

THE JATAKA TALES OF THE MOGAO CAVES, CHINA IN ANTHROPOLOGICAL
PERSPECTIVE

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To the Faculty of Washington State University:

The members of the Committee appointed to examine the
dissertation of MING-KUO WU find it satisfactory and recommend that it
be accepted.

Chair

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Abstract

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The Mogao caves of Dunhuang, Gansu Province, China were constructed and decorated from the 4th to the 14th century and contain several genres of art, colored clay sculptures, and narrative. One of these genres is the murals of the Jataka tales stories of the Buddha's previous lives as Bodhisattvas, those who represent specific goal-directed behavior and perform the acts of a bodhisattva in order to reach the status of buddhahood. The present research addresses the gap in scholarly knowledge about the murals of the Jataka tales at the Mogao caves of Dunhuang in six domains. First, through publicly available pictorial art data research, it presents the first-ever comprehensive, complete, and accurate catalogue of where in the caves the Jataka tale motifs appear, and which tales are depicted. Second, it formulates and uses a new conceptual-analytical paradigm, the Jataka tale-scape. Third, a new analytical perspective is developed, that of cascade altruism, which encompasses deeds done through many lifetimes in the Mahayana Buddhist quest of bodhisattvas. Fourth, the power and scale analytical approach used here compares the number and volume, in both absolute and annual rate of construction,

of Jataka tale-containing caves and non-Jataka tale-containing caves made at Mogao in each dynasty. Fifth, it shows that when there was dynastic unrest the artists produced Jataka murals on the cave walls with greater frequency. During more peaceful dynasties, particularly the Tang, the artists produced fewer or no Jataka scenes and usually relegated them to insignificant locales in the caves. There exists a distinctive correlation between the number and placement of the Jataka tale murals in the Dunhuang caves and the socio-political situation of contemporary times. And sixth, it conducts the results of an open-ended questionnaire with Taiwanese monks and nuns who preached and taught in several temples in three cities in Taiwan. The survey results show that the Jataka tales that transmitted Buddhist beliefs in medieval times are still important today.

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Dedication

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The present research is an ethno-historical study of the Jataka tales as they are depicted in the artwork of the Mogao caves located in northwestern Gansu Province, China (see Figure 1.1). These murals of the Jataka tales, stories of the Buddha's previous lives, were painted at different times during the medieval period in China, that is, between 400 and 1400 A.D. They are very significant for Chinese Buddhism; and, upon careful study, show their changing importance in Chinese Buddhist culture during the centuries in which they were made. The framework of analysis focuses on the Jataka tales at the Mogao caves which draw upon several anthropological perspectives focused on the ethno-historical study of the Nikayas¹ and Vinayas², the murals of the Jataka tale-
scape, the Buddhist concepts of karma, rebirth, and bodhisattva path, cascade altruism,

¹ The Five Nikaya Sutras consist of 1. Digha Nikaya, Long Sutra (Dialogues of the Buddha in English; *Chuang a han jing* 長阿含經 in Chinese); 2. Majjhima Nikaya, Medium-length Sutra (The Collection of the Middle Length Sayings in English; *Zhong a han jing* 中阿含經 in Chinese); 3. Samyutta Nikaya, Related topic Sutra (The Book of the Kindred Sayings in English; *Za a han jing* 雜阿含經 in Chinese); 4. Anguttara Nikaya, Numerical doctrine Sutra (The Book of the Gradual Sayings in English; *Zeng i a han jing* 增一阿含經 in Chinese); and 5. Khuddaka Nikaya, Minor Sutra (A Collection of Minor Sutras in English; some portions of Nikaya translated into Chinese Mahananic Pitaka) which exists in the Hinayanic Pitaka and contains 547 stories. These Nikayas expressed Buddha's speeches or dialogues through prose and verses, and in the brief sayings (Law 1974:79-80). However, the extant Chinese version of the Four Agama sutras is The Long Agama Sutra, the Medium-Length Agama Sutra, the Miscellaneous Agama Sutra, and the Increasing by One Agama Sutra.

² Vinaya is the third Tripitaka. It includes the rules or disciplines and doctrines for the monastic community of Buddhist monks, nuns, and laypeople who observe these precepts in their daily life.

emic and etic perspectives, and power and scale theory for analysis of the Jataka tale caves studied. The cognitive and anthropological perspectives used will bring an understanding of what is meaningful to Chinese Buddhists.

The Jataka tales, as depicted in the Mogao caves, constitute a valuable ethno-historical document from which can be gleaned much information about the history of the neighboring regions and their interactions with one another. It includes the history of the trading networks which comprised the Silk Road that spread outward from China to the Mediterranean Sea during the medieval era in China, and the history of Buddhism in China, where “karma”, “rebirth”, and “bodhisattva path” were introduced as new concepts for the Chinese.

In the most important and popular sermons of the Theravada (teaching of the Elders, or Hinayana Buddhism), the Jataka tales explain the bodhisattva way to benefit others. This I describe in Chapter 3. I show how the Jataka tales were part of popular Buddhist sermons on Nikayas, the dialogues, and Vinayas, monastic discipline, and how Nikayas and Vinayas viewed the main characters of the Jataka tales as “famous Indian nobles or wise men” and “popular figures.” When looking to history to explain the origin of the paintings of the Jataka tales themselves, they were created in response to the Buddha’s request to decorate and dignify monasteries.

Anthropologists have always been interested in the many forms of religious art. Although some are well preserved with written records and archaeological evidence, some lack both kinds of information. It is reasonable to assume that religious art, like material culture and other visible and tangible work, was made at a particular time and place by a particular person. We know the Mogao caves are not natural caves, but were

intentionally excavated by human beings. And, while we do not always know the artists who decorated them a thousand years ago, we do know that the murals still exist. Without doubt, religious art preserves the events of the past and continues to exist into the future.

Twenty years ago, when I took my first class on the art of the Mogao caves at Yuan-Kuang Buddhist Institution in Chungli City, Taiwan, I became enamored of and familiar with their amazing murals and painted sculptures. I have studied the publications and photographs printed in many volumes by different publishers since then. But, in the summer of 2004, with great excitement, I journeyed to the caves themselves to continue my research. For a short time I was able to work there, but, unfortunately, I did not get permission from the Dean of the Dunhuang Academy to continue my fieldwork into the next year. It is possible that my status as a Taiwanese complicated the situation, involving politics with academic scholarship.

I have a deep and abiding interest in these stories for two reasons. First, as a Mahayana Buddhist monk, the Jataka tales are an important part of my religious cultural heritage; and they express the cultural ethic in which Mahayanic Buddhists constantly practice “their greatest virtuous deeds” in order to save other sentient beings, or pursue true Dharma. By self-sacrifice, giving away everything, they seek ultimately to reach “their statuses of Enlightenment” through “cascade altruistic actions,” a concept that I will define below. The importance of the Jataka tales in my formal religious training and practice enables me today to apply a contemporary perspective to the study of the religious practices represented in the Jataka tales and depicted in the Mogao caves. As an

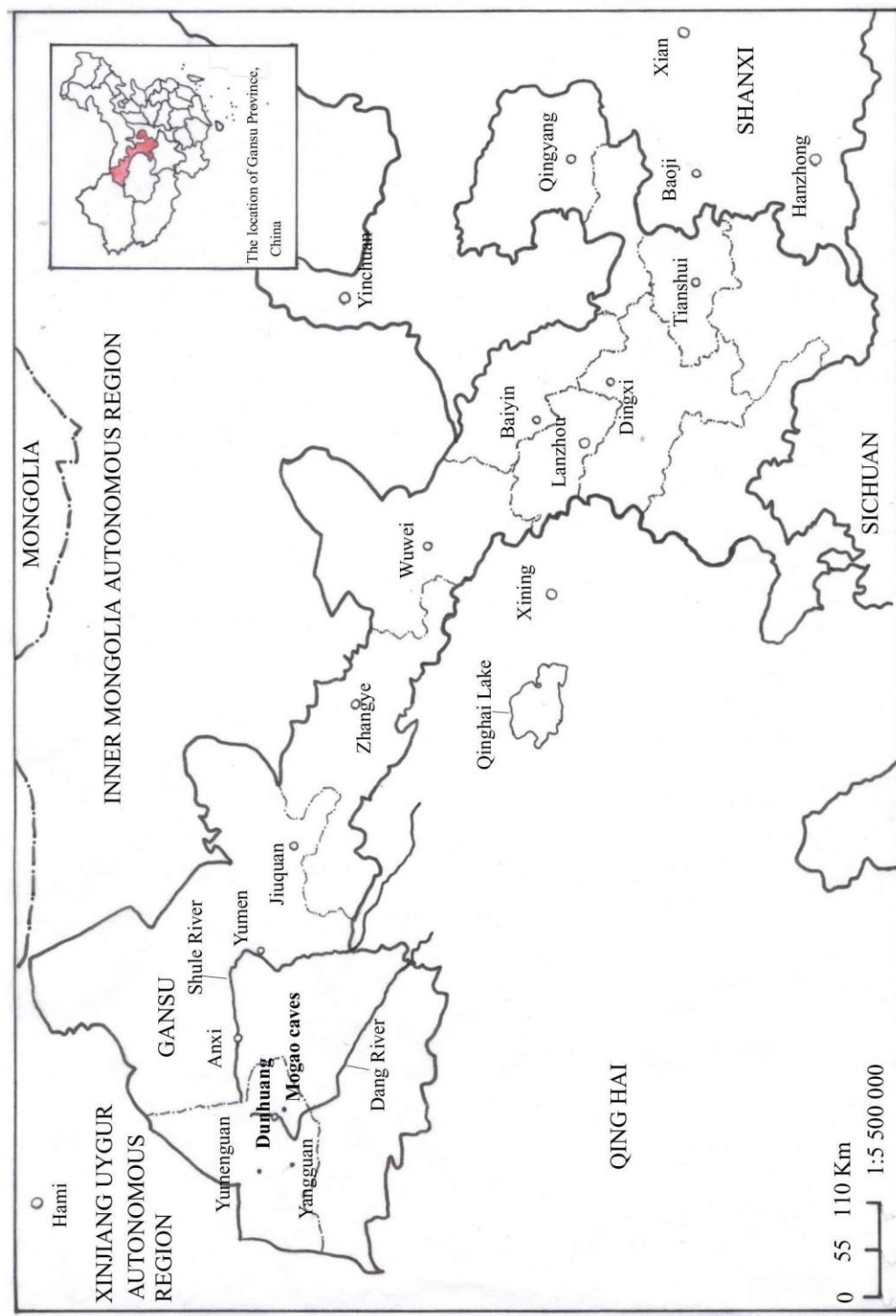
anthropologist, I realize that careful application of anthropological methods to the Jataka tales can provide a valuable and scholarly understanding of them and their cultural milieu.

A. The Cultural-Geographic Setting of the Dunhuang Region

Dunhuang City flourished in medieval China and is well-known throughout the world today because of the brilliant murals, sculptures, and documents at the Mogao caves. Figure 1.1 shows a contemporary map of Gansu province, and Figure 1.2 provides a map of Dunhuang City. It is located in the westernmost section of the Hexi Corridor of Gansu Province, which lies to the west of the Yellow River. In historical times the Yellow River passed through Lanzhou, the capital of Gansu. Figure 1.3 shows a medieval Chinese geographic view of the region and is a map of the Hexi Corridor/Gansu Corridor with geographic features mentioned in my text.

The ancient trade and travel route area west of the Yellow River is named the “Hexi Corridor.” It is also known as the “Gansu Corridor.” The Hexi Corridor is a relatively flat, narrow, and long passage that stretches some 1000 kilometers and has a width that ranges from a few kilometers to about 100 kilometers. Its shape is like that of a narrow corridor; thus it is named the “Hexi Corridor.” It lies sandwiched between the impassable North Mountain and Tinggeli and Badanjilin Gobi desert to the north and the Qilian Mountains to the south (Yin 1999:7). Thus the Hexi Corridor was the most important strategic passage protecting medieval Chinese dynasties from the Western Regions. It separated all of the world which lay to the west of the northwestern boundaries of imperial China reached by passage through the Hexi Corridor, and is now Xijiang Province of China. Today the Hexi Corridor remains important and contains four

Figure 1.1 The location of Gansu Province of China. It shows where Dunhuang City and the Mogao caves are located in the westernmost section of Gansu Province.



Source: Zhang 2001: 7-8

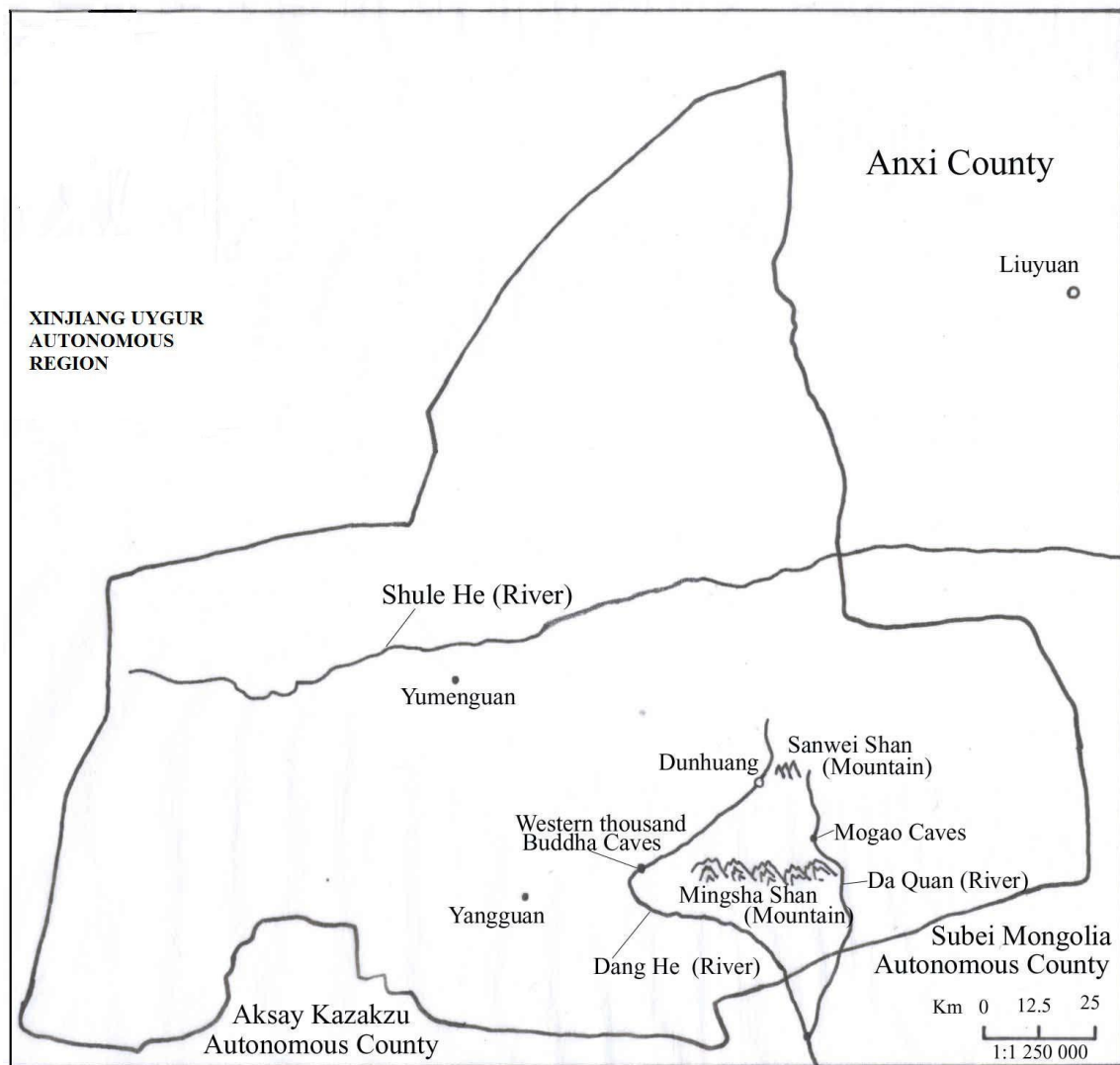
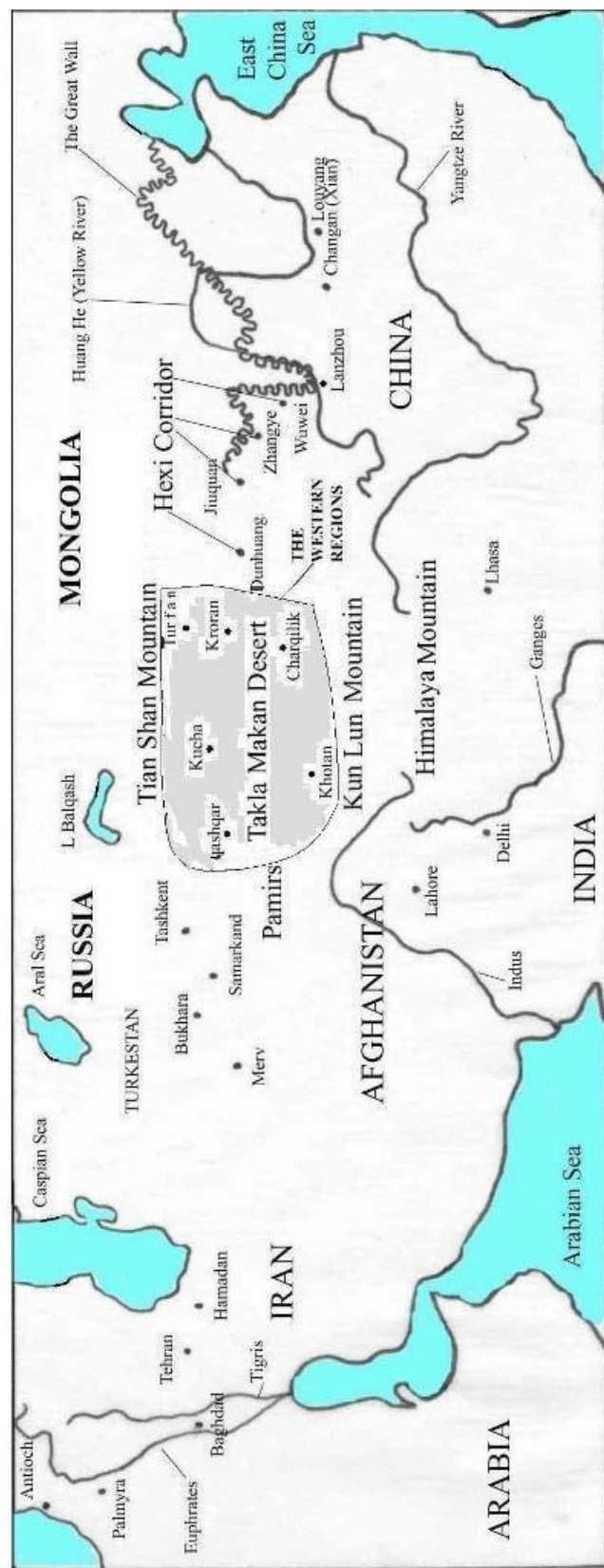


Figure 1.2 Map of Dunhuang City and environs. The large irregularly shaped area is the boundary of Dunhuang City today. Some modern place-names are included for reference. Source: The map of Dunhuang City, Zhang 2001:93-94.

Figure 1.3 A medieval Chinese geographic view of the region that includes the Hexi Corridor/ Gansu Corridor and the Western Regions which geographical features mentioned in the text. (Selective modern country names are included for easy identification.)



Source: Modified from Mallory and Mair 2000:51.

prosperous cities. From east to west they are Wuwei, Zhangye, Jiuquan, and Dunhuang.

In Chapter 2, I use historical changes in the physical and cultural geography to show how, from ancient to modern times, scholars have not agreed on the origin and meaning of the name, “Dunhuang.” However, the past history of Dunhuang *per se* presented a “living entity” paradigm with beneficial effects on society and culture. It continues to exist as such in the minds of the Chinese people today.

Dunhuang, once the political, cultural, and diplomatic center of northwestern medieval China, is near the border between modern Qinghai Province in the south and Xinjiang Province in the west. Within a larger geographic purview, Dunhuang is framed by the Qing-Zang plateau to the north, Anxi city to the east, the imposing Qilian Mountains to the south, and the vast expanse of the Takla Makan desert to the west. In Gansu Province, Dunhuang lies 40 degrees 10 minutes N latitude and 94 degrees 40 minutes E longitude, and reaches an altitude of about 1138 meters.

Dunhuang is a famous oasis town. It is embraced by mountains and deserts, including the huge Gobi, and its total area is about 31,200 square kilometers (Zhongguo liyou zhinan bianweihui 2002:54-55). The Dunhuang region is 60 to 240 kilometers long from east to west, and 90 to 190 kilometers wide from north to south. 2.4 percent of its territory contains cultivated lands, 8.5 percent is wasteland, 10 percent is desolate desert, 19 percent is moderate desert, 11 percent is mountainous, and 49 percent is the Gobi desert (Zhang 1995:2).

Dunhuang’s population of 187,578 (Zhu 2002:4), is multinational. The majority is of Han nationality; other ethnic minorities are Hui, Mongolian, Kazak, Tibetan, Dongxiang, Tu, Manchu, and Yugur (Uighur). These minority groups influence each

other economically, politically, and culturally; and they maintain close ties with the Han people. There are 370 villages and 10 towns which are administered by two county-level cities, one each in Shazhou and Qili counties (Yan 1994:58-60; Li 1997:11).

Dunhuang City lies in the interior/inland of Asia, in an arid portion of the continental temperate climatic zone. There is often much direct sunshine, and annual rainfall is less than 50 millimeters (Yang 2002:3). Dunhuang City has little rain because it lies far from any ocean and is surrounded by mountains and the Gobi desert. According to Li (1997:117) the annual rainfall is about 39.3 millimeters; but the annual rate of evaporation is 2,486 millimeters, which is 60 times greater than the annual rainfall (Zhang 1995:3; Gao and Chen 2001:1). The water supply that makes Dunhuang habitable depends on melted snow from the Qinghai Mountains.

Human life and culture in the Dunhuang region depend upon, and reflect, these geographic and climatic realities. Summer is short and very hot and is called “fireland”, while winter is long and extremely cold, with great diurnal variations in temperature. A common saying in Dunhuang is, “morning with fur-lined jacket, noon gauze.” Table 1.1 shows the yearly climatic pattern for Dunhuang. Another factor is wind. During spring, summer, and autumn, the east wind gusts frequently; during the winter the west wind gusts frequently (Zhang 1995:3; Li 1997:198).

B. The Mogao Jataka Tale-scape as a Conceptual Paradigm

The framework of analysis used here centers upon the “Mogao Jataka tale-scape.” Its central focus is on the crucial importance of the Jataka narratives that relate the deeds of the Buddha’s previous lives and the specific cultural contexts associated with their

Table 1.1

The Annual Temperatures of Dunhuang City (degrees Celsius)

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Average High Temperature	8.7	17.4	29.5	40.9	51.4	57	57	55.8	47.4	35.2	19.5	9.4
Average Low Temperature	-19.3	-15.2	-7.3	0.8	6.7	11	15	12.8	5.9	-2.7	-9	-16.7

Source: Yan 1994:84.

depiction at the Mogao caves (see Figure 1.4 for a diagram of the Mogao Jataka tale-scape), but also extended beyond that center. The Mogao Jataka tale-scape reaches out to consider the extended socio-cultural nexus that motivated and guided their representation. The concept of the Mogao Jataka tale-scape derives from my master's thesis in which I developed a "-scape" perspective that brought together an entire constellation of factors and features connected to a particular entity. In this case, it was the "chantscape" which centered upon intensive chanting practices in the Pure Land School in Taiwan (Wu 2002:66).

The concept of "chantscape" in part drew upon previous anthropological literature and perspective and provided valuable insights into the intensive chanting ceremonies under study, and also into the larger context of Buddhist cultural life and existence. Therefore, the -scape paradigm can be the application of particular conceptual/theoretical/analytical paradigms that provide a way to gain valuable insights and understandings relevant to that paradigm. For example, the -scape paradigm also can apply to sounds. For example, "soundscape" has been used to describe the aesthetics of voices of the rainforest (Feld 1991:135). Feld, an anthropologist, focused on natural

environmental sounds, such as the sound of birds, waterways, frogs, and crickets, and local musical expression from the Kaluli group living in Bosavi in the highland interior of Papua New Guinea. This study shows two ways: “the local and global intersect in new forms of cultural production and world music embodies and provokes various anxieties about the politics of cultural representation” (Feld 1991:132).

The analysis of the Mogao Jataka tale-scape will focus holistically on each period which produced the art of the Jataka tale caves, with the specific cave group under consideration as the central focus. The “—scape” examination will consider the links. The distinctive contribution here is the consideration of the cave-centered nexus in the Mogao Jataka tale-scape, with particular focus on specific detail, including the cultural-geographic setting of the Mogao caves; the varying socio-security situations in the Hexi Corridor; the Jataka tales in Buddhist and Chinese Buddhist culture; the cascade altruistic acts recounted in the Jataka tales; and the caves of Mogao themselves.

1. Cascade Altruism

In Western literature, altruism has long been a puzzle for the many different disciplines trying to define it. They have employed a variety of theoretical perspectives or explanatory devices including kin selection (Maynard Smith 1964; Hamilton 1964), reciprocal altruism (Trivers 1971; Alexander 1987; Nowak and Sigmund 1998), strong reciprocity (Gintis 2000; Fehr and Gächter 2002; Fehr, Fischbacher, and Gächter 2002; Fehr and Fischbacher 2003), and altruism and helping behavior (Macaulay and Berkowitz 1970; Wispé 1978; Krebs 1982; Batson 1991; Sober and Wilson 1998). Whereas Western literature views altruism as acts that occur during only one lifetime, Buddhists

believe in reincarnation that bodhisattvas are altruistic characters who seek buddhahood through the systematic practice of virtues in multiple lifetimes, performing altruistic acts to help other beings.

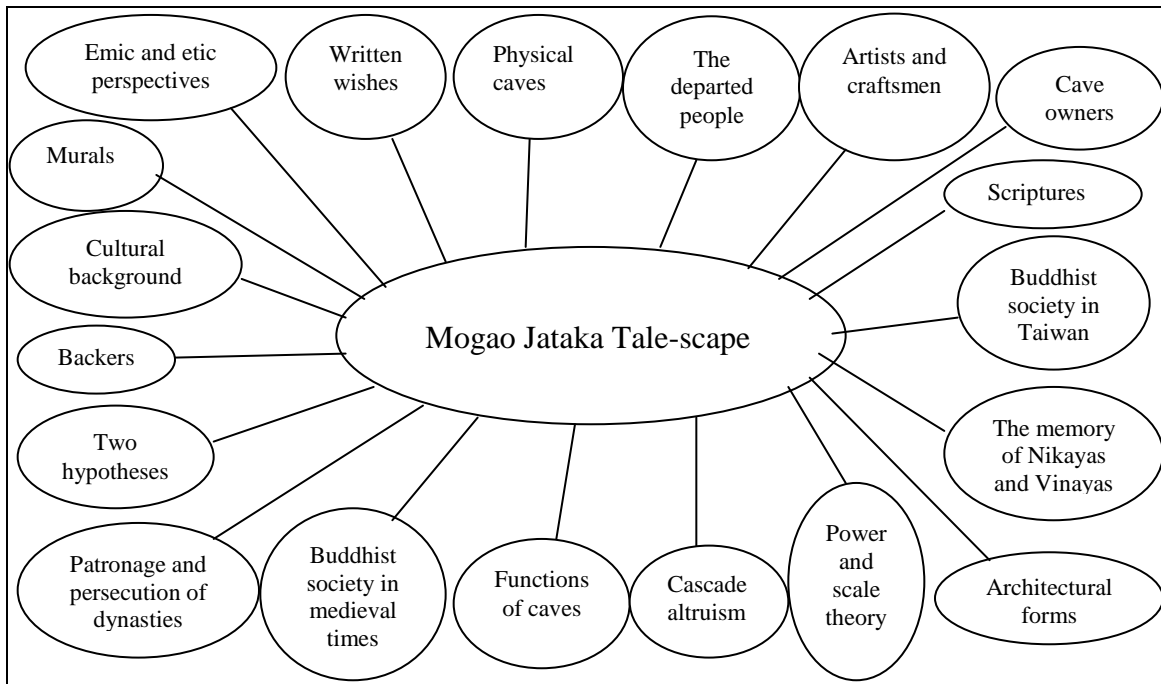


Figure 1.4 Diagram of the Mogao Jataka tale-scape. Schematic synoptic diagram of the “Mogao Jataka tale-scape applied to the Jataka tales at the Mogao caves, which focuses on the crucial importance of the Jataka narratives that relate the deeds of the Buddha’s previous lives. Each factor developed a “-scape” perspective that draws and brings them together into an entire constellation connected to a particular entity. In this case, it is the “Mogao Jataka tale-scape”, which centered upon the murals of the Jataka tales depicted on the walls of the Mogao caves.

In Chapter 7, I propose a new analytical concept, “cascade altruism.” This is then applied to Buddhist narratives, the Jataka tales, as they are depicted in the murals of the Mogao caves in Dunhuang City, and which are the best-known way to analyze Buddhist altruism. In the present analysis, the central feature of the Jataka tales is cascade altruism, a new analytical concept which has not previously appeared in the literature on altruism or the study of the Mogao caves. When I describe it in Chapter 7, I refer to the Mogao Jataka murals collectively as examples of “cascade altruism.” I mean that the murals of the Jataka tales pictorialize five forms of altruism: reciprocal altruism, fearless self-sacrificing altruism, boundless-giving altruism, kin-directed altruism, and courageous altruism. These make up cascade altruism because the performer of altruistic actions has the ultimate goal of saving all sentient beings through many lifetimes, enabling a doer or a bodhisattva to be reborn at a higher level or closer to enlightenment, as was the Buddha in India.

I argue that the concept of cascade altruism, and the five forms of altruism contained within it, provides a new perspective for future Buddhist studies and is useful in three ways: 1). it elicits and distills the principal ideas in Buddhist Jataka literature; 2). it distinguishes between the Western single-lifetime analytical construct of altruism and the Buddhist multiple-lifetime analytical construct of altruism; and 3). it provides a holistic perspective to understand the production, use and meaning of the Jataka tale paintings at the Mogao caves.

2. Power and Scale Theory

With respect to the present work, power and scale theory, as developed by Bodley (2003), and modified selectively to meet the relevant circumstances of the present study, offers a quantitative theoretical perspective on the Mogao caves that helps to elucidate certain important aspects of the Jataka tale-scape. Bodley has tested this statistical-analytical methodology on individual property ownership in the towns and cities of Spokane and Whitman counties (1999), has used it to show correlations between business corporations and income in Washington State (2001), and has developed it extensively to establish key insights regarding the cultural development of tribal, imperial, and commercial worlds (2003). In Bodley's (2003:4) context of power and scale theory, "power" means social power in which households, elites, rulers, and corporate groups increase their social power to influence other people and social events. "Scale" refers to the growth of populations, business enterprises, cities, and institutions. Concomitant with growth in power and scale goes the need to maintain larger systems. Increasing scale can effectively create disproportionate concentrations of power for a few individuals in the society at large (Bodley 2003).

Power and scale theory can be applied to the Mogao caves of Dunhuang even though they were constructed in China during the medieval period. In Chapter 8, I will discuss two forms of power and scale analysis that are appropriate. One is Bodley's (2003) societal formulation; the other is application of the underlying concept of establishing a power parameter and a scale parameter and then systematically comparing those parameters with each other. This approach will be used to analyze the population demographics by dynasty in Dunhuang Prefecture, the socio-security situation in the Hexi Corridor, the approximate amount of labor and number of loads necessary to complete a

particular cave construction project, the patronage networks for financial support to open caves, the relationships between cave size, and numbers of caves produced during each dynastic year.

Power and scale theory can be used also to demonstrate the status of different cave sponsors at the Mogao caves. I argue that the higher the status of cave owners, the more opportunity they had to provide the necessary funds, either their own or those of others. Therefore, I consider the dynastic period of rule to be the basic power factor because each one generated a different potential for cave construction. In addition, high social status is considered to be a power factor because those with high status could afford to construct larger caves than those of medium and low social status.

3. Emic and Etic Perspectives

Emic, as a Buddhist monk, and etic, as a western researcher, perspectives are different, and to a fair extent counterpoise each other, but, when used both individually and simultaneously, each of them can contribute their specific framework to the analysis of the Jataka tale murals of the Mogao caves. The emic and etic perspectives provide the crucial foundation for a more complete understanding of the Jataka tale-scape. There are numerous Jataka tales presented conspicuously or discretely throughout the Mogao caves in paintings on the cave walls and elsewhere that demonstrate these perspectives.

A key question that arises here is one of internal perception: how did exoteric Buddhists understand their own Jataka tales; and how did esoteric Buddhists understand the meaning of the tales depicted in the murals? I use historical methods to link the past with the present in order to understand these artistic works. The artistic meanings may be

different from the Buddhist scriptural context, which I describe throughout my research. This attention to the form and content of the art work *per se* allows me to pay close attention to the aesthetics of the paintings themselves, and also to how and when they were made, as well as to what they say. Thus, it is possible to provide a new ethno-historical understanding of the Mogao caves of Dunhuang. Emic and etic perspectives are fundamental to this understanding.

The etic perspective used is based on historical literary research that provides extensive information about the central theme of each Jataka tale. The etic perspective provides a basis upon which to analyze the cross-cultural and social conditions existing at the time particular paintings were produced. The etic perspective focuses on the four basic architectural forms which arose and evolved in the Mogao caves and provides a partial history of time sequences that help us understand the whole panorama which I describe in Chapter 4. In addition, the chronology of the relationship between Buddhism and imperial patronage and persecution reveals Chinese traditional ideology and religion as manifested by the central characters of the Jataka tales because Buddhists provided a variety of Jataka themes to pander to Confucian scholars' and the governments' tastes. These I describe in Chapter 5.

The emic perspective is based on a cultural analysis of the Mogao caves of Dunhuang and their art, which I describe in Chapter 6. To approach the emic perspective, analytical studies of the murals of the Jataka tales focus on three main perspectives. First are the four architectural forms of the caves as they underwent spatial changes. Second are the social relationships and religious functional practices of Buddhist cave art as the conceptual perspective shifted from achieving individual spirituality (meditation caves)

to the novel social consciousness of the Mahayanic spiritual world (lecture caves). Third is an exploration of the meaning of interpretation as the murals brought a new way of communicating an alternative paradise, which I describe in Chapters 4 and 6.

4. Two Hypotheses

In modern times, following the discovery of the secret library in Dunhuang by the Taoist priest Wang Yuanlu in 1900 (see Figures 1.5 and 1.6), Dunhuangology became, and remains, a major area of study for scholars in the East and West. Dunhuang scholars have studied and interpreted style, relationship, theme, function, and symbolism of the Indian and Chinese sutras of the Jataka tales. A growing number of scholars have published major works on the Jataka tales. Scholars such as Sawa (1962), Chang (1985), Kaneoke (1982), Takada (1991), and Joshi and Banerjee (1998) have identified and examined the meaning of specific Jataka tales at the Mogao caves. However, their identifications and explanations select only some popular and repeated Jataka tales in some periods and cannot provide an extensive perspective for the behavior of those Jataka tales. Others, like Matsumoto (1937), Kaneoke (1982), Takada (1991), Li (2000), and Xie (2000) have analyzed the relationship between the scenes and their scriptural sources, but their approaches cannot explain why certain Jataka tales appeared during some times, but disappeared at the other times during the constructing periods. Some scholars, for instance, Momohashi (1978), Shih (1993), and Chen (1995), have focused on the evolution of art forms and the styles used to depict the Jataka tales at various times and places. Although they reexamined and rediscovered the structure of these Jataka tales, their selections still cannot provide a holistic perspective to new ways of looking at

the behaviors of bodhisattvas. In most cases, these scholars shed light on the subject matter by tracing the murals and the scriptures back to the existing sources.

However, there has been no systematic study of the broader ethno-historical context of the depiction of the Jataka tales in the Mogao caves, and no study has focused on why the Jataka tales occupied prime locales in particular caves during some eras but were relegated to minor locales in other periods. I propose to fill that gap. To do so, I will employ the overarching concept of the Mogao Jataka tale-scape. I have two primary hypotheses: the first is that in periods of dynastic unrest the artists produced Jataka murals on the caves' walls with greater frequency. On the other hand, during more peaceful times and dynasties, particularly the end of the Sui and the Early and the High Tang Dynasties, the artists produced fewer or no murals at the Mogao caves. In Chapter 8, I apply the power and scale statistical-analytical methodology to examine this correlation and will show how the production of Mogao caves correlated with certain major socio-historical factors.

These murals did not exist in isolation; they are part and parcel of a larger fund of religious teaching materials which also included oral explications of the painted Jataka tales. Today that oral tradition has vanished because the Buddhist community cannot involve itself in the management of the caves. Instead, it is a secular institution, the Dunhuang Academy, that administers the affairs of the Mogao caves. Oral Jataka-tale traditions are, however, still very much alive in the contemporary Buddhist community in Taiwan, so it is worth exploring that locale as a partial parallel to medieval Dunhuang. This leads to my second hypothesis, which is that contemporary Taiwanese monks and nuns still preach the Jataka tales during their sermons; and, as would have been the case

in medieval China, Buddhist monks and nuns utilize particular favorites and tell vivid Jataka stories to Buddhists and non-Buddhists in many places, including temples, schools, and associations.

In order to examine this second hypothesis, I will do two things. First, in Chapter 9, I will discuss the results of a questionnaire I distributed in Taiwan. It provided enough information for me to analyze how these tales affect the beliefs and daily practices of Buddhist monastic and lay communities. All the results are based on the opinions and personal experiences of the responders in the Buddhist community of Taiwan in the summer of 2005. The 104 monks and nuns, who in Taiwan participated in this survey, were from three different regions, Kaohsiung, Taichung, and Taipei and were required to have had preaching experiences. Second, I have compiled a complete analytical inventory of the Jataka tales depicted in the Mogao caves. On the survey these respondents are to answer three questions: how contemporary Buddhist monks and nuns acquire their knowledge about the Mogao caves and the Jataka tales; how much they know about the artifacts of the Mogao caves and the main character of the Jataka tales depicted on the walls that provides a comparison between the two Buddhist societies of medieval China and contemporary Taiwan; and how these Jataka tales are important to the lives of Buddhists.

In Chapter 4, I search for depictions of Jataka tales in the Mogao caves which connect their chronology to the wider time periods. I begin by describing the cultural origin of and the initial pilgrimage to the Mogao caves and a description of the existing Mogao caves. With the changes in historical background, I discuss four manifestations of cave architecture to understanding how the Mogao caves arose and evolved: 1) chaitya,

central-stupa, or central-pillar; 2) vihara, meditation; 3) caisson ceiling; and 4) pariniravan, passing away of the Buddha. All four architectural forms were used for Buddhist religious purposes. In addition, each architectural cave consists of basic three structures—ante-room, corridor, and main room.

In looking to history to explain “Buddhism and imperial patronage and persecution”, which I describe in Chapter 5, I am aligning with the “ancient historical books of different dynasties” (Daoxuan 1927; Falin 1927; Fei 1927; Huijiao 1927; Shen 1927; Zanning 1927; Zhipan 1927; Liu 1966; Tuo 1966; Wei 1966; Linghu 1996; Ouyang 1966) and other contemporary historical books (Wang 1964; Jiang 1884; Chen 1973; Chen 1964; Guan 1982; Yu 1984) that have provided major evidence and a historical dimension to understand how the prosperity or decline of the Buddhist Sangha community was controlled by a strong central authority, the emperor, as well as by a central ideology—Confucianism or Taoism. Also, murals of the Jataka tales of the Mogao caves influenced the day-to-day lives of individuals and society as a whole in China.

In Chapter 6, I analyze sixteen different Jataka tales to present an overview of all those depicted at the Mogao caves within a completely diachronic periodization from the Northern Liang Dynasty to the Song Dynasty, but I discuss in detail only the five favorite Jataka tales that have dominated throughout history. This comparison elicits information regarding the meanings of the Jataka tales in both the contemporary Buddhist community in Taiwan and the Mogao cave times in Dunhuang, opinions on the concepts of karma and rebirth, their influences on beliefs and life, favorite Jataka tales, and the locales used to depict in the Jataka tales. In Chapter 10, I generally summarize the research.

The Mogao caves of Dunhuang have never been studied from a holistic perspective such as the –scape perspective before. The present research will fill that gap, using the analytical perspective of the Mogao Jataka tale-scape applied specifically to the 4th to 14th Centuries when the caves were living cultural entities. It will also consider associated cultural features, such as the now-lost oral Jataka tale sermon traditions, by drawing on an original study of a parallel oral tradition still alive in present-day Taiwan. One especially useful analytical tool for elucidating the Mogao Jataka tale-scape is power and scale analysis. It will be used both in Bodley’s formulation and in other formulations appropriate to the circumstances of the Mogao caves of Dunhuang, and thus suggesting that a –scape paradigm might be of value in studying other cultural sites of the past, like the Jataka tale sites of India and in other Buddhist countries like Sri Lanka, Burma, and Thailand.



Figure 1.5 shows the interior of the southwest corner of Cave 17. According to the inscription, on the south wall, the clay sculpture is of monk Hongbian, a chief of the Sangha of Shazhou, the Tang Dynasty. Source: Duan and Fan 2005:6.



Figure 1.6 shows a vast stack of valuable ancient manuscripts in the background while Paul Pelliot, in 1908, uses candle light to examine important collections of manuscripts. Source: Whitfield, Whitfield, and Agnew 2000:43.

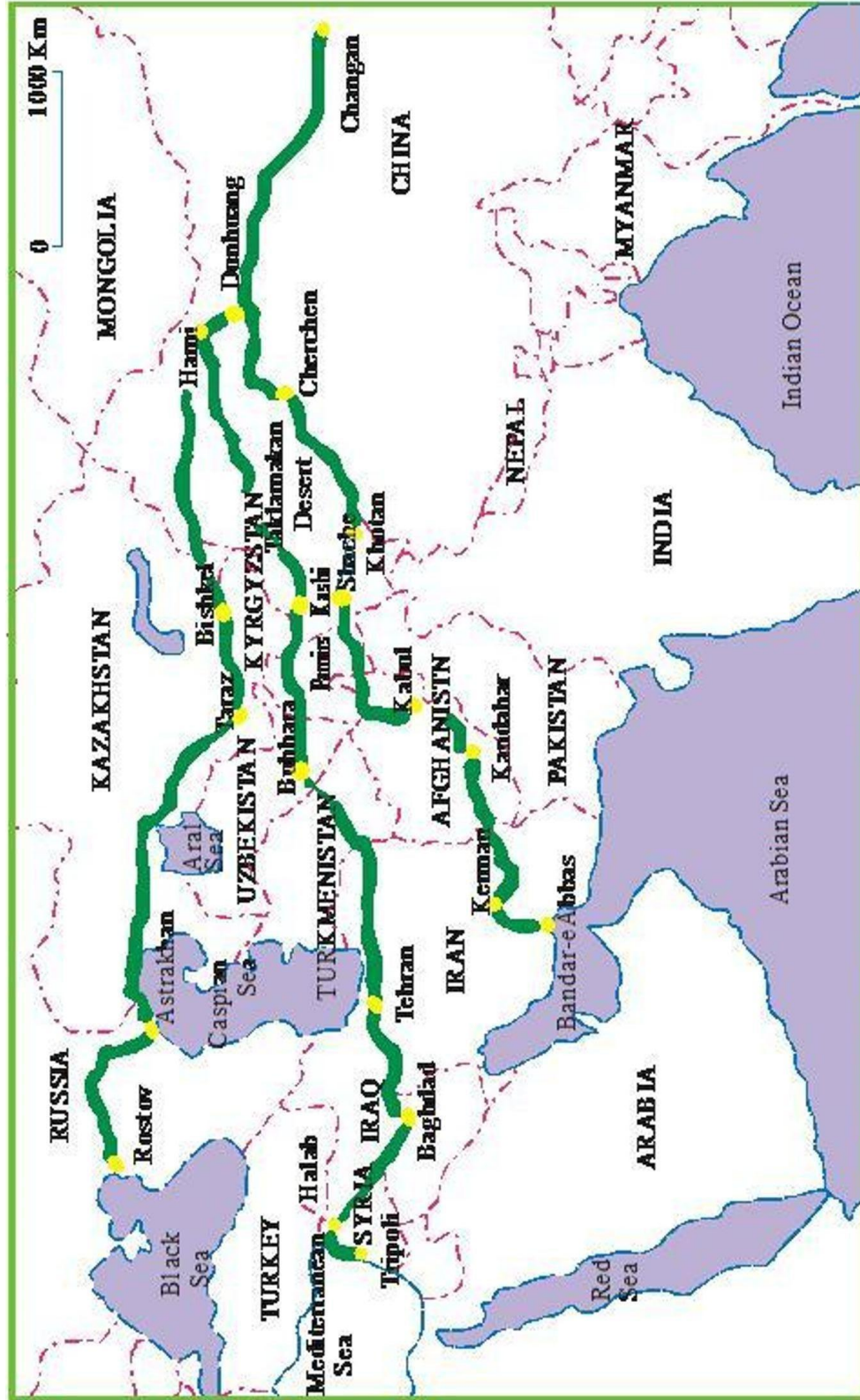
CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL CHANGES IN THE PHYSICAL AND CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY OF DUNHUANG FROM ANCIENT TO MODERN TIMES

In Chinese ancient and medieval history Dunhuang Prefecture was situated at a critical geographic locale for the connections of medieval China with the Western Regions; it lay on the western end of the strategic passage between medieval China and the Mediterranean, from where trade extended even further to Europe and North Africa (Yang, Guo, and Zhang 1997:235). Consequently, in medieval China Dunhuang Prefecture was an important gateway to enter the Silk Road and to connect central China with the Western Regions (Figure 2.1, the map of the Silk Road shows the relationship of Dunhuang Prefecture, the Western Regions, Central Asia, and Europe in medieval times; Figure 2.2 shows the geography from Dunhuang to west of the Pamirs to Kabul, Bukhara, and Taraz). In medieval Chinese geography the toponym, “the Western Regions”, designated all of the world which lay to the west of the northwestern boundaries of imperial China and which were reached by passage through the Hexi Corridor (Gansu Corridor). Dunhuang is an oasis on the lower reaches of the Dang River in Gansu Province, China (see Figure 1.1).

Dunhuang was one of the four fortresses on the medieval Hexi Corridor; the others were Wuwei, Zhangye, and Jiuquan (see Figure 1.3). Situated at the western entrance to the Hexi Corridor portion of the Silk Road, Dunhuang served as a rest stop, and sometimes as an entrepot, for traders who came from the Western Regions or entered into them on the ancient Silk Road. Dunhuang thus served as a gateway through which

Figure 2.1 This map of the Silk Road shows the relationship of Dunhuang Prefecture, the Western Regions, Central Asia, and Europe in medieval times. (Modern country names are used.)



Source: modified from Pei's map (Pei 1999:14-15).

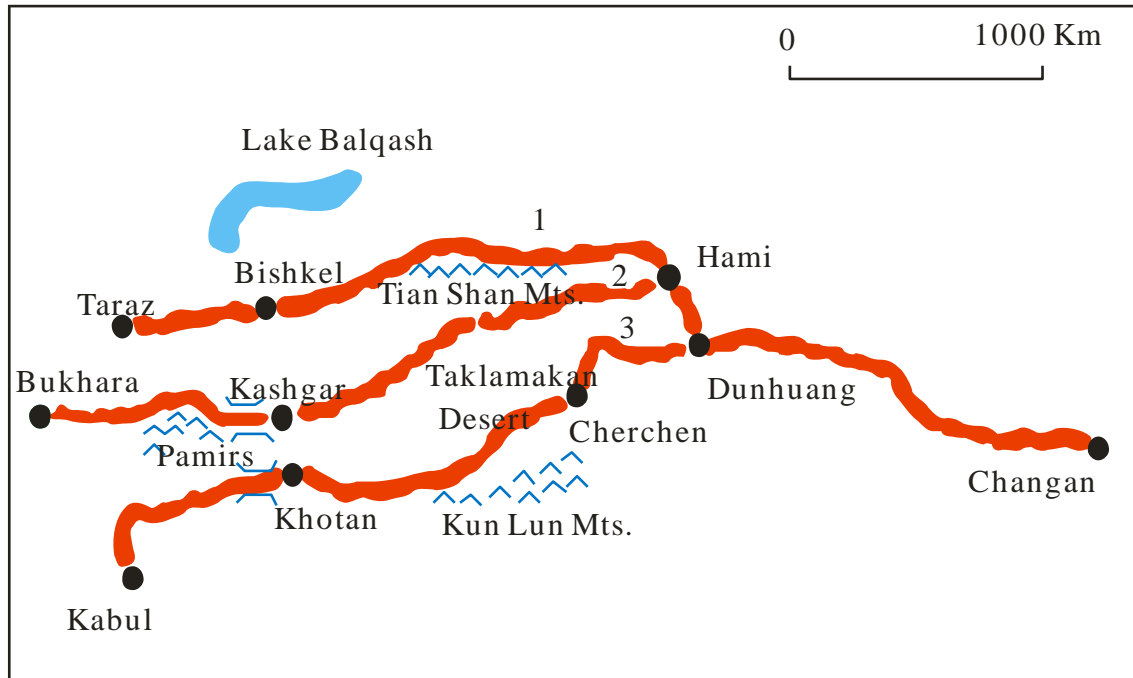


Figure 2.2 shows the geography from Dunhuang to west of the Pamirs. 1 is the northern branch of the Northern Silk Road. 2 is the southern branch of the Northern Silk Road. 3 is the Southern Silk Road.

Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity entered China in different times (Figure 2.1).

The Silk Road originated in the Chinese capital of Changan, then wended its way west and arrived in Dunhuang. There the route bifurcated, and two separate branches set off, the Northern Silk Road and the Southern Silk Road. The Southern Silk Road route descended across the Western Regions of the ancient oases around the southern perimeter of the Taklamakan Desert, passed through Khotan (now Hotan) the southwestern mountain pass from Shache, climbed westward along the southern slopes of the Pamirs,

and entered what is now Afghanistan. From there it continued southwestward to the shore of the Persian Gulf, ending at present-day Bandar-e ‘Abbas in Iran.

The Northern Silk Road headed almost due north from Dunhuang and arrived in the caravan town of Hami. From there the route forked into southern and northern branches. The northern branch of the Northern Silk Road extended westward along the mountain-steppe area of the northern slopes of the Tien Shan Mountains, and from there into the Russian steppe and entered into present-day Kazakhstan, thus avoiding the Taklamakan region altogether. On the steppe this northern branch of the Northern Silk Road continued westward and passed south of the Aral Sea and north of the shore of the Caspian Sea, and finally reached present-day Rostov-na-Donu (Rostov on the Don), Russia. There maritime routes led into the Black Sea, and from there into the Mediterranean.

The southern branch of the Northern Silk Road ran across the Western Regions through the ancient oases around the northern perimeter of the Taklamakan Desert, reached Kashgar (now Kashi), left through the northwestern mountain pass. From there, it crossed westward along the northern slopes of the Pamirs and continued towards the west, ran south of Lake Balahash and westward across the desert-steppe to Bukhara, (in modern Uzbekistan). From there, it headed south to Tehran (then in Persia, today in Iran) and crossed westward to the city of Baghdad (the capital of modern Iraq), and finally reached the shore of the Mediterranean Sea in present-day Lebanon.

Each of the three major branches of the Silk Road that led to and from Dunhuang had their own risks and times of great danger, but each of these three Silk Road branches also had unique “feeder links” and distinctive patterns of supply and demand. Ultimately,

their westward extension led to the vast maritime trade realms of the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean. The total length of the Silk Road covered more than four thousand miles from east to west, and its branches crossed some of the coldest mountains and some of the bitterest deserts on earth, including the Takalamakan Desert. The Silk Road continued to play an important role as the major trade connection between China and Europe until the 16th century when modern sea routes became prosperous tracks. In large measure, the Silk Road connection in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries broke down because of the shifting maritime trade in high quality Chinese porcelain which was much sought after in the west; once that route was found, the overland one fell into disuse. But while the Silk Road still thrived, Dunhuang remained important as the eastern entry-point into the Hexi Corridor, which lies to the west of the Yellow River, and thence to the capital of China.

The first formal mention of Dunhuang as a prefecture occurred during the Western Han Dynasty, which was established by Emperor Wu in 111 B. C (Ban 1966:17). Since then, Dunhuang has been renamed several times—Dunhuang Prefecture, Shazhou (“Zhou” is the generic of the toponym, and means, “province”), Guazhou, and Dunhuang County. Over time, Dunhuang’s boundaries changed as well as its name (see Appendix A; the names and boundaries of Dunhuang Prefecture that changed over time). For present purposes, the name “Dunhuang Prefecture” will be used to refer to this geographic region.

The problems with which I am concerned here involve not only a description of the history of ancient Dunhuang. The focus needs to be on both physical and human geography, which cannot be separated from one another and are keys to the regional

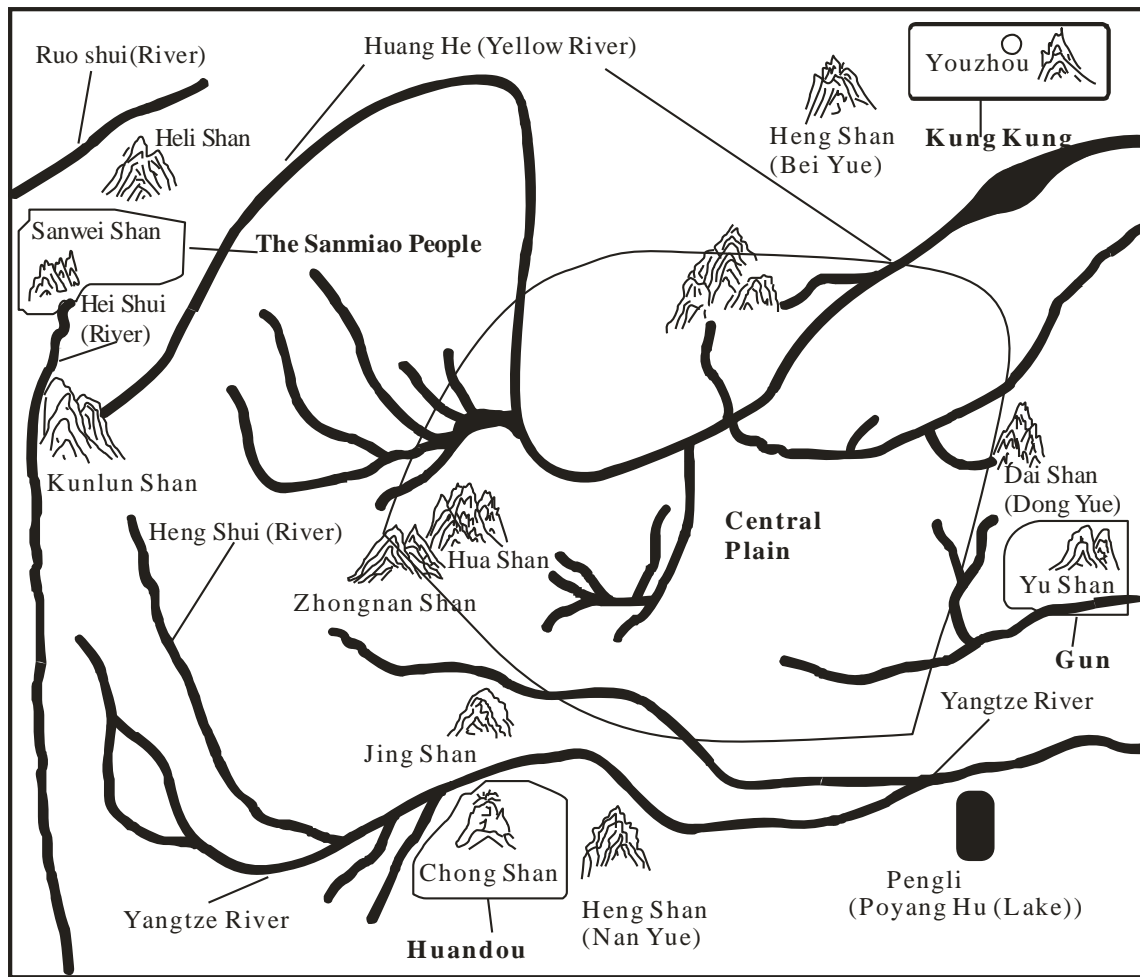


Figure 2.3 Dunhuang people who were banished to four directions outside of the Central Plain in ancient times. Based on Sima's history and Cao's geographical information, Kung Kung was banished to the northeast in Youzhou; Huandou was banished to the south in Chong Shan (Mountain); the Sanmiao people were banished to the west in Sanwei Shan (Mountain); and Gun was banished to the east in Yu Shan (Mountain). Sources: Basic map from Cao et al. 1990, plate 197, Yu Gong Suo Zai Sui Shan Jun Chuan Zai Tu 禹貢所載隨山浚川之圖 (Map of Mountains and Rivers Recorded in Yu Gong; additional identifications from Sima 1966:15-16).

features, physical conditions, cultural background, and realities of human life in Dunhuang during the era of the Mogao caves. I shall attempt an explanation of the cultural semantic meaning of Dunhuang, which so strongly paved the way for changing the accepted date of Buddhism coming to China in 67 A.D. and the understanding of the cultural conceptualization which is buried in the minds of the Chinese people.

A. Dunhuang as a Place for Banished People

From one perspective, it was the very land itself which created the history, culture, society, and people of Dunhuang. The study of Dunhuang historical and human geography is a foundation for the understanding of medieval Dunhuang culture. Ancient Chinese literature supplies clues about what Dunhuang was like before the Western Han Dynasty came into contact with its people. According to the earliest historical documents of the ancient Chinese, the *Shun Dian* 舜典 (*The Shun Law*) in the *Shangshu* 尚書 (*The Book of Documents*), the Emperor Shun (2255 B.C.) used banishment as a replacement for the five principle punishments, which were branding, cutting off the nose, cutting off the feet, castration, and execution.

China at this time only consisted of the Central Plains region (Figure 2.3). To be exiled from this area was to be sent into the dangerous “other.” The Emperor Shun banished “[Flood controller] Kung Kung to the northeast, to Yuzhou, [now the north of Liaonin and Hebei Provinces]; Huandou [an administrator of the Emperor Yao] was exiled to the south, to Chong Shan (High Mountain), [now Hunin Province]; the Sanmiao people were sent far west to the Sanwei Shan (Three Peaks Mountain), [now Dunhuang City]; and [Flood controller] Gun was exiled to the east, to Yu Shan (Feather Mountain)

[now Jiangsu Province]” (Confucius 1964:7) (Figure 2.3 shows where these four people were banished to four regions outside of the Central Plain (Cao et al. 1990:plate 197).

The historian Sima Qian³ 司馬遷 (135-87 B.C.) expressly pointed out where the Sanmiao people had lived in the south of the middle reach of the Yangtze River, including Jiang-zhou (now Jiang-zhou), Hai-zhou (now E-zhou), and Jing-zhou (now Yue-zhou), and that they had rebelled several times in this region before they were defeated by Emperor Shun and banished to Sanwei Mountain (Sima 1966:16) (Figure 2.4 points out where the Sanmiao people originally lived (Gao et al. 1990: plate 96). These four banishment locales to which the Sanmiao people were sent were perhaps both symbolic and actual. Sima Qian explained that these banished people were expected to manage the “barbarians” who lived in each of the four different regions. In Chapter One of Wudi banji (Chapter One of the Basic Annals of the Five Emperors) Sima Qian (1966:15-16) pointed out that the Emperor Shun banished “Kung Kung to Yu-ling where he managed the northern barbarians; Huandou to Chong Shan where he controlled the

³ Sima Qian was a famous historian of the Western Han Dynasty. Between 109 B.C. and 91 B.C. he wrote *Shiji* 史記 (*The Historical Record or the Records of the Grand Historian*), a *magnum opus* that covered Chinese history from the time of the five legendary Emperors through the end of the second century B.C., his own time. *Shiji* was the first systematic Chinese historical text; it influenced all subsequent Chinese historiography. The work contains 130 chapters grouped into five sections:

- 1.) 12 chapters of *benji* (basic annals) contain all biographies of the five legendary rulers from the Yellow Emperor to Qin Shihuang (the first Emperor of the Qin Dynasty), including the emperors of the Xia, Shang, and Zhou Dynasties, and four emperors and one empress dowager of the Han Dynasty before Sima Qian’s time.
- 2.) 10 chapters of *nianbiao* (chronological tables) are timelines of events.
- 3.) 8 chapters of *shu* (treatises) are cultural and economic records.
- 4.) 30 chapters of *shijia* (hereditary houses) contain all biographies of notable rulers, nobility and bureaucrats, including the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring States times.
- 5.) 70 chapters of *liezhuan* (memoirs) contain all biographies of other important figures.

southern barbarians; the Sanmiao to Sanwei and there they ruled the western barbarians; [and] Gun⁴ to Yu Shan there he administered the eastern barbarians.” This shows both the symbolism of exile from the core and the reality, in self-defense terms, of an attempt to manage the dangerous “other” by setting up effective buffer regions. Sima also delineated explicitly where the Sanmiao people went and quoted from *Kuodizhi*⁵ 括地志 (The Annals and the Traditional Commentary on Geography) “Sanwei Mountain has three peaks which are called “the three peaks.” Common usage refers to this mountain as Beiyu Shan [Low-Wing Mountain]; and it is located approximately thirty *li*⁶ southeast of Dunhuang Prefecture” (Sima 1966:16). According to the above passage, the Emperor Shun exiled these “four evils with their clans and sent them to the four frontiers” (Sima 1966:20) because if someone committed a crime in one’s family, the entire clan received punishment. I assume that, from an ethnographic perspective, the threat of communal punishment was a social device intended to ensure collective obedience to the state. Banishment also served the interests of the state; these exiled administrators brought key buffer zones into a productive, rather than combative, relationship to the Central Plains core region.

⁴ According to *Shiji*, Sima Qian used the word “*Ji*” which means “to kill” Gun in Yu Shan, but he also quoted from his teacher, Kong Anguo (?), the tenth descend of Confucius, who was a scholar of the study of Confucian classics and said that the word “*Ji*” means “to banish.” I suggest that Kong’s saying is correct because the Emperor Shun had substituted banishment for the five principle punishments (Sima 1966: 16).

⁵ *Kuodizhi* was compiled by Li Tai who was the fourth son of the Emperor Taizong in the Tang Dynasty. It was comprised of five-hundred-fifty chapters and was a geographical *magnum opus*. Much of the original book has been lost (Li 1991).

⁶ The *li*, a Chinese unit of distance, was the measure used from the Han Dynasty onward. A *li* is equal to 415 meters (Nienhauser 1994: xxxii).

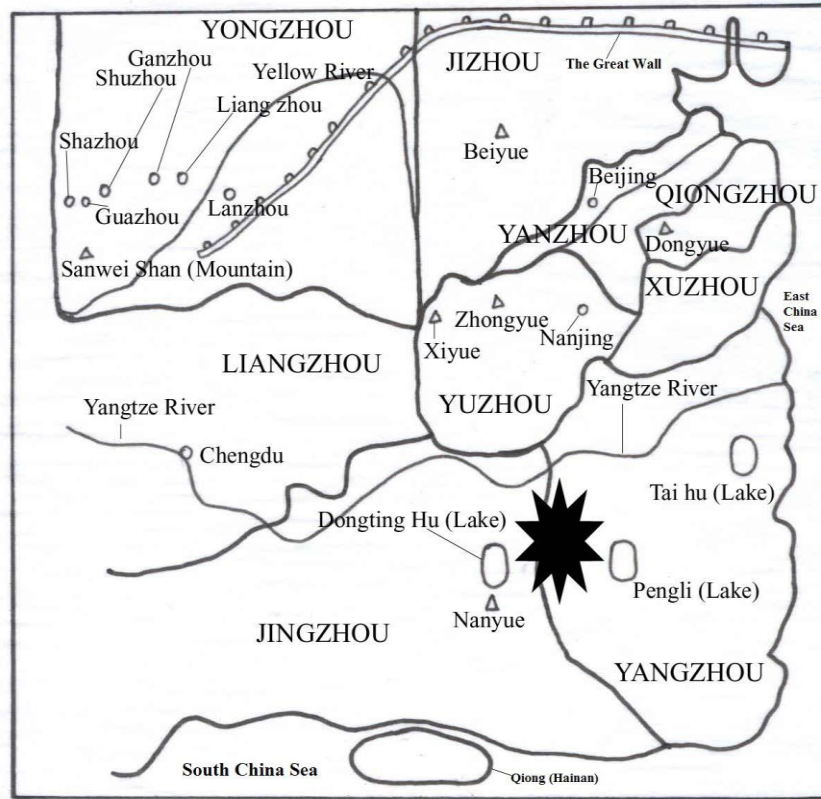


Figure 2.4 shows the nine prefectures the Emperor Ku established in ancient China. The prefectures of Yangzhou, Xuzhou, Qiongzhou, Yanzhou, and Yuzhou had clearly demarcated boundaries on all sides. The other four prefectures had partially fuzzy boundary regions where the Chinese realm met other realms. To the north, Jizhou prefecture merged into the pastoral-nomadic southern Gobi steppe region; to the northwest Yongzhou prefecture reached along the Hexi Corridor, and stopped at the Takalamakan desertic region, but northward merged into the complex mountainous zone. Liangzhou and Jingzhou prefectures both had fuzzy borders in the west. In this map I point out where the Sanmiao people lived on the south of the middle reach of the Yangtze River (the black starburst). According to Sima Qian (1966:15) the Sanmaio people originally lived in the interlacustrine area which lay to the east of Dongting Hu (Lake) and to the west of Pengli (Poyang Hu (Lake)) before they were banished northwestward to Sanwei Mountain. (the city of Beijing did not exist at this time, but is included here as a reference point.)

Source: Compiled from: Cao et al. 1990, plate 96, Di Ku Jiu Zhou Zhi Tu 帝嚳九州之圖; Sima 1966:15-16.

1. Early Civilizations Before the Xia Dynasty

The anthropological lineal evolutionary perspective on the development of sociopolitical organization holds that bands came before tribes; which in turn came before chiefdoms, and then finally came states. I assume that this view influenced the Marxist anthropology of communist China. In Chinese history, there were five legendary Emperors who became strongly allied as chiefs in the primary Chinese society which existed before the Xia Dynasty (2205-1766 B.C.). However, another perspective needs to be considered.

In earlier ancient Chinese history, the five emperors, the Huang-ti (the Yellow Emperor) (2697 B.C.), Chuan-hsu (2597 B.C.), Ku (2513 B.C.), Yao (2356 B.C.), and Shun (2255 B.C.) are legendary figures. They remained so until 1920 when they “became a true history of China’s cultural development from the Stone Age to civilization” (Chang 1968:121).

Scholars have sought to use archaeological evidence to prove this legendary history. Even though they consider that the five legendary emperors were allied chiefs, they still continue to call them “emperors” because the word “*di*” means “emperor” in every ancient document. I suggest that the word, “*di*,” may have undergone a significant semantic shift. In very early times it referred to specific personages who were what anthropologists today understand as being “chiefs.” When the early Chinese state emerged, the written word, “*di*,” was applied to the head of a state society, someone to whom the term “king” or “emperor” reasonably applies. For complex cultural reasons this head-of-a-state-society sobriquet was applied retroactively and anachronistically to earlier leading figures, such as Yao and Shun, who were in fact chiefs, headed societies,

and were chosen by kin groups that had not yet reached full state level, that is, centralized and organized social and political systems, a formal government with a hierarchical structure of authority.

The following two dialogs can support this view. They show the allied chiefs Yao and Shun in dialogue with administrators and with their four chiefs:

Yao said, "Who can manage the affairs of my position?"
Fang-chi said, "The Heir, Tan Chu [Yao's older son], is open and bright."
Yao said, "Oh, he is obstinate and mean; I do not want to use him."
Yao again said, "Who can do it?"
Huan Tou said, "Kung Kung has widely gathered people and put them to work. He can be employed."
Yao said, "Kung Kung is good at talking, [but] his behavior is eccentric; he looks respectful, but is contemptuous of heaven, so he will not do."
Yao again said, "Alas, you Chiefs of the Four Sacred Mountains! The widespread flood is dashing to the skies and is vastly embracing the mountains and overflowing the hills. People of the lowlands worry about it. Is there any one who can be sent to control it?"
The Four Chiefs all said, "Kun would do."
Yao said, "Kun neglects orders and ruins the name of the family members in his generation, he will not do." Nienhauser 1994:8

Shun spoke to the Chiefs of the Four Sacred Mountains: "If there is anyone who can strive in official service and glorify Yao's affairs, I will appoint him to office to assist with affairs."
They [the Four Chiefs] all said, "If Po Yu is made the Minister of Artisans and Craftsmen, he can manifest the imperial enterprise."
Shun said, "It must be so! Yu [Po Yu], regulate the land and water and devote your efforts to this!"

Nienhauser 1994:14

These passages are sufficient to show that Yao and Shun were allied chiefs in a united chiefdom society, because both Yao and Shun were seeking their successors. Also, interpretation of archaeological evidence has provided a cultural historical framework for the formative states of the prehistoric Chinese culture that immediately preceded the rise of the state civilization—the Shang Dynasty (ca. 1766 B.C. to 1154 B.C.). Chang has

subdivided the pre-Shang period into three stages of the earliest cultures in north and south China. They were the Yang-shao, the Painted Pottery Culture; (ca. 5000 B.C. to 3000 B.C.), the Lungshanoid, the Gray Pottery Culture (ca. 3000 B.C. to 2400 B.C.); and the Lungshan cultures, the Black Pottery Culture (ca. 2400 B.C. to 1850 B.C.) (Chang 1968:443). These cultures all existed in the Neolithic period. Stratigraphically, they lie above the Mesolithic strata which overlays the Palaeolithic; and typologically each of the three cultures exhibits distinctive sociocultural characteristics and a particular stylistic pottery (Chang 1968:88-89).

The Yang-shao culture was found in established “shifting farming villages” (Chang 1968:346) that were confined to the river valleys and small basins of the Yellow River, the Wei-shui River, and the Fenho River in north China (Chang 1986:192). The site of Yang-shao-ts’un, for example, was discovered in 1920 by the farmers of Yang-shao village in Mien-ch’ih County of northwestern Honan Province in north China (Chang 1986:108). This was the cradle of the earliest Chinese civilization in the Chung-yuan, the Central Plains. The locale of the Pan-p’o-ts’un settlement provides the best evidence of Yang-shao farmers in Shensi (Chang 1968:95) because the people living there would have had access to the resources of the rivers and mountains for abundant fish, seeds, vegetables, and wild game. Excavated tools—hoes, spades, and digging sticks—suggested that the Pan-p’o site was one of the earliest shifting farming villages. Chang stated that “...their settlements shifted from one locale to another after a short period of occupancy, that some favorable locales were repeatedly occupied, and that the shifting and repetitive settlement pattern probably resulted from the slash-and-burn technique of cultivation” (Chang 1986:114).

2. Archaeological Evidence

Three sites of the earlier Neolithic culture of South China—Ch'ing-lien-kang, Liang-chu, and Hu-shu—are dated to between 5000 and 3000 B.C. (Chang 1986:195-196). The Ho-mu-tu Culture that was discovered in 1973 across the Hang-chou Bay in Yu-yao county. Northern Chekiang shared many features of Ma-chia-pang cultures, and clearly they had influenced each other. As Chang (1986:208) described it, this site “...faced flatlands to the north and the Ssu-ming Mountains to the south across the river...[and] was surrounded by forests and ponds as well as rivers.” From the above passages it can be seen that at these sites in both north and south China the dense clusters of houses were built in the river valleys and small basins, thus the villagers had an abundant variety of natural resources and easy access to them. In anthropological terms these farmers, who apparently did not use draft animals, were horticulturalists who lived in large and sedentary communities in the early, Chinese shifting farming life.

The Lungshanoid and the Lungshan cultures were “permanent farming villages” (Chang 1968:346). In a comparable chronological position, Chang (1968:147-151) stated that the Lungshanoid cultures were a transitional culture no longer confined to the Nuclear Area, namely, the Central Plains of North China (western Honan, southern Shansi, and eastern Shensi Provinces). They spread to the eastern (Shantung Province) and southeastern (Huai River and Yangtze-Hanshui) areas in China. They also moved to northwestern areas where they came into contact with the Yang-shao culture, and from that contact there arose the largely Lung-shan cultures in the eastern regions. Based on relative stratification, this seems to have led to the early phases of the Shang civilization in Honan Province.

I believe that during the Lungshan culture, the social structure transitioned to a highly stratified chiefdom society. The dense clusters of houses, the villages and towns were protected by long walls constructed of sticks and mud. Meanwhile, burials showed clearly differentiated social strata. Later, strong social stratification would characterize the first state society of China, the legendary Shang. As Nelson (1996:136) stated, “...there is too little specific information to attach any of these legends to particular archaeological sites.”

It is clear that no specific sites can be associated unequivocally with these legendary cultures. However, there are some interesting archaeological excavations which show that the Liangzhu culture (Lung-shan Culture) dated from 3300 to 2200 B.C., spread near Hangzhou Bay and the lower reaches of the Yangzi River in Zhejiang and Jiangsu Provinces, and extended to Anhui, Shandong, and Guangdong provinces (Nelson 1996:138). More recent studies suggest a more nuanced analytical approach to the issue of the Chinese Neolithic and the legends and traditions handed down in written history (Keightley 2006; Shelach and Pines 2006; Allard 2006). The main point to consider is that the cultural importance of the Dunhuang region extends back into Chinese prehistory.

Some of the Chinese historical literature suggests that Sanwei Mountain was located in Dunhuang Prefecture. According to the forty-fifth section of the *Zuo-zhuan* 左傳, a Chinese historical work covering the period from 722 B.C. to 463 B.C., in the ninth year of the Duke Zhao 昭公, Zuo Qiuming 左丘明 (ca. 5th B.C.) stated that “a villain by the surname of Yun dwelt in Guazhou” (Zuo 1966:3). Du Yu 杜預, the Western Jin Dynasty, a commenter on the *Zuo-zhuan*, noted that “The surname Yun, those ancestors of the Yin-

rong, and Sanmiao people, were banished to Sanwei where [then it] was [in] Guazhou [prefecture] and now it is in Dunhuang” (1966:3).

Li Daoyuan 酈道元 was a Northern Wei scholar. In the fortieth section of his *Shuijingzhu* 水經注 (Commentary on the River Classic) he said that “The Sanwei Mountain is located in the south of Dunhuang County” (Li 1956:509).

The scholar Li Tai 李泰 (620-?) was the fourth son of Emperor Taizong of the Tang Dynasty. In his *Kuodizhi* (the Annals and Traditional commentary on Geography), he pointed out that “Sanwei Shan has three peaks; [it is] thus called Sanwei [Three Peaks], and another name for it is Beiyu shan. [This mountain] is situated thirty *li* southeast of Dunhuang County in Shazhou [Sand Prefecture]” (Li 1991:222).

Later on Li Jifu 李吉甫 (758-814 A.D.), a geographer of the Tang Dynasty, wrote his book called the *Yuanhe junxian tuzhi* 元和郡縣圖志 (the Geography of Yuanhe Prefectures and Counties) and completed it in 813 A.D., the eighth year of the Yuanhe reign of the Emperor Xianzong. Thus the book was named “Yuanhe.” Li Jifu said, “The Sanwei Shan is located thirty *li* south of Dunhuang County and has three peaks; therefore, it is named Sanwei [“Three peaks”]. Li Jifu quoted from the *Shanshu* [the *Book of Documents*] that pointed out that [the Emperor Shun] banished the Sanmiao people into the Sanwei; that is this mountain” (Li 1995:1026).

Yue Shi 樂史, in his *Taiping huanyu ji* 太平寰宇記 (the Record of the Geographic Places), stated that

Shazhou (Sand Prefecture) is the territory of the tribute of Yu, [which is] Yongzhou where the western barbarians live. Also, *Shazhou* is [the] place the *Liusha* (the Desert of Shifting Sands) and *Heishui* (Black River) flow through. The Book [of Documents] says that Yu [here the word “Yu” is misprinted. The correct word must be “Shun” according to the Book of Documents] banished the

Sanmiao people to Sanwei Mountain which become their homeland. [In other words], that is *Shazhou*. Later their offspring became the Jiangrong tribe and possessed this land for generations

Yue 1963:352

In the map of mountains and rivers of the nine Regions in the tribute of Yu, the *Ruoshui* (Small River) flowed down to the south and then joined the *Heishui* (Black River), which passed through the Sanwei Mountain and then eventually entered into the South China Sea (see Figure 2.5).

Some modern Chinese scholars have expressed doubt about *Sanwei* Mountain in Dunhuang being the place to which the Sanmiao were banished (Dai 1908:5). But I maintain that traditional Chinese historiographic literature and commentators are unanimous in support of the identification of the Sanmiao people who lived in Sanwei Shan as being one of those “four wicked ones” who were punished by Chief Shun and banished. They lived at Sanwei Mountain in Dunhuang, thus providing an important buffer function for the ancient core region of the Central Plains. Later on, in medieval times, Dunhuang became an important peripheral zone of the core Chinese central state.

B. The Riddle of Dunhuang

The place-name of Dunhuang has long attracted the attention of scholars. It was first mentioned by Zhang Qian 張騫 in his report to the Emperor Wu of the Western Han Dynasty. Zhang Qian described the Yuezhi and Wusun tribes who lived in the Dunhuang area and were mentioned in the memoir of Zhang Qian of the *Qian Han Shu* 前漢書 (History of the Former Han) in 125 B.C. (Ban 1966:3). However, Chinese scholars, past and present, have not been able to agree on the etymology and meaning of the toponym,

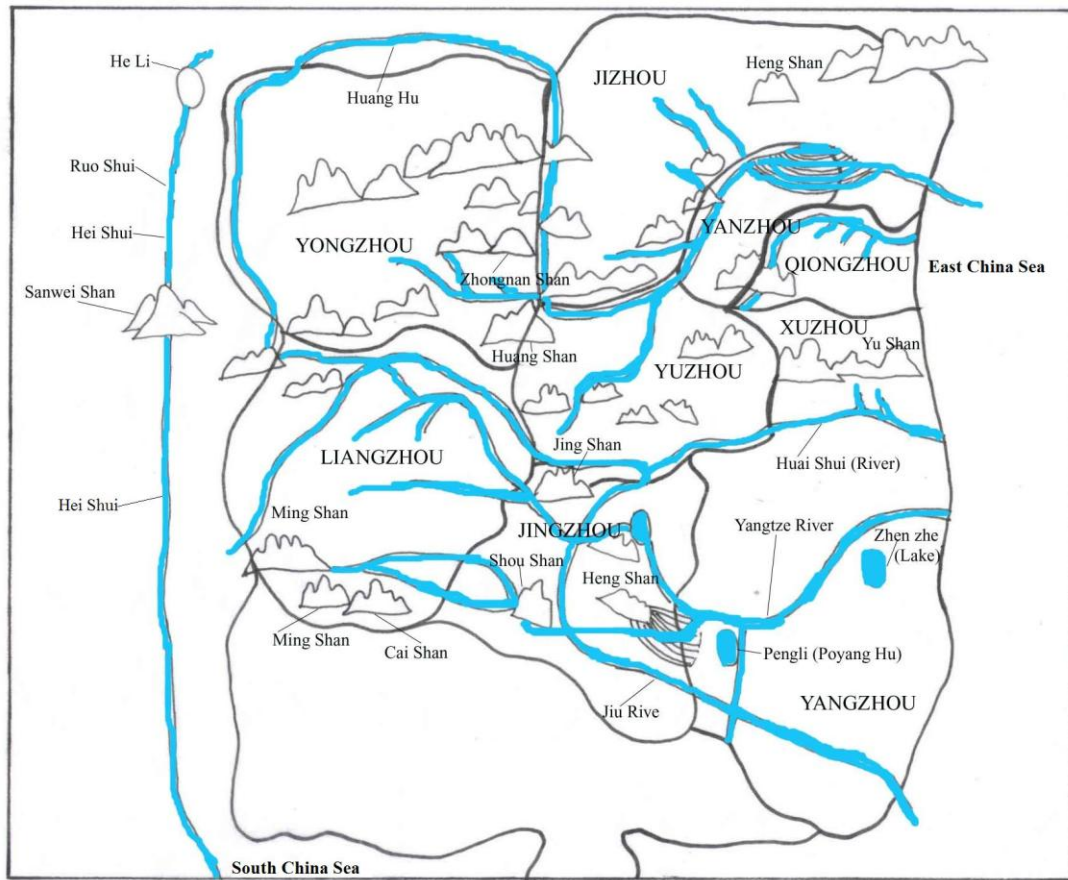


Figure 2.5 Hei Shui (Black River) flowed through the Sanwei Shan (Mountains) and entered the South China Sea.

Sources: Cao et al. 1990, plate 120, Yu Gong Jiu Zhou Shan Zhi Tu 禹貢九州山川之圖 (Map of mountains and rivers of the Nine Regions in Yu Gong). This is an ancient cartographic style. The blank areas on the right and bottom of the map are oceans; and it is understood that the Hei Shui flows into the sea.

Dunhuang 敦煌. Some saw the continued prosperity of Dunhuang, so they considered *dun* 敦 to be an allomorphic form of *da* 大, “great”; and that *huang* 煌 was *sheng* 盛, “prosperity” (Ban⁷ 1966:3 and Li 1995); and they also stated that the original name and meaning derived from Chinese characters. However, contemporary Chinese scholars do not agree with this old medieval Chinese etymology. The question, therefore, remains. Where does the name Dunhuang come from? And what is the original meaning of the word, “Dunhuang”? The following section considers three different paradigms relevant to the consideration of the riddle of the toponym, Dunhuang. These are: the historical documents which first mention the name in written Chinese characters; the linguistic interpretation and transliteration of the name as found in minority group languages; and the heartbreak of the modern peoples at their lost cultural materials.

1. The First Mention of Dunhuang

The paradigm of the first mention of Dunhuang can be found in Chinese literary documents. Four early documents are particularly important; they are: *Zhang Qian zhuan* 張騫傳 (the Memoir of Zhang Qian) in the *History of the Former Han Dynasty* (Ban 1966:3); *Dayuezhi guo* 大月氏國 (The Kingdom of Great Yuezhi, the Kushans) of the volume one of the *Xiyu zhuan* 西域傳 (the Memoirs of the Western Regions) in the *History of the Former Han Dynasty* (Ban 1966:12); *Wusun guo* 烏孫國 (the Kingdom of

⁷ Ban Gu (32-92 A.D.) was a Chinese historian in the Eastern Han Dynasty. He wrote a history of the *Qian Han Shu* (the History of the Former Han Dynasty) known in modern times as the *Hanshu* (the Book of Han), which contains 100 chapters grouped into 12 chapters of *Ji* (basic annals), 8 chapters of *biao* (Chronological tales), 10 chapters of *shi* (hereditary houses), and 70 chapters of *zhuan* (memoirs).

Wusun) of the volume two of the *Xiyu zhuan* 西域傳 (the Memoirs of the Western Regions) in the *History of the Former Han Dynasty* (Ban 1966:1); and the *Dawan* 大宛 (The Farghana) *liezhuan* 列傳 (the Memoirs of Dawan) of *Shiji* (The Historical Record) (Sima 1966:4). Dunhuang was mentioned first after a mission to the Western Regions. Zhang Qian was an emissary sent to the Western Regions to seek assistance in the war against the Xiongnu (Huns). He was captured by the Xiongnu and held prisoner for ten years, Zhang Qian's journey to the Western Regions lasted thirteen years, from 138 to 125 B.C. His diplomatic mission was considered a failure because the *Dayuezhi* (The Great Yuezhi) were too settled to want war against the Xiongnu, but his reports impressed the Emperor Wu who very much wanted to make contact with the Western Regions.

This action was described as “breaking the right arm of the Xiongnu”, meaning, to cut off the Xiongnu from having any diplomatic relations with the Western Regions, and was described as “contacting the Northwest Counties”, meaning to open trade with the Western Regions for the Han people, in the memoir of Zhang Qian of the *History of the Former Han Dynasty* (Ban 1966:4).

Section sixty-one of the *History of the Former Han Dynasty* (Ban 1966: 3) recounts the memoir of Zhang Qian who returned home from his diplomatic mission and reported on the geography of the Western Regions to Emperor Wu of the Western Han Dynasty. He portrayed that the Kingdoms of Wusun and Dayuezhi lived in between the Dunhuang and Qilian area. According to section ninety-six in volume one of the *Xiyu zhuan* (the Memoirs of the Western Regions) in the *History of the Former Han Dynasty*, Ban referred to the Kingdom of *Daroushi* (The Great Roushi), in modern Tajikistan, and

said that the people of *Dayuezhi* formerly had lived in “between the Dunhuang and Qilian areas” (Ban 1966:12). Also, Sima (1966:4) wrote the same words as Ban had written in the memoir of Zhang Qian of the *History of the Former Han Dynasty*. In addition, according to section ninety-six in volume two of the *Xiyu zhuan* (the Memoirs of the Western Regions) in the *History of the Former Han Dynasty*, Ban referred to the Kingdom of *Wusun* and mentioned that “the people of *Wusun* and *Dayuezhi* lived together in the Dunhuang area” (Ban 1966:1).

The above four ancient documents all mentioned the name of Dunhuang. This indicates that the lexeme, “Dunhuang” was in existence before the Han people came into direct contact with the people who lived there during the Han Dynasty.

In Chinese history Dunhuang was a crucial military geographic locale and a trade center with the Western Regions because it lay on the border between “Chinese and Barbarian.” Therefore, Dunhuang gradually developed into a metropolis for commercial trade and travellers arriving back from the west where the caravans stocked up on supplies before going to the west. The weary travellers from the long journey needed rest before heading onward to the Chinese capital, Changan, in medieval China. This special mercantile transit character formed the unique culture of Dunhuang.

In literary documents, the name Dunhuang first appeared when Zhang Qian referred to the kingdoms of *Dayuezhi* and *Wusun* situated “between the Dunhuang and Qilian areas.” Knowing this can help us to understand accurately the people who lived in the Dunhuang area during the Warring States period and the Qin Dynasty. However, most Chinese people know only that “Dunhuang” came from the Chinese language, and interpret it without real understanding of the meaning.

2. The Interpretation of Dunhuang

In their interpretations, past and present Chinese scholars have explained the meaning of the word, “Dunhuang.” For example, the ancient commentator, Yan Shigu (581-645 A.D.), who commented on the Geography in the *History of the Former Han Dynasty*, quoted from Ying Shao’s definition of Dunhuang in which “*dun* means ‘great’; and *huang* means ‘prosperity’” (Ban 1966:3). Modern linguists would say there is a hidden implication here, that a distant Chinese dialect was spoken by locals in the region at that time. Ying Shao was a Chinese Confucian classical scholar who lived in the early Han Dynasty. He is one, among other early Chinese scholars, who understood Dunhuang to mean “great prosperity.”

These ancient scholars often gave Dunhuang a literal meaning in Chinese. Following Ying Shao, Li Jifu (1995:1026) in his *Yuanhe junxian zhi* (the Geography of Yuanhe Prefectures and Counties) during the Tang Dynasty, stated that “*Dunhuang*, *dun* means ‘great’ because it is famous for opening up trade with the Western Regions.” These definitions of Dunhuang actually became established in the minds of early Chinese people because when Dunhuang played an important role as a city on the Silk Road, scholars provided a comprehensible meaning for the name of Dunhuang. However, twentieth and twenty-first century Chinese scholars do not agree with this early definition of Dunhuang. Some have argued that the name is either a Chinese phoneticization of a local dialect term, or else is how the indigenous people phoneticized a Chinese term (Cen 1936:67; Liu 1982:34; Shi 1985:72; Wang 1987:61-64; Yang, Guo, and Zhang 1997:242; Li 1997:32; Liu 2000:14). Some linguists seek to trace the original meaning of

Dunhuang to non-Chinese languages, including Tocharian, Xiongnu (Cen 1936:68; Hu and Fu 2004:16), Greek (Hai 1986:4), Tibetan (Li 1988:86), or Uighur (Qian 1994:49).

Recently, in the sphere of phonetics and phonemics, Chinese scholars have shifted their focus to indigenous people who phoneticized an expression of the local dialect into Chinese. From passages in three ancient documents Liu (1982:33) claimed that “Qilian” was from a minority language and not Chinese; and likewise, that the sound-shape “Dunhuang” was Chinese characters used phonetically to express the speech sound of a local dialect term. In the same way, Zhang Qian could have recast a local term into Chinese pronunciation as “Dunhuang” (Liu 1982:33) when he introduced the kingdoms of the Western Regions to the Emperor Wu. Liu stated that the minority tribes who lived there and herded their animals in between the Qilian and Dunhuang mountains used “Qilian” and “Dunhuang” interchangeably to refer to mountains; but he did not provide an explanation in terms of which minority language might support his view.

Wang (1987: 61-62) pointed out that this line of historical linguistic investigation has two main difficulties. First, it is not certain what languages actually were spoken there four or five thousand years ago; and second, the phonetic shape of the languages spoken in the Dunhuang region then is also uncertain. Wang considered that Dunhuang was an ethnonym for the Tocharian tribe who lived in the northwest area. He states that the *Bei shan jing* (Northern Mountain) in *Shan hai jing* (the classic of Mountains and Seas) shows that the Tocharian people were known as “Dunhong”. Hence, Dunhuang was one of the Chinese names for the Dunhong people whom modern scholarship knows as the Tocharians (Wang 1987:61; Guo 1966:6; Strassberg 2002:219).

Another sphere of linguistic analysis focuses on toponyms in the languages of regional minority peoples to establish the origin of the name, “Dunhuang.” These scholars have agreed that Dunhuang is derived from a minority language, but do not agree which language it might be. Cen suggested that the word Dunhuang may be a phoneticization from the Tocharian, the Xiongnu, the Turkic, or other Central Asian languages (Cen 1936:68-71). Cen specifically pointed out that Dunhuang was derived from Simocatta, an early 7th century Byzantine historiographer who used the term, “Taugas,” to refer to “the name of China” and “the name of a city” (Cen 1936:63). Further, he concluded that Taugas is “the Chinese people” (Cen 1936:71).

The reason for this assumption is that after the Emperor Wu opened up trade with the Western Regions, Dunhuang played an important role as the gateway to control the East and West when the foreigners first arrived at Dunhuang City and gradually this control-point nomenclature turned the city name into the country name. Spontaneously it became a bifunctional toponym (Cen 1936:67). Later, Cen compared the graphemes of three alphabetic syllabaries, the Tokhari, (name for a tribe), Thogara (name for a prefecture), and Taugas (name for a country), and concluded that “Dunhunag” was a several centuries old transliteration from Tokhari and Thogara (Cen 1936:68), while Taugas is a phoneticization of the underlying lexeme, “Dunhuang” (Cen 1936:67), but he did not specify a particular language of origin. Also, Hu and Fu (2004:16) agreed that perhaps Dunhuang is a phoneticization from the Xiongnu language. In addition, a few Chinese scholars have argued that Dunhuang was not a Chinese phonetization of a local term at all, but rather was a sinicized enunciation that the indigenous people made in order to let the Chinese people pronounce and remember the toponym in their own

Chinese language (Liu 1982:33; Li 1997:32-33). Such a situation often happens to anthropologists who go to an unfamiliar county to do their fieldwork and ask about things or events around them. Indeed, anthropologists often use their own language to write down the pronunciation of things and events.

In his analysis, Qian made the clear point that the lexical root of Dunhuang is close to the ancient Turkic language, of which the modern Uighur language, spoken by the Uighur people in Xinjiang, China, is a member. Qian (1994:49) gave three reasons to support his view.

The first reason is that Dunhuang 敦煌, also written as Dunwu 敦物, or Dunwu 惇物, was the name of a mountain found in the nomad territories of two groups surnamed Jiang and Yun. Dunwu Shan 敦物山 (Dunwu mountain) is also known as “Chui Shan 垂山.” In the Uighur language, Dunwu can mean “chui”, “continuous”, and “successive,” or may be a phonological variant of “dawamlək” and “dawamlexmək.” These words have a similar meaning, of “continuity,” and the same etymological root, “dawam.” This etymological sense of physical continuity underlies the original sound for “dunwu” 敦物, “dunwu” 惇物, and “Dunhuang” 敦煌, terms that were used to describe the Dunwu Shan. Qian concluded that the Qilian Shan referred to what are today the Qilian Mountains on the eastside of Jiuquan City, and that Dunhuang consisted of what are today known as the *Yema nanshan* (Wild-horse-Southern Mountains) and the *Danghe nanshan* (Dang-River-Southern Mountains) on the westside of Jiuguan City. As a result, Dunhuang originated from the name of a group of mountains and later was also used as the name of a prefecture and county during the Han Dynasty (Liu 1982:34; Qian 1994:49).

As his second reason in support of a Turkic origin, Qian quoted a *Zuo zhuan* passage dating from the fourteenth year of the Duke Xiang 襄公 which states that “Come, the surname of Jiang. Formerly, the Qin people [Qin mugong, a Duke of Qin in the Warring States period], forced Wuli, the ancestor of those surnamed Jiang, to [migrate to] Guazhou” (Zuo 1966:17) and referring to the ninth year of Zhao Gong, the *Zuo zhuan* states that “the villain who was surnamed Yun dwelt in Guazhou” (Zuo 1966:3). Therefore, the peoples surnamed Jiang and Yun dwelt in the place named “Guazhou.” In the Uighur language “gua” is pronounced as, “tawuz;” Chinese phoneticization drops the final “z.” So these words, *dunhuang*, *dunwu*, and *dunwu* are close to the pronunciation of ancestral Turkic “*tawu*” (Qian 1994:49). Accordingly, Qian concludes that the pronunciation of the ancient Turkic word, “dawam” gradually became “gua” in Chinese, and “tawuz,” in Uighur; and that both terms refer to “Guazhou,” the nomadic territories where the people surnamed Jiang and Yun lived (Qian 1994:17).

Qian’s third reason for attributing “Dunhuang” to a Turkic linguistic origin hinges upon a complex sound-meaning correspondence. Some Chinese scholars have used a concept best rendered into English as “metaideophone,” the close connection between the phones of sound and units of meaning-translation, in order to determine the origin of the name of Dunhuang. Qian’s and other analyses, using the concept of metaideophone, were based on the premise that “Dunhuang” arose from a pronunciation based upon Chinese sound or on a local indigenous dialect or language. In other words, Yang, Guo, and Zhang (1997:242) pointed out that the early Eastern Han Dynasty scholar Ying Shao depicted the word “dun” as meaning “da (great)” because “dun” was the metaideophone of the word “da” and had close sound and meaning. In contrast to this the character

“huang” 煌 that meant “sheng (prosperity)” was not correct for derived characters having similar close sound and meaning. In this instance, Yang, Guo, and Zhang (1997: 242) argued that another character “huang” 荒, which meant “desolation,” and mirrored the realistic life of people before Western Han times, would have been more appropriate; but, for reasons unknown, another written character became used instead. In this case the characters “huang” 煌 and “huang” 荒 have similar sounds and meanings in the Chinese lexicography.

These particularities of metaidiophone enter into the third reason for the etymology Qian proposed. Qian quoted from the *Zuozhuan* passage that refers to the twenty-second year of Zhaogong which states that “the Rong people [who bear the surnames of Jiang and Yun] originally dwelt in Guazhou; they are also known as ‘the Rong of Jiuzhou’ in the Spring and Autumn and the Warring States periods” (Zuo 1966:26). Hence, Qian stated that “the nomads of the surname Jiang and Yun roved around the area that is called “Guazhou” and also is known as “Jiuzhou” (Qian 1994:49). In the Uighur language “Jiuzhou” is “tokuz” and has a similar sound to the character “gua” in Chinese and to the lexeme “tawuz” in Uighur (Qian 1994:49). Finally, as his third point, Qian concluded that in pre-Han or early Han times the Chinese people transformed the mountain name “dunwe” into “guazhou”, and then into “jiuzhou” (Qian 1994:49). This is a fortuitous homophony between two words in the Uighur language (Qian 1994:49).

Another scholar, Li, sought the original meaning of Dunhuang in the modern Tibetan language. Li asserted that Dunhuang is a translated name from the language of the Jiang and the Hu tribes who once lived in the western Hexi corridor region, and said

that “the term, ‘Dunhuang’ can be traced back to its [former] residents. This can provide an understanding of the original name of Dunhuang” (Li 1988:86). He indicated that the modern Tibetan language is derived from the language of the Jiang; so he consulted with many Tibetan linguistic experts. Finally, one of the Tibetan linguistic experts, Suo Nanjie, proposed a cultural semantic meaning for the sound of “duo-hang” which means “the place of chanting sutras” or “the location of chanting sutras” in the modern Tibetan language (Li 1988:86). Li maintains that the term, “Dunhuang” existed before the Emperor Wu established Dunhuang as a prefecture in the early Han Dynasty and opened trade with the Western Regions (Li 1988:86). If this is in fact so, the date of Buddhism arriving in China may have been considerably earlier than the presently accepted date of 67 A.D. in the Eastern Han Dynasty. According to Li’s new perspective, although Buddhism spread into China in 67 A.D it may have arrived in Dunhuang much earlier. It may be true that before Zhang Qian arrived at Dunhuang in 138 B.C., Dunhuang could have had many Buddhist activities. As Chen (1964:19) stated, “[D]un-huang on the Chinese northwest frontier...was an important Buddhist center in China...[and] provide[d] havens for the travel-weary monks...[who] gathered to hold religious discussions, [and] to translate the sacred scriptures.”

In 1986 the scholar, Hai Feng, argued that the original place-name of Dunhuang perhaps was derived from the Greek language, not from the Tibetan language; and he disagreed with the views of other contemporary scholars, saying that the name was not a transliteration from the Chinese or from the languages of minority groups.

Hai Feng pointed out that the kingdom of *Daxia* [referring to first millennium B. C. Bactria] was the historical Greco-Bactrian kingdom that had already reached into the

Pamirs by the third century B.C. One of their major tribes, the Scythian, or Scyths, migrated into Dunhuang. Thus, it can be argued that the Greco-Bactrian people lived in Dunhuang before the Xiongnu people. As a result, Hai Feng concluded that the original placename of Dunhuang may be derived from Greek, but that it could not derive from a transliteration of the Xiongnu language (Hai 1986:4).

However, the scholar, Wang Yijian refutes this Hellenic attribution. He argues that Hai made a strategic error when he thought that the Scythian language was a branch of the Greco-Bactrian. Wang (1987:41) argued that the place-name of Dunhuang has nothing to do with the Greek people. He pointed out that the nomadic Scythians who moved around in the northern Euro-Asian steppelands of the Caspian Sea, Aral Sea, and Syr Darya (River, modern Khojend) in the seventh century B.C. were the same as the Saka people who spoke a non-Hellenic Indo-European language in ancient Persia (also see P'iankov 1994:40).

Most scholars agree that the Sakas are considered to be a branch of the Scythians because they were known to the Chinese as the Sai-zhong in the kingdom of the Wusun who are mentioned in the Memoirs of the Western Regions, in the *History of the Former Han* (Ban 1966:1). It is generally accepted that the view point of Wang coincides with the description of the Scythians given by Strabo (63/64 B.C.-ca.24 A.D), who wrote his *Geography*:

Most of the Scythians, beginning from the Caspian Sea, are called Dahae Scythae [who lived in the area around modern Turkmenistan], and those situated more towards the east [are called] Massagetae [an Iranian people of antiquity who lived in today's Uzbekistan], and Sacae [who lived in what is now Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, parts of northwestern of India, Iran, Ukraine, and the Altai and Siberia of Russia]; the rest have the common appellation of Scythians, but each separate tribe has its peculiar name. All, or the greatest part of them, are nomads. The best known tribes are those who deprived

the Greeks of Bactriana, the Asii, Pasiani, (Asian?) Tochari, and Sacarauli, who came from the country on the other side of the I[J]axartes [Syr Darya], opposite the Sacae and Sogdiani.

Strabo:1903:245

Recent archaeological discoveries also suggest that an Indo-European etymology for, “Dunhuang,” is a possibility. The Tarim mummies excavated in the Tarim Basin (located in the present-day Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, China) have been dated to the second and the first millennium B.C. These excavated mummies wore cloth of western European type. Physical anthropological analysis has also contributed to the suggestion that the migrations of Indo-European people to the Western Regions took place due to cultural exchange with the Chinese world, and that these people may have been the easternmost speakers of an Indo-European language (Mallory and Mair 2000:298-318).

Many of these Tarim mummies have “European” features, including blonde or red hair, blue eyes, and high noses, which also are found in present-day Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Central Asia, locales which are in the same general geographical area and have high genetic diversity. But, as Hemphill and Mallory noted, the interregional contacts indicated close affinities rather than unitary proto-European steppe populations. Hemphill and Mallory concluded that “Affinities are especially close between Krorän, the latest of the Xinjiang samples, and Sapalli, the earliest of the Bactrian samples, while Alwighul and later samples from Bactria exhibit more distant phenetic [sic] affinities” (Hemphill and Mallory 2004:217).

In summary, historical linguistic studies have suggested several possible etymological origin for the toponym, “Dunhuang.” The origin might be Chinese, a

Chinese phoneticization of an indigenous toponym, or an indigenous people's own sinicized pronunciation of a local toponym. If the term originated from a non-Chinese language, Altaic, Turkic, Tibetan, Scythian, proto Persian, Greek and ancient Indo-European have been suggested as possibilities. But Dunhuang, past and present, was and is more than an abstract lexeme. It was and is a living cultural semantic, one whose meanings and cultural role have changed over the centuries from flourishing prosperity to desolation and heartbreak.

3. The Heartbreak of Dunhuang

Finally, the paradigm of the heartbroken of Dunhuang has two aspects—the decline of the Silk Road and the cultural treasures of the Mogao caves of Dunhuang, which were stolen by Europeans. Silk Road trade, and with it the prosperity of Dunhuang, often fluctuated. Each downturn caused heartbreak in impoverished Dunhuang. By the year 1500 desolation had set in. Depredations, destructions, and thieveries occurred. But, for modern Chinese, the bitterest heartbreak was the wholesale removal of long-hidden documents to Europe in the early twentieth century. “Foreign devils” is the colloquial Chinese disparaging reference to Europeans, still used privately by Dunhuang residents today. Each part of the heartbreak of Dunhuang has its place in the larger scheme of history.

As Liu noted (2000), the Silk Road gradually declined from the eighth century onward as the Sea Road developed. He delineated five reasons why this occurred. First, the Silk Road declined when the politics and economy shifted from the traditional northern heartland regions into south China. The resulting major mercantile development

which took place in the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River promoted the development of the Sea Road. This shift occurred initially during the Tang Dynasty and then more rapidly in the Song Dynasty (Liu 2000:158-159). Northern commerce declined during the Northern Song Dynasty when it became increasingly weak under nomadic onslaughts from 960 to 1127 A.D. When the north was lost and the Song capital fled south to *Hangzhou* in 1127 A.D., Southern Song (1127-1279) commerce was almost entirely along the maritime Silk Road. The Yuan Dynasty, 1279-1368 A.D., began with vigorous overland Silk Road trade, but from 1290 A.D. onward downturns occurred with ever-increasing intensity. After the fall of the Yuan Dynasty in 1344 A.D. the overland Silk Road became treacherous, and though still used, goods sent along it became increasingly expensive and were often in erratic supply. That, plus extortionate Eastern Mediterranean entrepot taxation sent Europeans on the quest to reach China by sea. The Portuguese conquest of Malacca (on the Malay Peninsula) in 1511 A.D. doomed the overland Silk Road, and thus, Dunhuang. Where before there had been alternating cycles of prosperity and downturn, now desolation and near abandonment became permanent. Over time, Dunhuang had developed into a prosperous metropolitan city. But after the final decline of the overland Silk Road, Dunhuang withdrew from the international stage; it was no longer an international trade center in the northwest of China. Throughout its history, every downturn or upturn affected the constructions of the Mogao caves.

The second factor Liu points out with regard to overland Silk Road decline is change in export market demands. During the Tang period, the Silk Road decline was associated with the growing market of export porcelain to overseas. Because the merchants attempted to avoid the breakage of porcelain in transit, this led them to prefer

the Sea Road where heavy and bulky protective shipping packaging could be reduced (Liu 2000:159-160).

A third factor in the decline of the Silk Road was the shift in supply-source locales which occurred with the strongly increasing demand for fragrances and aromatics. Chinese Merchants imported the fragrance and frankincense from across the seas, from Dashi (the Arabic world), Sindhu (India), and Srivijaya (Sumatra) (Liu 2000:160). The fragrance was used primarily by the food and cosmetics industries, while the frankincense was used in incense as well as in perfumes. Incense was an important item in the material culture of medieval China. Different kinds of incense were used, as insect repellents, to fragrance people and things, and to provide aroma and wafting smoke curls that helped inspire scholarly and literary thought and writing. The middle and upper Chinese gentries were interested in these fragrances and in aromatic frankincense. Therefore, merchants had to increase their ocean-borne trade with distant coastal countries in order to meet the domestic demands of China for these exotic products.

A fourth factor in the decline of the Silk Road related to the weakness of the politics and polities in the Hexi Corridor region itself during the Mid Tang. To keep the Silk Road open it was necessary to have a powerful central dynasty which maintained a strong military presence, directly controlled the Hexi Corridor, and constantly maintained good relationships with the Western Regions. Liu pointed out that the An-Shi Rebellion which wracked China from 755-763 A.D., destroyed the capital Changan, and forced the Tang Dynasty to move troops from the Hexi Corridor to the central plains region in order to defeat the rebellion. As soon as the Tang military presence in the Hexi corridor weakened, three key takeovers ensued. The kingdom of Tibet invaded and conquered the

Hexi Corridor as well as the key southern Taklamakan segment of the Silk Road. The Dashi (Arabic world) occupied the vast geographic region from the west Pamirs through Central Asia. And the kingdom of the Huihe, (modern Uighur) took power in the mountain steppe area north of Tien Shan (Mountain) and thus controlled a key segment of the Northern Silk Road. The on-going conflicts among these kingdoms increasingly blocked the connection of the Hexi Corridor to the Western Regions and was the reason the Silk Road declined in the Mid Tang period (Liu 2000:160; Zhao 2004:52-66). Even though the Tang military successfully suppressed the rebellion, the central power of the Tang Dynasty had been so badly weakened that the economy declined steadily. Because of the rebellion warlordism arose and became an increasingly destructive factor in the social structure of the dynasty.

Liu observed that a fifth factor in the decline of the Silk Road related to improved Chinese shipbuilding and to the development and utilization of skilled navigation technology that improved the reliability of the long-distance oceanic trade network which linked China, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Southwest Asia (Liu 2000:161). Over a millennium and a half from approximately 100 B.C. to about 1400 A.D. China had successfully increased its navigation technology and knowledge, which, in turn, promoted economic prosperity and a flourishing sea trade (Levathes 1994).

For more than a thousand years, trade on the overland Silk Road flourished. Along with it Dunhuang grew wealthy and busy as an important transit and entrepot. Dunhuang served as a trading center that connected the Mediterranean world and China.

Four major historical circumstances negatively affected Dunhuang's well-being. The first was the times of troubles and chaos that followed the fall of the Han Dynasty.

The second was the Mid-Tang rebellion of 755-763 A.D. when the Chinese military withdrew from the Tibetan kingdom incursion into the Hexi Corridor and the Arabic Islamic expansion in Central Asia produced a shift of the economic center into southern China in the latter Tang. The third historical circumstance was the fall of the Northern Song in 1126 A.D. and the relocation of the capital south to *Linan* (now Hangzhou, the capital of Zhejiang Province), the capital of the Southern Song Dynasty. The final flourishing of the overland Silk Road took place during the era of Mongol Dynasty control from the latter 1200s through the early 1300s. But even then, trade was far less important than it had been in earlier centuries because mercantile needs and demands had already developed a strong maritime Silk Road. The Dunhuang of Mongol and Yuan Times prospered, but it never flourished as the great commercial hub it had been at times in earlier centuries. The fall of the Yuan Dynasty and subsequent turmoil in Central Asia put the final *coup de grace* on Dunhuang. As trade increasingly shifted to the sea route, so, too, did the spread of Buddhism shift from over-land routes to the searoutes linking Southeast Asia and China with the Indian subcontinent; and the Mogao caves vanished from memory.

Dunhuang remained neglected and lonesome for over 500 years. In the late nineteenth century, Whitefields (2000:32) stated that "...Dunhuang had become a remote, dusty town of few inhabitants in the wastelands of central Asia....Dunhuang and Mogao [caves] were once again fortunate." Even though the Mogao caves still served as a local religious center, many abandoned caves had been filled with blown sand, many wooden structures were damaged, and floods had destroyed the bottom of many wall paintings. In 1900 A.D. a Taoist monk named Wang Yuanlu, from Macheng of Hubei Province,

after serving in the military for a few years, traveled to the west and finally settled down at Mogao caves as a devotee and caretaker of these caves (Yang 2002:225).

Taoist monk Wang supervised a few workers whom he ordered to clear out the sand from the entrance to Cave 16. Then he hired a man named Yang to make a copy of the sutras in the entrance hallway of Cave 16.

When Yang was tired, he took a break for a smoke. He used the *jijicao*, splendid achnatherum, a kind of grass used for weaving, to light his smoke, and then put the remaining *jijicao* stalks into a crack in the entrance wall of Cave 16, ready for the next use. One day, he inserted the *jijicao* as usual into a hole, but the stalk bundle went in deeply, as though into a large hollow. Yang knocked on the wall, which echoed with a hollow sound. He felt that it was very odd, and told Taoist monk Wang what he had heard. Both of them hastened to Cave 16, and Wang knocked on the wall several times and realized from the hollow sound that the cave wall was only a partition. Wang and his copyist Yang later knocked the wall down and discovered a small room behind it. The room contained tens of thousands of ancient manuscripts, silk banners, paintings, silk embroideries, and textiles. That room and its astonishing contents became known as “the Secret Library Cave—Cave 17 of the Mogao caves (Gao and Chen 2001:17-18). Unexpectedly, the rich culture and art unearthed in the Mogao caves gave birth to a new life for Dunhuang.

The Secret Library Cave had been sealed off by a Buddhist monk named Hongbian around the mid-eleventh century when the kingdom of Xixia (the Western Xia) invaded the Dunhuang area. To put this into European historical perspective, when monk Hongban cached and concealed the library at Dunhuang, the Moslem Cordovan Caliphate

ruled Spain, Byzantium was at its height, an impoverished decimated Rome was at a nadir, and the Normans had not yet invaded England. The cache remained untouched for nine hundred years, and its twentieth century discovery made Dunhuang an extremely important site for scholarly studies of medieval Chinese civilization, the Western Regions, and Central Asia.

In 1900 China was confronted with the year-long military invasion of the Eight-Nation Alliance; an alliance of Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The expeditionary force compelled the imperial Qian government to sign the Xinchou Treaty, the Treaty of 1901, commonly known as the Boxer Protocol. Coincidentally, this time of adversity occurred at the same time that the great cultural treasure of the library at Dunhuang was discovered by Taoist monk Wang. According to the description of Zhang and Lu, for Wang who barely knew the rudiments of writing, ancient scrolls were not precious invaluable treasures. He considered them to be only, in some degree, antiquities that could be sold for a little money.

Later, in an effort to get some attention and rewards, Wang sent some examples of the exquisite silk paintings and calligraphies to the governor of Dunhuang County; but the governor did not attach much weight to these antiquities. Much later, the governor selected a few antiquities and gave them to a famous epigrapher named Ye Chuangchi 葉昌熾 who worked for the Ministry of Education in Gansu Province. Ye Chuangchi realized that they were priceless assets, and suggested to the governor of Gansu that all these ancient treasures be brought to the Gansu storehouse to be preserved as valuable cultural materials. Because it would have cost too much to remove them, the governor of

Gansu province instead instructed Wang to reseal the Secret Library (Xie 1999:232-233; Zhang and Lu 1999:111). The famous epigrapher Ye Changchi had set his mind on protecting these treasures; unfortunately, the regional governor responded with a complete lack of concern. Such ignorance predestined these ancient treasures to subsequent dispersal to every corner of the world.

Sir Aurel Stein (1862-1943), a Hungarian archaeologist, led three successful expeditions in Central Asia from 1900 to 1916. In 1907 Stein came to the Mogao caves which he called the “Caves of the Thousand Buddhas,” near Dunhuang city. During this expedition Stein gradually won the confidence of the humble Taoist monk Wang because both of them had the greatest esteem for the eminent monk named Xuanzang (602- 644). Xuanzang was a Chinese Buddhist monk famed for his seventeen year-long trip to India. As Whitefeilds and Agnew (2000:40) stated, “Astonished, Stein quickly pressed his advantage, suggesting to Abbot Wang that from beyond the grave Xuanzang had chosen this moment to reveal these sacred Buddhist texts to Stein so that “his admirer and disciple from distant India” could return “to the old home of Buddhism.”” Stein and his helper, Jiang Xiaowan, selected many valuable ancient manuscripts. Finally, Taoist monk Wang “sold Stein seven thousand complete manuscripts and six thousand fragments, [and] several cases loaded with paintings, embroideries, and other artifacts” for a total of £130 in contemporary British currency [about 5,000 or 6,000 taels in the Chinese currency of the day (Zhang and Lu 1999:111)] (Whitefeilds and Agnew 2000:43). All of this material is now divided between the British Museum, the British Library, and the Srinagar Museum and the National Museum in New Delhi, and provides

important sources for the study of the history of Central Asia and the art and literature of Buddhism.

The next year, in 1908 Paul Pelliot (1878-1945), a French sinologist and explorer of Central Asia, arrived at the famed Dunhuang site. With his knowledge of the Chinese language, Pelliot spent the next three weeks analyzing one thousand manuscripts a day by candlelight in the Secret Library and "...determined which were most likely to prove of scholarly or historical importance" (Whitefeilds, Agnew 2000:45). Like Stein, he convinced the Taoist monk Wang to sell him a selection of the valuable ones and finally paid the price of Fr. 90 in contemporary French currency (500 taels in the Chinese currency of the day (Zhang and Lu 1999:114)) for the thousands of documents, which he sent back to the Musée Guimet and the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris (Whitefeilds and Agnew 2000:45). Also, Pelliot turned his attention to the physical caves themselves, giving numbers to each of the existing caves. This was the first time anyone had numbered the Mogao caves (see Appendix B; a list of the Jataka caves numbers compiled by different specialists at the Mogao caves), and he took many photos of the mural paintings and statues. Before Pelliot returned to France, on May 26th, 1908 he stopped in Beijing and showed some of his finds to Chinese scholars. Finally, the Chinese government came to the realization that the treasures of the Secret Library were important ancient documents and ordered the immediate removal of all the remaining materials to the Ministry of Education in Beijing. Today those retrieved remains of the Secret Library are in the National Library of China in Beijing (Xie 1999:244-245). Unfortunately, many of the manuscripts were stolen and lost in transit to Beijing. Also, Wang did not hand over everything at the government's orders.

Dispersals of the Secret Library contents continued. In 1911 Wang sold six hundred documents to a Japanese expedition; in 1914 he sold over two hundred documents to a Russian expedition; and when Aurel Stein returned again, he got five more cases of material. In 1924 Langdon Warner (1881-1955), an American art historian, obtained twelve sections of wall paintings from Caves 320, 321, 323, 329, 331, 335, 372, and a Tang sculpture of a squatted offering bodhisattva from Cave 328, which is now in the Fogg Museum of Harvard University, in Cambridge, Massachusetts (Rong 1998:894; Xie 1999:246-256; Whilefeilds and Agnew 2000:45).

After the great calamity of the dispersal of these treasures and the rending apart of the Mogao cave Secret Library contents that left a scar on Chinese cultural history, the dispersed documents remained overseas. They brought fame to several museums for their collections of Chinese ancient manuscripts, silk and paper paintings, embroideries, mural paintings, sculptures, and other artifacts. The Chinese never forgot this catastrophe. No wonder that, sorrowfully, Chen (1991:1) said, "...the term Dunhuang means the broken-hearted history of academics in my country [China]" because of these foreign visitors. How heartbroken monk Hongban must have felt as he saw his world headed for imminent destruction. Perhaps he would find succor in the recovery of the learning he so loved and in its continuance in the intellectual, emotional, and religious life of the world today.

Though considerable research on the origin and meaning of the name, "Dunhuang," has been done, contemporary scholars still have not reached an agreed upon understanding of it. Scholars have utilized a variety of perspectives and reached their own views regarding the toponym, "Dunhuang," but we can only infer, for we cannot

know what the people who lived so long ago believed. Nor can we learn the original name and its meaning produced through their times and circumstances.

Even though scholars continue to debate, they cannot expect to reach a satisfactory outcome. Eventually, they need to bear in mind the forgotten “living entity” paradigm that Dunhuang was a living, meaningful sememe and that it provided a beneficial effect on society, culture, history, and people. Individual human beings lived all or part of their lives in detailed socio-cultural “ins and outs” of all the social and environmental settings, with continuities and changes that ran through all the days and nights of individual human lives. For those who experienced it first-hand as a living environment, and for those who knew of it only by word of mouth or writings, “Dunhuang” has existed in the minds of the Chinese people since its first mention in ancient times. This cultural semantic component is important and cannot be separated from the word Dunhuang *per se*. In a larger sense, the meta-etymology of “Dunhuang” is the cultural and Chinese conceptual locale in which it existed at each time, place, and life throughout history.

CHAPTER THREE

JATAKA TALES AS POPULAR BUDDHIST SERMONS ON NIKAYAS AND VINAYAS

Jataka, the tales of the Buddha's lives in previous incarnations, is the tenth book of the Khuddaka Nikaya, the "Sutra of Minor Collection," in the last division of the Sutra Pitaka, the "Basket of Discourses" of the Pali Texts. It is taught that Jataka is the best source of information relating to the numerous good deeds of the Buddha's reincarnated lives. These tales depict the Buddha born in different forms of humans and animals depicting his bodhisattva way to benefit others. In fact, Jataka tales are the Buddhist literature, the art treasures, the original and popular sermons of the Theravada, and the development of the conceptual bodhisattva of the Mahayana. As Francis and Thomas noted, "On several Buddhist stupas in India are carved representations of scenes in some of the Jataka tales and fables....Carved in relief on the railings are a number of scenes of Jataka tales....The date of the stupa is put on epigraphical grounds between 250—200 B.C." (Francis and Thomas 1916:5). These Jataka tales have been recorded in Buddhist literature either in Theravada or in Mahayana sutras. They have also been illustrated in Buddhist art—stone carvings and mural paintings in India, Southeast Asia, and East Asia. However, few examples of this art have survived today.

At first glance the Jataka tales appear to be simply accounts of laudable actions. However, the Jataka tales preserve *sine qua non* information for the study of popular Buddhism as it existed in Chinese society during the active period of Mogao caves, at the caves, in the nearby town, and elsewhere.

From the outset, in this chapter, I will provide some key concepts of the teachings of the Buddha, such as karma, bodhisattva, rebirth, merit, and miracle, which have been central ideas for the study and understanding of the Jataka tales from the earliest historical records of Buddhism. Moreover, I will try to establish the time when the original paintings of the Jataka tales appeared and will examine why they developed into a popular phenomenon for the Sangha community of sacred practitioners, and into certain forms of organization of worship for the laity. Besides this, I will also cover the Jataka tales as they were transliterated into Chinese characters and will include the definition and meaning of Jataka, and the various forms of Jataka in both Nikaya Sutras and the Vinaya. Finally, I will provide a comparison between the structures of Theravada and Mahayan Buddhism in the collections of the Jataka tales. These effects presuppose causes for the growth and evolution of the Jataka tales and how their authors used them to address the theoretical concepts of karma, bodhisattva, rebirth, merit, and miracle.

A. The Uniqueness of the Buddha's Teachings

The doctrinal ideas of karma, bodhisattva, rebirth, merit, and miracle often played a crucial role in shaping these Jataka tales' characters. They are the significant principles that form the narratives of the Jataka tales and teach us to understand the causative relationship between the past and the present characters in the Buddha's previous births. So bodhisattvas have the specific ultimate goal of altruistic behavior to improve others' welfare even though the cost to benefit others may be great self-sacrifice.

1. The Doctrine of Karma

The teachings of the Buddha are a practical educational system for “mental culture” which encourages everyone to use their own judgment to believe that good begets good and bad begets evil. The doctrine of karma is the universal law of cause and effect which pertains to human behavior and is a process of action and results. Karma indicates that bodhisattvas performed good deeds in the former lives of the Buddha and can be divided into three different dimensions: intention, responsibility, and career.

Karma is intentional in that it involves actions by all people who create karma through body, speech, and mind. Intention can involve the mind in volition, choice, and decision, which leads people to make a direct and conscious choice to respond to their behavior. Secondly, karma is a personal responsibility, from an ethical perspective, that encourages people to perform good responsible actions and to make good karma from the past and future. Expanding responsibility, bodhisattvas have always been committed to only good responsible actions and good karma. Thirdly, karma is like the personal career of a carpenter making tables in the present time while helping others as a bodhisattva’s career in the present time. In the Jataka tales, the behavior of bodhisattvas was based on intentions in their relationships with other people. Just as the characters in the Jataka tales increased their almsgiving and physical sacrifices to benefit others in many lifetimes, they also believed that good karma would guide them to reach Buddhahood, or their goal, nirvana. As a result, karma produces and determines the next birth. Therefore, past behavior influences the present; likewise, past and present actions influence the future.

2. The Concept of the Bodhisattva in Jataka Tales

Generally speaking, the term bodhisattva is a proper noun to refer to the Buddha's previous lives before he achieved enlightenment. There are two important meanings for the word bodhisattva as they are described in the Jataka tales: one embodies the lives of the past and present and good and evil karma and the second eulogizes the virtues of the bodhisattva who sacrificed himself to save or benefit others. The bodhisattva performed beneficences and passed severe tests along the path to becoming Buddha. These tests provide a way to interpret the life of the Buddha as it differs from others. Therefore, the term bodhisattva can be summed up as the pursuit of the enlightenment career of the Buddha. In this way, pursuing the enlightenment career of the Buddha evolved from a personal story to formulating the literature of the previous lives of the Buddha—Jataka.

3. The Idea of Rebirth

Buddhists believe in rebirth because the Buddha plays a great authoritative role in the concept of rebirth. In the Mahasaccaka Sutta, the Greater Discourse to Saccaka, the Buddha says, "I recollected my manifold past lives" (Ñāṇamoli 2005:341). Throughout the Buddha's discourses, various messages make sense about the cause of rebirth. For example, he says, "This craving is that which leads to rebirth" (Xuanzang 1925:662b). From his words, this craving is certain to cause sentient beings to birth again and again, for a limited period of time. This is *samsara*, the cycle of death and birth.

From another account, the Buddha experienced such repeated births, counting, "one birth, two births, three births, ... twenty births, ... fifty births, a hundred births, a thousand births, [and] a hundred thousand" in Bhayabherava Sutta, Discourse on Fear and Dread (Ñāṇamoli 2005:105). Likewise, bodhisattvas have to be reborn innumerable

times until their final rebirth to attain the Buddhahood, as the Buddha declared, “This is my last birth. Now there is no more rebirth” in the *Fobenxingji jing* 佛本行集經 (Sutra of the Collected Stories of the Buddha’s Deeds in Past Lives) (Jnanagupta 1924:811c). Verifiable rebirth seems to correspond to the main characters in all the Jataka tales who had to repeat their lives innumerable times in order to follow the bodhisattava path to benefit others and finally become Buddhas.

4. The Concept of Merit

Merit is a fundamental teaching of the Buddha and has been a very important concept for all Buddhists. In Buddhism, merit can be interpreted as good karma, which accumulates as a result of good deeds and carries over to a good rebirth in the next life. In other words, merit can be generated within one’s mind by everyone. Its occurrence depends on various conditions that will lead people towards liberation.

Merit can be divided three ways: the giving of merit; the receiving of merit; and the transference of merit. In Buddhism, the giving and receiving of merit are essentially interconnected between the Sangha community and lay people. For instance, when lay people give clothes, meals, bedding, and medicine to the Sangha community, they gain merit. Because monks and nuns earn merit through their meditation and their progress towards nirvana, they become a “field of merit.” That allows lay people who daily support the Sangha community by their good deeds to gain merit toward a better life both in the present and in future rebirths.

The transference of merit is a very important key to both Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism. Merit, Buddhists believe, can be transferred through action:

preaching Dharma, chanting sutras, donating materials daily to monks and nuns and other charities, performing services to all beings, including those deceased, and contributing to the welfare and happiness of all beings. I will discuss in more detail the transference of merit in Chapter 8 when cave owners who opened caves often did so with the wish that their gift would benefit departed relatives and also for the welfare and happiness of their living relatives. As a result, the transference of merit as a “gift” is of benefit to the departed, as well as for the welfare and happiness of the living. The concept of merit cannot be over-emphasized in the practice of Buddhism.

5. The Concept of Miracle

To Buddhists, a miracle can be something wonderful and can be part of one’s own personal experience, giving one confidence, trust, and conviction. The mind is an authentic power because it possesses the ability to perform miracles. Miraculous power is portrayed in many Jataka tales, and the miracle itself constitutes proof for the believers of the validity of the tale. In the Jataka stories a miracle is often manifested by the main character himself. For example, a miracle happened to King Sibi who sacrificed his entire body to save a dove’s life. His conversation with Indra, the king of gods, follows:

As he [King Sibi] was preparing to put his entire body on the scales, he began to faint and lose consciousness. Then suddenly taking thought, his mind reproached itself: ‘Oh mind, since beginningless time while wandering in the three worlds I have undergone every kind of suffering and no merit has been achieved. Now, mind, your hour has come! This is not the time for shirking!’ Then Indra, [king of gods], assumed his own form and said to the king: ‘Your Majesty, what birth is it you wish to obtain by undergoing this agony? Do you wish to become a universal monarch, an Indra, a mara-king? Do you desire the powers of the three worlds? What is it you wish?’

The king answered: ‘My desire has nothing to do with the pleasures of the three worlds. I seek Supreme Enlightenment.’

Indra said: 'With your body and bones thus trembling in agony, certainly you must have some thought of regret.'

The king replied: 'There [is] no thought of regret.'

Indra said: 'Seeing your body trembling and unable to return to life, who could believe what you say?'

The king said: 'Within my entire body, from head to foot, there is no single thought of regret so large as a hair. My desire certainly will be fulfilled. And if my words are true, may these wounds on my body be healed.'

Frye 1981:11

After the king spoke, his wounds were healed and his body was restored to wholeness.

Sibi's transformation demonstrated that a purified mind, confidence, trust, and conviction can develop miraculous power. The abundance of miracle stories in the Jatakas demonstrate that they are an important part of the Buddhist culture tradition.

Apart from the uniqueness of the Buddha's teachings mentioned above, I wish to deal specifically with events in the previous lives of the Buddha as related in the Buddhist scriptures. Throughout the development of Buddhism, Jataka contains the lessons of moral fables, hymnology, and fundamental doctrine necessary for a monk's education. They are based on the scriptures from the time of Buddha and even after his nirvana; and they have a collective intensity generated by the faith of Buddhist believers.

B. The Origin and Function of the Jataka Tales

The original mural paintings of the Jataka tales depicted at monasteries in the time of the Buddha and at the Mogao caves in medieval China require additional understanding, because the mute language of the tale's paintings has few explanatory inscriptions. The development of the Jataka paintings' historical origins within Buddhism may be observed by focusing on two fundamentals: the function of the artistic embellishment, or decoration in the paintings themselves, and their role as remembrances

of the Buddha. Decoration dignified the deeds of the previous lives of the Buddha as they were depicted on the walls of the monasteries and inspired his disciples. The paintings depicting the death of the Buddha produced a psychological, emotional reaction, and memorialized the Buddha among his devout disciples. Accordingly, these Jataka tales, carved in relief and depicted on walls at cave-temples, can be found in many different parts of the Buddhist world.

1. The Decorated and Dignified Monasteries

In order to understand how the Jataka tales grew and evolved and how they have attempted to address the theoretical concept of rebirth, we need to begin with the underlying assumptions that characterized the early years when the Buddha told Elder Sudatta to depict the Jataka tales on the wall of a monastery. There is no evidence to connect the wealth of the sutra's information and the surviving artifacts from the time of the Buddha, but later there are many paintings and reliefs of the Jataka tales in the caves in India, including the Great Stupa of Sanchi and in the Ajanta caves.

The history of the Jataka tales can be traced back to the time of the Buddha, but the evidence is not adequate to give us a clear-cut answer as to what tale was first depicted. There is one piece of segmental evidence that was recorded in the seventeenth volume of the Mula-sarvastivada-vinaya-ksudraka-vastu 根本説一切有部毘奈耶雜事 (The Miscellaneous Precepts on the Sarvastivada School) (Yijing 1926) that may provide information on the origin of the Jataka tales not related to other earlier Buddhist writings.

Soon after the Elder Sudatta, a wealthy merchant who loved to give food and clothing to the poor and friendless in Kosala (in what is now Uttar Pradesh), India,

converted to Buddhism as a lay patron of the Shakyamuni Buddha, he sincerely invited the Buddha to come to his country and preach Dharma to his people. As a result, the Buddha told him that if he could offer a place for him and his disciples to stay, he certainly would be there for the sermon. Elder Sudatta headed back to his kingdom to seek suitable land from Prince Jeta. Elder Sudatta had to convince Prince Jeta to sell his land to build a monastery, but Prince Jeta requested Elder Sudatta to pave with gold the surface of his land. Then he would sell the land to Elder Sudatta. Finally, Elder Sudatta constructed a monastery that was named Jatavana by the historical Buddha. Jatavana is the oldest monastery in Shravasti, India. Because Elder Sudatta donated the land, Prince Jeta offered his personal possessions above the ground (Huijue et al. 1924:418b-421b). Building this monastery contributed greatly to the spread of Buddhism into northern India. A legendary scene portrays Elder Sudatta who brought the gold with him to fulfill the request of Prince Jeta (Figure 3.1 shows a scene of the Elder Sudatta building a monastery).

According to the seventeenth volume of the *Mula-sarvastivada-vinaya-ksudraka-vastu*, when the monastery was built, Elder Sudatta thought that if it could have some decoration, it would look especially dignified. Therefore, he went to see the Buddha who guided him explicitly to paint all with the images, from the door painted with heavenly guardians, to the walls of the eaves drawn from the Jataka tales. The lecture hall pictured the elder monks giving the sermons, the dining room was decorated with a guardian holding a cake; and near the storage room the guardians were depicted holding treasures (Yijing 1926:283b). This painting suggests that the Jataka tales may have appeared on these monasteries' walls during the Buddha's time, but scholarly archaeological evidence



Figure 3.1 The scene shows the Elder Sudatta who purchased land from Prince Jeta. This mural painting may come from the tenth volume of the Xianyu Jing 賢愚經 (Sutra on the Wise and the Foolish). Prince Jeta appeared on the left, while Elder Sudatta was on the right, wearing Chinese costume and meeting in the center. A monk, Sariputta, is sent by the Buddha to supervise the monastery and stands behind them (Huijue et al. 1924:419c). The garden is filled with many trees while the land is divided into terraces. On the right side of the scene, two white elephants are carrying the gold on their backs. In front of one of the white elephants, a man squats and continues to pave the land with gold.

Sources: Liang 1994:100-101.

is still required to support this interpretation. We can not prove that the Jataka tales were depicted on the walls of the monastery during the Buddha's original lifetime, but there is ample evidence in Buddhist records to suggest this. We have exclusively relied on the Buddhist records and the ample evidence scattered over the Sutras and Vinayas that leave no doubt upon this point, which will be discussed in the following sections.

2. A Memory of the Buddha Recalled

Buddhism originated in India in about the 6th century B.C. when Siddhartha Gautama reached enlightenment. He spent the rest of his life moving from place to place teaching and preaching to the people. Numerous monastic and lay disciples addressed him as the Shakyamuni Buddha and practiced his teachings. At the age of eighty the Buddha entered into nirvana, which is not death, but a perfect life.

The word Buddha is a title, but not a name for him. After his entering into nirvana, the Buddhist Sangha community remained intact during the first ten decades. However, after that, the Sangha community split into twenty sects (sometimes referred to as eighteen sects) (Xuanzang 1927:15). Those sects had slightly different ideas about the teachings of the Buddha; however, primarily, they disagreed on the principles of the rules of the Vinaya discipline, for example, the Ten indulgences (see Appendix C). Moreover, these sects followed their particular leaders in the different ways of practicing the teachings of the Buddha, just like hikers who use different routes to climb to the top of a mountain. Meanwhile, members of the Sangha set forth various ways to achieve the same goal—enlightenment. As Davids quoted from Julien about these eighteen sects:

Schools of philosophy are always in conflict, and the noise of their passionate discussions rises like the waves of the sea. Heretics of the different sects attach themselves to particular teachers, and by different routes walk to the same goal.

Dauids 1907:218.

Buddhist sculptures and paintings are presented in many forms in different cultures, describing the scenes of the Buddha's reincarnated lives throughout the Buddhist world. In the Mogao caves of Dunhuang, many paintings portray the enlightening deeds of the historical Buddha. They have touched Chinese society and inspired it deeply.

These deeds of the Buddha, described in many Mahayanist manuscripts, consist of the deeds of the eight images: descending from the Tushita Heaven; Buddha entering into the womb of his mother; giving birth to the baby Buddha; departing from the royal palace; defeating the Mara; reaching enlightenment; preaching the Dharma; and entering the parinirvana, or the final nirvana. After the Buddha served as a teacher for about forty-five years, he, at the age of eighty, told his disciples that tonight he would enter into parinirvana. After the Buddha announced his approaching parinirvana, this sad news spread everywhere. When his disciples heard, they immediately wanted a last glimpse of the face of the Buddha. In the meantime, even with his sick body, the Buddha held on to his life and did not enter parinirvana sooner because most of his disciples were not present.

In his final freedom from the cycle of rebirths, we can see that the Buddha never forgot to instruct, and he soothed and encouraged all of his disciples to practice and develop their spirits on their own even though they would miss their guide, the Buddha. The Buddha entered into parinirvana, with moonlight shining on him, in 389 B.C. After the Buddha entered his final stage, parinirvana, all of his disciples were grief stricken and

sad. Massive scenes of his parinirvana are depicted in murals in the Mogao caves of Dunhuang. For example, Cave 295 was painted in the Sui Dynasty (581-618 A.D.). The fourth volume of the *Digha Nikaya* describes the scene:

Ananda stood behind the dying Buddha, touching on the bedside, and wept with great grief. He could not control himself, sobbed in secret, and said that the Perfect One [Buddha] will enter into parinirvana quickly. The Blessed One will enter into parimirvana very fast. The Great Dharma will fall into dimness [perish]. All sentient beings cannot benefit from the Dharma because the Buddha will enter into pariniravana. I [Ananda] have received the Buddha's favor and gain a retrogressive position. Unfortunately, I have not reached into the stage of non-retrogression, the perfect enlightenment, but the Buddha has entered parinirvana.

Buddhayashas and Zhu 1924: 25b-c.

The Buddha's entrance into parinirvana was the greatest event in Buddhist society because the society had lost a particularly great teacher. Like the sun when covered by clouds, these travelers had lost their map; like sailors without a lighthouse, they lost their course. People were in a dark room without a light to guide them out of their darkness. Herein is the implied question: What is the right thing for all of the Buddha's disciples to do to keep monastic society growing and prosperity. We can see that even though time has passed; the disciples of the Buddha still cherished him and missed him, and were filled with regret and sadness. This situation did not just happen to Indian disciples. It also applied to Chinese monks when they went to visit the relic of the Buddha. For example, it is stated in the *Biography of Eminent Fa-xian* 高僧法顯傳 (340-? A. D.), "I think that the Buddha stayed here for twenty-five years, and I am born far from the center. I travel across many kingdoms in the company of other Buddhists. Some returned to China; others died. Today, broken-hearted, I only see the relic of the Buddha, but not the Buddha himself" (Faxian 1928:860c). "I go to Vulture Mountain, offer flowers and incense, and light an oil lamp for a brilliant future. I sigh with regret and with falling tears. In the past, the Buddha preached the

Shurangama Sutra [the Resolute Meditation Sutra]. Even if I can not meet the Buddha during my life, I can see the historical relics”, Faxian said (Faxian 1928:863a). As a result of this attitude, many Chinese monks put themselves in dangerous situations to travel across the Taklamakan Desert between China and India and to pilgrimage to the relics and sacred places of the Buddha in order to bring sutras back.

C. Favorite Subjects in the Buddhist World

According to Theravada Buddhism, the Jataka tales came about because “... the Buddha knowing the differences in faculties and energy of his numerous hearers, preaches in many different ways, tells many tales, amusing, agreeable, both instructive and pleasant, tales by means of which all beings not only become pleased with law in this present life, but also after death will reach happy states” (Law 1974:271). In fact, the Buddha used the narrative action tale as a motif through which to tell of his former personal lives. In these he played a key role of bodhisattva while *en route* to becoming the future Buddha. As a consequence, he formalized a narrative type in which the phrase at that time so-and-so was I, the Buddha, or one of his disciples (Huijue et al. 1924:353b) ended his sermon. This was the so-called “Jataka tale.” Therefore, Jataka tales would have had specific audiences and recount specific intentions from when Buddha told the stories during his sermons.

In Mahayana Buddhism, the virtuous bodhisattva is “...the characteristic feature of the Mahayana or Bodhisattvayana” (Warder 1970:355). This thus is an important concept for the Mahayana movement. It is also a concept which differentiates it from the earlier teachings of conventional Theravada Buddhism.

The six Paramitas⁸, or perfections, relate to how to train a bodhisattva to complete his or her virtuous deeds before becoming a Buddha. In fact, the concept of the bodhisattva is not something new in Mahayana Buddhism because this concept already can be found in latent form in the earliest Nikaya Sutras and in the Vinaya, which described the past lives of the Buddha before reaching enlightenment. Warder points out that in the 4th century B.C. the Jataka tales were already very popular in Buddha's time and "...the Jataka stories and other accounts of the former lives of Buddha may be said to be purely descriptive, intended simply to inspire confidence in the Buddha. For the Mahayana the training of a bodhisattva is prescriptive. The way of the bodhisattva is substituted for, or at least is superior to, the old eightfold way [Path]" (Warder 1970:355). The purpose of the Buddha in telling the story of his past lives was that, by so doing, he enabled his audiences to know the law of karma in this present life and in the future life to come.

Jataka tales provide important meanings for Theravada Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism and deal with Buddhist ethics and the concept of karma which were developed in two stages during the history of Buddhism in India. First, during the Buddha's lifetime and then later, before Mahayana Buddhism arose, the Jataka tales served as narratives used by the Buddha or his eminent disciples to make specific points when they preached to their audiences. Second, when Mahayana Buddhism arose, the repertoire of Jataka tales was expanded to include a new concept, the deeds of the bodhisattvas in Buddhist society. Taken as a whole, the Jataka tales provide important evidence for

⁸ The six Paramitas are the following: 1. dana-paramita (generosity), 2. shila-paramita (discipline), 3. kshanti-paramita (patience), 4. virya-paramita (energy or exertion), 5. dhyana-paramita (meditation), and 6. prajna-paramita (wisdom).

anthropologists who analyze the historical and social conditions in Buddhist cultures of the past, describe Buddhist ethical ideas, and seek to understand the larger meaning and the ramifications of these Jataka tales through various times and in different regions.

The Jataka tales are, as noted, centered on Buddhist beliefs, and the concept of rebirth, but they also include certain pre-Buddhist stories. The Jataka tales can be found in the collections of the five existing Nikaya Sutras and the Vinayas, or monastic disciplines. Each tale is partly explained by a narrative style or a style compatible with the unique descriptions in the story and the slight differences between the two texts. For convenience and comparison in this chapter the contents of the Jataka tales are told in different styles, using unique descriptions.

First of all, Jataka tales present Buddhist beliefs. These are the important aspects that characterize all Buddhist virtues and represent the development of human values. Key among these is the concept of karma.

Second, the Jataka tales present Buddhist beliefs that center around “rebirth.” Differences over this issue separate the two major Buddhist schools. Conventional Theravada Buddhists want to attain the status of arhat, a non-regressive position. This means that they will not come back to this earthly world. Mahayana Buddhists, on the other hand, developed the concept of bodhisattva, an individual who not only reached Buddhahood, but also sought to save all sentient beings from earthly rebirth. A bodhisattva, through “... constant practice of virtuous deeds or [*sic*] Paramita (the highest virtue) [through practice of the six Perfections] one [a bodhisattva] reaches the status of “Enlightened One”” (Joshi and Banerfee 1998:173). From an ethno-historical perspective, a key cultural event in the development of Mahayana Buddhism during the

first few centuries A.D. was the development of the concept of the bodhisattva, one who practices his/her six Paramitas and prepares to become a Buddha in his/her future life. It does not matter that bodhisattvas may have been born in human or animal forms. What characterize these bodhisattvas is their nature as "...helpful, kind, and self-sacrificing or brave, clever and even possessing supernatural wisdom" (Law 1974:272). They also have the altruistic aim that, before they escape final rebirth, they intend to first help all other sentient beings escape from earthly rebirth. The lives of former Buddhas, bodhisattvas, as recounted in the Jataka tales, have inspired much Buddhist art, both in mural paintings and in bas-reliefs in the Mogao cave of Dunhuang and elsewhere.

Thirdly, another aspect of the Jataka tales is that they contain elements which can be traced to "...their history back beyond the Buddhist literature altogether..., an ancient Indian legend... [and] pre-buddhistic Indian folklore" (Davids 1971:197). In this case some of the Buddhist Jataka tales are obviously connected with early Indian literature which is non-Buddhist literature. The Buddha or his followers may have modified or adapted some of these older tales to suit Buddhist needs; and so they became a component of the Jataka tales. Different Jataka tales contain specific viewpoints associated with Theravada or Mahayana Buddhism.

D. Transliterations of Jataka into Chinese Characters

The term Jataka is used in both the Sanskrit and Pali languages and refers to the tales of numerous good deeds of the Buddha in his previous lives as bodhisattvas who intentionally assisted other worldly beings. Also, Jataka is one of the *navanga-buddha-sasana* (nine divisions of sutras) or *dvadasanga-buddha-vacans* (twelve divisions of

sutras). These divisions of sutras accord with the descriptive styles and contents of the spoken dharma of the Buddha and are divided into nine or twelve forms (see Appendix D).

Buddhist monks and Indian and Chinese scholars used transliterations of Jataka in several ways. They can be seen in many Mahayana collections: in the forty-first chapter of *Zaahanjing* 雜阿含經 (The Related Topic Sutra), Jataka was transliterated into *duduojia* 闍多伽 (Gunabhadra 1924:300c). Jataka became *dutuojia*, 闍陀伽 in *Chengshilun* 成實論 (The Treatise on the Establishment of Truth) (Kumarajiva 1925:245a), in *Fanyi minyiji* 翻譯名義集 (The Collection of the Translated Terms and Meanings) (Fayun 1928:1111c), and in *Dabo niepan jianshu* 大般涅槃經疏 (The Comments on the Sutra of the Great Decease) (Guanding 1926:137b). Jataka appeared as *shedejia* 社得迦 in *Nanhai jigui neifazhuan* 南海寄歸內法傳 (The Record of Southern Countries) (Yijing 1928: 227c).

While Jataka showed Chinese characters *benqi* 本起 in *Zhong a han jing* (The Medium-length Sutra) (Samghadeva 1924:421a, 709b, 764a) and in *Qizhijing* 七知經 (The Sutras of seven understood Dharma) (Zhiqian 1924: 810a). Another Jataka became *benyuan* 本緣 in *Chuang a han jing* 長阿含經 (The Long Sutra) (Buddhayashas and Zhu 1924:16c and 74b). Another was transliterated into *bensheng* 本生 in *Abhidharma-mahavibhasha-shastra* 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論 (The Great Commentary on the Abhidharma) (Xuanzang 1926:660a), in *Yuqie lunji* 瑜伽論記 (The Note on the Stages of Yoga Practice) (Dunlun 1927:439b-c), in *Dabo niepan jianshu* 大般涅槃經疏 (The Comments on the Sutra of the Great Decease) (Guanding 1926:137b), in *Guanwuliang shoufojing yishu* 觀無量壽佛經義疏 (The Annotations on the Meaning of the Contemplation Sutra) (Yuanzhao 1926:303b), in *Prakaranaryavaca-castra* 顯揚聖教論 (The Commentary on the Treatise of the Stages

of Yoga Practice) (Xuanzang 1925:509a), and in *Fanyi minyiji* 翻譯名義集 (The Collection of the Translated Terms and Meanings) (Fayun 1928:1111c). As Dharmaraksha (1925:450a) mentions Jataka, all transliterations refer to “the previous Buddha as bodhisattvas who practiced a variety of ascetic behaviors” to benefit others.

The Buddha mainly told Jataka tales to his disciples to teach them the theory of cause and effect, reincarnations, and to explain why Shakyamuni became a Buddha because he exerted himself to accomplish his assignment requiring him to undergo the three timeless periods of a bodhisattva’s progress toward the achievement of Buddhahood. The Jataka tales clearly reflect these thoughts and represent the fundamental interests of the people in the opening of the caves.

E. The Meanings of Jataka

From the above transliterated terms, Jataka appears in many Chinese characters. But whatever the characters, they describe the Buddha’s deeds in his past existences as bodhisattvas who intentionally assisted other worldly beings. They praise the deeds of true merit in the previous lives of Buddha who appeared in many forms, including kings, princes, ascetics, animals, and filial sons, to fulfill them. The Jataka of course also describe when the Buddha reached enlightenment, after being reborn as Prince Siddhartha Gautama. These acts show emphatically that the way to success means overcoming numerous difficulties and sacrificing for the benefit of another’s life as well as for the sake of enlightenment. In other words, to help as many people as possible to understand Buddha dogmas, Buddhists ponder deeply in order to turn abstract meanings of dharma into specific images, paintings on the walls of caves, or carvings in stone.

The *Chengshilun* 成實論 (The Treatise on the Establishment of Truth) makes clear that *dutuojia* 闍陀伽 is about the past condition of the Buddha and the present condition of the Buddha is the result (Kumarajiva 1925:245a). The *Yogacarabhumi-sastra* 瑜伽師地論 (The Treatise on the Stages of Yoga Practice) makes mention of Jataka tales which refer to the previous lives of Shakyamuni Buddha as a bodhisattva who performed the way of the bodhisattva and carried out difficult actions in his many past lifetimes (Xuanzang 1927:418c).

Moreover, the *Prakaranaryavaca-castra* (The Commentary on the Treatise of the Stages of Yoga Practice) mentions other sutras that have pointed out the past life of the Shakyamuni Buddha who was reborn many times and lived the paths of the bodhisattva (Xuanzang 1925:509a).

Kuiji 窺基 (1927:277b) stated that Jataka meant the life and death of the Shakyamuni Buddha for his past lives and in some places, he performed the way of the bodhisattva and all difficult actions. From the above three definitions of the Jataka, we know that a bodhisattva is a being who is dedicated to assisting all sentient beings, a being who in the previous lives of the Shakyamuni Buddha performed good acts to achieve the complete buddhahood that enabled him to be reborn as the Buddha in India.

This brings up a new subject. The *Great Commentary on the Abhidharma* refers to Jataka tales which are not only about the reincarnated lives of the Buddha but also the previous lives of his disciples (Xuanzang 1926:660a). In the preceding sections all Jataka tales fell into the same category—the reincarnated lives of the Buddha; however, this is not always the case. Sometimes, the Buddha would take these opportunities to speak to

his followers of the previous lives of his disciples. As a result, the previous lives of the Buddha's disciples are part of the Jataka tales.

F. Jataka Forms Appearing in Nikaya Sutras and Vinayas

Jataka tales can be found in the collections of the Buddha's discourses—the early Nikaya Sutras, the dialogues, and the Vinayas, the precepts. These Jataka tales were popular in Indian society for several hundred years, then spread into the Western Regions, and, finally, came to China in the first century. During this time, the art works and culture of Buddhism bore optimum witness of Buddhism in East Asia.

1. The Forms and Characters of Jataka in Nikaya Sutras

From the early Theravada Sutras (The Pali Texts) to the later Mahayana Sutras (The Chinese Texts) the Nikayas and Vinayas provide various narrative forms and contents for us to learn who the main characters are in these Jataka tales. These Jataka tales are found in both Sutras.

The first Jataka tale is about Mahasudassana Suttanat (the Great King of Glory), one life of the previous Buddha after he died, entering the world of a Brahman in

Dialogues of the Buddha of the Pali Texts (Davids 1959:218-232).

Now it may be, Ananda, that you may think the Great King of Glory of that time was another person. But, Ananda, you should not view the matter. I at that time was the Great King of Glory.

Davids 1959:229

In the Pali Texts the Great King of Glory recalled that his body had been buried eight times in the same spot in India.

Now I call to mind, Ananda, how in this spot my body had been six times buried. And when I was dwelling here as the righteous king who ruled in righteousness, the lord of the four regions of the earth, the conqueror, the protector of his people, the possessor of the seven royal treasures—that was the seventh time. But I behold not any spot, Ananda, in the world of men and gods, nor in the world of Mara, nor in the world of Brahma—no, not among the race of Samanas [any ascetics, recluses, or mendicants who are seekers of the way] or Brahmins, of gods or men,—where the Tathagata [the Buddha] for the eight time will lay aside his body.

Dauids 1959:232

By contrast to the *Dashanjianwang jing*” 大善見王經 (The Great King of Glory) in *Zhong a han jing* 中阿含經 (hereafter ZAHJ) of the Chinese Mahayana Texts, it describes that:

I [the Great King of Glory] was reincarnated on this earth seven times. First, I was born into a *chakravarti-rajā* (wheel-turning sage king) for six times; and now, for the seventh time, was the Tathagata who was the Buddha and enlightened himself.

Samghadeva 1924:518b

The second Jataka tale talks about *Mahagovinda Suttanta* (The Lord High Steward) in the *Dialogues of the Buddha* of the Pali Texts (Dauids 1959:259-281) that described the previous Buddha as a Lord High Steward who taught his disciples that after their death they would be reborn into the blissful world of Brahma. Here is the conversation that Five-crest asked the Buddha who would remember his previous life:

[Five-crest says that] Does the Exalted One [the Buddha] remember [your previous life].
[The Buddha replied that], I do remember, Five-crest. I was the High Steward of those days. I taught my disciples the way to communion with the Brahma world.
Dauids 1959:280

However, the same Jataka was recorded in the *Dianzun jing* 典尊經 of *Chuang a han jing* 長阿含經 (hereafter CAHJ) of the Chinese Mahayana Texts that the young Jotipāla was a son of a minister of the King Disampati and became a Govinda. That is a title, not a

name, and literally means “Lord of the Steward” (Davids 1959:266). After his father’s death, Jotipāla became the Lord of the Steward to assist the son, Renu, of King Disampati to administer his kingdom. This Jataka describes what the Mahabrahma told all the heavenly beings:

In bygone days, the Lord of the Steward was another person, but this should not be the way to view the matter. Now the Shakyamuni Buddha was the Lord of the Steward.

Buddhayashas and Zhu 1924:33c

The third tale is about the grey hairs growing on King Makhādeva’s head. It appears in both *Majjhima* Nikaya of the Pali Texts (The Middle Length Sayings) (Horner 1994:267-273) and in *Datian nai linjing* 大天徠林經 (Discourse on Makhādeva) of ZAHJ of the Chinese Mahayana Texts (Samghadeva 1924:511c-515b). There came a time for King Makhādeva because of messengers of death and gray hairs, to pass on his kingdom to his eldest son. King Makhādeva had been enjoying “human sense-pleasures”; and now it was time for him to seek “*deva*-like sense-pleasures” (Horner 1994:268-269; Tong-miao 1993:80; Samghadeva 1924:513b-c). To do so, King Makhādeva cut off his hair and beard, donned saffron garments, and became a monk, exchanging his home for homelessness.

The Buddha told Ananda, “I, at that time, was King Makhādeva; I founded that lovely custom; the folk that came after maintained that lovely custom founded by me” (Horner 1994:272; Tong-miao 1993:86). The Chinese version described that “Ananda, at that time the King Makhādeva, was someone else. This should not be thought of in this way. You should know I was the King Makhādeva” (Samghadeva 1924:515a).

This Jataka also showed up in the tenth sutra of the *Shinianpin* 十念品 (Chapter of the Ten Thoughts) of the first volume of *Zeng i a han jing* 增一阿含經 (hereafter ZIAHJ) of the Chinese Mahayana Texts. In each of the past eighty-four thousand years King Makhādeva used his wisdom to take care of his kingdom and ruled by law whether he was prince or king. The end of this Jataka described that “at that time the King Makhādeva was someone else. This should not be thought of in this way. At that time King Makhādeva was the Shaykamuni Buddha” (Samghadeva 1924:553c).

In addition, King Makhādeva appeared in the fourth sutra of the *Lisanbaopin* 禮三寶品 (The Three Saluted Jewels) of the forty-eight volume of ZIAHJ of the Chinese Mahayana Texts. The Buddha said that “King Makhādeva was I in the beginning of the present Wise Kalpa⁹ (Samghadeva 1924:810a), including the previous lives of Ananda and Devadatta who were two cousins of the Buddha. Both Chinese sutras refer not only to the previous life of the Buddha but also include previous lives of the Buddha’s disciples. However, the plot is same as the Pali sutra.

The fourth Jataka is about a Brahman Velāma¹⁰ who was very wealthy, had boundless assets, and loved to give very rich gifts to others. In *Anguttara Nikaya* (The Gradual Sayings) of the Pali Texts, Chapter Lion Road of the Book of the Nines mentions that “... you may think thus: Maybe Velāma, the Brahman who made that very rich gift,

⁹ A kalps is an aeon, or great length of time. The Three Kalpas consist of the past Glorious Kalpa, the present Wise Kalpa, and the future Constellation Kalpa. In each of these kalpas there was the appearance of a thousand Buddhas and listing their names on the Names of Three Thousand Buddhas Sutra (Shih 1989:553).

¹⁰ Velāma, a merchant of Shravasti in Kosala, India, was a lay patron of Shakyamuni Buddha. He, also known as Sudatta, was one of the wealthiest men in the kingdom of Kosala. Since he often made donations of food and clothing to the poor, he was also called Anathapindada (Pali Anathapindika), meaning “Supplier of the Needy.”

was someone else. But think not so, for it was I, who at that time was Velāma, the Brahman” (Hare 1989:264; Guo 1994:52). The same Jataka also can be found in the Sutra of *Xudaduo* 須達哆 (Sudatta) of Chapter of Fanzhi 梵志品 (Brahman) of volume thirty-nine of ZAHJ of Chinese Mahayana Texts (Samghadeva 1924:677b-678a) and in the Third Sutra of the “*Dingqu sidipin*” 等趣四諦品 (The Four Noble Truths) of the nineteenth volume of ZIAHJ of Chinese Mahayana Texts (Samghadeva 1924:644c-645a).

The fifth tale is about a famous Brahman teacher in the *Alanna jing* 阿蘭那經 (The Sutra of Araka) of ZAHJ of the Chinese Mahayana Texts. According to this Jataka, a Brahman named Araka, who was freed of all lustful passions, lived a godly life. He believed there was no immortality for the born, had many hundreds of disciples and taught his doctrine to them:

The life of man is short, insignificant, and trifling. For a future life [you should] do good! Live the godly life! For the born there is no immortality.

Samghadeva 1924:683a

Thus, after his death, Araka, arose in the Brahma’s world. The Buddha said of Araka’s previous life that “long ago, the Brahman Araka was someone else. This should not be thought of in this way. Monks should know that I was the Brahman teacher, Araka”. (Samghadeva 1924:684a). The same tale appears in the Great Chapter of the Book of the Sevens of *Anguttara Nikaya* (the Book of the Gradual Sayings) of Pali Texts. The Brahman teacher, *Aluojia* 阿羅迦 (Wheel-Wright), differs from the Chinese Text, but the doctrine is about the same. Wheel-Wright taught his disciples that “Short is the life of man, O Brahman, insignificant and trifling, fraught with much ill, much trouble. By mantras awaken the people! Do good! Live the godly life! For the born there is no

immortality” (Hare 1989:93; Guo 1994:329). However, the tale does not mention who was the previous life of Wheel-Wright in the Pali Text.

The seventh Jataka is about a King Murdhagata 頂生王 who was a wheel-turning King, an ideal ruler in ancient Indian mythology, a previous incarnation of the Shakyamuni Buddha, and he ruled all four continents surrounding Mount Sumeru, the central mountain of the Buddhist cosmos. This Jataka appears in both the *Sizhou jing* 四洲經 (the Sutra of the four continents) of ZAHJ of the Chinese Mahayana Texts and in the *Anbopin* 安般品 (Breath-counting meditation) of ZIAHJ of the Chinese Mahayana Texts. King Murdhagata literally means born from the Crown of the Head. Even though he possessed seven treasures: wheels, elephants, horses, jewels, jewel-like women, excellent ministers of financial affairs, and generals, he was not satisfied to rule the four continents. He ascended to the Trayastrimsha, thirty-three heavenly gods, seated at Shakra’s side, and later conceived a desire to drive Shakra away from the Trayastrimsha. However, he failed to become the ruler of the Trayastrimsha and descended to the Jambudvipa, the southern continent. As a result, King Murdhagata failed in an attempt to conquer the Trayastrimsha and fell to the ground (Samghadeva 1924:494c-495a-c; Samghadeva 1924:584b). Consequently, the Buddha spoke of the previous life of King Murdhagata to Ananda:

King Murdhagata, in bygone days, was someone else. This should not be thought of in this way. You should know I was the King Murdhagata. Ananda, at that time this was for my welfare, for their welfare, for mass welfare. This is a compassionate world for gods, for humans, who asked for dharma, welfare, and happiness.

Samghadeva 1924:495c-496a

In addition, this Jataka had the same personality and appeared in both *Niufenyujing* 牛糞喻經 (the Sutra of the Cowdung Parable) of ZAHJ of Chinese Mahayana Texts and on Cowdung of *Sanyutta Nikaya* (The Book of the Kindred Sayings) of Pali Texts, but according to this Jataka the Buddha said that

Formerly, [monks], I was a ruler, a noble crowned [Mahasudassana], and (as such) I had eighty thousand townships, ... palaces, ... halls, ... couches of solid ivory... [and] had four and eighty thousand elephants with trappings of gold, ... steeds with trappings of gold, ... chariots with trappings of gold, ... jewels, ... women, ... vassals, ... cows, [and so forth].

Woodware 1992:122-124

Even through King Mahasudassana possessed many luxurious things, he realized that material forms of the world were impermanent and unstable. They would pass and be gone; they would perish utterly. For that reason, the Buddha told the monks that things of the world are mutable and doomed to perish. In other words the monks should be disgusted, averse to, and freed of things of the world (Woodware 1992:124; Yun-an 1993:207; and Samghadeva 1924:497a). However, in the Pali Texts the tale does not mention who was the previous life of King Mahasudassana.

The eighth Jataka appears in *Majjhima Nikaya* (the Middle-length Sutra) of the Pali Texts and describes a potter, Ghatikāra, who lived in the village of Vebhalinga. He was the chief supporter of the Kassapa Buddha and invited his dear friend, Jotipāla, who was a young Brahman, to see the Kassapa Buddha who taught dharma to the young Brahman. After hearing his dharma, Jotipāla became a monk for half a month and set out toward Benares. The potter Ghatikāra supplied daily meals and other material to the Kassapa Buddha, including porridge, curries, boiled rice, and grass for his leaking hut. At the end of the story the Buddha says ““Now, at that time the Brahman youth, Jotipāla,

was someone else'. But this, Ānanda, should not be thought of in this way. I, at that time, was Jotipāla, the Brahman youth" (Horner 1994:250; Tong-miao 1993:56). The same personality also appeared in *Bingpolingqi jing* 鞞婆陵耆經 (the Sutra of Vebhalinga) of ZAHJ of the Chinese Mahayana Texts (Samghadeva 1924:499a-503a).

The following Jataka tales appear only in the Chinese Text. In many past existences, other Buddhas predicted enlightenment for the Shakyamuni Buddha and for other individual disciples, as well as for groups of disciples, thousands in all.

The first Jataka is about, in bygone days, a heretical teacher named *Shanyan* 善眼, Sunetta (Bright-eyes) who, freed of all pleasures of the senses, had many hundreds of disciples. He taught them the Brahmalokasahavyataya Dharma (Brahma Dharma) in the *Qiri jing* 七日經 (the Seven Day Sutra) of ZAHJ of the Chinese Mahayana Texts. Some disciples pursued knowledge of Brahma Dharma under Sunetta's guidance so that after they died, they ascended to the Brahma world. Those not so pursued after they died ascended to the four heavenly kings, the six heavens of the world of desire, the Trayastrimsha, and so forth. The Buddha spoke to monks about the previous life of Sunetta:

Sunetta, in a bygone age, was a heretical master who kept aloof from all lustful passions and possessed the power to be anywhere at will. He was another person, but this should not obscure the matter. I at that time was Sunetta who taught the Brahma Dharma to his disciples. Those who inclined not their hearts towards the teacher's dharma after their death arose in [the six heavens of the world of desire¹¹] the four heavenly kings, the Trayastrimsha, Yama Heaven, the Tushita

¹¹ The six heavens of the world of desire are in ancient Indian and Buddhist cosmology. The four heavenly kings represent the first and lowest of the six heavens. It is located halfway up the four sides of Mount Sumeru. The Trayastrimsha means thirty-three heavenly gods which is the second and is located above the four heavenly kings and below the Yama Heaven. It is located on a plateau at the top of Mount Sumeru. The Yama heaven is the third and is located above the Trayastrimsha and below the Tushita

Heaven, the Nirmanarati Heaven, and the Paranirmita-vasha Heaven. Meanwhile, those who inclined their hearts to his dharma, after their death arose in the Brahma's world.

Samghadeva 1924:429b-c

The second Jataka happened in an infinite time, having a Buddha named Dipankara Buddha in the third sutra of the *Shanzhishipin* 善知識品 (Chapter of the Good Friend) of ZIAHJ of the Chinese Mahayana Texts. There was a Brahman named *Yeruoda* who had a favorite Brahman disciple, *Yunlei* 雲雷, also known as *Chaoshu* 超術 because he knew all Brahman skills and understood astronomy and geography. *Chaoshu* wanted money to pay for instruction from his teacher. Therefore, he went to the Bomo kingdom to compete with other Brahmans, debating for victory and a prize five hundred gold coins, a golden staff, a golden container, and a thousand cows. After winning the prize on his way to the palace, *Chaoshu* heard that King Bright had invited the Dipankara Buddha and his disciples to the palace for lunch. *Chaoshu* walked into the street of the city wanting to obtain flowers and incense in order to make offerings to the Dipankara Buddha. When *Chaoshu* arrived in the city, the people told him that it was forbidden to sell flowers and incense on the streets by order of the King. Disappointed and without hope, *Chaoshu* left the palace. Outside the palace, he saw a Brahman girl named *Shanwei* who held five flowers. He told the girl that he needed these flowers to present to the Dipankara Buddha

Heaven. It is located on the summit of Mount Sumeru. The Tushita Heaven is the fourth and is located above the Trayastrimsha and below the Nirmanarati Heaven. It consists of an inner and outer court. Bodhisattva Maitreya dwells in the inner court and waits to be reborn in the earthly world where he will attain Buddhahood. The Nirmanarati Heaven means conjured objects of pleasure and various delights. It is the fifth and is located above the Tushita Heaven and below the Paranirmita-vasha Heaven. The Paranirmita-vasha Heaven means freely enjoying things conjured. It is the highest heaven of the world of desire.

who might heartily bless *Chaoshu* and help him to attain enlightenment in the future. The girl agreed to help him, but she made a deal with *Chaoshu* in which she expressed the wish to be his wife forever. In that moment *Chaoshu* gave five hundred gold coins in exchange for these flowers. On the way back to the palace he saw the Dipankara Buddha and his disciples who were in line on the street. He offered the flowers to the Dipankara Buddha, but the Buddha would not accept them. At that time the Dipankara Buddha said to *Chaoshu*, “You can not provide five flowers and obtain the promise of future enlightenment” (Samghadeva 1924:599a). At that moment *Chaoshu* spread his long hair out on a muddy road and sincerely invited the Dipankara Buddha to step onto his long hair. Then *Chaoshu* was told that “in the future you will become Shakyamuni Buddha” (Samghadeva 1924:599b). At the end of this Jataka the Buddha spoke to monks

In a bygone age *Yeruoda* was another person, but this should not obscure the matter. Shuddhodana [the father of the Shakyamuni Buddha (Pure Rice in Chinese translation as)] at that time was *Yeruoda*. I [the Buddha] was *Chaoshu*; and Devadatta [cousin of the Shakyamuni Buddha] was the head Brahman of the eighty-four thousands. Gopi [the wife of the Buddha] was the Brahman girl.
(Samghadeva 1924:599b)

According to this Jataka, in a past existence Shakyamuni himself received a prophecy of enlightenment as well as other individual disciples from the Dipankara Buddha.

The third Jataka is about King Landowner in the first sutra of *Dizhupin* 地主品 (Chapter of the Landowner) of the thirteenth volume of ZIAHJ of the Chinese Mahayana Texts (Samghadeva 1924:609a-611a). Prasenajit, the king of Kosala of ancient India, was the same age as Shakyamuni and ruled the middle Ganges Valley from Shravasti, the capital of Kosala, which rose to prominence as the most powerful kingdom in India. King Prasenajit provided four offerings for the Shakyamuni Buddha and his monks,

including clothes, meals, bedding, and medicine for three months. King Prasenajit thought that he supported the Buddha and his disciples with these four offerings, felt that they would successfully produce unlimited merit for him. Therefore, he believed that he had done everything needed for making merit. But the Buddha told the King that he should not think this way and told the story of King Landowner to instruct him that making merit is a never-ending pursuit. This Jataka indicated that in a bygone age, the Shakyamuni Buddha was the King Landowner who provided four offerings for the Lamp-light Buddha.

The fourth Jataka also happened at the end of the first sutra of *Dizhupin* 地主品 (Chapter of the Landowner) of the thirteenth volume of ZIAHJ of the Chinese Mahayana Texts and is about a slave, named *Chunhei* 純黑 (Pure black). He had offered meals for the Come One (the Buddha) for thirty-one *Kalpa*, an extremely long period of time, and made a wish that this merit should not fall into the three evil paths of existence—the realms of hell, hungry spirits, and animals, and that he would meet the Come One who would speak the Dharma to *Chunhei* for enlightenment in the future. The Buddha then said, “At that time, *Chunhei* was another person, but this should not matter. Now *Chunhei* was the previous life of Shakyamuni Buddha” (Samghadeva 1924:611b).

The fifth Jataka in the *Dingjianpin* 等見品 (Chapter of Equal Seeing) of the twenty-sixth volume of ZIAHJ of the Chinese Mahayana Texts mentioned an eight-year-old child and two fishes (Samghadeva 1924:693b-c). This tale is about the previous existence of the Shakyas and relates to the previous life of the Buddha.

After Prasenajit ascended the throne, he wished to take a wife from the Shakyas. Some members of the Shakyas agreed with the marriage; others disagreed. Those who

disagreed believed that such a marriage would violate the clan's hierarchical rules. However, one of the older advisers to the king, named Mahanama, gave his maidservant's beautiful daughter in marriage to Prasenajit, falsely claiming that she was his own daughter. Later, she bore the king a prince named Virudhaka. When Virudhaka was eight years old, he went to Kapilavastu, the domain of the Shakyas in the kingdom of the Shakyamuni Buddha. There he was informed of the truth behind his birth and thereby put to shame. After ascending the throne, Virudhaka led his troops to destroy the great majority of the Shakyas, thereby avenging their betrayal of his birth.

At that time monks asked the Buddha why Virudhaka destroyed the Shakyas. The Buddha replied that in a bygone age the peoples who lived in a fishing village of Luoyue City were starving. They were eating grass and roots even though the village had a large fish pond with two kinds of fishes, *Jusuo* 拘瓊 and *Liangshe* 兩舌. To stave off starvation, the villagers caught and ate these fish. The fish, however, took revenge on the village people. Meanwhile, an eight-year-old child who saw these fish, was put on shore and generated joy and happiness. The Buddha told the monks, “At that time the village's people, who had been others, now were members of the Shakyas. The *Jusuo* fish was now King Virudhaka; the *Liangshe* fish was now the Brahman, *Haoku*. I, at that time, was the eight-year-old child who saw these fish on shore and laughed at them” (Samghadeva 1924:693b-c). This Jataka tale relates to the previous existence of the Buddha, a Brahman, as well as to all members of the Shakyas who were destroyed by King Virudhaka because they ate two kinds of fish when they were starving.

The sixth Moni 牟尼 Jataka appeared in the second sutra of *Maxietianzi wen bazheng pin* 馬血天子問八政品 (Chapter of Rohitassa devaputta asking the Eightfold path

(see Appendix E)) of the thirty-eighth volume of ZIAHJ of the Chinese Mahayana Texts (Samghadeva 1924:757a-758c). This Jataka indicated that one day the Buddha was staying at Jeta-Anāthapindika Grove in Sāvatti. At that time Upali, one of the ten chief disciples of the Buddha, asked the Buddha, “‘If these laymen and laywomen who practiced the eight precepts (see Appendix F) do not get their wishes, do they also grow to great advantage?’ Then the Buddha replied that although they achieved great advantage, it was not enough” (Samghadeva 1924:757a). Why was this? Meanwhile, the Buddha told the following Jataka.

In a bygone age Moni 牟尼, a princess of the King *Baoyue* 寶岳 (Treasure-mountain), saw an elder monk who begged for tallow candles and sesame oil because he wanted to give them to the Baozang 寶藏 (Treasure) Buddha for light. Moni gave him the tallow candles and sesame oil and offered them to the Baozang Buddha who predicted that the elder monk would become a Buddha named Dengguang 燈光 (Lamp-light) in an infinity of kalpas. Later, Moni went to see the Baozang Buddha, greeting him, sitting down at a respectful distance, and asking for the prediction for her; but the Baozang Buddha said, “Woman cannot be a *chakravarti-rajā* (wheel-turning King), a Cakra Devanam-indra (the king of gods), Mahabrahma-deva (The great heavenly king Brahma), and devil king” (Samghadeva 1924:757c). Moni continued to ask why she could not become a Buddha (Samghadeva 1924:757c). The Baozang Buddha responded, “You can. You should make a firm wish” (Samghadeva 1924:757c-758a). At the end of this story the Buddha spoke to Upali, “At that time the princess Moni was I” (Samghadeva 1924:758c). This Jataka describes the past actions of Moni and the Dengguang Buddha because she provided the tallow candles and sesame oil for the elder monk who offered

them to the Baozang Buddha who later became the Dengguang Buddha. This tale also points out that a small offering creates great meritoriousness.

The seventh Jataka tale is about the relationship of the Horse King, merchants, and female demons in the first sutra of *Mowang pin* 馬王品 (Chapter of the Horse King) of the forty- first volume of ZIAHJ of the Chinese Mahayana Texts (Samghadeva 1924:769b-770c). This tale of the Buddha happened because a Brahman wanted to give a beautiful Brahman girl to the Buddha. The Buddha refused to accept the girl, but a monk requested that if the Buddha did not take the girl, he would accept her. Therefore, the Buddha blamed that monk for a foolish thought and discoursed on the nine malignances¹² of women.

The Buddha then told this story: Once upon a time, in the city of Benares in the Kasi country, there was a merchant named Pufu who led five hundred merchants on a sea voyage to seek treasure. While at sea they experienced a big storm, and the boats blew to an island with female demons who were disguised as beautiful women. They tempted the merchants with their bodies, their voices, with treasure and fine food. “Monk, you should know that all five hundred merchants were stupid and puzzled and developed a keen affection for these women,” said the Buddha (Samghadeva 1924:770a). At that time merchant Pufu himself thought “This sea is strange and unnatural. There are these women here. I have a suspicion that they must be demons” (Samghadeva 1924:770a).

¹² In the *Zeng i a ha jing* (the Book of the Gradual Saying), the concept of the nine evil phenomena of women is as follows: (1) Their bodies are dirty and not clean; (2) They speak harshly; (3) They are not consistent; (4) They are jealous; (5) They are niggard; (6) They love to travel; (7) They are quick to hate; (8) They tell lies; (9) Their speech is imprudent (Samghadeva 1924:769c).

Meanwhile, the Horse King flew around in the sky and said that he could carry away whoever wanted to leave this disaster scene. After he heard the voice of the Horse King, the merchant, Pufu, came and asked for help to leave the island. The Horse King then rescued only merchant Pufu from the demon women. The five hundred merchants stayed on the island. The demons of the head woman chased merchant Pufu; however, he kept away from her. Later, the beautiful head woman seduced King Fandamo, who led her into his palace. And then the head woman ate the body of the King, leaving only his bones, and left the palace. The Buddha explained the causality of these characters and said, “The merchant Pufu was the monk Sariputra of those days; the head demon woman was the Brahman girl; the King Fandamo was the monk; the King of the Horse was myself; and the five hundred merchants were the five hundred monks” (Samghadeva 1924:770c). The Buddha demonstrated that this story is to teach monks who had to abandon their desire for food and drink and sexual love.

The eighth Jataka is about the loss of a child in the tenth sutra of *Shanepin* 善惡品 (Chapter of the good and bad) of the forty-third volume of ZIAHJ of the Chinese Mahayana Texts. The Buddha described that *Liaozhongbingwang* 療眾病王 (The King of Curing Multitudes) conversed in “a tone of death” to the parents whose new-born baby died. The parents were confused. Their son had not eaten nor drunk nor spoken for seven days so they brought him to visit the King who cured multitudes. He told them that the baby had died. The parents then asked “What does it mean, ‘a tone of death’?” The King replied, “The child could not eat and drink, speak, and play and had a body of stiffness without movement. That was ‘the tone of death’” (Samghadeva 1924:785a-b).

At the end of this sutra the Buddha told the monks that at that time the King of Curing Multitudes was someone else. “This should not be thought of in this way. You should know I was the King of Curing Multitudes” (Samghadeva 1924:785b). This story indicated that everyone should know there is birth and death, which means that no one can escape this tragedy.

The ninth Jataka tale appeared in the third sutra of *feichangpin* 非常品 (Chapter of impermanence) of the forty-ninth volume of ZIAHJ of the Chinese Mahayana Texts. The Buddha, who stayed at Jeta-Anāthapindika Grove in Sāvatti, told monks that everyone needed to keep the impermanent in their minds. In a bygone age a Qingjingyinxianwang 清淨音響王 (The King of Pure Sound) had a son and named him Subhuti. While Prince Subhuti was growing up, the King of Pure Sound gave him every pleasure in the palace because he was afraid of the Prince becoming an ascetic. Later, Prince Subhuti left the palace, shaved his head, became a beggar, and sought enlightenment. At the end of this story the Buddha told the monks that “At that time the King of Pure Sound was someone else. Monks, you should not think in this way. I was the King of Pure Sound of those days” (Samghadeva 1924:817a).

These Jataka tales are variously enumerated in the Nikayas of the Pali Texts and the Chinese Mahayana Texts. Two Jataka tales are in *Digha Nikaya* (Dialogues of the Buddha), in *Majjhima Nikaya* (The Middle-length Sutra), and in *Anguttara nikaya* (The Numerical Doctrine Sutra), while one Jataka tale is in *Samyutta nikaya* (The Related Topic Sutra). In contrast to the Chinese Mahayana Texts, there is only one tale in CAHJ. ZAHJ has seven Jataka tales, while ZIAHJ has eleven Jataka tales. Table 3.1 has the list of comparisons. When *Digha nikaya*, *Majjhima nikaya*, and *Samyutta nikaya* bring up

Jataka, they simply talk about the previous lives of the Buddha, but ZIAHJ evidently brings out both Jatakas of the Buddha and his disciples because ZIAHJ was passed down by the Mahasamghika School which split in the Buddhist Order around a century after the death of Shakyamuni and liberalized monastic rules and doctrine. Later, this school was the forerunner of the Mahayana movement and eventually split into eight additional schools.

All Jataka tales that have three unique features appear in the Nikaya Sutras of the Pali Texts and the Chinese Texts. First, the *suttantika*, monks, who knew the sutras and made a feature of these Jataka tales, were famous Indian wise men. Some Jataka tales explained the previous lives of the Buddha, including King Mahasudassana, King Mahagovinda, King Makhādeva, King Murdhagata, King Prasenajit, King Curing Multitudes, King Pure Sound, Brahman Velāma, Araka, Jotipala, and Chaoshu, heretic Sunetra, slave Chunhei, eight-year-old child, Princess Moni, and the Horse King. Second, the end of each Jataka always says that “I was so and so of those days.” Even though these Indian wise men were good and virtuous and had earned merits in the past, they were not perfectly proficient until the present life of the Buddha, who enlightened himself, and was made perfectly proficient (Yinshun 1994:560; Yichun 1997:25). Third, these Jataka tales included the relationship of the Buddha to his disciples; however, later *suttantika* only narrowed down the previous lives of the Buddha’s tales in his past.

2. The Forms and Characters of Jataka in Vinayas

Vinayadhara monks knew the rules of the Vinaya, the monastic discipline. *Vinayadhara* supported Jataka tales that happened in the lives of the monastic Sangha.

All episodes were intended to remove a monk's or a nun's evil conduct and to instruct them by Shakyamuni who said to his disciples that these incidents had already happened in the past but also occurred again in the present.

Table 3.1 lists all of the Jataka tales in both the Pali Texts and the Chinese Mahayana Texts.

The name of Nikaya in the Pali Texts	The name of Nikaya in the Chinese Mahayana Texts	Characters of the Jataka tales
1. <i>Digha nikaya</i>	1. Chuang a han jing	The Lord of the Steward, a minister
2. <i>Digha nikaya</i>	1. Zhong a han jing	The Great King of Glory
1. <i>Majjhima nikaya</i>	2. Zhong a han jing 1. Zeng i a han jing	King Makhādeva
2. <i>Majjhima nikaya</i>	3. Zhong a han jing	Brahman Jotipāla
1. <i>Anguttara nikaya</i>	4. Zhong a han jing 2. Zeng i a han jing	Brahman Velāma
2. <i>Anguttara nikaya</i>	5. Zhong a han jing	Brahman Araka
1. <i>Samyutta nikaya</i>	6. Zhong a han jing 3. Zeng i a han jing	King Murdhagata
	7. Zhong a han jing	Heretic Sunetta or Shanyan
	4. Zeng i a han jing	Brahman Chaoshu
	5. Zeng i a han jing	King Prasenajit
	6. Zeng i a han jing	A Eight-year-old child
	7. Zeng i a han jing	The Princess Moni
	8. Zeng i a han jing	The King of the Horse
	9. Zeng i a han jing	The King Curing Multitudes
	10. Zeng i a han jing	The King Pure Sound
	11. Zeng I a han jing	Slave Chunhei

The following Jataka tales are based on these schools of vinaya: Mahasamghika¹³, Sarvastivada¹⁴, Mahishasaka¹⁵, and Dharmagupta¹⁶. Each of these schools had its own

¹³ Mahasamghika 大眾部 split from the Sthaviravada (Theravada) School of the Buddhist Order because of the “Five Teachings of Mahadeva, a five-point modification of the monastic rules (see Appendix G) one hundred years after Shakyamuni's death. This school was based upon the Great Canon of Monastic Rules 摩訶僧祇律 and used it as their

rules of monastic discipline, which carried over into Chinese translation. The Chinese later used their rules of discipline as their primary texts for monks and nuns. The literary words used in the Jataka tales emphasized that so and so in the past was so and so in the present. Therefore, *Vinayadhara*'s Jataka tales expressed the dependent causation or the arising condition and the interdependence of all things in which they had a relationship with the Buddha, his disciples, other beings, and phenomena. These Jataka tales teach that no beings or phenomena exist on their own. They are popular folk tales in Indian society with very colorful characters, including kings, Brahmins, immortals, and animals.

a. The Jataka Tales in the Great Canon of Monastic Rules (GCMR)

These Jataka characters are in the GCMR of the Mahasamghika School in the Vinaya text. The Buddha told the first Jataka, which is about the dependence of a *Damingcheng* 大名稱 (King Great Designation) and a minister, Taoli 陶利, to his monastic

primary guide. This work was translated into Chinese by a northern Indian monk, Buddhahadra, and a Chinese Buddhist monk, Fa-hsien 法顯 in 416 A.D.

¹⁴ Sarvastivada 說一切有部 was one of the twenty Hinayana schools and branched out from the Sthaviravada School. Sarvastivada developed two hundred years after Shakyamuni's death and used the Ten Divisions of Monastic Rules 十誦律 as their rules of monastic discipline. In the early fifth century Punyatara and Kumarajiva translated the Ten Divisions of Monastic Rules from Sanskrit into Chinese.

¹⁵ Mahishasaka 化地部 (彌沙塞部) is one offshoot of the Sarvastivada School and one of the twenty Hinayana schools. This school came in to existence three hundred years after Shakyamuni's death. It believed in the Fivefold Rules of Discipline 五分律, which was their vinaya text and was translated by an Indian monk, Buddhajiva, and Chinese monks, Zhi Tao-sheng 竺道生 and others at Long-guang Temple in 424 A.D.

¹⁶ Dharmagupta 法藏部 (曇無德部) was formed from the Mahishasaka School three hundred years after the Buddha's death and was one of the twenty Hinayana schools. The Fourfold Rules of Discipline 四分律 belonged to the Dharmagupta School and was translated into Chinese by Indian monk, Buddhayashas, and Chinese monk, Zhi fo-nien 竺佛念 in 410-412 A. D.

audiences. It appears in the first volume of the GCMR. The story occurred in a bygone time when the minister Taoli wished King Great Designation to make laws for his people protecting them from possible troubles later in their peaceful life. But King Great Designation said that “There is no evil, and no need to impose punishment on criminals” (Buddhabhadra and Faxian 1926:228a). Commoners were already being respected. At the end of this tale the Buddha told the monks that “at that time the King Great Designation was another person, but this should not be thought of in this way. I was the King Great Designation. The minister, Taoli, was Sariputra” (Buddhabhadra and Faxian 1926:228b). This past situation also could apply to the present condition, for Sariputra asked the Buddha to establish the precepts for monks and lay-people in order to prevent trouble from happening.

The second Jataka is about “the relationship between a celestial being, a golden-winged bird, and a dragon” and appears in the second volume of the GCMR. A situation arose in which a monk named Danijia 達膩迦, who was the first person to take things without permission, received the blessing of the Buddha, freeing him from the punishment of King Bimbisara 瓶沙王. The Buddha told of the dependent causation in the past in which a golden-winged bird, a giant bird, lived in a tremendous tree near an enormous sea. Many dragons lived in the sea, but they were afraid of that golden-winged bird. When the bird was hungry, it split the sea with its wings and ate the dragons. Because of their fear, the dragons asked for help from the Buddha who gave them a kasaya (monk’s robe) to put on the dragon palace for protection. One day, when the bird saw a dragon in the sea and wanted to eat it, the dragon was overcome by fear. He grabbed the kasaya, covered his head, and leapt on the shore. Then the dragon ran into a

palace that belonged to a celestial being that had such great dignity that the bird did not break into the palace. At end of the story the Buddha told monks, “At that time the celestial being was someone else, but not thought of in this way. I was the celestial being. The golden-winged bird was King Bimbisara; the dragon was the monk, Danijia” (Buddhabhadra and Faxian 1926:240b).

The third Jataka is about the previous life of the Buddha when he was born as a parrot, Luoda 羅大, and discoursed about the eight winds¹⁷ with his best friend parrot, Poluo 波羅, that there are no real and permanent things. It is in the fourth volume of the GCMR. Both parrots were in high favor with a king who gave them a golden cage to live in, and he ate meals with them; but their good fortune did not last long. One day a minister offered a baby monkey to the king who gradually favored the baby monkey over the two parrots. Poluo complained to Luoda about being treated coldly by the king, but Luoda talked about the eight winds to Poluo, that nothing is real or permanent, just like we who were favored by the king for a short period. The baby monkey grew up with long hair and looking ugly. The king disliked the monkey because it frightened away princes and put it in a stable. A prince who held food near the monkey was scratched on the face. The monkey tore apart the prince’s clothes with his claws. The prince was scared and cried out. The king stared angrily at the two and ordered that the monkey be killed. As the situation developed, the Buddha spoke to the monks: “In bygone days

¹⁷ Eight winds are prosperity, decline, disgrace, honor, praise, censure, suffering, and pleasure, which prevent Buddhists from reaching enlightenment because some are often controlled either by prosperity, honor, praise, and pleasure, or by decline, disgrace, censure, and suffering.

parrot Luoda was someone else, but I was parrot Luoda. Parrot Poluo was Ananda” (Buddhabhadra and Faxian 1926:258c).

The fourth Jataka tale, in the fourth volume of the GCMR, is about a poor Brahman who went to sea with merchants and got many treasures. When they returned to the land, the Brahman played with these treasures on the shore. After a while, the Brahman accidentally dropped his treasures into the sea and wanted to ladle out the sea to recover them. A sea god saw the Brahman continuously scooping out water from the sea and gave the treasures back to the Brahman. The Buddha then told the monks, “At that time the sea god was someone else, but I was the sea god; the lying monk was the Brahman” (Buddhabhadra and Faxian 1926:260c).

The fifth Jataka tale, in the fifth volume of the GCMR, is about a celestial being who saved a monkey’s genitals. Once there was a monkey who went to a pond for a drink of water and saw a turtle asleep with its mouth open. He put his genital into the mouth of the turtle, but when the turtle closed his mouth, the monkey picked up the turtle and went to a celestial being for help. At the end of the tale the Buddha said to the monks that “At that time the celestial being, who was another person, was I. The turtle was a Brahman, and the monkey was Udāyi” (Buddhabhadra and Faxian 1926:265b). This story deals with a monk, Udāyi, who had sexually harassed a woman novice and several laywomen. They were rescued by the Buddha in the present and also in the past.

The sixth Jataka, in the sixth volume of the GCMR, is about Prince Jingmian 鏡面 (Prince Flat-Face) who was born without face and nose but had a heavenly eye which allowed him to see anything anywhere. After Flat-Face became the king of Kasi, he wanted to summon an artisan to build a new palace. A minister, who wanted to test the

new king, dressed a monkey as an artisan and brought him to see the king. The king then asked the minister who the artisan was. At the end of the story the Buddha said, “At that time the King Flat-Face was I. The monkey was now monk Channa 闍陀,” (Buddhabhadra and Faxian 1926:279c) who built a house for a lot of money from his master, but was not good at management.

The seventh Jataka, in the seventh volume of the GCMR, is about an elder, who was a main figure in this tale. He had a slave named Amoyou 阿摩由 who had a ferocious temper. At that time Amoyou threatened other slaves with his master’s power. The Buddha spoke to the monks, saying, “The elder, who was someone else, was I. Slave Amoyou was now monk Channa” (Buddhabhadra and Faxian 1926:285b). He also threatened other people with the Buddha’s power in this time. Just as in the past, other people were threatened with a Brahman’s power (Buddhabhadra and Faxian 1926:285b-286a) because the threats of Buddha’s power to other people were the same as those of the past.

The eighth Jataka is about a famous Brahman Fuluxi 弗盧醯, who had five hundred child-disciples and a slave named Jialuohe 迦羅訶 who was ordered about by these children. Later, Jialuohe ran away from his master to another country, declared himself to be the son of Brahman Fuluxi, named himself Yeruodaduo 耶若達多, and married a daughter of the king’s master. Later on, when the Brahman Fuluxi came to a neighboring country to catch the runaway, Jialuohe, he met on the way Yeruodaduo who told everything to his master about his lies to his in-laws. At end of this tale, the Buddha told the monks, “The Brahman Fuluxi, who was someone else, was I. The slave, Jialuohe, was now monk Channa” (Buddhabhadra and Faxian 1926:286a).

The ninth Jataka, in the twentieth volume of the GCMR, is about the Buddha who praised reverent elders. The Buddha said that even though the monks had just been ordained into the Buddhist Order for one day, the young monks had to pay respect now even to elder monks just the same as was required in the past. The Buddha told the monks that in bygone days there were three animals—a bird, a monkey, and an elephant—who lived under a tree. The elephant said that whoever was the first one to live in this tree should be revered. After they talked to each other, the bird was the chosen one; and the other two respected the bird. At end of this story the Buddha said “The elephant was I” (Buddhabhadra and Faxian 1926:446b).

b. The Jataka Tales on the Ten Divisions of Monastic Rules (TDMR)

Some of the Jataka tales can be found on the TDMR of the Sarvastivada School in Vinaya texts. The following are based on this school and relate only to the previous lives of the Buddha. The first Jataka tale occurs in the thirty-fourth volume of the TDMR. The same plot occurs as the ninth Jataka in the GCMR. In it the Buddha discoursed on how to reverence elder monks in the Sangha. However, at the end of the tale the Buddha spoke to the monks, “At that time the bird, who was someone else, was I. The monkey was Sariputra; the elephant was Maudgalyayana” (Punyatara and Kumarajiva 1925:242b-c). This tale included more detail than the one in the GCMR. The Buddha indicated that even though these animals could show their respect to each other, it was the monks who followed him and who practiced his Dharma who also needed to respect elder monks.

The second, third, and fourth Jataka, a serial tale, appears in the thirty-sixth volume of the TDMR. These three tales are about a doe, a wild goose minister, and a

buffalo, who faced a dreadful situation and never left the Stag King, the Wild Goose King, and the Lion King alone. The story began with a hunter who put grain on traps that lured deer and wild geese. The Stag King, Weide 威德, and the Wild Goose King, Zhiguo 治國, were careless and stepped on a trap by accident. They showed the trap to the five hundred deer and the five hundred wild geese and urged them to leave this dangerous place. Only a doe and the wild goose minister stayed with Weide and Zhiguo and encouraged them to escape before the hunter came, but Weide or Zhiguo could not break away from the trap. When the hunter came, the doe or the wild goose minister said to the hunter:

You can use your sharp knife to kill me, and then release Weide.

The hunter listened to the doe and was touched that the doe so deeply loved the stag that she would sacrifice herself to save him.

The hunter said I will never kill you nor will I kill Weide. I will release you both so that you can go anywhere you want.

Punyatara and Kumarajiva 1925:263a-b and 263c

At end of the tale the Buddha spoke to the monks: “In bygone days the Stag or the Wild Goose King was someone else, but this should not be thought of in this way. I was the Stag King and the Wild Goose King. The five hundred deer and the five hundred wild geese were the five hundred monks” (Punyatara and Kumarajiva 1925:263b and 263c).

The fourth tale is about the Lion King, who walked in front of the five hundred lions and fell into a well because he was sick and dim-sighted from old age. Those five hundred lions left him alone; only the buffalo saved the Lion King. At the end of the story the Buddha said, “At that time the Lion King, who was someone else, was I. The five hundred lions were now the five hundred monks” (Punyatara and Kumarajiva 1925:264b). The three Jataka tales have the same plot but only the main figures are

different. In the past, while the five hundred deer, wild geese, and lions faced a dreadful situation and left the Stag King, wild goose, and lion alone; in the present, the five hundred monks are the same.

The fifth Jataka tale, in volume thirty-seven of the TDMR (Punyatara and Kumarajiva 1925:266a-b), is about a master archer. He had a favorite disciple who married a daughter of his master. She had a dowry including four carts, a thousand arrows, and a thousand gold pieces. The Buddha told this story to the monks: After the young archer married, he and his bride went to their own place, but on the way they encountered a thousand thieves. The young archer killed nine-hundred-ninety-nine thieves with his nine-hundred-ninety-nine arrows, and finally, he used the last arrow to kill the head thief. The Buddha described the causality of this event like this: “At that time the master archer, who was someone else, was I. The young archer was Sariputra; the daughter of the master archer was Maudgalyayana; and the head thief was Devadatta” (Punyatara and Kumarajiva 1925:266b).

All of these Jataka tales are unique because most of the main figures are kings in the animal kingdom. Also, each event evokes the three serial Jataka tales in the TDMR, tales of the past lives of the Buddha.

c. The Jataka Tales in the Fivefold Rules of Discipline (FRD)

These Jataka tales appear in the FRD of the Mahishasaka School in the Viyana texts. They are based on the FRD of the Mahishasaka School and relate only to the previous lives of the Buddha. The first Jataka, in the third volume of the FRD, is about a Fox King who led his pack of foxes, elephants, tigers, and lions and encircled the city in

Kāsī country in order to marry a daughter of King Kāsī 迦夷王. Later, a minister suggested an idea to King Kāsī. That is, when the time comes to fight, you send a messenger to ask fox to grant your wish that the lions fight first and roar later. This would show that our troops were afraid of the pack of lions and fox would fall into a trap because he would order the pack of lions to roar first and fight later. The next day, when the troops met on the battlefield, King Kāsī ordered them to put earplugs in their ears. Meanwhile, fox ordered the pack of lions to roar first. Fox heard the sound from the lions and fell to the ground from his seat on an elephant. Suddenly, the whole pack of animals fell apart. The Buddha told the monks, “At that time King Kāsī was I; the minister was Sariputra; and the fox was Devadatta” (Buddhajiva and Zhu 1926:19a).

The second Jataka tale, in the twenty-fifth volume of the FRD, is about a young elephant who imitated an elder elephant who went to a pond, picked up an Indian lotus, washed it and ate it for energy. But the young elephant did not wash it before eating it. Later he got sick and died. At the end of this tale the Buddha told Maudgalyayana that “the elder elephant was I. The young elephant was Devadatta” (Buddhajiva and Zhu 1926:165a). In this tale the present Devadatta wanted the Buddha to retire and he would become a new Buddha to lead his Sangha; but Devadatta encountered great suffering just like in the past when a young elephant imitated an elder elephant and died.

The third Jataka tale talks about a trainer’s disciple who slighted his master and “told the king he should not hire his master to train these elephants because his training skills were not as good as mine.” This tale is in the twenty-fifth volume of the FRD. Consequently, the king tested both trainers, but both were the same. Later, the king asked the disciple trainer if he has skills other than training elephants. The disciple trainer

replied by saying “No.” The king asked the master trainer the same question, and he answered “Yes” and showed his training skills to the king. As a result, the king knew that what the disciple trainer said was false. At the end of the tale the Buddha said, “The master trainer was I; the disciple trainer was Devadatta who learned from me and yet slighted me generation after generation” (Buddhajiva and Zhu 1926:165b).

The fourth Jataka occurred in the same volume as the third Jataka, which indicated that the archer disciple had learned how to hold the arrow for six years without shooting. One day the archer disciple shot an arrow that went through a trunk of a tree and into the ground. The master archer saw this scene and sent him to kill the five hundred thieves and the head thief in order to insure travelers’ safety. In ending this Jataka, the Buddha said, “The master archer was I. The archer disciple was Sariputra and the five hundred thieves were the five hundred monks. The head thief was Devadatta” (Buddhajiva and Zhu 1926:165c).

The fifth Jataka happened in the twenty-sixth volume of the FRD. It was about a little chick who braved the fire in the forest and asked the fire god to save him. At the end of this tale, the Buddha said, “At that time the little chick was I. The fire god was now the fire god. In the past I [the Buddha] extinguished the fire, and in the present I [the Buddha] also put out the fire” (Buddhajiva and Zhu 1926:176a).

d. The Jataka Tales on the Fourfold Rules of Discipline (FROD)

These Jataka tales occurred in the Viyana texts of the FROD of the Dharmagupta School. The following Jataka tales are based on this school and only relate to the previous lives of the Buddha. The first Jataka tale also occurred in the third sutra of the

Shanzhishipin 善知識品 (Chapter of Good Friend) of ZIAHJ of the Chinese Mahayana Texts (Samghadeva 1924:597a-599c), but the plot has just a few differences. It discusses a young disciple named Miquemona 彌却摩納 who studied under a celestial being, Zhenbao 珍寶. He wanted to pay back the celestial being who told him that he needed about five hundred gold coins. This tale takes place in the thirty-first volume of the FROD. At the end of the tale the Buddha spoke to merchants saying that “At that time the celestial being, Zhenbao, was another person, but this should not influence the matter. He was now Maitreya bodhisattva. Miquemona was someone else, but this should not influence the matter. He was I of those days” (Buddhayashas and Zhu 1926:785c). In this tale the Buddha did mention that the future Buddha was an existing bodhisattva.

The second Jataka tale occurred in the forty-sixth volume of the FROD (Buddhayashas and Zhu 1926:910a-b) and also appeared in the fourth Jataka of the twenty-fifth volume of the FRD (Buddhajiva and Zhu 1926:165b-c). This tale indicated that an archer disciple killed about five hundred thieves. At the end of the story the Buddha did mention the previous lives of other people, including the five hundred thieves who were the five hundred monks; the head thief was Devadatta. The archer disciple, named Sanruo 散若, was Sariputra, but he forgot to say who he was in this tale.

The third Jataka tale appears in the forty-sixth volume of the FROD (Buddhayashas and Zhu 1926:910b-c) and again in the second Jataka tale of the twenty-fifth volume of the FRD (Buddhajiva and Zhu 1926:164c-165a), which told of a young elephant who imitated an older elephant.

The fourth Jataka tale, in the forty-sixth volume of the FROD, talked about Yueyiwang 月益王 (King Wax) who had two sons named Shanshi 善事 (Good Charity)

and Eshi 惡事 (Evil Charity). When Good Charity grew up he wanted to go sea to seek the *Mani*, a wish-granting jewel. He hoped that there would be no poor people in the world without means to fulfill their wishes. The detail of Prince Good Charity going to sea will be discussed in chapter five. At the end of this tale, the Buddha spoke to the monks. He said, “King Wax was another person, but now he is King Cuddhodana [my father]. The first queen now is Mahamaya [my mother]. At that time, the Moon King was a member of the Sakya tribe; the daughter of the Moon King was Gopi [my wife].... Prince Good Charity was I; Prince Evil Charity was Devadatta; and the five hundred merchants were the five hundred monks” (Buddhayashas and Zhu 1926:913a-b).

Vinaya texts have made dramatic changes in the main figures of the Jataka tales. There are more animal kings, celestial beings, sea gods, and trainers, which indicates that *Vinayadharas* adopted popular figures for the Jataka tales. In addition, the plots of the Jataka tales of the Vinaya texts are discussed in less detail than in the Nikaya texts, but they indicate that there is causation or a relationship between the Buddha and his disciples in the past and in the present. Sometimes, when the Buddha talked about the Jataka tales, he was concise in saying that “such causation popularizes the five hundred Jatakas in those Vinaya texts and spreads the Jatakas far and wide.” Nine Jataka tales are in the GCMR while five tales are in the TDMR and in the FRD. There are four tales in the FROD, but only one does not mention who lived a previous life of the Buddha. Table 3. 2 lists the Jataka tales in these four Vinaya Texts.

The Jataka tales of Nikayas indicate an incident or anecdote from the life of Shakyamuni Buddha in India. The Vinayas describe the causative relationship between

past and the present acts and identify the characters involved in the past incidents with their contemporaries.

Table 3. 2 All Jataka tales for the four Vinaya schools.

The names of Vinayas in Chinese Texts	Characters in the Jataka tales
The Great Canon of Monastic Rules 摩訶僧祇律	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. King Great Designation 大名稱王 2. Celestial being 仙人 3. Parrot 鸚鵡 4. Sea god 海神 5. Celestial being 仙人 6. King Flat-Face 鏡面王 7. Elder 長者 8. Brahman 婆羅門 9. Elephant 象
The Ten Divisions of Monastic Rules 十誦律	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bird 鸚 2. Stag King 鹿王 3. Wild Goose King 鴈王 4. Lion King 獅子獸王 5. Master Archer 射師
The Fivefold Rules of Discipline 五分律	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. King Kāsī 迦夷王 2. Elder elephant 大象 3. Master Trainer 調象師 4. Master Archer 射師 5. Little Chick 雉鷄
The Fourfold Rules of Discipline 四分律	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brahman 婆羅門 2. Not define 3. Elder Elephant 大象 4. Prince Good 善事

G. Comparative Collections of Jataka Tales Between the Structures of Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism

Jataka tales have been preserved in Sanskrit and Pali, as well as in Chinese and Tibetan Canons and are in the preaching style of the Buddha. Many Jataka tales are Indian popular and didactical narratives from pre-Buddhist times, stories of the Buddha's previous lives adapted to Buddhist purposes. These tales are rich in parables and

allegories told in numerous ways: artistic reliefs, carving on stupas and pagodas, mural paintings, and paintings on cave-temples. The Jataka narrative is part of the Buddha's discourses and is associated with the purpose of Buddhist literature to tell of the Buddha's life or related events in his life.

The study of Jataka tales, besides these bas-reliefs and mural paintings, is primarily done by means of the Pali Canon and other Canons that were translated into other languages. The Jataka-Atthavannana may be the first collection of the Jataka tales and was probably compiled in the third or fourth century B.C. by an unknown author (Davids 1843:233; Shih 1989:1952). Today the Jataka tales of the Pali Canon are believed to be derived from the Jataka Atthavannana and were written by Buddhaghosa in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) about the fifth century A.D. (Davids 1843:233; Davids 1907:13; Cowell 1973:x). In the nineteenth century Fausböll, a Danish scholar, spent about twenty years (1877-1896) of scholarly work to edit the Jataka tales of the Pali Canon into six volumes based on Singhalese (Ceylonese) and Burmese texts. He added a biography, in the first volume, of the Buddha, written by Buddhaghosa, and influenced the circle of Western Buddhism (Shih 1989:1952). In 1973 the English Jataka tales were translated into English by various scholars under the editorship of Cowell and consist of six volumes: the first and the second volumes contain 150 Jatakas each; the third one has 138 Jataka tales; the fourth one contains 72 stories; the fifth volume has 27 Jatakas; and the last one contains 10 Jatakas (Cowell 1973). This work makes it very easy for English readers who do not know the other languages in which the Jataka tales were previously written and translated. The 547 Jataka tales are by themselves the biggest section of the

Sutra pitaka. The birth stories detail the previous lives of the Buddha and of his followers and foes.

Each Jataka tale has a common opening and ending. As Cowell stated, “Each story opens with a preface...which relates the particular circumstances in the Buddha’s life which led him to tell the birth-story and thus reveal some event in the long series of his previous existences as a *bodhisatta* [or bodhisattva] or a being destined to attain Buddha-ship. At the end there is always given a short summary, where the Buddha identifies the different actors in the story in their present birth at the time of his discourse” (Cowell 1973:ix). Each story shows where the Buddha told a particular Jataka and what character appeared in the story (Table 3. 3 shows where each Jataka takes place; and Table 3. 4 shows who appeared as the main character in a given story).

The Jataka tales were translated from the Pali Canon into Japanese in 1935-1941. Between 1985 and 1994, the Yuan Heng Temple assembled scholars to translate these Jataka tales from Japanese to Chinese. They also rechecked them with both the Pali Canon and the Thai Siam-rattba version. Many of the Jataka tales are Indian folk tales from pre-Buddhist times, adapted by the Buddhists so that the verses contain the moral of the story. In the strictest sense, these verses alone are the canonical part of the Jataka tales. The Jataka tales, which have inspired numerous artistic representations, particularly in the form of reliefs on stupas and pagodas, enjoy great popularity among the lay people of southeast Asian countries, for whom they convey the basic concepts of the Buddha’s teaching. The Jataka tales are extant, not only in Pali, but also in a Chinese translation. They are also available in anthologies of Buddhist myths and tales.

The Jataka tales are available in different languages, but each language has its own versions and translations. One tale may appear in different form in different languages; and the tales have become popular throughout the Buddhist world of Southeast Asia, Central Asia, and East Asia. The Jataka tales in Theravada Buddhism appear in a collected series of volumes. In contrast to this, the Mahayana tales are scattered about. Some are partially translated from the Pali or appear in different Chinese versions. An eminent monk, YinShun (1906-2005), in his *Compilation of the Tripitakas of the Theravada Buddhism*, pointed out that in Mahayana Buddhism the Jatakas were put in as part of the Sutras and Vinayas, or were compiled into various single sutras and in those forms were circulated in the past and in the present (Yinshun 1994:101-102). Looking at the Chinese Mahayanic Tripitaka (Three Baskets: Sutra; Vinaya; and Abhidharma), I have found some examples of this dispersed placement of Jataka tales, including *Wubai Bensheng Jing* 五百本生經¹⁸ (the Sutra of Five Hundred Jatakas), *Liudu Jijing* 六度集經¹⁹ (the Sutra on the collection of the Six Paramitas) (Kang 1924), *Sheng*

¹⁸ *Wubai Bensheng Jing* 五百本生經 was translated by Mahayana 大[摩訶]乘, a Western Region monk, at Guangzhou during the Yong-ming reign of Emperor Wudi of the Southern Dynasty of the Chi (ca. 483-494), according to *Chusanjang jiji* 出三藏記集 (Complete Translation of the collected Tripitakas). No indication was given regarding how many volumes in the Sutra of Five Hundred Jatakas, which once existed, have been lost (Sengyou 僧佑 1928:13b).

¹⁹ the Sutra Collection of the Six Paramitas was translated by Kang Seng-hui 康僧會 (? ~ 280) who came to the capital Jianye 建業 (It is now Nanjing) in the Wu Dynasty of the Three Kingdoms (247 A.D.) and introduced Buddhism into southern China. He was completely accepted by King Sunquan of the Wu Dynasty who built a temple named Jian-chu Si 建初寺 (The Found-beginning Temple) (Shih 1989: 4538). The original Sutra had nine volumes, but at present it has only eight volumes according to the Complete Translation of the Collected Tripitakas (Sengyou 1928:7a).

*Jing*生經²⁰ (the Sutra of Jatakas) (Dharmaraksha 1924), *Pusa Benxing Jing* 菩薩本行經²¹ (The Sutra of Bohisattva Jataka) (unknown author 1924), *Xian Yui Jing* 賢愚經²² (Sutra on the Wise and the Foolish) (Huijue et al. 1924), and so forth. These Sutras reveal the concept of the Buddha's previous lives as a bodhisattva who practiced his six Paramitas to fulfill his virtuous actions and perform deeds that express and embody the concept of karma. Through their realistic accounts of the Buddha's past lives, these sutras made it possible for the Chinese people who lived during medieval times to have a better understanding of the law of cause and effect and its relationship to previous, present, and future lives.

Many Jataka tales end with a formulaic recitation of personae and their roles. An example is the following: "At that time was I myself [the Buddha], and so-and-so was the person who is now so-and-so." Thus, in the Jataka tale of Prince Mahasattva feeding

²⁰ The Sutra of Jataka has five volumes with fifty-five stories and was translated by Dharmaraksha, a monk from Dunhuang, who "...came to Chuangan during the reign of Emperor We-di of the Western Jin (265 A.D.) (Shih 1989:3488).

²¹ The bodhisattva Jataka Sutra has three volumes but the name of the translator has been lost. According to the six volumes of the *Lidai sanbao ji* 歷代三寶紀 (Chronicle of the Records about Buddhist Translations) there was a section named "Record of Eastern Jin" (Fei 1927: 68b-c) which may mean that many sutras had been translated during the Eastern Jin Dynasty, but either they were untitled, or they have since vanished.

²² The Sutra on the Wise and the Foolish of Wisdom and Foolishness has 13 volumes with sixty-two stories and was translated by Hui-jue and Wei-de. Hui-jue came from the Western Region named Gao-chuang Guo (it is now in Turfan, Xinjiang Province, China). In 445 A.D., after he returned to his country, he translated this Sutra (Shih 1989:6060). The nine volumes Complete Translation of the collected Tripitakas stated that Wei-de was a monk who, with his seven monks, lived in the He-xi area. They traveled in a group seeking for the Sutras, came to Ku-stana Guo (it is now in Khotan, Xinjiang Province, China), and there met a gathering of eminent monks who preached in Pali about their expert knowledge of Sutras and Vinayas at Great Temple. At that time eight monks listened to these eminent monks' preaching and took notes on the stories they heard. Those who returned to Gao-chuang Guo translated and compiled those stories into this Sutra, under the direction of Hui-jue (Sengyou 1928: 67c).

himself to a hungry tigress, “...the Buddha said to Ananda, ‘At that time King Maharadhana was Cuddhodana (Pali, Suddhodana) who was my father, and the Queen was Mahamaya who was my mother. At that time the oldest Prince, Mahapranada, was Maitreya [who will be the future Buddha], and the second Prince, Mahadeva, was Po xiu mi duo luo 婆修蜜多羅. At that time the Maharatha [Mahasattva] was I myself”” (Huijue et al. 1924:353b).

Table 3.3

Where each Jataka takes place

Places	appeared times	Places	Times mentioned
Jetavana monastery	437	The East garden	1
Bamboo grove	47	Kapilavatthu	1
Sāvatthi	10	Gijjhakūta	1
Veluvana park	5	Bhesakalā grove	1
Mongo grove	4	A monastery in front of Jetavana	1
Banyan grove	3	Gabled chamber at Vesali	1
Ghosita park	3	The gabled house at Vesali	1
Shrine of Aggālara near Alavi	3	Amaradevi	1
The Gabled chamber	2	Patikarama	1
Badarika Monastery	2	Forest near the town of Desaka	1
Alms pilgrimage	2	Kundadhānavana in Kundiya	1
Lake Kunāla	2	Veluvana	1
Pleasure garden	1	Tapoda park	1
Deer park	1	Sāketa	1
A hamlet of Kosala	1	Subhagavana park	1
Anvpiya	1	Kapilapura	1
Ketaka vana	1	Isipatana	1
The bank of the River Rohini	1	Pubbārāma	1
Bank of the Ganges	1	Benares	1
Dakkhināgiri	1		
Tatol	528		19

Table 3.4

The many reincarnations of the Buddha in 547 Jataka tales

Characters	Times mentioned	Characters	Times mentioned
A King	60	A peacock	4
An ascetic	54	A low-man	3
A brahman	40	A caravan	3
A wise man	39	A crow	3
A merchant	34	A student	3
A king of gods	30	A fish	3
A spirit	26	A lizard	2
A prince	25	A robber	2
A teacher	23	A rat	2
A specialist	18	A jackal	2
A chaplain	14	A woodpecker	2
A hermit	13	A dragon	2
A counsellor	11	An antelope	2
A lion	10	A partridge	2
A bird	10	A fairy	2
A monkey	10	A poor man	1
A deer	9	A nobleman	1
An elephant	8	A valuer	1
A goose	8	A sow	1
A parrot	8	A dog	1
A minister	7	An iguana	1
A courtier	7	A snake	1
A pigeon	6	A cock	1
A bull	5	A squire	1
A quail	5	A hen	1
A tree-fairy	4	A gamber	1
A farmer	4	A guarder	1
A vulture	4	A forg	1
A horse	4	A hare	1
Tatol	496		51

Theravada Buddhists preach Jataka tales during their sermons and carve Jataka tales on walls of caves in order to present the great lives of the previous Buddha because the spiritual Buddha constantly inspires the innermost being of Theravada Buddhists. The tales embody the lofty Buddha, they are pondered deeply in meditation and when finally entered into nirvana, Theravada Buddhists derive enlightenment from the teachings of the Buddha.

In contrast to this, Mahayanic followers place more emphasis on altruism to benefit all living beings. For them the Jataka tales are filled with the spirits of bodhisattvas who practice the six Paramitas. In medieval China we can see that these Chinese Mahayana Buddhist followers recorded the practice of bodhisattva virtue on the walls of the Mogao caves. They did this in order to encourage Chinese Buddhist followers to look at the Jataka tales. In these tales, the bodhisattvas deeply seek the spiritual Buddha, and reveal the compassionate mind of the bodhisattva. They even advance by sacrificing portions of their body in order to gain an enlightened verse or to save other living beings. These living stories were recorded in the Biographies of Eminent Monks, and in other historical narratives. Once again, throughout this chapter, I emphasize both the Theravada and Mahayanic collections of the Jataka tales, those which refer only to the causative relationship of the Buddha in his past lives as the central actor in these stories, rather than his disciples and lay followers.

CHAPTER FOUR

ARCHITECTURAL FORMS OF THE JATAKA TALE CAVES

The architectural forms of the Mogao caves are visible, tangible works which record and interpret past human actions, particularly social, political and religious ones. They hold many great works of art whose artists and artisans remain unknown to people worldwide—like the pyramids in Egypt and Angkor Wat in Cambodia. In the Mogao caves the mural paintings, the sculptures, and the architectural art were made in many particular dynastic periods and by many different contributors. However, scholars today cannot always identify them by name. Even though the artists and artisans have been dead for a thousand years, their attractive architectural forms still exist in the Mogao caves and inform us.

These caves, small, medium, and large, fill the south to north sections of the cliffs and date from the first introduction of architectural arts in the fourth century A.D. Architectural forms often played a large part in shaping the developmental history of the Mogao caves. In this chapter I will deal primarily with the cultural and historical background of the identified and established Mogao caves as well as the chronology of those associated with Jataka tales.

Cave architecture, for the present purpose, consists of four basic forms—*chaitya*, central-stupa, or central-pagoda-pillar cave; *vihara*, meditational cave; caisson ceiling cave; and *parinirvana*, passing away of the Buddha cave—all depict Jataka tales. These four cave architectural forms prevailed from the early fourth century on. They showed clearly how the Mogao caves arose and evolved, and provide a partial history of time

sequences at Dunhuang that help us understand the whole panorama. I shall consider them in order here.

A. The Cultural Origin and the Initial Pilgrimage at the Mogao Caves

Dunhuang studies focus on four basic elements: the study of the art found in the stone caves, the cultural artifacts of the secret library, other cultural relics, and relevant historical documents. Integrated scientific approaches which are used for the study of physical objects (Hu and Luo 1998:1) refer to the items of material culture from the Mogao caves of Dunhuang.

1. The Dedication of the Mogao Caves by Two Wandering Monks

The caves of Mogao²³ or “Peerless Caves” (Whitfields and Agnew 2000:5), or the “Dunhuang Caves” in Western literature, are located approximately twenty-five kilometers southeast of Dunhuang City (Figure 4.1. the cliff-face locale of the Mogao caves), in barren foot-hills, and are clustered on the eastern-hillside cliff-face of the

²³ The Mogao caves are sometimes referred to as *Chien-fo-tung*. But Jiang disagrees with the name of Chien-fo-tung because this term is a common name applied to all cliff caves that are carved with sculptures of the Buddhas (Jiang 1999:6). The term, ‘Caves of the Thousand Buddhas,’ or *Ch’ien-fo-tung*, was coined by Sir Aurel Stein in the twentieth century (Stein 1912:20). After Stein had used the term Ch’ien-fo-tung, it particularly came to refer to the geography of the Mogao caves, so that when someone says, “Ch’ien-fo-tung,” people immediately recall the Mogao caves. However, this explanation seems incorrect to the Chinese scholar Jiang Liangfu who asserts that the name of the Mogao caves derives from its place name, Mogao township, a political toponym originally used in the Tang Dynasty. Indeed, the contemporary term, “Dunhuang studies,” includes all the material of the Mogao caves; therefore, the name of the Mogao caves is a very proper name for it; but nowadays only a few Chinese scholars use this appellation; it is not a name in common use (Jiang 1999:6).

*Mingsha Shan*²⁴鳴沙山, “the Dunes of the Singing Sands” (Whitfields and Agnew 2000:3).

This massif is oriented in such a way that a large cliff faces to the east along the *Dangquqn* 宕泉 (the Great River) (Li 1998:8). The Mogao massif was considered sacred and has remained sacred since the first cave was consecrated in 366 A. D. by two wandering monks.

A mendicant monk named *Yuezun*, who traveled from the east, arrived at the *Mingsha Shan* with a staff as his sole companion. Suddenly, he saw a phenomenal vision, a golden radiance with a thousand Buddha figures that were reflected on the top of *Sanwei Shan* (Three Steep Mountains). He was inspired to carve a cave temple there for meditation. This was the first cave dedicated at this site. It was near Dunhuang prefecture, at that time an important staging-post on the Silk Road.

Later, another wandering monk named *Faliang* came to the Mogao site and chiseled out a second cave next to *Yuezun*’s cave. These two monks are regarded as the founders of the Mogao caves. Their history is recounted in the “Mogaoku Ji” (Record of the Mogao Caves). It is on the upper left section of the north wall (a shaft that reaches upward) in Cave 156 (Li 1998:333). It is a Buddhist belief that a golden light shining on a place has the appearance of a thousand Buddhas, a phenomenon known as “Land of Buddha.” It is a sign that this is a good place to build a temple. One of the most famous Mahayana Sutras, the Lotus Sutra, records that

At that time the Buddha emitted a ray of light from the tuft of white hair between his eyebrows, one of his characteristic features, lighting up eighteen thousand worlds in the eastern direction. There was no place that the light did not penetrate,

²⁴ Jiang states that when a person or a horse walked down the sand-dune, then the grains of sand burst against each other making a rumbling sound which is the so-called “*Mingsha Shan*” “Dunes of Singing Sand” (Jiang 1999:3)

reaching downward as far as the Avichi hell [hell of incessant suffering] and upward to the Akanishtha heaven [The highest of the eighteen heavens of the world of form.]

Watson 1993:6

According to this Sutra, the Buddha sends a golden light to shine on eighteen thousand worlds to bless and benefit all responsive beings either upward or downward. As a consequence, the Dunhuang massif was considered sacred from the first dedicated cave (366 A.D.) to the very last (1368 A.D.).

2. A Description of the Existing Mogao Caves

Viewed from a distance, the caves look like a cluster of honeycombs facing out from the cliff face to the east, running along the *Dangquan* River, which is derived from the Nan Shan (South Mountain), and passes through these caves, and which, not far away, flows into the ground (Figure 4.2 and 4.2 (continued) are panoramic views of the Mogao Caves across the *Dangquan* River). As Hu and Fu (2004:9) pointed out, in ancient times the [*Dangquan*] River was broadest there, so the earliest caves were constructed in the cliff faces at the middle level or above. However, after the Tang Dynasty (618-906 A.D), when the width of the river was reduced, the caves were constructed at the bottom level. This condition is described by Stein (1921:792) as “... the stream [*Dang* (Da) *quan* River] descending the valley finally loses itself through evaporation, except on the occasion of rare floods.” Some of these caves are connected one to another by balconies within and along the front of the precipice. The cave clusters are divided into two sections: the south section and the north section. In addition, the caves constructed in the Northern Liang (401-439 A.D.) were in the center of the south section. Construction of later caves

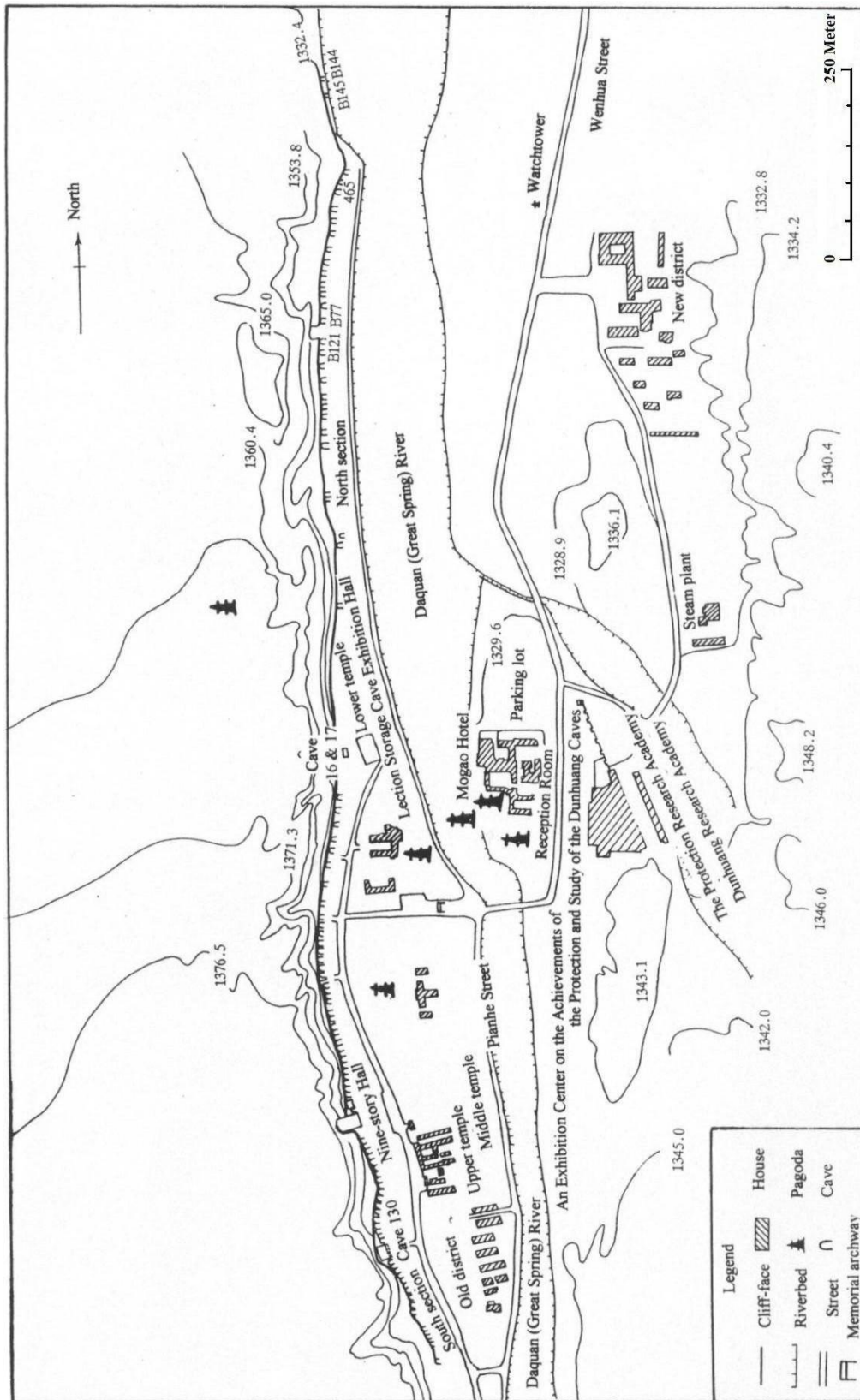


Figure 4.1 The cliff-face locale of the Mogao caves (Peng and Wang 2000:4).

looked toward the south and north sides while the last constructions were made on the south and north edges.

The north section has 248 caves which are distributed over a length of approximately 700 meters, and a height of some 5 or 6 stories. They include caves 461-465 that have been previously recorded in the *Complete Content of the Mogao Caves at Dunhuang* (Peng and Wang 2000:1-11). Peng and Wang (2000:343-350), in their archeological account, concluded that the various functions of these north caves were for meditation, residence, residence and meditation, burials, worship, and storage. Here is an account that Stein narrated about the north section of the Mogao caves when he first saw them:

They [the north section] are cut, like all the rest of its shrines, into the almost perpendicular conglomerate cliffs lining the western edge of the wide sandy bed... The multitude of dark cavities, mostly small, belonging to this northernmost group of shrines honeycomb the somber rock-faces in irregular tiers up to a level of about 50 to 60 feet above the bed.

Stein 1921:792

Most of these cave-faces have suffered major damage from natural phenomenon, such as the erosive action of the wind and the slow undercutting of the stream.

The south section has 492 caves ranged over a length of approximately 1,000 meters and a height of some 40 to 50 meters. In the classification of the Mogao caves into northern and southern sections, which is used by many scholars today, caves 461, 462, 463, 464, and 465, are included in the north section. However, an earlier work, the *Dunhuang wenwu yanjiusuo*²⁵ (now Dunhuang Academy) grouped them with the south section

²⁵ See *Dunhuang wenwu yanjiusuo* (The Dunhuang Memorial Academy) a compilation of the *Dunhuang Mogaoku neiron zonglu* (The Complete Contents of the Mogao Caves at Dunhuang) published in 1982. The Dunhuang Memorial Academy has spent much

because of the mural paintings and sculptures they contained. I follow the logic of the *Dunhuang wenwu yanjiusuo* and include those five caves as part of the south section. Taken together, the 492 southern caves contain approximately 45,000 square meters of mural paintings and over 3,000 painted sculptures. The south caves include meditation caves, preaching caves, worshipping caves, and one burial cave, number 17, which was constructed for a Buddhist official named Hung Bian (Li 1998:8). For purposes of the present analysis, the Mogao caves will be considered *in toto* because it is the total existence of the caves, and not their spatial distribution, which is significant.

The Mogao caves are considered to have been a religious place where people of many societal ranks carried out esoteric and exoteric religious practices. These people included emperors, dynastic officials and their families and dependents, Buddhist officials, as well as foreign and local monks and nuns, merchants, soldiers and their family members, masons, artisans, carpenters, artists, Buddhist laymen, and laywomen; and non-Buddhist men and women. They came from all parts of China, and from other countries, to demonstrate their patronage, to make merit for themselves or their dead relatives, to pray for the peace and prosperity of their lands and kingdoms, and to make offerings and devotions in the hope that they could travel in safety.

B. The Chronology of Jataka tales in Time Sequences

Like the chronologies of any country, many Dunhuangological historians have been so struck by the time sequences and time frames of the Mogao caves that they have

manpower and time to identify the periodizations of the Mogao Caves. All my datings and chronological identifications in the present document are based on this publication.

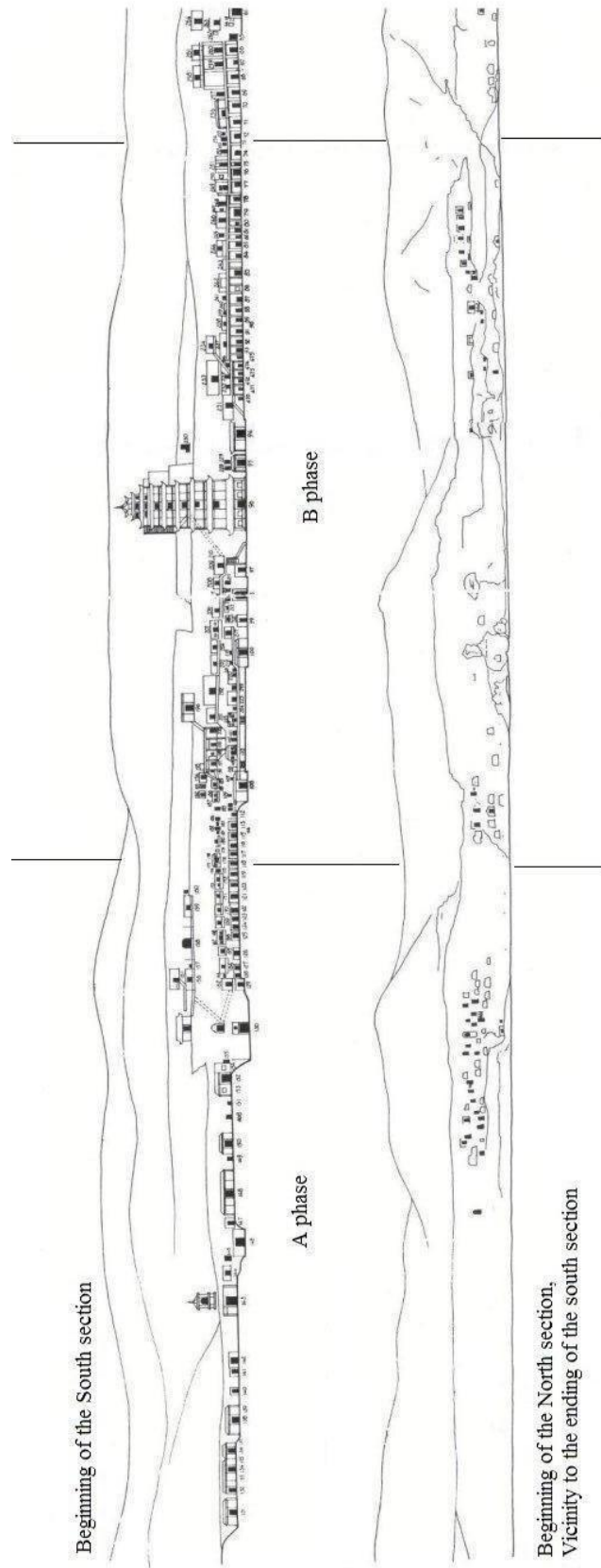


Figure 4.2 (read from left to right: north is towards the right). I also divide the entire cave complex into four phases that will help readers to identify where these Jataka caves are located on the cliff escarpment. Also, these A, B, C, and D phases will help readers find easily the location of each Jataka cave when, later, I show a sketch of some caves on cliff faces.

Top: southern half of the south section.

Bottom: southern half of the north section, beginning immediately adjacent to the northern end of the south section which is at the top right of Figure 4.2 (continued).

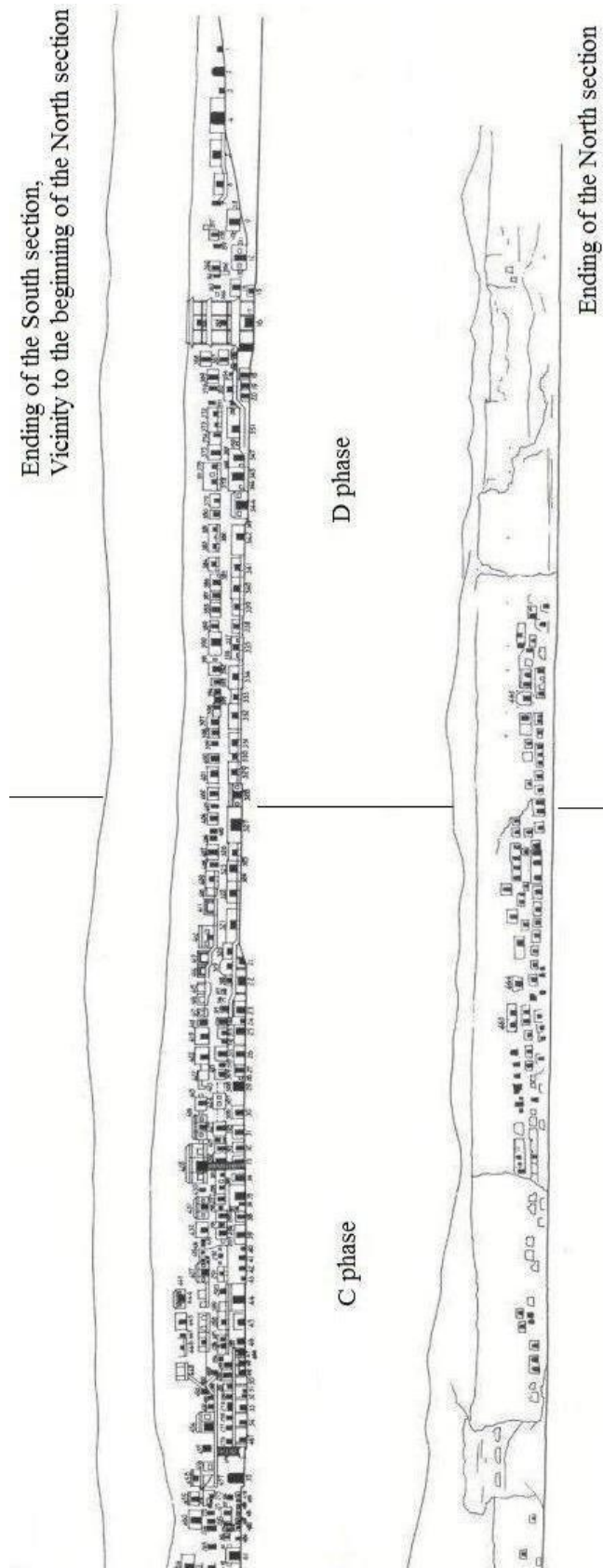


Figure 4.2 (continued) (read from left to right; north is toward the right)

Top: the northern end of the south section. The right top section is adjacent to the southern end of the north section which is the bottom left of Figure 4.2.

Bottom: the northern end of the north section. Source: Dictionary of Dunhuangology 1989: following page 1027.

researched diligently to identify them. In trying to find exact dates for these caves in the available literary and archaeological data, I found many source books on the Mogao Caves (Chen 2000 (1926) Yin 2000; Shih 1996; Xie 1996 (1957); Duan 1994; Chien 1994; Chang 1985; Dunhuang Wenwu Yanjiusuo ed. 1982; and Pelliot 1993 (1981-1992)). They have been extremely helpful in determining the chronology of the four-hundred-and-ninety-two Mogao caves (see Appendix H Periodization of the Mogao Caves). This section is an attempt to show all caves which have pictured Jataka tales.

First, in researching these volumes, documentaries, and captions, I carefully sought to discover which tales are depicted in which cave. The Dunhuang Academy diachronic periodization analysis of the Mogao caves made it possible for me to order this formidable complex of periods and problems. Other periodical articles were important sources for determining the historic periods of the caves (Li 1998:8-10; Fan, Ma, and Guan 1982:365-83).

Secondly, my account places caves with Jataka tales at the center, but I consider that the Buddha in his previous lives was the central actor portrayed in these caves, rather than his disciples. Within the framework of this reliable data, I began to search for depictions of Jataka tales in the caves. For my analysis I obtained a complete sample of forty-seven caves that ranged from the Northern Liang Dynasty (421-439 A.D.) to the Song Dynasty (960-1035 A.D.). For purposes of description, I will discuss the development of the cave architecture in the following order: first, an idealized cave model is needed here to show all four basic architectures, which consist of an ante-room, a corridor, and a main room. Second, the period of the Jataka tale caves' construction may be divided into eight dynasties. Third, the four fundamental features of Buddhist

architecture may be catalogued as consisting of: 1). *chaityas*, halls with an inner central-stupa, or central-pagoda-pillar for worship; 2). *viharas*, meditation halls with surrounding cells for sole or assembled monks to meditate; 3). caisson ceiling caves, halls with a caisson ceiling and a niche on the end of the west wall for worship; and 4). *parinirvana*, a hall meaning the passing away of the Buddha cave, with an inner altar for worship (Dunhuang wenwu yanjiusuo 1957-59:195-207 in Vol. II).

1. An Idealized Cave Model

All four architectural features, it will be understood, cannot be observed from the exterior because the caves were cut inside the cliff. Therefore, all architectural features must be viewed from the interior spaces used for Buddhist religious purposes. Figure 4.3 shows an East-West cross-sectional view of an idealized cave model. It covers the basic three structures—ante-room, corridor, and main room—in any particular cave in the Mogao complex. The ante-room leads into a narrow corridor and this leads to a much larger, main room, a space for daily religious activities. I will begin by describing the three areas of a cave: an ante-room, a corridor, and a main room.

The ante-room is the front yard of a cave (Figure 4.4 shows an ante-room of Cave 231). Known in Chinese as “kuchang” (Ma 2003:55), it means “the opening house [cave] without four walls” (Chang 1966:4823). If this concept is applied to the Mogao cave, the ante-room only has three walls, the west, the south, and the north wall, but no east wall. The west wall of the cave opening is separated from the main room.

The corridor is a door or a hallway entrance to the main room (Figure 4.5. A view of the narrow corridor). Ma (2003:59), a philologist in Dunhungology, has pointed out

that because the ante-room has no door, only a corridor connects the ante-room and the main-room; therefore, the corridor has another name—door.

The main room contains four walls—east, west, south, and north—and a ceiling created for the practice of monks’ nuns’, and lay peoples’ daily religious routines (Figure 4.6 shows the main room of Cave 275). Sometimes, the main room has a niche at the end of the west wall, an inner central-stupa, an inner altar for worship, and with surrounding cells on both sides of the south and north wall for sole or assembled monks’ meditation.

2. Chronology of Constructions

As mentioned earlier, the chronology of construction is available from the various sources of archaeological data, like the list of cave openings in different dynasties in Appendix I. About 2 percent of the forty-seven Jataka caves are viharas; about 17 percent are chaityas; about 61 percent have caisson ceilings with an inner niche; about 17 percent have caisson ceilings with an altar; and about 2 percent are parinirvana caves.

The detailed measurements of these Jataka tale caves in the Northern Dynasties and the Sui Dynasty are shown in Appendix J while the later periods, the caves of the Tang, the Five Dynasties, and the Song Dynasty are shown in Appendix K. The following Mogao caves that contain Jataka tales can be divided into eight different dynasties:

1. Cave 275 was constructed during the Northern Liang Dynasty and has seven openings. Its shape is *Vihara*, a small meditation cave, with a small main hall for solitary monks to meditate. Buddhists called it “chanku.”

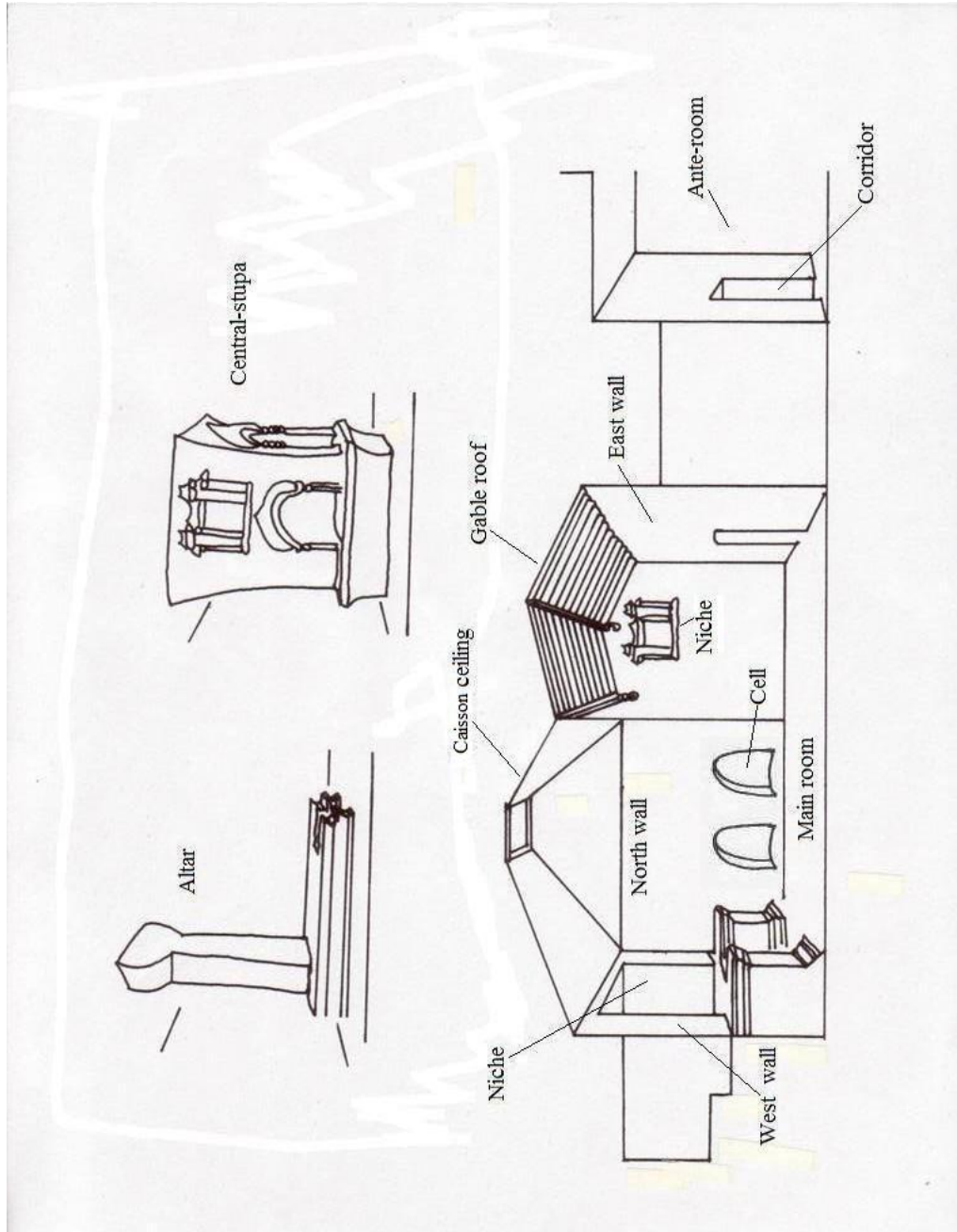


Figure 4.3. An East-West cross-sectional view of an idealized cave model that includes all four architectural features---chaitya, vihara, caisson ceiling, pariniravana. An inner altar, a niche, cells or central-stupa may be placed in the main room.

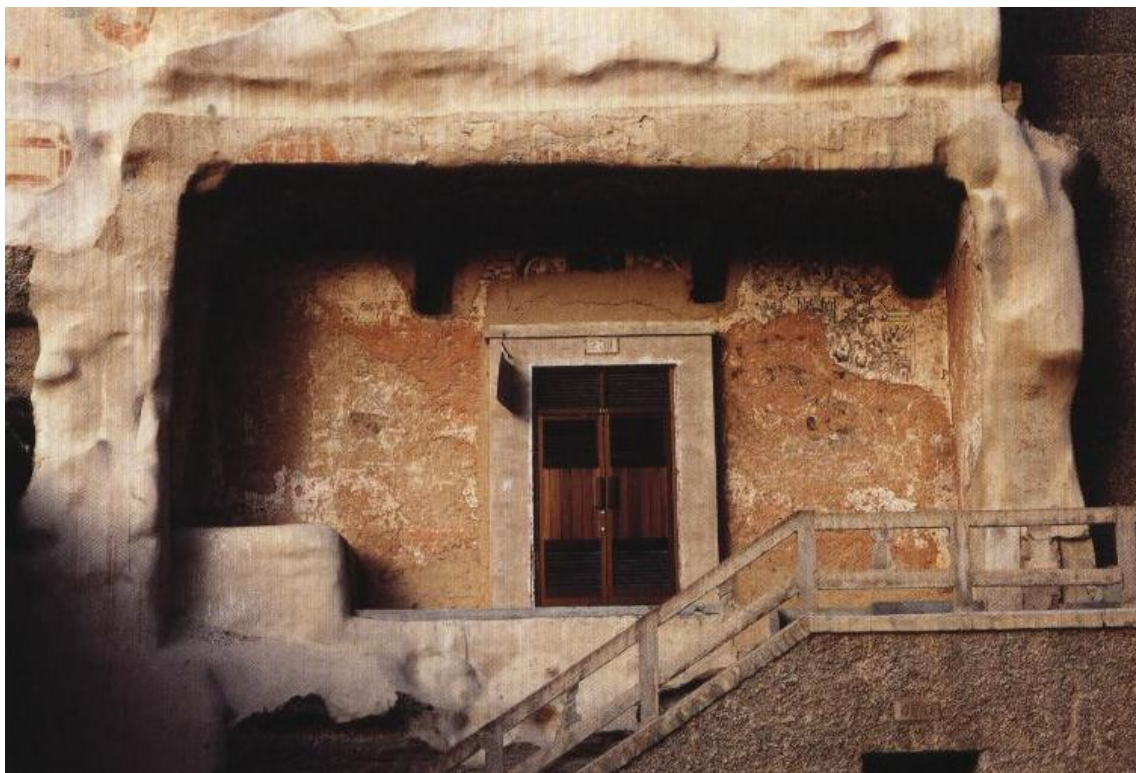


Figure 4.4. The kuchang of Cave 231 which is on the second level. A staircase is connected to the ground; and a door has been built by the Dunhuang Academy to keep sand from sandstorms from blocking the entrance today. Under the eave, the remains of a narrow footway planked over an ante-room. The ante-room here is partially destroyed.

Photo: Sun and Sun 2003:162.



Figure 4.5. Cave 384 has a narrow corridor to enter the main room. Two lions are seated near the west wall of the ante-room and face one another. Two figures on the west wall are Buddhist guardians with aureoles. Also, two standing Bodhisattvas are by the side of the corridor. From the narrow corridor a Buddhist triangle (a Buddha, two attendants, his two disciples) is housed in the niche of the main room. The figures are the Buddha and his two disciples. Photo: Sun and Sun 2003:119.



Figure 4.6. The main room of Cave 275. The seated figure with crossed ankles is the Bodhisattva Maitreya who wears a jeweled crown with an aureola and a triangular nimbus. On the upper level of the south and north walls there are six small niches, each with a bodhisattva. The ceiling has been partially destroyed. Two standing lions are on either side of the Maitreya. Photo: Sun and Sun 2003:66.

2. Both Cave 254 and Cave 257 were constructed in the Northern Wei Dynasty when ten caves were opened. Both caves are chaityas, central-stupas or central-pagoda-pillars with four facing niches on the east, west, south, and north.

3. During the Western Wei Dynasty (535-556 A. D.), eleven caves were opened, but only Cave 285 contained Jataka tales. It is a large meditation cave with a caisson ceiling and eight cells on each side of the south and north walls for assembled monks' meditation.

4. In the Northern Zhou Dynasty (557-580 A.D.) sixteen caves were opened. Six of them, 294, 296, 299, 301, 428, and 461, contained Jataka tales. Caves 294, 296, 299, and 301 are caisson ceiling caves with a niche at the end of the west wall. Cave 428 is a chaitya. Cave 461 is a caisson ceiling without an inner niche.

5. During the Sui Dynasty (581-618 A.D), about ninety-four caves were cut out at Mogao within the short span of about 37 years. The five Caves, 302, 417, 419, 423, and 427, that contained Jataka tales were built in the Sui Dynasty. They are chaityas with a gable roof in front.

6. The Tang Dynasty may be divided into three periods: the High, Mid, and Later. During the High Tang (705-780 A.D.), ninety-seven caves were opened, two were decorated with Jataka tales. Cave 31 is a caisson ceiling cave with a niche at the end of the west wall. Cave 148 is a Parinirvana cave with a dome ceiling.

During the Mid Tang period (781-847 A.D.), fifty-five caves were erected, but only nine caves, 112, 154, 200, 231, 236, 237, 238, 258, and 449, contained Jataka tales. They are caisson ceiling caves with inner niches in the west wall. Some caves have a

single caisson ceiling, such as Caves 112, 154, 200, 236, 238, and 449 while Caves 231, 237, and 258 have double caisson ceilings.

In the Later Tang period (848-906 A.D.), seventy-one caves were opened, but only ten caves, 9, 12, 19, 85, 138, 141, 144, 145, 147, and 156, contained stories of the previous lives of the Buddha. They are caisson ceiling caves with inner niches in the west wall. Caves 9 and 12 have double caisson ceilings and Caves 19, 141, 144, 145, 147, and 156 have single caisson ceilings. Caves 85 and 138 have inner altars.

7. During the Five Dynasties (907-959 A.D) twenty-six caves were created. There were nine caves, 4, 5, 61, 72, 98, 100, 108, 146, and 390 that told five stories of the Buddha. They are caisson ceiling caves. Some caves—4, 5, 61, 72, 98, and 108—had inner altars while other caves—5, 72, 100, and 390—had inner niches on the west wall.

8. In the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1035 A.D.), fifteen caves were constructed but only two caves, 55 and 454, contained scenes of the Jataka tales. They are caisson ceiling caves with inner altars.

3. Four Architectural Features

As mentioned above, throughout their history, architectural differences developed between the earlier and later forms of Buddhist art. During the early Northern dynasties, most caves were viharas and chaityas. In the later periods, caisson ceiling caves became dominant and replaced the earlier forms. The Jataka tale caves can be described as chaitya, vihara, caisson ceiling, or parinirvana.

A *chaitya* cave is one form of Buddhist architecture in China. In India it indicated “a temple containing a *Chaitya*” and never has “cells for residence in [its] side walls”

(Fergusson 1988:174). At the Mogao caves Chaitya is an inner central-stupa, or central-pagoda-pillar and built in a main room for worship. For example, Cave 254 has this architectural feature (see Figure 4.7; Figure 4.8a shows a floor plan; Figure 4.8b is a cross-sectional view; and Figure 4.8c shows a sketch of Cave 254 on the cliff face. These figures have been redrawn from the original in Shih (1996) and the Dictionary of Dunhuangology (1998)). The central-stupa is directly connected to the ground and the flat ceiling, has the shape of a square, and lies halfway into the cave. There is a commodious space in front of the stupa. On either side of or at the back of the stupa there is a corridor. The function of the central-stupa is for monks, nuns, and laypeople to circumambulate the stupa clockwise. It also serves as a lecture hall for monks and nuns who preach the Dharma to laypeople and visitors.

Vihara is “for the accommodation of Buddhist Bhikshus, or mendicant monks living together in communities” in India (Fergusson 1988:175). On the other hand, *vihara*, a meditation cave in China, serves single or assembled monks and nuns for meditation. For example, Cave 285, built in the Western Wei, is a meditation cave with a caisson ceiling and with four surrounding cells on either side of the south and north walls (see Figure 4.9). In the center there is a square platform which was circumambulated clockwise by monks, nuns, and laypeople. Moreover, the room served as a lecture hall for monks or nuns who preached the Dharma to laypeople, and it offered a meditation venue to monks and nuns. (Figure 4.10a shows a floor plan; Figure 4.10b is a cross-sectional view; and Figure 4.10c shows a sketch of Cave 285 on the cliff face, the Western Wei).

Caisson ceiling caves usually have an inner niche on the west wall (see Figure 4. 11). Some caves have a single caisson ceiling as in the Sui and Mid Tang Dynasties while others have double caisson ceilings as in the Mid and Later Tang, and the Five Dynasties. When the caisson ceiling cave developed, the commodious space for monks, nuns, and laypeople to pray to the Buddha and bodhisattvas also served as a lecture hall for monks or nuns to preach the Dharma to laypeople visiting the caves (Figure 4. 12a shows a floor plan; Figure 4.12b is a cross-sectional view; and Figure 4.12c shows a sketch of Cave 296 on the cliff face, the Northern Zhou). In addition, during the Later Tang Dynasty, the Five Dynasties, and the Song Dynasties, an inner altar replaced the inner niche in the main room in some caves at the Mogao caves (Figure 4.13 shows an inner altar of Cave 61, the Five Dynasties; Figure 4. 14a shows a floor plan; Figure 4.14b is a cross-sectional view; and Figure 4.14c shows a sketch of Cave 61 on the cliff face).

Parinirvana cave is a hall with an inner altar along the west wall and with a dome ceiling. It represents the Sakyamuni Buddha reclining on a long altar and entering nirvana (see Figure 4.15). The function of the Parinirvana caves preserves the memory of the great nirvana of the Buddha. It, too, serves as a lecture hall for preaching the Dharma and for worship and offers a venue for meditation for monks and nuns. An example of this architectural type is Cave 148 (Figure 4. 16a shows a floor plan; Figure 4.16b is a cross-sectional view; and Figure 4.16c shows a sketch of Cave 148 on the cliff face, the High Tang).



Figure 4.7. One of the earliest central-stupas which has four niches on every face of the square column, Cave 254, the Northern Wei. The gable roof is part of the front ceiling in this cave. The central Buddha, with broken hands and foot, sits in a shallow alcove. On the left, the south wall, the middle level depicts a preaching scene of the Buddha who defeats the assault of Mara before achieving enlightenment. Three niches contain painted sculptures. The one in the middle, in a meditating position, is badly defaced. Photo: Sun and Sun 2003:54.

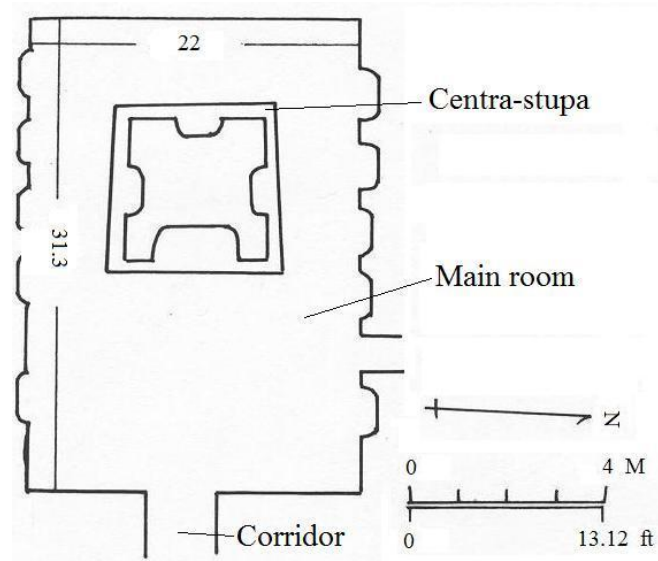


Figure 4.8a. A floor plan of Cave 254, the Northern Wei. Source: Shih 1996:163.

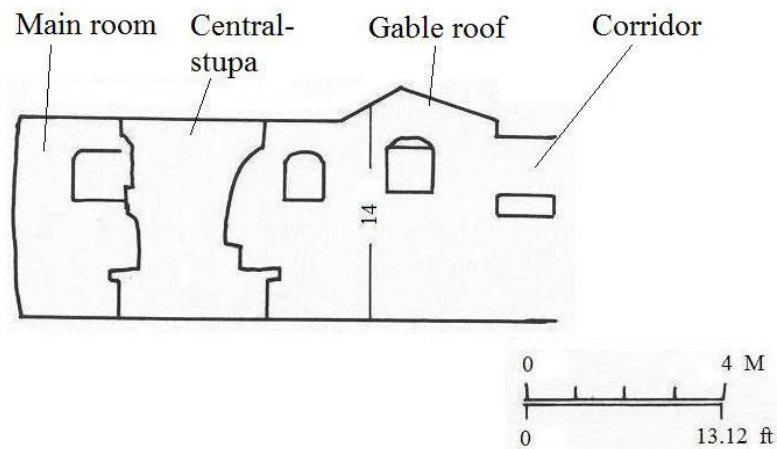


Figure 4.8b. An East-West cross-sectional view of Cave 254, the Northern Wei. Source: Shih 1996:163.

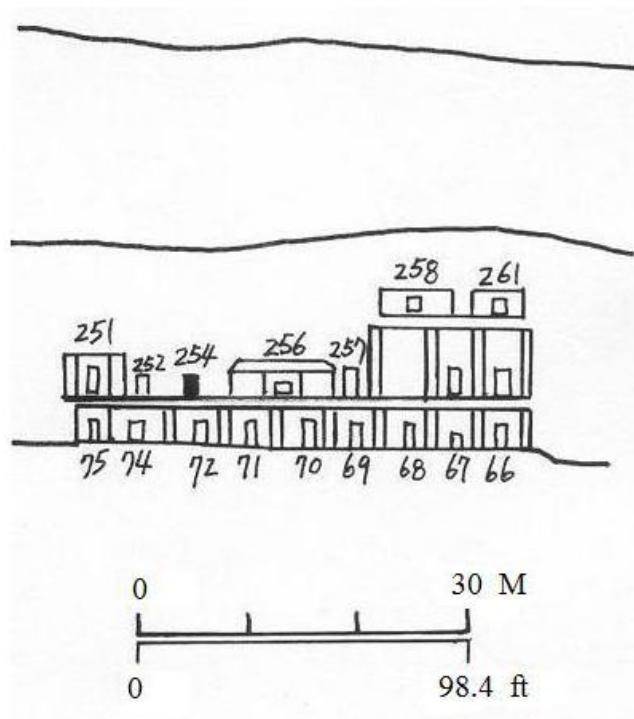


Figure 4.8c. A sketch of Cave 254 on the cliff face. The small black square is the door of Cave 254. The horizontal lines represent elevations. During the Northern Wei Dynasty, Cave 254 was erected on the second level of the B phase of the south section. Source: Sun 1998: single foldout sheet following page 1027.



Figure 4.9. A view of the northwest corner of the main room with a caisson in Cave 285, the Western Wei. Three niches were cut in the west wall—a statue of the Buddha dominates the big niche in the center while two meditating monks are seated in two small niches on either side. A square platform lies in the central cave without any painting or statues. On the south wall at left there are four small meditation rooms for monks and nuns to practice their meditation. The four slopes of the ceiling are painted with Chinese deity tales, including Fuxi and Nuwa, the father and mother of the cosmos, the Thunder god, the Lightning god, the Wind god, the Rain god, and others. Photo from Sun and Sun 2003:47.

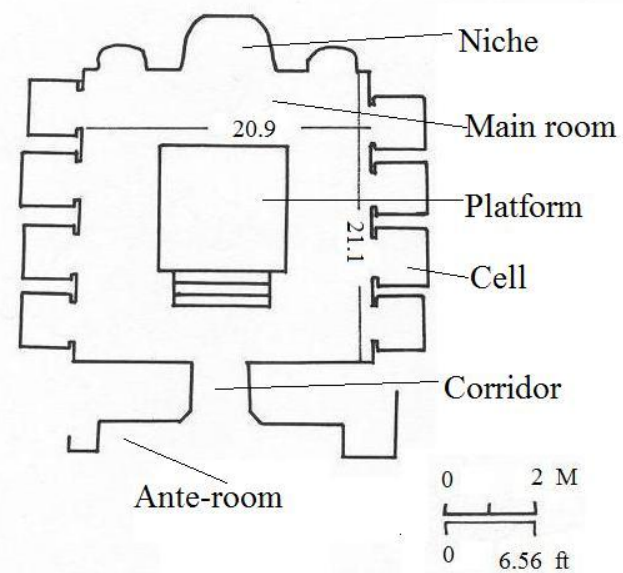


Figure 4.10a. A floor plan of Cave 285, the Western Wei. Source: Shih 1996:71.

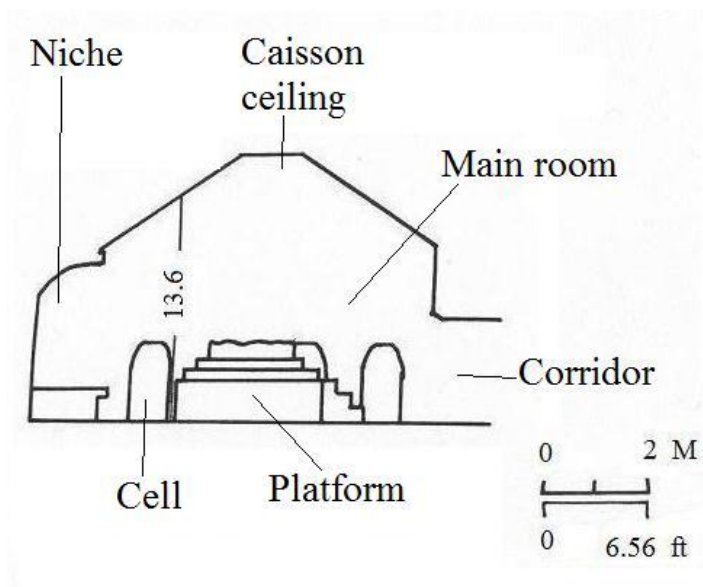


Figure 4.10b. An East-West cross-sectional view of Cave 285. Source: Shih 1996:71.

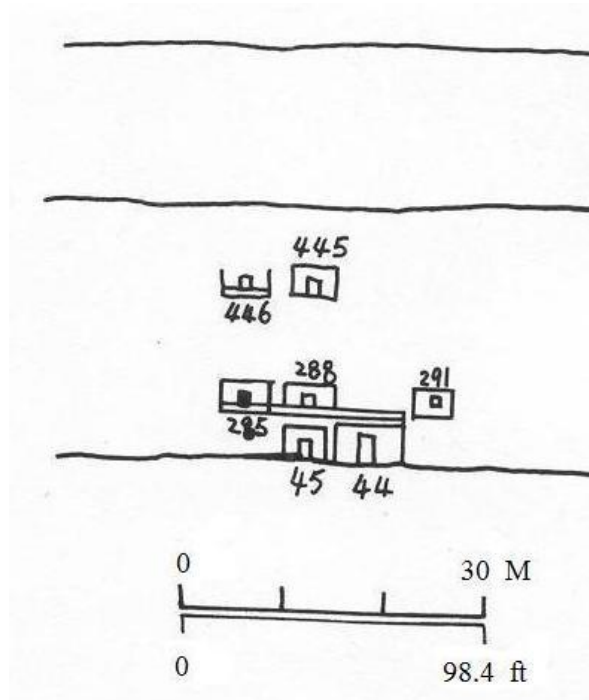


Figure 4.10c. A sketch of Cave 285 on the cliff face. The small black square is the door of Cave 285. The horizontal lines represent elevations. During the Western Wei Dynasty, Cave 285 was built on the second level of the C phase of the south section. Source: Sun 1998: single foldout sheet following page 1027.



Figure 4.11. Cave 296, a caisson ceiling cave, has an inner niche on the west wall, the Northern Zhou. A seated Buddha is at the center and is flanked by his two standing disciples in the niche who are facing each other and two standing bodhisattva on the outside of the niche who are facing east. Both the south and north walls are adorned with images of a thousand Buddhas. Below the north wall is the Jataka tale of Prince Sujata. Photo: Li 2000:127.

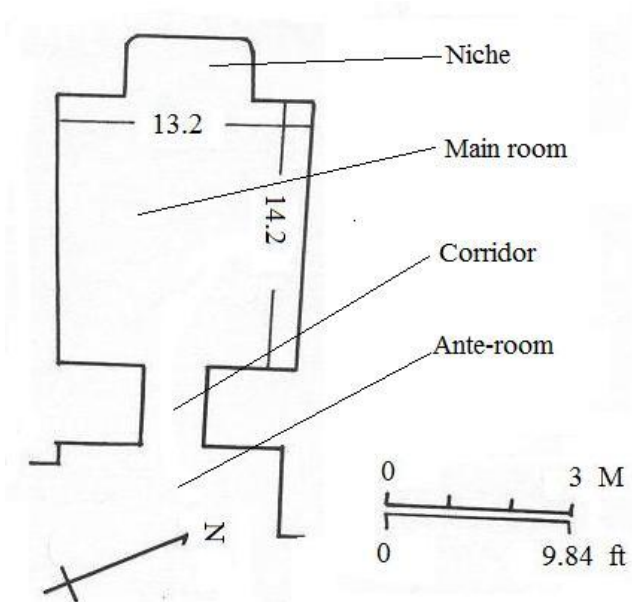


Figure 4.12a. A floor plan of Cave 296, the Northern Zhou, Source: Shih 1996:74.

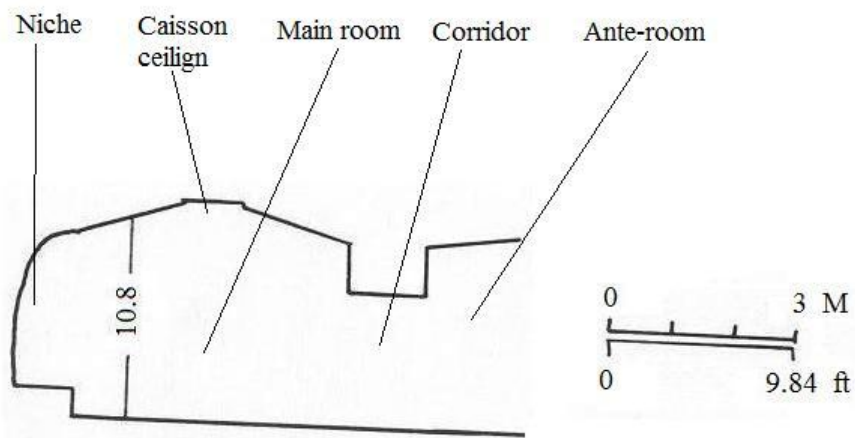


Figure 4.12b. An East-West cross-sectional view of Cave 296. Source: Shih 1996:74.

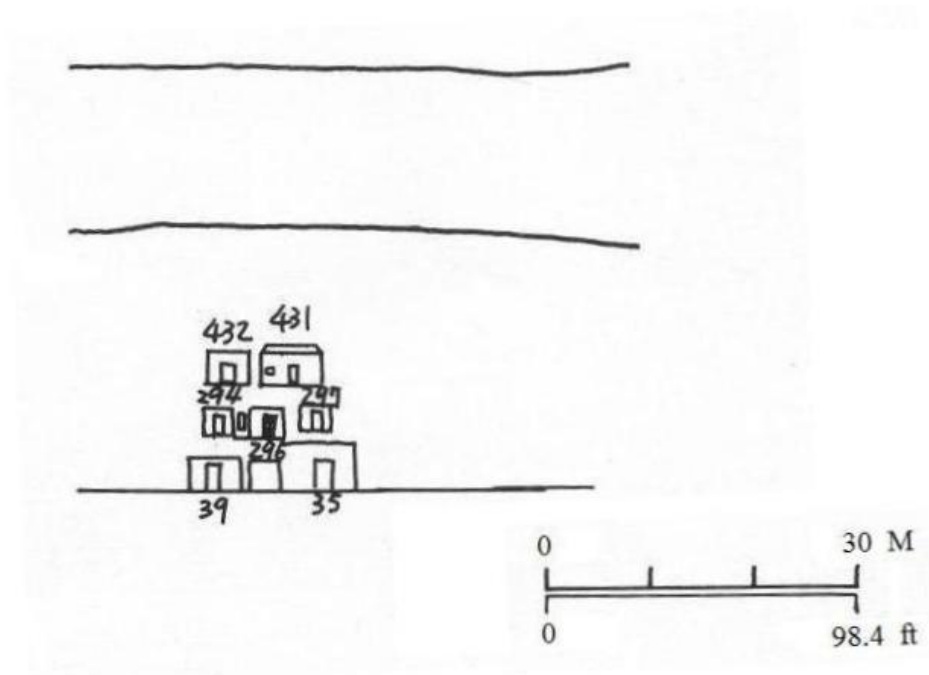


Figure 4.12c. A sketch of Cave 296 on the cliff face. The small black square is the door of Cave 296. The horizontal lines represent elevations. During the Northern Zhou Dynasty, Cave 296 was built on the second level of the C phase of the south section. Source: Sun 1998: single foldout sheet following page 1027.



Figure 4.13 shows an altar niche in the main room of Cave 61. To the left of the image, a wall of the altar reaches to the ceiling with a standing Buddha on the back. To the right, the four slopes of the ceiling are adorned with the Thousand-Buddha motif that represents the Buddha-nature of the universe. Photo: Sun and Sun 2003:134-135.

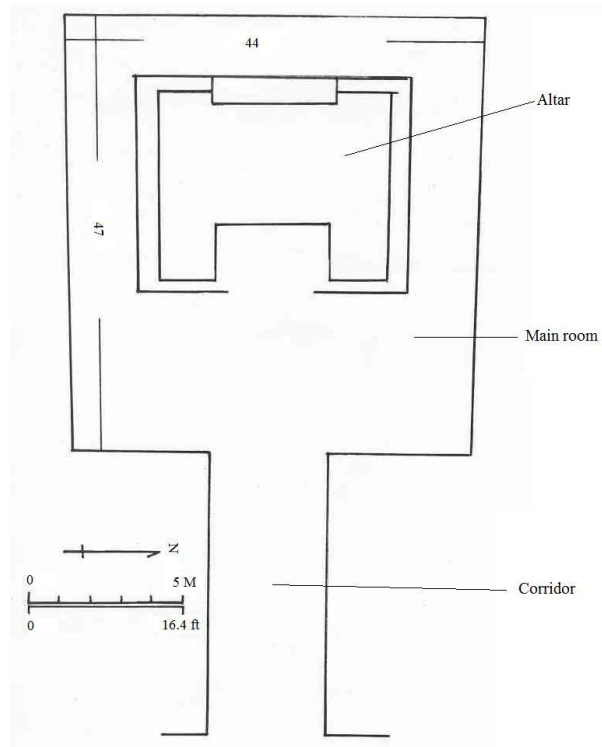


Figure 4.14a. A floor plan of Cave 61, the Five Dynasties. Source: Shih 1996:114.

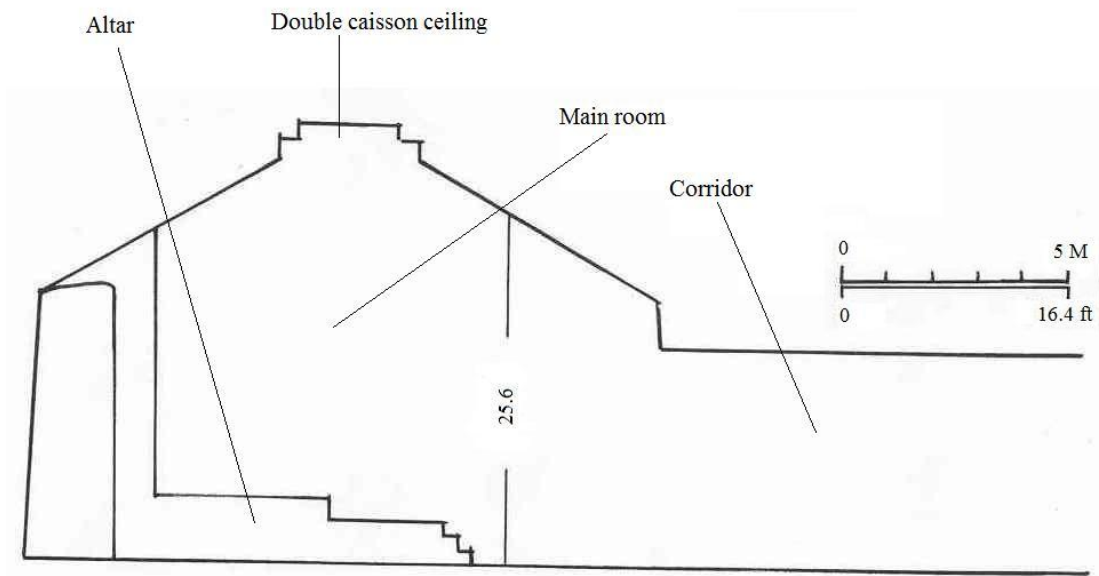


Figure 4.14b. An East-West cross-sectional view of Cave 61. Source: Shih 1996:114.

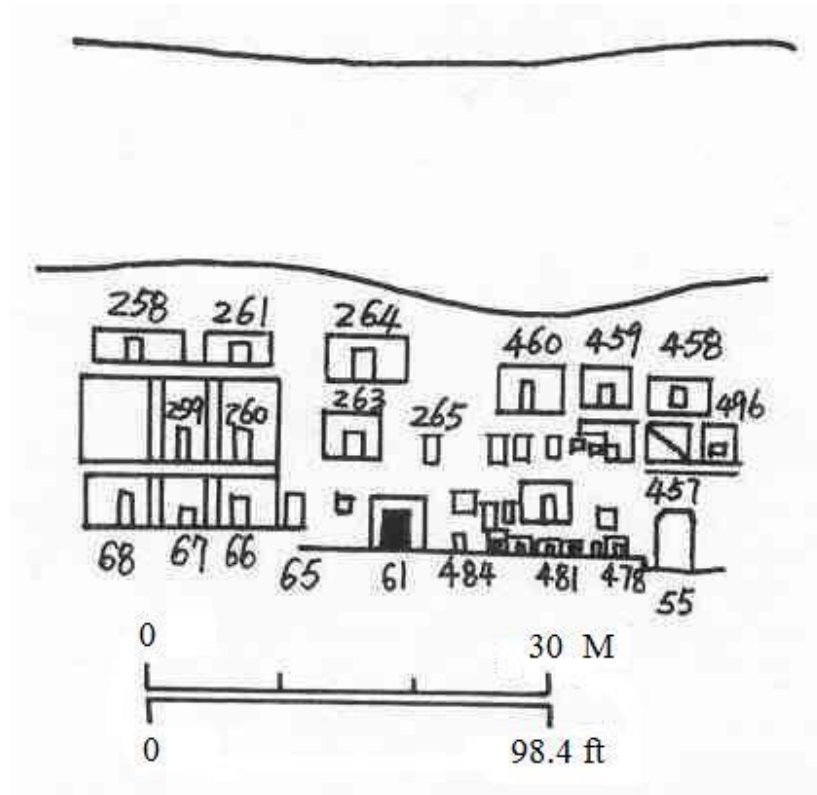


Figure 4. 14c. A sketch of Cave 61 on the cliff face. The small black square is the door of Cave 61. The horizontal lines represent elevations. During the Five Dynasties, Cave 61 was erected on the ground level of the C phase of the south section. Source: Sun 1998: single foldout sheet following page 1027.



Figure 4.15. A *parinirvana* Buddha. It is 46 feet 2 inches in length and lies on an altar of the west wall of Cave 148. The dome ceiling is filled with painted images of the Buddhas. Many sorrowful disciples stand behind the *nirvana* Buddha in different positions. The north wall also has a niche which enshrines a seated Buddha on a lotus throne. Photo: Sun and Sun 2003:130

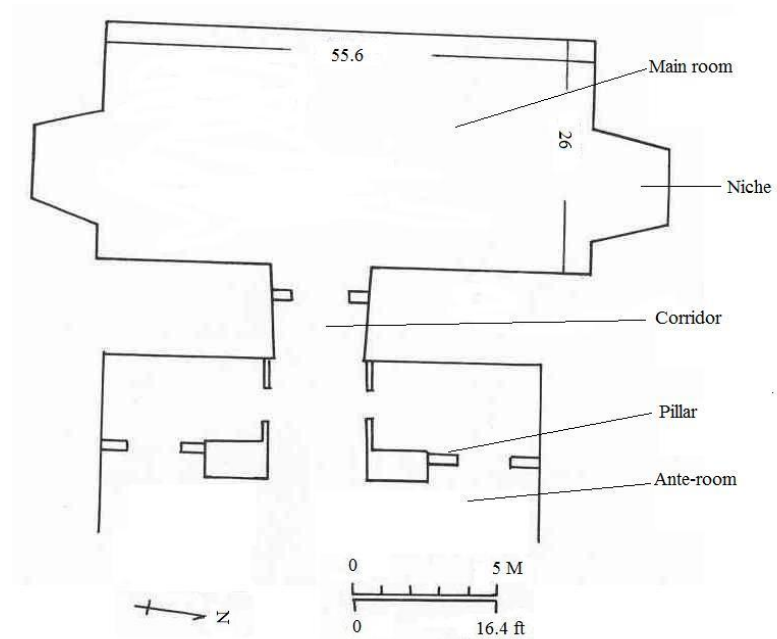


Figure 4.16a. A floor plan of Cave 148. Source: Shih 1996: 30-31.

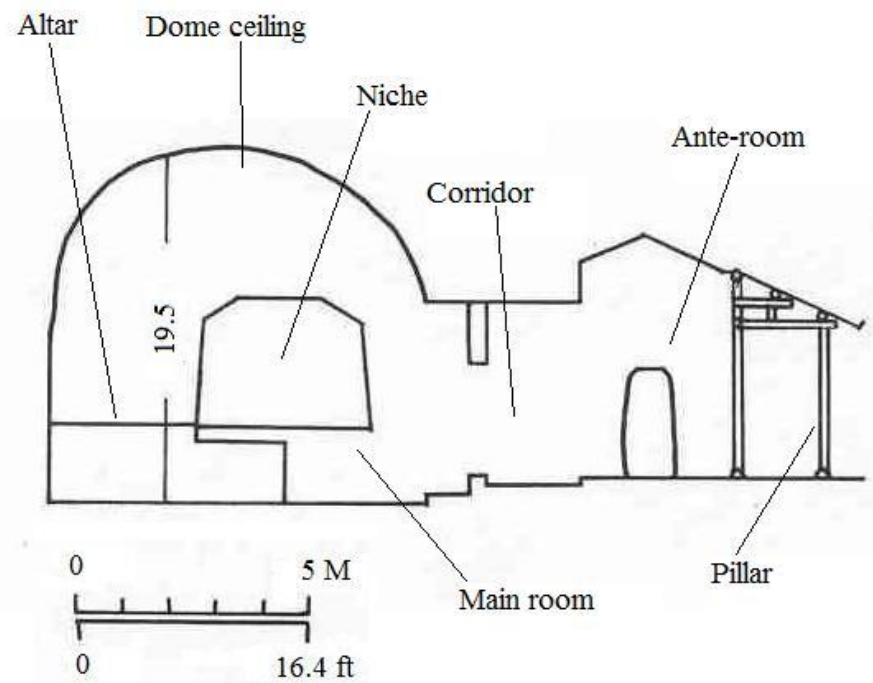


Figure 4.16b. An East-West cross-sectional view of Cave 148. Source: Shih 1996:30-31.

Drawing by author.

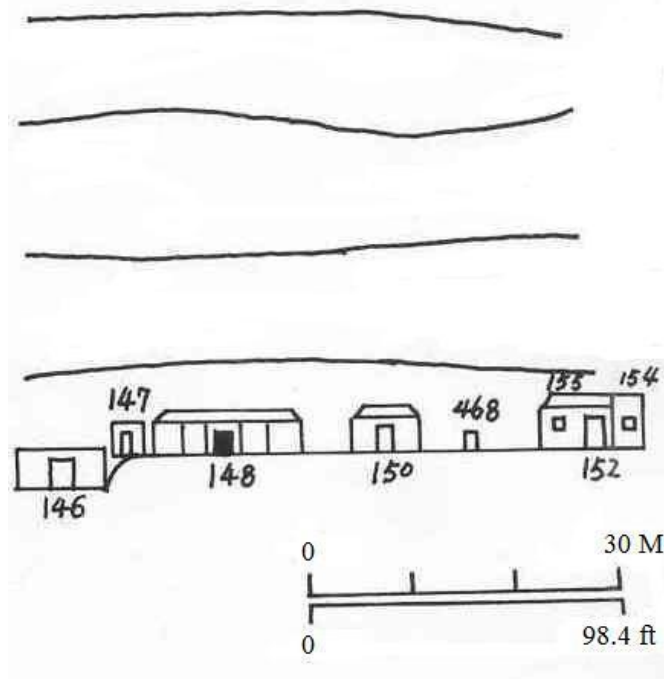


Figure 4.16c. A sketch of Cave 148 on the cliff face. The small black square is the door of Cave 148. The horizontal lines represent elevations. During the High Tang Dynasty, Cave 148 was built on the ground level of the A phase of the south section. Source: Sun 1998: single foldout sheet following page 1027.

In summary, the Mogao caves became an important place of pilgrimage for Buddhists, travelers, missionaries, and pilgrims after two wandering monks opened the first two caves on a conglomerate scarp in 366 A.D. They had a vision of a thousand Buddhas on the cliff faces across the valley. Throughout several dynasties, caves have been cut into the east face and are ranged in irregular rows. As already shown in the sketches of the Jataka caves on the cliff escarpment, the earliest dynasties created their caves on the second level of the central group while later dynasties cut their caves some

distance from the central group at either ground level or on the third and fourth levels at the two extremities of the south section of cliff.

On the whole, the Jataka tale caves can be catalogued into four architectural forms: *viharas*, *chaityas*, caisson ceilings, and pirinirvana caves, which consist of three basic structures—an ante-room, a corridor, and a main room. Throughout the evolution of construction, in the early period, the architectural types were usually viharas, meditation caves and chaityas, central-stupas of small to medium size. During the Sui period, caisson ceiling caves gradually appeared with a single caisson ceiling of small size. Also, an inner niche gradually replaced the central-stupa at the end of the west wall. Much later in the High, Mid, and Later Tang Dynasties, the Five Dynasties and the Song Dynasty, the single and double caisson ceiling caves with an inner niche become dominant architectural forms. Finally, during the latter period of the Later Tang Dynasty, the Five Dynasties, and the Song Dynasty, some caisson ceiling caves of medium and large size had an inner altar in the main room.

CHAPTER FIVE

BUDDHISM AND IMPERIAL PATRONAGE AND PERSECUTION

Buddhism was founded by Gautama Siddhartha, who was born in the Kapilavestu kingdom of northern India, a city in present-day Nepal, in the sixth century B.C. (563-483). His father, Suddhodana, was a good ruler and took care of his kingdom; his mother, Mayadevi, gave birth to a baby prince, Siddhartha, at the Lumbini Grove, and died seven days later. Mahaprajapati, who was the Siddhartha's maternal aunt, nursed him and raised him just as lovingly as his own mother would have. At the age of sixteen, the young prince married Yasodhara, who was a daughter of king Suppabuddha II of the neighboring Koliya clan. At the age of twenty-nine, he had a son, Rahula, after which he left the palace, entered homelessness, and for six years practiced the life of an ascetic in the forest. Later, he gave up the ascetic life because he thought it could not help him attain his goal—spiritual liberation, enlightenment—the means to release the endless circle of rebirths. He turned to meditation. At the age of thirty-five, he achieved complete *bodhi*, enlightenment. After the attainment of Buddhahood, he spent forty-five years moving from place to place to spread his teachings and gathering a great number of monastic and lay followers around him. Finally, at the age of eighty the Buddha entered nirvana in Kusinara. In Buddhist literature, the Buddha was designated as Sakyamuni, the sage of the Sakya clan, but sometimes he is known as the Gautama Buddha because he was a member of that clan.

After entering nirvana, the teachings of the Buddha still remained with his monastic disciples in northwest and northeast India. Due to King Asoka, who was

converted to Buddhism during his reign from 274 to 236 B.C., Buddhism expanded southward to Ceylon and northwestward to the Gandhara and Kashmir regions, northern Pakistan and eastern Afghanistan. From the northwest boundaries, Buddhism travelled to Central Asia and then to East Asia, China, Korea, and Japan.

Although Buddhist missionaries had burst out from India after the third century B.C., they did not reach China until 67 A.D. during the Eastern Han Dynasty (25 B.C.-220 A.D.). Both the mountains and deserts barred its spread, but since then, Buddhism has greatly affected Chinese culture. When Buddhism was a new religion and appeared in China during the Eastern Han Dynasty, it was confronted by the dominant ideology, Confucianism, and a native religion, Taoism.

In this chapter, I will discuss the wider political significance of the Jataka tale murals, their depictions of the religious beliefs of the dynastic rulers, and their influence on the real lives of individuals and society. Developed from the 4th century to the 12th century, they connect the historical background to the variations and appearance of the subject matter. For many years historians and artists of Dunhuangology ignored the connection of these themes with the changes in the historical background. I connect the chronology of these Jataka-tales caves to the wider political processes and the emergence of Jataka themes that shaped a particular historical context at the Mogao caves. The chronology of the relationship between Buddhism and imperial patronage and persecution will cover four periods: the initial period, which contains the Northern Liang and Wei, Western Wei and Northern Zhou Dynasties; the developed period, which includes only the Sui Dynasty; the mature period, which covers the High, Mid and Later

Tang Dynasties; the declining period, which consists of the Five Dynasties and the Song Dynasty.

A. The Initial Period of the Northern Liang Dynasty (see Appendix L)

The Western Jin Dynasty ended tragically in 316 A.D. The imperial household was exiled to the south where it formed a new dynasty called the Eastern Jin (317-419 A.D.). The north region of China, therefore, was controlled by minorities. From that time, antagonistic political relations between the north and the south took shape. As a consequence, Buddhist diffusion also developed in the two regions: south and north. The former tended to like the inner logical perfection of Buddhist doctrines in which royal households and elites converted to Buddhism while the latter emphasized Buddhist practices and activities—such as meditation, opening caves, carving Buddhist sculptures, and building temples—that royal households, elites and commoners believed would earn them both merits and blessings.

The northern minority ruling elites produced a unique Chinese socio-political milieu for the growing Buddhist culture in the north because they liked Buddhist symbolism and created social functions to suit Chinese tastes more generally. There was a saying, “The present rulers are the present Buddhas.” An example of this is the ruling elite named “Juqumengxun [a king of the Northern Liang] at Liangtu [the area of the Hexi corridor] which was devoted to Buddhist charities” (Shen 1927:202b). “This elite placed many Buddhist statues in this cliff [the Mogao caves]. These clay images were kaleidoscopic which made people amazed and dizzy” (Shen 1927:202b).

Juqumengxun respected an eminent monk, Xuangao, who specialized in meditation and precepts and later went to the Maiji Shan to practice meditation with one hundred of his followers (Huijiao 1927:397a). This was a trend that developed in the Northern Liang monastic mainstream during which many prominent monks, with their disciples, went to remote mountains to practice meditation. As a result, under the impetus provided by the patronage of the rulers, the temples at the Mogao caves were built for meditation.

In this period, the main characters of the Jataka tales, depicted in Cave 275, were the noble kings of India. As a result, the ruling elites in China believed that Buddhism was a foreign religion and the Buddha was a foreign religious leader. In the same way, the minority ruling elites thought that they could control the conduct of the Chinese and should be regarded as a symbolic representation of the living Buddha.

There is another aspect to this situation. During this period, there was turmoil, disunity, and struggle everywhere, and the people moved around to hide themselves from war. The cave owners and artists saw that the people lived miserable lives so they took advantage of events and hoped that the present rulers would learn of the Buddha's or bodhisattva's compassion for the people.

B. The Initial Period of the Northern Wei Dynasty (see Appendix L)

In 386 A.D. the Toba people, who were Turkic speakers, founded the Northern Wei Dynasty. In the following year the Northern Wei unified northern China and adapted Loyang as its capital city (Zhou 1992:135). In 524 A.D., a member of the Northern Wei, Yuan Rong, assumed the governorship in Guazhou because Emperor

Shuzong issued an edict that “all towns be changed into zhou [prefectures]” (Wei 1966:10). As a consequence, Dunhuang town changed its name to Guazhou (the Prefecture of the Gourd) under the authority of the Northern Wei. Later, in the Northern Zhou, Yu yi followed Yuan Rong by becoming the governor of Guazhou. These two governors came from the “heartland” to Guazhou and were devoted to Buddhism. They were enthusiastic about the way Buddhism was prospering. And, due to their political power and the resources of the economy in the Dunhuang area, they were able to open more caves (How 1998:2-3).

At this time of political changes, these governors introduced the painting style and Chinese ideology of southern China which had an impact on how Jataka tale murals were painted in the Mogao caves. During this period, the main character of the Jataka tales, depicted in Cave 254, was King Sibi of India. As stated above, in the Northern Liang, “The present Emperors are the present Buddha.” Another character of the Jataka tales, depicted in Cave 254, was Prince Mahasattva who fed himself to a hungry tigress and showed spiritual fearlessness. The story told of a bodhisattva who sacrificed his flesh to save others and hoped that the rulers of the Northern Wei would sacrifice their greed for power and reduce their conflicts with neighboring dynasties. Like this bodhisattva, they would be more concerned for others’ lives than for their own.

When the Emperor Taiwu of the Northern Wei was crowned in 423 A.D., he was well disposed towards Buddhism. Later, he had deep faith that Taoism would become countrywide because he believed Kou Qianzhi, a Taoist priest, and Cui Hao, a prime minister, who predicted the unification of politics and religion for the Northern Wei.

In 445 A.D. the rebels of Gaiwu were armed against the Northern Wei and attacked Chuangan. When Emperor Taiwu led troops to Chuangan City, a groom of Emperor Taiwu accidentally discovered a large cache of weapons in a temple and reported back to the Emperor. Emperor Taiwu was very angry and ordered his men to search the temple. They found the tools for making wine, personal treasures, and a secret room for royal women having affairs with their lovers in the temple. Because of these circumstances, in 446 A.D. Emperor Taiwu proclaimed that Buddhism must be completely destroyed. Wei stated that “every county buried monks alive and destroyed all Buddhist statues” (Wei 1966:5). This destruction of Buddhism affected the whole of the Northern Wei Dynasty. An imperial decree ordered all Buddhist pagodas and statues destroyed, one by one. All Buddhist sutras were to be burned. This marked the first imperial persecution of Buddhism in China.

Four years later, Cui Hao and his clansmen were killed because he compiled a history of the Northern Wei which portrayed in more detail the background of the Northern Wei’s ancestors (Wei 1966:6; Yu 1984:137), which is a political subtext. After Cui Hao was killed, the Emperor Taiwu, who died in 452 A.D., felt rather disturbed at the destruction of Buddhism, but realized that this event was over, and there was no way to reverse it (Guan 1982:80; Yu 1984:188). Common people saw the causal reasoning of Cui Hao at the time; therefore, they accepted the Buddhist concept of cause and effect—karma. Thus, the Nine-colored Deer in the mural painting in Cave 257 of the Mogao caves became the symbol for the concept of working karma and represented cause and effect.

C. The Initial Period of the Western Wei Dynasty (see Appendix L)

In 534 the kingdom of the Northern Wei was divided into two regimes—the Eastern Wei (534-550 A.D.) with its capital at Yeh and the Western Wei (535-557 A.D.) with its capital at Changan; both were of non-Chinese origin. The imperial households of the Western Wei were devoted to Buddhism. Under the patronage of the Western Wei, many caves were opened, thereby sustaining the growth of the Mogao area. One instance out of many is that of Emperor Wen who, in 535 A.D., built a temple named Boruoshi (Wisdom Temple) as a house of refuge for widowers, widows, and sick monks and nuns (Falin 1927:507b).

Yu Wentai, a minister of the Western Wei, built six temples in Changan and recruited one thousand monks (Falin 1927:508a). As stated in the Biography of Bodhiruci, Yu Wenheitai, who highly esteemed Mahayana Buddhism, supported one hundred monks, and discussed sutras and treatises with them. At the same time, Yu commanded monk Tanxian 曇顯 to compile a detailed outline of Buddhist doctrines (Daoxuan 1927:429b). Furthermore, in the thirty-fifth section of the *Zhoushu* (The History of the Northern Zhou) Yu gave orders that Xue Shen 薛慎 and eleven other Confucian scholars must learn Buddhist concepts. As a result, many scholars competed to study Mahayanic Buddhism (Linghu 1996:625). Buddhism was restored and reconstructed not only through acceptance by the imperial households but also by the practices of devoted monks, laypeople, and scholars like Tanxian, Yu Wentai and Xue Shen. Buddhist events and activities became fashionable and promoted rapidly the restoration of Buddhism in every corner of the Western Wei.

During this period of the Western Wei, the main character of the Jataka tales was a Brahman, depicted in Cave 285, who sacrificed himself to learn an enlightened verse. Artists painted the Brahman's story in order to pander to the tastes of the mainstream, just like Confucian scholars catered to the government's tastes. Imperial households and the government sustained Buddhism and that interested the Confucian scholars who studied Buddhism as a fashion in the circle of elites. As stated above, Confucianists learned both Confucianism and Buddhism. Some famous Confucian scholars forsook the world, withdrew from their society, and lived in obscurity as monks who practiced meditation in the mountains. On the one hand, both had to strive for Confucian values; on the other hand they had to embrace Buddhism.

D. The Initial Period of the Northern Zhou Dynasty (see Appendix L)

The Toba Wei remained in power until 534 A.D. Their kingdom was then divided into two states, the Eastern Wei (534-550 A.D.) and the Western Wei (535-557 A.D.), with capitals at Yeh and Chang-an respectively. These in turn were replaced by the Northern Qi (550-577 A.D.), with Yeh as the capital, and by the Northern Zhou (557-581 A.D.), with Chang-an as capital. Both were of non-Chinese origin" (Singhal 1984:57).

The political power of the Northern Zhou (557-581 A.D.) separated from the Western Wei and lasted a brief period—twenty-four years—until Emperor Wen (Yang Jian), finally unified the country in 589 A.D. under the Sui Dynasty. Even though the early imperial households of the Northern Zhou warred against each other, they continued to pursue various Buddhist activities such as carving statues, building temples, recopying

sutras, supporting monasteries, and recruiting new members. Buddhism continued to grow, flourishing because of the imperial household's two meditating masters, Taozhen 道臻 (Daoxuan 1927:631b) and Tanyan 曇延 (Daoxuan 1927:488c), who were appointed as national Sangha officers to manage the monastic communities. Later, during the regime of the third emperor of the Northern Zhou, Emperor Wu, two doctrine masters, Sengshi 僧實 (Daoxuan 1927:558a) and Tanchong 曇崇 (Daoxuan 1927:568a-b), were appointed to be provincial Sangha officers. Both the national Sangha officer and the provincial Sangha officer managed the national and provincial monastic systems and formulated rules for monks and nuns to obey.

Emperor Wu seized power and was crowned in 560 A.D. In 565 he commended Huangfu Xia 皇甫遐 for his diligent spirit and filial piety. According to *Zhoushu* (the History of the Northern Zhou), Linghu Defen (583-666 A.D.) recorded that Huangfu Xia lost his father when he was young, but he took good care of his mother. When his mother died, he built a thatched cottage just south of his mother's grave (Linghu 1996:832).

Emperor Wu of the Northern Zhou carried out the second imperial persecution of Buddhism between 574 and 577 A.D. Earlier, in 567 A.D., Wei Yuanseng, a Taoist priest, submitted a written statement to Emperor Wu prohibiting the building of new temples because he thought that too many Buddhist temples affected the interests of the Northern Zhou Dynasty. This statement proved to be influential later when Emperor Wu wanted to suppress Buddhism (Daoxuan 1927:132b).

From 569 to 570 A.D. the emperor held religious debates five times. However, he could not decide which religion, Confucianism, Buddhism, or Taoism, was the best. After a seventh debate in 573 A.D., he gave priority to Confucianism (Lingfu 1996:83).

The next year, for the first time in the Northern Zhou, Emperor Wu devastatingly suppressed Buddhism and Taoism.

According to the *Biography of the Emperor Wu*, it is written that “First, the Emperor Wu restrained Buddhism and Taoism. Buddhist and Taoist scriptures and images were also to be destroyed. Buddhist and Taoist monks were to return to the laity” (Zhipan 1927:358c; Lingfu 1996:85) because he wanted to make the country rich and build up its military power in order to unify the south and the north. As time went on, a second round of persecution focused on Buddhism only. This was in 577 A.D., after Emperor Wu took over the Northern Qi (Yu 1984:182). This time Emperor Wu destroyed Buddhist scriptures and images in the whole empire of the Northern Qi, and about three million monks and nuns returned to the laity (Zhipan 1927:358c). Following the death of Emperor Wu, in the next year, persecution of Buddhism drew to a close. Thereafter, when Emperor Xuan was crowned in 579 A.D., many Buddhists promoted the restoration of Buddhism.

Buddhism was suppressed by Emperor Wu because he believed doctrines of Confucianism to be fundamentally opposed to Buddhism. He believed that monks, who deviated from their filial obligations by leaving their parents and entering a religious life, could not carry out their ordinary duties, including caring for the sick and aged, and worshiping their ancestors. Therefore, Emperor Wu forced the monks to return home. Everything, according to Emperor Wu, indicated that Buddhism was useless for his country (Daoxuan 1927:153b). Huiyuan (523-592 A.D.) refuted the criticism of Emperor Wu about the behavior of monks and pointed out that “we established our character by the practice of religious actions that glorify our parents. Therefore, we practice the virtue

of filial piety”²⁶ (Daoxuan 1927:153c). Thus, when monks renounced the secular world and awakened to the truth that guided all people to enlightenment, they could truly repay all obligations to their parents and others.

Two examples were quoted by Huiyuan in “the story of Moggallana,” about a Buddhist monk who rescued his mother from the condemnation of a hungry ghost for her unjust life, and “the story of the Buddha,” who carried the coffin of his father to the burial place (Daoxuan 1927:153c). Another story, advocating filial piety, is that of Shanzi, a filial son who spent his entire life helping his blind parents to live reclusive lives in the mountains. This tale appeared in the Sutra of Shanzi (Shengjian 1924:438b-440a). During this period Buddhists determined that filial piety was the central dogma of all Chinese social life. Thereafter, these stories became elements of Buddhist scripture, as well as popular tales depicted at the Mogao caves and other Buddhist caves in China.

These tales thus became a central part of the Buddhist tradition in China. Chen stated that Chinese Buddhism developed three ideas concerning filial piety:

First by pointing out the numerous sutras in the Buddhist scriptures which stress filial piety; second by forging a body of apocryphal literature which emphasizes piety as a central theme; and third, by contending that the Buddhist concept of filial piety was superior to that of the Confucians in that it aimed at universal salvation..., while the Confucian piety was limited to just one family.

Chen 1973:18

E. The Developed Period of the Sui Dynasty (see Appendix M)

²⁶ Also see the first section of the Scope and Meaning of the Treatise in Xiaojing (The Classic of Filial Piety) (Zeng Zi 1963:1)

The restoration of Buddhism occurred by imperial edict under the Emperor Jing of the Northern Zhou in 580 A.D.; but, as a matter of fact, it was Yang Jian, an important person with behind-the-scenes power, who revived Buddhism (Zhipan 1927:359a; Sima 1960:5413). The credit goes to Yang Jian because of his energetic efforts to promote Buddhism during his “rise to power” (Wang 1927:213c). In 581 A.D. Emperor Jing abdicated the crown to Yang Jian who was his uncle and became the first emperor of the Sui Dynasty.

The wholesale support of a reviviscent Buddhism was carried out by the Emperor Wen (541-618 A.D.). Under his rule people had the option of becoming monks and nuns. There was a census of households in each family in order make assessments for the costs of writing scriptures, the carving of Buddhist sculptures, and the translation of scriptures during the Sui Dynasty (Wei 1996:1099; Zhipan 1927:359b). Five temples on the Five Great Mountains were established during this regime, i.e., the northern Great Mountain, the southern Great Mountain, and the Center Great Mountain (Fei 1927:107b; Falin 1927:509a-b). In 600 A.D. an ordination and great amnesty were held, and monks were invited to come to the palace to preach (Falin 1927:509a). An order was issued forbidding the destruction of Buddhist and Taoist statues (Wei 1996:46). In view of all this, it can be said that the Emperor Wen supported Buddhism with all his power.

In the Sui period, people lived peacefully in reunified China. Most main characters of the Jataka tales depicted on the walls were following the previous dynasties and could be grouped into four scenes: the sacrifice scenes, like the noble kings and princes of India and a Brahman who sacrificed their bodies to save others or learned an enlightened verse; the filial scene, such as Syama; the karma scene, like the Water Carrier

who saved the lives of many fish and received good karma; and the charitable scenes, including Prince Sudana, because the people had some prosperousness so they could give up their own possessions and properties to help others in the society.

F. The Mature Period

1. The Early and High Tang Dynasties

During the early period of the Tang, the emperors used Buddhism to bless their thrones. Moreover, they took advantage of Buddhist martial monks to protect their empires. The first emperor of the Tang Dynasty, Kaozu (Li Yuan), prayed to the Buddha, built temples and Buddhist images for good luck, offered food to monasteries, and practiced Buddhism (Daoshi 1928:1026b; Falin 1927:511a). Li Shimin, known as Duke Qin, used “the martial monks of the Songshan Shaolin Temple” to suppress the revolt of Wang Shicong and later became the second emperor of the Tang, Taizong (Wang 1964:724). In their early policies toward Buddhism, the emperors used the martial monks for the benefit, advantage, and protection of their dynasties.

Buddhism quickly developed in the Epoch of Division between North and South, and it prevailed further in the Sui and Tang Dynasties. Emperors, elites, officials, and commoners zealously promoted Buddhism; therefore, Buddhism became more prevalent during the Tang Dynasty. The success of Buddhism during this period was eventually to provoke great jealousy and resentment in a prominent Taoist named Fu Yi (555-639 A.D.). In 624 A.D., in the early Tang, Fu Yi presented a memorial to Taizong, the second emperor, attacking Buddhism. He “charged that the doctrines of the Buddha were full of extravagances and absurdities and that religion was fostering disloyalty and the

breakdown of filial piety, for it taught that one need not show reverence to ruler or parent” (Chen 1964:215). Fu Yi argued furthermore that Buddhist doctrines were contrary to most Confucian ethics and virtue. At the same time, he also charged that Buddhists encouraged people to enter monastic life, which affected the economy, stopped reproduction of offspring, and diminished the imperial armies. The memorial also criticized monks and nuns who lived in celibacy and idleness and easily evaded paying taxes.

Even though many scholars attacked Buddhism, Emperor Taizong did not persecute Buddhism, but he did take measures to restrain Buddhism. The best examples of restraint are illustrated in the *Xugaosheng shuan*, 續高僧傳, *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*. These three events all happened in his reign (627 A.D.): First, he went to Chenzhou (in Henan Province) to reduce the number of monks and nuns. He kept only thirty (Daoxuan 1927:623c). Second, he sent a roving ambassador named Du Zhonglu to check the teachings of Buddhism and clean up the “bad habits” of the Buddhist Sangha (Daoxuan 1927:634c). And third, he decreed that monks who privately entered into the monastic order could be sentenced to capital punishment (Daoxuan 1927:666a). Emperor Taizong exercised restraint early in his reign, but in his later life he was more and more interested in the translations of texts and discussion of Buddhist doctrines. As Chen stated, “He...invited this eminent monk [Xuanzang] to live with him on various occasions, so that they could spend more time discussing various points of Buddhist doctrine and the traces of the religion in India and Central Asia” (Chen 1964:219). Under the next Emperor Kaozong (649-683 A.D.) and Empress Wuzhou (684-704 A.D.), Buddhism was supported by imperial patronage and flourished. As part of this patronage

Emperor Kaozong decreed that Yuhua (Jade flower) palace would be a temple for a preeminent monk named Xuanzang and serve as a translating house (Zhipan 1927:367b). Empress Wuzhou was the first person to give a purple robe to a monk as a present (Zhipan 1927:369c). That gift brought great prestige and high achievement to monastic life during her reign.

The High Tang lasted from 705 to 781 A.D. when Emperor Zhongzeng (705-709 A.D.) assumed the throne from the Empress Wu. Under the policy of Emperor Ruizeng, (710-712 A.D.) Buddhism changed dramatically because he decreed in 711 that "...Buddhism and Taoism were to be on an equal footing" (Chen 1964:223). In the reign of the Emperor Xuanzong (713-755 A.D.) Taoism was given priority over Buddhism and enjoyed imperial favor. In 714 an imperial edict decreed that about twelve thousand fake monks and nuns be defrocked and return to the laity. He also issued an order to all officers prohibiting construction of new temples and for the populace to make no Buddhist statues and copy no scriptures. If the populace needed scriptures, they were to get them at existing temples (Zhipan 1927:373b). Emperor Xuanzong's intent with these measures was to control and regulate Buddhism, and restrict the numbers of monks and nuns and temples.

During the reign of Emperor Xuanzong, the Tang Dynasty experienced many rebellions. However, under the next emperor, Shuzong (756-762 A.D.), a part of a finger bone was welcomed as a relic of the Buddha and kept at Famen Temple in Fengxiang of Shanxi Province. It was taken into the palace for a popular annual festival and monks were ordered there to chant sutras day and night (Zhipan 1927:375c). Since imperial dignity took the lead in welcoming the relic bone of the Buddha into the palace, such an

annual festival attracted a vast multitude, and subordinates imitated each other in Buddhist practices even more during this period.

2. The Mid Tang Dynasty

Historical evidence suggests that during the Middle Tang dynastic period (781 to 848 A.D.) Buddhism was established and supported by both the imperial court and commoners. Chapter forty-eight of the New History of the Tang, part of the “Monograph on the Hundred Officers” stated that, during the reign of Kaiyuan, Emperor Xuanzong, there were 5,358 Buddhist temples and 75,524 monks and 50,576 nuns (Ouyang 1966:9). Furthermore, Emperor Dezong (780-805 A.D.), in 819 A.D., welcomed a relic finger bone of the Buddha from the Famen Temple in Fengxiang of Shanxi Province into the imperial palace and sent it around to other temples for people to see (Zhipan 1927:379c). During this time Buddhism probably influenced both the minds of Chinese people and their culture. Nevertheless, anti-Buddhist memorials were also presented throughout the era.

In 819 A.D. Han Yu (768-824 A.D.), a member of Tang officialdom, observed the afore-mentioned circumstance of welcoming the relic bone of the Buddha into the imperial palace and the increase in the numbers of temples, monks and nuns. Eventually, he provoked indignation with his recommendation “to respect Confucianism and to exclude Buddhism.” The important portions of Han Yu’s memorial were an intentional attack on Buddhism. The following is an example:

Now the Buddha was of barbarian origin. His language differed from Chinese speech; his clothes were of a different cut; his mouth did not pronounce the prescribed words of the Former Kings, his body was not clad in the garments prescribed by the Former Kings. He did not recognize the relationship between

prince and subject, nor the sentiments of father and son.... How much the less, now that he has long been dead, is it fitting that his decayed and rotten bones, his ill-omened and filthy remains, should be allowed to enter in the forbidden precincts of the Palace?... I am in truth ashamed of them. I pray that Your Majesty will turn this bone over to the officials that it may be cast into water or fire, cutting off for all time the root and so dispelling the suspicions of the empire and preventing the befuddlement of later generations.... If the Buddha has supernatural power and can wreak harm and evil, may any blame or retribution fittingly fall on my person. Heaven be my witness: I will not regret it.

Chen 1964:225-226

After the Emperor Xianzong received Han Yu's anti-Buddhist memorial, he was so angry that he demoted Han Yu to be a tribune in Chaozhou, which is presently in Guangdong Province. The anti-Buddhism of Fu Yi and Han Yi is clear. Simply, Buddhism was a foreign religion. It destroyed the system of Chinese ethics, allowed monks and nuns to shave their heads and to live in celibacy and idleness.

Another point argued was that Buddhism was detrimental to the economy and to the livelihood of the people of the Tang Dynasty. If a large number of people became monks and nuns and they did not bear any of the taxation of the state, it would create an economic collapse. Moreover, monks avoided conscription which created a shortage in the army and rendered the dynasty unable to defend itself against enemies.

Buddhists overcame much harsh criticism during the Early, High to Mid Tang from Confucian or Taoist men who provoked the emperors into regulating or controlling Buddhism. Eventually, in 845 A.D., Buddhism suffered more imperial persecution from Emperor Wuzong of the Tang. His anti-Buddhism began abruptly, and was in support of Taoism, his favorite religion, as well as concern over lost revenue. Emperor Wuzong was a Taoist patron and warmheartedly practiced Taoism. After he was crowned, he "invited eighty-one Taoist monks to stay in the Forbidden Palace to study the Taoist books" (Liu

1966:3). With this kind of imperial favor toward Taoism, persecution of Buddhism was able to continue.

Concerning the national economy and defense, the *History of the Old Tang* is the most reliable record available for this event of July, 845 A.D. It was called the “Hui-Chuang persecution.” This report was presented by the Department of the Grand Imperial Secretariat and described the following:

Bronze images [of Buddha or Bodhisattvas] and bells are to be turned over to the Salt and Iron Commissioner to be melted into coins. Iron statues will be turned over to local officials to be converted into agricultural implements. Images made of gold, silver, jade, and so on are to be turned over to the Bureau of Public Revenue. All images made of gold, silver, bronze, and iron possessed by people of wealth and position are to be handed over to the government within one month after the issuance of this decree.... As for images made from clay, wood, or stone, these will be permitted to remain as usual within the temples.

Chen 1956:68

Finally, in August of 845 A.D. Emperor Wuzong decreed the wholesale suppression of Buddhism which included the demolition of 4,600 temples and 40,000 monasteries. More than 260,500 monks and nuns were defrocked and returned to lay life (Liu 1966:14). Moreover, in order to improve the national economy the government of the Tang categorized the defrocked monks and nuns and 150,000 slaves into the *liang-shui hu* (the household of the biennial tax). That meant their taxes needed to be paid completely in two installments each year—in summer and autumn (Liu 1966:14). Thus, it can be seen that the Hui-Chuang persecution was widespread and did much damage to the Chinese Buddhist community. Emperor Wuzong died in 846 A.D. after taking longevity potions (Liu 1966:16-17). Even though the suppression lasted for only a year, it was a fatal blow to Chinese Buddhism. In summary, the history of the Mid-Tang shows that some

emperors initiated a number of measures to regulate or to control Buddhism, but some imperial patrons helped Buddhism to flourish and to win the adherence of the Chinese.

3. The Later Tang Dynasty

The Later Tang is dated from the year 848 A.D., when Dunhuang prefecture was returned to the Tang, to the close of 907 A.D., when the Tang Dynasty ended. Since the rebellion of An-shi (755-763 A.D.) when the capital, Changan, was attacked, the Kingdom of Tibet used the occasion to seize the Hexi area, including, in 781 A.D., Dunhuang. Therefore, the people of Dunhuang lived under the brutal rule of Tibet for less than 70 years, until 848 A.D. when a local aristocrat named Zhang Yichao 張議潮 led the local army to expel Tibetan power in Dunhuang and Jinchang.

In 851 A.D. Emperor Xuanzong, (847-859 A.D.) established a Righteous Army in Shazhou (Dunhuang) and appointed Zhang as its Military Commissioner. He also figured significantly in revoking the anti-Buddhist movement by restoring “the eight temples on each Right and Left Street in Shangdu (Changan); and he executed Liu Xuanjing and his eleven colleagues because they incited the Emperor Wuzong to suppress Buddhism” (Liu 1966:2).

In 866 A.D. Zhang Yichao helped the Tang to recover the entire Hexi area. He reopened the trade route between Changan and the Western Regions and increased agricultural production. In the following year he was recalled and settled down in Changan. His nephew, Zhang Huaishen, took over his uncle’s position and for 40 years made the Hexi area even more prosperous than in the Early Tang (Duan 1994:173). However, in the period of his rule, he had to confront internal revolt and foreign invasion.

There was internal disorder in the Righteous Army. The people struggled under pressure and exploitation to pay to repel the invading Ganzhou Uigur forces, and they were also forced to pay Zhang's personal expenses (Qian 1988:74). Zhang Huaishen died in 890 A.D. under ambiguous circumstances. After his death his family had only one male child left, Zhang Chengfeng, who was a grandson of Zhang Yichao, "and maybe the son of Zhang Huaiding" (Rong 1996:91). Most historians thought that Sou Xun, a son-in-law of Zhang Yichao, murdered Zhang Huaishen and became the governor of Shazhou from 890-894 A.D.. Today, however, Qian (1988:68-74) points to many suspicions that suggest Sou Xun did not kill Zhang Huaishen but instead was entrusted by the Zhang family to substitute for the Military Commissioner of the Righteous Army. He concluded that "Sou Xun did not usurp the rule of the Zhang family's Righteous Army before he died [because] he was appointed to be a Military Commissioner of the Righteous Army and subrogated this position, but did not usurp it. The situation was critical so this was a short-term expedient. When he passed away in 894 A.D., the rulers of the Righteous Army and the local people respected him. Moreover, his relatives continued to be trusted and to receive preferential treatment. I agree with Qian's statement that if Sou Xun did kill Zhang Huaishen, then Zhang Chengfeng, a grandson of Zhang Yichao, did become the Military Commissioner in 894 A.D. He would not have assigned Sou Xun's nephew to be his Military Guard and let his cousin marry him. Then again, I doubt that if Sou Xun did kill Zhang Huaishen, then, why, later, when Zhang Chengfeng and his relatives built caves, did they portray Sou Xun's figure on the important walls? For example, there was a figure of Sou Xun on the south wall of the corridor in the Cave 9 and on the north wall of the corridor in Cave 98.

Recently scholars discovered in Dunhuang documents that the quarrelling brothers of the Zhang family caused the death of Zhang Huaishen (Li 1986:19-20; Deng 1988: 77-78). Two brothers, Zhang Yanxing and Yanci, killed other half-brothers and hounded their father. Afterwards, however, in 890 A.D., these two brothers supported their father's half-brother, Zhang Huaiding, to be the Military Commissioner of the Righteous Army. Zhang Huaiding died two years later; but, if this is the case, the rule of Sou Xun should be from 892-894 A.D.

Lu (1990:23 and 25), Rong (1992:83) and Yang (1995:188) insist that in 910 A.D. Zhang Chengfeng established a new dynasty which was called "the Golden Mountain State of Western Han," and gave himself the title of "Baiyi Tianzi" (White-robed Son of Heaven) (Li 1987:78). Unfortunately, the Western Han State ended in 914 A.D., following the death of Zhang Chengfeng (Yang 1995:190).

The next powerful political figure was the aristocratic Cao Yijin, but the regime shifted during the Five Dynasties (see Appendix O The reigning dates of Rulers of the Military Commissioner of the Righteous Army). All together, for about two centuries the Righteous Army ruled the Hexi area as an independent regime, until the downfall of the Tang Dynasty (907 A.D.), the Five Dynasties (907-960 A.D.), and the early period of the Song Dynasty (960-1014 A.D.). Political power was held by two aristocratic families—Zhang and Cao (see Appendix O, the Military Commissioner of the Righteous Army in Hexi Area).

During the period of the Tang, the success of Buddhism provoked great jealousy and resentment in an ideology, Confucianism and a native religion, Taoism. Adherents of both attacked Buddhism for two reasons: first, the doctrines of the Buddha were

fostering disloyalty and the breakdown of filial piety that were contrary to most Confucian ethics and virtue. Second, Buddhism was a foreign religion which destroyed the system of Chinese ethics, allowed monks and nuns to shave their heads, and to live in celibacy and idleness.

To diminish this anti-Buddhist atmosphere, Buddhists adopted a measure to comfort the angry scholars of Confucianism and the priests of Taoism. Artists painted a great quantity of the Prince Sujata Jataka tale on the walls of the Mogao caves (see Appendix N). This tale not only described an act of filial piety but also dealt with loyalty. Prince Sujata fed his flesh to his parents when they had no food while running away to the neighboring kingdom to ask for help to fight a rebellious minister and save their kingdom. This tale expressed the truth that Buddhists still took care of their parents as filial sons and showed their loyalty to their country, the Great Tang.

G. The Declining Period of the Five Dynasties (see Appendix P)

The Five Dynasties developed from the ending of the Tang (907 A.D.) to the beginning of the Northern Song (960 A.D.). There were five dynasties in succession. They were the Late Liang, the Tang, the Jin, the Han, and the Zhou. None unified China like the Sui or Tang, but some followed a policy of protecting Buddhism.

The following examples present the emperors who established their patronage of Buddhism during their reigns. First of all, in the Late Liang Dynasty (907-921 A.D.) the Emperor Mo 末帝 respected an eminent monk named Guiyu 歸嶼, invited him to come to the palace, and granted him a Purple Robe as a reward (Zanning 1927:746c). Second, in the Late Tang Dynasty (923-934 A.D.), the Emperor Zhuangzong 莊宗 gave “alms to a

thousand monks” and inquired of Huiran 慧然, a Chan Master, about the teachings of the Chan (Zen school) in the palace (Jiang et al. 1884: 3-1). Third, in the Late Jin Dynasty (936-943 A.D.) in the fourth year of Taifu, the Emperor Gaozu 高祖 established a day for the Memorial Festival of the State and led his officers to the temple to offer meals to the monks (Jiang et al. 1884:3-1). However, the source does not provide much information regarding the month or a day. Fourth, in the Late Han Dynasty (945-948 A.D.), the Emperor Gaozu 高祖 treated two monks, Sengzhao 僧照 (Zanning 1927:749c) and Daipi 道丕 (Zanning 1927:818c-819b), with great respect. Fifth, in the Late Zhou Dynasty, in November of the third year of Guangshun, the Emperor Taizu 太祖 granted a Purple Robe to Fajin 法進, his favorite monk. But, in 955 A.D., Emperor Shizong 世宗 issued an edict suppressing Buddhism (Jiang et al. 1884:3-2).

According to the anthology of Buddhist history, *A Complete Collection of Illustrations and Writings from the Earliest to Current Times*, “In May of the second year of Xiande, Emperor Shizong destroyed, throughout the region, more than 3,336 temples” (Jiang et al. 1884:3-2). He issued an imperial edict to turn all Buddhist bronze images into coins (Jiang et al. 1884:3-2) because of the state of the treasury and the need to conduct military campaigns against the Khitan realm, and the empire of the Northern Han in the north and the empire of the Later Shu in the south.

In the Five Dynasties, Buddhism sometimes gained imperial favor and sometimes suffered imperial suppression, but the main Jataka narratives were depicted on the walls during the Tang Dynasty. The two prominent Jataka tales were Prince Sujata and Shanshi. The former showed filial piety and loyalty, as stated above, in the Tang Dynasty. The latter dramatized the charitable action of Prince Shanshi who went to sea

and got the *moni*, the wish-granting jewel. When he returned to his country and prayed to the *moni*, food and clothing and jewels rained down to satisfy the people who came and took what they wished.

Chinese Buddhism underwent another period of imperial repression in 955 A.D. even though the Emperor Shizong did not entirely outlaw it. This period caused serious problems for the growth of Buddhist membership. Furthermore, the emperor prohibited the private ordination of monks and enforced a policy of examination for imperial ordination. When candidates passed this examination, they usually received their official certificates. For the examination, the young male postulants, who were older than fifteen, had to recite a hundred leaves of sutras, or read five hundred leaves of sutras. The young female postulants, who were older than thirteen, needed to recite seventy leaves, or read three hundred leaves in order to be granted their certificates (Jiang et al. 1884:3-2). It is true that monasticism declined further in the Song Dynasty because of these imperial examinations and spiritual requirements.

H. The Declining Period of the Song Dynasty (see Appendix P)

The Emperor Shizong died from illness in the field in 959 A.D. He left a six-year-old son to succeed him, and that led to the fall of his dynasty. The death of Shizong paved the way for the later reunification of China by the Song Dynasty.

The Emperors of the Song Dynasty, founded in 906 A.D. by Zhao Kuangyin, did make some contributions to Buddhism. As the Emperor Taizu of the Song (906-968 S.D.) replaced the emperor of the Late Zhou, he dismissed the suppression of 955 A.D. and ordered the ordination of 8,000 monks (Jiang et al. 1884:3-4). He also ordered the first

publication of the Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka in Chengdu. The process of publishing lasted for 13 years, from 971 to 983 A.D., and was known as the Shu-Block of the Tripitaka (Guan 1982:220). Such imperial patronage contributed greatly to Chinese Buddhism. While the first Emperor Taizu piously respected virtuous monks and Buddhism, succeeding Song emperors who inherited this practice were merely friendly and protective. As soon as the second emperor of the Song, Taizong, ascended the throne in 976 A.D., he ordered the imperial ordination of 170,000 monks (Zhipan 1927:396c).

The Emperor Zhenzong made an annual journey to visit temples with his officers on the fifteenth day of the first month. During these visits, he prayed for the peace, welfare and prosperity of the dynasty. He prostrated himself piously before the Buddha for more than one hundred times and finally stood in front of his officers and said that “when you prostrate before the Buddha, you can decide to be genuine or false. That is up to you, not my decision” (Zhipan 1927:405a).

The next emperor, Renzong, took measures to restrain Buddhism because he listened to the words of Zhang Dong at the Department of the Board of Rites. In his decree, he reduced the number of monks and nuns by one third (Tuo 1966:5). Statistics during the Jingyou reign of Emperor Renzong (1034-37 A.D.) show that there were 385,520 monks and 48,740 nuns (Zhipan 1927:409c). Suppression reduced the numbers of monks to under 257,012 and of nuns to under 32,492. Moreover, he destroyed many unnamed temples (Tuo 1966:3).

Emperor Huizong was famous for the imperial promotion of Taoism. In 1119 A.D., Taoism was again given priority over Buddhism. Eventually, he issued a decree to suppress Buddhism (Tuo 1966:1). During his reign, from 1101 to 1126 A.D., the Song

Dynasty became increasingly weak and faced many foreign enemies. Because he was a talented painter and calligrapher and sponsored numerous artists at his court, he neglected to train an army. That gave the Jin Dynasty the opportunity to attack the northern border of the Song empire. The enemy entered Kaifeng, the capital of the Song Dynasty, in January 1127 A.D. After it succeeded in entering the capital city, the Jin captured the entire imperial court, including Huizong and his son, Emperor Qinzong, and took them to northern Manchuria. History calls this the “Jingkang Incident.” As a result of the Jin invasion and seizure of the capital, Kaifeng, in the north, the Song Dynasty was forced to move south of the Yangtze River. After many years of disorder, chaos, and struggle, one of the sons of Huizong established the Southern Song Dynasty and was named the Emperor Gaozong.

The Western Xia Dynasty, known also as the Tangut Empire, existed from 1038 to 1227 A.D. and occupied the northwestern area of Gansu, Shanxi, and Ningxia, along the trade route between Central Asia and the West (Dunnell 1996:3). The founder, in 1038, was Li Yuanhao who was a Tangut Chieftain. Later he was called the Emperor of Da Xia (the Great Xia, in Chinese Xi-xia). He demanded that the Song emperor recognize him as emperor, instead of governor. But, until 1043 A.D. the emperor of the Song was recognized as an equal because of annual tribute.

With the death of Renzong in 1193 A.D. and six attacks by the Mongol Empire, the power of the Western Xia weakened and began to fail (Kwanten 1974:7). 1216 A.D., when the Mongols asked for military aid in the campaign against the Islamic countries, the Emperor Shenzong was willing to help; but his court and his general would not agree to this demand. Later, when Genghis Khan returned from his campaign, the general of

the Western Xia provoked Genghis Khan into fighting. Unfortunately, the Emperor Xianzong died in this battle (Kwanten 1974:8).

The last emperor of the Western Xia was Emperor Modi who demanded peace; his dynasty was incorporated into the Yuan Dynasty in 1227 A.D. (Kwanten 1974:10). The Yuan Dynasty took over the Southern Song and unified China in 1280 A.D.—the first non-Han dynasty to rule all of China.

In the Song Dynasty, early emperors supported Buddhist activities, such as imperial patronage of the publication of the Tripitaka. The later emperors suppressed Buddhism, reduced the numbers of monks and nuns and destroyed many unnamed temples. Whether with imperial patronage or during persecution, the main Jataka narratives depicted on the walls followed the Five Dynasties as stated above.

In summary, before the Emperor Wu of the Western Han Dynasty opened the overland roads for trade, the Western Regions, Central Asia, India, and the Middle East already had a flourishing Buddhist culture. Eventually, seeds of Buddhism travelled to China along with merchants, caravans, and embassies on the trade routes and through the front gate—Dunhuang Prefecture. For the Chinese, Buddhism was a foreign religion with strange customs, difficult to accept and integrate into their ethical life. The Indian and Chinese monks who pioneered the way demanded new forms to fit into the Chinese social system, as did the artists who created Buddhist paintings in the Mogao Caves. Throughout the history of Chinese Buddhism, imperial rulers performed a strong and significant role in promoting and spreading the teachings of the Buddha. It is clear that the relationship between Buddhist communities and imperial patronage helped to illuminate Buddhism, its integration into the daily life of the Chinese and its effects on

their thoughts and beliefs. Whatever the dynasty, imperial patronage was a matter of concern for the flourishing of Buddhism. For example, some supported the translation of scriptures into Chinese and other Buddhist activities, like constructing temples, and carving caves such as the Dunhuang, Yungang, and Lungmen. On the other hand, Buddhist growth and the gaining of imperial favor invited trouble from the scholars of Taoism and Confucianism who appealed to the emperors of various time periods to persecute Buddhists. Some monarchs attacked and suppressed Buddhism either because Taoism or Confucianism gained imperial favor or because the state had an economic crisis. Both caused four wholesale suppressions of Buddhism. In India, the Buddhist community was beyond the authority of the secular kings, but in China, the prosperity or decline of Buddhist Sangha was controlled by a strong central authority person—the emperor—as well as by a central ideology—Confucianism or Taoism.

CHAPTER SIX

THE FIVE FAVORITE JATAKA TALES AT THE MOGAO CAVES

The murals of the Mogao caves fit into more than twelve major categories. They include biographical accounts of the historic Buddha, Jatakas, parables on discipline and karma, episodes in traditional Chinese and Indian mythology, preaching themes of the Buddha, and illustrations of Mahayana sutras. The murals also depict victories throughout Buddhist history, images of flying celestial beings, portraits of bodhisattvas and caves' donors, and secular genres. However, here the central analysis deals only with Jataka tales. In other words, the framework of analysis used centers upon the "Jataka tale-scape." It focuses on the crucial importance of the Jataka narratives that relate the deeds of the Buddha's previous lives. During medieval times in China, they were the most important sources of information about the previous lives of the Buddha.

Murals of the Jataka tales originated as an art form in India and were brought into Central Asia, the Western regions, and then into China during the fourth century A.D. Investigation of the murals at the Mogao caves, studied in the present work, points to socio-cultural inferences that can be drawn about them during the eight periods of their active lives, beginning in the Northern Liang Dynasty, through the Northern Wei, the Western Wei, the Northern Zhou, the Sui, the Tang, and the Five Dynasties, and finally ending in the Song Dynasty. Within this framework of reliable chronology, I began to search for depictions of Jataka tales in the caves from the four volumes of Dunhuang wenwu yanjiusuo 1982, Chang 1985, Duan 1994, and Xie 1996. All volumes have recorded each cave in two parts: the period of construction and the contents. The section

on contents described in detail the murals depicted on the walls and the locations, but they did not provide any pictures.

After a careful review of the voluminous and wide-ranging literature on the various themes of Jataka narratives (Dunhuang yanjiusuo 1982; Li 2000; Yin 2000), I found that there are forty-seven caves which contain sixteen different Jataka tales depicted in one hundred and twelve paintings. For a detailed account, Appendix L provides the quantities of the Jataka tales in the initial period; Appendix M presents the quantities of the Jataka tales in the developed period; Appendix N shows the quantities of the Jataka tales in the mature period and Appendix P for the declined period.

In this chapter the Jataka tale-scape paradigm will examine the murals of these Jataka tales and arrive at an anthropological understanding of the cause of their increase and decrease during different Chinese dynasties. I have selected five favorite Jataka tales, those which appeared more frequently throughout the caves' history than others (see Table 9.10). They are: the King Sibi Jataka in Cave 254 of the Northern Wei; the Prince Mahasattva Jataka in Cave 428 of the Northern Zhou; the filial Syama Jataka in Cave 302 of the Sui; the Prince Shanshi Jataka (Eyou Chapter, a title of that section, literally meaning Evil Friend, a brother of Shanshi) in Cave 85 of the Later Tang; and the Prince Sujata Jataka in Cave 98 of the Five Dynasties. As a guide to reading and interpretation, I at first show a full view of the Jataka tale's mural and then add numbers that interpret the individual episodes with the panorama of the series. These five Jataka tales demonstrate that these visual representations communicate content, guidelines, composition, and relation to sutras, providing a clear visual and verbal narrative for readers and viewers.

A. King Sibi Jataka

In Cave 254, Northern Wei Dynasty, the King Sibi Jataka tale is painted on the middle level of the north wall and includes other additional characters in a common background (Figure 6.1). This story, told in ten scenes, is about King Sibi offering his own flesh to feed a hawk in order to save a dove's life (Figures 6.1.1 to 6.1.10). It begins as follows: (1) At the upper right, a hawk chases a dove; (2) King Sibi, with a halo, sits at the center, bends his left leg, and stretches his right leg to hold the terrified dove that has taken refuge and sits in the palm of the king's right hand; (3) In the lower right foreground, the hawk asks him to return the dove to him as its prey; (4) Then King Sibi decides to offer his flesh to save the dove's life; (5) A small attendant, lower right, cuts at the king's left leg to pay the dove's ransom; and near to him there is a standing man who holds a pair of scales—the dove on the right scale and the full body of King Sibi on the left scale; (6) Three wives, lower left, show their distress. They are dressed in foreign costume, which shows a strong Western Regions influence; (7) The scripture illustrated in this tale shows King Sibi sitting on a scale while all the heavenly gods, who admire King Sibi's practicing the path of the bodhisattva and sacrificing his entire body to ransom the dove, reverence him with palms and fingers held together in a praying position. They are on both sides of the middle row; (8) Celestial beings, in the upper row, fly and scatter petals to celebrate the restoration of King Sibi's life (Hui-Jue et. al 1927:352a); (9) Finally, the King, on the left scale, offers his whole body to save the dove because his flesh cannot balance the dove on the right scale; (10) At the end of the story the king is restored to wholeness by the Shakra, also known as Shakra Devanam Indra, who comes from heaven to test King Sibi's benevolence.

The Chinese texts of the narrative can be found in *Xianyu jing* 賢愚經 (Sutra on the Wise and the Foolish) (Hui-Jue et. al 1927:351c-352b), *Jingluyixiang* 經律異相 (Divergent Concepts in the Sutras and Vinaya Texts) (Sengmin et. al 1928:137c-138a), *Pusa benxing jing* 菩薩本行經 (Sutra of the Collected Stories of the Buddha's Deeds in Past Lives) (Unknown author 1924:119a), *Pusa benshengman lun* 菩薩本生鬘論 (A Garland of Birth Stories) (Shaode et. al 1924: 333b-c), *Dazhidu lun* 大智度論 (The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom) (Kumarajiva 1926: 87c-88c), *Liuduji jing* 六度集經 (Sutra on the Collection of Six Paramitas) (Kang 1924:1b-c), *Dazhuangyan lun* 大莊嚴論 (The Birth Stories on the Great Dignity) (Kumarajiva 1925:321a-323c), *Shizi sutuosuowang duanrou jing* 師子素駄娑王斷肉經 (Sutra on the King Sutuosuo to Stop Eating Meat) (Zhiyan 1924:392c), *Rulengjia jing* 入楞伽經 (The Sutra on the Buddha Entering Lanka Mountain) (Bodhiruci 1925:562c-563a), and *Zhongjingzhuanza pi* 眾經撰雜譬喻 (Parables of the Collection on Various Sutras) (Kumarajiva 1924:531b).

B. Prince Mahasattva Jataka

The Jataka tale of Prince Mahasattva is depicted in Cave 428 of the Northern Zhou Dynasty and shows spiritual fearlessness as the prince feeds himself to a hungry tigress. The tale is depicted on three registers, placed south on the east wall, and reads from the south or right of the top register horizontally, drops to the second register in the reverse direction, and then falls to the bottom register (see Figure 6.2). It is interesting to note that this tale was repeated in almost every dynasty, except the Western Wei, on various places in the caves and became the commonest and most popular subject for donors and artists. To read this tale in order of events I added numbers that indicate

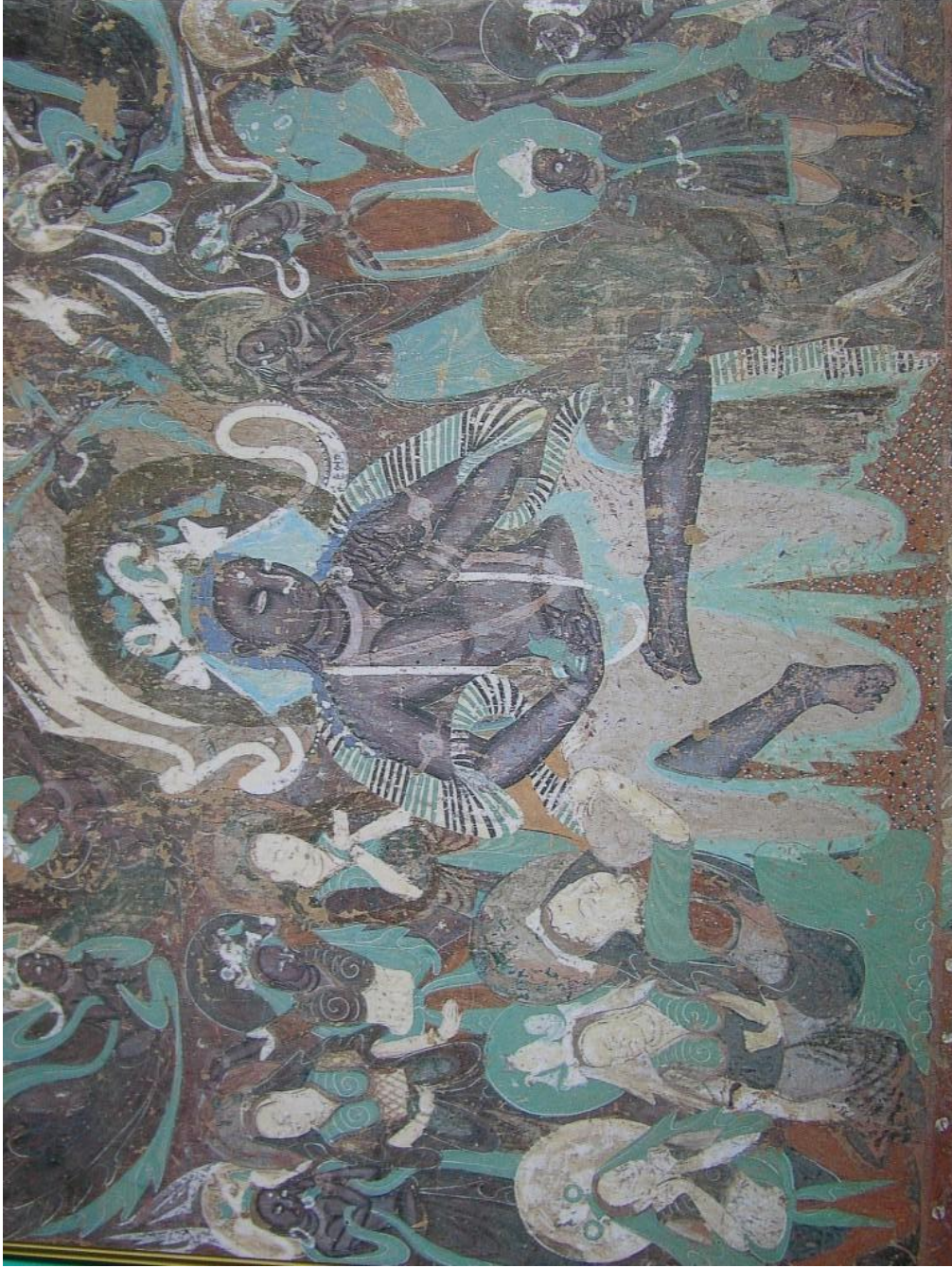


Figure 6.1 The Jataka of King Sibi is illustrated on the middle level, north wall, Cave 254, Northern Wei Dynasty.
Source: Li 2000:38.



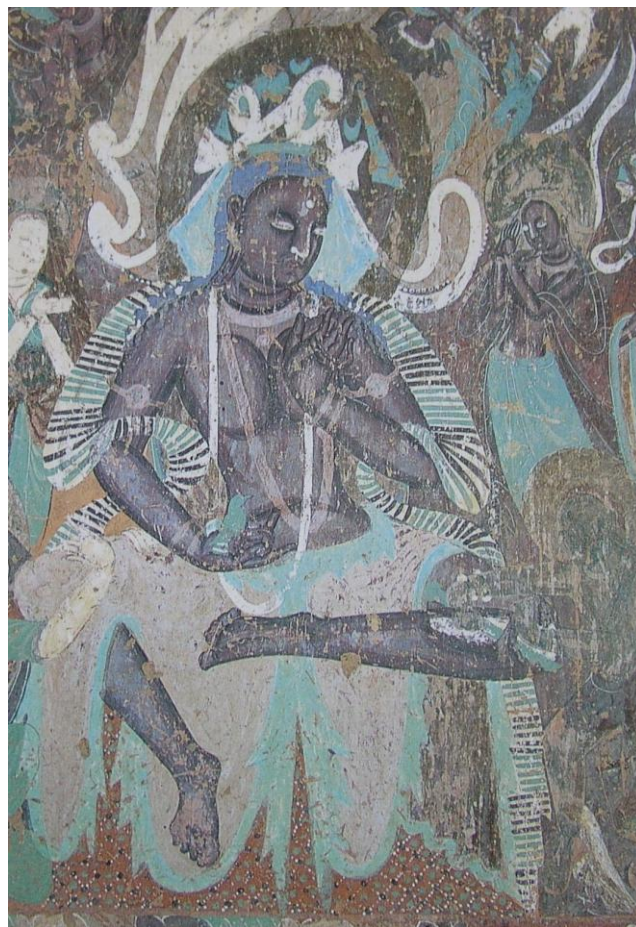
Figure 6.1.1.



Figure 6.1.2.



Figure 6.1.3.



Figures 6.1.4. and 6.1.10.



Figure 6.1.5.



Figure 6.1.6.



Figure 6.1.7.

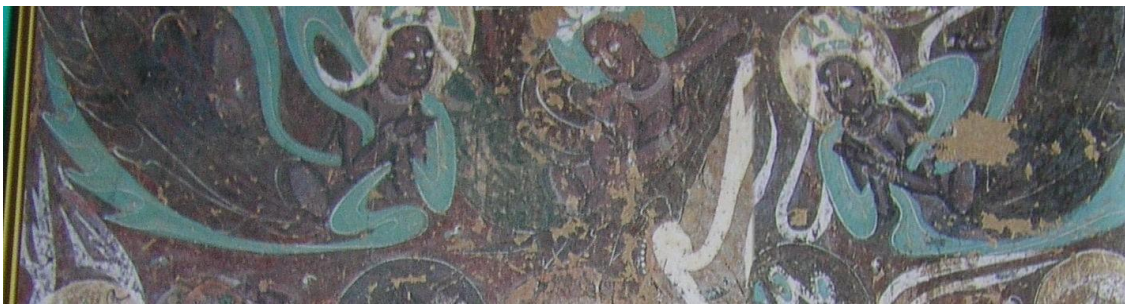


Figure 6.1.8.



Figure 6.1.9

about fifteen scenes. This tale is illustrated in Figures 6.2.1 to Figure 6.2.15 (Li 2000:180-83). They begin from the top right-hand corner and continue to the far left as follows: (1) The kneeling Prince Mahasattva and his two older brothers ask their father for permission to go to the forest while the king and queen remain in the palace; (2) The princes are riding on horses and leaving the palace; (3) They are hunting in the forest while a tiger is chasing deer on the top; (4) They stop in the middle of the forest.

The story then drops straight down to the second level where it runs toward the far right as follows: (5) They go further in to the forest; (6) They take a rest in the valley and see a starving tigress who is ready to devour her seven cubs. Prince Mahasattva thinks of saving the tigress's life and tells his brothers to go ahead; (7) The two elder Princes ride off; (8) Mahasattva strips and lies down in front of the tigress, offering his body to feed the tigress; but the tigress is too weak to devour him; (9) Then he gets up, climbs to the top of the cliff, stabs his neck with a piece of bamboo to make it easier for her and the cubs to eat him; (10) He throws himself from the cliff into the valley; (11) Again, he offers his flesh to the tigress and her cubs. The tigress first licks his blood, devours him completely, and then leaves only the Prince's bones behind.

The tale continues on the bottom level where it moves toward the left and ends in the stupa in the right-hand corner: (12) When the other two brothers discover their brother's remains, they weep bitterly and do not know what to do; (13) The two brothers travel back to the palace; (14) The two princes report to their father on Mahasattva's death; (15) Finally, a stupa is built on the ground to enshrine Mahasattva's ashes.

The artists considered that landscape was important. Trees and mountain ranges were used as vertical and horizontal lines to separate the scenes in the foreground and



Figure 6.2 The Prince Mahasattva Jataka is depicted on the south side of the east wall of Cave 428, the Northern Zhou Dynasty. It is divided into three rectangular levels of pictures, read as a boustrophedon, to tell this story. Source: Li 2000:180-81.

background. The compositions of the Prince Mahasattva Jataka of Cave 428 in the Sui period have clean and clearly visible figures against a white background, and the circling mountain ranges block each scene, as they complete the story. The Jataka of Mahasattva expresses the ideal that if bodhisattvas seek enlightenment, they must set their thoughts on giving and even sacrificing themselves for many lifetimes. At the end of this tale the stupa that was built for enshrining Mahasattva's relics and for worship are the equivalent of the Buddha relics and a natural way for Buddhists to cherish the memory of the Buddha.

General references to the Mahasattva Jataka can be found in *Xianyu jing* 賢愚經 (Sutra on the Wise and the Foolish) (Hui-Jue et. al 1927:352b), *Pusa benxing jing* 菩薩本行經 (Sutra of the Collected Stories of the Buddha's Deeds in Past Lives) (Unknown author 1924:119a), *Pusa benshengman lun* 菩薩本生鬘論 (A Garland of Birth Stories) (Shaode et. al, 1924:332b-333b), *Liuduji jing* 六度集經 (Sutra on the Collection of Six Paramitas) (Kang 1924:2b), *Jinguangming jing* 金光明經 (Golden Light Sutra) (Dharmaksema 1925:353c-356c), and *Pusa toushen si ehu qita yinyuan jing* 菩薩投飼餓虎起塔因緣經 (The Sutra on the Original Stupa of the Bodhisattva Feeding His Own Flesh to a Starving Tigress) (Fasheng 1924:424b-427c).

C. Syama Jataka

The Jataka of Syama (Shanzi in Chinese) recounts how Syama, a son of loyalty and filial piety to his parents, helped his blind parents to live in the forest and was shot by a king. At the end of the story, Syama is restored to wholeness because of his act of filial piety.

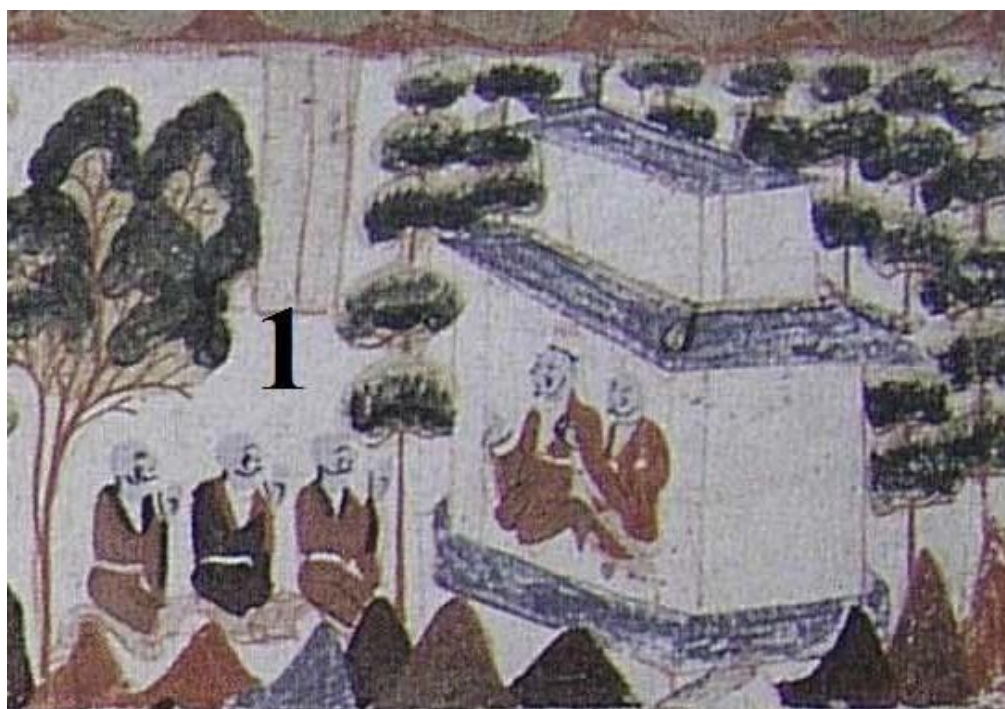


Figure 6.2.1.



Figure 6.2.2.



Figure 6.2.3.

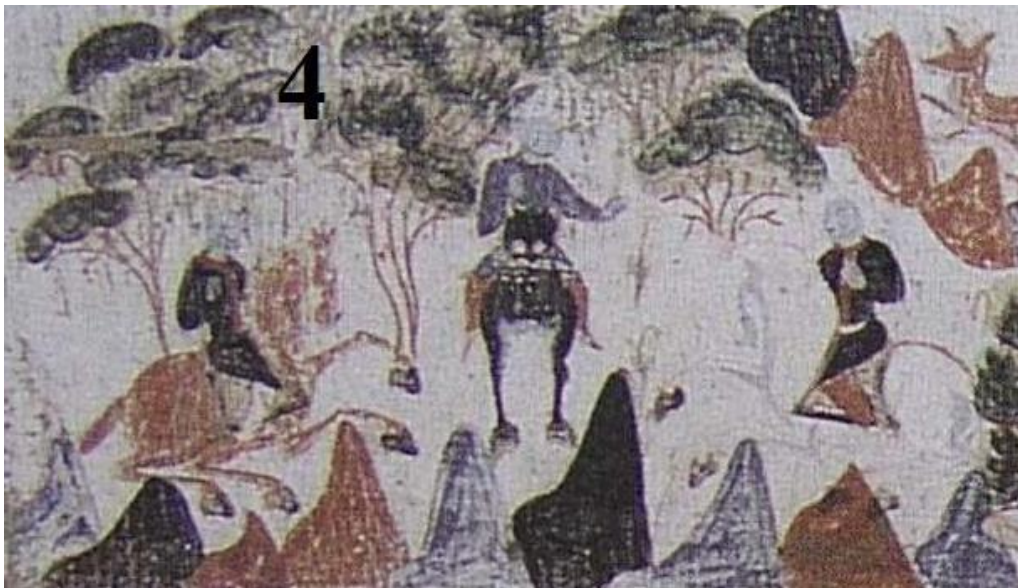


Figure 6.2.4.



Figure 6.2.5.



Figure 6.2.6.



Figure 6.2.7.



Figure 6.2.8.



Figures 6.2.9 and 6.2.10.



Figure 6.2.11.



Figure 6.2.12.



Figure 6.2.13.



Figure 6.2.14.



Figure 6.2.15.

Cave 302 contains the Syama Jataka of the Sui Dynasty. It is clearly displayed in a chronological layout on the lower level of the east side of the gabled ceiling and reads from the north side or right toward the south side or left (Figure 6.3). This Syama Jataka consists of ten scenes as follows: (1) The king of Benares and his attendant stand waiting in the palace because the king wants to go hunting and asks his retinue to go with him; (2) The king and his retinue are riding horses in the forest; (3) The king sees deer and birds on the riverbank, mistakes Syama for a drinking deer, and shoots him dead with an arrow; (4) Syama is fetching water from a river; he wears a deer-skin coat because he does not want to scare away other animals who drink water there; (5) The king comes to see the dying Syama who tells the king to take care of his blind parents; (6) The king is on his way to meet Syama's blind parents; (7) The king and his retinue arrive at the blind parents' grass hut and tell them what happened to their son; (8) Then the king leads the blind parents to see the dying Syama; (9) The father weeps loudly and holds the boy's head; the mother, in a great sorrow, holds the boy's legs. They vow that if heaven and earth know of Syama's filial piety, the poisoned arrow will come out, taking his pain away and restoring him to life. Finally, Indra gives Syama a magic medicine to save his life; (10) Syama is restored to wholeness and continues to take care of his blind parents in the forest. Figures 6.3.1 to 6.3.10 show the tale's murals.

The Syama Jataka explains the transmission of karmic effect from one life to another or from present to future. In the formula of the law of causal sequence, the king shot Syama as a result of the king's evil karma. It is shown as the immediately preceding cause of his present existence. Syama honored and cared for his blind parents with his physical strength as a filial son who received good karma which finally restored his life



Figure 6.3 Ten illustrations of the Jataka Syama in Cave 302, lower level of the east side of the gabled roof ceiling, Sui Dynasty. Source: Li 2000: 128-29.



Figure 6.3.1.



Figure 6.3.2.



Figures 6.3.3 and 6.3.4.



Figure 6.3.5.



Figure 6.3.6.



Figure 6.3.7.



Figure 6.3.8.



Figures 6.3.9 and 10.

and even his parents' eyesight.

During the Northern Zhou and Sui, murals of the filial Syama and Sujata conveyed to Chinese audiences the concept of filial piety and loyalty. They depict the Buddhist virtues of filial piety as shown by the two sons who sacrificed themselves for the benefit of their kin, advanced toward the bodhisattva way, and thereby accomplished the virtues of altruism to benefit others in their endless lifetimes.

There are at least four sutras for this tale, all by a person named Shengjian who translated three sutras from three different dynasties. *Pusha Shanzi jing* 菩薩睽子經 (The Sutra of Bodhisattva Syama) (Unknown author 1924: 436b-438b), *Shanzi jing* 睽子經 (The Syama Sutra) (Shengjian 1924: 438b-440a), *Shanzi jing* 佛說睽子經 (The Syama Sutra) (Shengjian 1924: 440a-441c), and *Shanzi jing* 佛說睽子經 (The Syama Sutra) (Shengjian 1924: 442a-443c).

Two versions of the Jataka were subjects for artists during the Tang, the Five Dynasties, and the Song periods—the Prince Kalyanakarin (Shanyou in Chinese or Chapter Eyou) and the Prince Sujata. Both Jatakas were popular subjects, repeated throughout the many caves at Mogao caves. Some caves contain the complete story; but others simply use a few illustrations to tell this tale.

D. Prince Shanyou or Shanshi Jataka (Eyou Chapter)

The Jataka of Prince *Shanyou*, literally meaning Great Friend, and the *Eyou* Jataka, literally meaning Evil Friend, have the same content, but appear in two different sutras. The Jataka of Prince Great Charity is based on the *Shanshi daizi ruhai pin* (the Chapter of Prince Shanshi Goes to Sea) in *Xianyu jing* 賢愚經 (Sutra on the Wise and the



Figure 6.4 The Shanyou Jataka displayed in the Eyou Chapter, on the left side bottom of the south wall, Cave 85, the Later Tang Dynasty. It reads from the left hand corner, up to the left, moves rightward down to the center, and drops down toward the left. Source: Yin 2000: 136-37.

Foolish) (Huijue et al. 1924:410a-415b). The Evil Friend tale emerged for the first time in the Tang Dynasty. It continued to be depicted in the declining period of the Five Dynasties and the Song Dynasty. In both periods artists created great quantities of the Evil Friend Jataka at the Mogao caves, which originated from *Dafang bian fobaoen jing* 大方便佛報恩經 (Repaying Debts of Gratitude Sutra) (Unknown author, 1927:142b-147a). This Jataka was the visual aid to religious education that assisted monks and nuns in their explanations of the doctrine of karma.

In this tale Prince Shanyou goes on a sea journey that underlines the danger of the sea while he fulfills peoples' wishes (Figure 6.4). This tale shows that Shanyou was a kind and generous Prince who gladly distributed alms using his country's jewels. He never stinted in his efforts. He was a filial son who did not squander his parents' jewels but decided, rather, to go to the seven treasure city to seek the *mani*, the wish-granting jewel that possesses the power to produce whatever one desires. With the *mani*, he could continue to give alms liberally. Also, the story conveys the teaching of karma through comparison of a good deed, like Prince Shanyou's; with a bad one, like Prince Eyou's, who injured his brother and was punished by the king.

Cave 85 demonstrates a new form for the Eyou Chapter and expands in the Later Tang Dynasty and following periods. The tale is placed on the left side bottom of the south wall and has nineteen illustrations: (1) The king inside the palace asks the mentor to take care of Shanyou on their journey; (2) Shanyou, his brother and mentor, and five hundred merchantmen take leave of the king and his retinue; (3) They ride on horses toward the seashore; (4) They arrive at the seashore and are ready to sail away; (5) They arrive at the treasure mountain. Some merchants load jewelry onto the ship while

Shanyou and his mentor continue on; (6) They come to the silver mountain; (7) Shanyou and his mentor walk near the golden mountain; (8) While Shanyou and his mentor are in the golden mountain, the mentor dies there; (9) Shanyou walks through enormous lotuses toward the seven jeweled city; (10) Shanyou visits the dragon king and gets the *mani* in the city's palace; (11) Shanyou flies out of the city on a cloud; (12) Shanyou rejoins his brother, Eyou, when he arrives at the seashore; (13) While his brother is asleep, Eyou pricks Shanyou's eyes with thorns and takes the *mani* away; (14) An ox king licks out thorns from Shanyou's eyes; (15) When Shanyou plays a banjo, the princess of the neighboring kingdom comes to listen from the orchard and later marries Shanyou; (16) Shanyou's wife does not believe he is the prince of the neighboring kingdom. Shanyou swears an oath, "If I lie to you, may I never recover my sight, but if, in truth, may my eyes become as they were before." When he says this, he regains his sight; (17) Shanyou and his wife ride on an elephant on the way back to his land; (18) Shanyou meets his father in the palace; (19) Shanyou sits on top of a tower and prays to the *mani* to bring down whatever each person wishes. The power of the *mani* enables people to come and receive what they wish and are satisfied. Figures 6.4.1 to 6.4.19 tell the tale of Prince Shanyou.

E. Prince Sujata Jataka

Prince Sujata, also known as Xusheti in Chinese, fed his flesh to his parents as an act of filial piety²⁷. The Sujata Jataka appears on the bottom right-hand corner of the

²⁷ Filial "relating or appropriate to a son or daughter" (Chambers 1998:600). Filial piety, strong devotion of a son to his parents, was a central "social structure" behavior in

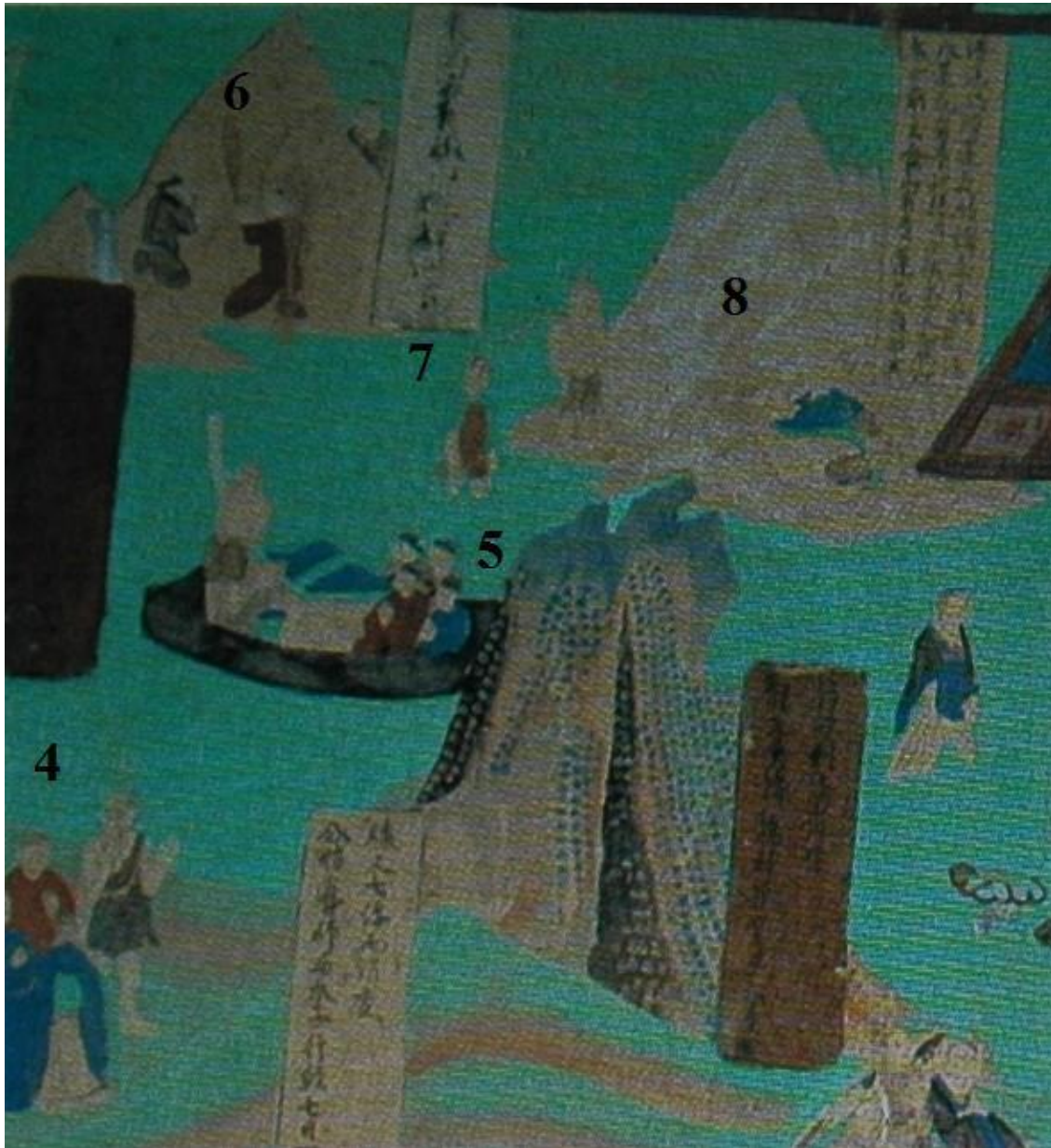


Figures 6.4.1 and 6.4.2.



Figure 6.4.3.

traditional Chinese culture. Confucius, in the fifth century B.C., stressed the importance of filial piety.



Figures 6.4.4, 6.4.5, 6.4.6, 6.4.7, and 6.4.8.



Figures 6.4.9, 6.4.10, 6.4.11, 6.4.12, and 6.4.13.



Figure 6.4.14.



Figure 6.4.15.



Figures 6.4.16 and 6.4.17.



Figures 6.4.18 and 6.4.19.

south wall in Cave 98 of the Five Dynasties (Figure 6.5 shows the Prince Sujata Jataka in Cave 65). In general, it reads from top to bottom with a zigzag layout and has fifteen scenes (Figures 6.5.1 to 6.5.15). They can be described as follows: (1) A yaksha appears in the sky and tells King Virtuous that a rebellious minister, Rahula, has killed his father and brothers and is coming to kill him. He urges the king to escape now because the troops will come at any time; (2) Troops are coming to the palace; (3) The king, queen, and Sujata hurriedly leave the palace and take provisions for a week; (4) They sit for a last meal. The following description does not show in the mural: but, in their haste, the king takes the wrong way. For two weeks they search for their destination. When they run out of food, the king wants to kill the queen and eat her flesh. When the king draws his sword to stab the queen, Sujata says, “Do not kill my mother.” Sujata beseeches his father, “Without killing me, you can cut off my flesh little by little and feed the three of us for a few days. If you kill me, my flesh will become stinking and spoil” (Unknown author 1927:129a); (5) Sujata cuts off his own flesh alone; (6) He holds a tray with his flesh and offers it to his parents; (7) After Sujata’s flesh has been eaten for a few days, he tells his father to divide the last of it into three parts and to go on, leaving him there alone. The fleshless Sujata prostrates himself and sees his parents off; (8) Sujata sits on a rock because his stinking and spoiling body attracts many flies that fly above his head; (9) He makes a wish-prayer that “by the merit of having offered the flesh of my own body to my father and mother, may I attain Enlightenment and deliver all beings in the ten directions from their many sufferings and lead them to Nirvana,” (Unknown author 1927:129b-c). The artist paints his parents in front of him; (10) Indra and his friend transform themselves into two ferocious lions in front of Sujata and try to devour him. Sujata

permits the lion to have what flesh and bones and marrow are left of his body. When Indra understands that Sujata's mind is firm, he turns himself back into his own form to indicate that Sujata has passed the test from Indra. Later, Sujata's body is restored to wholeness; (11) The king and queen head for the neighboring kingdom; (12) They arrive at the neighboring kingdom, meet the neighboring king and queen and retinue in front of the palace. King Virtuous tells the neighboring king and queen what happened to his father and brothers; (13) King Virtuous and his wife are inside the palace; (14) The neighboring king sends someone to look for Sujata and finally finds and greets him on the road; (15) The messenger escorts Sujata back to the palace. Sujata meets and then prostrates himself before his parents outside the neighboring palace. Figures 6.5.1 to 6.5.15 tell the Sujata tale.

There are four different sources for this story, but the narration here is based on the *Dafang bian fobaoenjing* 大方便佛報恩經 (Repaying Debts of Gratitude Sutra) (Unknown author 1927:128b-130b). Other Chinese versions are found in *Fayuan zhulin* 法苑珠林 (The Forest of Gems in the Garden of the Law) (Daoshi 1927:655c-656c); *Xianyu jing* 賢愚經 (Sutra on the Wise and the Foolish) (Huijue et al. 1924:356a); and the *Jinglu yixiang* 經律異相 (Divergent Concepts in the Sutras and Vinaya Texts) (Sengmin and Baochang et al. 1927:163c-164c).

To summarize, these murals of the Jataka tales, showing the gradual evolution of scriptures, were probably produced during eight dynasties from the 4th to the 12th century A.D. The illustrations show the gradual growth of the Western Region's influence in Dunhuang pictorial art. The different mural depictions of the Jataka tales throughout this time-span can be broadly analyzed into categories of "Western Regionization to

Sinicization.” These include the modes of the influential Western Regions, the confluent modes of the Western Regions and China, and the final modes of Sinicization. However, each dynasty contributed its own distinctive forms. In my own observation, Buddhist art shows the influence of Taoism and Confucianism in the Han, and in the Western and Eastern Jin Dynasties. The archaeological evidence of the bas-reliefs found in Han tombs provide an example which enables us to understand how indigenous art influenced Buddhist art in the Mogao caves; and how, later, well-known Buddhist art from the “Western Regions” became accepted. Indian monks or traders who came along the Silk Road from areas to the west of China brought this art to the Dunhuang area.

During eight dynasties, each narrative was based on a particular scripture, but sometimes the Chinese scriptures differed from the original Indian version. There is no doubt that the five favorite Jatakas represent all the great murals at the Mogao caves. They enjoyed immense popular support from the Chinese people, and played an important role in the repaying of moral obligations and demonstrating the law of causality.

The earliest illustrations of the Jataka stories were painted in prominent localities. There seemed to be a deep-seated desire to depict these kings and princes who sacrificed their physical bodies in order to save others and reach enlightenment. Later the subject-matter of the Jataka tales was placed in inconspicuous and obscure localities within the cave and became more stylized. The main figures continued to follow the ideas and influences of the Sui Dynasty. During the periods of the Tang, the Five Dynasties, and the Song, they are located in more fixed places, like those on the bottom of the illustration of the *Repaying Debts of Gratitude Sutra* on either right or left corners. Chief among the subjects painted in the periods of the Tang, the Five Dynasties, and the Song

are scenes of filial piety, the Sujata Jataka, the giving of alms to satisfy people's needs, and the Prince Shanyou Jataka.

In medieval China we see that Chinese Mahayana Buddhist followers portrayed the virtue of the practice of bodhisattva on the walls of the Mogao caves. They did this to encourage Chinese Buddhist followers to look at the Jataka tales; for in these tales, the bodhisattvas deeply seek the spiritual Buddha, evoke the compassionate mind of bodhisattva, and even advance toward Buddhahood by sacrificing portions of their body.

Indeed, Chinese artists selected quite a number of popular and inspirational Jataka tales to paint on cave walls. Their murals are associated with the six Paramitas of the bodhisattvas who exercised their altruism to help or save other sentient beings. At the same time, the artists altered their styles and techniques to suit the Chinese, whose aesthetic tastes changed over time.

Buddhist ideology initially spread over north and south China. People of northern China, in particular, believed in karma when society was deeply chaotic due to the suffering of war and famine. Because they lived in suffering, pain and misery, they wanted to make good karma for the future by emulating the actions of a bodhisattva.

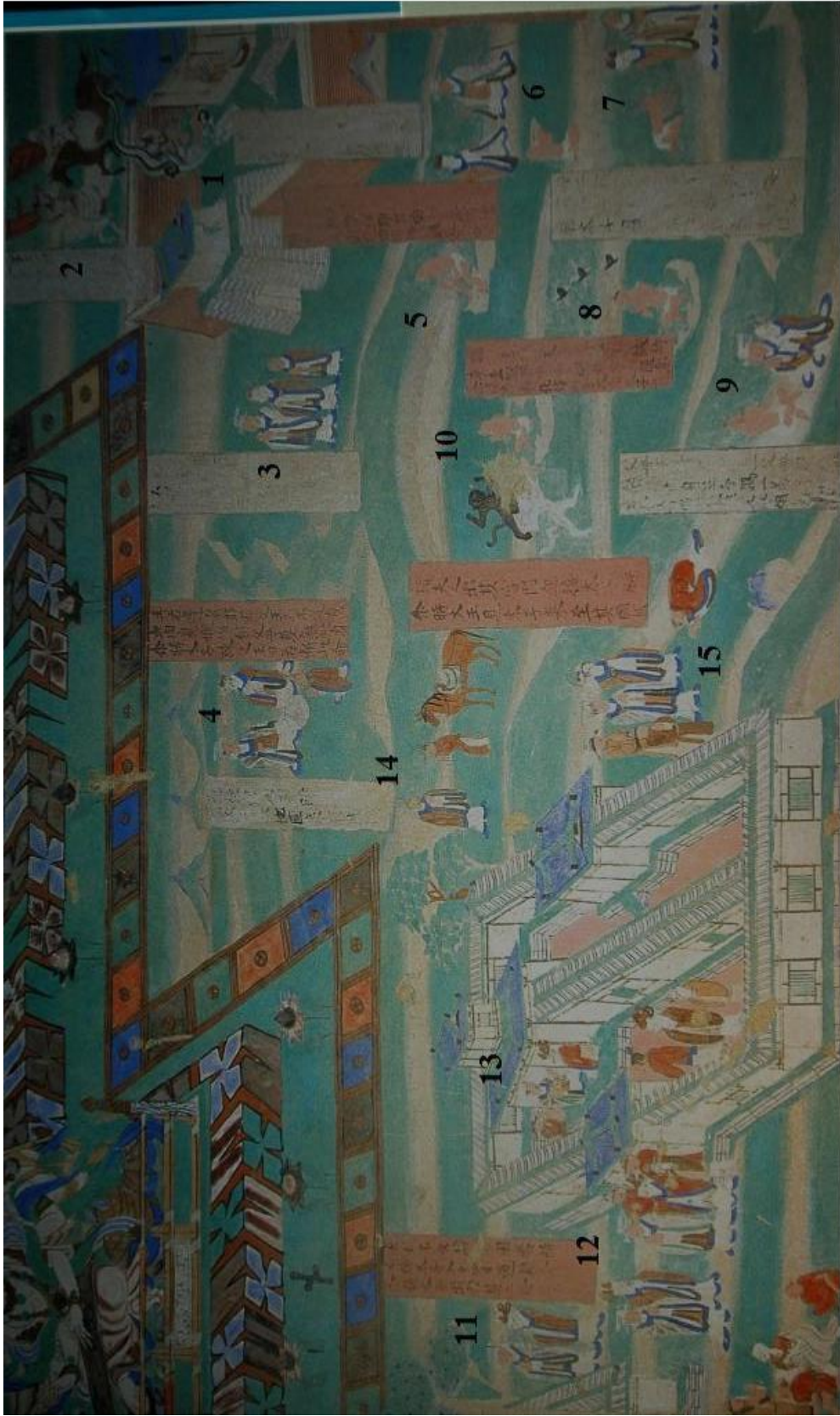
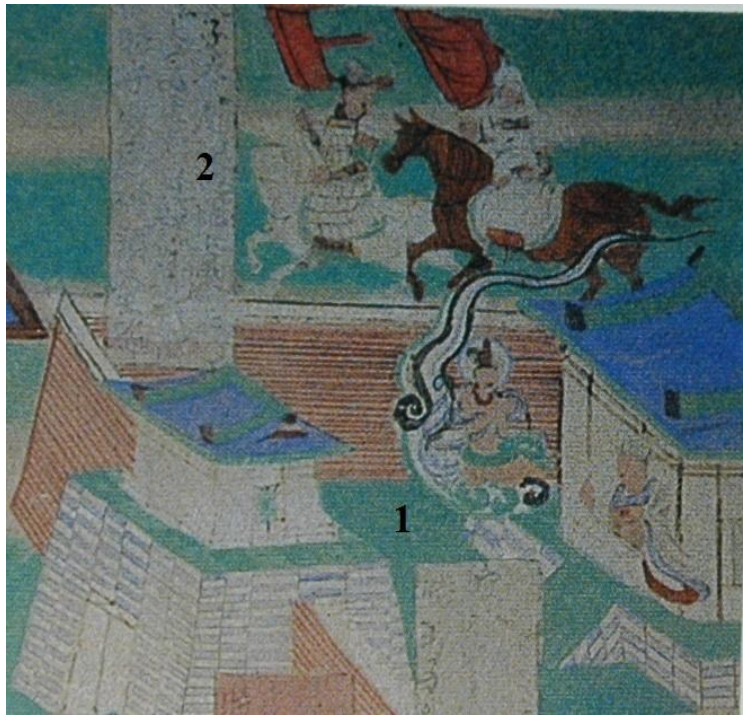


Figure 6.5 shows the Prince Sujata Jataka on the bottom right-hand corner of the south wall in Cave 98, the Five Dynasties. The story tells of a filial son who cuts off his flesh to feed his parents.

Source: Yin 2000:151.



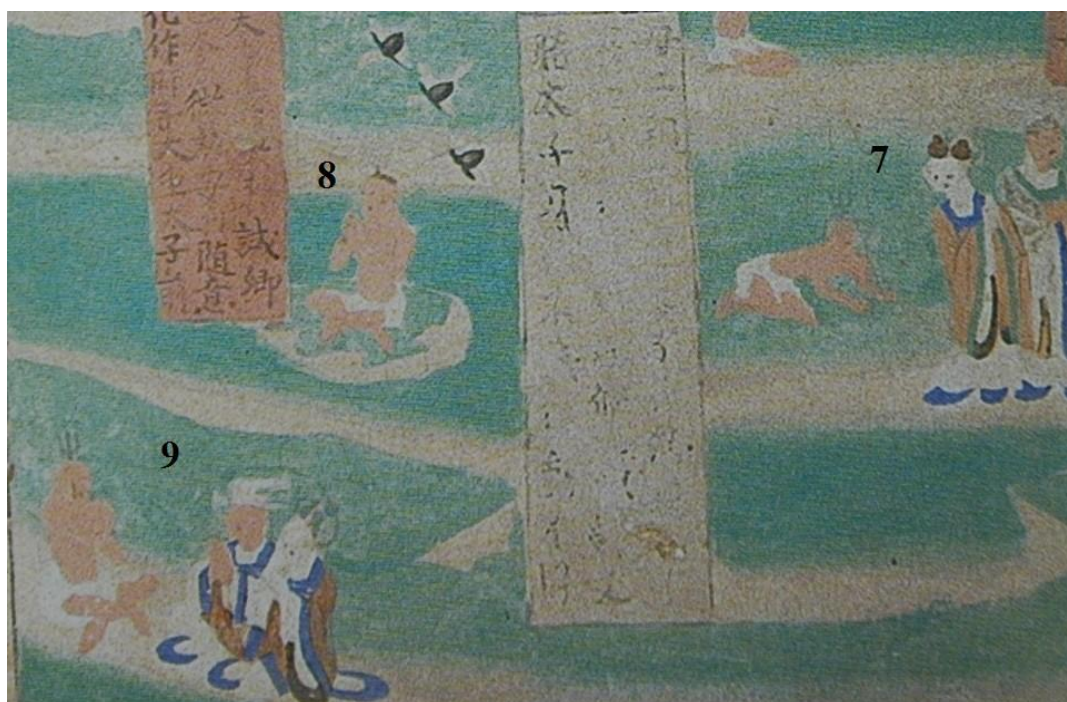
Figures 6.5.1 and 6.5.2.



Figures 6.5.3 and 6.5.4.



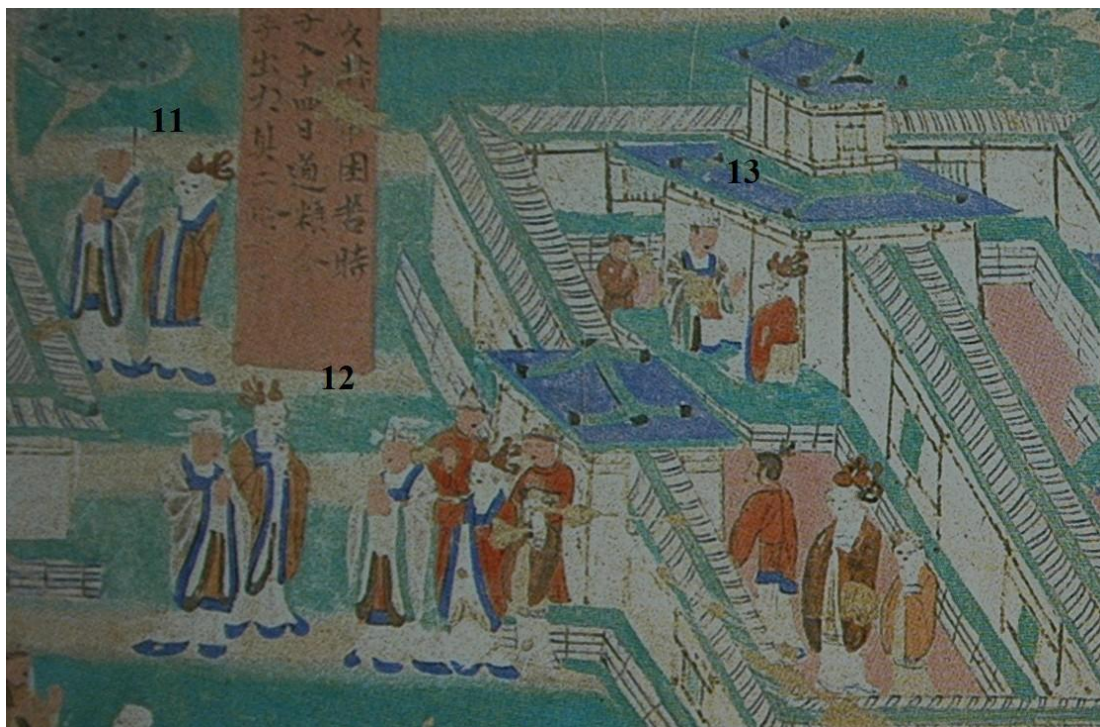
Figures 6.5.5 and 6.5.6.



Figures 6.5.7, 6.5.8, and 6.5.9.



Figure 6.5.10.



Figures 6.5.11, 6.5.12. and 6.5.13.

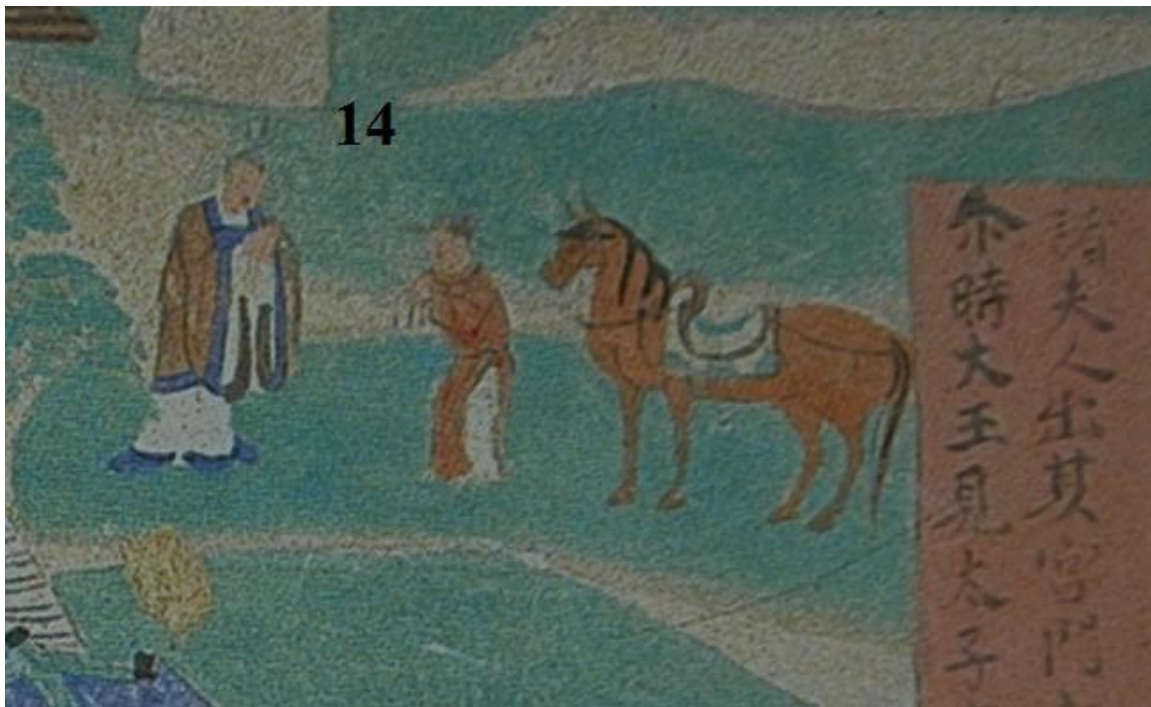


Figure 6.5.14.



Figure 6.5.15.

CHAPTER SEVEN

JATAKA TALES' ALTRUISTIC ACTS AS DEPICTED IN THE MOGAO CAVES OF DUNHUANG

In Mahayana Buddhism the concept of altruism refers to performing deeds which benefit “the welfare of others” (Shih 1988:2522). Specifically, bodhisattvas are the altruistic personages who follow a special path that reaches through multiple lifetimes. First, they pledge to become bodhisattvas, beings who have advanced so far that they can postpone entering nirvana by remaining outside of it in order to help all other sentient beings enter nirvana. Second, these personages perform their altruistic acts through many lifetimes. This chapter examines and analyzes the murals with depictions of the Jataka tales from the Buddhist perspective of altruism.

The Mogao cave murals depict five forms of altruism: reciprocal altruism, fearless self-sacrificing altruism, boundless giving altruism, kin directed altruism, and courageous altruism. I refer to these collectively as “cascade altruism”. I argue that the concepts of cascade altruism and the five forms of altruism contained within it are needed to fully understand the Mogao murals, and they also can provide a new perspective for future Buddhist studies.

The present chapter explores whether Western literature can and should be included in the quest to better understand altruistic acts. It begins with a definition of altruism and deals with altruistic behavior in Western literature, including a sociobiological and sociopsychological approach. Finally, it investigates and analyzes the paintings of the Jataka tales to help explain the cascade altruism paradigm and to

understand what makes bodhisattvas help others, which is either repeatedly experienced or extends beyond individual lifetimes.

A. Modeling of Altruism in Western Literature

In the study of altruism, it has long been a puzzle for many different disciplines to define the essential elements of altruism, because in Western literature each discipline, including anthropology, sociobiology, social psychology, theology, behavioral biology, ethology, political science, and economics, has a principle or definition to cover it. Indeed, a series of behaviours related to altruism such as kin selection (Maynard Smith 1964; Hamilton 1964), reciprocal altruism (Trivers 1971; Alexander 1987; Nowak and Sigmund 1998), strong reciprocity (Gintis 2000; Fehr, Fischbacher, and Gächter 2002; Fehr and Gächter 2002; Fehr and Fischbacher 2003), and altruism and helping behavior (Macaulay and Berkowitz 1970; Wispé 1978; Krebs 1982; Sober and Wilson 1998) began very early in human societies and have been a major focus of attention throughout history.

1. A Definition of Altruism

The term “altruism” is derived from the French *autrui*, meaning “of or to others” (Simpson and Weiner 1989:371) and was coined by French philosopher and sociologist Auguste Comte (1798-1857) in the 19th-century, but it originated from the Latin word—*alter*, “other.” Comte created the term “altruism” that has been used to refer to an ethical doctrine and the belief that human beings have a moral obligation to serve others and to show interest in others as a principle of action, referring to what he called the

“sympathetic instincts” (1851:569). In his book, *System of Positive Polity*, in referring to the interpretations of phrenologist Franz Josef Gall (1758-1828) Comte states his belief that

As to the locality of these three instincts [attachment, benevolence, veneration], Gall’s solution, except for the first of them, may be left untouched.... the great founder of cerebral physiology had been induced to place *Attachment* [my italics] in close relation to the egoistic organs and away from the two other sympathetic instincts. But with the organ of *Benevolence* [my italics] he was more successful.... Allotting the highest median portion of the frontal division.... *Veneration* [my italics]...should be placed immediately behind it.... Attachment I would place laterally to Veneration. Its organ sloping from before backwards connects itself below with that of the Love of Approbation.

Comte 1851:569

For Comte the motivation of altruism rested on these three sympathetic instincts: attachment, veneration, and benevolence. Moreover, he believed that “Live for Others” is the definitive formula for the human morality that he called altruism (Comte 1875:566). Therefore, in 19th century philosophy, altruism is an ethical doctrine and concerns moral actions that aspire to the good or welfare of others as their ultimate goal.

During the 1970’s, altruism was defined as “any behavior which benefits another in need, regardless of the helper’s motives” (Macaulay and Berkowitz 1970:2). Recently, Daniel Batson, an American social psychologist, has recast the definition for altruism. According to him, “Altruism is a motivational state with the ultimate goal of increasing another’s welfare” (Batson 1991:6). Kristen Monroe, a political psychologist, defines altruism as “behavior intended to benefit another, even when this risks possible sacrifice to the welfare of the actor” (Monroe, 1996:6). James Ozinga is an American political scientist and provides another definition for it. In his words, “altruism is behavior benefiting someone else at a cost to oneself” (Ozinga 1999: xv). These writers all focus

on the motivation and intention of an altruism that desires to benefit others and even to sacrifice for them. In addition, Post formulated a new definition for altruism and calls “genuine altruism....an action done without assuming reciprocal or reputational gains for the agent, but that by its very inward dynamic enhances well-being and often contributes to health, so long as it is not experienced as overwhelming” (Post 2007:6). This view offers a new field of study in that it is believed that altruists who produce health benefits for others will themselves be benefited. Most definitions of altruism are constructed on the norm of selfless behavior, carried out to benefit others without any anticipation of rewards. In my view all definitions of altruism must include action in which the helper must do something to benefit others and that, sometimes, must require self-sacrifice. Generally, therefore, definitions indicate that altruism is the best way to benefit others.

Traditionally a moral norm, the Golden Rule, is the proverbial guideline for Christians, Jews, and others in the English speaking world. It is a central social behavior for Judeo-Christian morality. Verse 18 of Leviticus 19 in the Old Testament says in the King James Version that “thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” (Leviticus 19:18). Here a neighbor might be someone who is a stranger. Later, the teaching of Jesus not only emphasized love of your neighbor but your enemy as yourself, so verse 35 of Luke 6 states that “love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest” (Luke 6:35). The Golden Rule serves as a model of altruistic behavior for modern Jews and Christians and means that humans have the capability to love others in the world as they love themselves.

2. Biological Study of Altruism

In 1852 Charles Darwin first published *the Descent of Man* and might have presented it in quest of “altruistic behavior”. In Chapter 4, he insisted that “We are thus impelled to relieve the sufferings of another, in order that our own painful feelings may be at the same time relieved” (Darwin 1998 (1871):109). Moreover, in 1859 Darwin offered an explanation of “altruistic behavior” in *The Origin of Species*, as “... one special difficulty, which at first appeared to me insuperable, and actually fatal to my whole theory” (Darwin 1964 (1859):236). The motivation of altruism might provide the potential for others to escape their suffering. He insisted that “The feeling of pleasure from society is probably an extension of parental or filial affections. The all-important emotion of sympathy is distinct from that of love” (Darwin 1998 (1871):108-109). In view of his theory of natural selection, altruistic behaviors seemed unclear to him and were at first not fully developed; but later his natural selection framework helped to explain how behavior patterns could contribute to the survival of others, both for humans and animals.

Sociobiologists have taken approximately 100 years to explain how natural selection can produce the altruism that benefits close relatives. During the early 1960s, William Hamilton, a British biologist, provided the first mathematical demonstration of kin selection that deals with the evolution of apparently altruistic acts, but the term “kin selection” was coined by John Maynard Smith (1964:1145). Hamilton provided a concept of “inclusive fitness” for the genetic theory of altruism between relatives (Hamilton 1964:8). Edward O. Wilson stated that “When a person (or animal) increases the fitness of another at the expense of his own fitness, this is called an act of altruism”

(Wilson 1978:27). For kin selection the genes are presumably responsible for altruistic behavior being passed down from one generation to the next; and altruistic behaviors may spread across groups and cultures. Alexander suggests that “some of the differences in patterns of altruism between different cultures conform to predictions from kin selection theory” (Ridley and Dawkins 1981:33) because all humans are related. Therefore, altruistic behavior can be found within all cultures.

Darwin suggested a theory of reciprocal altruism in *The Descent of Man*, which was “the power of sympathy; for we are led by the hope of receiving good in return to perform acts of sympathetic kindness to others” (Darwin 1998 (1871): 110). In reciprocal altruism, if we aid others, we can expect to receive aid in return. That is living “the golden rule” (Darwin 1998 (1871): 131). In 1971 Robert Trivers, a biologist, invented the phrase “reciprocal altruism”, which occurs when individuals help genetically unrelated people by their altruistic behavior and expect it to be reciprocated at some future time (Trivers 1971: 39). This concept is based on direct reciprocity and appears not to be genetically determined, but may act as a symbiosis to benefit others inside and outside of kinship ties.

In theory, reciprocal altruism usually involves direct reciprocity because altruism is repeated between the same individuals. However, recently, evolutionary biologists have developed alternatives to this idea, including indirect reciprocity, strong reciprocity, and costly signaling. According to Alexander (1987:94), indirect reciprocity “involves reputation and status, and results in everyone in the group continually being assessed and reassessed.” Therefore, he uses indirect reciprocity to explain all human behaviours which are based on moral systems in human societies. Nowak and Sigmund state that

indirect reciprocity involves a donors' cooperation to help a recipient at his cost. If so, the recipient receives great benefit. However, if the donor decides not to cooperate, both individuals receive nothing (Nowak and Sigmund 1998:574). Although both reciprocal altruisms involve unrelated individuals and indirect reciprocity, there is a difference between the two altruisms. Whereas Alexander's indirect reciprocity is based on moral systems like reputation, Nowak and Sigmund's indirect reciprocity depends on cooperation among individuals who decide to benefit others or not and does not necessarily require two individuals to meet again. For example, when you help your friend, you do not anticipate a reward from your friend, but from someone else. According to the absence of cooperation, your friend should be helped by others.

Strong reciprocity provides evidence to explain cultural evolution in human cooperative behavior in bilateral interactions. It prescribes that individuals sacrifice their resources to reward fair cooperation and punish unfair cooperation. Fehr, Fischbacher, and Gächter (2002:1) developed an alternative evolutionary theory, strong reciprocity that challenges the self-interest assumption and explains social norms, such as "food-sharing norms" and "collective action norms." However, it does not involve genetic transmission by which individuals with altruistic behaviors foster cooperation with others in social groups (Gintis 2000:169; Fehr and Gächter 2002:137; Fehr and Fischbacher 2003:785-791). Based on strong reciprocity, such altruism involves genetically unrelated individuals and indirect reciprocity. It also demonstrates that cooperation can build a reputation in larger cultural groups that benefits both donor and recipient and punishes individuals who engage in unfair behavior. For example, in the public goods game, when a group or a player is willing to contribute an amount to the individuals of the group, this

strong reciprocity provides a benefit to all members in the group. In contrast, if an individual of the group fails to cooperate, the group punishes or ostracizes the noncooperator within the social group.

3. Psychological Study of Altruism

Hamilton's theory has contributed mightily to our understanding of evolutionary mechanisms in fields from sociobiology, ecology, and psychology to ethology—the study of animals in the wild. The theories of evolution and culture reveal the social psychologists' ideas of what motivates individuals to perform altruistically and without rewards.

Psychologists have developed the most diverse analyses of altruism. Macaulay and Berkowitz (1970:3) defined helping behavior as altruism “carried out to benefit another without anticipation of rewards from external sources.” However, in the psychological laboratory (Wispé 1978:2), others showed that altruistic behaviors may require some cost from donors for their actions (Wispé 1978; Krebs 1982). For example, Wispé focused on “positive behavior—altruism, sympathy, and helping” and suggested that altruistic help “must involve at least some nontrivial self-sacrifice” (Wispé 1978:3 and 305). For Wispé, helping behavior is based on sympathy for the individual who receives the altruistic action. On the other hand, Krebs (1982:75) states the view that “altruism is an idea in the minds of people” who are willing to sacrifice their own welfare to benefit others. This view seems to correspond to the behavior of Buddhist bodhisattvas who often carry in their minds an ultimate goal and intentionally perform self-sacrifice to save others.

Altruism is explained more usefully by Batson who provides a new definition for the term altruism and suggests that “Altruism is a motivational state with the ultimate goal of increasing another’s welfare” (Batson 1991:6). In this situation, individuals may require a different form of motivation to reach a specific goal of pleasure and to improve others’ welfare such as the altruistic actions performed by bodhisattvas whose motivation is more concerned with the benefit to others, than the cost to themselves. Therefore, sometimes altruism requires self-sacrifice. In most of the Jataka tale cases, the costs of helping must outweigh the rewards; consequently, the full cost to the helping bodhisattvas often includes loss of their lives.

For Sober and Wilson (1998) there are two sorts of altruism: evolutionary altruism and psychological altruism. The former is based on “fitness consequences” and is directed at the effects of behavior on survival and reproduction. “Individuals who increase the fitness of others at the expense of their own fitness are (evolutionary) altruists, regardless of how, or even what, they think or feel about the action (Sober and Wilson 1998:6). By contrast, psychological altruism puts more emphasis on the motivation that individuals have for acting as they do. The act of helping another person requires “an ultimate concern for the welfare of others” which is psychologically altruistic (Sober and Wilson 1998:7). So, they believed that both evolutionary and psychological altruism developed “to motivate adaptive behavior” and concluded that “...every motive can be assessed from two quite different angles. The fact that a motive produces a behavior that is evolutionarily selfish or altruistic does not settle whether the motive is psychologically egoistic or altruistic” (Sober and Wilson 1998:205). Within

these various approaches, all explanations may be needed to provide a clear-cut formula for the altruist paradigm.

In the 19th century, Comte used the term altruism as something that was inherent in the human condition, but in the current academic circles of evolutionary biologists, altruism tends to be explained as an individual's behavior based on benefit to kin and group selection, or voluntary cooperation either through rewards or sanctions. On the other hand, altruism is also based on norms or complex systems of personal judgment in psychological research. Current models provide an understanding of biological and psychological bases for altruistic behavior in humans.

B. Jataka Tales as Altruistic Actions

The term “altruism” has been used to refer to actions that benefit the welfare of others or show regard for others. This includes actions which are not directed towards close kin and for which no return is expected either now or in the future. For Buddhists, the practice of “true altruism” means to give freely without expecting anything in return. “True altruism” has no strings attached and leaves the giver, the gift, and the recipient free (Shih 1988:681). As Derrida (1991:7) phrases the concept, “gift” does not involve an economic transaction, nor an expected return to the donor. It has to remain ‘*aneconomic*’ (outside the economic sphere), so here I believe that Buddhists’ altruism is more concerned with motives than with directly observable behavior as portrayed in the Jataka paintings in the Mogao caves.

To analyze Buddhist altruism by looking at Buddhist narratives, the Jataka tales, as they are depicted in the murals of the Mogao caves of Dunhuang, I utilize three types

of altruism, kin-directed, reciprocal exchange, or strong reciprocity, to compare the altruistic deeds of earthly bodhisattvas, including bestowing fearlessness, beneficence, and courage. Kin-directed altruism favors relatively close kin; it may involve the knowledge of genetic relationships (Grafen 1991; Hamilton 1964). Reciprocal exchange altruism appears in bilateral interactions in which there is either a short- or long-term return. Here the actor is willing to help others and only expects future returns from the present or from other receivers (Trivers 1971). In strong reciprocity altruism, people cooperate voluntarily (Fehr, Fischbacher and Gächter 2002). This chapter will answer two basic questions related to these three types of altruism. First, which types of altruism do these main Jataka figures demonstrate? Second, what motivates the earthly bodhisattvas to perform altruistic behaviors to increase their own, or other's welfare? An analysis of the Jataka tales depicted in the Mogao caves can answer these questions. It will also suggest the need to consider a different type of altruism, "cascade altruism" (defined below).

In Western literature, altruism is viewed as an act which occurs during only one lifetime (Grafen 1991; Trivers 1971; Hamilton 1964). In the Mahayana Buddhist belief system, however, the performer of altruistic actions, through many lifetimes, has the ultimate goal of saving all sentient beings that enabled a bodhisattva to be reborn as the Buddha in India: this is cascade altruism. As Lewis remarked, "... western [literature]... views [a] life and destiny [that] is contained with a 'one time around' reality, [while] the ... Buddhist worldview understands life as an ongoing succession of incarnations" (Lewis 2005:90).

Cascade altruism will be discussed below but, in essence, it is the grand altruism recognized by Mahayana Buddhism in which the performer of the altruistic deeds, through many lifetimes, has the ultimate goal of saving all sentient beings. Within cascade altruism, the specific deed performed in a given lifetime may be, in its physical nature, kin-directed or non kin-directed, reciprocal or non-reciprocal (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1 Types of Altruistic Acts		
	Kin-Directed	Non-Kin Directed
Reciprocal	Kin-Directed	Non-Kin Directed
	Reciprocal	Reciprocal
Non-Reciprocal	Kin-Directed	Non-Kin Directed
	Non-Reciprocal	Non-Reciprocal

1. Introduction to Cascade Altruism

Buddhist belief maintains that both kin and non-kin directed altruistic acts occur in more than one lifetime; it is their collectivity which constitutes cascade altruism. The analytical construct of “cascade altruism” is useful because: 1). it extracts and distills one major line of thought in Buddhist philosophy, and makes it available for Western scholarly analysis; 2). it broadens the Western single-lifetime analytical construct of “altruism” to include the analytical construct of multiple-lifetime altruism; 3). it makes possible a fuller understanding of the production, use, and meaning of Buddhist literature and art. Here it will be applied to the Jataka tale murals in the Mogao caves.

There are five specific altruistic deeds depicted in the Mogao caves, as follows:

The first is reciprocal altruism, the exchange of tangible (sacrificing one's physical body) and non-tangible goods—the true Dharma, truth as laid down in Buddhist scriptures (Chambers 1998:444). Here there is an immediate return. Reciprocal exchange altruism appears in bilateral interactions in which there is a short-term return, or a long-term return in which the actor is willing to help others and only expects future returns from the present or later receivers (Trivers 1971). Some of the altruism depicted in the Mogao caves is reciprocal, but some is non-reciprocal because the doer of the altruistic deed has no expectation of a return from the recipient of the deed. Also, the altruism depicted in the Mogao caves is not “strong reciprocity” (Fehr, Fischbacher and Gächter 2002), since no cooperation need take place. Other altruisms that are non-reciprocal follow:

Fearless self-sacrifice altruism expresses a willingness to sacrifice oneself for the needs of others, or an active sympathizing with others' sufferings.

Boundless-giving altruism gives material wealth to others who need and want it.

Kin directed altruism is, for example, the sacrifice of one's physical strength, like the filial Syama's helping his blind parents to survive in the forest and fulfill their goal of enlightenment. It is for existential benefit, not genetic benefit.

Western scholars focus on a distinction between kin and non-kin directed altruism. This is an important distinction because “kin directed altruism” is used to support the position that such altruistic acts are conducted because of the genetic benefit close kin receive from them (Grafen 1991; Hamilton 1964). In Buddhist philosophy, enlightenment is the goal. It is not related to reproduction and genetic fitness; rather, it is related to the benefit to kin in a larger existential sense. It is kin directed altruism which

supports the greater goal of enlightenment and the attainment of nirvana for all kin. This new, broader definition of kin directed altruism is related to the long-term existential benefit of kin and may or may not also involve direct biological benefit in terms of reproduction. This existential kin-directed altruism appears in the tale of Sujata, who showed filial piety by sacrificing his life so that his parents might live.

Courageous altruism is that which demonstrates physical courage while rescuing a stranger from a physically dangerous situation. This and all the other four kinds of altruistic deeds are subsets of the overall effects of cascade altruism.

Buddhist philosophy recognizes that non-kin directed altruistic acts occur. Non-kin directed altruism has the greater goal of saving all sentient beings and having compassion to benefit others. It is based on physical acts to achieve the desired result. It includes reciprocal altruism, fearless self-sacrifice altruism, boundless giving altruism, and courageous altruism.

Here it is useful to view cascade altruism as a set, to use the geometric perspective, and the five forms of specific altruistic deeds within it as subsets. Figure 7.1 shows this. The following discussion deals with some of the outcomes of this set and its included subsets.

Kin directed altruism and reciprocal altruism of Western literature are only one portion of cascade altruism because they presume that there is only a terrestrial, mortal, single, human life-span during which altruistic acts occur. By contrast, in cascade altruism, the Mogao caves' Jataka tales depict the ultimate Buddhist goal as the saving of all sentient beings, an altruism that extends through many lifetimes. Altruistic actions are done in a given lifetime specifically to further the doer on the path towards

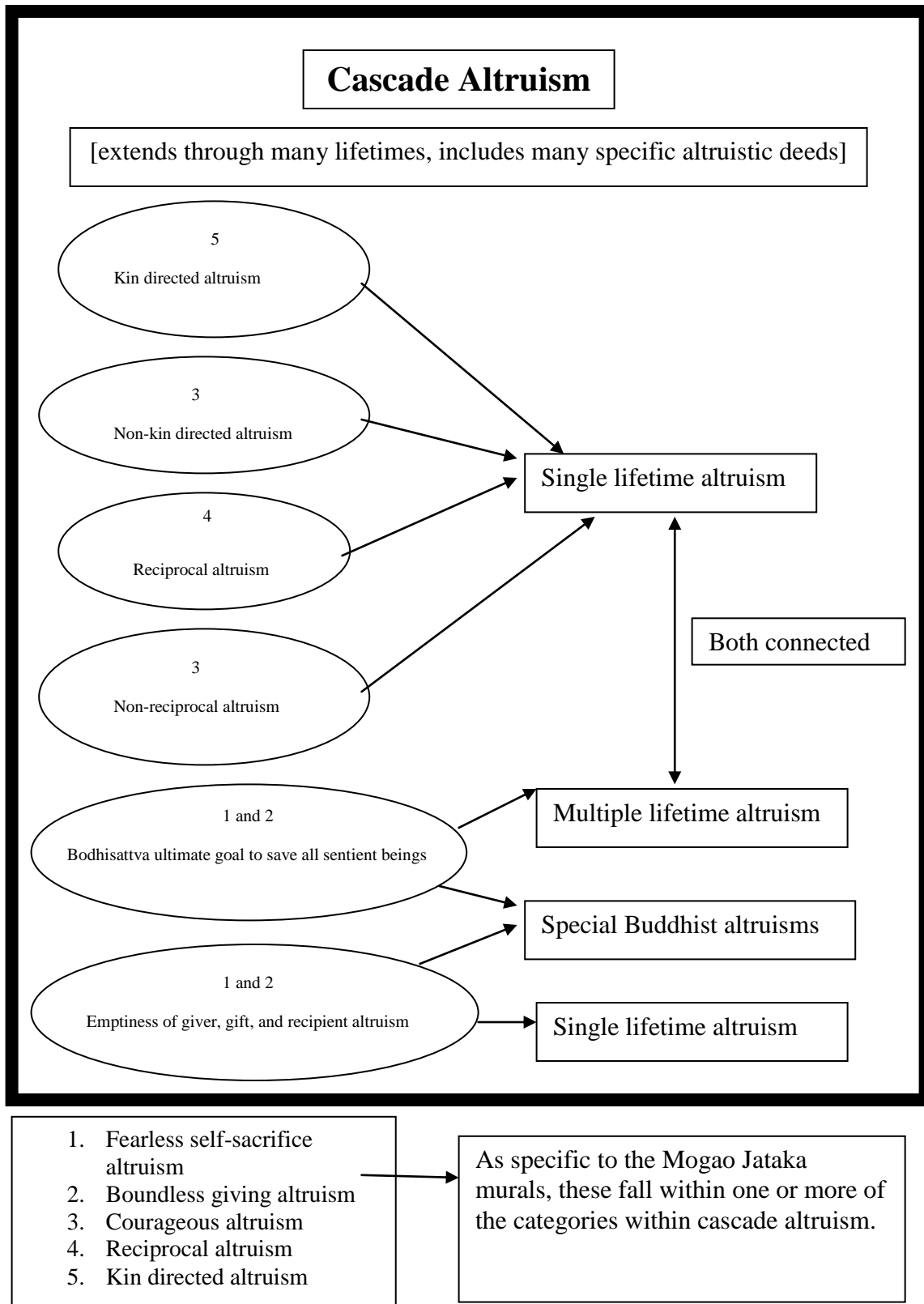


Figure 7.1 Cascade Altruism

bodhisattvahood.

Within the context of a given lifetime, behavior depicted in the Jataka murals may appear to be only kin directed or reciprocal. But, in fact, they are single lifetime steps on the bodhisattva path toward the ultimate goal of helping all sentient beings reach nirvana. Some Jataka murals depict emptiness altruism, where the giver, the gift, and the receiver are free from any clinging or attachments (Shih 1988:681). Buddhist philosophy states that attachment or clinging impedes progress toward nirvana and may pull one further away from that desired goal.

The physical manifestation of Mahayana Buddhist altruism is the particular altruistic deed performed within a given lifetime. This helps the immediate beneficiary and also advances the doer along the path to bodhisattvahood. A long series of such deeds, performed through several or many lifetimes, then may follow. The figures shown in the Jataka tales show some of these deeds. An important aspect of the Jataka tales is that, although each tale focuses upon a particular deed at a given time and place, the hearer/viewer of the Jataka tale is understood to be part of the larger picture—cascade altruism—within which a particular tale is situated.

Aspiring bodhisattvas perform altruistic acts with the conscious aim of doing virtuous and appropriate deeds to further their journey toward the goals of attaining a better rebirth in their next life and, ultimately, the state of enlightenment like the Buddha in India. A central belief of Mahayana Buddhism is that all sentient beings have the capability to free themselves from suffering and to achieve the realization of true reality, nirvana. The active belief is that the practitioner can achieve liberation through following the teachings of the Buddha which will enable them to carry out bodhisattva deeds.

The Mogao murals center around a dramatic primary deed, which is done within the larger context of cascade altruism with the ultimate intention of saving all other sentient beings from rebirth. Cascade altruism is a new analytical concept which has not previously appeared in the literature on altruism or the Mogao caves. The most important aspect of cascade altruism is the overarching context of Buddhist altruism that extends through many lifetimes. It inspired and motivated the construction of the Mogao caves, and also inspired and motivated the depiction of the Jataka tales in certain of those caves. The altruisms of the Jataka tales are situated within this overarching context of cascade altruism. The ultimate aim of cascade altruism is to assist all sentient beings in their escape from rebirth. Within the context of cascade altruism, many specific types of altruistic deeds/altruisms exist.

2. The Bodhisattva Doctrine

There are two primary schools of Buddhist thought about this concept recorded in historical theological texts. In Hinayana writings (Lesser Vehicle) the bodhisattva refers to the historical Buddha in his previous existences (Cowell 1973:x). However, Mahayana writings (Greater Vehicle) emphasize two separate aspects of the bodhisattva, the earthly and the transcendental. First, there are the “earthly bodhisattvas,” who are set apart by their compassion, charity, and altruism, as well as by their striving to attain enlightenment (Kohn 1991:25). Second, there are “transcendent bodhisattvas” who have accumulated merits through altruistic deeds in the past and so are qualified to enter buddhahood (Kohn 1991:24-25). These transcendent bodhisattvas delay their final entry into nirvana and are determined to remain in the earthly world until they have “brought

every sentient being across the sea of misery to the calm shores of enlightenment” (Ch’en 1964:13). This final act is the culmination of what I am here calling “cascade altruism” and emphasizes the multi-generational dimension of these deeds.

The Buddha said, at different times and in different places, that performing altruistic acts is the one way to become a bodhisattva (Yinshun 1993:85). Thus, sometimes the main figures of the Jataka tales take on human form and perform their deeds to benefit others. At other times, these earthly bodhisattvas are animal figures who have regard for the wellbeing of others. The present research contributes to the understanding of Buddhist altruism by examining the conduct of the main Jataka figures depicted in the Mogao caves. Because the lead human or animal in each tale has set specific goals for themselves, they perform specific deeds as they strive to reach the “status of Enlightened One” (Joshi & Banerjee 1998:173) or the state of a fully Enlightened Buddha. In essence, a bodhisattva attains enlightenment for his ultimate wisdom, but later he brings enlightenment to all sentient beings. This is a manifestation of his compassion, love, and kindness for all beings.

Overall, Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism accept the doctrine of bodhisattva as the highest position, and they both propagate this belief throughout the Jataka tales. According to the Jataka, all sentient beings can become bodhisattvas; the decision is left to the individual whether to take the path of the bodhisattva or not.

C. Cascade Altruism in the Jataka Tale Murals

In a larger analytical context the question arises: why did the main Jataka figures make various sacrifices or engage in boundless giving on behalf of themselves or others?

The answer is that the deeds of the Jataka tales can be looked at from two principal points of view. These are: Buddhist beliefs and the concept of rebirth.

First is the way the Jataka tales present Buddhist beliefs. These beliefs include important aspects of all Buddhist virtues, and they represent the development of human values. Key among these are the concepts of karma and the proper ways of action.

Second is how the Jataka tales present Buddhist beliefs that center around “rebirth”. Differences over this issue separate the two major Buddhist schools. Conventional Hinayana Buddhists want to attain the status of *arhat*, a non-regression position. This means that they will not come back to this earthly world. From an ethno-historical perspective, a key cultural event in the development of Mahayana Buddhism during the first few centuries A.D. was the development of the concept of the bodhisattva.

It does not matter if bodhisattvas have been born into human or animal forms. What characterizes these bodhisattvas is their nature as “...helpful, kind, and self-sacrificing or brave, clever and even possessing supernatural wisdom” (Law 1974:272). They also have the altruistic aim of intending to first save all other sentient beings from earthly rebirth; therefore, they themselves renounce complete entry into nirvana. The lives of former Buddhas and of bodhisattvas, as recounted in the Jataka tales, have inspired much Buddhist art both in murals and bas-reliefs in the Mogao caves and elsewhere.

My analysis centers on the actions of the main figures depicted in the Jataka tales, and is based on my own interpretations. Each of the individuals depicted in a single-lifetime scenario performed reciprocal, fearless, boundless giving, kin-directed, or courageous acts of altruism. The central figure of each Jataka tale was an individual who

desired to help others in various ways, both in this life and through the attainment of bodhisattvahood; and, thus, the actions of these personages help one to understand Buddhist cascade altruism. This would also have been true for those who viewed and discussed these figures when the Mogao caves were actively used. The following analysis covers specific examples of altruistic acts depicted in the Mogao caves' Jataka tale murals.

1. Reciprocal Altruism

King Bilengjieli, King Qianshenipoli, and King Chandraprabha were rulers of kingdoms who practiced the bodhisattva path and made their pledges to enlighten themselves first so that then they could benefit others. In order to seek enlightenment or perfection, these three kings immolated themselves to help them find true Dharma, the Ultimate Truth. They sent out proclamations and sought true Dharma everywhere. They asked, "Who has true Dharma and can explain it to us? We will provide him with whatever he needs.

King Bilengjieli's story involved hammering one thousand nails into his body for a Brahman (Huijue et al. 1927:350a-c); King Qianshenipoli suffered piercing with a thousand shafts and burning with torches for a Brahman (Huijue et al. 1927: 349b); and King Chandraprabha offered his head to a Brahman (Huijue et al. 1927:387b-390b). In each case these three kings were involved in direct reciprocity, willing to sacrifice their physical bodies for the reward of profound Dharma and, later, attainment of enlightenment.

Although both the Brahman and Prince Tanmoqian suffered in their search for enlightened verse, they performed self-sacrifices to achieve true Dharma (Huijue et al. 1927:349a). Whereas the Brahman donated his flesh to a hungry asura, Prince Tanmoqian sacrificed his physical body by jumping into a pit of fire for a Brahman. There is a crucial difference between the two tales: whereas, in the case of the Brahman, Indra transformed himself into an ugly asura, in the Jataka of Prince Tanmoqian, Indra transformed himself into a Brahman. Thus, whereas the Brahman's flesh serves as food to feed the hungry asura, Prince Tanmoqian's flesh serves as a promise.

All five of the main characters of these Jataka tales did not do this for themselves, but for the sake of others because they believed that through such altruistic acts they would be reincarnated as bodhisattvas and so be able to help and save other sentient beings who needed their help. In the final stage, when they had become Buddhas, they then would expound their true Dharma as a way to benefit others because true Dharma can guide sentient beings to true knowledge and correct views, maintain their virtues, and, eventually reach the attainment of enlightenment. These five Jataka tales show that they cared more about others than they did about their own physical survival. Therefore, the prosocial behaviors of the five characters are considered to be examples of great compassionate altruism. To illustrate, the five main characters have the ultimate goal of upholding the principle of justice and leading them to help others in need, which in turn brings benefit to others as well as to themselves.

In the tale of King Xiuliupo, he only provided his treasures to satisfy his people, but he experienced no true dharma to benefit his people (Huijue et al. 1927:349a-b). Therefore, he decided to proclaim that whoever had true dharma would receive whatever

he wished from him. A yaksha, a human-eating being, came to King Xiuliupo and said that he had true dharma, that if the king would give him his wife and son to devour, he would teach the dharma to the king. Therefore, the king offered his wife and son to the yaksha in order to hear the true dharma. The case of King Xiuliupo Jataka may still be considered as reciprocal altruism, but it is indirect reciprocity. That is, the king is willing to sacrifice his possessions, wife and son, to be kind to the yaksha who is being kind to benefit the king. Even though the sacrifice is not the king himself, it is costly; but it provides rewards for both donor and receiver.

In theory, reciprocal altruism includes cooperation which benefits both parties. It implies a pair of mutually reciprocated altruistic acts. Therefore, the benefits to the six main characters demonstrate that individuals may sacrifice themselves to receive the true dharma in the present and that will benefit others in the future. Reciprocity is a favored strategy and popular theme for most of the main characters in the Jataka tales depicted in the caves. This approach, an increasing generosity in reciprocally altruistic exchanges, is a Jataka tales-cape staple.

2. Fearless Self-sacrifice Altruism

By practicing great fearless, self-sacrifice altruism, all bodhisattvas can bestow fearlessness upon sentient beings so that they will not encounter suffering and anguish but will gain tranquility and peace. In the King Sibi Jataka, when a panicky dove was chased by a hungry hawk, the dove sought shelter and flew into King Sibi's right palm. The hawk approached King Sibi and asked for the dove (Huijue et al. 1927: 351c-352b). The hawk said he was so hungry he needed to eat the dove's flesh in order to survive; but

King Sibi rejected the hawk's request. In order to save the dove's life, King Sibi offered his own flesh to feed the hungry hawk. Finally, King Sibi jumped onto one side of the balance scale because the weight of the piece of his flesh that he had cut off was less than the dove's weight. Thus King Sibi sacrificed himself to save the dove's life.

In the Prince Mahasattva Jataka tale, Prince Mahasattva saw a hungry tigress and her cubs (Huijue et al. 1927:352b). He sympathized with their plight and offered himself as food to save their lives. Selflessly, he fed himself to the hungry tigress and her cubs. Both cases have three aspects in common. First is prosocial behavior, "a person seems to give up rewards without gaining any in return" (Rosenhan 1978:103). Second is a position of empathy and sympathy because King Sibi and Prince Mahasattva both had an intense feeling for others. According to Rosenhan (1978:103), willingness to sacrifice for the needs or wants of others "is frequently considered to be the basis for altruistic acts." Third is the fact that both King Sibi and Prince Mahasattva were motivated by loving kindness, friendliness toward all creatures, pity, a feeling for those who suffer or want, and empathic joy, which is a pleasure felt for others (Cohen 1978:92).

Fearless self-sacrifice altruism can give fearlessness to all sentient beings who are experiencing any kind of fear and can remove the fright that occurs in pressing situations. Thus, the "Perceiver of the World's Sounds" scripture explains that "... this Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World's Sounds has succeeded in acquiring benefits such as these and, taking on a variety of different forms, [as this bodhisattva] goes about among the lands saving living beings....This bodhisattva and mahasattva [great existence] Perceiver of the World's Sounds can bestow fearlessness on those who are in fearful, pressing or difficult circumstances" (Watson 1993:302). By describing the sympathetic acts performed,

fearless self-sacrifice altruism shows how to help panicky or fearful sentient beings find the courage required to do what is needed. The decision of King Sibi and Prince Mahasattva to sacrifice their lives in order to save other sentient beings was spontaneous. They performed altruistic actions and showed no fear while doing them.

These fearless, self-sacrifice altruisms, helping to save other people, are beneficial to others and are intended to be so. Bodhisattvas perform them in order to improve others' welfare at great personal sacrifice and without obvious reward.

3. Boundless Giving Altruism

In the Prince Sudana (Shengjian 1924:418c-424a) and Prince Shanshi (Unknown author 1924:124a-166a) Jataka tales, the generous giving of alms inevitably led to a reduction of the kingdoms' jewels and properties. Cohen (1978:81) defines altruism as being the act of a person giving everything or nearly everything to other people because they need or want it. Both Princes sympathized with all sentient beings who lacked material goods and were hungry. Therefore, the two Princes had to sacrifice their own possessions and properties in order to do everything possible to satisfy others. As the Lotus Sutra states:

Bodhisattvas [have many] various causes and conditions and [seek] the way of the Buddha. Some of them give alms, gold, silver, coral, pearls, *mani* jewels, seashell, agate, diamonds and other rarities, men and women servants, carriages, jeweled hand carriages and palanquins, gladly presenting these donations.... bodhisattvas who give their wives, ...children,...offerings of this kind [and] of many different wonderful varieties [present them] gladly and without regret as they seek the unsurpassed way.

Watson 1993:11

In the case of the King Sudhira, he, who has practiced the path of bodhisattva in the past and continues in the present and even the future, seeks Buddha's wisdom (Huijue et al. 1927:390b-392c). He promises that everyone who comes to request aid will not leave empty-handed. Therefore, his generosity is well-known in his kingdom and in the neighboring kingdom. In the tale, a blind Brahman from the neighboring kingdom came to the palace and requested Sudhira's eyes in order to recover his own eyesight. King Sudhira believed that supporting worthy religious people could strengthen his practice on the path of bodhisattva. By the same token, he believed that compassion is the great source of energy for bodhisattvas who had the empathy needed to remove others' suffering such as that of the blind Brahman's darkness. That is why King Sudhira decided to donate his eyes and help the blind Brahman to see the light of day. The behavior of the king is described in the Lotus Sutra as "bodhisattvas who happily give heads, 'eyes', bodies, and limbs in their search for the Buddha wisdom" (Watson 1993:9).

Prince Sudana, Prince Shanshi, and King Sudhira practiced the bodhisattva way of boundless giving altruism, which is done solely for the benefit of others. The boundless giving of both princes and the king constitute examples of emptiness altruism which is understood in Mahayana Buddhist philosophy as being the "emptiness of giver, gift, and recipient" (Shih 1989:681). This boundless giving falls within Derrida's (1991:7) concept of "gift" which cannot involve an economic transaction, nor any return to the donor. It has to remain '*aneconomic*' (outside the economic sphere). Within the context of the three Jataka tales, "...giving provides avenues for achieving personal gratification" (Cohen 1978:96). To help another can improve one's own welfare and still be altruistic if the helping is motivated by an ultimate desire to improve the other's welfare. For

example, if your friend's distress causes you distress, but you help to relieve it as an end in itself, then your motivation is altruistic. Because these outcomes pursue the ultimate goal of relieving a friend's distress, the motivation is altruistic.

4. Kin Directed Altruism

Two Jataka tales depicted in the Mogao caves show self-sacrifice for the sake of one's biological kin. These are the tales of Prince Sujata and the filial Syama. Both tales help us to understand the altruism of Buddhist filial piety. Both cases are based on biologically determined kin selection altruism.

Prince Sujata fed his flesh to save his parents' lives as they journeyed to a neighboring kingdom to ask for help to defeat the rebellious courtier, Lou Hou (Unknown author 1924:128b-130b). It is one of the most obvious examples of altruistic self-sacrifice that occurs. Prince Sujata sacrificed his flesh directly for his parents. That is kin selection altruism because he helped his kin to survive. As Wilson states, "If the individual is altruistic, he will perform some sacrifice for the benefit of [close relatives such as brothers, sisters, and parents]" (Wilson 1978:29-30). And then Prince Sujata expanded his sacrifice for the sake of all the people of his kingdom. Such behavior is noble because it reduced his own capacity for biological survival, while acting for the greater existential benefit of his people.

In the Syama Jataka tale, a filial son named Syama lived in the forest with his blind parents (Unknown author 1924:436b-438b). He took care of them and supplied them with the needs of daily life, such as food and water. The filial Syama sacrificed his physical strength to help his parents survive in the forest because they wanted to practice

religious ritual in order to reach enlightenment. Later, one day when the filial Syama went to fetch water, he was shot by the king who mistook him for a deer. When the king came to catch the “deer”, he realized it was a boy when he heard him cry, “This arrow has killed three [people]” (Duan 1994:111).

Kin selection often involves genetic survival and reproduction in a related group. However, in both of the cases described here, the kin directed altruism is sacrificial behavior that benefits ego’s kin, but does not deal with reproductive success and does not transmit an individual’s genes into the next generation. Rather, it has an existential value: It represents the Buddhist virtues of filial piety as shown by the two filial sons who sacrificed themselves for the benefit of their kin, their parents. They then advanced toward the bodhisattva way and, through this sacrifice, accomplished the virtues of altruism to benefit others in their endless lifetimes.

5. Courageous Altruism

The Nine-colored Deer Jataka tale describes courageous altruism in Buddhist culture (Zhiqian 1924:452b-453a). Courageous altruism is the risking of one’s own life in order to save the life of another. The deer risked itself to rescue a drowning man from a dangerous river. The behavior of this deer has inspired many Chinese Buddhists who practice Mahayana Buddhism to risk their own lives to save the lives of others. In this case, the drowning person was a stranger to the deer who could be hurt or killed in the river but provided an altruistic opportunity to save someone in danger. The deer made a quick decision to jump into the river, showing his best intention to chance a rescue without time to carefully weigh such a dangerous situation. I think the deer did not

perform this heroic action because of his interest in doing so. The deer put his life on the line simply because he was a benevolent and kind deer who could not stand to watch someone drowned. The tale suggests that the deer might have been somewhat less likely to engage in such a courageous altruistic act if he had had time to think about it first, but, even so, he will still do it.

The Water Carrier Jataka is similar to the Nine-colored Deer Jataka. It provides a precise example of courageous altruism (Dharmaksema 1925:352b-353c). When the Water Carrier saw immense numbers of fish near death in a dry lake, his compassion rose and encouraged him to rescue the fish. First, he and two sons covered those fishes with many leaves and sticks to protect them from the sun. Second, he borrowed twenty elephants from the king. Third, he used the elephants to carry water and fill up the lake. Finally, when he had saved the lives of many struggling fish, he preached the twelve-linked chain of causation to those fish (see Appendix Q). Later, about ten thousand fishes died and were born into the Tavatimsa Heaven because of hearing the teaching of the twelve-linked chain of causation. Compassion allowed the Water Carrier and his sons to forget their physical fatigue and keep constantly on the run for the sake of the fishes. With compassion, the Water Carrier was willing to make such a physical sacrifice without anticipation of rewards for himself.

The courageous, altruistic behavior of both the deer and Water Carrier implies that bodhisattvas see the life of all sentient beings as their own lives and feel that everyone should have an equal opportunity to live. They perceive, therefore, the pain of all sentient beings as their own pain. Obviously, bodhisattvas know that “seeing someone else in distress may cause [them] distress, and [they] may act to relieve the other’s

distress as an instrumental means to reach the ultimate goal of relieving [their] own distress (Batson 1991:2). Therefore, bodhisattva's behavioral altruism involves a specific goal-directed act for the welfare of others.

Both tales also explicitly expound Buddhist belief in the doctrine of karma, but there is a significant difference between the Deer Jataka and the Water Carrier tale. The former represents an evil karma because bad deeds bring bad results. The man saved from drowning subsequently betrayed the deer, and as a result he received bad karma in which sores broke out all over his body. The latter provides good karma because good deeds bring good results. The ten thousand sons of the Tavatimsa Heaven, the dead fishes, came down from the Heaven and brought many treasures to repay the Water Carrier who saved their lives and led them into the Heaven. In essence, the doctrine of karma deals with human actions and shapes the fortunes and conditions of human lives.

In the Buddhist perspective, the courage required for altruistic actions is not limited to one's present lifetime. This implies that the bodhisattvas will be reborn again and continue to practice the bodhisattva way until they attain Buddhahood.

This multi-lifetime perspective holds true for all of the single-lifetime deeds performed within the larger context of cascade altruism. Bodhisattvas both carry on the altruism that has been formed in their previous lifetimes and also transmit it through their present and future lifetimes, when they are reborn in different forms, to benefit others.

I believe that bodhisattvas who choose pain over pleasure, discomfort over comfort, and suffering over contentment perform the path of bodhisattva's compassion before reaching Buddhahood. What appears here is that altruistic behavior is really motivated by self-interest or self-intention.

The Jataka murals of the Mogao caves convey an important message about the behaviors of Buddhist cascade altruism, which extend through many lifetimes. The central action-figures in each of the Jataka tales depicted perform specific deeds in a single lifetime but act within the larger context of the cascade altruistic perspective that constitutes a central core of the bodhisattvas' identities. They are awakened beings who will always—in whatever lifetime they are living or whatever human or animal form they may have—use their great compassion to benefit others. They perform great altruistic acts of helping all sentient beings escape from rebirth and try to achieve their altruistic aims for the sake of all living beings.

On the basis of the behaviors of bodhisattva cascade altruism, I conclude that five key aspects of Buddhist altruistic behaviors appear in the Jataka tales depicted in the Mogao caves. These aspects are the following: 1). Altruism must involve a great passion to benefit others; 2). Altruism requires an intentional action, such as those past bodhisattvas who desired to fulfill the six paramitas of generosity, discipline, patience, exertion, meditation, and wisdom. This entailed the giving of two significant kinds of alms: material alms and spiritual alms; 3). Sacrificial actions were performed with a specific goal-directed intention to help others, either through hearing enlightened verses, or through saving another's life; 4). Altruism requires diligence and sets no conditions. Thus, bodhisattvas never felt too tired to help others and solve problems; 5). Altruism requires complete egolessness, and the emptiness altruism of non-attachment: the giver, gift, and receiver are free.

Taken individually and collectively, the Mogao Jataka tales show that giving is the central concept of acquired merits in Mahayana Buddhist teachings because

bodhisattvas perform their altruistic acts for the betterment of all. In other words, the analytical construct of “cascade altruism” delineates the broad context of giving in which a particular sentient being strives through many lifetimes to achieve the ultimate goal of becoming a bodhisattva who will save all other sentient beings from the cycle of death and rebirth. This newly recognized and defined “cascade altruism” underlies the Mogao caves’ Jataka tale murals. Because the builders and users of the Mogao caves understood their work and use in terms of the overarching conceptual paradigm here identified as “cascade altruism,” use of this larger perspective is important for a deeper and fuller scholarly understanding of the Mogao caves.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SOCIAL POWER AND CAVE CONSTRUCTION

This chapter presents a preliminary “power and scale” analysis of the Jataka tales at Mogao caves following the work of Bodley (2003). The murals depict the Jataka tales *in toto*, as a data set. John Bodley has previously connected power and scale with specific social phenomena on individual property ownership in the towns and cities of Spokane and Whitman counties (Bodley 1999) to business corporations and income in Washington State (2001), and extensively to establish the cultural development of tribal, imperial, and commercial worlds throughout world prehistory and history (2003). Power is social power in households, elites, rulers, and corporate groups who “influence other people and events in order to maintain or improve their own” (Bodley 2003:4). Bodley points out that power and scale theory can be applied to “history, cultural anthropology, archaeology, sociology, economics, and biocultural evolutionary theory” (Bodley 2003:xv). It involves individuals, but not social classes, who try to accumulate power and wealth and are agents of social change. Bodley used mathematical power-law and log-log graphs to show how societal growth disproportionately concentrates social power as scale increases (Bodley 2003:55). In contrast, the present study applies the concept of power and scale theory, used in conjunction with literary and archaeological data, as a specific comparative approach which is new to the study of the Mogao caves. This approach analyzes the relationships between cave size, numbers of caves, volume and number of caves produced per dynastic year, and the number of residents present in Dunhuang County at given times.

I will use power and scale analysis to argue that when there was dynastic turbulence, the artists produced murals of Jataka tales on the caves' walls with greater frequency. In contrast, during more peaceful times or dynasties, particularly at the end of the Sui and in the Early and High Tang Dynasties, the artists produced fewer or no Jataka scenes at the Mogao caves. Therefore, the power and scale statistical-analytical methodology will be useful to examine this correlation and show how the excavation and decoration of the Mogao caves correlated with certain major socio-historical factors during different dynasties.

In analyzing these Jataka tale caves and murals I will use data compiled from publicly available sources, and also a conceptual template and analytical procedure that will allow me to apply "power and scale theory." This methodology has not been previously used in the study of the Jataka tales of the Mogao caves.

For this analysis, each period of dynastic rule is considered to be the basic power factor because of the different abilities of rulers to construct caves. Also the sociopolitical center of power is at the dynasty level. Moreover, high social status of rulers is also considered to be a power factor because it provided better access to financial support than that of commoners with low social status. These variables will be correlated to several factors of scale. In order to do this, I will trace both specific and more general data sets.

The first section of this chapter is concerned with population demographics, by dynasty, in Dunhuang Prefecture. Various historical sources can provide basic census information to help us understand the rise and fall of dynasties and the shift of population in Dunhuang County during Chinese medieval times (Ban 1966; Fan 1966; Liu 1966;

Ouyang 1966; Tang 1966; Wei 1966; Qi 1989; Li 1997). This information shows that the number of residents increased when the dynasty was peaceful and prosperous, but also that the local population in the Hexi Corridor decreased when the ruling dynasty was insecure and precarious. Moreover, census information also suggests that some dynasties might have had a shortage of workers for the construction of caves and that some temporary craftsmen might have only lived there for short periods of time.

The second section estimates approximately how much labor power, in loaders and carriers, was needed for a project. This is based on the construction of the caves themselves and calculation of their proportions. The process used for digging the cave is known (Sun and Sun 2003:158); so, too, how the spatial layout for mural banners was designed (Pei 1999:14-15). We know also about painting the murals, molding Buddhist sculptures, building eaves, putting tiles on the ground, and setting up the narrow footway which is planked over the ante-room (Sun and Sun 2003:156). Here I focus only on calculations of manpower and how many carts for loading waste materials and carrying it away are required to completely finish each cave.

The third section concerns the patronage network with the financial support needed to open caves. I will describe how the cave owners interacted with the highest-ranking aristocrats, the medium-ranking Sangha community, and the lowest-ranking commoners. I hypothesize that the highest ranking aristocrats had more financial support and were therefore able to create larger caves than the medium- and lowest-ranking people.

The fourth section is the relative representation of Jataka murals in the Mogao caves, which requires consideration of three. First is the number of caves which do or do

not contain Jataka tales. Carefully taken into account are the chronological and archaeological data that trace the caves which depict the Jataka tales. There is a different cultural initiative for each cave. All involve detailed measurement which refers to two factors of scale: the cubic footage of each cave opened and total cubic footage, by dynasty. This measures the distribution, by dynasty, of when the caves were produced. It concerns the differing volumes of individual Jataka tale caves at different locales in any given time period as well as the total volumetric quantity of caves opened in each dynasty. A second measurement is the volumetric size of the caves in each group. The size cluster shows that the cubic footage of the Jataka tales caves falls into three ranges, high (28,189 cu ft to 55,269 cu ft), mid (9,220 cu ft to 27,197 cu ft), and low (180 cu ft to 8,854 cu ft). The last measurement is the average annual production of caves, by number and by volume per dynasty. This approach gives agency to representative dynasties' power; scale is represented by caves containing Jataka tales and non-Jataka tale caves. The analysis focuses on the total number of caves built annually and the total annual volume of caves constructed. The results confirm that the artists produced more Jataka tale murals on the caves' walls during the most turbulent dynasties. In contrast, in more peaceful times, artists produced few or no Jataka tale scenes at the Mogao caves.

A. The Changing Census of Dunhuang County

Important population data are available from the *History of the Former Han Dynasty* (Ban 1966), the *History of the Later Han Dynasty* (Fan 1966), the *History of the Jin Dynasty* (Fan 1966), the *Old History of the Tang Dynasty* (Liu 1966), the *New History of the Tang Dynasty* (Ouyang 1966), the *New History of the Five Dynasties* (Ouyang

1966), among other historical sources. Analysis of the demographics as recorded in various historical documents will provide statistical distributions which can be interpreted in conjunction with other data in order to determine the frequency with which each individual dynasty opened both Jataka tale-containing and non-Jataka tale-containing caves, and this will make it possible to correlate the rise and fall of dynasties and cave production with the socio-security situation and population shifts in Dunhuang County during medieval times. The following is a brief discussion of the changing demographics of Dunhuang Prefecture throughout its history.

1. The Ancient Tribes (??-206 B.C.)

Long before the Han Dynasty made contact with Dunhuang region, there were many indigenous tribes residing there, including the Yuezhi, Wusun, Saizhung, and Xiongnu (Hun) peoples. According to the *History of the Former Han Dynasty*, “tribes of the Wusun and the Yuezhi lived in Dunhuang area” (Ban 1966:2). In the biography of Zhang Qian, Ban spelled out that “the Yuezhi tribe killed King Nandoumi of the Wusun tribe and took away the land” (Ban 1966:3). It is a history in which the Yuezhi tribe got strong enough to displace the Wusun tribe who then moved further north into the Xiongnu area, and the Yuezhi tribe took over control of the Hexi Corridor. According to the *Shiji* (the Stander History), Sima recorded, “In this time the Dunghu [the Xianbei tribe who lived in to east of the Xiongnu (Sima 1966:5)] were strong; and the Yuezhi tribe flourished....The King of the Xiongnu sent his prince, Maodun, to the Yuezhi tribe as a hostage.... [Later] Maodun... defeated the Yuezhi tribe” (Sima 1966:6-7). Consequently, the Yuezhi tribe were exiled to the west into *Congling* (now in the Pamir

Plateau) (Liu 2000:5) and settled down in the Bactria area (now Afghanistan) (Qi 1989:1, Zhang 1995:5). During the early Western Han Dynasty, the Xiongnu tribe completely occupied the Hexi Corridor; and, later, they invaded the northwest frontier of the Western Han Dynasty because the court of the Western Han was weak. To keep the peace on their frontiers, the Han emperors gave their daughters in marriage to the Xiongnu rulers. From their history we know that tribes who lived in the Hexi Corridor became mixed ethnically when one grew stronger and displaced another.

2. Census of the Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-24 A.D.)

Around the Second century B.C. the Han Dynasty, which had rested for over sixty years, grew stronger with both political power and economic prosperity. The Emperor Wu was ready to fight the Xiongnu to gain back some lands and extend his territories further into the Hexi regions so he started three wars with Xiongnu. The first was the war of the Henan in 127 B.C.; the second was the war of the Hexi in 121 B.C.; and the last one was the war of Mobei which defeated the Xiongnu in 119 B.C. and pushed them out of the Hexi Corridor (Hu and Luo 1998:7-8; Zhang 1995:17). Since the Hexi Corridor then belonged to the Western Han Dynasty, Emperor Wu established Dunhuang Prefecture in 111 B.C. (Ban 1966:17). While under the protection of the Han Dynasty, Dunhuang Prefecture had six counties, including Dunhuang. It became the busiest crossroads connecting China to the West. At this time there were 11,200 households with 38,335 people in the six counties of Dunhuang Prefecture (Ban 1966:3). The average family size was 3.4 (Table 8.1). Using the above information, in the Western Han Dynasty, the average number of households in each county would be about 1,867; by the

Table 8. 1. Census of Dunhuang County, by Dynasty

Dynasty	Number of Towns within the County	Average Number of Persons per Household	Average Number of Households in Dunhuang County	Average Population of Dunhuang County
Western Han	6	3.4	1,867	6,348
Eastern Han	6	4	1,175	4,700
The Three Kingdoms	7	4	342	1,368
Western Jin	9	4	700	2,800
Later Liang	9	4	3,222	12,888
Northern Liang	4	4	1,500	6,000
Western Wei	6	2.8	1,050	2,866
Northern Zhou, and Sui	3	4	2,593	10,372
Early Tang	2	4	3,233	12,932
Mid Tang	2	4	2,133	8,532
Rule by the Kingdoms of Tibet	1	9.4	2,700	28,180
Later Tang	11	4	3,949	15,796
The Five Dynasties	3	4	2,812	11,248
Northern Song	3	4	2,812	11,248

Sources: compiled from several sources: Ban 1966:4 for the Western Han Dynasty; Fan 1966:8 for the Eastern Han Dynasty; Qi 1989: 67-69 for the Three Kingdoms; Tang 1966:18, Li 1997:77, and Qi 1989:69-70 for the Western Jin Dynasty; Tang 1966:4 and Qi 1989:8 for the Later Liang Dynasty; Tang 1966:4 and Qi 1989:82 for the Northern Liang Dynasty; Li 1997:78-79 for the Northern Wei Dynasty; Wei 1966:5 and Qi 1989:86 for the Northern Zhou and the Sui Dynasties; Li 1997:79 for the Early Tang Dynasty; Liu 1966:37 and Ouyang 1966:10 for the Mid Tang Dynasty; Li 1997:80-81 for the Kingdom of Tibet; Li 1997:84 and Qi 1989:91 for the Later Tang Dynasty; and Li 1997:84 for the Five and the Northern Song Dynasties. All average household sizes of the dynasties are those suggested by Qi (1989:44 and 66).

same token, the average population of Dunhuang County at this time would be about 6,348 people (Li 1997:91).

3. Census of the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220 A.D.)

According to *Hou han shu* (the History of the Later Han Dynasty), there were 748 households with a population of 29,170 in the six counties of Dunhuang Prefecture (Fan 1966:8). Qi, however, believes that the family size was 4 for each household in the neighboring prefectures of Wuwei and Zhangye, whereas each household in Dunhuang Prefecture had 38 people per household, a number that seems too high. Qi points out that the word ‘hundred’ was used mistakenly for the word ‘thousand.’ If so, the total number of households must have been 7,048 with 29,170 people. Comparing Dunhuang’s to neighboring prefectures, the average family size should also be 4 (Qi 1989:44 and 66). If the preceding passage is correct, the average number of households should be 1,175; the population should be 4,700 for one of the six counties of Dunhuang Prefecture (Table 8.1). From the historical evidence available we know that the number of households dropped 37 percent while the population decreased by 26 percent due to the political situation.

The Eastern Han Dynasty had to deal with the Xiongnu’s invasion from the north and to pacify the domestic rebellion of the Jiang tribe from the Hexi regions until the dynasty finally collapsed in 220 A.D. Therefore, the increasingly insecure and precarious situation of Dunhuang Prefecture created two problems—a decline in the population and a diminished economy. But the Han Dynasty managed Dunhuang Prefecture in four

important ways—they brought in immigrants from central China, established garrisons, opened up uncultivated land, and stored food (Qi 1989:4).

4. Census of the Three Kingdoms (221-264 A.D.)

With the fall of the Eastern Han Dynasty, the country was again divided into three separate kingdoms—the Shu kingdom (221-263 A.D.) in the southwest, the Wu kingdom (222-277 A.D.) in the southeast and south, and the Wei kingdom (220-264 A.D.).

According to the *History of the Three Kingdoms*, there is no record of households and population for Dunhuang Prefecture, but Qi has discussed in more detail this matter and concludes that there were 7 counties in the Three Kingdoms (Qi 1989:67-69). According to Qi's theory, that meant that there were 342 households with 1368 people for each county in the Wei kingdom (Table 8.1). It clear that people fled from chronic wars; therefore, the populations of the Hexi regions were extremely diminished.

5. Census of the Western Jin Dynasty (265-316 A.D.)

The Western Jin Dynasty (265-313 A.D.) again reunited the separated parts of China and managed the Hexi people as had the Wei Dynasty. According to *Jin shu*, the History of the Jin Dynasty, there were 6,300 households in Dunhuang Prefecture but it gives no total population figure (Tang 1966:17). As Qi discusses this subject in more detail, he proposes that there were nine counties during the Western Jin Dynasty (Qi 1989:69-70; Li 1997:77). Therefore, there should be 700 households for each county. With Qi's theory, this would work for each county that had 2,800 people (Table 8.1). Along with both increased households and larger populations, Qi notes that in the early

Western Jin Dynasty society was perhaps more secure and stable and so refugees returned to their hometowns (Qi 1989:71). In Dunhuang Prefecture both the households and populations seemed not to have increased in number because two counties were added to its territory. I guess we must assume that a county is a fixed size.

6. Census of the Sixteen Dynasties (316-543 A.D.)

In the end of the Western Jin Dynasty (313 A.D.), north China confronted chaos and disorder everywhere. From 307 to 317 A.D., Shi (1982:47) points out that north China was disturbed and destroyed by the many minority tribes who fought each other in order to gain power and control over the north. In such a situation the people became deeply distressed and escaped either to the south of the Yangtze River or to the Hexi areas. This period of Chinese history was called “the Sixteen Dynasties of the Five Tribes.” They gained political power over the people in northern China, but no dynasty lasted for a long time. Instead, dynasties rose and fell quickly. During the rise and fall of the dynasties, Dunhuang Prefecture was ruled by all five dynasties: the Former Liang (313-376 A.D.), the Former Qin (367-387 A.D.), the Later Liang (387-400 A.D.), the Western Liang (400-420 A.D.), and the Northern Liang (421-442 A.D.) (Qi 1989:73; Liu 2000:39-40).

Hu and Luo cited Chen’s describing the Hexi area as united, prosperous, and a refuge for the people of central China and other refugees (Hu and Luo 1994:10). This passage suggests that under the Former Liang the Hexi area was comparatively secure and prosperous because Zhang Gui was the local governor of Liang Prefecture, and he welcomed these refugees from central China (Shi 1982:47). Under such conditions, the

population understandably increased. Another reason for the increased population is that immigrants were settled there by Emperor Fujian of the Former Qin Dynasty. According to the Biography of the *Liangwuzhaowang* in the *History of the Jin*, Emperor Fujian moved over 10,000 households from the southeast and also moved over 7,000²⁸ households from Zhong Prefecture to Dunhuang Prefecture. Moreover, more than one thousand households of Wuwei and Zhangye Prefectures escaped to Dunhuang and Jinchuan because of Gou Nu's bandits of the Wuwei (Tang 1966:4). Evidence found in historical records does not provide an accurate number of households, but during the Former Qin Dynasty there were 29,000 households in Dunhuang with 117,200 people. At this time there were only 9 counties in Dunhuang Prefecture (Qi 1989:80) which means that in Dunhuang County there were 3,222 households with 12,888 people (Table 8.1).

In 397 A.D, Dunhuang Prefecture was ruled by Emperor Duanye of the Northern Liang Dynasty (Qi 1989:82, Zhou 1992:116-117). When Juqu Mengsun killed the Emperor Duanye, he took over the rule of the Northern Liang (Zhou 1992:119). In 400 A.D. Li Gao established the Western Liang Dynasty with Dunhuang Prefecture as the capital (Zhou 1992:123), but later, in 405 A.D., he moved the capital to Jiuquan Prefecture and moved 23,000 households out of Dunhuang Prefecture and into five

²⁸ According to the *History of the Jin*, it says that "it moved over **70** households" (Tang 1966:4), I think the number of the households is not correct and has to be changed from "tens" to "thousands." Therefore, the total households of Dunhuang Prefecture are 29,000 (the 23,000 households were moved by the Emperor Fujian of the Former Qin Dynasty; and 6,300 households were part of the Western Jin Dynasty) which is given by Li (Li 1997:77). Otherwise, the households do not add up for Li Gao, the Emperor of the Western Liang, who moved 23,000 households to five different prefectures. Several scholars did put "thousands" instead of "tens", but they did not explain why they did so (Qi 1989:80; Zhou 1992:124; Zhang 1995:44; Li 1997:77).

different prefectures (Tang 1966:4). In 421 A.D. the Northern Liang took over the Western Liang. Dunhuang Prefecture then had four counties with 6,000 households and 24,000 people (Qi 1989:82). By this count, each county had 1,500 households with 6,000 people (Table 8.1).

In 439 A.D. the Northern Wei Dynasty (386-534 A.D.) took over from the Northern Liang (Zhou 1992:121-122) and reunited north China (Zhou 1992:135). After the Northern Wei had ruled the Hexi regions for 95 years, the dynasty was split into the Eastern Wei (534-550 A.D.) and the Western Wei Dynasties (534-557 A.D.). The Northern Qi (550-576 A.D.) took over the Eastern Wei Dynasty. The Northern Zhou (557-581 A.D.) took over the Western Wei in 557 A.D. and later took over the Northern Qi Dynasty in 576 A.D (Zhou 1992:143-149). When the Sui Dynasty took over the Northern Zhou in 581 A.D. and unified North and South China in 589 A.D., it ended the split between north and south.

History does not provide any number of households for Dunhuang Prefecture in the Northern Wei, the Western Wei, and Northern Zhou Dynasties, but Li (1997:91) assumed that there were about 1,050 households with 2,866 people in six counties during the Western Wei Dynasty because of the internal rebellion (Table 8.1). Population could not be less than the Western Jin Dynasty because during the Northern Wei there was no movement of people out of Dunhuang Prefecture.

7. Census of the Northern Zhou and the Sui Dynasties (557 A.D.-618 A.D.)

From history we know that the Northern Zhou ruled Dunhuang Prefecture for only twenty-four years, a relatively short period. There is no record to show a census

register for this period, but the *Geography of the History of the Sui* recorded 7,779 households for the three counties of Dunhuang Prefecture (Wei 1966:5). We can infer that each county had 2,593 households with 10,372 people (Table 8.1). As Qi notes, the households of Dunhuang Prefecture in the Sui Dynasty (581-618 A.D.) would be the same as in the Northern Zhou Dynasty because the Northern Zhou Dynasty also ruled for only a short period in Dunhuang. For that reason the households should match those of the Sui Dynasty (Qi 1989:86).

8. Census of the Early and Mid Tang Dynasty (618-848 A.D.)

In 618 A.D., Li Yuan proclaimed himself Emperor in the capital, Changan, and founded the Tang Dynasty (618-905 A.D.). The Tang Dynasty managed the Hexi regions for over 200 years. The number of households gradually increased in Dunhuang Prefecture because in 619 A.D. the Hexi regions were unified by the Tang Dynasty. That unification kept the Silk Road open so that diplomatic envoys of various counties, merchants, and Buddhist monks could come, one after the other, to Dunhuang city. It developed into an important halfway city connecting West and East and fostering economic and cultural exchange. As Li (1997:79) estimates in the *Geography of the Yuanhe Prefecture and County*, there were 6,466 households with 25,864 people recorded in the two counties of Dunhuang Prefecture (during the Kaiyuan reign of the Emperor Xian in 741 A.D.). Therefore, in the Early Tang Dynasty Dunhuang County itself had 3,233 households with 12,932 people (Table 8.1).

However, during the Mid Tang, the household count changed in the fluctuating political situation because the Tang Dynasty was confronted with the rebellion of the An-

Si in the capital of Changan and the invasion of Tibet in the Hexi area. Around 753 to 755 A.D., the *History of the Old and New Tang* recorded a census of 4,265 households with 16,250 people in two counties in Sand Prefecture (during the Tang Dynasty, “Dunhuang” and “Sand” were used interchangeably) (Liu 1966:37 and Ouyang 1966:10). Therefore, Dunhuang County had 2,133 households with 8,532 people in the Mid Tang Dynasty (Table 8.1). At this time the households of Sand Prefecture were reduced because of the constant warfare and the invasion by the Tibet kingdom in the western and northwestern areas. When the soldiers sent to the front died, their families returned to their hometowns. Local residents also moved to other places because of the wars and the requirement to pay heavy taxes (Li 1997:80).

9. Census of the Kingdom of Tibet (786-848 A.D.)

While the kingdom of Tibet occupied the Hexi regions from 786 to 848 A.D, no census was recorded. But using historical Tibetan documents, Li (1997:80-81) spelled out the number of households and the population. One of the documents stated that Sand Prefecture had 2,700 households. In another, when Tibet ruled Sand Prefecture, the Buddhist population had 2,800 monks and nuns. Li (1997:81) concluded that there were 2,700 households with 25,380 people in one county and pointed out that the average number of persons per household was about 9.4. Moreover, he added all 2,800 members of the Buddhist monasteries which increased the population to 28,180. He did this because the Tibetan government treated the larger community as one of the ten tribes in the Tibetan occupation (Table 8.1). Therefore, the average household size apparently

doubled in comparison with before the occupation by Tibet, which implies that the Tibetan governor wanted to assume political control over a larger population.

10. Censuses of the Later Tang Dynasty, the Five Dynasties, and the Song Dynasty (848-906 A.D.)

During the Later Tang, the leader of the *Guiyijun*, the Military Commissioner of the Righteous Army, Zhang Chaoyi, recovered the lost territories of Gourd and Sand Prefectures from Tibet in 848 A.D. (Zhou 1992:325). In this period of the Later Tang, the Five Dynasties, and the Northern Song, there were also no recorded censuses. Qi carefully documented a record of 359 households in a village near Dunhuang County (Qi 1989:91). However, Li (1997:82) also provided information that Dunhuang County had 11 villages in the Later Tang period. Therefore, Li added Shouchuang village to the 11 villages of Dunhuang County. He concluded that Dunhuang County had 3,949 households with 4 persons per household (Li 1997:82). Accordingly, the population of Dunhuang County was counted as 15,796 in the Later Tang Dynasty (Table 8.1).

During the Five Dynasties and the Northern Song, according to Li, there were 45,000 people in the three counties of Sand (Dunhuang) Prefecture. If each household had 4 residents, that meant there were 11,250 households (Li 1997:84). Therefore, in Dunhuang County the households were 2,812 with 11,248 people (Table 8.1).

Historical studies have shown that during medieval times various ethnic tribes succeeded one another wresting control over the Hexi Corridor. However, the census information in ancient documents does not provide detailed population information about each tribe (Li 1997:74). As a result of the combination of continuous tribal

Table 8.2 Dynasty Dates and the Socio-security Situation in the Hexi Corridor

Dynasty	Number of Years in Power, and Dynasty Dates	Hexi Corridor Socio-security Situation
Western Han	133 (111 BC-23AD)	peaceful time
Eastern Han	195 (25-220)	peaceful time
The Three Kingdoms	44 (220-264)	peaceful time
Western Jin	51 (265-316)	peaceful time
Later Liang	18 (385-403)	peaceful time
Northern Liang	18 (421-439)	troubled times
Northern Wei	95 (439-534)	extreme turbulence
Western Wei	21 (535-556)	always turbulent
Northern Zhou	23 (557-580)	always turbulent
Sui	37 (581-618)	peaceful time
Early Tang	86 (618-704)	very peaceful time
High Tang	76 (705-781)	very peaceful time till 755
Mid Tang or the kingdom of Tibet ²⁹	67 (781-848)	sometimes peaceful
Later Tang	59 (848-907)	intervals of peace
Five Dynasties	53 (907-960)	periodically turbulent
Northern Song	70 (960-1030)	often turbulent

Sources: compiled from Zhou (1992) and Ji (1998:1-10). (With the present author's summative estimation of the socio-security situation in each dynasty)

²⁹ The Mid Tang period is also known as the Kingdom of Tibet. During this time the Hexi Corridor was not in Tang hands. It was ruled by the Kingdom of Tibet and was, usually, relatively peaceful. The Kingdom of Tibet never gained lasting suzerainty over central China and thus does not appear in the dynasty lists for that region. But the Kingdom of Tibet held suzerainty over the Hexi Corridor for over ninety years, and so appears as a dynastic unit for that region.

displacements and the shifting fortunes of Chinese dynastic power in the region, there is little detailed demographic data available for the Dunhuang area. However, various sources do provide some basic census information. From the above sources I have compiled a census table for Dunhuang County from the Western Han through the Five Dynasties and Song times. The result is Table 8.1, which provides a dynasty by dynasty census of Dunhuang County. Table 8.2 shows dynastic dates and the associated socio-security situation in the Hexi Corridor. The dates of each dynasty listed mark when that particular dynasty held control over the Hexi Corridor; the dates do not indicate the beginning and end of each dynasty in central China or elsewhere.

Considered in broad historical perspective, certain features characterized life and rulership in the Hexi Corridor during feudal times. First, rulers needed a settled population that they could control. This involved both forced immigration in order to provide an adequate population base, and also a demarcation of where people were to live so that they could be more readily controlled. Second, the residents confronted repression and exploitation from both the Chinese emperors and the minority rulers. Third, the residents were frequently the victims of ethnic wars, of separatist forces, and of annexation. Fourth, often whoever ruled the Hexi Corridor at a particular time forced the residents to pay heavy taxes, repressed them and exploited them heavily. This provoked their resistance and finally led to ethnic conflicts or internal war against their rulers.

Three points deserve attention here. First, six of the dynasties were of non-Han origin: the later Liang, Northern Liang, Wei, Zhou, Western Wei, and the kingdom of Tibet. Thus, the authors who provide data about them, such as Tang (1966:4) and Qi (1989:82) for the Northern Liang, and Li (1997:78-79) for the Northern Wei, and Wei

(1966:5) and Qi (1989:86) for the Northern Zhou have had to make careful and judicious use of often difficult and inadequate sources in order to arrive at their demographic findings. The second point to be noted is that the cited numbers for households and populations are somewhat inaccurate. But study of the available historical sources suggests to me that, within the county, Dunhuang city at times developed into an important and busy urban locale, so that there were peaks when the overall population of Dunhuang County exceeded the dynastic average given. Finally, the sometimes precarious and frequently shifting socio-security situation of the Hexi Corridor, including Dunhuang County, affected the demographics. Table 8.2 shows the shifting socio-security situation in the Hexi Corridor.

Figure 8.1 shows the shifting population patterns in graphic format. The population of Dunhuang County underwent rapid growth during the times of the Western Han, the Later Liang, the Early Tang, and the Kingdom of Tibet. This contrasts with the shrinking population of other times, such as the lowpoints of the Three Kingdoms and Northern Wei. The pattern which suggests itself here is twofold: first, the population of Dunhuang county decreased when the overall political situation of an individual dynasty was insecure and precarious in this frontier region, and the people had to pay heavy taxes; but, second, when the ruling dynasty was peaceful and prosperous, the local population flourished and many people moved into Dunhuang County.

In summary, the population of Dunhuang County fluctuated significantly over time, ranging from a low of little more than a thousand during the Three Kingdoms to a high of more than twenty-eight thousand during Tibet Kingdom times. Probably there were shifting population dynamics within each dynasty, but the data are not adequate to

document them. However, from the perspective of the Jataka tales in the Mogao caves, the important factor is the average population in Dunhuang County during the different dynasties, and the socio-security factors with which each dynasty was associated.

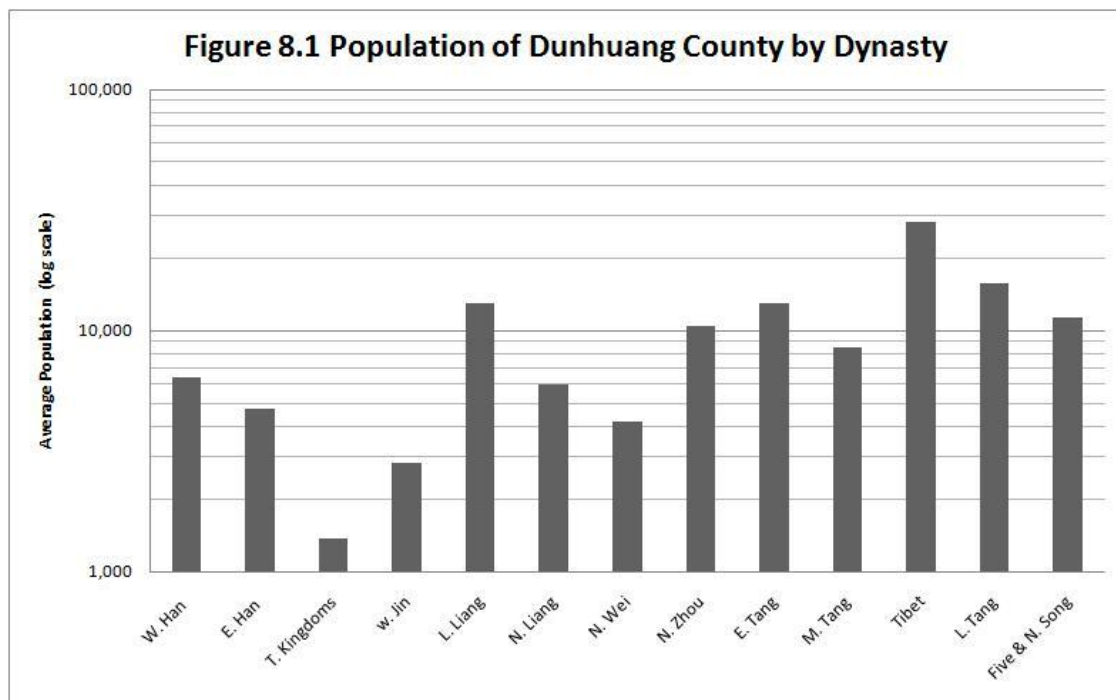
B. The Difficult Conditions Attending the Opening of the Caves

In Chinese medieval times, all Mogao caves of Dunhuang were extremely difficult construction projects because of two conditions: first, the perpendicular cliff was composed of the same pebbly conglomerate as that of *Mingsha* Mountain. Second, the craftsmen used only ordinary tools like hemp ropes, iron hammers, chisels, and hooks (Sun and Sun 2003:159; Ma 2003:73). The opening of the caves depended completely on these craftsmen who chiseled out every little bit of the unaccommodating cliff with these primitive tools.

1. The Procedure for Opening the Caves

We know that the geological structure made constructing the caves difficult. Nevertheless, caves continued to open, one after another. There was, however, no description explaining the excavation process nor how the craftsmen used labor-saving and time-saving tools. According to Sun and Sun (2003:158), there was much speculation about the methods used to open the caves. Figure 8.2 shows the likely excavation process. In the beginning, the craftsmen chiseled out the door and the corridor and then continued to dig out an upward narrow path through the ceiling of the cave. That excavation was most difficult at first because the restricted space could not hold more than one craftsman at a time. After the narrow channel was created, a few

craftsmen synchronized their efforts to dig downward until they completely shaped a rough cave. In this process, the craftsmen adopted the technique of digging downward because it was safer and took less effort. When they had rough-finished the interior of the cave, they always made scaffoldings to apply a dressing of clay on the walls, a necessary process, before the surface could be painted (Figure 8.3 shows the process for decorating caves). Ma, however, pointed out that the paintings and sculptures of a cave were often crafted over many dynasties during periods of reconstruction and reformation (Ma 1996:57).



2. The Cost in Human Resources for the Construction of Each Cave

Constructing new caves required immense human resources. It seems that a large corps of craftsmen whose task it was to dig out new caves lived in Dunhuang County. It

is possible that others were temporary residents who worked there for extended periods. Recently, Sun and Sun (2003:159) provided an example to calculate the human resources needed for the production of one cubic meter per day. They believe that it took an average of five craftsmen one day to dig out a cubic meter (35.3 cubic feet). At that time one craftsman dug out approximately seven cubic feet per day. Using this calculation, I propose a preliminary formula, $MD=V/7$, to calculate the human resources required for each project. V equals the volume of cubic feet of each cave. 7 cubic feet stands for a person's work effort in cubic feet per day. MD equals the man-days of labor. This is a rough calculation because there is no detailed documentation. However, this formula is

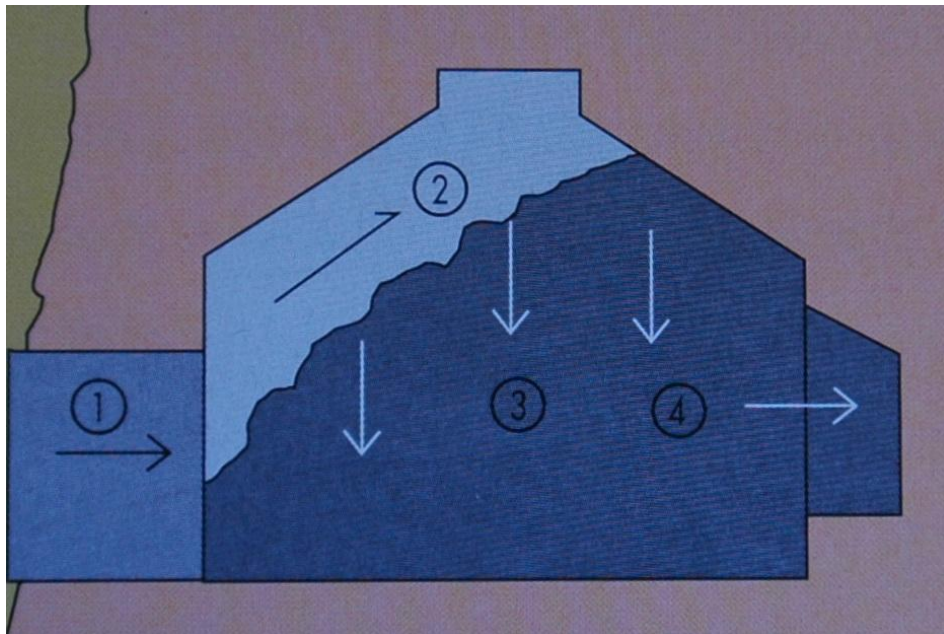


Figure 8.2 shows the procedure for the opening of a cave in sequence: 1. chiseling out the door and corridor; 2. an upward narrow path to the ceiling; 3. digging the main room; and 4 finally the niches. Source from Sun and Sun 2003:158

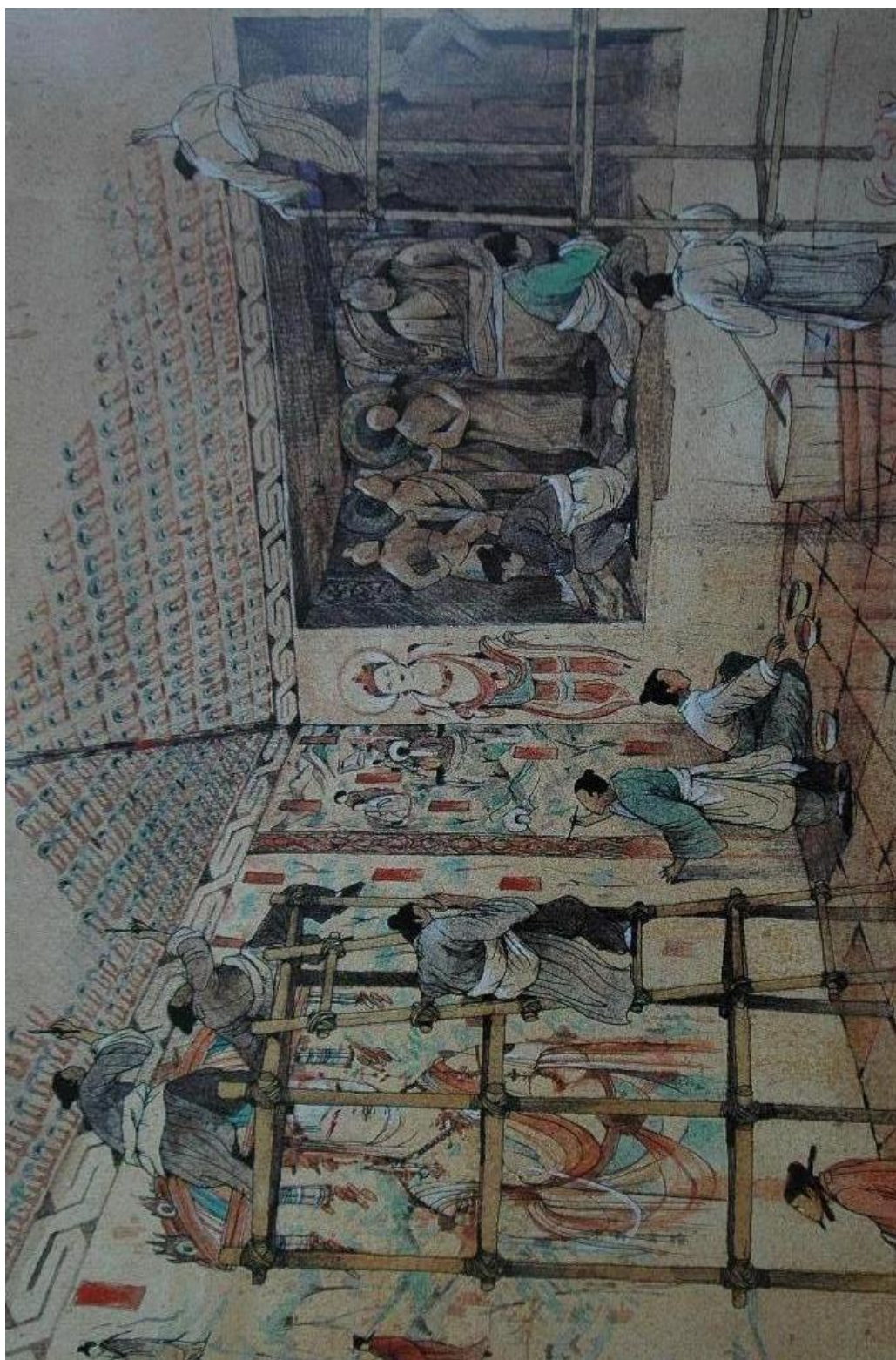


Figure 8. 3 A large corps of artists decorated the interior of the cave, fashioned sculptures, and painted the banners southwest wall view. Source: Wang 1999:71.

useful in helping us to understand the relationship between volume and the number of workers. Table 8.3 illustrates that in each dynasty the individual output during the building of the Jataka tale caves is different. Some caves are small and some are extremely large, especially during the Five Dynasties and the Song Dynasty. For example, Cave 141, Later Tang Dynasty, has 582 cubic feet; therefore it required eighty-three workers to work in order to dig it out. Cave 108, the Five Dynasties, has 27,197 cubic feet and required 3,885 workers to construct it. If we compare the size of caves and the number of the workers in Caves 141 and 108, the size of Cave 108 is forty-seven times bigger than Cave 141. Therefore, vastly more human resources were needed to construct a large cave in the Five Dynasties than the one worker required to build a much smaller cave in the Later Tang.

The 7 cubic feet per day is the independent variable because it is controlled by this formula, but MD is the dependent variable because it may vary when the V changes in number. Table 8.3 plots these data for each cave, showing the increase or decrease of cubic feet of volume as determined by the number of workers through eight dynasties.

Another measurement of scale is to calculate how many loads of waste material are produced to clean out a particular Jataka cave. Sun and Sun (2003:159) provided a way to calculate it and demonstrated that one cubic meter of conglomerates weighed about 2.5 tons (equal to 2.76 short tons). In Chinese medieval times, the loading vehicle was the bullock cart, which, fully loaded with conglomerate material, weighed about two hundred fifty kilograms (equal to 0.28 short ton). Table 8.4 shows the number of loads from each Jataka tale cave. For example, if the volume of Cave 275 is 1,341 cubic feet; approximately 374 loads of waste material were carted off. Each cave also needed a

Table 8.3 illustrates the volume of cubic feet and the number of the workers in each cave

Dynasty	Cave Number	The Volume of Cubic feet	Man-days of Labor
Northern Liang	275	1,341	192
Northern Wei	254	9,640	1,377
	257	10,368	1,481
Western Wei	285	5,997	857
Northern Zhou	294	1,887	270
	296	2,024	289
	299	565	81
	301	942	135
	428	26,919	3,846
	461	787	112
Sui	302	1,532	219
	417	544	78
	419	2,310	330
	423	989	141
	427	12,793	1,828
High Tang	31	3,104	443
	148	28,189	4,027
Mid Tang	112	507	72
	154	1,636	234
	200	1,478	211
	231	8,637	1,234
	236	1,451	207
	237	9,220	1,317
	238	1,096	157
	258	5,474	782
	449	1,391	199
Later Tang	9	8,101	1,157
	12	8,854	1,265
	19	180	26
	85	27,046	3,864
	138	41,081	5,869
	141	582	83
	144	2,829	404
	145	1,019	146
	147	809	116
	156	7,341	1,049
The Five	4	33,436	4,777
	5	6,929	990
	61	52,941	7,563
	72	7,230	1,033
	98	55,269	7,896
	100	18,571	2,653
	108	27,197	3,885
	146	19,835	2,834
	390	6,911	987
Song	55	20,651	2,950
	454	23,709	3,387

Table 8.4 the Number of Loads in Each Jataka Tale Cave.

Dynasty	Cave Number	Total Volume of Cubic Feet	Total Weight in Short Tons	Number of Loads
Northern Liang	275	1,341	105	374
Northern Wei	254	9,640	754	2,692
	257	10,368	811	2,895
Western Wei	285	5,997	469	1,675
Northern Zhou	294	1,887	148	527
	296	2,024	158	565
	299	565	44	158
	301	942	74	263
	428	26,919	2105	7,517
	461	787	62	220
Sui	302	1,532	120	428
	417	544	43	152
	419	2,310	181	645
	423	989	77	276
	427	12,793	1000	3,572
High Tang	31	3,104	243	867
	148	28,189	2,204	7,871
Mid Tang	112	507	40	142
	154	1,636	128	457
	200	1,478	116	413
	231	8,637	675	2,412
	236	1,451	113	405
	237	9,220	721	2,575
	238	1,096	86	306
	258	5,474	428	1,529
	449	1,391	109	388
Later Tang	9	8,101	633	2,262
	12	8,854	692	2,472
	19	180	14	50
	85	27,046	2,115	7,552
	138	41,081	3,212	11,471
	141	582	46	163
	144	2,829	221	790
	145	1,019	80	285
	147	809	63	226
	156	7,341	574	2,050
The Five	4	33,436	2,614	9,337
	5	6,929	542	1,935
	61	52,941	4,139	14,783
	72	7,230	565	2,019
	98	55,269	4,321	15,433
	100	18,571	1,452	5,186
	108	27,197	2,126	7,594
	146	19,835	1,551	5,539
	390	6,911	540	1,930
Song	55	20,651	1,615	5,767
	454	23,709	1,854	6,620

labor force to load and unload the conglomerate waste material during the construction of the Jataka caves. I do not know how many workers were involved in disposing of this waste.

C. The Diverse Patronages

The Mogao caves are considered to have been a religious place where people of many statuses carried out esoteric and exoteric religious practices. In different periods these caves were opened because of the support of returning and departing travelers, pilgrims, and aristocracies who offered financial assistance for their construction. These patrons or sponsors can be classified by social rank into highest, medium, and lowest. The highest-ranking social group included aristocrats and military officials. The aristocrats were the imperial families, prefectural families, and local officials, whereas the military officials were commissioners, generals, field officials, and followers. The Buddhist community comprised the medium ranks, including the chiefs of Sangha, local Sangha officials, abbots, and ordinary local monks and nuns. In the lowest-rank were the commoners, Buddhist laymen, lay women, merchants, soldiers and their family members, masons, artisans, carpenters, artists, and non-Buddhist men and women. They came from all parts of China, and from other countries, to demonstrate their patronage, to acquire merit for themselves or their dead relatives, to pray for the peace and prosperity of their lands and kingdoms, and to make offerings and devotions in the hope of safely completing a perilous journey, including protection from all travel dangers.

The portraits of donors are an important key for identifying the date of each cave because their fashions—the particular hat, the head dress, the boots, and the gown of a

certain period—are all significant clues. Moreover, another way to ascertain the date is the written wishes beside the donors' figures on the walls. Unfortunately, throughout the years, some of the written wishes have disintegrated, making it difficult to date the cave. Both large and small detailed images were drawn on different walls of the caves, as well as the central pillar, and the corridor.

A few source books on the Mogao caves have recorded the detailed written wishes of the donors and counted the numbers of the donors, like Xie (1996), Pelliot (1981-1992), Dunhuang wenwu Yanjiusuo (1982), Chang (1985), Shi (1985), Dunhuang Yanjiusuo (1986), and Shih (1996). They have been extremely helpful in counting the numbers of the donors and determining the patronage networks of financial support in caves, which I will focus on here.

The status of the cave owner determined the scale of the caves and the strength of financial support. Here I discuss how the highest social ranks could afford to construct more large caves than the medium and lowest ranks because they had opportunities to connect with others of the same social status and collect money to support cave construction. For example, in 524 A.D., during the Western Wei Dynasty, Yuan Rong, the Duke of *Dongyang*, was a prefecture of *Guazhou* (Dunhuang Prefecture) and the owner of Cave 285 (He 1986:197).

In the early caves, like that of Cave 285, a medium cave (between 16 ft by 16 ft to 30 ft by 30 ft) had about 5,997 cubic feet with portraits of 159 donors on the east and the north walls (Table 8.5). The portraits of the donors were painted below the main stories and arranged in rows (Figures 8.4 and 8.5 show the donors in a row on the north wall of Cave 285). The donors were the Duke of *Dongyang* and his wife, four monks and eight

Table 8.5 the Distribution of Donators' Statues from N. Laing to N. Zhou Dynasties

Dynasty		N. Liang	W. Wei	N. Zhou					
Cave Number	Rank	275	285	294	296	299	301	428	461
East Wall	Monk		1				5	7	
	Nun		5		2				
	Novice								
	Royal man	1	3						
	Royal woman		1						
	Lay man	34	51	31	7		9	208	
	Lay woman	6	26	6	11		6		
	Servants			1					
	Mainds				1		2		
	Unknown					6			
West Wall	Monk								
	Nun								
	Novice								
	Royal man								
	Royal woman								
	Lay man							838	1
	Lay woman								3
	Servants								
	Mainds								
	Unknown					2			
South Wall	Monk						1		
	Nun								
	Novice								
	Royal man								
	Royal woman								
	Lay man						17	217	
	Lay woman			33			12		
	Servants								
	Mainds								
	Unknown								
North Wall	Monk		3	8			3		
	Nun		3				18		
	Novice								
	Royal man								
	Royal woman								
	Lay man		25	23			14	308	
	Lay woman		41				8		
	Servants								
	Mainds								
	Unknown								
Central Pillar	Monk								
	Nun								
	Novice								
	Royal man								
	Royal woman								
	Lay man							68	
	Lay woman							67	
	Servants								
	Mainds								
	Unknown								
Corridor	Monk								
	Nun								
	Novice								
	Royal man							2	
	Royal woman							3	
	Lay man								
	Lay woman								
	Servants							2	
	Mainds								
	Unknown								

The cave donors are not mentioned in the available sources for Caves 254 and 257.

Sources: *Dunhuang wenwu yanjiusuo* 1982; *Dunhuang yanjiuyuan* 1986; Xie 1996.

nuns, five members of the aristocratic Yin families, three members of the Hua households, and the Xi household among others. Figure 8.6 shows the cave members of Cave 285 and owner connected with other donors. During the northern dynasties, Cave 428 was considered the largest cave (over 31 ft by 31 ft), about 26,919 cubic feet. It is four times bigger than Cave 285. Normal patronage could not afford to construct such a huge cave; it had to be done by an aristocratic family or a prefecture. Ma remarked that a person had to have power, influence, and wealth to build this cave (Ma 1996:69). Most scholars agree that Yu Yi, Duke of *Jianping*, was the cave owner and a prefect of *Guazhou* from 565 to 576 A.D. in the Northern Zhou Dynasty. According to the portraits of the donors in this cave, there were about 1,713 donors (Xie 1996:278-280). If we read through their written wishes, many donors did not live in Dunhuang Prefecture, but in Lingzhou (now Wuwei in Gansu Province), Ganzhou (now Zhangye in Gansu Province), and Jiangzhou (now Jiujiang city in Jiangxi Province). This suggests that Yu Yi had a network of other high, medium, and low social personages for the financial support needed to construct the cave. Therefore, this network of financial support directly supports my hypothesis that the more financial support provided to powerful patrons, the larger the cave they could sponsor.

During the Sui Dynasty, most caves were built small with a few of medium size; and the donors covered a wide range of rank, including monks, nuns, novices, ambassadorial families and their dead relatives, households, and a Military Commissioner of the Righteous Army and his family members (Table 8.6). However, none of the available sources mentioned the cave owners. For examples, Cave 301 is a Buddhist patronage cave because most sponsors were monks, nuns, novices, and Buddhist

households. Cave 390 is Ambassador Deng's family cave. He invested money in its construction because the written wishes refer to many of his relatives, even an uncle and a cousin who were monks (*Dunhuang yanjiuyuan* 1986:149-151). In addition, Cave 427, the Wang family's cave is meritorious because Wang, an ambassador, dedicated his merit to honor his dead and living relatives in the main room (*Dunhuang yanjiuyuan* 1986:155-160). From 944 to 974 A.D., Cao Yuanzhong, a Military Commissioner of the Righteous



Figure 8.4 portrays the Duke of *Dongyang*, on the right side first, and his wife, on the left side on the north wall of Cave 285 in Western Wei Dynasty. Behind him the two donors may be his family members. They are all dressed in Chinese costume. The artist often portrays these patronages in profile and places those of high social status forward and low social status in the back with male donors on the right side and female donors on the left, thereby treating them differently. Source: *Dunhuang wenwu yanjiusuo* 1957-59: plate 123 of the Vol. I.



Figure 8.5. The artist arranged the portraits of the donors in a row on the north wall of Cave 285 in the Western Wei Dynasty. If there were monks and nuns who were donors, the artist always put them ahead of other donors. On the right side the first person was a monk with six men behind him; and the second figure may be an aristocrat because behind him a small figure was an attendant who held a sword. By contrast, on the left side the first person was a nun with six women behind her; and the second figure may be an aristocrat's wife because there was a small figure who was a maid behind her. Source: *Dunhuang wenwu yanjiusuo* 1957-59: plate 126 of the Vol. I.

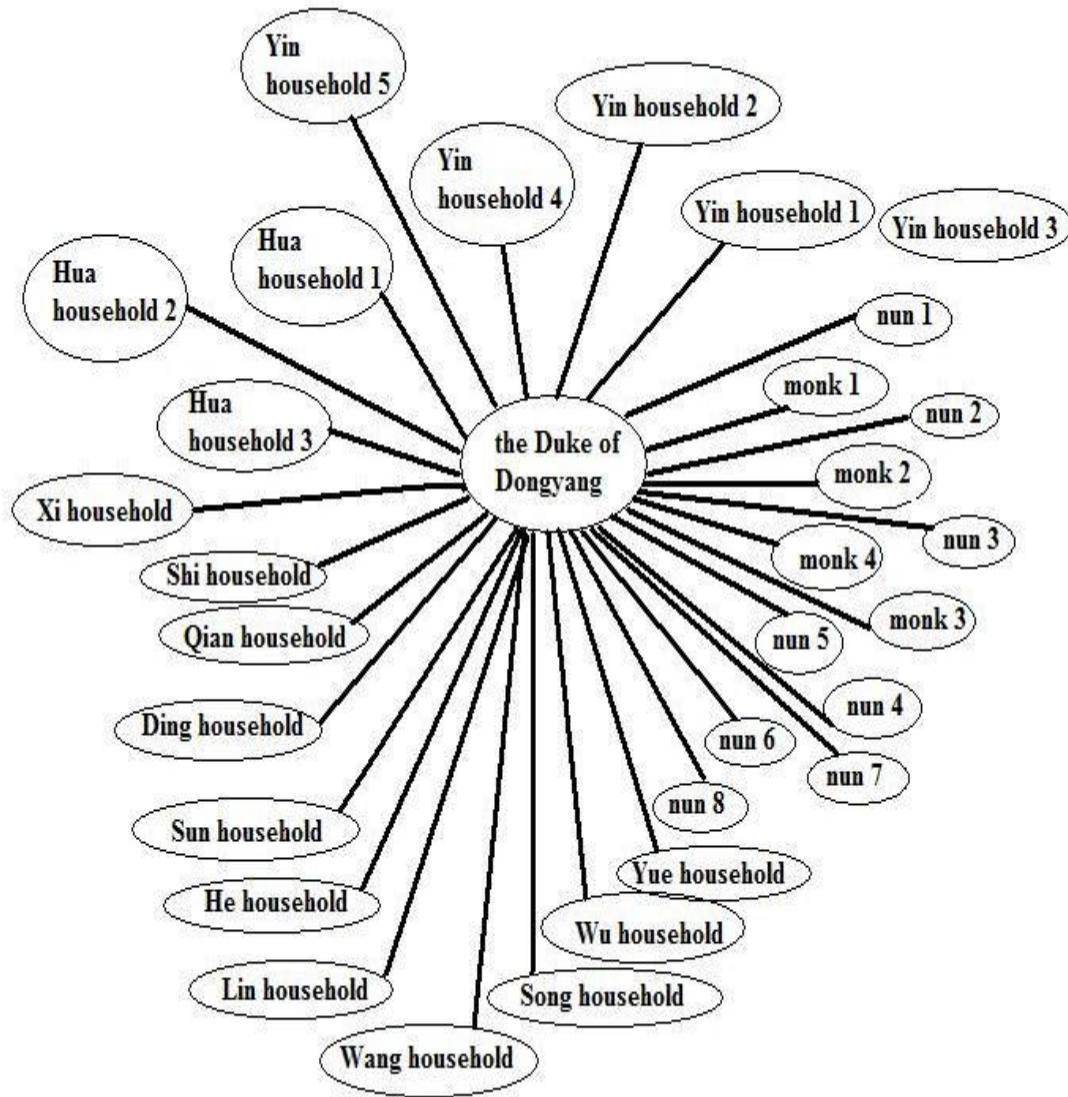


Figure 8.6 shows how Yuan Rong, the Duke of Dongyang, is connected with the backers of Cave 285, the Western Wei Dynasty. Most donors' images are still on the walls, but their written wishes are decomposed. Therefore, gathering of data on the donors' names to put on the diagram is dependent on existing and available written wishes. Sources: *Dunhuang yanjiuyuan* 1986: 114-119; Xie 1996:152-155. The diagram by author.

Army in Dunhuang Prefecture, invested money to repair Cave 427. As a remembrance, the artist portrayed his image on the south wall of the corridor (*Dunhuang yanjiuyuan* 1986:155).

During the Tang Dynasty, eleven small Jataka caves (smaller than 15 ft by 15 ft), eight medium (between 16 ft by 16 ft to 30 ft by 30 ft), and two large caves (over 31 ft by 31 ft) were built (see Appendix K). The donors had the status of chiefs of the Sangha, monks, nuns, associations, boys, girls, ambassadorial families and their departed relatives, field officers, soldiers, households, servants, maids, Military Commissioners of the Righteous Army and their family members (Tables 8.7 and 8.8). Table 8.9 shows the relative power to produce the Jataka caves by ranking donors from different periods. The available sources identify ten cave owners that can be catalogued into four categories: the chief monk, association, aristocracy, and the Military Commissioner of the Righteous Army. For example, when the chief monks were the cave owners, as for Cave 12, a monk called Yibian was the owner. A monk named Farong, also known as Di, chief of the Sangha, owned Cave 85, while Cave 144 was owned by monk Longzang (Wan 1986:180). These chief monks were born into aristocratic families and were able to collect funds from their relatives and other sponsors to build a large cave, 85, a medium cave, 12, and a small cave, 144, in the Later Tang Dynasty. Figure 8.7 shows the owner of Cave 144 and the donors who are assembled. When an association was the cave owner, people gathered funds from the community to construct a small cave, such as 449, in the Mid Tang Dynasty, and a small cave, 144, in the Later Tang Dynasty (Wan 1986:180). An aristocratic family cave owner, such as the Yin family who lived in Wuwei Prefecture, constructed a medium cave, 231, in the Mid Tang Dynasty. Another aristocratic family

Table 8.6 The Distribution of Donators' Statuses in the Sui Dynasty

Dynasty		Sui			
Cave Number	Rank	302	419	423	427
East Wall	Monk				
	Nun				
	Novice				
	Royal man				
	Royal woman				
	Lay man				
	Lay woman	16		5	
	Servants				
	Mainds				
	Unknown	?			
West Wall	Monk				
	Nun				
	Novice				
	Royal man				
	Royal woman				
	Lay man	9		4	33
	Lay woman				
	Servants				
	Mainds				
	Unknown	?			
South Wall	Monk			1	
	Nun				
	Novice				
	Royal man				
	Royal woman				
	Lay man	9		3	23
	Lay woman			3	
	Servants				
	Mainds				
	Unknown	?			
North Wall	Monk			1	
	Nun				
	Novice				1
	Royal man				
	Royal woman				
	Lay man	9		9	2
	Lay woman				30
	Servants				
	Mainds				
	Unknown	?			
Central Pillar	Monk	5			31
	Nun	2			
	Novice	1			
	Royal man				
	Royal woman				
	Lay man	1			10
	Lay woman	1			23
	Servants				
	Mainds				
	Unknown	4			
Corridor	Monk				
	Nun				
	Novice				
	Royal man				1
	Royal woman				1
	Lay man	1			
	Lay woman	1			
	Servants				3
	Mainds				3
	Unknown				

Available sources do not mention the donors of Cave 417. Sources: *Dunhuang wenwu yanjiuso* 1982; *Dunhuang yanjiuyuan* 1986; Xie 1996.

Table 8.7 The Distribution of Donors' Status in the High and Mid Tang Dynasties

Dynasty		High Tang		Mid Tang								
Cave Number	Rank	31	148	112	154	200	231	236	237	238	258	449
East Wall	Monk		4		1							6
	Nun											
	Novice											
	Royal man											
	Royal woman											
	Lay man		23		?		1					4
	Lay woman		4				1					
	Servants		1				1					
	Mainds						1					
	Unknown								?			
West Wall	Monk			1*			2				6	5
	Nun											
	Novice											
	Royal man		4									
	Royal woman											
	Lay man		22				6		?			1
	Lay woman		20				6					4
	Servants						4					
	Mainds											
	Unknown				?		?					
South Wall	Monk		7									
	Nun											
	Novice											
	Royal man											
	Royal woman											
	Lay man		7									
	Lay woman											
	Servants											
	Mainds											
	Unknown											
North Wall	Monk		8									
	Nun											
	Novice											
	Royal man											
	Royal woman											
	Lay man											
	Lay woman		2									
	Servants											
	Mainds											
	Unknown											
Central Pillar	Monk	4										
	Nun											
	Novice											
	Royal man											
	Royal woman											
	Lay man											
	Lay woman											
	Servants											
	Mainds											
	Unknown											
Corridor	Monk	4										
	Nun											
	Novice											
	Royal man		1				1					1
	Royal woman		1				1					2
	Lay man								?			
	Lay woman								?			
	Servants											
	Mainds		2									
	Unknown											

* means the information is from Paul Pelliot (1981-1992:96). Sources: *Dunhuang wenwu*

yanjiuso 1982; *Dunhuang yanjiuyuan* 1986; Xie 1996

Table 8.8 The Distribution of Donors' Status in the Later Tang Dynasty

Dynasty		Later Tang							
Cave Number	Rank	9	12	85	138	141	144	147	156
East Wall	Monk						1		
	Nun	5		8	3				
	Boy	2							
	Royal man						1		
	Royal woman						1		
	Lay man		1						3
	Lay woman	9	1	3	29				1
	Servants		2						
	Mainds	9	2		2		5		2
	Girl	2							
West Wall	Monk	6	3				3		3
	Nun						4		4
	Novice								
	Royal man								
	Royal woman								
	Lay man	4			10	2	16	18	3
	Lay woman	2	17			3	17		5
	Servants								5
	Mainds		9						3
	Unknown								
South Wall	Monk								
	Nun								
	Novice								
	Royal man								
	Royal woman								
	Lay man				10				
	Lay woman								
	Servants								
	Mainds								
	Unknown								
North Wall	Monk				7				
	Nun								
	Novice								
	Royal man								
	Royal woman				1				
	Lay man								
	Lay woman				6				
	Servants								
	Mainds				3				
	Unknown								
Central Pillar	Monk								
	Nun								
	Novice								
	Royal man								
	Royal woman								
	Lay man								
	Lay woman								
	Servants								
	Mainds								
	Unknown								
Corridor	Monk			1			1		
	Nun								
	Novice								
	Royal man	4							5
	Royal woman								3
	Lay man		3	6	?		5		
	Lay woman		3		?				
	Servants			8					
	Mainds								
	Unknown								

The cave donors of Cave 417 are not mentioned in the available sources. Sources: *Dunhuang wenwu yanjiuso* 1982; *Dunhuang yanjiuyuan* 1986; Xie 1996.

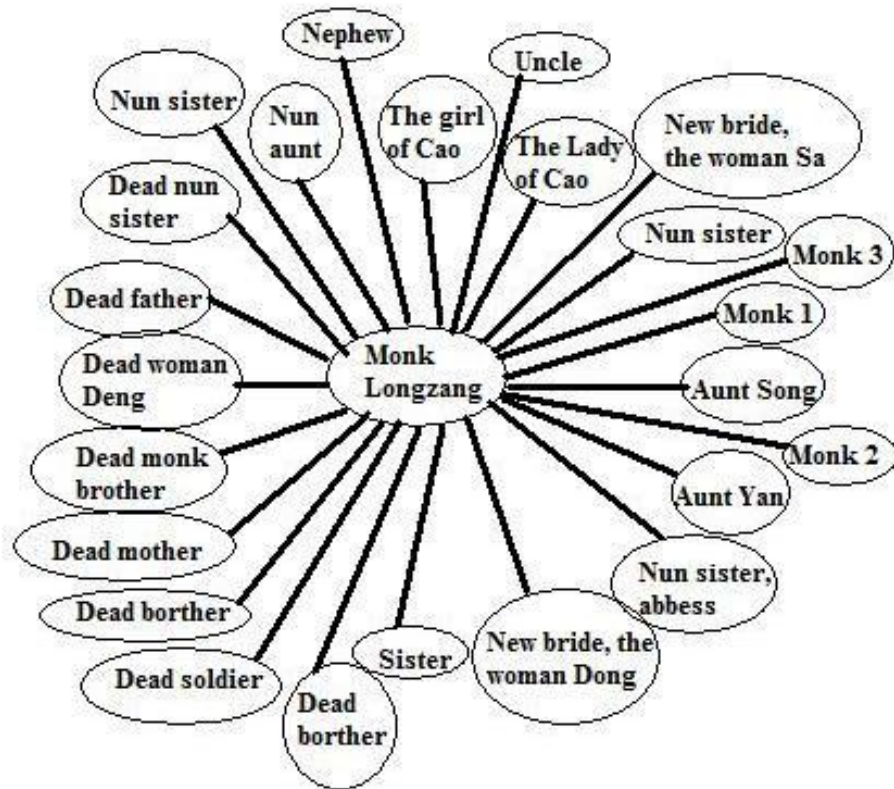


Figure 8.7 shows the monk Langzang as the cave owner, connected to the backers, for the construction of Cave 144. The diagram indicates to me that many of the donors were dead because their living relatives dedicated the money for building a cave and made the cave a “meritorious cave” in memory of their dead parents and relatives. Such meritorious caves were popular after the Tang period. Source: *Dunhuang yanjiuyuan* 1986:64-67. (drawn by author).

Table 8. 9

The Donors Show the Relative Power to Produce the Jataka Caves by Rank

Dynasty	Rank							
	Sangha VS. Aristocrat		Layman VS. Laywoman		Servant VS. Maid		Boy VS. Girl	
N. Liang		1	34	6				
W. Wei	12	4	76	67				
N. Zhou	44		1,742	146	6	6		
Sui	42		114	80				
Tang	97	24	145	133	21	36	2	2
The Five	77	434	35	18	12	64		
Song	2	44		43	1			
Average	46	127	422	81	10	35	2	2

The donors are not available for the Northern Wei Dynasty. Table 8.9 shows that laymen, who were likely to offer financial assistance for their construction, demonstrated the relative power throughout all periods. However, during the Five Dynasties, the dominant relative power shifted to these aristocrats who had a high social status to connect to the others for financial help to build large caves. This also reveals that the individuals of the Sangha community who came from aristocratic families collected funds through their powerful families and relatives in the Tang Dynasty and the Five Dynasty.

sponsored a large cave, 138, in the Late Tang Dynasty (Wan 1986:185). The Li family, lived in LongXi (now Dingxi City, Gansu Province) for many generations and built a medium cave, 148, in the High Tang Dynasty (He 1986:205). Zhang Yichao, the Military Commissioner of the Righteous Army, was the owner of Cave 156. These monk's caves, aristocratic caves, and the Military commissioner's cave which later became the family's cave all served as gifts dedicated to their departed relatives.

After the Tang Dynasty, cave owners constructed the largest caves in the Five Dynasties and the Song Dynasty because the backers were the imperial family, prefecture families, local officers, military officers, and the chief and local Sangha officers. Table 8.10 shows the distribution of donors' status in the Five Dynasties and the Song Dynasty, and Figures 8.8a and 8.8b show portraits of some the backers in Cave 98. Most cave owners of the Jataka tale caves during this time were connected to Cao Yijin who was the seventh Military Commissioner of the Righteous Army in Dunhuang Prefecture from 914 to 935 A.D. For example, the cave owner of Cave 108 was Cao's brother-in-law, Zhang Huaqing, the Left Mounted Guardsman (Yang 1998:360; He 1986:223-224).

Cao Yijin also constructed a large cave, 98, which would be considered a "family cave." According to the written wishes, there were many backers. First, his departed relatives, including grandfather, father-in-law, sisters, daughters, and others; his living relatives, consisting of his three wives, a son-in-law, the King of Yutain, a daughter, the Queen of Yutain, other daughters, nieces, and new bride daughters-in-law. Second, his staff consisted of eighty-five Commanders-in-Chief and twelve Vice Commanders-in-Chief. Third, the Sangha community included thirty-five of the chiefs of Sangha, local Sangha officers, and monks (Dunhuang yanjiuyuan 1986:32-48). Figure 8.9 depicts Cao

Yijin and his supporters. Moreover, other large caves were also related to Cao Yijin. For example, the owner of Cave 100 was his older son, Cao Yuande, in the Five Dynasties; the owner of Cave 61 in the Five Dynasties and 55 in the Song Dynasty was his third son, Cao YuanZhong. The owner of Cave 545 was his grandson, Cao Yangong. In later periods, such “family caves” suggest that the cave owners used them as gifts dedicated to the departed ones by the living. They believed that using names of the departed to construct caves produced merit for the benefit of their dead relatives. Building large caves also showed that those with power and high social status could afford them because they could connect to others of the same status for financial help. Their networking for financial support indicates that powerful patrons could amass the resources to build large caves.

D. Scales on Distribution, Volumetric Size, Annual Production of Caves

Having set up this framework, I consulted the literature for reliable chronological and archaeological data. For this analysis I obtained samples from forty-seven caves containing Jataka tales ranging chronologically from the Northern Liang Dynasty to the Song Dynasty (see Table 8.11 and Figure 8.10). It needs to be noted here that two scale measurements, the cubic footage of each cave opened and total cubic footage by dynasties, involve analyzing social power. Table 8.11, in and of itself, shows no obvious pattern of cave growth, in absolute numbers or cubic feet of volume, throughout time, although it does show a tendency toward small cave sizes in the earlier periods, and a tendency toward larger cave size from the late Sui on.

Another important scale factor is that of cave production per dynasty. Table 8.11 shows the volumetric quantity of individual Jataka tale caves opened in each dynasty, and also the total volume of caves opened in each dynasty (see Figure 8.11). Figure 8.11 plots graphically the total volumetric quantity of Jataka caves opened per dynasty.

Many factors may have influenced the total volume of caves opened in each dynasty. What is significant for the present (power and scale) analysis of Jataka tale caves and their correlation with socio-security are the dynastical clusters, the *per annum* rate of cave opening, and the relative proportions, by dynasty, of the Jataka and non-Jataka tale caves opened. These factors will now be considered.

Dynastical clusters, rather than absolute volume alone, provide important information. For example, if one subtracts the volume of the single largest cave from total volume built during the Mid Tang and Later Tang and during the Five Dynasties and the Song Dynasty, the result shows that the absolute volume falls dramatically, by approximately less than one-third, to 21,672, for the Mid Tang, and by approximately less than one-half, to 56,761, for the Later Tang, and by approximately a quarter, to 173,050, for the Five Dynasties, and by approximately one-half, to 20,651, for the Song Dynasty. Clearly, the matter of size clustering needs consideration.

Another factor of scale to be considered is the volumetric size of the caves in each group. Examination of Table 8.12 shows that the cubic footage of the Jataka tale caves falls into three ranges, high, mid, and low. Five caves are in the highest volumetric range, which extends from 55,269 to 28,189 cubic feet. Eleven caves are in the mid volumetric range, which extends from 27,197 to 9,220 cubic feet. More than two-thirds of the caves, 30 out of a total of 47, fall into the low volumetric range, which extends from 8,854 to



Figure 8.8a Portraits of the backers in Cave 98. Two figures are the Princess of the Uighur, Cao Yijin's wife, and her maid, on the east wall of the main room. Their hands are holding incense burners. The written wishes, in Chinese characters, are always placed in front of the figures. Of the written wishes, nothing is left but the blue color with a long cartouche. Source: *Dunhuang Yanjiuyuan* 1957-59: plates 12 and 13, Vol. V).



Figure 8.8b Portraits of the backers in Cave 98. Two figures are the King of the Yutian and his wife, Cao Yijin's daughter, on the east wall of the main room. King Yutian is holding a golden branch in his right hand. The written wishes, in Chinese characters, are always placed in front of the figures. Of the written wishes, nothing is left but the blue color with a long cartouche. Source: *Dunhuang Yanjiuyuan* 1957-59: plates 12 and 13, Vol. V).

Table 8.10 The Distribution of Donors' Status in the Five Dynasties and the Song Dynasty.

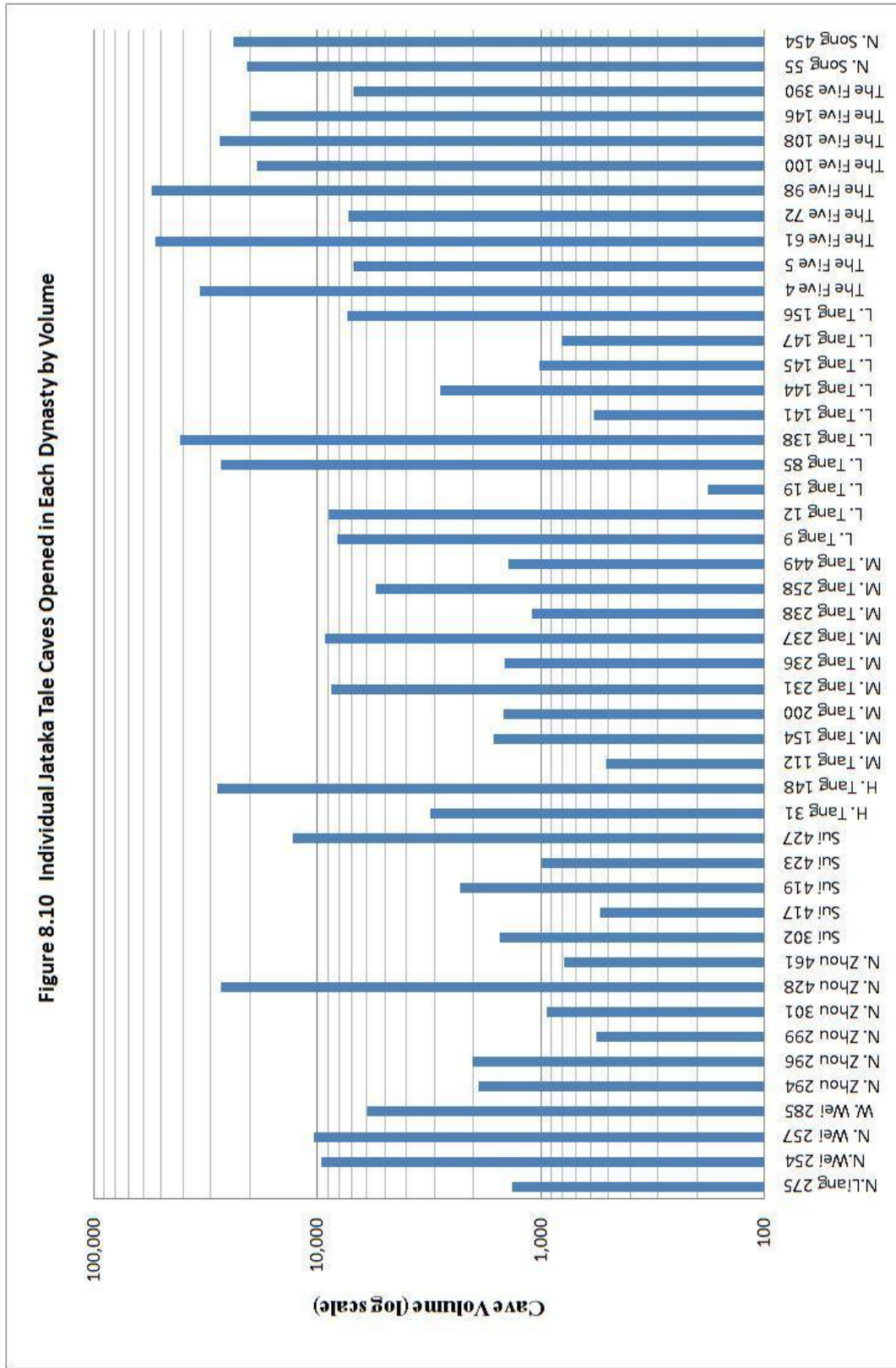
Dynasty		The Five								Song	
Cave Number	Rank	4	5	61	98	100	108	146	390	55	454
East Wall	King				1						1
	Nun			3	5		4				2
	Queen			1	1						
	Royal man										
	Royal woman			17	7		8			5	6
	Lay man	1	4								
	Lay woman	4							5		6
	Servants				2						6
	Mainds	1			2						
	Unknown										
West Wall	Monk		3						6		
	Nun		5						6		
	Novice										
	Royal man		4		63				14		
	Royal woman								6		
	Lay man										
	Lay woman		4								
	Servants										
	Mainds								5		
	Unknown										
South Wall	Monk				32						
	Nun										
	Novice										
	Royal man				16					4	
	Royal woman			16	11		10		35		
	Lay man	6	20								
	Lay woman	3								9	13
	Servants										
	Mainds						4		39		
	Unknown										
North Wall	Monk										
	Nun										
	Novice										
	Royal man				52				75		
	Royal woman			17	13		9				
	Lay man										
	Lay woman		2								15
	Servants										
	Mainds				4		4				
	Unknown										
Central Pillar	Monk										
	Nun										
	Novice										
	Royal man										
	Royal woman										
	Lay man										
	Lay woman										
	Servants										
	Mainds										
	Unknown										
Corridor	Monk			11							
	Nun			2							
	Novice										
	Royal man		3		17	5	14		8	6	15
	Royal woman		1			10				2	5
	Lay man										
	Lay woman							4			
	Servants				4	6					
	Mainds					5					
	Unknown										

The cave donors of Cave 72 are not mentioned in the available sources. Sources: *Dunhuang wenwu yanjiuso* 1982; *Dunhuang yanjiuyuan* 1986; Xie 1996.

Table 8.11 Reference Numbers and Cubic Footage of Jataka-tale Containing Caves
Opened in Each Dynasty.

Dynasties	Reference number designating the caves	The cubic footage of each cave opened	Total cubic footage, by dynasty
N. Liang	275	1,341	1,341
N. Wei	254	9,640	20,008
	257	10,368	
W. Wei	285	5,997	5,997
	294	1,887	
	296	2,024	
N. Zhou	299	565	33,124
	301	942	
	428	26,919	
	461	787	
	302	1,532	
	417	544	
Sui	419	2,310	18,168
	423	989	
	427	12,793	
H. Tang	31	3,104	31,293
	148	28,189	
	112	509	
	154	1,636	
	200	1,478	
M. Tang	231	8,637	30,892
	236	1,451	
	237	9,220	
	238	1,096	
	258	5,474	
	449	1,391	
	9	8,101	
	12	8,854	
	19	180	
	85	27,046	
L. Tang	138	41,081	97,842
	141	582	
	144	2,829	
	145	1,019	
	147	809	
	156	7,341	
	4	33,436	
	5	6,929	
	61	52,941	
	72	7,230	
The Five	98	55,269	228,319
	100	18,571	
	108	27,197	
	146	19,835	
	390	6,911	
N. Song	55	20,651	44,360
	454	23,709	

Note: The Chinese sources which enumerate the Mogao caves do not recognize the Tibetan Kingdom period. Rather, they list the caves produced then as Mid Tang. The Tables used here, of necessity, follow that classification. Source: Shih1996: Vol. I.



**Figure 8.11 Total volume of Jataka Caves
Opened, by Dynasty**

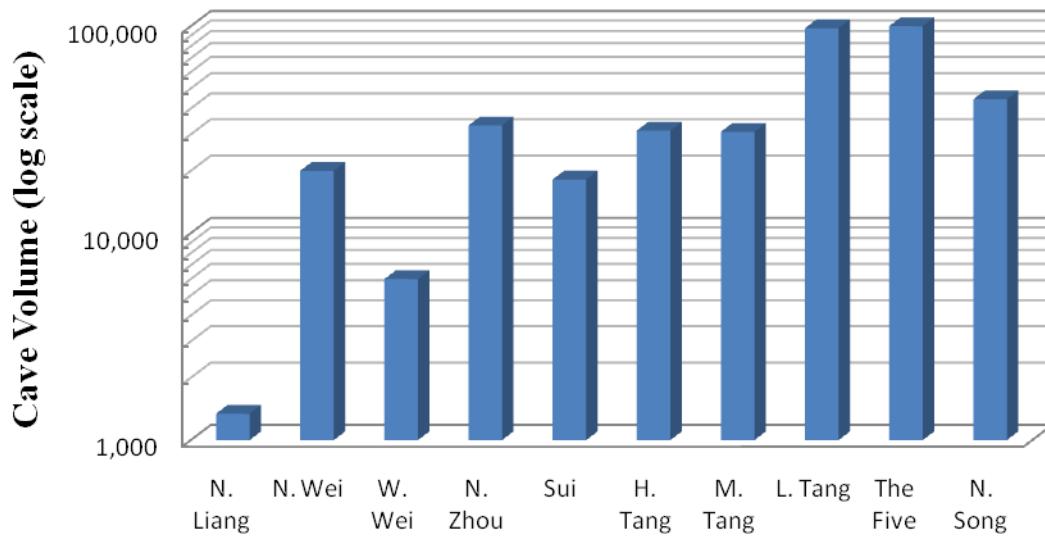


Table 8.12

Size Clusters of Cave Volumes, in Cubic Feet

Number of caves per cubic footage unit	Range of absolute cubic footage in the size cluster	Average volume, in cubic feet, of the caves in the size cluster	Relative volumetric Size
5	28,189-55,269	42,183	High
11	9,220-27,197	18,723	Mid
30	180-8,854	3,118	Low

180 cubic feet. Figure 8.12 shows a log-log plot of this patterning. This rank order of the Jataka cave size clusters shows a log-normal distribution, with many small, some medium, and only a very few with large cubic footage, which mirrors the rank order distributions of size often encountered in nature. There is a relationship between the social rank of cave owners and cave volume. The higher the status of the cave sponsors, the more they had access to financial support from themselves and others. Thus, Military Commissioners of the Righteous Army, local officials, associations, and even some chiefs of Sangha, and Buddhist officials, could finance the chiseling out of high or mid-volume caves.

Two major patterns in the Mogao caves become apparent when those selected from the above-mentioned patterns are plotted against one another. First, Figure 8.12, discussed above, shows a log-log plot of the absolute volume of the 47 extant Jataka caves, and also shows how the clusterings fall into the lognormal pattern which is often found in nature and in hierarchical human societies. This suggests that the number of very high status individuals is not being limited by the society at large.

Another major pattern emerges when the number of Jataka and non-Jataka caves produced per year is plotted by dynasty. Table 8.13 and Figure 8.13 show this in tabular and graphic form. Figure 8.13 shows, in summative plotting, linear scale, the total number of caves, Jataka and non-Jataka, opened, on average, per year, in each dynasty. Three clear patterns appear on this chart. First, with the exception of the Northern Wei, which was a time of great troubles and disorder in the Dunhuang region, the Jataka tale caves constitute a relatively small percentage of the total number of caves opened. Second, the peak of Jataka cave building, in terms of numbers of caves opened per year,

occurred during the time of the Northern Zhou, which was also a time of troubles. In contrast, in the Sui, when peace was restored and maintained, the annual number of Jataka tale caves produced decreased, while the absolute number of caves produced peaked sharply. Also, when the early Tang was a peaceful time for the Chinese, there were no Jataka tale caves produced at the Mogao caves. This reflected the establishment of security and a resultant major increase in trade with regions in the West, trade that passed through this Eastern end of the Silk Road corridor. Third, the An-Shi Rebellion from 755 to 763 A.D. greatly weakened the centralized bureaucracy of the Tang Dynasty and was politically and economically detrimental to relationships with the neighboring kingdoms, particularly the kingdom of Tibet which seized the Hexi Corridor in 781 A.D. During the Mid and Later Tang Dynasties, the socio-security situation could be seen as intervals of peace, while in the Five Dynasties the Hexi Corridor was periodically turbulent. Therefore, Figure 8.13 shows that the annual number of Jataka tale caves produced increased again in the turbulent periods of the Mid and Later Tang and in the Five Dynasties. The result suggests that during these medieval times, the quantities of Jataka caves correlated clearly with the socio-security situation in Dunhuang County.

In conclusion, the application of power and scale analysis to the caves of Mogao, Dunhuang, provides a statistical means to approach an important ethno-historical question: did the production of Mogao caves correlate with certain major socio-historical factors? The present study has shown that the answer is, yes.

Because the Chinese people faced repression and exploitation from both their own people and the minority rulers, they could not see any hope in the harsh reality of their lives. Therefore, they placed hope in Buddha after they died. This is why the

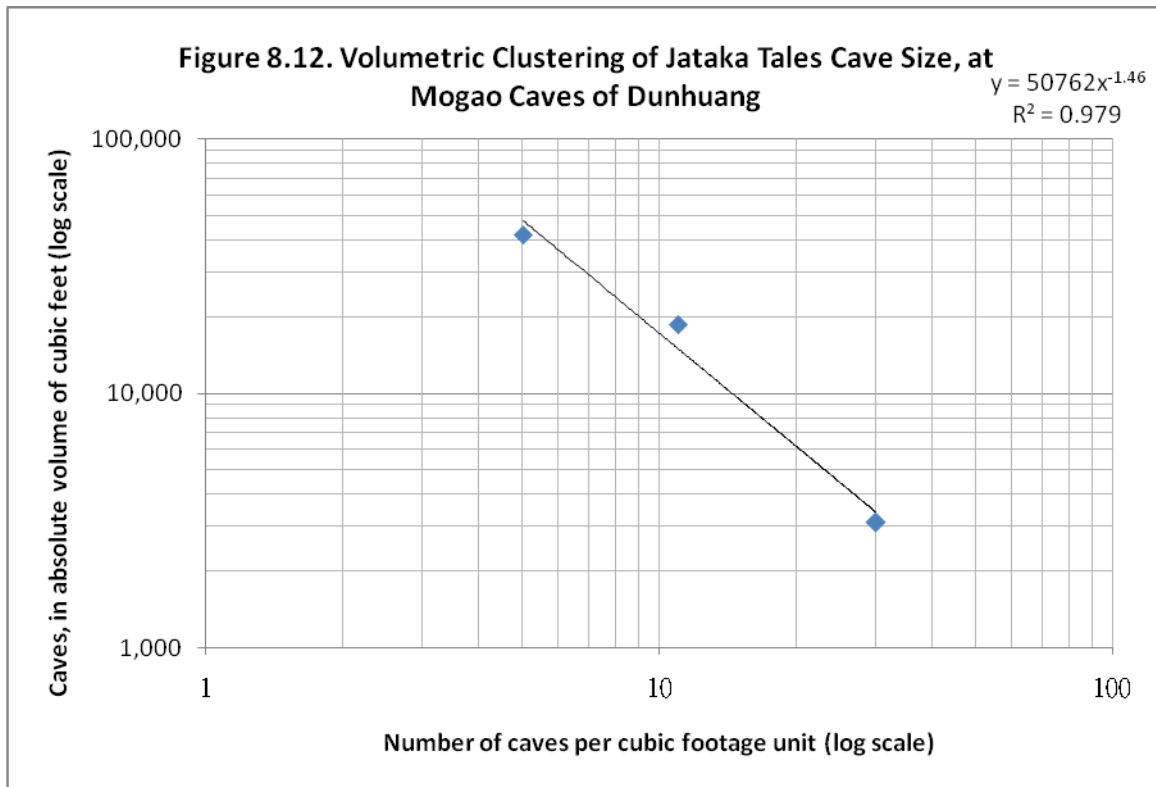


Table 8. 13

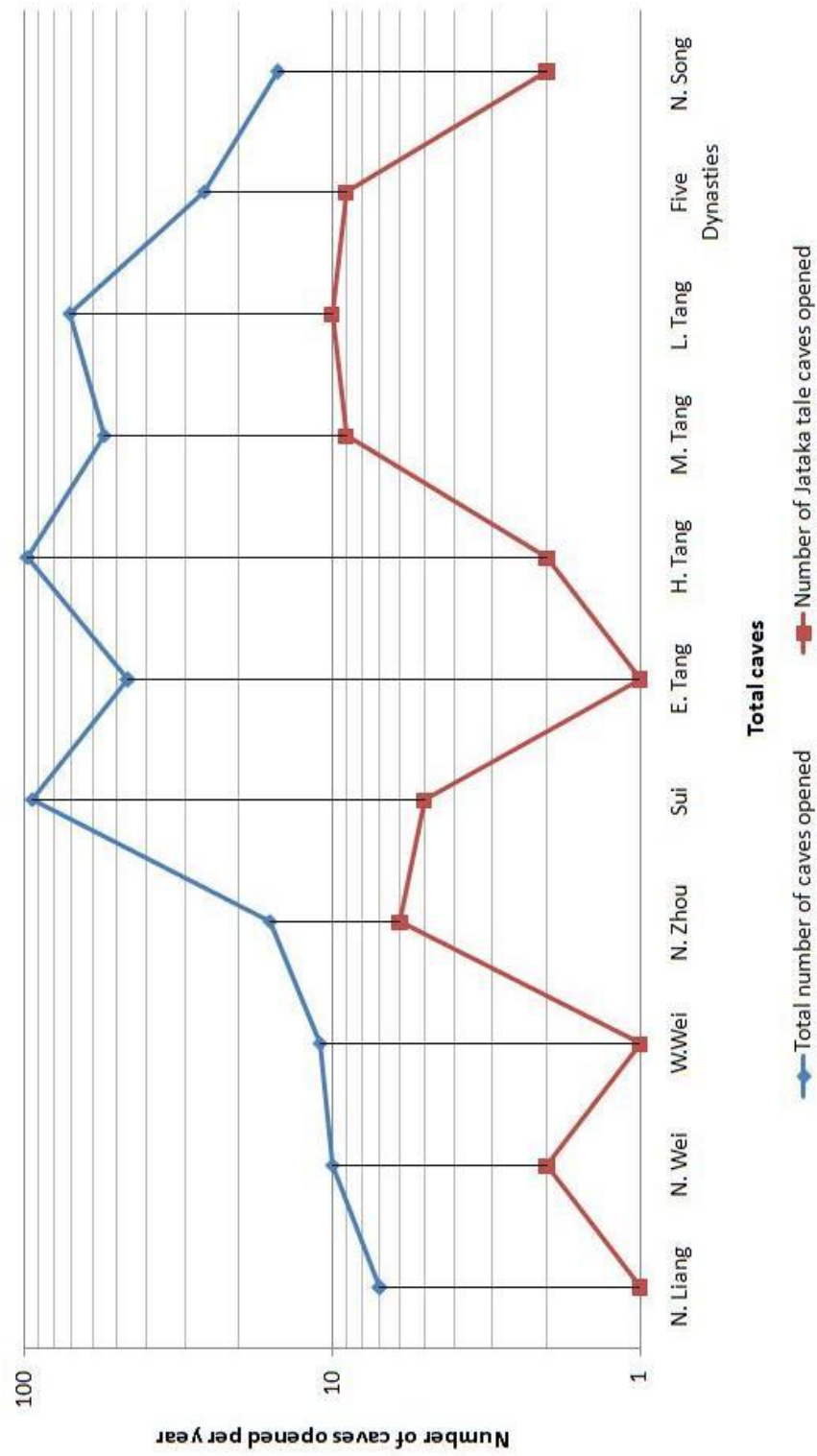
Average Annual Jataka Cave Production Per Dynasty

Dynasties	Number of years the dynasty reigned	Total Number of caves opened	Number of Jataka tale caves opened	Average number of Mogao caves opened per year	Average number of Jataka tale caves opened per year
N. Liang	18	7	1	0.39	0.06
N. Wei	95	10	2	0.11	0.02
W. Wei	21	11	1	0.52	0.05
N. Zhou	23	16	6	0.70	0.26
Sui	37	94	5	2.54	0.14
E. Tang	86	46	0	0.53	-
H. Tang	76	97	2	1.28	0.03
M. Tang	67	55	9	0.82	0.13
L. Tang	59	71	10	1.20	0.17
Five Dynasties	53	26	9	0.49	0.17
N. Song	70	15	2	0.21	0.03

Source of the total number of caves opened is from Ji 1998: 9-10.

Bodhisattva acts depicted in the mural paintings of the Jataka tales were popular. They illustrated ascetic and patient actions and presented ways to seek liberation from the hardships of their daily existence. As discussed, with respect to the power and scale analysis, summative findings in Figure 8.13 show that the proportion of Jataka tale caves opened per year, relative to the total average annual cave openings, was greater in troubled times in dynasties such as the Northern Liang, Wei, Mid and Later Tang, the Five Dynasties, and the Northern Song. It was less so in peaceful times, in such dynasties as the Sui and Later Tang. In other words, the relative effort put into constructing Jataka tale caves was greater during times of trouble when the socio-security circumstances were poor. The use of power and scale analysis has provided a statistically based foundation from which other cultural questions of understanding and meaning about the Mogao caves of Dunhuang can be considered. But, using evidence from 47 out of 492 caves, in summary, it can be said that non-Jataka caves were constructed by the elite for selfish reasons, while the Jataka caves were built by more common people seeking enlightenment in times of crisis.

Figure 8.13 Average number of cave excavations per year, by dynasty



CHAPTER NINE

JATAKA TALES IN CONTEMPORARY TAIWANESE BUDDHIST SOCIETY

In the summer of 2004, I went to the Dunhuang Academy in Dunhuang City, Gansu Province, China, and discussed my fieldwork project with Dean Fan. Here, at the academy's library, I could obtain the data related to my study of the Jataka tales. During the next year, I wanted to see some of the caves in which the Jataka tales were depicted. However, my plan was rejected by Dean Fan because she said, "All the caves here are closed for individuals." Disappointed, I conducted, instead, an open-ended questionnaire on the subject of my fieldwork at the Mogao caves.

It is important to note that in medieval China each dynasty adopted Buddhism only to a certain degree; and that, during each era, cave owners commissioned artists to depict the various themes of the Jataka tales on the walls of the Mogao caves, themes within particular cultural contexts where the Chinese expressed their feelings of unease about society and their hopes for the future or for a better next life. In a comparison with medieval China, this questionnaire can elicit both similar and different information and opinions about the Jataka tales in the contemporary Buddhist society of Taiwan, forming a basic comparison of the two societies.

The Jataka tales were taught by medieval monks and nuns as they are today by monks and nuns who utilize them to spell out an understanding of karma, how to practice the Bodhisattva way, and the concept of rebirth to their audiences or visitors. This survey was designed to illuminate how these tales affect the beliefs and daily practices of monks

and nuns as well as laypeople in contemporary Taiwan. There is, however, a crucial difference in both societies between the environment and the method of teaching.

Environmentally, in medieval times, all monks and nuns had to depend on the natural light filtering through these dark caves. Because all caves faced to the east they could tell these tales to visitors better in the morning. In contrast, modern Taiwanese monks and nuns do not have to wait for the sun to rise. Thus, they can talk about these tales any time there is an appropriate moment for them.

As for the method of teaching, in the past monks and nuns were limited to the Jataka tales already painted and, therefore, invariable on the walls, but they did provide a visual aid for their audiences. Today's monks and nuns can choose a variety of stories to tell to their audiences, but they lack the visual aid of the murals. Nevertheless, for both societies, the Jataka tales are important cultural backdrops that help them understand the previous Buddha's long career as a bodhisattva.

The purpose of this survey was to answer three questions: 1). how contemporary Buddhist monks and nuns acquire their general knowledge about the Mogao caves and the Jataka tales; 2). how much they know about the artifacts of the Mogao caves and the main characters of the Jataka tales depicted in them; and 3). what subject matter provides a comparison between the two Buddhist societies of medieval China and contemporary Taiwan, as well as what may have influenced belief in the doctrines of karma and rebirth. This survey will analyze how the Jataka tales are important to the lives of Buddhists today, just as they were in medieval China.

A. The Distribution of Religions in Taiwan Today

By 2003, the population of Taiwan exceeded 23 million. Registration statistics of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 2004, show that approximately 24 percent of the total population, 5,486,000, are Buddhist. The remaining 76 percent of the population is distributed among various other religions (see Table 9.1). Figure 9.1 shows religious adherents in Taiwan. It is not easy, however, to distinguish the adherents of Taoism and Buddhism because sometimes a person considers himself as both a Buddhist and a Taoist.

The following is a sampling of Taiwanese monks' and nuns' opinions about Jataka tales' issues. The analysis focuses on city temples and country temples, the sermons experienced by sophisticated monks and nuns and senior monks and nuns, and their level of education. All respondents to this survey live at temples in Taiwan. It is significant to this survey that, according to Article 13 of the Constitution, all people of Taiwan have the freedom and right to choose their own religion and beliefs. Therefore, there is no official religion for the people of the Republic of China. In the first thirteen questions, respondents were asked to answer these personal questions.

B. The Replies of Buddhist Monks and Nuns in Taiwan to Questions About the Beliefs Taught in the Jataka Tales

As part of the survey, 104 monks and nuns in Taiwan participated in this project. They were from three different regions: Kaohsiung, Taichung, and Taipei. The participants were required to have had preaching experiences. Information was collected from resident monks and nuns of several temples on the west coast of Taiwan, starting

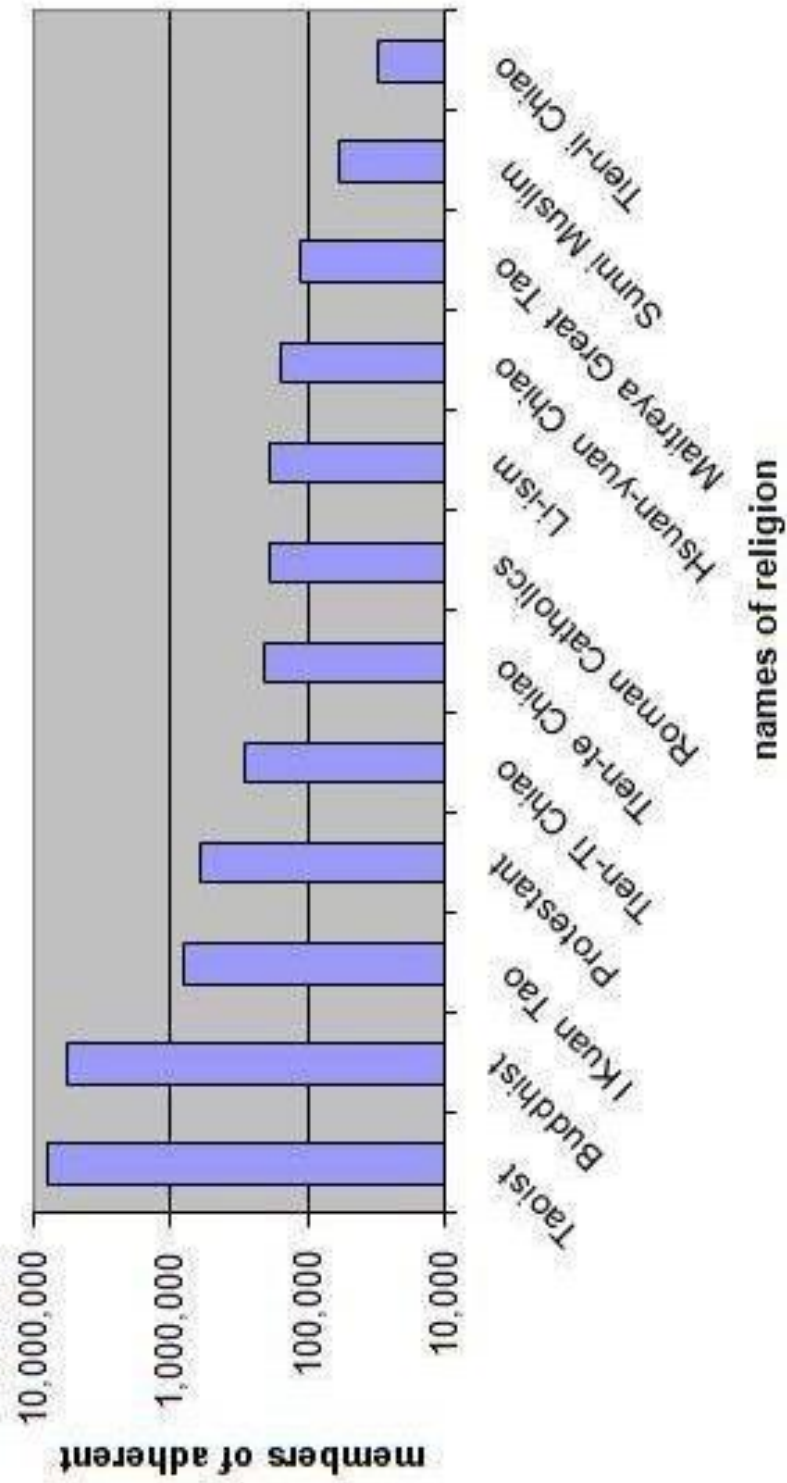
from the Kaohsiung area of southern Taiwan, the Taichung area of central Taiwan, and northward to the Taipei area.

1. The Sample of Respondents

The sample was divided into three groups of primarily monks (17.3%) and nuns (82.7%). The ages of the participants ranged from twenty-five years to seventy-four-years. The first group of 47 (10 monks and 37 nuns) live in both Kaohsiung City and County and Tainan County. The second group of 25 (4 monks and 21 nuns) live in Chiai and Nantou Counties and in both Taichung City and County. The third group of 32 (4 monks and 28 nuns) live in Hsinchu and Taoyuan Counties and both Taipei City and County (Table 9.2 shows which temple and how many monks and nuns participated in this survey). In this survey, the majority of participants were nuns. It is true that every year young women become nuns in Taiwan today. This may reveal that young women attempt to develop their own spiritual freedom and enlighten themselves by joining the temple's life rather than be housewives. The 104 respondents who have preached sermons to Buddhists or non-Buddhists in their temples or somewhere else are displayed in Table 9.3 categorized by age, education and gender. All information was collected by means of an open-ended questionnaire. For convenience of reference, the first group of subjects will be named the Kaohsiung sample; the second group will be referred to as the Taichung sample; and the third group will be called the Taipei sample.

In Table 9.3 the term “young” refers to monks and nuns aged 20 to 45 and the term “old” to ages 46 to 70. Of the 104 respondents, 58 (10 monks and 48 nuns) are between 20 and 45, accounting for 55.8 %, 46 (8 monks and 38 nuns) are between 46 and

Figure 9.1 shows the distributed religious adherents in Taiwan



Source: the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor 2004.

Table 9.1

The Percentages of Religious Distribution in Taiwan.

Names of Religion	Population	Percentage
Taoist	7,600,000	33
Buddhist	5,486,000	24
I Kuan Tao	791,000	3.4
Protestant	605,000	2.6
Tien-Ti Chiao	279,232	1.2
Tien-te Chiao	200,000	0.8
Roman Catholics	182,814	0.7
Li-ism	182,000	0.7
Hsuan-yuan Chiao	152,500	0.6
Maitreya Great Tao	110,000	0.4
Sunni Muslim	58,000	0.2
Tien-li Chiao	30,000	0.1

Source: the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 2004.

Table 9.2

The Participation of Temples and Monks and Nuns in This Survey

Region	Name of Temple	Respondent	
		Monk	Nun
Kaohsiung	Yuan Hent Temple	3	9
	Kaohsiung Buddhist association	1	0
	Guan De Temple	1	6
	Pu Ti Temple	2	8
	Jue Yuan Temple	0	4
	Fajie TV Station	0	5
	Di Jia Temple	3	1
Subtotal		10	37
Taichchung and Nantou	Ci Guan Temple	2	5
	Nantao	0	6
	Xianguan Temple	0	10
	FuYan Buddhist Institution	2	0
Subtotal		4	21
Taipei	Negcha Tempe	2	8
	Yuan Guan Buddhist Institution	2	8
	LianHua Buddhist Institution	0	3
	Huen Shi Buddhist Institution	0	4
	Xi Lian Temple	0	5
Subtotal		4	28
Grand Total		18	86

Table 9.3

The Sample of Respondents

Educational level	Monks		Nuns		Subtotal		Total
	Young	Old	Young	Old	Young	Old	
Kaohsiung Sample							
Elementary	0	1	0	1	0	2	2
Secondary	1	2	8	9	9	11	20
Undergraduate	4	1	5	6	9	7	16
Graduate	1	0	5	3	6	3	9
Taichung Sample							
Elementary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Secondary	1	0	5	1	6	1	7
Undergraduate	0	3	10	3	10	6	16
Graduate	0	0	1	1	1	1	2
Taipei Sample							
Elementary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Secondary	0	0	5	6	5	6	11
Undergraduate	3	1	4	5	7	6	13
Graduate	0	0	5	3	5	3	8
Grand Total	10	8	48	38	58	46	104

70, accounting for 44.2%. The category, elementary education, contains subjects who had not exceeded six years of formal education, whereas secondary education refers to a majority of subjects who had completed at least 12 years of schooling. Only a few had completed only 9 years of schooling. The category “undergraduate” refers to subjects who had received college or university degrees. The “graduate” category contains those who had obtained a master’s or a doctor’s degree. Of the total respondents, 2% or 2 finished only primary school; secondary school graduates numbered 38, accounting for 37%; university graduates numbered 45, accounting for 43%; with 19 master’s and doctor’s degrees, accounting for 18.3%. The educated monks and nuns also play a significant position in the life of Taiwanese temples today because before 1990, the

Taiwan government did not allow temples to establish universities even if some temples could afford to open universities. However, today five Buddhist universities have been established. In addition, many universities offer courses of study in Buddhism. Those universities need to recruit Buddhist monks and nuns who are scholars in order to teach in their departments of Buddhist studies or related fields. Another significant education factor is that if temples have some educated monks and nuns they will raise the reputation of their temple, and they can instruct the new monastic and lay members of the temple, and attract many scholars and university students to become members of their temples.

2. Attendance at Buddhist Institutions

In 1920, an eminent monk, Taixu, established the Wuchuang Buddhist Institute for monks; and then in 1922, the Nun's Buddhist Institute of Wuchuang was also set up in China (Yu 1984:529). Taixu established both institutes to educate young monks and nuns in order to promote the Sangha's status and quality and to regulate the Sangha's behavior. In Taiwan there are over thirty Buddhist Institutes to educate young monks and nuns; some of the institutes welcome young laymen and laywomen. Most student monks and nuns are sent by their masters, or they enroll voluntarily because they have an interest in studying Buddhism. Most orthodox Buddhist Institutes have a boarding school where students can live for a term and then return to their temples or homes during the break. However, some Buddhist Institutes allow students to commute daily.

Generally, the school system is similar to the system of normal schools. The Buddhist Secondary Institute (High school) offers three years of study for students who have graduated from elementary and junior high schools. The Buddhist College offers

four years for students who have graduated from the Buddhist Secondary Institute and High School while the Buddhist Graduate school provides a higher level of education for two years for students who have graduated from Buddhist colleges and universities.

Table 9.4 explains that most respondents have graduated from both Buddhist Institutions and from other, non-Buddhist schools. Only a small portion of monks (3%) and nuns (14%) had not enrolled in any Buddhist institution. There were no significant differences between monks' and nuns' education within their own group. However, a majority of the nuns received their higher education in Buddhist institutions and normal schools, whereas the monks had not. This is a fact of life that is still true in Taiwanese Buddhist society.

C. Knowledge of the Mogao Caves and the Jataka Tales Among Monks and Nuns

Three questions focused on eliciting information about (1) the first time they heard about the Mogao caves, (2) the current basic religious knowledge of the Mogao caves and the meaning of the Jataka tales, (3) the now-lost oral explications of the Jataka tales once given at the Mogao caves of Dunhuang in China, and how oral Jataka tale traditions remain alive in the temples of Taiwan.

1. Respondents' Replies Regarding the First Time They Learned of the Mogao Caves

Table 9.5 indicates that the majority of respondents first learned about the Mogao caves in their courses. That means that most Buddhist institutions included the Mogao caves in their curricula for students learning about Buddhist art, architecture, documents,

and sculptures. On the other hand, a few respondents learned from television. Because Buddhist institutions and most temples never allow monks and nuns to watch TV, they might have learned of these caves before they became monks and nuns. Also, a few learned from traveling, going to museum exhibits and libraries.

2. The Knowledge of Cultural Artifacts

Another question asked is related to the knowledge of the cultural artifacts that have been preserved at the Mogao caves. Table 9.6 shows the eight types of cultural artifacts on display at the caves. Over 90 percent of the respondents knew about the Buddhist sculptures and wall paintings in the Mogao caves because these two subjects often appear in books, magazines, journals, and other media as one of the world's heritage sites. Over 80 percent of the respondents mentioned the Buddhist cave temples and relics as both cultural and natural artifacts.

Half of the respondents replied that the silk and paper paintings and ancient manuscripts were part of the caves' cultural artifacts. People seldom see these artifacts because most of them were spirited away to Western museums by predatory foreigners, including Aurel Stein and Paul Pelliot in the early twentieth century. However, Huang Yonwu compiled images of these valuable artifacts into 150 volumes and published them in 1981 and 1982.

3. The Knowledge of the Main Characters in the Jataka Tales

Table 9.7 displays monks' and nuns' knowledge of the main character in the Jataka tales. The monks are more concerned with kings who appeared frequently in the

Table 9.4 Monks and nuns graduated from Buddhist schools

Monks' Education						
School	Elementary	Secondary	Undergraduate	Graduate	Subtotal	Total
Buddhist Secondary	1	0	1	0	2	2
Buddhist College	0	2	5	0	7	7
Buddhist Graduate	0	1	4	1	6	6
No Attendance	0	0	3	0	3	3
Subtotal	1	3	13	1		18
Nuns' Education						
School	Elementary	Secondary	Undergraduate	Graduate	Subtotal	Total
Buddhist Secondary	1	13	2	2	18	18
Buddhist College	0	9	16	3	28	28
Buddhist Graduate	0	6	10	9	25	25
No Attendance	0	5	6	4	15	15
Subtotal	1	33	34	18	86	86
Grand Total	2	36	47	19		104

Table 9.5

Where monks and nuns learned the Mogao caves

Sources	Monks	Nuns	Total
Newspapers	4	11	15
Magazines	4	18	22
Courses	4	42	46
Television	3	4	7
Others	2	8	10
Not respond	1	3	4
Grand Total	18	86	104

Table 9. 6

The Knowledge of the Cultural Materials includes at the Mogao Caves

Cultural material	Monks	Nuns	Total
Buddhist cave temples	12	71	83
Inscriptional records	9	49	58
Buddhist sculptures	14	77	91
Cultural relics	11	72	83
Buddhist wall paintings	15	82	97
Silk and paper paintings	6	42	48
Chinese architecture	6	50	56
Ancient manuscripts	8	43	51
Others	0	0	0
Not respond	1	1	2

Jataka stories, whereas the nuns are more concerned with animals who dominated in the stories. Both viewpoints relate to difference in how monks and nuns learn about the Jataka tales. For monks, Confucianism influenced their thoughts because one of the teachings of Confucius is based on the “theory of humanism”; that is, everything depends on humanity, in order to govern others one must first govern oneself. Such viewpoints of the monks match the murals in the caves that give priority to humans, such as King Bilengijeli, Sibe, Candrababha and Prince Mahasattva, Sudana, and Sujata. For nuns, the traditional literature of Jataka influenced their view of the murals because most of the main characters were animals and appeared frequently in the Khuddaka Nikaya, the Sutra of Minor Collection.” Their points of view corresponded to the literature of Jataka (see Table 9.8), and, similarly to the stone carvings of the Jataka tales in Indian caves and stupas. This is also true of the wall paintings of the Jataka tales in the Kizil caves, especially Cave 17, in Baicheng County, Xinjiang Province, China. However, this is not

the case in the Mogao caves (Ma 2001:44-58). Animals in the Jataka tales, though important, do not dominate at the Mogao caves. Today, only Cave 275 depicts an animal tale, that of Nine-colored Deer on the west wall.

4. A Lost Oral Tradition Versus A Living Oral Tradition

Another aspect I need to point out is that the murals of the Jataka tales were in a fixed and static place at the Mogao caves so the monks and nuns had to go to them; but the one-hundred-four respondents living in several temples in three Taiwan cities often gave public sermons to Buddhists and non-Buddhists in many places, including temples, schools, jails, and associations. This helps us to understand the teaching of the Jataka tale-scape in both the past and the present. The oral explications of the Jataka tales once given at Dunhuang are now lost, but the oral Jataka tale tradition remains alive in the contemporary society of Taiwan. From Table 9.9 we can see that contemporary monks and nuns told at least one Jataka tale during their preaching careers. However, over half of the respondents replied “never used”, “once in a while”, and “if needed to tell”, regarding the use of a Jataka tale in their preaching, because their lectures did not cover the “life of the previous Buddha as a bodhisattva” or were seldom related to the concept of karma and rebirth. A few respondents used a story more than three times which suggests that they might have been dealing with a special monographic study or series of talks. For example, every summer I was invited to attend the children’s camps at some temples in Taiwan and often talked about “karma” to the children. I also shared many Jataka tales with the children who seemed to enjoy listening to them. It is obvious that

contemporary Taiwanese monks and nuns still tell the Jataka tales during their sermons just as was done in medieval China.

Table 9. 7

The Main Character in the Jataka Tales

Main characters	Monks	Nuns	Total
King	18	77	95
Prince	16	79	95
Brahman	10	67	77
Animal	15	80	95
Woman	7	34	41
Merchants	12	53	65
Others	2	0	2

Table 9. 8

The Main Characters in the Jataka Tales who
Frequently Appear in the Jataka of Hinayana Sutras

Main characters	Frequency appearance
King	53
Prince	28
Brahman	89
Animal	124
Minister	85
Merchant	69
Heavenly Gods	64
Tree gods	35
Total	547

Table 9.9

How Many Times Monks and Nuns Include Jataka Tales in Their Preaching

Frequency	Monks	Nuns	Total
Once	4	22	26
Twice	2	10	12
Three times	2	3	5
Four times	0	0	0
Five times	0	0	0
More than five times	0	2	2
Never used	4	7	11
Once in a while	3	10	13
Used when needed	1	28	29
No response	2	4	6
Grand Total	18	86	104

Table 9.10

The Five Favorite Jataka Tales Often Told by Monks and Nuns

Name of the Jataka tale	Response by monks	Response by nuns
The Nine-colored Deer	7	35
The One-horned Celestial Being	3	20
King Sibi	2	15
Prince Mahasattva	3	8
Brahman	3	8
Total	18	86

Table 9.11

Portrayal of the Five Favorite Jataka Tales in the Mogao Caves

Name of the Jataka tales	Response by walls
Prince Shanshi (Chapter Eyou)	28
Prince Sujata	22
Prince Mahasattva	15
King Sibi	5
Filial Syama (Sama)	5

D. Comparing Beliefs in the Jataka Tales Between the Two Societies

Other questions in the survey were designed to compare beliefs in the Jataka tales in two different periods of Buddhist societies—medieval China and contemporary Taiwan, related to: (1) the favorite tales in the two societies; (2) the location and audience in the two societies; (3) enterprises, other than creating caves, among the respondents.

1. Monks' and Nuns' Five Favorite Jataka Tales for Their Audience

Table 9.10 shows the five favorite Jataka tales that monks and nuns like to tell to their audiences. In general, there are no significant differences between monks' and nuns' five favorite Jataka tales, the exception being the order in which they were told.

There is a crucial difference between the two societies even though both make use of the Jataka tales. In contemporary society there is a strong emphasis on the concept of karma, so monks and nuns often preferred to tell two Jatakas, the Nine-colored Deer and the One-horned Celestial Being, to their audiences. The two stories are associated with the doctrine of karma and stern observance of self-control by individuals. In medieval society the focus was on charity, as in the tale of Prince Shanshi who provided abundant material goods to satisfy all sentient beings; and the tale of the filial son, Syama, who took care to supply the daily needs of his blind parents in a forest (Table 9.11). However, both societies have one act in common, the self-sacrificing of flesh to save another's life, like Prince Mahasattva and King Sibi, or like Prince Sujata who fed his flesh to his parents who asked the neighboring kingdom for help to defeat a rebellion.

2. Analyzing Diverse Locations and Audiences

During medieval times, monks and nuns used the murals painted on the walls of the Mogao caves as visual aids. Their audiences looked at the images while listening to the story and the sermon. However, in contemporary Taiwan, monks and nuns sometimes used visual aids to help their audiences to understand the stories told during the preaching, but using them depended absolutely on the speakers. Table 9.12 shows that a majority of monks and nuns rarely or never used visual aids while preaching. There are two reasons for this. First of all, the murals of the Jataka tales are not available for them. The second reason is that most sermons take place in a Great Hall or Dharma Hall while the speaker is seated on a stage. This tradition is still alive in the Buddhist temples of Taiwan.

Another question asked is where monks and nuns in the two societies delivered their sermons. During medieval times, it was clearly in the caves which was the place the monks and nuns had to preach the Jataka tales, whereas in the contemporary society of Taiwan, monks and nuns can preach and teach the tales in many places (Table 9.13). Over one-third (38%) of the entire sample favored the temples as the place for their sermons. This suggests that various lecturers preferred the temples because they can hold large audiences of monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen and including the audiences shown in Table 9.14.

The second most favored venue was a Buddhist institution because monks and nuns were often invited to give lectures to students or they taught in the school. Students in Buddhist institutions make up the second largest audience in the whole sample (Table 9.14).

Now, I want to point out a modern technique used to spread the teachings of the Buddha. That is “Preaching Dharma on TV.” Even though it is only 1 percent of the entire sample, today this technique is fashionable and popular in Taiwan. It is also more convenient for all kinds of audiences who can watch the programs in their leisure time, and as the same programs are repeated, it is not necessary to go to the temples or other gathering places.

3. Looking into the Future of Contemporary Buddhists

The respondents were asked what they would like to do if they had a chance to establish their own Buddhist enterprise (Table 9.15). Over half of the entire sample were interested in Buddhist education. According to this view, the majority thought that Buddhist education could strengthen the Sangha community as well as the monks and nuns themselves. That is the reason many masters send their young monks and nuns to study in Buddhist institutions. Some even send them abroad to study, not only to receive a better education but also to expand their horizons within Buddhist society. For example, the previous abbot of my temple, my grandmaster, has sent many young monks and nuns to study in America, Ecuador, Japan, Hong Kong, and Sri Lanka. After they graduated, they returned to our temple and became the backbone of the lecturers. The preaching of Dharma for monks and nuns was the leading second choice. Half of them agreed that the preaching of Dharma certainly spread the message of the Buddha, educated the next generations of laypeople, and made the temples prosperous.

Here I also want to point out that contemporary monks were never interested in constructing Mogao-like caves. Only a few nuns were interesting in doing so in Taiwan,

but they were only 5 percent of the entire sample. Two possible explanations are: the difficulty in finding the right place to make Mogao-like caves, the need for more financial support from society as well as the limitations of a person's lifetime. Environmental concerns provide another explanation. On September 21, 1999 in Central Taiwan a 7.3 on the Richter scale earthquake occurred. It caused landslides everywhere in Taiwan making it very difficult to get a government permit to build temples on sloped areas or mountain ranges. It became even harder to get permits to build caves.

Table 9. 12

The Use Visual Aids During the Sermon

Frequency	Monks	Nuns	Total
Always	1	4	5
Sometimes	6	27	33
Rarely	5	15	20
Never	5	37	42
No response	1	3	4
Grand Total	18	86	104

Table 9.13

Where Monks and Nuns Preach Their Sermons

Places	Monks	Nuns	Total
Temples	16	61	77
Buddhist Institutions	11	30	41
Schools	4	28	32
Governmental Institutions	3	10	13
Hospitals	2	8	10
Jails	2	7	9
Juvenile Detention Houses	2	5	7
Families	1	2	3
Adult Sunday Schools	0	1	1
Funeral Homes	1	1	2
TV	0	2	2

Table 9.14

Target Audiences for Preaching by Monks and Nuns

Audience	Monks	Nuns	Total
Housewives	9	63	72
Buddhist Institution and College students	14	37	51
College or University students	9	30	39
Business people	5	27	32
High school students	8	22	30
Elementary school students	5	24	29
Junior high school students	6	21	27
Factory workers	2	18	20
Communal Institutions Prisoners	5	14	19
Hospital patients	3	11	14
Criminals	2	7	9
Juvenile offenders	1	5	6
Television	1	2	3
Total	70	281	351

Table 9.15

What Buddhist Monks and Nuns Would Like to Do in the Future

Enterprise	Monks	Nuns	Total
Buddhist Education	14	67	81
Preaching Dharma	12	55	67
Buddhist Charities	10	39	49
Social Charities	4	31	35
Translating Dharma	2	17	19
Constructing Mogao-like caves	0	5	5
Preaching Dharma on TV	0	1	1
No Response	1	2	3
Total	43	217	260

One of the questions asked the respondents was this: If you had a chance to decorate the walls of the temples with the Jataka tales, in which place would you depict them? Table 9.16 provides five similar patterns for the two societies. In contemporary society, the respondents preferred to depict murals of the Jataka tales on the external wall of the Great Hall. That is an extremely prominent location at a temple because most people visit the Great Hall. If they do not enter the Great Hall, they will look at it from the corridor. Therefore, everyone would have a chance to see the murals. In medieval society, such a prominent location for the murals is similar to that of the initial period—the Northern Liang, Northern Wei, and Western Wei—all the way to the mature period—the Tang Dynasty—and on to the declining period of the Five Dynasties when artists often depicted the murals of the Jataka tales on the south or north walls.

In contemporary society, monks and nuns chose to paint murals on the internal wall of the Great Hall. That is in a prominent location because visitors usually entered the Great Hall. This second pattern is like the initial period of the Northern Zhou Dynasty, the mature period of the Tang Dynasty, and the declining period of the Five Dynasties and the Song Dynasty when these murals were painted on the east walls. After visitors turned toward the cave exit, they could see them as they left a cave.

The third position for the depiction of the murals was on both sides of the corridor to the dormitory. It is not a prominent location because if visitors did not go that way, they would never see them. It is similar to the developed period of the Sui Dynasty. Artists also placed murals on the ceilings, but if visitors did not look up, they never saw them.

The fourth position chosen by monks and nuns was the wall of the entryway. It is also only slightly prominent location because most visitors drive through the entrance gate to the temple and never see them. This situation applies to the mature period of the Mid and Later Tang Dynasties and the declining period of the Five Dynasties, when artists depicted murals behind the Buddhist sculptures in the niches of the west wall. A majority of visitors could easily miss them while visiting a cave.

The respondents chose a fifth position for the murals—the internal wall of the Lecture Hall. It is in an obscure location and is seldom open to visitors. However, in contemporary society it is opened when there is a lecture. This pattern is like that of the developed period in the Sui Dynasty when artists pictured the murals on the base of the pedestal of the central pillar. However, if visitors did not squat down, they could miss them.

E. The Two Societies' Opinions About Beliefs in the Jataka Tales

During the survey, three questions focused on the subject of belief in the Jataka tales that directed the life of Buddhists and provided the reasons to believe in karma and rebirth in contemporary Taiwan Buddhist society in Taiwan, and whether Buddhists believe the implications of the Jataka tales that affect their lives.

In the first question, the respondents were asked to what degree the Jataka tales influenced their lives. Table 9.17 shows the degree to which the Jataka tales affect contemporary Buddhist society. In response, close to half of the monks and nuns answered that they were somewhat relevant to their lives. Approximately a quarter of them mentioned that they were very relevant or had very little relevance. As shown in

Chapter 3, some of the teachings of the Buddha, especially karma and rebirth, have been central ideas related in all Jataka tales to foster understanding of the numerous good deeds of the Buddha's reincarnated lives.

In the actual sample, 24 monks and nuns (23%) said, "The Jataka tales have strongly affected my life." They had either normal school degrees or degrees from Buddhist institutions. Attending Buddhist institutions implied a *de jure* and *de facto* belief in the karma and rebirths of the main characters of the Jataka tales. That is, these tales convey the connotation of karma and rebirth as well as the doctrine of karma—"reap as you sow" and rebirth. This point may well explain why they believe in these tales. On the other hand, 24 monks and nuns said, "These tales have very little influence in my life." They had either high school or university degrees or graduate certificates. The majority of respondents, however, did not attend Buddhist institutions. It was surprising that about 23 percent of monks and nuns responded with "little influence in their lives."

The question arises, "Do they believe in the virtues of the bodhisattva"? Dealing with this question of variation, there are two possible answers: First, it depends on the common sense of the person who believes in a certain degree of karma and rebirth. Even though a person is already a monk or a nun, in actual life, both karma and rebirth are definite invisible causes and cannot be seen with our eyes. A result can be seen in Table 8.18 which shows respondents' beliefs regarding a certain degree of karma. Second, I suggest that the environment can be another factor to vary the degree of believing in karma. It may depend on different environmental conditions. If the times are prosperous and happy Buddhists live a comfortable and relaxed life, and do not think of karma and rebirth.

Table 9.16

Temple Positions for the Jataka Tale Depictions in the two societies

Place for depiction in contemporary society	Place for depiction in medieval society
The external wall of the Great Hall	South and North walls
The internal wall of the Great Hall	East wall
On both sides of the corridor	Ceilings
The wall of the entryway	In the niches
Lecture Halls	On the base pedestal

Table 9. 17

Degree of the Jataka Tales' Influence on the Life

Degrees	Monks	Nuns	Total
Very Relevant	5	19	24
Somewhat Relevant	6	43	49
Very Little Relevant	7	17	24
Not at all Relevant	0	4	4
Not Response	0	3	3
Grand Total	18	86	104

Table 9.18

Monks' and Nuns' Believe in a Certain Degree of Karma

Degree	Monks	Nuns	Total
Extremely Important	8	35	43
Moderately Important	4	42	46
A Little Bit Important	6	8	14
Not Related	0	1	1
Grand Total	18	86	104

Table 9.19 demonstrates that respondents were asked to imagine how the Jataka tales affected the beliefs and daily practices of Buddhist laypeople. The results range from “extremely important”, through “moderately important”, to “a little bit important.” In effect, if there was an environment of political unrest in the country; if Buddhists suffered in a time of war, or confronted other difficulties, they often thought of karma and rebirth because they expected something good in their future and to be born into a better next life. For example, looking back to medieval China, during the Northern Zhou, the Mid and Later Tang, and the Five Dynasties, when people confronted war and a chaotic society, they often thought of karma and rebirth and more Jataka tales were produced on the walls of the Mogao caves. All those who think of karma and rebirth have to face the difficult consequences of their religious beliefs; and those who seldom think of the two live in peace and happiness. Therefore, the Jataka tales do not have a strong influence on the contemporary Buddhist society in Taiwan, but there is a strong correlation between the two societies. Somehow the condition of the environment is associated with beliefs on karma and rebirth.

The Jataka tales at the Mogao caves demonstrate the immense selflessness and compassion by the Buddha during his long time as a bodhisattva. They are not simply artistic wall paintings of stories. Belief in these tales suggests, in fact, that karma and rebirth were and are key principles in both medieval and contemporary Buddhist society. The purpose of the questionnaire has been to compare how the two societies were influenced by a few chosen subjects in the Jataka tales. The results also showed similarities and different degrees of belief in the Jataka tales as expressed in the two societies’ views of karma and rebirth.

In more than one way contemporary monks and medieval monks have closely equivalent viewpoints on the kings and princes of the Jataka tales which were depicted throughout medieval times and influenced by the teaching of Confucius that put the “human” in a higher priority position than the “animal.” However, when today’s monks were asked to select five favorite Jataka tales, the Nine-colored Deer got a high score. When they were asked for more detail on the subject matters, they were more concerned with the teachings of the Buddha—karma.

I have shown that, in different periods, both societies had similar reasons to depict the Jataka tales at the Mogao caves and on the walls of temples. Contemporary society produces parallel patterns to match each other in the depicted places, from the external wall of the Great Hall, at temples, or the south and north wall at the Mogao caves, from the extremely prominent location inside of the Lecture Hall at temples to the base pedestal, and obscure location, at the Mogao caves (see Table 9.16).

The last question asked was to what degree the Jataka tales influenced the lives of contemporary monks, nuns, and laypeople. The answers were not as definitive as expected for their opinions and common beliefs, other than the concepts of karma and rebirth, varied. For example, about half of monks and nuns replied “somewhat relevant” to describe the effect on their life, along with believing that the concept of karma is “moderately important.” However, I offer the opinion that the environment, because of a strong, common experience, may have forced them to believe in karma and rebirth. Thus, difficult environmental conditions strongly influenced religious belief in both medieval Chinese society and contemporary Buddhist society in Taiwan.

Table 9. 19

Monks' and Nuns' Opinion About the Jataka Tales,
How They Affected Beliefs and Daily Practices of Buddhist Laypeople

Degrees	Monks	Nuns	Total
Extremely Important	6	36	42
Moderately Important	9	38	47
A Little Bit Important	3	11	14
Not Related	0	1	1
Grand Total	18	86	104

CHAPTER TEN

CONCLUSION

Many generations of scholars have been interested in various aspects of the Mogao caves since they first came to the attention of outsiders in the early 20th century. Archaeologists have surveyed the existing caves and art. Art historians have interpreted the murals of the diverse Buddhist stories depicted on the walls. Others have debated the caves' function and cave owners' behavior and beliefs, and they have analyzed the religious beliefs and practices depicted in the caves from a holistic perspective. Travelers have visited these caves to admire their aesthetics and the valuable Buddhist paintings, architectures and sculptures. Pilgrims came throughout the years to experience emotional intensity generated by acts of worship. Buddhist monks and nuns have viewed these powerful and pervasive images and believed that they could provide a uniquely realistic aura of factuality in their representation of the Buddha's lands and paradises. All of them came to the Mogao caves to fulfill their own purposes and needs, helping the Mogao caves to become a well-known Buddhist World Heritage site.

I have shown that Dunhuang provided a rest stop for traders, was an entrepot for merchants, and a place of pilgrimage for Buddhist monks who came from the Western Regions. It also served at different times as a gateway through which Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity spread into China. Dunhuang has been an arena of activity for diverse people since it was established by Emperor Wu of the Western Han Dynasty in 111 B.C. and throughout the rise and fall of many dynasties.

Scholars, both past and present, have been unable to agree on either the topology or the etymology of the name Dunhuang. Dunhuang is mentioned in Chinese literary documents as a place before the arrival of Han people. The literal meaning of Dunhuang, “Great Prosperity” has been established in the mind of the Chinese people since it was mentioned in the *History of the Former Han Dynasty*.

Modern scholars disagree with early definitions of Dunhuang like “Great Prosperity.” Some insist that it is a Chinese phoneticization or an indigenous phoneticized term. Recently, some linguists have maintained that it originated in a minority language such as Turkic, Uighur, Xiongnu, or Tibetan. According to Suo Nanjie, a modern Tibetan linguistic expert, the sound of “duo-hang” means a “place of chanting sutras” or a “location of chanting sutras.” If that is true, the date of Buddhism’s entrance into China has to be moved back to 138 B.C. before Zhang Qian arrived at Dunhuang in 138 B.C., the Western Han Dynasty, instead of the accepted date of 67 A.D. in the Eastern Han Dynasty because Dunhuang might have many Buddhist activities. This new perspective, however, still needs more related information to support Suo Nanjie’s translation.

Even though the origin and meaning of Dunhuang has been established, current scholars still disagree with each other in their understanding of it. I suggest that scholars have to bear in mind the forgotten “living entity” paradigm—that Dunhuang created a beneficial effect on the society, culture, and history of people who lived part of their lives in socio-cultural worlds that varied in detail over the centuries.

The Jataka tales as depicted in the Mogao caves of Dunhuang constitute a valuable ethno-historical document from which can be gleaned much information about

the history of neighboring regions which interacted with one another, and the history of the trading networks which comprised the Silk Road that reached out from China to the Mediterranean Sea during the medieval era of China.

I have discussed the literature and murals of the Jataka tales, both of the past and as these stories exist today. They have been the cultural center of the teachings of Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism as they convey the notions of karma and rebirth. Chinese Mahayana Buddhism has gradually absorbed the ideals of the Jataka tales through the translated sutras and the art from India and the Western Regions. I have described the uniqueness of the Buddha's teachings, the decorated and dignified monasteries that recalled memories of the Buddha, and the favorite sermon subjects of Nikayas and Vinayas, revealing the reasons why the Chinese people of different dynasties were inspired to establish such monuments as the Mogao caves of Dunhuang.

The caves of the Jataka tales were created from memories and from studies of past Dunhuang culture, including the periods of construction, the four architectural forms used, the style and location of the art, and both imperial patronage and persecution of Buddhism. These decorated caves also demonstrated the financial networks of diverse donors who were kings and queens, members of prefectural families, local officials' families, the members of official military families, the Buddhist community, the returning and departing merchants and travelers, and pilgrims, among others. In all eras, the cave sponsors and donors commissioned different sized Jataka caves depending on their financial resources.

Ever since Buddhism was introduced to China during the second century A.D., the teachings of the Buddha have been preached and practiced. In the Jataka tales it is

necessary for us to learn who the protagonists were as well as what their motives were. Evidence of both has been preserved in Buddhist scriptures, Nikayas and Vinayas, because the Buddha told the narratives of his previous lives repeatedly through his preaching. Chinese Buddhists came to believe that the concept of bodhisattva could help them to achieve the status of buddhahood, both physically and mentally, as they sought a better next life. Although both Nikayas and Vinayas involve the Jataka tales that relate to the numerous good deeds of the Buddha's previous lives during his long career as a bodhisattva to benefit others, but there is a crucial difference between the two scriptures: whereas the tales of Nikayas indicate an anecdote from the life of Shakymuni Buddha, are famous India wise men, and provide more detail in the Nikaya texts, the tales of Vinayas focus on the relationship between the Buddha and his disciples in the past and the present, are the popular figures and animals, discuss in less detail in the Vinaya texts.

The basic roles of bodhisattva were to help or to save sentient beings and to sacrifice their physical selves to save others' lives. As such, the Jataka tales told of the bodhsattvas' virtuous deeds. They were inspired by the sermons of the Buddha who eulogized the merits of bodhisattva. It was important for Chinese Buddhists to practice the six Paramitas, especially the *dana*, generosity, because they improve one's self and insure a better rebirth. The Paramitas could be invoked in dangerous situations during the periodic wars of medieval China when daily life was full of misery and torment. Therefore, it can be said that artists who depicted the main protagonists of the Jataka tales performing altruistic acts to help or save others' lives through many lifetimes were helping to teach Buddhist virtues and to dramatize the roles of bodhisattva.

I have argued that the central Jataka characters represented specific goal-directed behavior because they chose from among the five exemplary behaviors (see chapter 7 p. 234), those which they believed would guide them to the achievement of their goals—enlightenment or buddhahood. Therefore, the Jataka tales presented a specific awareness, which involved not only the deeds and the rewards but also the intention and the cost behind the deeds. For instance, some of the characters in the Jataka tales pursued, to the fullest extent, a verse from a wise sage in order to achieve enlightenment. As a consequence, some did, in the end, generously give away their mortal bodies to help or save another sentient being. This is an example of intention followed by bodily sacrifice.

The particular behaviors involved vary widely. In my own observations, I have found that there are forty-seven Mogao caves that have paintings of the Jataka tales on their walls. Only sixteen specific Jataka tales are depicted (see Appendix L, M, N, and P). These were popular narrations that the artists illustrated in many different ways to express the meaning and ideology of each tale. Each became, in effect, a pictorial sutra painted on the walls of the caves.

Based on the central action depicted, these Jataka tales can be analyzed into five categories of altruism: reciprocal altruism, fearless self-sacrificing altruism, boundless-giving altruism, kin-directed altruism, and courageous altruism. I refer to these collectively as “cascade altruism” for bodhisattvas performed altruistic acts through many lifetimes.

I conceptualize these components of behavior in my analysis of comprehensive cascade altruistic behavior: 1). Altruism has to involve a great passion to save others; 2). Altruism must be an intentional action; 3). Altruism sometimes involves a physical

sacrifice to save another's life; 4). Altruism requires diligence and sets no conditions; and 5). Altruism requires no anticipation of benefit in return. Thus cascade altruism helps a bodhisattva to achieve buddhahood in his many lifetimes. The depictions of cascade altruism in these Jataka tales help scholars understand Buddhist altruism. The enactment of the behaviors of bodhisattva cascade altruism has been described as follows:

Loving kindness has the characteristic of devotion to others' welfare, the function of offering welfare, and the effect of counteracting anger; compassion has the characteristic of devotion to removing other's suffering, the function of not allowing others' suffering, and the effect of counteracting harmfulness; sympathetic joy has the characteristic of rejoicing in others' well-being, the function of not being envious, and the effect of counteracting displeasure; and equanimity has the characteristic of regarding all beings with even-mindedness, the function of seeing beings equally, and the effect of counteracting lust.

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With these deeds in mind, I have shown how the Mogao Jataka tale-scape is the central paradigm in murals of the Jataka tales at the Mogao caves and the teachings of the Buddha in both Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism. The idea of the Jataka tale-scape focuses holistically on each period of Mogao cave art, the specific cave group, and is considered the central nexus. I have offered an explanation for why more Jataka-tale containing caves were produced during certain times. Figure 8.15 shows that there were two clear peaks of Jataka cave production: one in the Northern Zhou Dynasty and one in the Later Tang Dynasty. These peaks demonstrate that when dynasties suffered a time of great troubles and turmoil, the artists produced more Jataka murals, and with greater frequency, than in peaceful times.

The first peak in the creation of Jataka caves was in the Northern Zhou Dynasty. Six caves were dug and painted with murals of the Jataka tales. When the Sui Dynasty reunited North and South China, and peace time was restored and maintained, then the

pace of Jataka cave production declined. Similarly, in the Early and High Tang Dynasties, when people lived in peace and enjoyed prosperity, there were no Jataka caves created.

Until 755 A.D. when the High Tang was confronted with the An-Shi Rebellion in the capital city, Changan, and at the same time, the Hexi Corridor regions were also subjected to an attack by the Tibet kingdom, creating an unstable society, the painting of murals slowed. After Tibet seized the Hexi Corridor area from 781 to 848 A.D., a time also known as the Mid Tang period, the area of the Hexi was sometimes sufficiently troubled for nine Jataka caves to be dug quickly.

The second peak of Jataka cave construction was in the Later Tang Dynasty when ten caves were excavated. Throughout the Five Dynasties, nine caves were dug. Dynastic turbulence at this time was responsible for the more frequent building of caves and painting of Jataka murals on their interiors. On the other hand, more peaceful dynasties produced fewer or no Jataka-tale caves. Correspondingly, I found that Jataka murals dominated in the early periods and disappeared during the Early and the High Tang, but then reappeared in later periods, such as the Mid and Later Tang, the Five Dynasties, and the Song Dynasties. The power and scale perspective helps explain this correlation and shows that the production of Mogao caves correlated in different dynasties with certain major socio-security situations. The significance of the two peaks reflected that when there was dynastic unrest the artists pictured with greater frequency the Jataka tales on walls. By contrast, during the more peaceful periods the artists produced less Jataka tales at the Mogao caves. Concomitantly, the power and scale theory also shows that caves reflect the social power of their sponsors. Those with power

and high social status could connect to others of the same status for financial support to build large caves in the Tang Dynasty, the Five Dynasties, and Song Dynasty.

A special contribution of this research is the use of both etic and emic perspectives. The etic perspective is an outsider view that includes the concepts of historical changes in art styles, of social situations, of political variations, of economic conditions and of traditional thoughts as they find realization in the Mogao cave art of Dunhuang. For example, artistic tastes developed and changed throughout the history of the making of the Mogao caves and the painting of murals of the Jataka tales. The stylistic changes went from simple to more complicated, or from plainness to detailed specificity, as artistic tastes and cultural interests shifted during the various periods and different dynasties.

Viewed from a holistic perspective, the Buddhist narrative murals can be described as having evolved and changed over time. The first Jataka tale paintings in the Mogao caves were influenced by the Indian and the Western Region style of human figure painting. The second artistic phase combined foreign and the traditional Chinese styles. Later on, Chinese artists developed their own style. During this process of Sinicization they perfected a distinctive mode of human figure representation, that is, the painting style of the Jataka tales went through a process of adoption, rejection, retention, and discarding.

The emic perspective is an inside, Buddhist perspective, that analyzes the concepts of spatial structures, including architectural structures used for religious practices. In the development of the Mahayanic school, it provides an alternative way for Chinese to choose their future life. These concepts are manifested in the Mogao caves of

Dunhuang. The structures include the spatial lay-out which connects physical architectural structures with human activities, that is, using the structures for social functions and religious practices. Changing architectural structures reflected altering concepts of ideology and also reflected the prevalent notions of ethical norms, all of which found physical realization in the caves.

The art of the Mogao caves was molded into different paradigms to satisfy individual needs, religious needs, and the needs of the Buddhist community. For example, in the beginning the primary function of the caves was for individual meditation. Later, this expanded into multifarious uses of the caves, for collective meditation, as lecture halls, as destinations for visiting pilgrims, and for the acquisition of merit for particular families who wished that “this dedication may benefit their departed relatives,” or “may this contribute to the happiness and welfare for their living relatives.” Eventually, the shifting panorama of architectural changes in the physical caves reflected the changing concepts in both esoteric and exoteric society and also the influence on attitudes of a burgeoning economy.

Results of my questionnaire survey, conducted with contemporary Taiwanese Buddhist monks and nuns, reveal that the concepts of the Jataka tales, karma and rebirth, both have varying degrees of influence on the daily life of the two societies—medieval China and modern Taiwan. Both societies put the “human” story of the Jataka tales rather than the “animal” story in the first position. This indicates the strong influence of the teachings of Confucius. Another similarity is the selection of the locations to display the tales. From the early dynasties to the late dynasties, a consistent pattern was used to match locations with the choices of the monks and nuns. When contemporary monks and

nuns chose their favorite Jataka tales, they showed that the idea of karma was very strong, whereas, in medieval times the story of giving alms was more likely to be considered an individual's or society's favorite. Moreover, while modern monks and nuns respond to the influence of karma and rebirth in their daily lives and practices, their answers reflect different personal and common beliefs, and different environmental conditions.

Both the murals of the Jataka tales and the responses of contemporary monks and nuns express the elementary emotions of an individual consciousness or a collective conscience to satisfy individual or societal needs and wishes. In the twenty-first century, Buddhist teachings provide some insights into the long-vanished oral culture associated with the Mogao cave murals, and how the Mogao Jataka tale caves are still associated with certain aspects of contemporary Taiwanese thought and culture.

The present study of the Mogao Jataka tale-scape has three anthropological dimensions. First, it offers new anthropological insight and understanding into the Mogao caves of Dunhuang because it reaches beyond previous scholars' works and establishes an overarching analytical perspective that focused on the interconnectedness of cultural entities, nexus, and embedment into the larger context of their cultural life and existence. Second, it offers a novel application of power and scale analysis. One power and scale relationship existing is that the higher the status of cave owners, the more opportunity they have to access financial support from themselves and others. Third, the totality of the work suggests that an overarching –scape paradigm, here used in the specific formulation of Mogao Jataka tale-scape, can be a useful paradigm which is valuable for the scholarly study of other historical cultural sites.

The Mogao Jataka tale-scape represents a single theme for a main character that provides a comprehensive, memorable, and recallable story that spreads across the population and endures over time. Their themes led particular Jataka tales to be repeated in different Chinese dynastic periods. Chinese Buddhists were motivated to tell the stories and to listen to them. This helps to explain why the Jataka tales are depicted again and again in the Mogao caves and leads to consideration of the categorization of the behaviors of Jataka characters. Different tales may simultaneously dramatize the same goal-directed behavior, while also demonstrating different categories of virtues. Overall, the murals express an organic entity of utility and art. There is still more to be studied and learned about the Mogao caves. It has been my aim to contribute to a scholarly knowledge and understanding of this historic Buddhist site.

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Appendix A. The names and boundaries of Dunhuang Prefecture that changed over time.

Dynasties, number of years in power	Names in different periods	The numbers of the county	The names of compass of competency
The Han Dynasty (111 B.C.-220 A.D.)	Dunhuang	6	Dunhuang, Longle, Minga, Yuanquan, Quangzhi, Xiaogu
The Wei Dynasty of Epoch of the Three Kingdoms (220-265)	Dunhuang	7	Dunhuang, Longle, Minga, Yuanquan, Quangzhi, Xiaogu, Yihe
The early Jin Dynasty (265-283)	Dunhuang	9	Dunhuang, Longle, Minga, Yuanquan, Quangzhi, Xiaogu, Yihe, Chuangpu, Qianqi
The Former Liang Dynasty (318-376)	Shazhou	5	Dunhuang, Longle, Xiaogu, Wuze, Liangxing
The Northern Liang Dynasty (421-441)	Dunhuang	4	Dunhuang, Longle, Xiaogu, Dongxiang
The Northern Wei Dynasty (441-534)	Guazhou (526A.D.)	6	Dunhuang, Xiaogu, Mingsha, Pingkang, Shouchuang, Dongxiang,
The Western Wei Dynasty (535-556)	Dunhuang	3	Dunhuang, Mingsha, Pingkang
The Northern Zhou Dynasty (557-580)	Dunhuang	3	Mingsha, Liangxing, Kuaiji
The Sui Dynasty (581-617)	Guazhou	3	Dunhuang, Chuangle, Yumen
The Early and High Tang Dynasty (618-785)	Shazhou	2	Dunhuang, Longle
The Kingdom of the Tibet (786-847)	Shazhou	1 (10 tribes)	Upper, Middle, Lower, Simian, Hegusa, Xidongsa, Ningzong, Tongjia, Xingren, Sengni
The Later Tang Dynasty (848-905)	Shazhou	2	Dunhuang, Shouchuang
The Golden Kingdom (906-914)	Shazhou	2 (11 villages)	Dhunhuang, Shouchuang
The Five Dynasties and The Song Dynasty (914-1036)	Shazhou	3	Dunhuang, Shouchuang, Ziting
The Uighur Kingdom of the Shazhou (1037-1067)	Shazhou		Unknown
The Western Xia Dynasty (1067-1228)	Shazhou		Unknown
The Yuan Dynasty (1228-1403)	Shazhou		Unknown
The Ming Dynasty (1404-1528)	Shazhouwei (prefecture)	1	
Under the Turfan	Unknown		Unknown
The Qing Dynasty (1697-1911)	Shazhouwei Dunhuang county (in 1760)	1	

Sources: Qi 1989; Yan 1994; 53-54; Li 1997:72-73. The reigning dates of each dynasty represented the exactly controlling Dunhuang area and were dissimilar era dates.

Appendix B

A list of the Jataka caves numbers compiled by different specialists at the Mogao caves.

The Jataka caves numbers compiled by different specialists									
Dynasty	Dunhuang Academy	Chang Dachien	Paul Pelliot	Shi Yan	Dynasty	Dunhuang Academy	Chang Dachien	Paul Pelliot	Shi Yan
N. Liang	275	233	118-i	204	M. Tang	258	244	109	208
N. Wei	254	248	105	190		449	225	120 ^L	286
	257	243	110	193	L. Tang	9	155	167	405
W. Wei	285	83	120-n	248		12	154	166	404
	294	89	126	256		19	149	161 ^a	349
	296	90	129	258		85	60	92	129
N. Zhou	299	92	133-a	261		138	5	1	5
	301	93	133-c	263		141	7	3	7
	428	213	135	300		144	10	6	10
	461	306	0	496		145	11	7	11
Sui	302	94	137-a	265		147	13	9	13
	417	207+	136-h	312		156	300	17 ^z	63
	419	208	136-f	310	The Five	4	159	170	409
	423	210	136-b	306		5	158	169	408
	427	212	136	302		61	75	117	168
H. Tang	31	115	135-c	234		72	70	106	157
	148	14	10	14		98	42	74	71
M. Tang	112	36	46	40		100	40	66	69
	154	18+	0	21		108	39	52	68
	200	278	57	105		146	12	8	12
	231	47	81	132		390	190	150	377
	236	52	82 ^b	135	Song	55	79	118-f	176
	237	53	84	136		454	228	119	282
	238	257	87	137					

Source: Xie 1996:2-23; Xu 1996:64-68; Shih 1996:211-245. Those four scholars have each used their own system for numbering the existing caves. I got the information of cave 461 is from Shih's volume II because other specialists do not list it in their publications.

The explanation of symbols:

0 is for an unidentified or unrecorded cave for Paul Pelliot.

+ represents the list of subsidiary caves by Chang Dachien.

X^z or X^{a b c etc.} represents the list of a subsidiary cave by Paul Pelliot.

Appendix C

The Ten indulgences or ten unlawful things are:

1. That salt might be preserved in horn, whereas salt like other edibles might not, according to the Vinaya, be laid aside for use.
2. That solid food might be taken, not only up till noon, but till the sun threw shadows two inches long.
3. That the rules of the Vinaya might be relaxed in the country, away from the conveniences of the monasteries.
4. That ordination, confession, etc., might be performed in private houses, and not only in the *uposatha*³⁰ halls attached to the monasteries.
5. That where the consent of the Order was necessary to any act, that consent might be obtained after, and not only before the act.
6. That conformity to the example of others was a good excuse for relaxing rules.
7. That whey might be taken after noon, but not liquids such as water or milk.
8. That fermented drinks, if they looked like water, were allowed to be drunk.
9. That seats covered with cloths were allowed, so long as the cloths had no fringes.
10. That gold and silver might be received by members of the Order.

This quotes from Davids 1907:216.

³⁰ *Upasatha* literally means a ceremony in which a monks' or nuns' community has an obligation to hold the *uposatha* twice a month to recite their *pratimoksha*, the 250 disciplinary rules for monks and 348 disciplinary rules for nuns. In Taiwan's temples, every *uposatha* is held on the first day and the fifteen day of each month and takes place in a separate room for monks or nuns who have to attend it and have to confess any violated rule. During the *uposatha*, there is a head monk or nun who is in charge for the recited pratimoksha and calls three times after each section of the rules for the monks or nuns to confess the rules they have violated.

Appendix D

The twelve divisions of Sutras

1. Sutra literally means the lengthy discourses of the Buddha. This style directly uses prose to describe the discourses of the Buddha. An example of this is Digha Nikaya, the “collection of long discourses” (Law 1974:80), which is the first Sutra in the Sutra pitaka.
2. Geya refers to the teaching of the Buddha who composed in prose, intermixed with verse.
3. Vyakarana is predictions bestowed. The Buddha predicts that disciples will attain enlightenment in the future.
4. Gatha are songs which are interpolated to indicate the discourses of the Buddha in many Sutras.
5. Udana refers to the utterances of the Buddha.
6. Nidana is the purpose and occasion of speaking sutras.
7. Avadana is related to parables and allegories, which help us to understand the doctrines and point out the stories of the previous lives of the Buddha’s disciples and lay followers.
8. Itivrttika is the Buddha’s saying by a compiler who maintained “thus I have heard.”
9. Jataka are the stories of the previous Buddha’s lives when he performed bodhisattva’ actions.
10. Vaipulya is scriptures in Mahayana and is rendered as correct and equal. That means that part of a sutra concerns the expansion of doctrine.
11. Adbhuta-dharma is the Buddha’s discourse dealing with miraculous events.
12. Upadeśa is discourses and discussions by question and answer.

Sources: Lan 1994:109 and 306-309; Shih 1989:145 and 344; Yinshun 1981:111-126; and Yinshun 1994:9.

Appendix E

Ashtangika-mārga (Eightfold Path, also known as Noble Eightfold Path)

The Eightfold Path was an early Buddhist teaching that set forth the principles for attaining liberation. Moreover, the path leads to release from suffering and constitutes the contents of the last of the Four Noble Truths. The Eightfold Path includes:

1. Right view, which is the correct views of the teaching of the Buddha and is based on an understanding of the Four Noble Truths.
2. Right thought, which includes renunciation and non-violence, and avoids harming sentient beings.
3. Right speech, which avoids speaking harsh words and nonsense, lying and slandering others.
4. Right action, which avoids bad actions, such as killing, stealing, wrong speech, and sexual misconduct, that conflict with moral discipline.
5. Right livelihood, which means making your living correctly, not being slaughterers, hunters, or dealers in weaponry or intoxicants which are harmful to sentient beings.
6. Right effort, which means giving up bad habits and acquiring new good ones.
7. Right mindfulness, which focuses on your activities, of body, feeling, and mind.
8. Right concentration, which concentrate your mind on an object, such that mind and object both become a single point, like a hammer hitting a nail on the head. A single point concentrates “thwack.”

Source: Shih 1989:280.

Appendix F

Atthan asamannāgata uposatha (Eight precepts)

The Eight Precepts are also known as eight prohibitions. Buddhist laymen and laywomen observe them for twenty-four hours, a single night and day, on specific days of the month, including eighth, fourteenth, fifteenth, twenty-third, twenty-ninth, and thirteenth. Although they vary somewhat among different sources, the eight precepts can be summarized as follows: (1) not to take life, (2) not to steal, (3) to refrain from all sexual relations, (4) not to lie, (5) not to drink intoxicants, (6) not to wear ornaments or perfume, nor to listen to singing or watch dancing, (7) not to sleep on a wide or elevated bed, and (8) not to eat after the noon hour. Because these eight precepts are included among the ten precepts for male and female novices of the Buddhist Order, on specific days of the month lay believers effectively live a monastic life in form and spirit by observing the eight precepts.

Source: Shih 1989: 318.

Appendix G

The Five Teachings of Mahadeva, or Five Point Modification of the Monastic Rules

These five points refer to the arhat who would otherwise be considered a “worthy one,” who had escaped from the cycle of death and rebirth, who retains certain human weaknesses; therefore, Mahadeva claims a flexible interpretation of the monastic rules. Later, the Sthaviravada (Pali Theravada) and Mahasamghika schools were founded because the five Teachings of Mahadeva offered as a new perspective. They are:

1. An arhat may experience sexual orgasm while sleeping because a devil tempted him in a dream.
2. An arhat may lack certain knowledge.
3. An arhat may still have doubts.
4. An arhat, who may lack his level of enlightenment, may have it pointed out by another enlightened person.
5. An arhat may encounter certain insufferable trials.

Sources: Lan 1994:639 ; Shih 1989:754.

Appendix H

The periodization of the Mogao Caves.

<u>Dynasties</u>	<u>Years</u>
Northern Liang	421-439
Northern Wei	439-534
Western Wei	535-556
Northern Zhou	557-580
Sui	581-618
Tang	
Early Tang	618-704
High Tang	705-780
Mid Tang (Period of Tibetan occupation)	781-847
Later Tang (Zhang family rule)	848-906
Western Han (Golden Mountain Kingdom)	910-914
Five Dynasties (Cao family rule)	914-960
Late Liang	914-923
Late Tang	923-936
Late Jin	936-946
Late Han	947-950
Late Zhou	951-960
Northern Song (Still Cao family rule)	960-1035
Xi Xia Period	1036-1226
Yuan	1227-1368

Note: the dates and names are those specifically applicable to the Dunhuang region; they differ significantly from those in other regions of China. Sources: Shi 1982:177-178; Li 2000:252.

Appendix I

The number of cave openings in different dynasties at Mogao Caves

1. Northern Liang (421-439) has seven caves: 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, and 275.
2. Northern Wei (439-534) has ten caves: 251, 254, 257, 259, 260, 263, 265, 273, 441, and 487.
3. Western Wei (535-556) has eleven caves: 246, 247, 248, 249, 285, 286, 288, 431, 432, 435, and 437.
4. Northern Zhou (557-580) has sixteen caves: 250, 290, 291, 294, 296, 297, 298, 299, 301, 428, 430, 438, 439, 440, 442, and 461.
5. Sui (581-618) has ninety-four caves: 56, 59, 62, 63, 64, 206, 243, 244, 253, 255, 262, 266, 274, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 284, 289, 292, 293, 295, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 376, 378, 378, 380, 383, 388, 389, 390*, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 429, 433, 434, 436, 451, 453, 455, 456, and 457.
6. Early Tang (618-704) has forty-six caves: 51, 57, 58, 60, 67, 68, 70, 71, 77, 78, 96, 202, 203, 204, 205, 207, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 220, 242, 283, 287, 321, 322, 328, 329, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 371, 372, 373, 375, 381, 386, and 448.
7. High Tang (705-780) has ninety-seven caves: 23, 26, 27, 28, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 39, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 52, 66, 74, 75, 79, 80, 83, 84, 87, 88, 89, 91, 101, 103, 109, 113, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 129, 130, 148, 162, 164, 165, 166, 170, 171, 172, 175, 176, 179, 180, 182, 185, 188, 194, 199, 208, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 223, 225, 264, 300, 319, 320, 323, 345, 347, 353, 374, 384, 387, 444, 445, 446, 450, 458, 460, 482, 483, 484, 490, and 492.
8. Mid Tang (also known as the Tibetan period) (781-847) has Fifty-five caves: 7, 21, 43, 53, 69, 92, 93, 112, 133, 134, 135, 144, 151, 153, 154, 155, 157, 158, 159, 186, 191, 197, 200, 201, 222, 226, 231, 234, 236, 237, 238, 240, 258, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 363, 365, 366, 368, 369, 370, 447, 449, 467, 468, 469, 471, 472, 474, 475, 478, and 479.
9. Later Tang (848-906) has seventy-one caves: 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 29, 30, 54, 82, 85, 94, 102, 104, 105, 106, 107, 111, 114, 127, 128, 132, 136, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 145, 147, 150, 156, 160, 161, 163, 167, 168, 173, 177, 178, 181, 183, 184, 190, 192, 193, 195, 196, 198, 221, 224, 227, 229, 232, 241, 336, 337, 343, 348, 349, 459, 470, and 473.

10. Ten caves that cannot be dated for sure are from in the Early, High, Mid, or Late Tang: 65, 76, 81, 97, 110, 131, 169, 252, 344, and 466.
11. There are twenty-six caves from the Five Dynasties (907-959): 4, 5, 6, 22, 35, 36, 40, 61, 72, 86, 90, 98, 99, 100, 108, 137, 146, 187, 189, 261, 325, 346, 351, 362, 385, and 476.
12. From the Northern Song (960-1035) there are fifteen caves: 25, 55, 73, 152, 174, 230, 233, 235, 256, 355, 364, 377, 443, 452, and 454.
13. From Sazhou Huaer, the Uighur (1030-1068) there is only one cave: 330.
14. From Xixia, the Western Xia (1036-1226) there are fourteen caves: 37, 239, 326, 327, 330, 350, 352, 354, 356, 367, 382, 415, 464, and 491.
15. There are eight caves from the Yuan (1227-1368): 1, 2, 3, 95, 149, 462, 463, and 465.
16. From Chin (1715-1911) there are two caves: 11 and 228.
17. The historical periods for nine caves cannot be determined: 245, 324, 409, 477, 480, 481. Caves 485 and 486 are the same caves as 487 and 489.

Because all scholars use their own dating systems for determining the periods of cave construction, there are discrepancies in these statistics.

* Cave 390 was originally constructed in the Sui Dynasty, but it was reconstructed in the Five Dynasties. I place it in the Five Dynasties because the style and location of the mural is similar to those of the Five Dynasties.

Sources: Shi 1982:177-184; Ji 1998:8-10.

Appendix J

Measurements of the Jataka tale caves in the Northern Dynasties and the Sui Dynasty.

Dynasty	Cave number	Ante-room		Corridor		Main Room		
		Deep	Wide	Long	Wide	Deep	Wide	Height
N. Liang	275	5' 9"	10' 9"	* 1' 9"	* 2' 6"	10' 6"	11' 4"	11' 1"
N. Wei	254			3' 9"	4' 5"	31' 3"	22'	14'
	257					32' 4"	20'	16'
W. Wei	285			4' 4"	4' 1"	20' 9"	21' 1"	13' 6"
N. Zhou	294	* 2' 7"	12' 1"	3' 6"	3' 2"	13' 6"	12' 5"	11' 1"
	296	4' 9"	11' 9"	4' 2"	3' 3"	14' 2"	13' 2"	10' 8"
	299			6"	2' 9"	8' 5"	8' 2"	8' 1"
	301			1' 8"	3' 1"	10' 6"	10' 1"	8' 8"
	428	7' 7"	38' 3"	6' 8"	7' 3"	44' 9"	35' 9"	16' 7"
	461			2' 9"	3' 1"	9' 4"	9' 3"	9'
Sui	302	3' 9"	14' 2"	3' 2"	3' 6"	12' 7"	11' 6"	10' 4"
	417					* 7' 8"	* 8' 2"	7' 5"
	419	6' 5"	12' 7"	3' 7"	2' 9"	14' 1"	13'	12' 6"
	423			2' 1"	2' 7"	9' 8"	9' 7"	10' 4"
	427	12' 1"	23' 2"	4' 5"	7' 2"	34' 9"	23' 2"	15' 8"

Source: Shih 1996: Vol. I.

* indicates the measurement of what remains of the structure.

The graph's empty spaces indicate that the measurement was unavailable to the author.

Appendix K

Measurements of the Jataka tale caves in the Tang Dynasty, the Five Dynasties, and the Song Dynasty.

Dynasty	Cave number	Ante-room		Corridor		Main Room		
		Deep	Wide	Long	Wide	Deep	Wide	Height
High Tang	31	6' 3"	13' 6"	5' 2"	4' 2"	16' 2"	16' 1"	11' 9"
	148	9' 8"	49' 7"	10' 4"	10' 4"	26'	55' 6"	19' 5"
Mid Tang	112		* 11' 4"	2' 2"	2' 6"	6' 8"	8' 2"	9' 1"
	154			1' 4"	1' 8"	12' 4"	13' 6"	9' 7"
	200	* 3' 2"	* 16' 7"	4' 4"	3' 6"	11' 8"	11' 6"	10' 8"
	231	* 6' 2"	24' 6"	6' 2"	5' 5"	20' 9"	22' 1"	18' 7"
	236	* 2' 7"	14' 1"	2' 9"	3' 9"	11' 4"	12' 6"	10' 1"
	237	7' 8"	26' 4"	6' 3"	6' 5"	23' 1"	23' 9"	16' 7"
	238	* 3' 9"	* 12' 6"	3' 9"	2' 9"	10'	11' 3"	9' 7"
	258	* 1' 6"	* 18' 6"	4' 5"	5' 2"	19' 6"	19'	14' 7"
	449	5' 9"	15	5' 2"	3' 6"	10' 8"	11' 3"	11' 4"
Later Tang	9	12' 4"	21' 3"	7' 7"	5' 2"	27' 8"	18' 8"	15' 5"
	12	* 17' 3"	22' 6"	8' 5"	6' 5"	21' 6"	22' 4"	19' 3"
	19	* 2' 6"	6' 7"	2' 1"	2' 2"	4' 7"	6'	6' 4"
	85	12' 7"	29' 8"	13' 4"	8' 5"	36' 7"	32' 9"	22' 4"
	138	14' 4"	32' 8"	5'	9' 6"	45' 5"	41' 8"	21' 6"
	141	4' 5"	9'	2' 9"	2' 2"	7' 7"	9' 1"	8' 3"
	144	* 7' 5"	14' 7"	5' 5"	3' 9"	14' 1"	15' 8"	12' 7"
	145	5' 5"	10' 1"	2' 6"	2' 7"	9' 8"	10' 3"	10' 1"
	147	3' 6"	10' 3"	4' 2"	2' 6"	9' 1"	10' 1"	8' 8"
	156	* 8' 3"	24' 5"	6' 8"	6' 2"	20' 5"	20' 7"	17' 3"
The Five	4	* 8' 5"	33' 1"	16' 4"	10' 4"	38' 5"	36' 8"	23' 6"
	5	* 7' 5"	24' 6"	9' 8"	6' 5"	20' 9"	22' 4"	14' 8"
	61			30' 3"	12' 6"	47'	44'	25' 6"
	72	6' 8"	13' 9"	4' 1"	6' 7"	21' 4"	20' 6"	16' 4"
	98	13' 1"	33'	23' 2"	11' 8"	49' 2"	41' 3"	27' 2"
	100	9' 8"	30' 1"	22' 3"	10'	30' 3"	30' 8"	19' 9"
	108	9' 1"	30' 3"	18' 6"	9' 1"	36' 9"	33' 2"	22' 2"
	146	7' 8"	28' 8"	16' 4"	8' 7"	30' 8"	28'	23'
	390	* 5' 2"	20' 9"	5'	5' 5"	19' 6"	20' 5"	17' 2"
Song	55	* 1' 9"	* 7' 7"	28' 2"	11' 2"	39' 8"	36' 8"	14' 1"
	454	9' 5"	28' 3"	19' 3"	8' 8"	36' 7"	33' 3"	19' 4"

Source: Shih 1996: Vol. I.

* indicates the measurement of what remains of the structure.

The graph's empty spaces show that the measurement of the area could not be provided by the author.

Appendix L

The Number of Jataka tales in the Initial Period at the Mogao Caves

Names of the Jataka	Cave numbers	Dynasties	Locations	Quantities
King Bilengjieli	275	Northern Liang	North Wall	1
King Sibi	275	Northern Liang	North Wall	2
	254	Northern Wei	North Wall	
King Candrababha	275	Northern Liang	North Wall	1
Prince Mahasattva	254	Northern Wei	South Wall	4
	299	Northern Zhou	Ceiling	
	301	Northern Zhou	Ceiling	
	428	Northern Zhou	East Wall	
Nine-colored Deer	257	Northern Wei	West wall	1
Brahman hears a verse and sacrifices himself	285	Western Wei	South Wall	1
Prince Sudana	294	Northern Zhou	?	2
	428	Northern Zhou	East Wall	
Prince Sujata	296	Northern Zhou	North Wall	1
Prince Kalyanakarin	296	Northern Zhou	Ceiling	1
Filial Syama (Sama)	299	Northern Zhou	Ceiling	3
	301	Northern Zhou	Ceiling	
	461	Northern Zhou	West wall	
One horned celestial being	428	Northern Zhou	East Wall	1

Sources: Dunhuang Yanjiuyuan 1982; Ji 1989; Xie 1996; Li 2000.

A question mark indicates an unknown location.

Appendix M

The Number of the Jataka tales in the Developed Period at the Mogao Caves

Names of the Jataka	Cave numbers	Dynasties	Locations	Quantities
King Sudhira	302	Sui	Ceiling	1
King handraprabha	302	Sui	Ceiling	1
King Qianshenipoli	302	Sui	Ceiling	1
King Bilengjieli	302	Sui	Ceiling	1
King Sibi	302	Sui	Ceiling	1
Brahman hears a verse and sacrifices himself	302	Sui	Ceiling	1
King Xiuloupo	302	Sui	Ceiling	1
Prince Tanmoqian	302	Sui	Ceiling	1
Filial Syama	302	Sui	Ceiling	2
	417	Sui	Ceiling	
Prince Mahasattva	302	Sui	Ceiling	2
	419	Sui	Ceiling	
Water Carrier	417	Sui	Ceiling	1
Prince Sudana	419	Sui	Ceiling	3
	423	Sui	Ceiling	
	427	Sui	The base of the throne	

Sources: Dunhuang Yanjiuyuan 1982; Ji 1989; Xie 1996; Li 2000.

Appendix N

The Number of Jataka tales in the Mature Period at the Mogao Caves

Names of the Jataka	Cave numbers	Dynasties	Locations	Quantities
Pring Sudana	9	Later Tang	West wall	1
Brahman	9	Later Tang	?	1
King Sibi	85	Later Tang	Ceiling	2
	156	Later Tang	Ceiling	
Prince Mahasattva	154	Mid Tang	South wall	5
	231	Mid Tang	West wall	
	237	Mid Tang	?	
	9	Later Tang	West wall	
	85	Later Tang	East wall	
Water Carrier	154	Mid Tang	Ceiling	1
King Qianshenipoli	85	Later Tang	South wall	1
Prince Sujata	31	High Tang	North wall	12
	148		Ceiling	
	112		North wall	
	200	Mid Tang	?	
	231		East wall	
	236		West wall	
	85	Later Tang	South wall	
	138		East wall	
	141		South wall	
	145		North wall	
	147		West wall	
	156		North wall	
	31	High Tang	North wall	
	148		Ceiling	
	154		North wall	
Chapter Eyau	231	Mid Tang	East wall	16
	236		West wall	
	238		West wall	
	258		South wall	
	85	Later Tang	South wall	
	12		East wall	
	19		?	
	138		North wall	
	141		?	
	144		North wall	
	145		North wall	
	147		West wall	
	156		North wall	

Sources: Dunhuang Yanjiuyuan 1982; Ji 1989; Li 1991; Jiang 1994; Xie 1996; Yin 2000.
A question mark indicates an unknown location.

Appendix O

The reigning dates of Rulers of the Military Commissioner of the Righteous Army

Personal Names	Reign Dates
Zhang Yicao	851-867
Zhang Huaishen	867-890
Zhang Huaiding	890-892
Suo Xun	892-894
Zhang Chengfeng	894-910
Cao Yijin	914-935
Cao Yuande	935-939
Cao Yuanshen	939-944
Cao Yuanzhong	944-974
Cao Yangong	974-976
Cao Yanlu	976-1002
Cao Zongshou	1002-1014
Cao Xianshun	1014-??

Sources: Rong:1996; Tan 1988:52-57.

Appendix P

The Number of Jataka Tales in the Declining Period at the Mogao Caves

Names of the Jataka	Cave numbers	Dynasties	Locations	Quantities
Prince Mahasattva	72	The Five	West wall	4
	108		?	
	146		?	
	55	Song	East wall	
King Qianshenipoli	85	The Five	South wall	1
Prince Shanshi	98	The Five	North wall	1
Prince Sujata	4	The Five	South wall	10
	5			
	61			
	98			
	100			
	108			
	146			
	390		?	
	55	Song	South wall	
	454			
Chapter Eyou	4	The Five	South wall	11
	5			
	61			
	98			
	100			
	108			
	146			
	390		?	
	449		East wall	
	55	Song	East wall	
	454		South wall	
Water Carrier	55	Song	East wall	1
Prince Sudana	454	Song	?	1

Sources: Dunhuang Yanjiuyuan 1982; Ji 1989; Li 1991; Jiang 1994; Xie 1996; Yin 2000.
A question mark indicates an unknown location.

Appendix Q

Twelve-linked chain of causation

In both Pali and Sanskrit terms, *nidanas* literally means link. Twelve links or the twelve-linked chain of conditioned arising, which is an early Buddhist concept, shows the causal relationship between suffering and ignorance. It is one of the important teachings of the Buddha that answers why people have *samsara*, the experiencing of the suffering or cycle of birth and death. Each link involves a cause that constitutes the chain of condition and leads to the next. The twelve-linked chain of causation is as follows:

1. Ignorance (*avidya* in Sanskrit) that gives rise to
2. action (*samskara*) is volitional action and causes
3. consciousness (*viijnana*), which rises to
4. name and form (*namarupa*), mental and physical phenomena and causes
5. the six sense organs (*shadayatana*) which are eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind and gives rise to
6. contact (*sparsha*) or touch that causes
7. sensation (*vedana*) or feeling, which causes
8. desire (*trishna*), which gives rise to
9. attachment (*upadana*) or grasping that causes
10. existence (*bhava*) or the process of becoming that causes
11. birth (*jati*) or rebirth that causes
12. old age and death (*jara-marana*).

The twelve-linked chain of causation can deal with two conditions: transmigration and emancipation. The former is *samsara*, which causes the cycle of birth and death so that ignorance gives rise to action that cause consciousness and so forth as explained above. The latter is nirvana because of the departure from the cycle of rebirth and death. As a result, if ignorance ceases, action also ceases. If action ceases, consciousness ceases, and so forth.

Source: Shih 1989:337.