to Gautam Buddha Airport, Bhairahawa (also known as Siddharthanagar) from Kathmandu. Bhairahawa is the nearest town to Lumbinī. One can take a taxi or a public bus from Bhairahawa airport to Lumbinī to cover the distance of 18 km. Travelling around 300 km distance from Kathmandu to Lumbini by road takes about 7-9 hours.

Today, Lumbinī[34] is the greatest holy site for Buddhists. Buddhists from the world over, as well as domestic ones, feel proud and satisfied, and experience fulfillment in their life while visiting Lumbinī, which is also equally popular among non-Buddhist visitors. The grove of Lumbinī had changed into a pilgrimage site soon after the *mahāparinirvāṇa* (physical death) of the Buddha. The importance of Lumbinī is so great that the Buddha himself advised his followers to make pilgrimages to Lumbinī because it is the foremost Buddhist pilgrimage site in relation to the other sacred sites. The Buddha explained the significance of Lumbinī in the following words: "Lumbinī should be (visited and) seen by person of devotion, and which would cause awareness and apprehension of the nature of impermanence ..." Lumbinī is a World Heritage Site and truly a must visit place in the world.

The pilgrimage visit of the famous Mauryan emperor Aśoka guided by his spiritual teacher Upagupta to this holy site in 249 B.C. was the first pilgrimage visit in Lumbinī. The phrase *hida bhagavan jāteti* ("because *bhagavat* [i.e.: the Buddha] was born here") of the Lumbinī pillar inscription of emperor Aśoka seems to reflect what Upagupta in the Aśoka legend in the Divyāvadāna says to explain the importance of

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33 Guruge 1998: 13-20.
34 Ghimire 2011: 44-52.

the site to the emperor. There are no reliable records to describe the status of the site after Aśoka's visit. The famous Chinese pilgrims Zhi Sengzai (3rd century), Faxian (5th century AD) and Xuanzang (7th century AD) visited Lumbinī for the purpose of pilgrimage. The visits of the Chinese travellers bring more information about Lumbinī. Xuanzang's records are the most informative of all: for he not only travelled to see Lumbinī and other Buddhist sites, but he also maintained a detailed description of his travels[35]. The Khāsa king Ripu Malla from Sinja in far western Nepal paid a visit to the holy site and engraved his name on the Aśoka Pillar dated to the year 1312 of the Śaka era.

Pilgrimage sites are visited to acknowledge religious history. Pilgrims visit Lumbinī to reduce mental tension and gain peace. Usually, normal tourists travel to see and experience places, but pilgrimage is a process in which pilgrims cultivate morality, increase wisdom and gain merit. That is why pilgrimage is a part of Buddhist life[36].

Lumbinī is a very important place and stakeholders need to work collectively to develop it in a coordinated manner. Lumbinī is like a diamond because its being the holy birthplace of the Buddha, and it should be marketed internationally as per its outstanding value and branding. Lumbinī is an unparalleled cultural heritage which cannot be competed with in the whole world. Lumbinī is even more significant today than during the Buddha's time as the whole world is full of war, racism, conflicts, and killing. Buddhist wisdom and peace originated from Lumbinī and spread from there into the world. Lumbinī is a common destination for all mankind, free from religious, racial, and sexual discrimination[37].

The attractions of Lumbinī

Lumbinī has been compared with Cittalata (the divine grove of Indra in paradise) for its spectacular landscape, sanctity and spirituality in ancient times. Early Buddhist sources describe Lumbinī as being rich in flora and fauna. The serenity and tranquility of Lumbinī helped sages contemplate the true essence of human life[38]. Lumbinī is the hub for many attractions and is abuzz with religious, archaeological, historical and natural activities.

Māyā Devī temple: The center of attraction of the pilgrims and tourists visiting Lumbinī is the Māyā Devī Temple. The holy site witnessed the construction of the Māyā Devī Temple known as the heart of all monuments at this holy site. The ground floor consists of the remains of the foundations of the early Māyā Devī Temple that

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35 Kunwar & Ghimire, 2012
36 Personal interview with Ven. Panumant, 2009.
37 Personal interview with Ven. Sato, 2009.
38 Rai, 2010: 1.

dates back to 3rd century B.C. The *sanctum sanctorum* is the birth spot of the Lord Buddha. The upper floor consists of an open meditation platform, on which stand the dome and the gold plated shrine pinnacle.

Nativity sculpture: The stone sculpture which depicts the birth scene of the Buddha is known as the Nativity Sculpture. It was installed in the temple in the 4th century AD. The image shows Māyā Devī, mother of the Lord Buddha, supporting herself by holding a branch of a tree with her right hand, and Gautamī Prajāpatī, her own sister, in supporting posture at the time of delivery and the newly born Gautama standing upright on a lotus pedestal. Two other celestial figures are seen in welcoming the newly born Bodhisattva.

Aśokan Pillar: The pillar is one of the most important monuments, the first epigraphic evidence relating to the life of the Buddha and an authentic historical document of Lumbinī. The pillar is standing even today and bears a very well preserved inscription; it is made of sedimentary rock and sand stone and has three parts viz. a cylindrical pillar, a bracket figure and a crowning part. The total height of the pillar is 30'10.5" of which 13'8.5" are buried underground, and the pillar has remained in place for more than 2300 years. The pillar bears an inscription stating "hida budhe jate Sakyamuni", meaning: "Sakyamuni Buddha was born here". The inscription engraved by Emperor Asoka is still intact and testifies the authenticity of the birthplace. The text written in Brahmi script and in Middle-Indic dialect can be translated as follows:

> *King Piyadasi (Asoka), the beloved of the Gods, in the twentieth year of his reign, himself paid a royal visit. Sakyamuni Buddha was born here, therefore, the (birth spot) marker stone was worshipped, and a stone pillar was erected. The lord having been born here, the tax of the Lumbini village was reduced to an eighth part (only).*

Puṣkariṇī pond: The famous and most sacred pond known as Puṣkariṇī in which it is believed that Māyā Devī took a bath just before giving the birth to the Lord and also where the infant Buddha was given his first purification bath. The devotees feel elated and purified from evil effects in their lives by washing their face in the pond. It is also known that there are two artesian wells, as a source of water in the pond.

Marker stone: The sedimentary sandstone, lying deep in the *sanctum sanctorum* of the Māyādevī Shrine, is the marker stone (stone slab-conglomerate). It pinpoints the exact location where the Buddha was born. The point where the Buddha put his first step on the earth is marked by the marker stone. It has been shown, after a hard and meticulous excavation under the three layers of ruins on the site of the old Māyā Devī Temple. Being very important and sensitive in nature, the marker stone is enclosed in a bulletproof glass case for its preservation. The marker stone measures 70 x 40 x 10

cm[39]. The marker stone has been found in the exact distance and direction as mentioned by Xuanzang, the Chinese traveller.

Other structural remains: The brick masonry foundations, known as the group of *stūpa*s and *vihāra*s, built in the period of Mauryan, Gupta and Kuṣāna (between the 3rd century BC and 2nd century AD), are evidence of the early devotees' desire to be near the sacred place.

The Sacred Garden: The Sacred Garden is the focal point of Lumbinī including several historical and archaeological monuments around the Māyā Devī shrine. Its peaceful, sacred look preserved and restored to its legendary beauty can function as a magnet to attract more pilgrims and tourists. The garden lying in the southern part of the Lumbinī Master Plan is well preserved by enclosing it with a circular pond and a circular levee. Its form, consisting of a circle enclosing a square, embodies the mystic symbol of the universe in its purity and simplicity. The square area is formed with a network of raised walkways between the landscaped area and the archaeological remains. A beautiful garden and the circular levee with a large water body is the newest attraction in the shrine complex.

The Eternal Flame (Śāntidīpa) burning as a symbol of world peace; the **Monastic Zone** the space allotted for the construction of the monasteries of two major sects of Buddhism – Theravāda and Mahāyāna – the **Lumbinī Museum** with artifacts (ancient coins, religious manuscripts, terra-cotta fragments, stone and metal sculptures) collected from the site during the excavation in the sacred complex and the areas nearby related to the life of the Buddha and the history of Lumbinī; the **Lumbinī International Research Institute (LIRI)** to facilitate scholars interested in philosophy, religion and culture with a good collection of Buddhist texts, manuscripts, journals, research reports etc. in different languages are important attractions of Lumbinī. Likewise, Lumbinī is the center of various eco-tourism activities. There are about 200 blue bulls and 250 bird species with a Crane Sanctuary and a Wetland Garden. As Buddha was associated with water and forest from his birth onwards, the master plan has given high priority to the conservation and development of the natural environment in Lumbinī. The **Lumbinī Village Tour** is another attraction of Lumbinī. Visitors can enjoy and see their traditional costumes and way of life and culture, and the traditional farming practices, of Terai people.

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39 Rai, 2010: 93

Strengths of Lumbinī

Pilgrimage is one of the important aspects of Buddhist practices. Lumbinī's strengths in this respect are – to name just a few – that it is the Birthplace of the Buddha, a top class pilgrimage site, declared as World Peace City, a World Heritage Site that carries a history of more than 2600 years; it is designated as the Fountain of World Peace that may provide ultimate peace and *nirvāṇa*, hosts national and international Buddhist monasteries and therefore is the home of monks, nuns, peace lovers and spiritual leaders. It is the nerve centre for a Buddhist circuit, equally respected by millions of Hindus and people of other faith, caste and creed. Today, various organizations (UNESCO, UNDP, IUCN) are working to preserve and develop the site, and it is a fast growing tourist destination for pilgrimage, sightseeing, historical and archaeological purposes. It harbors endangered spices of flora and fauna in its rich farmland and green forest. The region shelters more than 160 religious, historical and archaeological sites related to the Buddha and his life in and around Lumbinī. Local (Tharu) culture, arts and crafts, traditional farming practices are another attraction for culture lovers. The region has road access to other important Buddhists sites in India[40].

Buddhist sites around Lumbinī

Besides Lumbinī, there are many sites associated with the life of Lord Buddha. They have their own importance regarding pilgrimage, sightseeing, historical and archaeological.

Table no. 1: Buddhists Sites Around Lumbinī

Name of the site	Significance	Location	Evidence (historical/ archaeological)
Tilaurakoṭ	Identified with ancient Kapilavastu, the kingdom of Śākyas where Buddha spent his earlier 29 years of life.	Kapilvastu District	Grandeur of the excavated site, the river Banging identified as the Bhagirathi River
Niglihawa/ Araurakoṭ	Natal town of Kanakamuni Buddha	Kapilvastu District	Aśoka Pillar, archaeological ruins and historical documents

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40 Ghimire, 2013: 86

Gotihawa	Natal town of Krakucchanda Buddha	Kapilvastu District	Aśoka Pillar, archaeological ruins and historical documents
Kudān	Buddha met his father and son at this place on the first visit to his native city after enlightenment	Kapilvastu District	Aśoka Pillar and archaeological site and historical documents
Sagarahawa	The place of massacre of the Śākyas	Kapilvastu District	Large pond, archaeological site and historical documents
Devadaha	Maternal home of Māyādevī	Rupandehi district	Presence of an ancient temple on a mound and historical documents
Ramgram	Site of the *stūpa* where the original physical remains (*asthi dhātu*) of the Buddha is believed to have been buried	Nawalparasi district	Presence of an ancient temple on a mound and historical documents

Source: Ghimire, 2006.

Distance for the Lumbinī circuit tour

There are different sites around Lumbinī with special importance. Tourists and pilgrims can visit independently or with guided tour in these sites. The following table shows the distance of the sites and time required to travel.

Table no 2: Distance for Lumbinī Circuit Tour

SN	From	To	Km.	Drive
1.	Airport	Māyā Devī Temple	17.4	25 Min.
2.	Bhairahawa	Māyā Devī Temple	21.1	30 Min.
3.	Māyā Devī Temple	Kudān	29.42	45 Min.
4.	Kudān	Gotihawa	4.33	15 Min.
5.	Gotihawa	Tilaurakoṭ	7.32	20 Min.
6.	Tilaurakoṭ	Niglihawa	8.85	20 Min.
7.	Niglihawa	Araurakoṭ	1.25	3 Min.

8.	Araurakoṭ	Sagarahawa	5.21	10 Min.
9.	Sagarahawa	Devadaha	65.3	1.5 Hrs.
10.	Devadaha	Ramgram	25.19	40 Min.
11.	Ramgram	Bhairahawa	28.56	1Hrs.
12.	Bhairahawa	Airport	3.7	5 Min.
13.	Lumbinī Garden Walk	-	7.5	-
14.	Ekala Village Walk	-	3.0	-
15.	Shivagadhiya	-	3.5	-
16.	Tenuhawa Village Walk	-	2.2	-
17.	Lumbini Adarsa Village Walk	-	5.5	-
18.	Madhuwani Village Walk	-	6.5	-

Source: Ghimire, 2006

Services at Lumbinī

Accommodation: There are many budget hotels and lodges, as well as modern star hotels in and around Lumbinī. The present number of tourists can be easily managed by the different categories of the hotels and guest houses in Lumbinī. Siddhārthanāgar (Bhairahawa) has also desired accommodation facilities for the tourists.

Road: Lumbinī is connected with major cities of Nepal and the capital city Kathmandu by roads. It has also connection with Indian cities. The majority of international tourists/pilgrims visiting Lumbinī enter Nepal through India.

Airport: Bhairahawa is air linked with the capital Kathmandu. There are regular flights operated by different airlines at Gautam Buddha Airport, Bhairahawa. This airport is being upgraded into an international/regional airport very soon.

Communication: Lumbinī is well facilitated with telephone and internet service; cable television and newspapers and post offices. Lumbini also caters services of health posts, police stations, and tourist information centers.

Package tour

Visits to Lumbinī are sold in package tours[41] by operators in Kathmandu and India. The operators of Kathmandu sell Lumbinī tour packages mostly combined with sightseeing to Pokhara, Tansen, Chitwan, and Gorkha while those coming from India do pilgrimage tours to Buddhist circuit involving Bodhgayā, Sārnāth, Kuśinagar and other Buddhist sites with Lumbinī. The Indian tours enter Nepal mostly on a half-day trip to Lumbinī only and exit the same day. Their contribution to tourism income of the Bhairahawa-Lumbinī area is negligible except paying Lumbinī conservation and entrance fee. Tour guides on these packages mostly do not follow any code of conduct while interpreting at the main heritage site of Lumbinī. The tours organized in Kathmandu mostly stay overnight at hotels either at Bhairahawa or at Lumbinī itself. Most packages thus comprise either three days or at most five days, depending on degree of devotion and interest of the tourist in Buddhism culture, archaeology and history of Lumbinī and other sites around it.

Potential markets

The market of Lumbinī is so massive. Lumbinī is the nerve center for Buddhists around the world and a center of attraction for others. It can attract millions of tourists every year. NTB[42] writes that 8 million Indians, 69.53 million British, 17.5 million Japanese, 40.9 million Chinese, 8.8 million Korean, 22.4 million French, 71.2 million German; 16.69 million Dutch people travel abroad every year. Likewise, millions of the pilgrims and tourists from USA, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Spain, Italy, and Russia holiday abroad every year. The people traveling from those countries are in top rank of in Nepal's tourists' arrival and this can contribute towards Lumbinī's better marketing and promotion. For instance, Thailand has a 90% Buddhist population, Sri Lanka has a huge percentage of Buddhist population, there are about 47% Buddhists in Korea and China is the largest neighbouring market, which has declared Nepal as tourist destination. People from these areas would definitely like to see the holy birthplace of Lord Buddha so that they are potential marketplaces for Lumbini. If the government of Nepal introduces and implements a dynamic marketing strategy in the international market, it definitely can attract more tourists to Lumbinī.

Great heritage sites are a place of attraction for everybody irrespective of personal religious faith. It is therefore logical and relevant that Lumbinī, which is symbolically related to peace and harmony, is a place of reverence for all peace-loving people, but also for those people interested in history and archaeology. About 10.000 pilgrims used to visit Mecca 50 years ago, and almost 3 million Muslim pilgrims visited the holy city of Mecca for the *hajj* in 2008. Saudi Arabia had deployed around 100.000

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41 Ghimire 2011: 44-52, Ghimire 2006: 106
42 Annual Report of Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) 2008/09.

security personnel to keep order during the five days pilgrimage[43]. However, only 136,001 international tourists / pilgrims (Indians are not included) visited Lumbinī in 2012[44]. More than 1.5 billion Buddhists and more than 1.5 billion Hindus respect and worship Buddha. It is also a centre of attraction for non-Buddhists and non-Hindus. That is why Lumbinī has a huge potential to attract millions of tourists. If Nepal can bring 5% of them, it will be miracle for Lumbinī as well as for the Nepalese tourism industry. Nepal can tap the huge potential of spiritual tourism from the Buddhist world over[45].

3. Paśupatināth: An ultimate pilgrimage destination

Paśupatināth is the guardian deity or the patron god of Nepal and one of the most important gods of the Hindus in the world. The name of Paśupatināth first appears in the late Vedic texts as being identical with Śiva-Rudra. Rudra, described as a fierce deity in the Ṛgveda, was subsequently conceived as Śiva ("benign") too. Most probably he represents the virulent features of Agni, the fire god invoked first in the Vedas, who along with Soma (water), as Agni-Soma, completes the dualism of opposites in nature. The god Paśupati himself is invoked as Agni in the Vedic texts and his cult seems to have received a sound philosophical basis not later than 2nd century B.C. Paśupatināth has continued to hold an unsurpassed influence in Nepal, more than any other deity, and his shrine is the highest of all the holy places in the land. Nepali chronicles describe Paśupati as the lord (*nāth*) who is first and without beginning (*ādi, anādi*). There are several versions of the story of his appearance in Nepal. Some Purāṇas relate the story of the appearance of the resplendent phallic icon (*jyotirliṅga*). But a Nepali *liṅga* combines anthropomorphic components in it since the beginning.

It is the holiest and oldest shrine of Lord Śiva. Paśupatināth[46] is considered to be God of Gods (the great God). Śiva is known by many different names, and Paśupati is one of them. *Paśu* in Sanskrit means "animal" and *pati* means "master". In other words Paśupati is the master of all living beings of the universe. This is how Lord Paśupati is eulogized in the Vedas, Upaniṣads and other holy books. The Skandapurāṇa, an ancient Hindu holy text, describes the fame of Nepal as – "in the Himalayas there is a most auspicious blessed place, where *śaṅkara* (the giver of joy) in the form of Paśupatināth resides." All ancient Hindu religious texts describe the Himalayas as the abode of Lord Śiva in which Nepal is the centre. The place has been acclaimed in the

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43 USA Today, May 12, 2008.

44 LDT, 2012

45 Rai, 2013:56

46 It is believed that Lord Paśupatināth dears five things: Gaṅgājala (water from a holy river) with which his idol is bathed before worship, Godugdha (cow's milk) which is dripped on Him, Bilva-pattra (wood apple, Aegle marmelos leaves), Dhaturo (thorn apple, Datura metal) flowers or fruits and Rudrākṣa (utrasum, Elaeocarpus spaericus) beads strung on yellow thread.

Purāṇas as more sacred than a combination of thousands of pilgrimage places. However, it is undoubtedly the presence of the Paśupatināth shrine that bestows upon the country the highest religious sanctity. The very name of Paśupatināth is the culmination (union) of all Hindu sects like Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva and Śākta. In addition to that there is an inseparable relation among Śiva, Viṣṇu and the Buddha. That is why there is an age-old tradition of seeing the Lord Viṣṇu along with Śiva and Buddha in Nepal. Therefore the temple of Paśupatināth is considered as the centre of respect and reverence for all sects, such as the Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, Śākta, Saurya and Gāṇapata. The followers of the Buddha, the Jains and Sikhs equally respect Paśupatināth. Regarded as the most sacred temple of the Hindu god Śiva in the world, Paśupatināth temple's existence dates back to 400 A.D. Thousands of pilgrims from all over the world come to pay homage at this temple.

Lord Paśupatināth is famous by different names as Śiva (god of peace), Mahādeva (god of gods), Rudra (god of terror), Nāṭarāja or Nāṭeśvara (the lord of dance, or king of dancer) and Yogeśvara (the Lord of *yoga*, mostly depicted in meditation posture). He is also called Pañcānana or five faced god. His various faces represent different directions and are known by different names as:

- The Eastern *mukha* (mouth)   Sadyojat (recent born)
- The Southern *mukha*   Vāmadeva
- The West *mukha*   Aghora
- The North *mukha*   Tattapuruṣa
- The upper (central) *mukha*   Īṣana

In addition, there is one lower mouth which is called Kālāgnirudra. Therefore, his devotees pay respect to him by chanting the *mantra 'pañcavaktram trinetram'*.

Archeology and structure

The Paśupatināth temple is double-roofed pagoda of gold-coated brass. The main gate and another three smaller gates are made of silver. It enshrines the world famous *liṅgam* (phallus) of Paśupatināth in the womb chamber of the temple. The big gilded figure of Nandi (bull) the mount of Lord Śiva is in front of the main gate of the temple. It is placed on a stone pedestal flanked by a golden trident.

Paśupatināth is a superb example of Nepālī architecture commonly known as pagoda style, with a stair plinth and many-tiered terraced roof. A Chinese traveller of the seventh century has amazingly described the temple, as appearing to wear a 'crown of clouds'. It is believed that the present temple of Paśupatināth represents the same shrine referred to in the inscription of Bhāsmeśvara dating to *Vikrama saṃvat* 455. The Paśupatināth area consists of ancient temples, archaeologically and architecturally important monuments, *vihāra*s, monasteries, hermitages, *ghāṭ*s, *patie*s, *pouwa*s, and *sattal*s. In this sacred complex there are about five hundred and fifty big and small monuments in about twenty three monument complexes. Repair and restoration

activities of Paśupatināth area not only facilitate Hindu pilgrims and encourage cultural tourism but also help to develop the whole locality of Paśupati area[47].

Significance of Paśupatināth

In the seventy first chapter of the Skanda Purāṇa[48], a great scholar Skanda talking to Saint Agastya says that Paśupati-kṣetra is the place where one can get a daily dose of *dharma* (religion), *artha* (wealth), *kāma* (pleasure), and *mokṣa* (liberation or salvation).The place from Koteśvara to Tileśvara is the place called Mṛgendra Hill (Mṛgasthāli) which provides *kāma*. The zone between Vajrayoginī and Paśupatināth is blessed and is the place of *siddhi* (supernatural powers) so it is believed that all wishes will get fulfilled. God is associated here with Gopāla Siddha Gaṇa (accomplished attendant). Here Vinayak (Ganeṣa) and Chetrapāl (Nandi) give constant company. Guheśwarī, Brahmī, Maheśvarī, Kaumārī, Narasinghī, Varaṇī and Śivadhātrī always adorn the place. Millions of *devatā*s (divine beings) and deities are always protecting the ten directions of the zone. The *gaṇa* (attendants) of Paśupati are always guarding this area. Maṅgaladevī is present for doing *maṅgala* (welfare) for people. Wishfully Goddess Śrī Rāja-rājeśvarī together with her *gaṇa* lives here. This Paśupati-kṣetra is the town and temple of deities of wish fulfillment and *mokṣa* (salvation).

Paśupatināth is equally worshipped and revered by all Hindus and Buddhists since centuries, which is proved by the existence of the Śivadeva-vihāra and Rājavihāra in Paśupatināth area. Management of the Paśupatināth temple has been executed by the fully dedicated worshippers of Paśupatināth. The present system of daily worship and performance of all rituals is said to have been restored by Śaṅkarācārya who visited Paśupatināth in course of his mission for renaissance of Brahmanism. However it is not certain whether the first Śaṅkarācārya himself or some of his late successors had visited Nepal. There is a temple dedicated to Śaṅkarācārya in the vicinity of Paśupatināth temple. Till the date, the priests of Paśupatināth are selected from the Brahmans of Karṇātaka region of South India. However there is a huge debate on such kind of appointment.

As the recipient of the universal adoration of Nepalese people as well as Hindus all over the world, Paśupati shrine is the most holy beacon. The Hindus believe their visit to four great holy places (*dhama*s) will be successful only after the visit of Paśupatināth. From the time immemorial, pilgrims ranking from illiterate pauper to kings, and genius like Śaṅkarācārya have trekked long to pay homage to this "God of Gods".

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47 Amatya 1999.
48 The Skanda Purāṇa is the largest Mahāpurāṇa, a genre of eighteen Hindu religious texts. It contains a number of legends about Śiva, and the holy places associated with him.

Festivals in Paśupati area

The Paśupati area is the hub for many festivals and is abuzz with religious activities and celebrations. The most important festival celebrated here is the Śivarātrī. A large numbers of devotees from different parts of Nepal as well as from India and abroad come to pay homage to Lord Śiva in this festival[49].

Paśupatināth tour and *darśan* for pilgrims

The Paśupati Area Development Trust has developed the "Paśupatināth darśan" package tour program to attract more pilgrims. A guided tour of the Paśupati area and a *darśan* of Shri Paśupatināth is organized for those traveling under this program. There is an option of either a morning *darśan* or an evening *darśan*. Upon entering the Paśupati area the guides will escort the pilgrims and will enlighten them about the significance of the various important sites.

Best experience of pilgrims/tourists in the Paśupati area

The single most important experience satisfying the pilgrims visiting Paśupatināth is the worship of Lord Paśupatināth and other gods and goddesses around Paśupatināth. The other favourite activities in the vicinity are: bathing in the holiest river, the Bagmati, hermitage activities, culture and architecture of the Paśupatināth temple, enjoying puffing cannabis with Yogins, which is, however, illegal. On the other hand the crowd of non-Hindus visitors / sightseeing tourists gather on the other bank of the Bagmati River, where they observe cremation activity that they cannot see in their own country. There are also hermitage activities, culture and the architecture of the temples around Paśupatināth[50].

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49 **Important festivals in the Pashupati Area**

Important festivals in the Pashupati Area	Tithi	Month
Shivaratri (the night of Shiva)	Falgun Krishna Triyodashi	Mid February
Hari talika (Teej)	Bhadra Sukla Tritiya	August
Janai Purnima (Rakshaya Bandan)	Shrawan Purnima	July
Bala Chaturdashi	Chaturdashi	November
Shrawan (July/August)	All Mondays	July/August
Shakrantis (First day of every month)		
Grahan (eclipse)		
Ekadashis		

Other festivals in Paśupatināth area in different occasion: Gai Jatra, Krishna Jatra, Trishul Jatra, Battleswori Jatra, Bankali Jatra, Dhando Chatya Jatra, Madhav Narayan Jatra, Bhairav Jatra, Ganesh Jatra, Guheshwari Jatra, Desho-Dwara Puja, Bajreswari Jatra, Ropain Jatra, Khadga Jatra, Bhairv Nach, Nange Nach, Nava Durga Nach, Hari Siddhi Nach etc.

50 Ghimire, 2003 (The author conducted a survey in 2003. Altogether 131 Hindu pilgrims of different standard and 22 non-Hindu tourists of different nation and purpose, 54 shopkeepers and 16 experts were interviewed).

SWOT Analysis of Pilgrimage Tourism in Nepal

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis was made to analyse the prospects and challenges of pilgrimage tourism in Nepal from the fields, surveys, observation, interaction with stakeholders and secondary data.

Strengths:
- Nepal holds world top class pilgrimage destinations such as Lumbinī, Paśhupatināth, Manākamana, Muktināth and many more. Whole country is like a pilgrimage destinations, sacred mountains, sacred ponds (*kunda*) and holy rivers for Hindus and Buddhists.
- Nepalese culture, traditions and ritual are unique
- Tourists visiting with various purposes can also experience pilgrimage in different sites
- Political situations of the country is improving
- Cheap and exciting destinations
- One of the best destinations for regional tourism (Asian), Buddhists and Hindu pilgrims which is less affected by international incidents
- The only leaving goddess in the world, the Kumārī
- Nepal's diverse tourist attractions such as natural, historical, adventurous and many more.

Weaknesses:
Despite the high potential of pilgrimage tourism development, political instability has been the great problem in Nepal. Political parties have not understood the beauty of different cultures, and religions. "Recent political development in the country is deteriorating religious, cultural, ethnic and social harmonies that have been existed since long in Nepal. New generation has no more interest to follow our age long tradition. Buddhists have high respect in the world because of which Tibetans are benefited. India has been able to take advantage from Hinduism but Nepal seems to have deprived of it. Most of the Buddhist countries are getting benefits from Buddhism but contrary to it, Nepal, the birthplace of the Buddha is over shadowed"[51]. Mostly, pilgrimage visits are unplanned and has not been institutionalized or organized. Nepalese are honoured to have Lumbinī and other top class pilgrimage sites in Nepal. Just promoting Lumbinī Nepal can attract millions of tourists / pilgrims. Furthermore, the political situation-band, road blocks, lack of basic infrastructures for tourism development, lack of promotion and marketing, lack of airlines and international airports, lack of appropriate tour package for all target groups, lack of awareness, no policy thrust, lack of a clear cut vision of the concerned authorities, lack of pilgrimage network among different pilgrimage sites, lack of destination development plan and

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51 Personal interview with Yogi, 2009.

lack of cleanliness and sanitation of the pilgrimage sites are the weaknesses in developing pilgrimage tourism of Nepal.

Opportunities and benefits

As per the opinion of respondents, field observation, interaction with stakeholders during this research following are the possible benefits and opportunities from pilgrimage tourism:

a. Economically: If there is increase in tourist arrivals with increase of length of stay and per day expense of per tourist that results more economic gain and employment. There would be increasing investment including joint ventures in tourism related industries including hotels, resorts, airlines etc.

b. Partnership approach: Government, private sector and international organizations for the development infrastructure and tourism.

c. Culturally: Preservation of Nepalese culture, art and handicraft

d. Academically: Establishment of academic institutions and research centers (e.g. Lumbinī could be learning centre of Buddhism a centre of peace).

e. Politically: World Buddhist Summit 2004 had declared Lumbinī as a World Peace City, it should be developed accordingly. It could be a centre of peace talks and declare Lumbinī convention / declaration such as Colombo declaration and Geneva Convention.

f. Developing Lumbini not only as pilgrimage destination but also as interfaith destination, peace destination, sightseeing touristic destination, meditation destination. Nepal (especially Lumbinī) could be the best destination for MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions).

g. Pilgrimage network: Developing circuit tour, village tour, pilgrimage network among pilgrimage sites in and around Lumbinī, network with other places of Nepal, network with other places of India and other Asian countries.

j. Multiple indirect impacts on farming, fishery, local products and handicrafts

k. Human resource development for the national and international market

m. Pilgrimage tourism is less affected by national and international incidents

n. Better competition through professionalism with increased budget and focused marketing yielding better results

Threats and Constraints

Despite huge potentials of pilgrimage tourism in Nepal its advancement has been hindered by several reasons. This research state following threats and constraints:

- Lack of package programmes and mostly unplanned and unorganized tour
- Lack of basic facilities and infrastructure in most of the pilgrimage sites

- Lack of proper pilgrimage networking among different sites
- Poor accessibility and difficult terrain in most of the sites
- Poor peace and security situation of the country
- Politicization in pilgrimage sites (political appointment in key positions)
- Lack of awareness and proper coordination among local and national stakeholders
- Lack of aggressive marketing plan and budget in national and international markets
- Less priority given to pilgrimage tourism compared to other conventional tourism.
- Lack of enough literature highlighting importance of pilgrimage sites and pilgrimage process.
- Chances of defaming Nepal as a negative and unfriendly destinations for non-Hindus and non-Buddhists
- Increase of *temporocentrism* in the society and degradation of religious activities

In particular:

Lumbinī: Industrial expansion and urbanization in and around, incompletion of Master Plan on time, pollution and dust, seasonality, long dry and hot season, conflict between locals, stakeholders and LDT, India's rigorous marketing and developmental strategies in Buddhist sites, national and international politics to drag Lumbinī in controversy. Lack of spiritual, religious and cultural environment, the spirituality in Lumbinī is only present and claimed in the modern monasteries which are not directly situated around the Buddha's birthplace. Provision of providing a 24 hours visa for the tourists / pilgrims arriving via India. Because of this, most of them spend couple of hours in Lumbinī, are not aware about Lumbinī and its territory, and go back to India on the same day. That is why; their contribution to Nepal is negligible.

Muktināth: Linked with road and air service but flights are irregular and very bad rough road, monopoly of local transporters from Beni to Jomsom and Muktināth, the world famous trekking route to Muktināth from Pokhara is in danger because of dust blown by dynamites as the road is still under construction, tourists hardly want to trek these days on route, effect of dryness, coldness and high altitude.

Paśhupatināth: Dirty politics and corruption, debate on appointment of priests (Indian or Nepali), pollution in (temple, surrounding areas and the Bāgmatī River), delay in implementation of Master Plan and poor condition of the conservation and developmental activities, lack of joint efforts from the government and private sector, lack of proper management of flower sellers and souvenir shops.

Suggestions

As pilgrimage tourism has not been developed in professional (institutional) ways, there are several strategies to help it develop in Nepal. The best ways are formulating and implementing pilgrimage tour packages and establishing a sound network among important pilgrimage sites. Minimizing threats and constraints; and empowering strengths can contribute to sustainable tourism. The research has shown that majority of the pilgrims and tourists are satisfied with their visits and are not bothered by problems and constraints. There is always need for improvements, developments and utilization of world famous tourism products to get benefits from them. This research recommends the following points for the development of pilgrimage tourism in Nepal Tourism (for the Rural Poverty Alleviation Programme, Lumbinī).

- Networking, Planning and Marketing: Develop package programs. Make pilgrimage an organized tour and offer rigorous marketing plan at national and international levels. Get experience of how Mecca, Jerusalem and other international destinations are developed and connected.
- Community Involvement: Community participation is one of the important aspects of tourism development. There are multiple (direct and indirect, positive and negative) impacts from tourism. Tourism ultimately develops the periphery of the destination and locals will benefit. Locals have to be involved in decision making processes. Community should protect traditional dresses, traditions and rituals, arts and handicrafts.
- Education and Awareness: Education is the fundamental factor to stimulate, empower and make aware the host community. Tourism courses in university and colleges, training centers, workshops, research, publications etc. play a vital role in educating people about tourism. Bilingual and multilingual training, workshops and seminars; training should be regularly conducted to raise awareness of hospitality, heritage management and responsible tourism. Such activity also will also encourage to the research scholars, writers and presenters.
- Infrastructure Development: Wide roads and regular, faster and modern transportation systems should be introduced and infrastructure should be developed at all the sites in a given pilgrimage network. Proper places for worshipping, praying and rituals should be managed in pilgrimage sites.
- Training and Human Resource Development: Research into pilgrimage, and the historical and archaeological sectors, should be encouraged. Locals should be trained and involved in tourism and decision making process so that they will take responsibilities and ultimately reap the benefits.
- Collaboration among Stakeholders: International communities are important stakeholders for the over-all development of important heritage and monuments. Nepalese embassies and consulate offices should work in the respective countries to promote tourism. A calendar of events should be

prepared and distributed to attract tourists in the off season. Conventional tourists visiting Nepal, such as trekkers, mountaineers, holiday makers etc. should be encouraged to visit Lumbinī through improved network system.

Discussion / Conclusion

For the development of pilgrimage tourism and an optimal return from it in the national economy, the central issues are: the development of pilgrimage sites (infrastructure and networks), as well as the development of packages and promotional materials; the identification of sites and their optimum utilization; the minimizing of weaknesses; the widening of opportunities; the tackling of the threats and the cultivation of a tourism / pilgrimage that is free from politics.

The policies and plans formulated by the government[52] are high sounding; however, the implementation is not satisfactory for the development of tourism. Proper attention is not paid to the development of pilgrimage sites and promotion of pilgrimage tourism, which could be a better alternative to tourism when international tourism is much affected by international or national incidents. Nepal has potential in many areas of tourism. Tourists with different purposes, such as religious development, the pursuit of adventure, cultural exploration, the investigation of the natural world, the study of history etc. are attracted to Nepal. Nepal is one of the cheapest destinations in the world. However, it's appeal depends on the quality of services provided; the better the quality of service, the greater the economic return. Nepal should be very careful in its conservation and utilization of its world-class pilgrimage destinations for tourism development. The government should have concrete plans, necessary policies and code of conducts to ensure quality services and security. The country should enhance its present image as one of the world's cheapest and most exciting destination[53]. Nepal can benefit to a great extent from both her neighbours i.e. India and China with their large Hindu and Buddhist populations. Nepal could be the best venue for those who are in search of total spiritual satisfaction. Nepal and its socio-religious setup do not allow or advocate or tolerate any form of religious fanaticism and extremism. The pristine mountains of Nepal are believed to be the home of gods and goddesses. The blend of these majestic mountains and beautiful landscapes offers a complete peace of mind and soul to any visitor choosing Nepal as pilgrimage destination.

The holy sites of Lumbinī, Paśupatināth, Muktināth and many other are not only the part of the heritage of Nepal and Nepalese people, but they also belong to Buddhists and Hindus all over the world. This sense of belonging is integral to the continued development of those places and the region as a whole.

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52 Ghimire 2011: 51.
53 Ghimire 2003.

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Personal interview with Ven. Panumaant, Royal Thai Monastery, Lumbinī, 2009
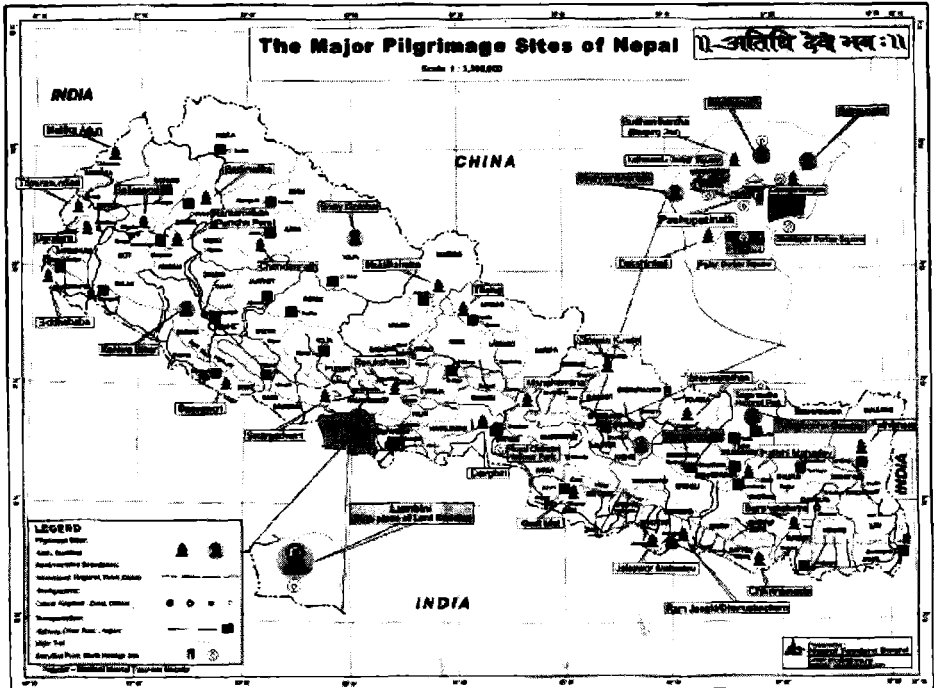

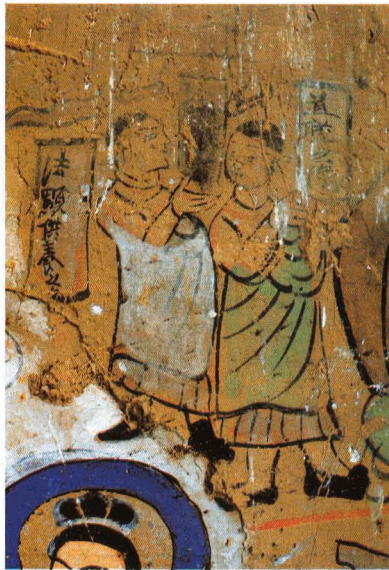Fig. no. 1: The major pilgrimage sites of Nepal
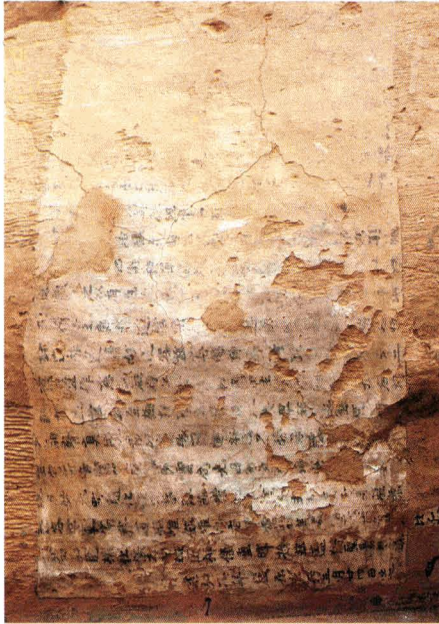
Illustrations and Plates

Wang 1

Binglingsi (photo: Bangwei Wang)

Wang 2

Mural grotto no. 169:
Faxian and Daocong
(photo: Binglingsi
Institute)

Wang 3

Inscription in grotto no. 169 (photo: Bangwei Wang)

Broeskamp 1

Guanyin sculpture, Ciyun cave, Hangzhou, height 2.72m (photo B. Broeskamp 1997)

Broeskamp 2

White-robed Guanyin sculpture, 1.85m in height, Yanxia cave, Hangzhou, niche
2.30m x 0.88m (photo Lakshmi Filomena Broeskamp 2012).

Broeskamp 3

Two White-robed Guanyin clay statues, 38cm in height, Ruiguang Pagoda,
after Suzhou Museum 2006, p. 186.

Broeskamp 4

Guanyin sculpture, 2m in height, Yanxia cave, Hangzhou, niche 2.78m x 1.14m
(photo Lakshmi Filomena Broeskamp 2012).

Broeskamp 5

Avalokiteśvara panel dated 1022 CE, 58cm in height, above the entrance to the Qingling cave, Feilaifeng, Hangzhou (photo Lakshmi Filomena Broeskamp 2012).

Broeskamp 6

Detail of plate 2, White-robed Guanyin sculpture, Yanxia cave, Hangzhou
(photo Lakshmi Filomena Broeskamp 2012).

Broeskamp 7

Ajanta cave 1, wall painting, scene of the Mahājanaka Jātaka, © Benoy K. Behl.

Broeskamp 8

Mahāparinirvāṇa stele, schist, 53 cm in height, Gandhāra, 2nd-3rd CE, © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Broeskamp 9

Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, scroll painting, colour on ramie, from Murtuq, tenth-eleventh century, 59 x 95 cm, MIK III 8559, © Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Kunstsammlung Süd-, Südost- und Zentralasien, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

Broeskamp 10
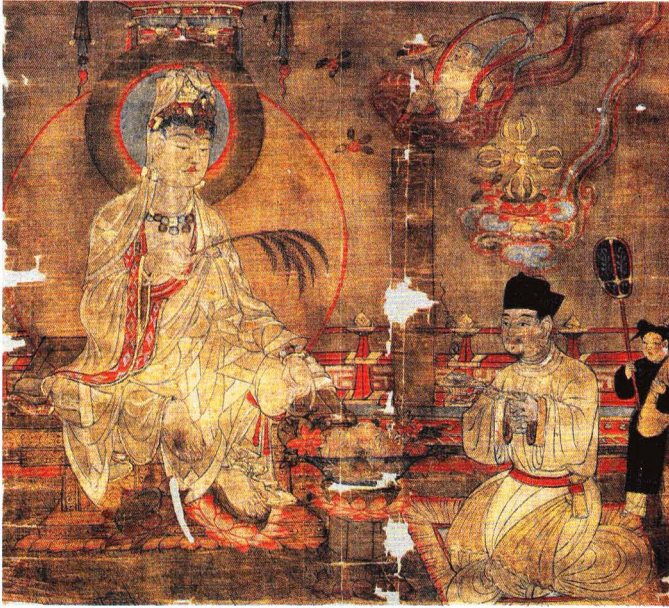
White-robed Guanyin, colour on silk, from Dunhuang, tenth century, 52cm x 55.2 cm, Palace Museum collection, Beijing; after Yu Hui (ed.) 2005, p. 268.

Broeskamp 11

Guanyin shrine, sandalwood, Yunyan pagoda, Suzhou, tenth century, 6.3cm x 19.3 cm; after Suzhou Museum (ed.) 2006, p. 55.

Skilling, Pakdeekham 1

ปัญญาสชาดก
ภาคที่ ๒๘

นางสัมฤทธิ์เวชชศาสตร์
พิมพ์เป็นที่ระลึกในงานฌาปนกิจศพ
นายเจิม พลางกูร ผู้เป็นตา
นางหนู พลางกูร ผู้เป็นยาย
นางเปา เสงี่ยมพงศ์ ผู้เป็นมารดา
ณเมรุวัดเทพศิรินทราวาส
วันที่ ๒๓ เมษายน พ.ศ. ๒๔๘๒

พิมพ์ที่โรงพิมพ์พระจันทร์

Title page of *Paññāsa-jātaka*, vol. 28. Fine Arts Department, Bangkok, 1939.

Skilling, Pakdeekham 2

Story of the Five Buddhas on tympanum of Uposatha hall Wat
Chakkrawat Rajawat, Bangkok (photo Peter Skilling).

Skilling, Pakdeekham 3

Story of the Five Buddhas on tympanum of Uposatha hall, Wat
Chakkrawat Rajawat, Bangkok (photo by Peter Skilling).

Skilling, Pakdeekham 4

Five Buddhas: old mural painting in the Vihāra of Wat Phra Thaen Sila-at
(photo by Santi Pakdeekham).

Skilling, Pakdeekham 5

Five Buddhas: cloth scroll
painting. Chao Samphraya
National Museum, Ayutthaya
(photo by Peter Skilling).

Skilling, Pakdeekham 6

Pañcabuddhavyākaraṇa: the Buddha predicts the future kings of Thung Yang
(after *Paññāsajātaka*, vol. 4. Fine Arts Department, Bangkok, 2011).

Skilling, Pakdeekham 7

Wat Phra Thaen Sila-at, Laplae, Uttaradit Province (photo by Santi Pakdeekham).

Skilling, Pakdeekham 8

Pavilion above the Stone seat in Vihāra of Wat Phra Thaen Sila-at, Laplae,
Uttaradit Province (photo by Santi Pakdeekham).

Skilling, Pakdeekham 9

View of the Stone seat or Phra Thean Sila-at (photo by Santi Pakdeekham).

Skilling, Pakdeekham 10

View looking down into the cavity of the Stone seat (photo by Santi Pakdeekham) with offerings thrown in by pilgrims.

King Rama V: modern mural painting, Vihāra of Wat Phra Thaen Sila-at
(photo by Santi Pakdeekham).

Buffetrille 1

Pilgrims making ritual prostrations in front of Kha ba dkar po mountain
(photo by Buffetrille, 2004).

Buffetrille 2

The Kha ba dkar po range (photo by Buffetrille, 2004).

Buffetrille 3

Lho 'od gsal pass (2990m): a heap of roasted barley flour with bowls on it
(photo by Buffetrille, 2003).

Buffetrille 4

Lho 'od gsal pass: pebbles hanging from a tree (photo by Buffetrille, 2003).

Buffetrille 5

Offering of clothes for the people in the *bar do* or hells (*dmyal lam*)
(photo by Buffetrille, 2003).

Buffetrille 6

Lho 'od gsal pass: bowls full
of barley flour (photo by
Buffetrille, 2003).

Buffetrille 7

Kha ba dkar po: 'Bras zhing thang temple (photo by Buffetrille, 2003).

Buffetrille 9

A pilgrim coming out from a "passage to hell" (photo by Buffetrille, 2003).

Buffetrille 10

Pilgrims with their bamboo sticks (photo by Buffetrille, 2003).

Buffetrille 11

Aben village: the bamboos form a second ceiling (photo by Buffetrille, 2003).

Buffetrille 12

The "Drum of hell" (photo by Buffetrille, 2003)

Buffetrille 13

Pass of Rdo skas la. *maṇi mtho rtse*, "[flags with the] *maṇi* [mantra put] in high [places]" and "wind horse" (*lung rta*) are dispayed on both sides of the path (photo by Buffetrille, 2003).

Buffetrille 14

Aben. A door with black circles to prevent the *ro langs* to enter (photo by Buffetrille, 2003).

Buffetrille 15

Shog la. A "house" (*khang pa*) (photo by Buffetrille, 2003).