

The Eighth Broadyard Workshop
Pakistan–Gandhara Buddhist Culture and Buddhist Temples
in Xinjiang, China
June 28, 2018

An in-depth discussion about Gandhara Buddhist art and its relation to Xinjiang Buddhist temples was conducted at the Eighth Broadyard Workshop (博雅工作坊) held by the Institute of Area Studies, Peking University (PKUIAS). The workshop was on the theme of “Pakistan–Gandhara Buddhist Culture and Buddhist Temples in Xinjiang, China,” and focused on literature, images, archaeological materials and documents.

The opening ceremony was presided over by Prof. Duan Qing from the School of Foreign Languages at PKU.

Deputy Head of Mission at Pakistan Embassy in Beijing Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, and Director of PKUIAS Qian Chengdan delivered speeches at the ceremony.

Baloch offered her congratulations on the achievements of PKUIAS since its establishment. She briefly reviewed the development of Gandhara civilization and the historical cultural exchanges between Pakistan and China. Then she pointed out that there are many Buddhist ruins in Pakistan such as the ruins of the ancient cities Taxila and Takht-i-Bahi, which are significant to our understanding of Buddhism and its history today. In this sense, Swat is also of prominent importance. According to Faxian, Xuanzang and others, Swat used to be a key Buddhist town. Baloch said that she is looking forward to cooperation between PKU and the University of Peshawar to explore Buddhist ruins, further studying the historical connections between the two countries. Particularly, the

connection between Gilgit-Baltistan in Pakistan and Xinjiang is worth noting, she said, adding that a photo exhibition of Buddhist sites in Pakistan is going to be held at PKU. She hoped that the exhibition would be well received by PKU students and teaching staff as well as outside visitors. In addition, Pakistan will also publish books about Buddhist ruins and Chinese scholars' investigations, and she hoped that the effort will gain as much support as possible.

Prof. Qian Chengdan thanked Baloch for attending the ceremony, and said that PKUIAS will strengthen its links with academic institutions in Pakistan. Prof. Qian also remarked that the Broadyard Workshop, as a platform for academic communication and discussion, aims to provide China with deeper insight into the situations of other countries. PKUIAS is not only concerned with current events, but also the cultural situations in different places. In order to understand, research, digest and disseminate all the available knowledge, the institute needs to cultivate new talent to conduct area studies. These young people are expected to learn more about areas outside China. However, their horizons should not be confined to international relations, but extend to cultural and social studies. It is through comparative studies that the workshop expects to develop an in-depth understanding of the latest scholarship.

The first seminar was hosted by Prof. Li Chongfeng from the School of Archaeology and Museology at PKU, and its first speaker was Zhang Jiamei, an associate professor from the School of Foreign Languages at PKU. Her presentation, entitled "The Road from the Ancient to Modern and the Intersection of Civilizations — Peshawar," narrated her own experience in

Pakistan and discussed both the historical and present situation of Peshawar, a major city in Gandhara.

Zhang explained that Peshawar is located on the main road that gives China access to the South Asian subcontinent. Situated at the east end of the Khyber Pass, Peshawar is the first city you must encounter if you enter the subcontinent via this mountain pass. Topographically, the basin has offered Peshawar abundant water and fertile soil, making Peshawar a gathering place for different people since ancient times. Richly endowed with resources and skilled craftsmen, Peshawar served as an international entrepot in different historical periods. Peshawar is also the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in Pakistan. This is a strategic political location connecting Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. Languages used in Peshawar include Urdu, English, Pashto, Persian and others.

The Grand Trunk Road goes through Peshawar and stretches toward South Asia as well as Central Asia. Considered to be one of the oldest and longest roads in Asia, the Grand Trunk Road was also the only way to enter the subcontinent from Northwest China in ancient times, and today it still appears as it was during the Mughal Empire in the 16th century.

Historically, Peshawar boasts a prominent political status, since King Kanishka moved the country's capital to Peshawar after his accession, and later Akbar the Great of the Mughal Empire gave the city the name "Peshawar," which is still in use today. Many Buddhist historical sites still remain in this city. King Kanishka ordered the construction of the tallest stupa in the world at that time.

Zhang Jiamei has researched the name of Peshawar, and found that it evolved from “Purushapura” to “Parashawar,” and finally to “Peshawar.” In Sanskrit, the word “Purushapura” means “the city of man” with “pura” denoting “residence.” Many names in Chinese classics, such as “husband’s land” (丈夫土), “husband’s city” (丈夫城), “husband’s palace” (丈夫宫) and the City of Purushapura (布路沙布逻城) were all translated in ancient times from this term. It was not until the 10th century that this region became known as “Parashawar.” During the reign of Akbar the Great of the Mughal Empire, the name “Peshawar” was granted, supposedly with the meaning “frontline city” in Persian. Court historian Abu al-Fazal once used both Parashawar and Peshawar to refer to this area in Persian historical books. However, according to Prof. Dani, a contemporary Pakistani historian, Peshawar had other former names.

Zhang Jiamei said that she was often repelled by the news coming from Peshawar because it was mostly negative. During this investigation, however, after visiting Buddhist ruins and the Peshawar Museum nearby, and going sightseeing, she realized that Peshawar is a conservative city but still lively.

She said that since the founding of Pakistan in 1947, Peshawar has become the cultural center of northwestern Pakistan. The University of Peshawar was established in 1950 and gradually incorporated research institutes in the British colonial period. During the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union in the 1960s, Peshawar functioned as the base of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in Pakistan. When the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in the 1980s, Peshawar became a

political center of both the CIA and Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

Nowadays in Peshawar, most residents are Pashtuns from Afghanistan. In addition, a local minority who speak Hindko call themselves “Peshawas,” believing that they came earlier than the Pashtuns. Although Muslims are an overwhelming majority, Sikhs, Hindus, and Christians also live together here. Today local culture is a mix of Gandhara, Hindko and Pashtun influences. This is reflected in local music, painting, literature and other fields, as well as festivals and family lifestyles. It is worth noting that Peshawar is currently home to the most Sikhs in Pakistan. Peshawar was once part of the Sikh Empire, but Sikhs moved out during the British Raj. After the partition, a large number of Sikhs went to India, but the influx of Afghan refugees later brought in many more Sikhs. Pashtuns in Pakistan can trace their history back to the 11th century when the Dilazak tribe first settled there. Later in the 15th century, two new groups of Pashtuns came to live in Peshawar. During the Mughal Empire, Peshawar was a border city over which the central government had a relatively weak control. As a result, there were some uprisings and rebel movements, notably the Rōshānī Sufi reformation movement, in which Pashtuns led by the enlightened Pir Roshan challenged inequality and social injustice. After the end of the Mughal Empire, people of different beliefs such as Persians, Afghanistsans, British colonial masters and Sikhs all left their marks and cultural influences.

Islam was introduced to the Peshawar area in the late seventh century. In the 5th century BC, Peshawar was a member of the ancient Persian cultural community. During the 4th

century BC, Alexander the Great's eastward expedition brought Peshawar under the influence of Greek culture. Later, the Maurya Empire was founded, and constantly fought with the Seleucid Empire. Peshawar was the westernmost city within the Maurya Empire's borders. In the 3rd century BC, the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom was founded in Peshawar, and local culture was impacted by battles between the Bactria and Parthian empires. After the establishment of the Kushan Empire in the first century AD, Peshawar became the empire's winter capital. When Kanishka annulled the summer capital, Peshawar remained the only ruling city. The fifth century witnessed occupation by the Huns.

Zhang Jiamei said Peshawar has always been one of the central transport hubs on the trade route connecting the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia, with hustle and bustle back and forth, and it is also an important station on the southern path of the Silk Road where merchants plying caravan routes opened the horizons of Peshawar residents. Anecdotes, odd news, ideas, commodities and goods spread everywhere from Peshawar via merchants and hawkers. Invasion and shifting regimes have strengthened the identity of the city's various communities.

At times, individuals were consoled by religions when facing grave situations. As power shifted, other groups and communities sought to revolt. Owing to the strong demand for self-protection and "open" market, Peshawar has become socially conservative.

However, if we take a closer look at this city today, we may feel its inclusiveness and colorfulness beneath the reserved outward appearance. Overall, we should not forget Peshawar is a

melting pot of intermingling cultures.

Prof. Zahid Anwar, director of the China Research Center at the University of Peshawar in Pakistan, delivered a presentation entitled “BRI, CPEC and Cultural Heritage Conservation in Pakistan.”

He explored how the Belt and Road initiative and the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor have impacted cultural heritage conservation in Pakistan against the backdrop of the historic Silk Road.

Prof. Anwar pointed out that the ancient Silk Road not only symbolizes the frequent trade and cultural contact between continents, but also represents political and cultural integration by inter-regional trade. South Asia has been part of this network, and Pakistan was once a gateway to South Asia on the Silk Road.

Regarding the concept of cultural heritage, Prof. Anwar said that the Yellow River and the Indus gave birth to two major civilizations and cultures. Cultural heritage describes our identity, as well as our connection to the past, present and future. It also functions as a record of all human creation and expression. Therefore, it is imperative to protect cultural heritage with laws and treaties. When it comes to the cultural exchanges between China and Pakistan and the impact of the BRI together with the CPEC on protecting Pakistan’s cultural heritage, Prof. Anwar believes that in ancient times, interactions between China and South Asia benefited both sides. In notes by ancient Chinese travelers, there are many references to South Asia. These notes serve as plentiful and reliable sources about South Asian society at that time. The ancient Silk Road enabled

Pakistan to establish cultural ties with China for thousands of years, connecting the two areas and promoting mutual trade and cultural interaction. To revitalize this cultural contact is one important missions of the CPEC, the flagship project of the BRI. China and Pakistan will pay due attention to protecting tangible and intangible culture throughout Pakistan. In this respect, the two countries have already made many efforts. For example, the Shaanxi Provincial government of China and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial government of Pakistan have signed a memorandum of understanding under the CPEC project to protect the cultural heritage of the two countries. In April of this year, a delegation of Chinese scholars came to explore Buddhist ruins in Pakistan and visit the University of Peshawar. China and Pakistan are endeavoring to protect archaeological sites identified through inspections along the CPEC. Protecting and developing these ruins shall benefit everyone. The CPEC involves not only roads, railways and pipelines, but also how the construction will exert influence on the quality of life of those along the routes.

Recently, China and Pakistan signed an agreement to realize cultural cooperation and learn from each other's culture and heritage, thus strengthening communication. Under the framework of the BRI and CPEC, contact between the two peoples will be strengthened and mutual cultural understanding will be promoted.

Prof. Anwar also mentioned the threat of violent conflicts to cultural heritage sites. For a long time, cultural heritage sites have suffered greatly from violent conflicts. For example, during the Afghan civil war from 1990 to 2001, more than 70 percent of

Afghanistan's cultural heritage sites and artifacts were destroyed or smuggled to other countries. In 1998 and 2001, during his visit to a number of cities in Afghanistan, Prof. Anwar saw destruction brought by wars onto archaeological sites, rare manuscripts, and Muslim tombs as well as damage from gangsters looting cultural relics.

For the time being, there is a good opportunity for Pakistan because participation in the BRI and CPEC marks the re-emergence of the Indus Valley as a critical area for regional economic and cultural communication. For Pakistan, the BRI and CPEC will further promote mutual understanding and preserve cultural heritage. In February this year, Yao Jing, Chinese ambassador to Pakistan, went to the University of Peshawar to attend the unveiling ceremony of the China Research Center during his visit to Peshawar. Since its establishment, the center has held a number of seminars on the subject of the CPEC project.

Prof. Anwar stated that Pakistan is also facing enormous challenges. These include regional violent conflicts causing damage to cultural heritage sites, urban expansion endangering archaeological sites, and a lack of sufficient technology for preservation and restoration. China has developed technologies for conserving both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, which might help Pakistan build museums and renew its facilities in its historical ruins and archaeological sites. Cultural tourism will also contribute to preserving regional cultural heritage sites. "If we can overcome these challenges, there should be a major leap in the conservation of archaeological sites in Pakistan," Prof. Anwar concluded.

Prof. Li Xiao, from the School of Chinese Classics at Renmin University of China, delivered a presentation titled “Comparison studies on the layout of temples in the Gandhara region and Tarim Basin.”

Prof. Li pointed out that the area to be discussed ranges from Central Asia to northern South Asia, covering almost all of the Pamir Mountains together with surrounding areas of today’s India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and the Tarim Basin in Xinjiang, China.

Referring to Faxian and Song Yun’s itineraries, he presented the distribution of Buddhist culture in these areas from the fourth to sixth centuries. He believes that although the routes of Faxian and Song Yun were not exactly the same, we can still learn about Buddhist popularity at that time and the changes in trade routes.

Prof. Li said that he hopes to clarify the vector and timeline of Buddhism’s spread through a comparative study on the structure and distribution of Buddhist temples around Gandhara, Central Asia, and the Tarim Basin.

The study aims to figure out which parts of Buddhist temple architecture remained unchanged or only experienced few alterations, and which parts were transformed by local architecture and culture. He pointed out that due to the limited scope of his Gandhara expedition, only representative sites such as Dharmarajika Stupa Temple, Jaulian Stupa and Monastery and Takht-i-Bahi from Central Asia and Xinjiang were used in this comparative study.

According to Prof. Li, Buddhist temples in Gandhara normally consist of a tower house and a Buddhist monastery for

the monks to practice. This is quite different from their counterparts in Xinjiang. Some consider this composition as the most important innovation of Buddhist architecture in Gandhara, which then spread westward to Afghanistan and Central Asia, finally coming to Zhongyuan (the Central Plain in China), and East Asia via the Tarim Basin. Before the Kushan Empire, an overturned bowl stupa was quite low, like an overturned mound. This is a traditional stupa style in central India, and today we can still recognize the remains of balusters in the surrounding areas.

The Dharmarajika Stupa contains an overturned bowl stupa, also known as a “fawang stupa,” and a Buddhist monastery. The overturned mound stupa indicates that it was presumably built around the second century BC. It is unlike the later columnar style, thus denoting an early construction date, though there was a later expansion in the fourth century. Today, remains of balustrade columns can still be seen in the path of circumambulation, or “parikrama.” The stupa is the earliest great stupa in Gandhara. It was finally abandoned in the 6th century. “In this expedition, we discovered new traces of stone balusters, as well as tooth profiles and stairs,” said Prof. Li.

The Buddhist temple north of the Dharmarajika Stupa consists of a stupa court and a monastery. In terms of its structure, it was built in the Kushan era, later than fawang stupa. The entire building is the best preserved in the region, consisting of a stupa with a square foundation and a courtyard surrounded by many rooms, as well as a monastery to the north. The monastery is basically square in its shape, with merely one door open on the southern wall of the court. This structure — a big

court with a small door — is commonplace in the Western Regions, or Xiyu. Prof. Li believes that it might result from strict discipline for the Buddhist monks, preventing them from entering and exiting the court at will. To enforce this, only a single small door was available. In the north, east and west side of the courtyard, there are monastic chambers of approximately the same size. In the middle of the courtyard is a very spacious atrium whose center is occupied by a square pool, probably the place where monks once bathed. The layout of arranging monastic chambers around an atrium originated in Gandhara during the Kushan era and later had a great influence on the whole Western Regions.

Jaulian Stupa and Monastery consists of a monastery and a large stupa court. Located to the east of the monastery, the stupa court is divided into two courtyards by two platforms of different heights. The northern one is lower and the southern one higher. There is also a smaller square court west of the lower one. The main stupa is in the center of southern high courtyard. On the sides of the road and in the front part, there are smaller “votive stupas” and other religious iconography. Also, huge niches for Buddha statues were erected on the circumambulation path of the courtyard. On the other side, the west monastery is a two-story building with perfect living facilities such a courtyard, a central pool, drainage culverts, indoor lamp niches (the lamp niches also appear in many houses in the ruins of Jiaohe), niches for Buddha statues, stone roads for circumambulation with stairs, a preaching hall, a dining hall, a kitchen, warehouses and toilets, indicating that the structure is very similar to later monasteries.

Takht-i-Bahi is located in the center of ancient Gandhara. The relics of temples in this location serve as a model for Gandhara temples. They mainly include buildings such as stupas, a monastery, an atrium, and a preaching hall or lecture hall, together with ancillary facilities such as courtyards, warehouses and galleries. The key parts are the stupas and monasteries. With only a small door, the architectural idea of Takht-i-Bahi is completely different from temples in the Central Plain and Xinjiang.

The temple consists of an atrium, a monastery and stupa courts. Prof. Li speculates that the remains of stone niches for the Buddha statues in the atrium may be grottoes for big statues. The small stupas on both sides of the atrium should be for votive stupas. Takht-i-Bahi is the only temple in Gandhara where the remains of the superstructure still exist. The remains of stupas at the top of the niche for Buddha are square, with an arched roof, and furnished with corbels. The monastery is connected to other buildings, such as the kitchen, dining hall, and places for marking the uposatha.

Regarding Buddhist monasteries in Central Asia, Prof. Li discussed the local spread of Buddhism and the distribution of Buddhist relics. Then he discussed Buddhist temples in three areas: Termez in Uzbekistan, Vakhsh Valley in Tajikistan, and Merv (Mouru) in Turkmenistan.

Kara-Tepe Buddhist Monastery in Termez is also known as a grotto because it is half on the ground and half underground. Located in the northwest corner of the old Termez city built in the Kushan era, its main relics are distributed over three small hills with more than a dozen caves. Prof. Li used the No. 1 cave

temple as an example to illustrate the structure of temples at this location. The Ajina-Tepe Buddhist Monastery is located in the Vakhsh valley in Tajikistan. This Buddhist site from the later period of Central Asian Buddhism can be traced back to the late seventh century and early eighth century. Consisting of a monastery in the south and a stupa court in the north, the structure of the Ajina-Tepe Buddhist Monastery is very similar to the ruins of the Rewake Buddha Temple in Hetian. In the center of the court sits a square stupa base with steps on four sides. The base is layered with multiple overlapping corbels, on top of which is a round stupa. In addition to the stupa, a great reclining Buddha statue in the chamber also serves as an object of worship in this courtyard.

Prof. Li concluded by describing the Buddhist relics in the peripheral areas of the Tarim Basin. On the whole, although the structure and layout of Buddhist temples around the Tarim Basin were deeply influenced by Central Asia and Gandhara when the temples were first introduced, local culture caused the design to diverge significantly. The snowy plateau, to a certain extent, blocked cultural exchanges between Gandhara and the Xinjiang area.

As a result, the northern margin of the Tarim Basin in particular received Buddhism hundreds of years later than Gandhara and Transoxania, and also was more influenced by the Buddhist architectural art of Transoxanian Central Asia than Gandhara, based on existing Buddhist architectural relics. In addition, comparing Buddhist pagodas in Moer Buddha Pagoda, Subashi Temple and Rewake Buddha Temple with those in Gandhara and Central Asia, it can be concluded that many local

elements were added to Buddhist architecture after its introduction to the Tarim Basin. For example, there are new features such as a heightened base and a reduced number of steps.

After the three scholars finished their speeches, Prof. Li Chongfeng from the School of Archaeology and Museology at PKU chaired the first round of discussion.

Qian Chengdan: May I ask Prof. Anwar about the policy of the Pakistani government in terms of cultural heritage site conservation? What attitudes will policies and laws take toward different religions?

Anwar: The government's policy is a kind of cultural adaptation. Today, religious minorities are entitled to protection by our constitution. Pakistanis are proud of their Buddhist cultural heritage. We not only value it but also protect it.

Qian Chengdan: Gone are the days when Buddhism was the mainstream religion and culture in the Gandhara region and Xinjiang. What do local people think about these Buddhist cultural relics and ruins now? Will they be conserved and appreciated? Will they be destroyed if they fail to be identified?

Anwar: At present, Buddhism in Pakistan has basically disappeared. Buddhism differs widely from the mainstream culture, and mainly involves the fields of history and archaeology. However, our government and people want to protect Buddhist cultural heritage because it is of great significance. On the one hand, it is part of local history. On the other hand, Buddhism spread from here to China and Korea, involving multiple dimensions which are important.

Qian Chengdan: As you have mentioned the attitude of the

authorities, what is the attitude of ordinary people in Pakistan?

Anwar: In fact, our general public lacks relevant knowledge and due to poverty, they show little solicitude for these cultural heritage sites. Since cultural heritage conservation is closely related to economic development, when our economy is booming, people in Pakistan will understand and value these cultural heritage sites better. At present, they are paying more attention to economic development.

Zhang Jiamei: In Taxila where urban culture is relatively developed, locals tend to consider Buddhist culture as pagan. However, in seemingly more conservative areas like Peshawar, people usually view Buddhist sites as their cultural heritage and they have taken measures to protect the sites.

Li Xiao: Local culture still inherits some certain elements from Buddhism (such as the swastika and dharmacakra symbols) which the bottom of society might view as pagan, but the upper class considers part of their own culture.

Wang Bangwei: The regions we discussed here were once historically multicultural and multi-religious, but all were Islamized later. Some Islamic extremists did destroy Buddhist sites (such as the Bamiyan Buddhas), but local authorities have been making efforts to protect these relics since the British colonial era. Yet in the meantime, cultural relics also suffer from trafficking and smuggling. Due to political instability and religious extremism in some areas of Pakistan as well as the problem of aging museum facilities, cultural heritage conservation in general still faces quite extensive needs.

Li Chongfeng: It is true that political instability does hamper the efforts in archaeological excavations. Recently,

China and Pakistan have been preparing to sign an agreement on conservation. Once the agreement is reached, China will assist Pakistan in preserving its cultural heritage sites and relics.

Anwar: Smuggling does exist, especially in the Swat area where smugglers secretly transport cultural relics to other countries. Though it is illegal in Pakistan and smugglers shall be sent to court for trial once arrested, smuggling still operates as a commercial activity where gangsters buy relics from local people at low prices and then resell them.

The second session was hosted by Prof. Li Xiao.

The first speaker was Miao Lihui, a research fellow at the Xinjiang Kucha Academy. The title of his presentation was “A Comparative Study of Structure and Grottoes in Gandhara and Kucha.”

First, Miao Lihui indicated the geographical scope of the Gandhara region, in a broad sense, includes the Afghanistan region. He explained the background and the close historical connection between ancient Gandhara and the Kucha kingdom by the transmission routes of Buddhist art and interaction between monks.

According to an excavation survey report from the Gandhara region by the Japanese scholar Mizuno Seiichi, the four main structures of caves in the Gandhara region are great Buddha caves, central-pillar caves, square caves, monastic chamber caves and other types of caves.

The Bamiyan Grottoes are the most famous great Buddha caves. They also include some square caves on the side back wall.

In a central-pillar cave, there is a square pillar in the middle

of the main chamber and the rear chamber. Cave 70 of Peshawar is an example. There is a square pillar in the middle of the cave, but there are no murals and niches. Miao Lihui also pointed out that it remains to be further studied whether this central pillar is related to the Kucha kingdom and what the relationship between the central pillar of the Kucha kingdom and the fawang stupa is. There are not many such central-pillar caves, but they are found in the main grottoes such as the Peshawar Grottoes, the Caraja Grottoes, and other grottoes. They are centrally located in the cave groups.

So-called square caves have a variety of structures, including square, round, and octagonal. There are single-chamber and double-chamber square caves. Ceilings are more complicated, with domes, arch ceilings, and cone ceilings. Not all side walls have niches, and not all floors have painted murals.

In the area, monastic chamber caves are the most numerous, including single-chamber, double-chamber and multi-chamber caves, and these chambers are often equipped with living facilities such as wells, lamp niches, and so on.

Apart from the Bamiyan Grottoes, the cave groups are basically a combination of a central-pillar cave and several monastic chamber caves. There may be other caves around, and there are often stupas nearby. The Bamiyan Grottoes are dominated by great Buddha caves and square caves, in addition to a combination of square caves and monastic chamber caves.

The Smast Cave in Kashmir is special. This cave is a huge natural cave with some small square and octagonal chambers, flat ceilings, water cellars and steps.

Miao Lihui summarized the main structures of caves and the characteristics of cave groups in the Kucha kingdom and put forward some personal views on the cave groups.

The central-pillar cave is the most characteristic and typical cave in the Kucha kingdom. It is characterized by a square pillar between the main and rear chambers, and there is a niche on the square pillar, which is the center of worship in the entire cave. The center pillars are in different shapes, including flat, square and rectangular. The ceilings are diverse, changing with the era.

The great Buddha cave is very similar to the central-pillar cave. The main feature is that there is a tall vertical Buddha in front of the main wall of the main chamber. The earliest example was excavated long ago in Kucha, and the structure changed greatly over time. The main change is that the Buddha pillar in the main chambers shrank over time and gradually disappeared.

Square caves are the most numerous in Kucha. Their flat and cave ceilings are diverse in form, and their functions are complex, spanning worship, lectures, and meditation.

The monastic chamber caves were mainly used for living, and also meditation. They have side corridors and a main chamber, and generally have living facilities such as doors, windows, and fireplaces.

In the Zen Cave, there is a shared long passage, multiple main chambers, side walls, and many small chambers.

The niche cave is very scattered, and not suitable for meditation. It may have been used for display.

The tomb grottoes may have been used to store sarira (Buddhist relics) of monks with high morals.

Cave groups included a combination of square caves and

monastic chamber caves, a combination of great Buddha caves and square caves, and a combination of central-pillar caves and monastic chamber caves, and so on. Although the combinations of forms are different, they are all designed to achieve the functions of cessation of desire and meditation. Viewed from the layout of the large temples, the worship area of the large-scale grottoes centered on the great Buddha cave often occupies the most prominent position of the temple. There is not necessarily an open-air stupa, as found in the Kizil Grottoes and Kumu Tula Grottoes. The layouts of small caves often depend on their functions. The MazhaBaha Caves, for instance, have only two central-pillar caves and three square caves in the forty plus caves. The remainders are Zen caves and monastic chamber caves.

Finally, Miao Lihui made an overall comparison between the caves of Gandhara and the Kucha kingdom.

The great Buddha cave of the Kucha kingdom does not have a frontal chamber, consisting of a main chamber and rear chamber. The main wall of the main chamber has developed over the years. In the early stage, there were Buddha pillars and Buddha statues. Later, there was no central pillar between the main and rear chambers, with the main and rear chambers separated by the legs of the Buddha. This is very similar to the Bamyán Grottoes.

In addition, there are a large number of great Buddha caves in the Kucha kingdom. The great Buddha caves are very common in the main grotto groups, and generally occupy the best position in the grotto groups. It can be said that the excavation of the great Buddha caves is a characteristic of

Kucha Grottoes art. The earliest great Buddha cave in the Kucha kingdom was excavated in the 4th century and was active into the 5th and 6th centuries, and the first two great Buddha statues of Bamiyan were in the 5th and 6th centuries. Therefore, the influence of the Kucha kingdom is more likely to affect the Bamiyan area.

As for the central pillars, there are neither murals on the central pillars of the Bamiyan Grottoes nor niches. Whether they were used for worship is questionable. As a result, whether the central pillars of the Kucha kingdom caves are indigenous or externally influenced deserves further reflection.

As for the square caves, there are plenty of domes in Bamiyan and Kizil. They were made in the 5th and 6th centuries and can be seen in many places in the Kucha kingdom. The domes were reconstructed on the basis of the original arch ceilings, and their external traces were obvious. However, it is generally believed that the domes are derived from the Sassanid Persian period, and that Bamiyan most likely influenced the Kucha kingdom. In addition, square bucket ceilings and bucket styles are also more popular in Bamiyan.

As for the cave groups, the functions of caves in the Kucha kingdom and Gandhara are relatively simple, and the overall function of the temple is realized through the combination of different caves. The difference is that there are a large number of long square caves with the characteristics of monastic chambers in the Gandhara area. The number of worship caves is relatively small. The proportion of central-pillar caves and square caves with the significance of worship in the Kucha kingdom is very high. The combination of central-pillar caves and monastic

chamber caves is very common in the two places, but stupas are rarely found in the Kucha kingdom. The combination of great Buddha caves, square caves, and monastic chamber caves is also common to both places. Miao Lihui emphasized that the main point of the speech is to put forward some views and problems on the relationship between the two places. The mutual influence of the two in different periods needs further study.

Wang Long, a research fellow at the Archaeological Institute of the Turfanological Research Academy, spoke on the topic “New Discovery of the Tuyuq Grottoes.” The Tuyuq Grottoes are located in the eastern part of Turpan city, Xinjiang. The caves are distributed along the east and west sides of the Tuyuq Canyon. They are divided into the East District Grotto Group and West District Grotto Group.

The existing Tuyuq Grottoes can be divided into worship caves (including the central-pillar caves and Buddhist hall caves), monastic chamber caves, Zen caves, and other living caves. According to their structure, they can be divided into central-pillar caves, square caves, and rectangular arching caves. The construction of the grottoes has its own unique features, roughly divided into three types. The first type is cutting into the cliff to form a cave. The second type is using adobe to build caves in front of the cliff. And the third type is combining the first two methods. This third construction method has several different techniques, which are an important feature of the caves in the Gaochang period. In addition to the caves and the ruins of the Tuyuq caves, there are many Buddhist temple sites on the grounds and some stupas on the slopes on both sides of the canyon.

The Tuyuq Grottoes are the earliest grottoes with the largest scale of construction and the most complete types of caves in the Turpan area. The age of the grottoes ranges from the Gaochang County period in the early 5th century to the Gaochang Uighur period, and after the introduction of Islam, it was gradually neglected until it was abandoned.

For the overall situation of archaeological excavations in recent years, Wang Long said that the main excavation area from 2010 to 2011 was the East District, and 56 caves were cleared. The main types of caves include ch⁻etiaghara, Buddha hall caves, Zen caves, monastic chamber caves, as well as other storage caves.

Ch⁻etiaghara: In the middle of the K18 grotto is the central stupa hall. On four sides, adobe is used to build the walls. The ground in the cave is paved with bricks. The cave faces roughly west, with a front porch and a main chamber. The main chamber has a vertical rectangular shape, and the position of the center pillar is backwards. There are traces of steps in front of the cave door. Large backlights and lotus seats remain in the center-pillar cave. Judging by the remaining backlights, it is estimated that the original statue height should be more than 4 meters. The left, right and rear corridors of the cave are all covered with murals. Outside the south corridor, there is a new bodhisattva with a goat beard, which is unprecedented. The NK2 Grotto is also a ch⁻etiaghara, with murals on the left, right and rear corridors. The preservation is relatively intact. The corners of the west end of the corridor are painted, and have two unique guardian-like statues, which have not been seen before. There are many types of monastic chamber caves, such as monastic

chamber caves in a row, a two-cave combination with only one entrance, multiple caves connected, and so on.

The Zen cave is mainly a vertical cave, with left, right and rear niches.

There are only a few storage caves. There are hoard pits in the rear chamber.

A large number of relics were unearthed in the East District and West District, the most important of which was documents. The documents are mainly Buddhist scriptures, as well as secular documents and ancient notebooks. The documents are mainly written in Chinese, as well as other popular languages in the ancient Western Regions, such as Sogdian, Sanskrit, Uighur, Tibetan and so on. Some of the documents are relatively complete and have the inscriptions of the year. The earliest font styles date back to the 4th and 5th centuries, and the latest date back to the Gaochang Uighur period. In addition, there are paintings on silk, paper paintings, textiles, and other artifacts.

The main excavation area from 2013 to 2015 was the West District. A total of 17 caves were excavated — three ch⁻etiayghara, nine monastic chamber caves, four Zen caves, and one Buddhist altar — along with two stupas and one Buddhist monastery on the grounds.

Ch⁻etiayghara: the K12 (K31) grotto consists of a main chamber, frontal chamber, and stairs. It is assumed that the original Buddha statue was a sitting statue. In front of the K3 cave door, there are traces of the remaining overturned bowl stupas. In the cave is a statues altar, fragments of Buddha statues, murals, inscriptions and so on in the cave.

Monastic chamber cave: There are murals in the K27 Cave.

The door of the K27 Cave was found in the excavation and a pottery vat was found in the rear chamber. However, the composition of the internal residue of the vat is still unclear.

Zen cave: There are three small niches on the left and right sides of the frontal and rear chambers of the K10 Cave. There are murals in the cave. Many beautiful inscriptions in Uighur, brāhmī and Chinese have been found, which still need to be further interpreted. In addition, there are many instances of cave breaks, cave reconstructions, and mural repainting in the Tuyuq Cave.

In 2016, the caves that had not been cleared on the high platform in the central part of the West District were excavated. The WK1 Buddhist altar cave under the cliff of the West District and two central-pillar caves were discovered. In 2017, the main accumulation under the cliffs in the East District was further cleaned up. One ch⁻etiyaḡhara, one Buddha hall cave and a platform in front of the cave were newly discovered, along with one monastic chamber cave at the end of the ravine. A large number of paper documents were unearthed during the excavation process, most of which are Buddhism scriptures in Chinese and Uighur.

The Buddhist hall found under the cliff in the West District in the Uighur period is divided into frontal and rear chambers, all of which are adobe blocks. The four walls of the rear chamber and the two side walls of the doorway are all painted with murals. The upper part of the mural is severely denuded, but the lower part is better preserved. The front wall of the rear chamber was originally painted with a sitting Buddha. On the left side of the Buddha's seat is a portrait of noble aristocratic

Uighur men and women in gorgeous clothes. In addition, K58 is a ch⁻etiyaghara, facing the south and north, divided into two phases, with niches on four walls and traces of late repairs. A large number of paper documents were unearthed, most of which are Buddhist classics. These documents have been identified partly, but also need further study.

Reflecting on years of archaeological excavation, research fellow Wang Long summed up the Tuyuq Grottoes: the discovery of new data shows that the early caves of Tuyuq have a close relationship with the caves in the Kucha kingdom and the early grottoes of Gansu in terms of cave structure and painting techniques. What is more important is that the Tuyuq Grottoes were influenced by Khotan, one of the Western Region Buddhist centers, in terms of the themes of murals. The construction of the Tuyuq Grottoes can be said to have a specific plan. The construction of the grottoes was conducted from the inside to the outside (from north to south) and from the top to bottom. The inside ditch was built earlier, the outside ditch was built late, and many caves showed signs of rebuilding. In addition to the caves, many important relics in front of the cave and a large number of documents in many languages were also discovered in the Tuyuq Grottoes. These new discoveries have important academic significance and provide valuable information for the study of the Silk Road culture.

Zhang Xiaogang, a research fellow at the Dunhuang Academy, gave a presentation titled “A New Study on Two Historical Legendary Paintings about Khotan History in the Dunhuang Murals.”

Zhang Xiaogang first introduced the relationship between

the Dunhuang and Khotan in the Tang and Song dynasties from both geographical and historical perspectives. He said that in the Five Dynasties period (907-960) and the early Song Dynasty, there were a large number of statues and historical legendary paintings about Khotan in Dunhuang murals. During the late Tang Dynasty, a group of Buddhist communion images appeared in Dunhuang. Among the earliest Buddhist communion images in the Mogao Grottoes, there were many auspicious images about Khotan, such as the Ox-headed Mount.

First, Zhang Xiaogang talked about the story of the origin of the ancestors of the king of Khotan. He first pointed out that this story appeared in Cave 454 of the Mogao Grottoes, and described the general situation and structure of the cave, as well as the images relating to the story in corridor number 70-76.

Zhang Xiaogang said that Mr Sun Xiushen identified this group of images as the story of the Vairochana arhat who invited the king to build a Buddhist temple, and identified the two cities in the images as the capital of the country. But neither of these suppositions have been carefully tracked down or written into a specific article. Some people once thought that this group of images has nothing to do with Khotan based on the cartouches such as “Lady Shengguang” and “Yakṣa King’s World,” because the appearance of Lady Shengguang’s story does not match with the Buddhist communion images. Therefore, there has been no reasonable explanation for the emergence of these cartouches.

Zhang Xiaogang pointed out that the content of this group of images should be compared with the story of the “Gostana” in the Tibetan literary work “Li yul lung bstan pa” (Prophecy of the Li Country). He believes that this image shows a scene when the

queen of Ashoka was bathing in the pool and saw Vaisravana and his relatives flying through the air. In the image, the person riding on the lion is Vaisravana, the city below may be the capital Khotan, and the pool in the city indicates that the queen is bathing. He said that if this comparison is correct, then the entire group of images is the legend of the origin of the ancestors of the king of Khotan. This image was painted under the Ox-headed Mount. Under the Ox-headed Mount, there is a story featuring Ashoka covering the sun with his hand. It may be this story that leads to the tales of Ashoka building 84,000 stupas and camping in Khotan, as recounted in “Li yul lung bstan pa.” He pointed out that this group of images is unique in the entire Dunhuang Grottoes. Cave 454 was probably built between 974 and 976 AD. This group of images is relatively late in the existing Dunhuang Buddhist communion images. Similar ones have not been found in other caves. Therefore, he proposed several possible reasons. First, it may have spread to Dunhuang relatively late or it was selected as the theme of cave painting relatively late. Second, Cave 454 is a relatively large cave, and the plane it can use is also large, allowing it to accommodate more Buddhist communion images. Third, Cave 454 may have been built when the relationship between Dunhuang and Khotan was very close. In this context, painting the legend of the origin of the ancestors of Khotan makes sense. However, the identity of the king in the image is still uncertain.

Zhang Xiaogang pointed out a contradiction: the “Lady Shengguang” in the cartouche is the wife of Prasenajit, Mallika, and the story of Mallika written in the Buddhist Scriptures does not match with the images in Cave 454. None of Ashoka’s

imperial concubines is called “Lady Shengguang.” Zhang Xiaogang speculated that Lady Shengguang was seen as devoted to Buddhism and was more well-known to the people in the region than the wife of Ashoka, so Ashoka’s wife was placed under the name of Lady Shengguang in the story.

Zhang Xiaogang introduced the images depicting the legends about the Khotan Sangharama and Morgubdesil. This image is only found at the bottom of the auspicious image of the Ox-headed Mount in Cave 126, Dunhuang. The cartouche on the picture is “Story of the Khotan Prince Becoming a Monk.” The image had been initially suspected to be related to the stay of the Khotan princes and princesses in Dunhuang during the Five Dynasties and Song Dynasty, but this turns out to be not the case. Sun Xiushen opined that this may be an image of a Khotan king becoming a novice monk in Kaśmira in his previous life. But the cartouche cannot be completely squared with this story.

Zhang Xiaogang compared this group of images with the story of Morgubdesil written in the Tibetan literary works “Li yul lung bstan pa” and “Li yulchoskyi lorgyus.” “When the Khotan King went to the ’Gum tir temple, he lost a child and later found him in a small valley in Ox-headed Mount. Then he built a monastery there, and the child later became a monk who was the first to become an arhat in Khotan and was then named ‘Morgubdesil.’” According to Dunhuang documents, all the children and grandchildren of the Khotan king are called princes. Therefore, this Sramana, who is the child of the king, is also a prince. This image tells such a story. The city in the image was placed in the ravine under the Ox-headed Mount. This is consistent with the documentary records. For example, there is a

large pool in the image and there are lotus flowers in the pool. This echoes the legend written in “Li yul lung bstan pa” and “Li yulchoskyi lo rgyus,” recounting that when Khotan was a sea, lotus flowers emerged in the sea, and later the monasteries were built in the places where the lotus flowers emerged.

Zhang Xiaogang concluded that the group of images in the corridor in the Cave 454 should be based on the story of the origins of the ancestors of the Khotan king. The two cities belong to Khotan. The group of images in the corridor in Cave 126 describes the story of the son of the Khotan king who became a monk and became Morgubdesil as written in “Li yul lung bstan pa.”

The second session of the workshop was chaired by Prof. Li Xiao from the School of Chinese Classics of Renmin University of China.

Prof. Duan Qing first talked about the successful interpretation of Hu language documents (from the Hu people in the Western Regions) unearthed in Tuyuq and pointed out that the most important discovery was the “Vajrasekhara Sutra” in the Sogdian language, which is similar to the Tang Dynasty translation by Amoghavajra (Bukong). This also shows the influence of Buddhism of the Central Plain in China on the Tuyuq area. She pointed out that Sogdian documents were once unearthed in Dunhuang and Turpan. However, since the founding of the People’s Republic of China, no Sogdian Buddhist scriptures have been unearthed, so the discovery of Tuyuq is of great significance.

Prof. Li Xiao pointed out that the archaeological report of the Turpan excavation in the 1950s has not been published yet.

He hopes that the Turpan Institute and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences will assume their own responsibilities and hand over the documents in the Hu language to professional scholars like Duan Qing as soon as possible for further studies.

Prof. Joy Lidu Yi suggested that from the perspective of using previous research, scholars can further pay attention to reports published by Kyoto University. She also recommended research by foreign scholars on the classification of Buddhist grottoes, in particular the article “Art in the Dark: the ritual context of Buddhist caves in western China,” which is considered to be very important for studying Buddhist art and Buddhist caves.

The second session ended with a question and answer session.

Question from a researcher of Yungang Grottoes: The domes of the Kucha Grottoes are generally believed to originate from the Sasanian empire. The Yungang Great Buddha Caves also have domes. Some people think that they are derived from Xianbei thatched cottages, and the ages of the two places are also close to each other. Is there a connection between the two?

Miao Lihui: My statement that “The domes of the Kucha area originated from the Sasanian empire” is quoted from previous researchers. As for the origin of the Yungang domes, it is now only a conjecture. It is not proved whether it is related to the tent life of the nomadic people. In addition, there are also activities of nomadic people such as Turks in the Western Regions. It is not necessary to link them and deem that one must be influenced by another.

The third session was chaired by Associate Professor

Zhang Jiamei from PKU's School of Foreign Languages.

The first speaker was Prof. Duan Qing, whose presentation was entitled “The Symbol of the Snake Stupa – A Multicultural Analysis of Gandhara.”

Duan Qing first pointed out that different civilizations in the world have different characteristics in expression. Chinese civilization is a written civilization. Words are not only used for official management, but also for literary works and theoretical works. In other civilizations this may not be the case. For example, in the Kharoṣṭhī documents unearthed in Niya, written text is only used for official business. Spiritual content is presented in other ways.

Duan Qing believes that in academic research, attention needs to be paid to the details. If the details are neglected, the important contribution of a once great nation to culture will be ignored. As an example, she said that a woolen tapestry with a Greek style unearthed in Sampula in Xinjiang in the 1980s had the typical images of a Greek warrior and centaur. Does this mean that the Greeks came here? Mayke Wagner, a professor of archaeology in Germany, has made a groundbreaking contribution to answering this question. He compared the images of the centaurs of Sampula and Hadriana in Italy, and determined that the image was from Greece. But he noted differences in details: the instrument that the centaur blows closely resembles a salpinx in the image of the Sampula, and the floral ornaments surrounding the centaur are not from Greece. Later, some scholars pointed out that the salpinx was invented by the Scythians, and the floral ornaments were also from the Scythians, symbolizing the heavens. They are unique to the

Scythians. In addition to floral ornaments, there is a scene of a griffin attacking an ibex. According to the Scythians, after death, one will be under the jurisdiction of the realm of heaven, and no longer belong to the secular world. The griffin is a symbol of the separation between the heavenly realm and the secular world, so it often appears in Scythian tombs. The floral ornaments belong to the heavenly realm. As long as people reach this level, they enter the heavens. There was also a griffin image on the ribbon skirt unearthed in the same tomb with a Greek-style tapestry, but it has been geometrically patterned. Why is there a griffin pattern in the tomb of Sampula? This is precisely because they are Scythians who need to protect their souls through the griffin after death. The final conclusion of Mayke Wagner's article is that the owner of the tombs is a Greek Scythian.

Duan Qing found that these people were not Greek Scythians. On the contrary, they were Scythians that adopted the Greek gods. Many traces of Greece have been found in China. It was not the Greeks who arrived here, but the Scythians who passed the elements of Greek civilization to China. According to carbon-14 dating, the Sampula tombs date to the 1st century BC. On a blanket of the 6th century, there was also a circle of images of griffins, and in the middle was the gods. This layout is because the early Scythians did not have a temple, and they used a circle of griffins to represent an altar.

Duan Qing said the Scythians are generally considered to be people living in the north and east of the Black Sea, as opposed to the Sakas people living in Amu Darya and Syr Darya. However, the Scythians and the Sakas are actually the same race of people, with different characteristics in their faith.

The Kushans are also of the same race. The major characteristic of the Scythians is their absorption of the Greek civilization while stubbornly retaining their own faith. They are actually the successors of the Mesopotamia civilization.

Duan Qing shared her new findings from her visit to Pakistan. She noticed that in this area, the pattern of wavy images surrounding a stupa exists in large numbers. According to local commentators, this is a “Chinese dragon,” a claim she does not agree with.

She focused on a reliquary in the Huvishka era, with an inscription in Kharoṣṭhī on it showing that it was accepted by the master of Sarvāstivāda. The engravings were the moon god and the sun god, which shows the beliefs of the Kushans. Although the Kushan dynasty protected Buddhism, they were not necessarily Buddhists. The reliquary is also engraved with figures and wavy patterns. Western scholars believe that the wavy pattern is a garland. The king of the secular world is carrying it. The sun god and the moon god are above the garland. The garland plays a role in isolating the heavenly realm and the secular world. The other figure carrying the garland is Cupid. Three other meditating Buddha statues are also located above the garland, meaning that they have passed away and lived in the heavenly realm. Duan Qing agrees with Western scholars’ views on the wavy patterns, indicating the separation of the heaven realm and the secular world, but pointed out that this pattern is not a garland, but a snake. Observing a collection purchased by the Peshawar Museum in 1941, we can see that the winding wave pattern on the stupa is two snakes, and the whole image is a snake stupa.

Duan Qing conducted further exploration of the identity of the double snakes. She noticed the images on two stone reliefs featuring a war between Hu people and Han people in the Shandong Provincial Museum. One of them was unearthed in Wu Laowa, Jiaxiang county, Shandong Province. The Hu people wear pointy hats and the wind god participated in the battle. Since the Scythians believe in a wind god, combining the theme of the images, we can conclude that the Hu people here must be Scythians. In another image, unearthed in Songshan, Jiaxiang, Shandong Province, Scythians wearing pointy hats were entwined by a double snake, similar to the image on the Huvishka era reliquary. Duan Qing believes that the double snakes here should be Hermes. According to her research, the origin of Hermes is the snake god in Mesopotamia. His original image is a snake. After being accepted by the Greeks, Hermes took a human form. The characteristic of Hermes is that the god can separate the two worlds, the living and the dead, and go back and forth. The image of the Hermes double snake also appears on *qushu*, a long haired woolen carpet. Hermes can also be represented as a circle, indicating the cycle of life and death. According to the beliefs of Mesopotamia, because snakes will molt they are considered to be eternal and their life recycles. In the image of the snake stupa, the snake represents Hermes, which serves to separate the living and the dead. The part that is wrapped inside the snake represents the sacred heavenly realm.

Duan Qing believes that the wave pattern surrounding the stupa seen in Gandhara should be a representation of a snake body. Tracing the mythological background of this pattern, we can see several civilizations. First is the Greek god Hermes. He

is associated with the image of the snake god of the Mesopotamian civilization, and is the only one who can go back and forth between the worlds of the living and the dead. It is reasonable to use the snake body to separate the living and the dead world. However, in the beliefs of the Scythians and Kushan people, the human soul belongs to the realm of gods. In this context, the snake body separates the heavenly realm and the secular world.

The topic of the presentation by Meng Sihui, a research fellow from the National Palace Museum, was “Buddha Dipamkara in Vyakarana in the Gandhara Region: the Creation and Spread of Texts and Images.”

Meng Sihui first discussed the similarities and differences between Gandhara Buddhist art and Central Indian Buddhist art. Buddhist art in ancient India rose from the Barhut and the Great Stupa at Sanchi in central India in the late 2nd century BC. The reliefs in the two places show the Jataka tales and Buddha’s life story. The image of the Buddha is not expressed in human form but through symbols such as a holy tree, holy stupa, Dharma Wheel (Dharmachakra), and the Buddha’s feet. Some scholars believe that the Four Great Events images including “The Birth of Buddha,” “Becoming a Monk,” “The First Turning of the Dharmachakra” and “Nirvana” have become a recurring theme in Buddhist art, which must start from the Buddhist stone carving of Barhut. At the same time, in the cave temples of West India and Amaravati in South India, Buddhist art also rose in the 1st century BC. The rise of art activities in the Gandhara region should also be around this period. The architecture of Gandhara Buddhist temples has diverged significantly compared with

Central India. Among the Buddhist art in the Gandhara region, the most prominent is sculpture. The individual Buddha images are often represented by round sculptures, and murals are less likely to be found. They are mainly attached to buildings in places of worship. This can be clearly seen in the ruins of the Temple of Takht-i-Bahi at Mardan. The stupa courtyard is a place for offering and worship. It is centered on a large stupa, surrounded by statue niches and large and small offering stupas. The Buddhist monastery is the place where monks live and practice. The place is built with rooms for monks, lotus ponds, lecture halls, assembly halls, and so on. Round sculptures or high relief Buddha statues and bodhisattva statues are enshrined in the statue niches around the stupa. The base of the stupa and the area surrounding the stupa are decorated with a large number of embossed panels portraying Buddha's story. This makes the atmosphere of the entire stupa resemble a Buddhist sculpture gallery. Observing the small votive stupas in the Gandhara region, we also find that some altars are decorated with series of reliefs about Buddha's story. The reliefs begin with the story the "Buddha Dipamkara in Vyakarana" and show the Buddha's life in twenty to forty successive detailed scenes, which is a remarkable feature of such reliefs in Gandhara.

The second part of the reliefs shows the Buddha's life story in Gandhara and the "Buddha Dipamkara in Vyakarana."

Reliefs with the theme of Buddha's life story are one of the main elements of the Gandhara Buddhist ruins. In the carvings of these stories, the "Buddha Dipamkara in Vyakarana" is usually used as the opening tale, which is very rare in middle Indian and even other Buddhist regions. In the carvings of

Buddha's life in Gandhara's local and worldwide museums, there is a surprising number of representations of the "Buddha Dipamkara in Vyakarana" story, which makes this topic particularly important among Buddha's life stories. Logically speaking, the "Buddha Dipamkara in Vyakarana" is not only the end of the story of the Jataka life of Sakyamuni after he went through hardships and catastrophes, but also the beginning of the story of Sakyamuni's life as a Buddha. It is of great significance. However, the first protagonist of the Buddha Dipamkara in Vyakarana is not Dipamkara, but the $ma^=n!avaka$ who later became Sakyamuni Buddha. The records concerning the Dipamkara and Sakyamuni are widely found in the Chinese translation of Buddhist scriptures, such as "Carya-nidana," "Abhiniskramana" and "The Scripture of Karma Pastand Now." Among these Chinese translations, there are many translators and authors who have a close affinity with Gandhara. Gandhara's engraving of the "Buddha Dipamkara in Vyakarana," which is based on the scriptures, is an appropriate representation of the plots mentioned in the text. First, in front of the city gate, the $ma^=n!avaka$ bought flowers from the $Gopi^$ who took a water bottle and a lotus. The $ma^=n!avaka$ wore a deerskin around his waist and held a purse in his hand. Second, the $ma^=n!avaka$ threw the lotus above the Dipamkara standing in the center, and the lotus stood still above the Buddha. Third, the Dipamkara raised the right hand to vyakarana the bodhisattva. Fourth, the $ma^=n!avaka$ clasped his hands together and suddenly rose into the air. Fifth, after the $ma^=n!avaka$ landed, he lowered his head, laid his hair on the muddy ground and let the Dipamkara walk over his hair to

ensure Dipamkara's feet were spotless. The Gandhara carvings of the Buddha Dipamkara in the Peshawar and Swat regions used the same composition that put together a picture of what happened at different times and most of them chose these five main tales. Compared with the sculptures about Buddha's life in middle India, the narrative structure is simple and clear, and the backgrounds of characters, animals, and nature that are not directly related to the plot are omitted to the greatest extreme.

An interesting issue is the "Kapisa style" and "Flaming Shoulders Buddha." In the area of Aynak and Begram in Afghanistan, a kind of independent monument featuring the "Buddha Dipamkara in Vyakarana" carving has been unearthed in the site of Kapisa. There are fewer tales than in Peshawar, usually limited to three: presenting flowers, rising to the air and laying hair onto the ground. Many Dipamkaras have flames on their shoulders. This is known as a "Flaming Shoulders Buddha" or "Kapisa style." There are two main explanations for the origin of the flaming shoulders. According to the records of the "Traveling Notes of the Western Regions in the Great Tang Dynasty," in Kapisa, a legend goes that there were flames on Emperor Kaniska's body when he defeated a dragon. One theory is that Buddhist artists took as a reference the image of the emperor in the secular world when describing the sanctity of the Buddha. Another theory is that Buddhism used symbols of Zoroastrianism to represent the power of the Buddha. In China, images of the Buddha with flaming shoulders appeared in the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern dynasties, and the Buddha statues in the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi also showed images of flames, which are generally considered to be influenced by

Gandhara art.

Why are there a large number of “Buddha Dipamkara in Vyakarana” images in the Gandhara area? According to the records of “The Biography of Faxian” and “Traveling Notes of the Western Regions in the Great Tang Dynasty,” the story takes place near the capital of Nagarahara — a country in the Gandhara region. Nagarahara is also a place to buy flowers and lay one’s hair onto the ground. According to British archaeologist Robin Andrew Evelyn Coningham, the capital city of Nagarahara is the now Dasht-i-Begram, about two miles southwest of Jalalabad, Afghanistan. In ancient times, there were a lot of Dipamkara sites in Nagarahara, so the city was also called “Dipavati” according to “A Biography of the Tripitaka Master of the Great Ci’en Monastery of the Great Tang Dynasty.” The flower that the maⁿ!avaka bought from the Gopi[^] is the utpala. According to literature and investigations, the Gandhara area has been rich in utpala from ancient times to the present.

“Buddha Dipamkara in Vyakarana” tales spread through China. Research Fellow Meng Sihui first introduced the relevant research of Chinese scholars and then showed “Buddha Dipamkara in Vyakarana” images in China on carvings and murals in Kuqa, Kumu Tula, Yungang and other places, as well as a classical Chinese painting on silk from the Song Dynasty. After that, she briefly introduced the study of “Buddha Dipamkara in Vyakarana” in the “Buddha’s Story Image” in the mural painting of the west wall of the Yanshan Temple. The “Buddha Dipamkara in Vyakarana” of the Yanshan Temple shows a series of scenes like Gopi[^] selling lotus and

ma[^]=n!avaka laying hair onto the ground. It is worth noting that there are flames on the head aura and body aura of the Dipamkara. Meng Sihui believes that this has something to do with the flaming shoulders. She also pointed out that some scholars believe that the utpala was sold to the ma[^]=n!avaka by Yasodhara, which she says is incorrect.

Meng Sihui concluded that from the Gandhara to the Yanshan Temple, the “Buddha Dipamkara in Vyakarana” has gone on a long journey. Today, we can still see the thread connecting this journey.

Fan Jingjing, an assistant professor at PKU’s School of Foreign Languages, gave a presentation titled “The Gandhara Pattern of the ‘Great Departure’ Image.”

She said the “Great Departure” is an important turning point in the Buddha’s life. He left the palace of Kapilavastu and went to the forest to be a monk. This tale is a particularly important part of some Buddhist stories. Fan Jingjing showed two maps, pointing out that current archaeological excavations also show traces of Buddhist art during the Ashoka and Shunga periods.

As for the general distribution and age of the “Great Departure” images, Fan Jingjing said that in chronological order, the locations span Amaravati (about 150 BC), Barhut (about 100 BC), Sanchi (about 50 BC), Gandhara (2-3th century), and so on. The image of Buddha’s life story in Amaravati basically starts when the prince left the city and became a monk. People think that this represents the beginning of monasticism, so it is attached with great importance. The compositional elements are different from later generations. They are represented by

symbolic elements. The scene of the prince leaving the city is manifested through the gates of the city, the groom and the horse without a rider. In Barhut, there are also some reliefs that show “Great Departure” images, with the elements of a canopy and whisk being added. A canopy and whisk are often seen in India as symbolizing the status of a king. Elements in the “Great departure” images also symbolize the identity and status of Prince Siddhartha. The “Great Departure” image of the Great Stupa at Sanchi is similar to the image in Barhut.

Fan Jingjing pointed out that in the late Gandhara region, the number of images of the “Great Departure” was numerous, and the details were more abundant. In the “Great Departure” image of the Gandhara region, the scene about court maids sleeping in repulsive positions is repeatedly used. This episode is an important part of the story of the prince becoming a monk. It was because the prince saw the ugly sleeping posture of his maids that he decided to abandon the secular world. In addition, many reliefs unearthed in Takht-i-Bahi, Jalalabad, Swat, and some private Gandhara art collections in Japan feature the same scene: the crown princess was sleeping, the prince was preparing to leave the city, and the maids were sleeping with instruments in their arms. In some reliefs, the lethargic scene is preceded by a scene of court entertainment. Other reliefs show the scene of the prince’s wedding before the court entertainment. Fan Jingjing said that according to the analysis of Alfred Foucher, these series of pictures can be divided into two categories, one is arranged vertically, and the other horizontally. No matter which category, the images are continuous. Drums are often an important element in demonstrating court entertainment

and the women's drowsiness.

Through the comparative study of images, Fan Jingjing discovered another characteristic of the "Great Departure" images of the Gandhara region: the scene of secular pleasure is contrasted with the scene of the desire to be a monk. The former moment is in the court, and the next moment jumps to show the prince leaving the city. Both secular life and religious feelings are expressed. In addition, in Gandhara art, the portrayal of the performance in secular life is different from middle Indian and South Indian art. There is a saying that due to the influence of the conquests of Alexander the Great, there are many works of art that represent the theme of Dionysus in the Gandhara region. The scene of music and dance originally represented the activities of the agricultural harvest, but lay Buddhist monks see it as representing the heaven of Indra.

Fan Jingjing noticed that the scene of women sleeping in the court at night was manifested in many places. For example, in the image featuring the Queen Maha Maya and her dream of the white elephant in Barhut in the 1st century BC, in addition to Maha Maya, there are also two maids, one holding a water bottle and whisk, one leaning on the bed. Some scholars believe that the Gandhara portrayal of the "Great Departure" images was influenced by middle India or South India. Fan Jingjing believes that in the later period, the scenes of women's lethargy in middle India and South India that were influenced by the Gandhara region. On the one hand, although relics in Barhut and Sanchi also have some elements of music and dance, this is used to express the enjoyment of the heavenly realm, while in the Gandhara area, this is used to express the enjoyment of the

court. In the “Great Departure” image, the maids sleeping is a crucial factor pushing the prince to abandon the secular world. However, some of the images that appeared later in middle India and South India have nothing to do with the tale of the “Great Departure,” and they still deliberately show the story of the maids sleeping in ugly postures, which has nothing to do with the theme of the image. It may be that the art of these places was influenced by the art of Gandhara, but the transmission of the images is not well understood.

The third session discussion was hosted by Zhang Jiamei.

Prof. Qian Chengdan asked Prof. Duan Qing: The snakes you mentioned have a wide range of influences, including Mesopotamia, Greece, Persia, and Central Asia. In these areas, is the snake always a symbol of the separation of the living and the dead world?

Duan Qing: Yes.

Qian Chengdan: There are many snakes on the Han Dynasty portrait stones. In addition, the silk paintings unearthed from Mawangdui Tombs also have snakes on them. Are these symbols that separate the living and the dead world?

Duan Qing: What I mainly want to say is that the Scythians used the griffin to separate the world of the living and the dead. This is a symbol of Scythian culture and has influenced Xinjiang. Some scholars believe that the people there are Greek Scythians, that is, Greeks who accepted the culture of the Scythians. But I think it is the Scythians who accepted Greek culture and then arrived. As for the snake, I happened to find the image of Hermes on a Han Dynasty portrait stone in the Shandong Museum. I put these similar images together and

found that the snake played a role similar to the griffin, which also divided the worlds of the living and the dead. The gods of Scythian's different tribes used to divide the worlds of the living and the dead world are different. It is my opinion that the Kushan used Hermes. The snake I mentioned, its symbolic meaning is to separate the worlds of the living and the dead, because it represents Hermes, and Hermes is the only god that can connect the living and the dead world.

Prof. Li Chongfeng asked Prof. Duan Qing: Do you think that the Chinese dragon, the Indian dragon and the Western dragon have any relationship?

Duan Qing: There is no relationship between them.

Li Chongfeng: You just mentioned that there is a kind of relief image called a Snake Stupa. There are many stories of the guardian of the Dragon King in literature. It may not be snakes on the reliefs. On the relief of the Rāmagrāma Stupa, there is an image of the guardian of the Dragon King. In the murals of the Kizil Grottoes, both the Naga of India and the Dragon King of China have also appeared. Does whether what you've seen on reliefs of the stupa is a snake or a dragon need further study?

Duan Qing: This question is as complex as it is simple, involving beliefs in different cultural traditions. Chinese dragons and Indian dragons have different characteristics. Hermes is a double snake, which is an obvious feature, so I decided that this image is related to the Scythians. It should also be noted that Scythia was a civilization that did not pay attention to written language. The words are limited to official business. All other expressions rely on pictures. To communicate about the gods, Scythia uses pictures. Gandhara is the hometown of Buddhism.

This place is influenced by Scythians.

Scythia creates myths for objects of worship. Scythians were storytellers. In addition, it should be noted that the sutra story was indeed influenced by the West. Now we can confirm that the story in “Suvarnaprabhasa” has a Greek origin. The dragon king and the goddess mentioned in it are from Greece.

At the end of the workshop, Prof. Qian Chengdan first expressed his gratitude to the scholars who participated in the meeting. He also said that he was particularly interested in the snake mentioned in Prof. Duan Qing’s report, because at a certain time, the image of the snake has been manifested in many civilizations in Eurasia. Is the snake considered to represent the separation between the living and the dead world in these civilizations? He is looking forward to seeing the results of further research by Prof. Duan Qing.