

The Nature of the Dunhuang Library Cave and the Reasons for its Sealing

In: Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie, Vol. 11, 1999. pp. 247-275.

Résumé

La découverte en 1900 de la grotte de Mogao No. 17, habituellement appelée "grotte aux manuscrits" fit sensation dans le monde savant. Les raisons et la date de la fermeture de cette grotte, contiguë à la grotte No. 16, ont longtemps intéressé les chercheurs parce qu'elles ont un rapport direct avec le contenu de cette grotte : ce que nous pouvons analyser et comprendre des matériaux qui y étaient entreposés. Des spécialistes ont émis diverses théories, mais ce sont les explications les plus anciennes, proposées par Aurel Stein et Paul Pelliot, qui gardent le plus d'audience. Sur la base de fragments qu'il trouva dans la grotte, Stein proposa l'hypothèse d'un dépôt de rebut, selon laquelle la grotte contenait un rebut sacré provenant de différents sanctuaires de Dunhuang. L'absence d'écrits Xi Xia ainsi que l'entassement chaotique de documents écrits, de peintures, de décorations murales, de statues bouddhiques et de stèles emmenèrent Pelliot à conclure que la grotte avait dû être murée en 1035 comme une réserve lorsque les Xi Xia envahirent Dunhuang. L'auteur avance à son tour une double hypothèse. D'une part, les manuscrits déposés dans la grotte appartiendraient à un dépôt d'ouvrages d'un monastère bouddhique en attente de restauration. D'autre part, c'est la nouvelle de l'invasion karakhanide à Khotan qui aurait entraîné en 1006 le scellement de la "grotte aux manuscrits".

Citer ce document / Cite this document :

Xinjiang Rong, Hansen Valerie. The Nature of the Dunhuang Library Cave and the Reasons for its Sealing. In: Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie, Vol. 11, 1999. pp. 247-275.

doi : 10.3406/asie.1999.1155

http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/asie_0766-1177_1999_num_11_1_1155

THE NATURE OF THE DUNHUANG LIBRARY CAVE AND THE REASONS FOR ITS SEALING*

RONG Xinjiang 榮新江

Translated by Valerie HANSEN

La découverte en 1900 de la grotte de Mogao No. 17, habituellement appelée “grotte aux manuscrits”, fit sensation dans le monde savant. Les raisons et la date de la fermeture de cette grotte, contiguë à la grotte No. 16, ont longtemps intéressé les chercheurs parce qu’elles ont un rapport direct avec le contenu de cette grotte : ce que nous pouvons analyser et comprendre des matériaux qui y étaient entreposés. Des spécialistes ont émis diverses théories, mais ce sont les explications les plus anciennes, proposées par Aurel Stein et Paul Pelliot, qui gardent le plus d’audience. Sur la base de fragments qu’il trouva dans la grotte, Stein proposa l’hypothèse d’un dépôt de rebut, selon laquelle la grotte contenait un rebut sacré provenant de différents sanctuaires de Dunhuang. L’absence d’écrits Xi Xia ainsi que l’entassement chaotique de documents écrits, de peintures, de décorations murales, de statues bouddhiques et de stèles emmenèrent Pelliot à conclure que la grotte avait dû être murée en 1035 comme une réserve lorsque les Xi Xia envahirent Dunhuang. L’auteur avance à son tour une double hypothèse. D’une part, les manuscrits déposés dans la grotte appartiendraient à un dépôt d’ouvrages d’un monastère bouddhique en attente de restauration. D’autre part, c’est la nouvelle de l’invasion karakhanide à Khotan qui aurait entraîné en 1006 le scellement de la “grotte aux manuscrits”.

The 1900 discovery of the Mogao Cave No. 17 (usually called the library cave) in Dunhuang stunned the scholarly world. The reasons for the sealing of the cave on the northern wall of Cave 16, and its timing, have long

* This article was originally published in Chinese as “Dunhuang cangjingdong de xingzhi ji qi fengbi yuanyin” 敦煌藏經洞的性質及其封閉原因, in *Dunhuang Tulufan yanjiu* 敦煌吐魯番研究 (Journal of the Dunhuang and Turfan Studies), vol. II (1997), pp. 23-48.

interested scholars, for they have a direct bearing on our understanding and analysis of the materials from the cave. Scholars have put forth various theories, but the most influential are still the earliest explanations, first proposed by Sir Aurel Stein and Paul Pelliot. On the basis of the fragments he found in the cave, Stein put forth the waste-repository hypothesis, which held that the cave contained sacred waste collected from different shrines in Dunhuang. The absence of Xi Xia writings, as well as the chaotic piling up of documents, paintings, wall coverings, Buddhist statues, and steles led Pelliot to conclude the cave was sealed off in 1035 as a storage room when the Xi Xia invaded Dunhuang.¹

My goal in this paper is to re-examine these two views and to make two new arguments. The surviving evidence, including Stein's own account, indicates the library cave was not a waste repository but instead a book storehouse of the time, complete with manuscript rolls contained in wrappers as well as various materials awaiting repair from a typical Buddhist library. Secondly, this paper argues that the library cave was sealed before 1006, when the people of Dunhuang heard about the fall of the Buddhist kingdom of Khotan to the Islamic conquerors from Kashgar and then sought to avoid the destruction that had occurred to Buddhist establishments there.

The Library Cave Before Stein Saw It

In order to explore the reasons for and the timing of the sealing off of the cave, it is necessary first to try to reconstruct the original appearance of the cave. Because no detailed account of the cave survives from the time of the discovery, we must consult a short pamphlet written in 1942-43, called *The Record of the Stone Caves at Dunhuang* (*Dunhuang shishi ji* 敦煌石室記) by the artist Xie Zhiliu 謝稚柳.

When Daoist Wang 王道士 and a Mr. Yang 楊某 broke through the cave wall in the middle of the night there was a door, no taller than a

¹ A. Stein, *Serindia*, II, p. 820. Pelliot 1908, p. 506. The following authors all follow Pelliot's interpretation: L. Giles, *Six Centuries at Tunhuang*, London, 1944, p. 5; Su Yinghui 蘇瑩輝 "Ba Heicheng suo chu Xixia shi xieben Fojiao jieming juanzi" 跋黑城所出西夏時寫本佛教偈名卷子, *Dunhuang lunji xubian* 敦煌論集續編, Taipei, 1983, pp. 231-240; Yan Wenru 閻文儒, "Mogaoku de chuangjian yu cangjingdong de kaizao jiqi fengbi" 莫高窟的創建與藏經洞的開鑿及其封閉, *Wenwu* 文物, N° 6, 1980, pp. 61-62.

person, sealed with mud. When the mud was removed, there was a small cave, a little bigger than ten feet. It was filled with countless numbers of white packets, whose arrangement was quite orderly. In each white packet was ten scrolls. In addition, Buddhist flags embroidered with figures were spread out underneath the white packets. This was the state of affairs on the 27th day of the fourth month of 1899 [sic], probably undisturbed since the time of the flight from the Xi Xia in the Song dynasty. This was the famous library cave.

This description of the high degree of preservation of the scrolls and their wrappings, although brief, largely agrees with Stein's earlier description. It is also possible that Xie was reporting what local people had told him and deserves our full attention.

After the discovery of the library cave, Daoist Wang, the self-appointed guardian of the cave, sent a sample of the best works to the Circuit Intendant Ting Dong 廷棟 of Suzhou, who in turn sent them to the Governor of Gansu in Lanzhou. The governor had absolutely no understanding of the value of these materials and ordered the original site closed off, with Daoist Wang as the guardian.² But Daoist Wang did not close off all the materials, but instead often used examples of calligraphy to send to officials and important figures so that he could use the proceeds to finance repair of the caves. In 1903-1904, when the famous scholar of epigraphy, Ye Changchi 葉昌熾, was the Provincial Educational Commissioner in Gansu, the district magistrate of Dunhuang Wang Zonghan 汪宗翰 presented a painting of the *Water Moon Avalokiteśvara* painted in 968, four fascicles of the manuscript copy of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, and thirty-one leaves of Sanskrit texts.³ Not long after, Ye Changchi obtained a section of the *Mahāprajñā-pāramitā-sūtra* and a painting of the Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha with a Khotanese princess as donor from the Dunhuang scholar Wang Zonghai 汪宗海.⁴ All of these materials date to the beginning of the Song dynasty, suggesting that they rested on top of the materials in the cave. As such, they may have been placed there last, where they could be removed first. It is said that Ye Changchi recommended that the governor order all ancient artifacts sent to Lanzhou to be preserved, but, because of a lack of funds, they were left under the care of the Dunhuang local officials. In 1904 Wang Zonghan

² *Serindia*, II, pp. 802, 803-804.

³ Ye Changchi 葉昌熾 *Yuandulu riji* 緣督廬日記, 12th day of 11th month of Guangxu 光緒 29th year (1903) and 22nd day of 8th month of 30th year (1904) .

⁴ *Ibid.*, 5th day of 9th month of 30th year (1904).

implemented the governor's order and sealed up the documents and artifacts in the library cave.⁵ This attempt to seal off the cave was, however, not successful, and manuscripts and paintings continued to leak out. In 1907 Stein saw his first manuscripts in the hands of a young Tibetan monk.⁶ In 1908 Lu Jiliang 陸季良 obtained a painting of the *Bhaiṣajya-guru* (Medicine Buddha) done in 929 by Fan Yixin 樊宜信.⁷ In the same year Pelliot obtained two Buddhist texts from the Qing official Zai Lan 載瀾 in Urumqi.⁸

Stein's Theory of the Waste Repository

Stein was the first archeologist to leave a detailed record, and he felt that the condition of the cave indicated that before his arrival the top layer in the cave had been disturbed and that many of the original bundles had been mixed up.⁹ Still, because Stein saw the cave when it was largely undisturbed, we must start our examination of the cave with Stein's description in *Serindia* of his second expedition in Central Asia.

Chapter 22 of *Serindia* describes how Stein, with the assistance of Jiang Xiaowan 蔣孝琬 (whom he calls Chiang Ssu-yeh), came to examine the cave. Stein's account is basically chronological, with the addition of a few flashbacks. Here it is possible to give only a brief summary of his report. Section I "The First Opening of the Hidden Chapel" records how Stein first saw a bundle of Buddhist texts Jiang Xiaowan had secretly taken from the mat-shed. Later, when he saw the library cave, it was filled with manuscripts in bundles, with only enough room for two people to stand in. Since it was impossible to examine the bundles inside the cave, the work had to be done outside of the library cave, in Cave 16.

Section II "Finds in a Polyglot Library" describes how Stein saw some bundles that he took to be refuse. The bundles contained Uighur and

⁵ See the inscription on the silk-painting which Wang Zonghan sent to Ye Changchi as a gift. It was transmitted to the Jiang 蔣 family in Wucheng 烏程, and published in *Yishu congbian* 藝術叢編, III. Cf. Wei Juxian 衛聚賢, "Dunhuang shishi" 敦煌石室, *Shuowen yuekan* 說文月刊, III, 10, 1946, p. 24.

⁶ *Serindia*, II, p. 802.

⁷ Cao Yuanzhong's 曹元忠 preface to "Shazhou shishi wenzi ji" 沙洲石室文字記, in *Dunhuang shishi yishu* 敦煌石室遺書, Beijing, 1909.

⁸ Akiyama Terukazu 秋山光和, "Perio chōsadan no Chūō Ajia ryotei to sono kōkogakuteki seika" ペリオ調査團の中央アジア旅程とその考古學的成果, *Bukkyō geijutsu* 佛教藝術, N° 20, 1953, p. 64.

⁹ *Serindia*, II, p. 813.

Sogdian manuscripts, and Sanskrit, Khotanese, and Tibetan pothi texts, with their characteristic leaf-shaped pages with side-holes for string. These packages included a Turkish Manichaean confession prayer. Many of these manuscripts were complete. Section III “Acquisition of Manuscripts and Art Relics” relates how Stein looked through the Chinese and Tibetan texts in the innermost part of the library cave as well as describing the wall painting behind the scrolls and the original location of Hong Bian’s stele 洪誓碑. In the final section he describes his negotiations with Daoist Wang and how he obtained the precious writings. Section IV “Subsequent Investigations of the Deposit” basically describes Pelliot’s acquisitions and what Stein heard about the materials shipped to Beijing.¹⁰

According to Stein’s records, almost all the materials in the library cave were originally divided into two types of packages. One type he called “mixed bundles” or “miscellaneous bundles.” This label covered Sanskrit, Khotanese, and Tibetan pothi texts; Uighur and Sogdian manuscript scrolls; paintings on silk and paper, textiles, and other materials including tiny scraps of paper bearing Chinese characters, torn ends of sutra-rolls with thin sticks of wood, wooden rollers, silk tapes, cloth wrappers, ex-voto rags of fabrics, small broken pieces of silk paintings, and painted wooden strainers all of which Stein took to be refuse. It was all wrapped into bundles.

The other category he called “regular library bundles.” Those, containing Chinese rolls proved to number some 1050 in all, each containing roughly twelve separate scrolls. In addition, this category included eighty packets of Tibetan rolls as well as eleven huge Tibetan pothis. Stein produced the above figures after a thorough investigation of the original condition of the library cave. But in the beginning Stein depended on Daoist Wang and Jiang Xiaowan secretly bringing him manuscripts at night, and his classification of the manuscripts obscures their original condition.

Fortunately, figure 200 in *Serindia* and figure 194 in his narrative of the second expedition, *Ruins of Desert Cathay*, provide photographs of Chinese manuscripts as they appeared just after being removed from the cave.¹¹ These allow us to see immediately that the Chinese manuscripts were placed in neat bundles. One of the bundle-wrappers bears a five-character label saying “Mohe banruo 摩訶般若 [*Mahāprajñā-pāramitā*]: hai 海.” This label gives both the *sūtra* name and the wrapper number (a character from *The Thousand-Character Classic*) of the text according to the *Kaiyuan lu* 開元

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 807-830.

¹¹ See also *Ruins of Desert Cathay*, London, 1913, fig. 188.

録, an important catalogue of Buddhist texts dating to the Kaiyuan era of the Tang dynasty. This bundle contains the second section of the forty-fascicle *Mohe banruo jing* (*Mahāprajñā-pāramitā-sūtra*), which indeed falls under the character *hai* in the *Kaiyuan lu*.¹² These two photographs confirm that these “regular library bundles” really were Buddhist texts that had been divided into sections, labeled, and then placed in wrapped bundles.

At the time, Stein, however, did not understand the system of classifying Buddhist texts in traditional China. Nor did he inquire why so many well-preserved Buddhist texts or paintings—like the 69-palm-leaf Sanskrit *Prajñā-pāramitā* (Ch. 0079. a), the 44-leaf Khotanese *Vajracchedikāsūtra* (Ch. 00275), the 1108-line-long collection of Khotanese Buddhist texts (Ch. C. 001), and the 15-foot-long Uighur Manichaean confession prayer (Ch. 0015), among other outstanding examples¹³—were tied up into bundles and placed together. Stein also hypothesized that the cave had been closed in the early years of the eleventh century, because the latest dates he saw on the scrolls and paintings were from the end of the tenth century.¹⁴ In discussing the reasons for the sealing of the cave, he emphasized the discarded items in the cave, while neglecting to mention the intact items he himself had seen and already introduced to readers. The waste repository hypothesis began with Stein.

Because Stein was a Western archeologist who did not read Chinese, of course he could not understand the traditional Chinese way of classifying Buddhist texts. His failure to do so lessens the reliability of his explanation. Still, he used rigorous archeological methods to present everything he had found, item by item, and to number them. Everything had “Ch.” at the

¹² Fang 1991, p. 351, paid attention to the context of this photograph. But he did not find it relevant to the problem of the sealing of the library cave, because he thought that Pelliot had taken the photograph. See his “Dunhuang jingzhi” 敦煌經帙, paper presented to 1992 Conference of Dunhuang Studies in Beijing.

¹³ Stein’s conclusion has been confirmed by the linguists. On Ch. 0079. a, see E. Conze, “Preliminary note on a *Prajñāpāramitā* Manuscript,” *JRAS*, 1950, pp. 32-6; Ch. 00275, see S. Konow, “The *Vajracchedikā* in the old Khotanese version of Eastern Turkestan,” *Manuscript Remains of Buddhist Literature found in Eastern Turkestan*, vol. I, ed. by A. F. R. Hoernle, Oxford, 1916, pp. 214-288, pls. V-XIV; Ch. C. 001, a collection of six esoteric texts, see Takubo Shūyo 田久保周譽, *Tonkō shutsudo utengo himitsu kyōtenshū no kenkyū* 敦煌出土于闐語秘密經典集の研究, Tōkyō, 1975, and R. E. Emmerick, *A Guide to the Literature of Khotan*, Tōkyō, 1992, pp. 21-22; Ch. 0015, see A. von Le Coq, “Dr. Stein’s Turkish *Khuastuanift* from Tunhuang,” *JRAS*, 1911, pp. 277-314.

¹⁴ *Serindia*, II, p. 820.

beginning of the number to indicate that it was from “Ch’ien-fo-tung”(Qianfodong 千佛洞, the cave of the thousand Buddhas). He used small Roman numerals to number the “orderly bundles,” so that we can reconstruct the original state of the library cave.¹⁵ Owing to Daoist Wang’s preference for Chinese materials over non-Chinese materials and art objects, Stein took more from the “mixed bundles,” and was able to obtain only 270 scrolls from the “regular library bundles” of Chinese and Tibetan texts.¹⁶ In this way the original classification of the 1130 (1050 Chinese + 80 Tibetan) bundles was destroyed.

At the very beginning, Stein saw the high level of preservation of the Chinese manuscripts, yet because the quantity was so great, Stein had to abandon his plan to have Jiang Xiaowan make a list. In *Serindia* appears a 150-page-long “list of paintings, woodcuts, textiles, and miscellaneous antiques recovered from Ch’ien-fo-tung” as well as incomplete lists of Sogdian, Uighur, Khotanese, Sanskrit, and Kuchean finds, with the sole glaring omission being that of Chinese manuscripts.¹⁷ Furthermore, after Stein sent what he had found at Dunhuang to London, it was divided among the British Museum, the India Office Library, and the Central Asian Antiquities Museum of New Delhi, because his funding had come from both the Indian government and the British Museum. Even more unfortunate, while the art objects that went to the British Museum and the non-Chinese materials stored in New Delhi retain their Ch. numbers, the Ch. numbers on the Chinese manuscripts, which might shed some light on their original bundles, were abandoned and replaced with new S. numbers when the documents were catalogued.¹⁸ Today, in London, the Chinese Buddhist manuscripts are kept in the British Library, while the sutra wrappers made of silk, are stored in the British Museum since they are classified as art objects. This means that the manuscripts and their wrappers are further divided, making it impossible to recover the original state of the manuscripts, when they were wrapped in their covers.

Stein’s description of the library cave’s appearance was basically

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 814, n. 2; p. 836, n. 13.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 824-925.

¹⁷ “List of Paintings, woodcuts, textiles, and miscellaneous antiques recovered from Ch’ien-fo-tung” in *Serindia*, II, pp. 937-1088, “List of Sogdian and Turkish manuscripts from Ch’ien-fo-tung,” *ibid.*, pp. 924-925; “Inventory list of manuscripts in Sanskrit, Khotanese, and Kuchean,” *ibid.*, III, pp. 1432-1459.

¹⁸ *Serindia*, II, p. 814, n. 2.

accurate. The Chinese and Tibetan texts were divided into orderly bundles, as were the manuscripts in other languages and the paintings. It is difficult to regard these complete packets, like the Khotanese Buddhist texts, the picture of Avalokiteśvara (Ch. LVII. 004), and the large group of late-tenth-century Boddhisattva banners (Ch. 0025, etc.)¹⁹ as waste.

Pelliot's Activities in the Library Cave

Since the library cave had already suffered Stein's massive disruption, it was no longer in its original condition when Pelliot arrived. Pelliot said that the cave was abandoned to the point of chaos. In fact this state was the product of Stein's rifling and explorations, but Pelliot took it to be the original state of the cave, hence his explanation that the monks hid everything there before fleeing when the Xi Xia invaded. Later scholars have followed Pelliot's train of thought and pointed out that the wall could have been sealed up in the 1008-1010 war with the Xi Xia,²⁰ in 1094-98 when the Karakhanids threatened,²¹ or even as late as the Yuan dynasty of Mongol rule.²²

Yet, because Pelliot mistook the disturbed state of the cave for its original appearance, Pelliot's dating for the library cave sealing is unconvincing. Pelliot's records are much shorter than those of Stein, but we learn from them that the eleven huge Tibetan pothis Stein had seen had not been moved. Almost every other manuscript and pothi manuscript was incomplete, but there were still some outstanding artifacts among them.²³ In fact, even though Pelliot's Chinese was infinitely superior to Stein's, he too did not understand the traditional means of classifying Buddhist texts, and he later regretted his failure to bring a Buddhist dictionary with him. From a

¹⁹ These beautiful paintings have been published in *Serindia*, IV, pls. LVI-XCIX and in R. Whitfield, *The Art of Central Asia: The Stein collection in the British Museum*, I-II, Tōkyō, 1982-1984.

²⁰ Chen Yuan 陳垣 *Dunhuang jiejyu lu* 敦煌劫餘錄, Beijing, 1931, pp. 3-4, advocates the years after 1004. Bai 1985, pp. 340-357.

²¹ Yin Qing 殷晴, "Dunhuang cangjingdong weishenme yao fengbi" 敦煌藏經洞爲甚麼要封閉, *Wenwu*, N° 9, 1979, p. 6.

²² Zhang Wei 張維, *Longyou jinshi lu* 隴右金石錄, vol. V, Lanzhou, 1938, dates the sealing to the end of the Yuan dynasty. Guan Baiyi 關百益, "Dunhuang shishi kaolüe" 敦煌石室考略, *Henan bowuguan guankan* 河南博物館館刊, I, p. 13, advocates the time of the Mongol invasion.

²³ Pelliot 1908, pp. 509-529.

photograph taken by his photographer at the time we can see that when Pelliot first entered the cave, the vast majority of scrolls in the cave were divided into neat bundles.²⁴

Most regrettably, when Pelliot examined the entire corpus he realized he could not take it all away, so he established a basis for selection. He took those scrolls on the backs of which were written non-Chinese materials, and those scrolls bearing colophons, while leaving behind all the Chinese manuscripts he thought already in the Buddhist canon. Most scholars applaud Pelliot's decision.²⁵ In fact the Paris collection is superior to that in London in many respects. Still, it was the ordinary Buddhist texts that shed the greatest light on the original bundling of manuscripts in the library cave. And when Pelliot had completed his thorough examination, he had destroyed the original ordering of the Buddhist scrolls in the cave forever, making reconstruction impossible.

Pelliot was an expert. He shipped to Paris not only the best manuscripts studied by modern scholars, but also all the art objects left behind by Stein as well as the non-Chinese materials except the well-known Tibetan pothis. Among his collection was a sutra wrapper made of bamboo mentioned in his preliminary report. In 1909 Pelliot took the manuscripts and this wrapper to Beijing where he showed them to Chinese scholars. Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 copied many of the texts and recorded the existence of the wrapper.²⁶ The Pelliot collection resembles the Stein collection in that it was also divided on its arrival in Paris, with over 6,000 manuscripts going to the Bibliothèque Nationale, and the Louvre Museum receiving more than 200 paintings, some 20 wooden sculptures, a number of banners, sutra wrappers, and textiles. In 1947 all these art works were transferred to the Guimet Museum.²⁷ Accordingly, those studying documents rarely pay attention to the materials in the museum, with the result that an official document, which records the

²⁴ P. Pelliot, *Les Grottes de Touen-houang*, tome 6, Paris, 1924, pl. CCCLXVIII.

²⁵ Fujieda Akira was critical of Pelliot's selection of the manuscripts. See his "The Tunhuang Manuscripts: A general description, I," *Zinbun*, 9, 1966, pp. 8-10.

²⁶ Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 "Dunhuang shishi milu" 敦煌石室秘錄, *Kaoguxue lingjian* 考古學零簡, Shanghai, 1923, p.40. Wang Renjun's 王仁俊 copy of the document contained in the wrapper is in his *Dunhuang shishi zhenjilu* 敦煌石室真蹟錄, Beijing, 1909.

²⁷ Cf. L. Feugère, "The Pelliot Collection from Dunhuang," *Orientalism*, March 1989, pp. 41-42.

bestowing of rank on an official, contained in the bamboo sutra wrapper mentioned above, has not yet received scholarly attention.

The State of the Cave After Pelliot's Departure

According to records dated the 23rd day of the 10th month of 1910 from the Dunhuang archives, in 1908 Daoist Wang had taken some manuscripts and made two wooden containers which he sealed and filled with wooden knobs. He placed them in a Buddhist hall, calling them sutra-turning containers which devotees could turn to gain merit. In 1910, the Qing Educational Ministry sent a telegram ordering the Gansu Governor to ship the remaining manuscripts to Beijing. Although the Dunhuang county government collected some manuscripts, local officials were careless and did not touch Daoist Wang's sutra-turning containers. Nor did they collect the huge Tibetan rolls and pothis. Because the government failed to collect the remaining manuscripts, many found their way into private hands.²⁸

The so-called sutra-turning containers must have contained a fair number of scrolls, which Daoist Wang had protected from the government officials. In 1911-12, the Ōtani expedition managed to buy several hundred manuscripts and art works, and in 1914 Stein followed suit.²⁹ In 1914-1915, Oldenburg from Russia also bought many fragmentary manuscripts.³⁰ As a result, the materials that actually went to the National Library of Peking consisted of the Chinese manuscripts that Stein, Pelliot, and Daoist Wang had failed to remove. Further, even these manuscripts were damaged by people who removed the best sections and cut the remaining manuscripts

²⁸ The archives of Dunhuang county were published by Wei Juxian 衛聚賢, "Dunhuang shishi" 敦煌石室, *Shuowen yuekan* 說文月刊, III. 10, 1946, pp. 24-25, 37-39. The huge Tibetan pothis were moved to another cave and were ultimately stored in the Museum of Dunhuang City and the Museum of Gansu Province, see Rong Enqi 榮恩奇, "Dunhuangxian bowuguan cang Dunhuang Yishu mulu" 敦煌縣博物館藏敦煌遺書目錄, *Dunhuang Tulufan wenxian yanjiu lunji* 敦煌吐魯番文獻研究論集, III, Beijing, 1986, pp. 541-542; Huang Wenhuan 黃文煥, "Hexi Tufan wenshu jianshu" 河西吐蕃文書簡述, *Wenwu*, N° 12, 1978, pp. 59-63.

²⁹ *Shin Saiki-ki* 新西域記, Kyōto, 1937, passim. Cf. Ikeda On, "Aperçu général des manuscrits chinois de la collection Ōtani," *Documents et Archives provenant de l'Asie centrale*, ed. Haneda Akira, Kyōto, 1990, pp. 239-249; *Serindia*, II, p. 830.

³⁰ L. N. Mens'ikov *et al.*, *Opisanie Kitaiskij Rukopisei Dunhuangskogo Fonda Instituta Narodov Asii*, I, Moscow, 1963; II, 1967.

into pieces so that the total number of manuscripts remained the same.³¹ This is why so many of the texts we see in Beijing today are divided into 15 or 21 fragments. This type of incomplete manuscript is the product of human intervention—not the original state of the manuscripts. It cannot be taken as support for the waste repository hypothesis.³²

The above is a brief introduction to the history of the cave and how its treasures came to be dispersed. From the description of the original state of the cave in Stein's earliest report, we know the library cave originally was divided into bundles that contained large numbers of Buddhist texts. At the same time it contained art works given by believers in addition to some waste paper and fragments of silk. After Stein obliterated the original appearance of the cave, the materials it contained were divided several times, with the result that they are held in many different locations today. Still, we must remember that this dispersed state is the product of the investigations at the beginning of the century, not the original state of the cave. In short, much evidence undercuts the waste repository hypothesis.

Monastic Holdings at Dunhuang

In putting forth our criticism of the waste repository hypothesis, we cannot deny that many fragments of Buddhist texts and textiles in the cave appear to have been discarded. Whether or not these items were actually refuse hinges on our understanding of the collections in the various Dunhuang monasteries in the Five Dynasties and early Song periods. When Stein put forth the waste repository thesis, he knew very little about the monastic collections for they had yet to undergo systematic investigation. Today, after the scholarly efforts of nearly a century, we have a rough idea of the state of monastic holdings at the time, so we can offer a more plausible explanation for the fragments of texts and textiles that Stein found in the library cave.

³¹ For losses on route, see *Serindia*, II, pp. 829-830; For theft in Beijing, see Rao Zongyi 饒宗頤, "Jingdu Tengjingshi Youlinguan cang Dunhuang canjuan jilue" 京都藤井氏有隣館藏敦煌殘卷紀略, *Xuantang jilin shilin* 選堂集林史林, Hong Kong, 1982, pp. 1000-1001.

³² See the sketch of the joining together of many manuscripts by Nakata Atsurō 中田篤郎 in his *Catalogue of the Dunhuang Manuscripts in the National Library of Peking* 北京圖書館敦煌遺書目錄, Kyōto, 1989, pp. 53-155. Cf. Dunhuang Dazangjing bianji weiyuanhui ed., *Dunhuang Dazangjing* 敦煌大藏經, Taipei, 1989-1991.

By the early Tang, Buddhism flourished in the Dunhuang region. During the reign of Empress Wu, more than a thousand caves had been dug at the site of the Mogao Caves. After the Tibetan occupation of Dunhuang, with the massive patronage of Buddhism, the number of monasteries, and the monks and nuns in them, increased dramatically. After 848, with the government of the Returning-to-Righteousness Army (Guiyijun 歸義軍), Buddhism continued to enjoy a privileged position, with the number of monasteries in Dunhuang increasing from the sixteen it had been under the Tibetans to seventeen or eighteen.³³ Of these monasteries, Longxing Monastery 龍興寺 was the largest. This monastery, an officially recognized monastery since the Tang, was located inside the walls of Shazhou near the government offices. The officials in charge of supervising the monasteries, whether under the Tibetans or the Returning-to-Righteousness Army, had their offices in the Longxing monastery.³⁴

The Three Realms (Sanjie) Monastery 三界寺, built near the Mogao Caves far from the city, was one of the smaller monasteries at Dunhuang. Built after Longxing, Kaiyuan 開元, and Lingtu 靈圖 monasteries, its library and other holdings could not compare with those of the larger monasteries. Still, whether the monastery was a small one or a large one at Dunhuang, all monasteries contained fragments of Buddhist texts and donated Buddhist images.

Let us take a look at the large Longxing monastery as an example. “A List of Buddhist Paintings and Texts in the Longxing Monastery During the Tibetan Period” (P3432) records the Buddhist statues, texts, clothing, and implements held by Longxing monastery.³⁵ Among the items mentioned is a set of the canon, according to the order of the *Da Tang Neidian lu* 大唐內典錄 (The Great Tang Record of Buddhist Scriptures). According to P3432, some of the library holdings are not complete, and some sutras are missing.³⁶ Also worthy of our attention is the record concerning the Buddhist banners and wrappers, such as “And two small red banners, could

³³ Cf. Fujieda Akira, “Tonkō no sōniseki” 敦煌の僧尼籍, *Tōhō Gakuhō* (Kyōto), 29, 1959, pp. 287-290.

³⁴ See S1438 Model letters. Cf. P. Demiéville, *Le concile de Lhasa*, Paris, 1952, p. 271. For the leading role of Longxing Monastery in the Buddhist community in Dunhuang, see documents S1947 and P2879.

³⁵ Full text in Ikeda On 池田温, *Chūgoku kodai sekichō kenkyū* 中國古代籍帳研究, Tōkyō, 1979, pp. 514-516.

³⁶ For Fang Guangchang’s study of the Buddhist catalogue, see Fang 1991, pp. 96-106, 309-310.

not be used; And three old golden-flower banners, could not be used,” and “sutra wrappers... could not be used.”³⁷ These Buddhist images and wrappers could no longer be used, but they remained in the Longxing monastery collection. As the documents below reveal, traditional restoration practices required monasteries to retain damaged banners and wrappers until they could be repaired. The banners and the wrappers in the library cave at Dunhuang were not refuse.

The problem of missing texts at Longxing monastery persisted. According to a report written in 848, “On the seventh day of the ninth month of the *wuchen* 戊辰 year, an inspection of the holdings at Longxing monastery according to the *Record of Buddhist Scriptures*, following the categories of sutras, vinaya, abhidharma, and collected materials. With the exception of the existing texts, those missing texts are as follows: sutras, 472 fascicles missing; vinaya, 80 fascicles missing; abhidharma, 301 fascicles missing, collections 14 fascicles missing, biographies of the virtuous sages, 21 fascicles missing. Sutras, vinaya, abhidharma, biographies, altogether 888 fascicles missing” (P3852 verso).³⁸ This notation reveals that the missing Buddhist texts from the Longxing monastic collection at the end of Tibetan rule had not yet been replaced.

“An inventory of goods held in perpetuity by the monasteries of Shazhou on the fourth day of the first month of the fourteenth year of the Xiantong 咸通 reign [873]” (P2613) records that the state of Buddhist images and votive items in other monasteries resembled that at Longxing monastery. The list included such items as two broken and torn red banners, one old broken and torn silk sutra wrapper from Korea, one old broken patterned brocade sutra cover, and twenty-four broken and torn raw silk bodhisattva’s images-banners.³⁹ In this inventory, the items that are least usable are labelled *cijichu* 次籍除, literally, to be discarded at the next time of registering. The items to be discarded include everyday utensils like pots and pans—not votive items, which are not to be thrown away, no matter how damaged. This list reveals that, because each monastery at Dunhuang held all votive items in high regard, it was common practice for Buddhist monasteries to retain possession even of unusable Buddhist images.

³⁷ For Hou Ching-lang’s study of the Buddhist paintings, see his “Trésor du monastère Long-hing à Touen-houang,” *Nouvelles contributions aux études de Touen-houang*, Paris, 1981, pp. 149-168.

³⁸ Fang 1991, p. 129.

³⁹ For complete text, see Ikeda On, *op. cit.*, pp. 579-582.

The problem of missing sutras persisted until the early years of the Song without ever being resolved. The colophon of the list of Buddhist texts in S2142 says “On the 23rd day of the fourth month of *jiazi* 甲子, the second year of Qiande 乾德 of the Great Tang [should read Song] dynasty [6 June 964], the keeper of Sutras and Dean, Huiyan 惠宴, and the Vinaya Teacher Huici 會慈 examined and checked the two sets of the *Da banruo jing* 大般若經 and found many missing sections which they have not yet been able to replace. On the same day the Vinaya Teacher Haiquan 海詮 asked permission to deposit *Da Foding lüezhou ben* 大佛頂略咒本 in one fascicle, and the Vinaya Teacher Huici asked permission to deposit a small-character copy of the *Zuishengwang jing* 最勝王經 in two fascicles, to be counted as one set.”⁴⁰

At this time the Keeper of Sutras in the Buddhist organizations at Dunhuang had no way of finding the missing sections so that he could restore full sets of sutras, nor could the ordinary monasteries. From the time of Tibetan rule (786 to 848), to the Five Dynasties and early Song dynasty, it was common for each monastery library at Dunhuang to be missing sections of or entire texts. Accordingly, among the Dunhuang documents are many lists of missing texts, lists of missing wrappers, lists of supplementary sutras, and applications to the court to request sutras,⁴¹ all of which point to the persistence of this problem.

The library at the small Three Realms Monastery was in even worse shape. A list of sutras preserved in the library has the following colophon: “On the fifteenth day of the sixth month of *jiawu* 甲午 year of the fifth year of the Changxing 長興 reign [934], Daozhen 道真, a monk at Three Realms Monastery noticed that the collection of sutras and commentaries in the monastery was not complete. Full of sincerity, vowing to fulfill his intentions, he subsequently requested old and damaged sutras and manuscripts from different collections to enter the monastery, so that they could be repaired from beginning to end, disseminated to the world, thereby to add to the glory of the Buddhist establishment for ten thousand ages and one thousand autumns, and to make up the offerings ... all sutras and commentaries now in the library collection appear below” (Document 0345 held by the Dunhuang Academy). According to the research of Shi Pingting

⁴⁰ This translation is based on that in Giles 1957, pp. 272-273, but I have changed the romanization to pinyin and slightly altered his text.

⁴¹ J.-P. Drège, *Les bibliothèques en Chine au temps des manuscrits*, Paris, 1991.

施萍婷, this text lists the books after Daozhen re-organized the collection of the Three Realms Monastery.⁴²

A different document, entitled “A list of all sutras in the library,” is the register of the collected and repaired texts after the completion of the work (No. Xin 新 329 in the National Library of Peking).⁴³ It bears the same colophon as the text held in Dunhuang, though the last sentence has been changed to read “all sutras and commentaries that have been received appear in the following catalogue.” S3624 is the clean copy of this listing, of which only 24 lines are extant. The relatively complete list of texts in the Beijing library text shows that the collection at Three Realms Monastery contained significant gaps, even after the effort to restore it had been completed. Furthermore, we should notice that the incomplete canon supplemented by Daozhen contained some apocryphal sutras, some Chan texts, and some Three Stages school 三階教 texts, which had been omitted from the standard Buddhist canon such as the *Dacheng wujin zangfa* 大乘無盡藏法 (The method of the unending treasure of the great vehicle), *Yanluowang shouji* 閻羅王授記 (King Yama’s prediction), *Bayang shenzhou jing* 八陽神咒經 (The incantations of the eight yang), *Fumu enzhong jing* 父母恩重經 (The sutra of parental love), *Wuliang dacijiao jing* 無量大慈教經 (The sutra of infinitely compassionate teachings), *Shan’e yinguo jing* 善惡因果經 (The sutra of the outcomes of good and bad deeds), and *Lidai fabao ji* 歷代法寶記 (A record of the Dharma Treasures through the ages). This listing helps us to understand why the library cave contained certain Buddhist texts, yet was missing others, and why apocryphal texts were also included.⁴⁴ If one uses the *Kaiyuan Register* listing with its categories to judge the library’s holdings, many of the texts in the library cave would

⁴² Shi 1990. A part of the manuscript preserved in the Library of Dunhuang Academy has been published by Dunhuang Academy, *Dunhuang* 敦煌, Nanjing and Lanzhou, 1991, p. 263, pl. 284.

⁴³ Xin 新 0329 is originally a manuscript in the Ōtani collection that is now held by the National Library of Peking. The photos of full text in Inokuchi Taijun 井ノ口泰淳, et al., *Ryojun hakubutsukan kyūzō Ōtani tankentai shōrai Tonkō koshakyō mokuroku* 旅順博物館舊藏大谷探検隊将来敦煌古寫經目錄, Kyōto, 1989, pls. 6-76. Printed text and studies see Oda Yoshihisa’s 小田義久 article on the manuscripts in *Ryūkoku daigaku ronshū* 龍谷大學論集, 434/435, 1989, pp. 555-576.

⁴⁴ Those texts belonged to the Three Stages school, apocryphy, and Chan school, could be found among the texts from the library cave. Cf. Yabuki Keiki 矢吹慶輝, *Sangaikyō no kenkyū* 三階教の研究, Tōkyō, 1927; Makita Tairyō 牧田諦亮, *Gikyō kenkyū* 疑經研究, Kyōto, 1976; Shinohara Hisao 篠原壽雄 and Tanaka Ryōshō 田中良昭, *Tonkō butten to zen* 敦煌仏典と禪, Tōkyō, 1980.

appear to be unorthodox.⁴⁵

Still, the collection at the Three Realms Monastery contained gaps while mixing accepted and apocryphal texts. As Buddhism developed in Dunhuang in the tenth century, many apocryphal sutras circulated in large numbers. This was the result of the massive popularization of Buddhism. Daozhen was not well schooled in the niceties of doctrine. S3147 is a copy of the apocryphal *Yanluowang shouji* (King Yama's prediction), which was received and carried by the monk Daozhen of the Three Realms Monastery.⁴⁶ Clearly it was natural for spurious and apocryphal sutras to be present in monastic libraries, and we cannot expect the catalogues of imperial collections at Luoyang and Chang'an to describe accurately the library holdings of the Three Realms Monastery library in such a remote place as Dunhuang.

Daozhen's work of repairing and supplementing the library was not complete even by the year 934. A colophon on the *Mādhyamaka-śāstra* (*Zhonglun* 中論) reads: "On the fifteenth day of the first month of the *yiwei* 乙未 year [935], the monk Daozhen, who repaired the *Da banruo* (*Mahāprajñā-pāramitā*) *sūtra* at the Three Realms Monastery, together with the text of a lesson to be read aloud in the inner temple, repaired eleven copies of various sutras. One copy of the *Bao'en jing* 報恩經 (Rewarding kindness sutra) and the *Da Foming jing* 大佛名經 (Great sutra of Buddha's names) was also made separately. With pious intent, Daozhen made sixty wrappers for the *Da banruo jing* of dark red embroidered silk cloth, all complete, and he also made fifty silver banners for presentation to the Three Realms Monastery."⁴⁷ Clearly Daozhen did not restrict himself to the collection and repair of texts. He also made wrappers and painted Buddhist images on banners.⁴⁸ Judging from the certificate given by Daozhen at the Three Realms Monastery in 987, which is the latest surviving record about

⁴⁵ Fang Guangchang states his opinion that there was no complete canon in the library cave and that apocryphal texts remained unused at the time in his "Dunhuang cangjingdong fengbi yuanyin zhi wojian" 敦煌藏經洞封閉原因之我見, *Zhongguo shehui kexue* 中國社會科學, N° 5, 1991, p. 217. His comments do not fit the situation in Dunhuang during ninth and tenth centuries.

⁴⁶ Giles 1957, p. 163, N° 5448.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 124-5, N° 4298.

⁴⁸ The silk-painting of Liu Sahe 劉薩訶 mentioned in the colophon was found in the library cave. Cf. H. Vetch, "Lieou Sa-he et les grottes de Mo-kao," *Nouvelles contributions aux études de Touen-houang*, pp. 137-48; Shi Weixiang 史葦湘, "Liu Sahe yu Dunhuang Mogaoku" 劉薩訶與敦煌莫高窟, *Wenwu*, N° 6 1983, pp. 5-13; R. Whitfield, "The Monk Liu Sahe and the Dunhuang Paintings," *Orientalia*, March 1989, pp. 64-70.

Daozhen, his efforts to collect and repair sutras continued until late in the tenth century. One side of S6225 is a “Record of various sutras acquired by the monk Daozhen of the Three Realms Monastery while on the quest in different places.” On the reverse is Daozhen’s handwritten note, which says “collected one copy of the *Da banruo jing* (*Mahāprajñā-sūtra*) in 600 fascicles, all complete. Another copy of the same, incomplete. Three copies of *Da banniepan jing* 大般涅槃經 (*Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*) and *Da beijing* 大悲經 in three fascicles, all complete. One copy of the list of *sūtras*.” This is a short listing of the *sūtras* collected by Daozhen. Daozhen also wrote S6191, which says, “Various copies of the *Da banruo jing* in ten fascicles. If donors and officials are lacking wrappers, they can take these.”⁴⁹ These results were gradually attained after 934, indicating Daozhen’s success in collecting texts. His comment also reveals that this method of collecting manuscripts would inevitably produce large numbers of duplicate texts.

The Three Realms Monastery was a small monastery that lacked the resources to hire lay students to come and copy manuscripts, so Daozhen used the method of collecting old manuscript copies from other monasteries. This explains why some of the texts in the library cave did not originally belong to the Three Stages Monastery. They were collected from other monasteries. Today the manuscript copies of Buddhist texts from Dunhuang, like the *Mahāprajñā-pāramitā-sūtra*, bear different dates, different copyists’ hands, and different monastic seals. Another reason for the variety is that the Mogao Caves at Dunhuang were an important site for donors, and the holdings of the Three Realms Monastery must have included many manuscripts and images donated by devotees. In addition, I think that the old and torn manuscripts Daozhen collected from other monasteries were placed in the Three Realms Monastery to await the necessary materials to repair them. In the end, both the manuscripts and the repair materials were placed in the library cave. The damaged manuscripts, waste paper, wooden knobs, cover sheets, sutra cover fragments and silk tapes Stein saw in the library cave were actually materials for the repair of manuscripts, covers, and paintings. For this reason they were preserved in the library cave. They might have been discarded by the larger monasteries at Dunhuang, but to a monastery like the Three Realms Monastery, they were not refuse.

In the manuscripts held in Paris and London, there are many patches on the manuscripts, paintings, and sutra covers, which have gradually become

⁴⁹ According to Shi 1990, those two documents, S6225 and S6191, should belong to Daozhen.

detached. In London, the curators have cataloged these fragments under a number at the end of the collection, so that the number of such fragments in London increases all the time. In Paris, they are cataloged according to the text number with which they were found, under the label “bis” (again) or “pièce 1, 2, 3” (fragment 1, 2, 3). These fragments were originally used by the monks of old to repair paintings, covers, or manuscripts. When the library cave was opened, these patches were still attached to the original texts. Even when detached, they remain an integral part of the original document.⁵⁰ Regrettably, the number of such materials increases all the time, giving people the impression that the library cave was totally chaotic and in disrepair—to the point that they have become further proof of the waste repository theory.

The Relation Between the Library Cave and the Three Realms Monastery

As both a high-ranking Buddhist official (*sengzheng* 僧政) and a monk of the Three Realms Monastery, Daozhen issued a list of caves where lamps should be lit on the eighth day of the twelfth month in 951.⁵¹ The names he used for the caves—such as the Cave of Cao Yijin 曹議金 (Dawang ku 大王窟) reveal that this list was made for the Mogao Caves at Dunhuang. Because Daozhen held both positions simultaneously, we can deduce that the Three Realms Monastery was located in front of the Mogao Caves. (Although no evidence survives, I suspect the ruined wooden building facing the Cave 16 adjoining the library cave may be the site of the Three Realms Monastery during the Tang dynasty.) The documents and artifacts found in the library cave are clearly related to the holdings and votive offerings of the Three Realms Monastery there. In addition, there is no question that the Three Realms Monastery held the

⁵⁰ Rong Xinjiang, *Yingguo tushuguan cang Dunhuang hanwen feifojiao wenxian canjuan mulu* (Catalogue of the Chinese Non-Buddhist Fragments from Dunhuang in the British Library) 英國圖書館藏敦煌漢文非佛教文獻殘卷目錄, 1994, pp. 26-27; idem., “The Historical Importance of the Chinese Fragments from Dunhuang in the British Library,” *Journal of the British Library*, in press.

⁵¹ Jin Weinuo 金維諾, “Dunhuang kukan mingshu kao” 敦煌窟龕名數考, *Zhongguo meishushi lunji* 中國美術史論集, Beijing, 1981, pp. 326-343; Sun Xiushen 孫修身, “Dunhuang shishi laba randeng fenpei kukan mingshu xiezuo niandai kao” 敦煌石氏臘八燃燈分配窟龕名數寫作年代考, *Silu fanggu* 絲路訪古, Lanzhou, 1981, pp. 209-215.

greatest number of manuscripts bearing its own seal or the abbreviated characters denoting other monasteries.⁵² Stein hypothesized that the library cave drew much of its contents from the holdings of the Three Realms Monastery,⁵³ as did Fujieda.⁵⁴

The library cave was originally the meditation site for Hongbian, the Monk-supervisor who served in the Returning-to-Righteousness Army government at Shazhou.⁵⁵ After his death, his disciples placed his statue there. Since it was near the site of the Three Realms Monastery, sometime in the mid-tenth century it became the storehouse where Daozhen placed all the damaged manuscripts and Buddhist scriptures he collected in addition to the votive offerings. Among them were complete texts, silk paintings, ritual implements, and damaged manuscripts. For a long period, Daozhen collected these materials both in the monastery library and the cave.

Buddhist scriptures and paintings doubtless constituted the majority of items in the library cave, and they originally were the property of the Three Realms Monastery. They included every type of Buddhist scripture dating from the fifth century on. Although some of these were damaged, from Daozhen's tenth-century vantage point, they were valuable documents. Like the Song editions held in today's libraries, they were prized acquisitions even though they had suffered great damage. It is even more difficult to say that the many Buddhist scriptures copied in the late tenth century, or Buddhist paintings done at the same time, were refuse. These documents and artifacts were carefully placed in the library cave, suggesting they were not thrown away.

In a further refinement of the waste-repository theory, Fujieda argued that the main reason for the discarding of the hand-copied Buddhist texts was the introduction of woodblock printing. When libraries put the newly printed Buddhist sutras on their shelves, he suggested, they consigned the manuscript copies to a repository, probably sometime around the year 1002.⁵⁶ If one argues, as Fujieda has, that the introduction of woodblock printing caused the

⁵² A list of Buddhist sutras with seals and signs given by J.-P. Drège in his *Les bibliothèques en Chine au temps des manuscrits*, pp. 238-245. Most of the manuscripts are from the Three Realms Monastery.

⁵³ *Serindia*, II, p. 882.

⁵⁴ Fujieda 1981, p. 67.

⁵⁵ Ma Shichang 馬世長, "Guanyu Dunhuang cangjingdong de jige wenti" 關於敦煌藏經洞的幾個問題, *Wenwu*, N° 12, 1978, pp. 21-33.

⁵⁶ A. Fujieda, "The Tun-huang Manuscripts," *Essays on the Sources for Chinese History*, Canberra, 1973, p.128; Fujieda 1981, pp. 65-68.

nature of books to change, leading to the disposal of hand-written manuscripts, one still has no way of explaining the presence of paintings and block-printed editions in the cave. Furthermore, even though it is possible that the Northern Song issued a block-printed set of Buddhist texts to Shazhou,⁵⁷ this set of texts would never have been placed in the Three Realms Monastery but in the Longxing Monastery inside the city—if it had been shipped at all. Even after the introduction of woodblock printing, officials were still commissioning hand-written manuscripts: “The king of Dunhuang, Cao Zongshou 曹宗壽, and his wife, the Lady of Jibei 濟北 prefecture, both devout believers, ordered workmen to make wrappers and write scrolls to be deposited in Bao’en Monastery 報恩寺. Recorded on the fifteenth day of the fifth month of the fifth year of the Xianping 咸平 era [1002]” (F32A, a document held in St. Petersburg).⁵⁸ This document underlines the appeal of hand-copied manuscripts, even as late as 1002, indicating that the reason put forth by Fujieda for the disposal of manuscripts is not convincing. Another weakness of Fujieda’s opinion is that the library cave has not enough room for depositing the Buddhist scrolls from all of the monasteries in Dunhuang.

Intact Materials from the Library Cave

Based on what they can see in libraries in different countries, people today generally think that the Dunhuang manuscripts are mostly incomplete scrolls, but this perception is inaccurate. The cave contained complete sutras in Chinese, complete paintings, complete wrappers, and complete Tibetan, Sogdian, Uighur, and Khotanese texts—the presence of which all belie the waste repository thesis.

Roderick Whitfield has reprinted six complete Buddhist scriptures dating to the Six Dynasties, Sui, and Tang periods.⁵⁹ In London many complete Buddhist scrolls are over ten meters long.⁶⁰ Judging from the example of the

⁵⁷ Only one canon made of manuscripts was sent to Shazhou (Dunhuang) by the Song dynasty in 1007, see *Song Huiyao* 宋會要, fanyi 蕃夷, v, section on Gua-Sha 瓜沙 prefectures. There is no mention of printed books.

⁵⁸ *Ecang Dunhuang wenxian* 俄藏敦煌文獻 (Dunhuang manuscripts collected in the St. Petersburg Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Russia), vol. I, Shanghai, 1992, pp. 321-322.

⁵⁹ Whitfield, *The Arts of Central Asia*, I, pls. 1-6.

⁶⁰ Giles 1957, gives the length and width as well as information about the beginning and end of the manuscripts.

holdings at the Three Realms Monastery, it seems it was impossible to restore a full canon according to the list contained in *The Kaiyuan Register*. But *The Kaiyuan Register* set the standard of the day, and it is an important task to measure the holdings of the library cave against the wrapper numbers given in *The Kaiyuan Register*. *The Tripitaka from Dunhuang Manuscripts*, recently published in Taipei, is one such effort to compile the Buddhist texts from Dunhuang,⁶¹ but because the Russian holdings have not yet been published in their entirety,⁶² is still incomplete.

Because most sutra wrappers were treated as art works and placed in museums, they have been published so that one can research their designs or weaves.⁶³ Accordingly we still do not understand their full significance. The sutra wrappers made of linen or paper in the British Library have already been taken apart to expose the manuscripts they contained, and only a few intact examples survive.⁶⁴ It is rumored that the National Library of Peking and the Dunhuang Academy have more wrappers in their possession. The existence of these wrappers proves that the sutras in the library cave were originally in an order, but the wrappers await systematic cataloguing before we can determine how many survive.

Most of the scholars interested in the reasons for the sealing of the cave overlook the large number of silk paintings and embroidered art objects from the cave. As pointed out above, many of these intact art objects have been executed to a sufficiently high standard to command the undying affection of both scholars and monks. How could these masterpieces be refuse? According to the research of art historians, these works all date to the ninth and tenth centuries, with some being completed only at the end of the tenth century. They were too new to fall within the category of no-longer-usable items at Three Realms Monastery. We can easily look at the

⁶¹ *Dunhuang dazangjing*, Taipei, 1989-1991, 63 vols., vols. 1-60 contain the Chinese texts.

⁶² 10 volumes of *Ecang Dunhuang wenxian* have been published. The entire set is projected to contain about 20 volumes.

⁶³ Some sutra wrappers in the British collection have been published in *The Arts of Central Asia.*, III, pls. 6-7, pp. 286-288 (Ch. XLVIII. 001, Ch. XX. 006); for those in the French collection, see K. Riboud et G. Vial, *Tissus de Touen-houang conservés au Musée Guimet et à la Bibliothèque Nationale* (Mission Paul Pelliot XIII), Paris, 1970, pls. 1, 3, 4, 12, 30, 39, 43, 45, 87, pp. 3-26, 69-71, 145-155, 201-207, 221-228, 231-235, 369-370; Nos. EO. 1200, EO. 1208, EO. 1209/1, EO. 3664, EO. 1199, EO. 1207, EO. 3663, MG. 23082, MG. 23083.

⁶⁴ On the sutra wrappers in the British Library, cf. Rong Xinjiang, *op. cit.*, cited in note 50.

beautiful paintings taken by Stein to London⁶⁵ and the extensive holdings of the Pelliot Collection.⁶⁶ These works were all contained in the library cave, a fact which proponents of the waste repository school cannot explain. My own view is that these paintings would not have been sealed up unless there was a severe external threat to Buddhism.

We must also consider the non-Chinese texts. It is commonly held that the Tibetan manuscripts must be discarded, since the period of Tibetan rule ended in 848. The long period of Tibetan rule, however, had a lasting impact on Buddhism at Dunhuang. The famous Tibetan monk Facheng 法成 was in Dunhuang in 848, but he did not return to Tibet. Instead, at the request of his disciple, the successful general Zhang Yichao 張議潮, he remained at Dunhuang where he continued to teach Buddhism.⁶⁷ The Tibetan texts he used could not have been immediately thrown away. Moreover, the studies of Uray and Takeuchi have shown that Tibetan remained one of the languages in use along the Silk Road until the end of the tenth century.⁶⁸ If we consider the continuing presence of different Tibetan tribes (Tibet, Tuyuhun, and mThong-khyab among them) in Dunhuang, it becomes increasingly likely that devotees read Tibetan texts even after 848.

Because Dunhuang was an important city along the Silk Road, its residents used other languages. A colony of Sogdians had lived in eighth-century Dunhuang.⁶⁹ Although after 848 the Sogdians no longer lived in Conghua canton, it took a long time for them to disperse, and it should come as no surprise that the library cave contained Sogdian texts. Uighur and

⁶⁵ See Whitfield, *The Arts of Central Asia*.

⁶⁶ J. Giès, M. Soymié, et al., *Les arts de l'Asie centrale. La collection Paul Pelliot du Musée national des Arts Asiatiques-Guimet*, 2 vols., Paris, 1995-1996.

⁶⁷ Cf. Rong Xinjiang, "Jiushi shiji guiyijun shidai de Dunhuang fojiao" 九十世紀歸義軍時代的敦煌佛教, *Qinghua hanxue yanjiu* 清華漢學研究, 1, 1994, p. 90.

⁶⁸ G. Uray, "L'emploi du tibétain dans les chancelleries des États du Kan-sou et de Khotan postérieurs à la domination tibétaine," *JA*, CCLXIX, 1981, pp. 81-90; *idem.*, "New Contributions to Tibetan Documents from the post-Tibetan Tunhuang," *Tibetan Studies. Proceedings of the 4th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Schloss Hohenkammer-Munich 1985*, München, 1988, pp. 515-528; T. Takeuchi, "A Group of Old Tibetan Letters Written under Kuei-i-chun: a Preliminary Study for the Classification of Old Tibetan Letters," *AOH*, XLIV, 1990, pp. 175-190.

⁶⁹ Ikeda On, "Hasseiki chūyō ni okeru Tonkō no sogudojin shūraku" 八世紀中葉における敦煌のソグド人聚落, *Yūrashia bunka kenkyū* ユーラシア文化研究, 1, 1965, pp. 49-92; Rong Xinjiang, "Caves of the Thousand Buddhas," *Encyclopedia Iranica*, V. 1, New York, 1990, pp. 97-99.

Khotanese texts are even easier to understand for the ruling house at Dunhuang, the Cao family, intermarried with the Uighurs of Ganzhou and the Khotanese ruling family in Khotan. At the end of the tenth century, Dunhuang continued to have relations with the Uighurs of Ganzhou and Xizhou (Turfan) as well as the Khotanese, and many Uighurs and Khotanese were long-term residents at Dunhuang, who produced the Khotanese and Uighur Buddhist sutras and texts.⁷⁰ Similarly, many of the Chinese residents in Dunhuang after 848 could read and write these languages.

In short, nothing in the library cave—not Buddhist sutras in Chinese, not the Tibetan documents, not the paintings, not the Sogdian, Uighur, or Khotanese texts—was discarded. I suspect the documents, sutras, and votive offerings in the library cave were the library holdings and property of the Three Realms Monastery.

The Disposal of Buddhist Materials

Buddhist followers had traditionally buried damaged sutras and broken statues in the ground. One of the major reasons we cannot accept the waste repository hypothesis is that the library cave was too big to be such a burial place. If the manuscripts from the fifth century and later had indeed been refuse, they should not have been placed in this cave but instead placed inside a Buddhist statue or some other small place. In 1965, archeologists found two such refuse areas at the Mogao Caves at Dunhuang—one in front of caves 125 and 126, and one in a hole below the ground level of the lower wall-paintings of cave 130. There, they found Northern Wei and Tang fragments of embroidered silk, Buddhist paintings on silk, and wood-block printed images of the Buddha.⁷¹ These materials were all crumpled up, as if

⁷⁰ Rong Xinjiang 榮新江, “Gongyuan shishiji Shazhou Guiyijun yu Xizhou Huigu de wenhua jiaowang” 公元十世紀沙洲歸義軍與西州回鶻的文化交往, *Dierjie Dunhuangxue guoji yantaohui lunwenji* 第二屆敦煌學國際研討會論文集, Taipei, 1991, pp. 583-603; *idem.*, “Ganzhou Huigu yu Caoshi Guiyijun” 甘州回鶻與曹氏歸義軍, *Xibei minzu yanjiu* 西北民族研究, N° 2, 1993, pp. 60-72; *idem.*, “Yutian wangguo yu Guasha Caoshi” 于闐王國與瓜沙曹氏, *DHYJ*, N° 4, 1994, pp. 111-119; Zhang Guangda 張廣達 and Rong Xinjiang, “Guanyu Dunhuang chutu Yutian wenxian de niandai jiqi xiangguan wenti” 關於敦煌出土于闐文獻的年代及其相關問題, *Jinian Chen Yinke xiansheng danchen bainian xueshu lunwenji* 紀念陳寅恪先生誕辰百年學術論文集, Beijing, 1989, pp. 284-306.

⁷¹ *Dunhuang wenwu yanjiusuo* 敦煌文物研究所, “Xinfaxian de Beiwei cixiu” 新發現的北魏刺繡, *Wenwu*, N° 2, 1972, pp. 54-59; *idem.*, “Mogaoku faxian de Tangdai sizhiwu jiqita” 莫高窟發現的唐代絲織物及其它, *Wenwu*, N° 12, 1972, pp. 55-67.

they were meant to be thrown away.

The appearance of these refuse areas casts doubt on the argument of Fang Guangchang, who has also refined the waste-repository thesis. He has hypothesized that at some point during the Cao family rule of Dunhuang all the monasteries were subject to a massive cleaning and reorganization, and the discarded, useless sutras, used documents, waste paper, banners, and excess Buddhist images were all placed inside the library cave.⁷² But the placement of materials in the library cave does not resemble the Buddhist materials from all the Dunhuang monasteries in the refuse areas. They look as if they were sealed up for a different reason.

Dating the Latest Document in the Cave

The document cited above, the donor's record dated 1002 (F32A) is the latest dated document to come from the library cave. Some have argued for a later date on the basis of different materials, but each of these arguments can be refuted. In 1913, E. D. Ross described a Uighur Buddhist text dating to 1350,⁷³ while in 1986 J. C. Huntington argued, on the basis of stylistic considerations, that a group of Tibetan paintings dated to after 1035.⁷⁴ Both the text and the paintings must have come from cave 464 (originally Pelliot number 181), where both Stein and Pelliot found many manuscripts in Chinese, Tibetan, and Uighur dating to the Yuan dynasty.⁷⁵ Other scholars have advanced evidence from undated Chinese materials to argue that they were written after 1002. In some cases they cite taboo characters⁷⁶ or Buddhist texts written after this date,⁷⁷ but each claim can

⁷² Fang Guangchang 方廣鎬, "Dunhuang changjingdong fengbi yuanyin zhi wojian" 敦煌藏經洞封閉原因之我見, pp. 213-223.

⁷³ E. D. Ross's note to Legge, "Western Manichaeism and the Turfan Discoveries," *JRAS*, 1913, p. 81.

⁷⁴ J. C. Huntington, "A Note on Dunhuang Cave 17, 'The Library,' or Hong Bian's Reliquary Chamber," *Ars Orientalis*, 16, 1986, pp. 93-101.

⁷⁵ *Serindia*, II, pp. 828-829; Pelliot 1908, pp. 506, 529; Bai 1985, pp. 351-353; Liu Yongzeng 劉永增, "Huiguwen xieben yu Mogaoku dier cangjingdong" 回鶻文寫本與莫高窟第二藏經洞, *DHYJ*, N° 4, 1988, pp. 40-44; *Grottes de Touen-houang, carnet de notes de Paul Pelliot: inscriptions et peintures murales*, IV, Paris, 1992, pp. 32-39.

⁷⁶ Tan Zhen 譚真, "Cong yifen ziliao tan cangjingdong de fengbi" 從一份資料談藏經洞的封閉, *DHYJ*, N° 4, 1988, pp. 36-39.

⁷⁷ Bi Sujuan 畢素娟, "Liaodai mingseng quanming zhuzuo zai Dunhuang

be refuted. The strongest evidence against the 1002 date is the presence of two copies of the *Jingde chuandenglu* 景德傳燈錄 (*The transmission of the lamp*) in St. Petersburg.⁷⁸ This book was completed in 1004, and Dunhuang scholars have long thought it the manuscript with the latest date in the library cave.⁷⁹ One of the Russian manuscripts (F. 229b, M. 897) is indeed this text. Its recto and verso sides resemble those brought back by Stein from Khara-khoto (KK. II. 0238. k), with the same shape of characters, writing style, and number of characters per line.⁸⁰ After comparing photographs from the British Library, I realized that the British and Russian texts were originally from one scroll that was divided between Stein and Kozlov.⁸¹

The other text, Dx. 1728 (M2686) is a fragment of paper containing only ten lines. The Russian catalogue places a question mark after its identification as from the *Jingde chuandenglu*.⁸² In 1991, when I visited St. Petersburg, I saw the original, which is definitely from Dunhuang. But when I examined its contents, I identified it as a fragment from the monk Jingjue's 淨覺 preface to the early Chan history, *Lengjia shiziji* 楞伽師資記, which was written during the first half of the eighth century.⁸³

Stein and Pelliot both noted the presence of later materials in the library

cangjingdong chuxian ji youguan wenti" 遼代名僧詮明著作在敦煌藏經洞出現及有關問題, *Zhongguo lishi bowuguan guankan* 中國歷史博物館館刊, N° 18/19, 1992, pp. 133-139; Chen Tsu-lung 陳祚龍, *Dunhuang xuelin zhaji* 敦煌學林札記, Taipei, 1986, pp. 65-68; Li Zhengyu 李正宇, "Dunhuang yishu Songren shi jijiao" 敦煌遺書宋人時輯校, *DHYJ*, N° 2, 1992, p. 47.

⁷⁸ L. N. Mens'ikov *et al.*, *Opisanie Kitaiskij Rukopisei Dunhuangskogo Fonda Instituta Narodov*, I, pp. 353-354; II, pp. 409-410. These plates of the former have all been reprinted in *Ecang Dunhuang wenxian*, IV, pp. 299-305.

⁷⁹ For example, A. Cadonna, "Il frammento manoscritto del Jingde chuandeng lu nel fondo di Dunhuang a Leningrado," *Cina*, 19, 1981, pp. 7-33; Tanaka Ryōshō, *Tonkō zenshū bunken no kenkyū* 敦煌禪宗文獻の研究, Tōkyō, 1983, pp. 637-638.

⁸⁰ H. Maspero, *Les documents chinois de la troisième expédition de Sir Aurel Stein en Asie Centrale*, London, 1953, p. 230.

⁸¹ Rong Xinjiang, "Ecang Jingde chuandenglu fei Dunhuang xieben bian" 俄藏景德傳燈錄非敦煌寫本辨, *Duan Wenjie xiansheng zhixue wushi zhounian jinian Dunhuangxue lunji* 段文傑先生治學五十周年紀念敦煌學論集, Beijing, 1996, pp. 250-253, pls. XVIII-XII.

⁸² P. Demiéville, "Récents travaux sur Touen-houang," *T'oung Pao*, LVI, 1970, p. 2, n. 1, also doubts this identification.

⁸³ Rong Xinjiang, "Dunhuang chanzong dengshi canjuan shiyi" 敦煌禪宗燈史殘卷拾遺, *Zhou Shaoliang xiansheng xinkai jiuzhi qingshou wenji* 周紹良先生欣開九秩慶壽文集, Beijing, 1997, pp. 232-235.

cave, which Daoist Wang had placed there. Pelliot noted particularly a late nineteenth-century edition of a Daoist pamphlet. People often overlook this important point although it has been emphasized repeatedly by Ross, Rona-Tas, and Whitfield.⁸⁴ So, even if texts dating to after 1002 are found, their presence alone would not be sufficient to disprove my argument, since the cave Stein visited in 1907 had already been disturbed by Daoist Wang's addition of later materials.

The Trauma of the Karakhanids' Invasion of Khotan

From the accumulated documents in the cave, we can establish that the sealing must have taken place soon after 1002—not as late as the 1035 date of the Xi Xia invasion advocated by Pelliot.⁸⁵ In Pelliot's time, people did not yet know much about the history of the region, so they latched onto the 1035 date. I think a much more plausible reason for the sealing of the cave was the fall of Khotan to the Karakhanids in 1006.

The most important historical event occurring in the northwest after 1002 was above all the Islamic Karakhanid destruction of Buddhist Khotan.⁸⁶ Because of the marriage relations between the rulers of Dunhuang and the Khotanese royal family, in 970 the king of Khotan sent a letter to his maternal uncle, the military governor of the Returning-to-Righteousness Army, Cao Yuanzhong 曹元忠. In it, he asked him to send troops to help Khotan resist the Karakhanids.⁸⁷ Some thirty years later, soon after Khotan's

⁸⁴ E. D. Ross, "The Caves of the Thousand Buddhas," *JRAS*, 1913, pp. 434-436; A. Rona-Tas, "A Brief Note on the Chronology of the Tun-huang Collections," *AOH*, XXI, 1968, pp. 313-316; Whitfield, *The Art of Central Asia*, II, pl. 83, p. 347.

⁸⁵ Stein dated the sealing to the beginning of the eleventh century, see *Serindia*, II, pp. 820, 827. The following scholars agreed with Stein: Fujieda 1981; Fang Guangchang, "Dunhuang cangjingdong fengbi niandai zhi wojian" 敦煌藏經洞封閉年代之我見, presented to the 34th International Congress of Asian and African Studies. Hong Kong August 23-28, 1993. Bai 1985 refuted Pelliot's opinion with strong evidence.

⁸⁶ Cf. Huan Tao 華濤, "Satuke Bugela han yu Tianshan diqu Yisilanhua de kaishi" 薩圖克不格拉汗與天山地區伊斯蘭化的開始, *Shijie zongjiao yanjiu* 世界宗教研究, N° 3, 1991, pp. 10-23.

⁸⁷ H.W. Bailey, "Sri Visa' Sūra and the Ta-Uang," *Asia Major*, new series, XI.2, 1964, pp. 10-23.

fall, many Khotanese fled to Dunhuang.⁸⁸ Among the fairly complete Khotanese sutras in the library cave are many from the reigns of Visa' Sūra (r. 966-977) and Visa' Dharma (ruled after 978), such as Jātaka texts (Ch. 00274) and Vajrayāna texts (Ch. I. 0021b). These may have been written down by refugees, who maintained their belief in the destruction of the current Buddhist age even after they came to Dunhuang, or the Khotanese monks may have brought these texts with them from Khotan when they fled.⁸⁹ The news that the Khotanese monks brought with them about the eastward movement of Islam must have terrified Buddhist devotees far more than what they heard about the Buddhist kingdom of the Xi Xia. Because the Karakhanids had fought in a bloody war for forty years before they took Khotan, they ferociously destroyed the Buddhist monasteries of Khotan.⁹⁰ This news must have prompted the monks of the Three Realms Monastery to seal up their manuscripts, paintings, and other sacred objects. Yet because the Karakhanids did not attack Dunhuang, the residents there had sufficient time to rebuild the wall outside the library cave and paint Bodhisattvas on it.⁹¹ Because the wall in front of the cave was well concealed, when those who had done the sealing died, later generations forgot all about it and the library cave remained undisturbed until Daoist Wang broke through the wall concealing it in 1900.

⁸⁸ For example, in the Qinghai area, Aliyu 阿里骨, the leader of the Qiang tribe, was originally Khotanese. See his biography in *Songshi* 宋史, vol. 492, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977, p. 14165. He was probably the descendant of those who fled to the east from Khotan.

⁸⁹ Cf. Rong Xinjiang, "Yutian wangguo yu Guasha Caoshi," p. 118.

⁹⁰ Concerning the effects of this bloody battle on the destruction of Khotan, cf. Yin Qing, "Guanyu Dabao Yutianguo de ruogan wenti" 關於大寶于闐國的若干問題, *Xinjiang lishi lunwen xujì* 新疆歷史論文續集, Urumqi, 1982, pp. 241-258.

⁹¹ Different scholars have different proposed dates for the painting of the rebuilt wall concealing the library cave, with some saying early Song, others Xi Xia. The wall-painting is reproduced in *Zhongguoshiku: Dunhuang Mogaoku* 中國石窟敦煌莫高窟, Beijing, 1987, pl. 118. He Shizhe 賀世哲, "Cong yitiao xinziliao tan cangjingdong de fengbi" 從一條新資料談藏經洞的封閉, (*Xibei shidi* 西北史地, N° 3, 1984, pp. 83-86) dated the painting to 1002-1014. For the Xi Xia dating, see Liu Yuquan 劉玉權, "Dunhuang Mogaoku Anxi Yulinku Xi Xia dongku fenqi" 敦煌莫高窟安西榆林西夏洞窟分期, *Dunhuang yanjiu wenji* 敦煌研究文集, Lanzhou, 1982, pp. 294-295.

Conclusion

What he found there, as I have argued above, was the contents of the library of the Three Realms Monastery. Like the libraries of other monasteries at Dunhuang, it contained a mixture of intact and damaged materials. The intact materials were placed in what Stein called “regular library bundles.” Labelled according to a contemporary Buddhist catalogue, these wrappers contained a fixed number of fascicles. Daozhen, the monk at Dunhuang who did so much of the cataloguing, launched a large-scale effort to find the missing sections, but he bemoaned the large number of texts he was unable to locate. Alongside these “regular bundles” were other less regular bundles. Because they contained texts in different languages, and in different formats, they were of different sizes. But they too contained full-length texts in Sogdian, Uighur, Khotanese, and Tibetan—all Silk Road languages that continued to be spoken even after the Chinese reconquest of Dunhuang in 848.

In addition to these manuscripts the cave contained other votive items, some intact, some not. The intact treasures included the beautiful paintings one sees today in museums all over the world. Many of these paintings were found in a hole underneath Hong Bian’s statue. They had been rolled tightly before burial, but the long centuries under the weight of the statue had pressed down on them, causing many to crack. Other damaged materials included everything the monk thought he might need to repair the beloved sutras of his library; scraps of paper and cloth, used wrappers, wooden knobs, and silk tapes for bindings. His beliefs also prevented him from throwing away anything that had been given to the monastery as a votive offering, whether tattered banners or fragmented statues. The only things a devout Buddhist could dispose of were the worn-out utensils of daily life and these are the only things that have not been found in the library cave.

The library cave fits contemporary descriptions of Buddhist collections perfectly. Because those who closed off the cave did not leave any records behind, it is more difficult to determine their motives for doing so. One can only argue, as I have above, on the basis of the dates of the latest documents in the cave. Although different analysts have found evidence suggesting different dates, the latest document that can plausibly be dated to the library cave is, to my mind, that dating to 1002. If we take 1002—or soon after—as the date for the closing off of the cave, then the news of Khotan’s fall to non-Buddhists in 1006 provides a more likely motive for its sealing than

does the more generally accepted 1035 invasion by the Buddhist kingdom of the Xi Xia. The sealing could also have been linked to belief in the imminent destruction of the Buddhist age, a belief widespread among the Khotanese of the time. While my suggestion about the fall of Khotan must remain tentative in the absence of more direct proof, the nature of the library cave should be clear. All surviving evidence suggests that it was indeed a library cave not a repository for waste as so many have previously argued.

Bibliography

Bai Bin 白濱

- 1985 “Shilun Dunhuang cangjingdong de fengbi niandai” 試論敦煌藏經洞的封閉年代, *1983 nian quanguo Dunhuang xueshu taolunhui wenji shiku yishubian I* 1983 年全國敦煌學術討論會文集石窟藝術編上, Lanzhou, 1985, pp. 340-357.

Dunhuang yanjiu 敦煌研究 (DHYJ)

Fang Guangchang 方廣鎬

- 1991 *8-10 shiji Fojiao dazangjing shi* 八—十世紀佛教大藏經史, Beijing, 1991.

Fujieda Akira

- 1981 “Une reconstruction de la ‘bibliothèque’ de Touen-houang,” *JA*, CCLXIX, 1981, pp. 65-68.

L. Giles

- 1957 *Descriptive Catalogue of the Chinese Manuscripts from Tunhuang in the British Museum*, London, 1957.

P. Pelliot

- 1908 “Une bibliothèque médiévale retrouvée au Kan-sou,” *BEFEO*, VIII, 1908, pp. 500-529.

A. Stein

- 1921 *Serindia*, Oxford.

Shi Pingting 施萍婷

- 1990 “Sanjiesi Daozhen Dunhuang cangjingdong” 三界寺·道真·敦煌藏經洞, *1990 nian Dunhuangxue guoji xueshu taolunhui wenji* 1990 年敦煌學國際學術討論會文集, Shenyang, 1995, pp. 178-210.