The Northern Wei Manuscripts of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* from the Dunhuang Library Cave: A Study

Abstract

Among the artefacts uncovered at the Dunhuang Library Cave敦煌藏經洞, was a set of manuscripts of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, dating from the Yanchang 延昌 era of the Xuanwu Emperor 宣武帝 from the Northern Wei 北魏 Dynasty. According to a preliminary investigation, at least nine of the manuscript fragments were copied in 513 C.E., yet all these fragments were transcribed separately at different times by different scribes. Due to its great length, making a copy of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* takes a long time and requires a sustained effort. Among the extant manuscripts, the few fragments from the reign of the Xuanwu Emperor of the Northern Wei Dynasty are second in content only to those from the Northern Liang 北涼 Dynasty, preserving the set with the largest number of dated manuscript fragments and with the highest concentration of copies of the period. They also reflect the importance of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* and its circulation in society at the time. As such, they are extremely noteworthy. What is the reason that Yuanke 元恪, during the second year of the Yanchang era of the Xuanwu Emperor in the Northern Wei, vigorously promoted the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* and its teachings? To answer this question, this paper will first explore the historical background of the relevant personages active at the time of Emperor Xuanwu in the Northern Wei Dynasty. Second, referring to scribal inscriptions from Dunhuang, this study will shed light on the official scribal organization and the scribes who were active in Dunhuang in that period, as well as their relationship with the stone inscriptions of the Longmen Grottoes 龍門石窟, examining the mutual influences between Dunhuang and Luoyang 洛陽 whereby Buddhism developed. Finally, by analyzing the calligraphy employed in writing the manuscripts and in carving the inscriptions, this paper will further explore the nature and origins of the Southern styles of calligraphy associated with Buddhist writing.

Key words: *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, Dunhuang, Buddhist Scribes, Northern Wei Dynasty, Longmen Grottoes

I. Introduction

Before the rise of printing, the transmission of Buddhist scriptures in the Chinese language and the formation of the Buddhist Canon took place during the period of handwritten manuscripts. Thus far, a systematic study of Chinese manuscript canons has been carried out in Fang Guangchang’s 方廣錩 *Zhongguo xieben dazangjing yanjiu* 中國寫本大藏經研究 (*A Study of Manuscript Canons in China*), with special emphasis on the period from the eighth to the eleventh century.[[1]](#footnote-1) While the period from the third to the seventh century represented the stage of incubation and maturity of the manuscript canons, no systematic study to date has examined the period preceding this critical time prior to the eighth century. Not only is this stage the source of the Buddhist Canon, but it is also the key to an important transition of textual materials from writing to engraving. In this respect, there remain intricate and complex cultural factors to be explored in greater depth. Based on relevant manuscripts of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* found in Dunhuang and in Turfan, I will initially examine how these manuscripts relate to the formation of the Buddhist Canon.

Preliminary investigations of the manuscript scrolls of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* revealed that about 220 titles (pieces) were unearthed from the Dunhuang Library Caves. According to the *Dunhuangxue dacidian* 敦煌學大辭典 (*Dictionary of Dunhuang Studies*), there are about 300 titles (pieces) altogether,[[2]](#footnote-2) yet this number is still much lower than the number of the documents found at Turfan.[[3]](#footnote-3) I have arranged a preliminary list of the documents unearthed at the Dunhuang Grottoes and in Turfan indicating a total of 12 manuscript fragments of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*bearing an early date or a presumable date before 550 C.E. With the exception of the earliest, which date from the period of the Northern Liang 北涼 Dynasty, these manuscripts include at least nine pieces from the time of Emperor Xuanwu in the Northern Wei Dynasty. The *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* and related manuscripts dating from the time of Emperor Xuanwu are listed according to Ikeda On’s 池田温 *Chugoku kodai shahon chiiki kiroku* 中國古代寫本識語集錄 (*A Collection of Sayings from Ancient Chinese Manuscripts*) in the Appendix [Table: The *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* and related manuscripts from the Northern Liang to the Northern Wei Found in Dunhuang and in Turfan]. Fang Guangchang observed about this set of manuscripts: “As we enter the Northern and Southern Dynasties, there is a phenomenon that deserves our attention. During the Yongping 永平 and Yanchang 延昌 years in the Northern Wei Dynasty, a set of scriptures was transcribed by, among others, copiers of classical works, such as the teacher of the Canon Linghu Chongzhe 令狐崇哲 [...]”[[4]](#footnote-4) The concentration of these documents’ origins from the years of Yongping and Yanchang in the Northern Wei Dynasty is somewhat startling and inevitably raises questions. Why did this set of scriptures appear so suddenly? Did this distinctive phenomenon arise from certain social or historical factors? Before discussing the manuscripts of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* from the Yanchang period of the Northern Wei, we will first review the Buddhist background of Emperor Xuanwu and of his times.

2. Buddhist Developments during the Period of the Xuanwu Emperor in the Northern Wei

Emperor Xuanwu Yuan Ke 元恪 (483–515) and Empress Dowager Hu 胡太后 of the Northern Wei Dynasty both had a deep appreciation for the teachings of the Buddha. On one occasion, Emperor Xuanwu expounded on the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa Sūtra*, while Empress Hu could also give lectures and explain the Buddhadharma. They both spared no effort in promoting Buddhist culture and made significant contributions to the development of Buddhism. There are three major aspects to their achievements in promoting Buddhist culture and art:

(1) Actively building Buddhist monasteries, stūpas, and cave temples

As the development of Buddhism extended from the Northern Liang Dynasty, at the time when the Northern Wei Dynasty had established their capital in Pingcheng 北魏, the country was already in a strong position. Under the influence of Emperor Xiaowen’s 孝文帝 Sinicization policies during the Northern Wei Dynasty, a solid foundation was laid to move the Northern Wei capital to Luoyang.

Religious culture and politics thrived throughout the time of Emperor Xuanwu. As recorded in the *Beishi* 北史 (Northern History), the prosperity was such that “since Buddhism had entered China, the stūpas and temples had never been that flourishing.” It was also a time when the temples, stūpas, caves, statues, and steles came to proliferate. Historical records show that in various prefectures and counties of the Northern Wei Dynasty, there was a total of 13,727 monasteries and nunneries during the Yanchang era (512–515) alone, while the members of the ordained saṃgha were too numerous to be counted. Economic and trade exchanges between East and West were very frequent at this time. In addition, a large number of Buddhist monks migrated to the area in response toimperial support and advocacy. Luoyang welcomed so many monks from India and from Western Central Asia that it became necessary to establish monasteries to support the foreign monks there. The *Luoyang jialan ji* 洛陽伽藍記 (*Record of the Monasteries of Luoyang*) records that Luoyang’s Yongming Temple 永明寺 was built specifically for the foreign saṃgha and that it supported as many as 3,000 ordained individuals. After Emperor Xuanwu’s passing, Empress Dowager Hu intensified her worship of the Buddha. Besides the caves and the statues at Longmen, the most famous temple in historical records built in the Luoyang area was the Yongning Temple 永寧寺, with its scale and structure considered the most outstanding in the history of Buddhist architecture. Other large imperial monasteries include the Yaoguang Temple 瑤光寺, the Jingming Temple 景明寺, and the Yique Grottoes 伊闕石窟 at Longmen in Luoyang.[[5]](#footnote-5)

The construction of the Binyang Sandong 賓陽三洞 at Longmen in Luoyang during Emperor Xuanwu’s reign dates from around 510–520 C.E. Zenryū Tsukamoto 塚本善隆 observed:

From the time when the Northern Wei Dynasty moved the capital to Luoyang, the carving of statues at Longmen increased tremendously. The peak was between Xuanwu (Shizong 世宗) and Xiaoming 孝明 (Suzong 肅宗), when the period between the two dynasties amounted to less than 30 years (500–527 C.E.) [...] This was the golden age of the Luoyang Period of the Northern Wei Dynasty, bringing unprecedented prosperity to economic power and to the Buddha’s teachings.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Scholars have demonstrated the existence of a close relationship between the grottoes in the Longdong 隴東 area and the south and north cave temples in Jingzhou 涇州, all of which were excavated at this time. Because Empress Dowager Hu was born in Jingzhou, she felt a strong amity toward her birthplace, which may have influenced the focus of activity there. In the second year of Emperor Xuanwu’s Yongping era (509 C.E.), Emperor Xuanwu’s trusted commander and provincial governor of Jingzhou excavated the Nanshi Cave Temple 南石窟寺 on the north bank of the Jing River 涇河. Five of such cave temples are still extant. In 510, the Beishi Cave Temple 北石窟寺 was also excavated under Mount Fuzhong 覆鐘山 on the east bank of the confluence of the Pu 蒲 and Ru 茹 Rivers, all of which are important Buddhist sites in Longdong 隴東.

II. The Translation of Buddhist Scriptures and the Development of Huayan 華嚴 Thought

During his reign, in addition to actively cooperating with foreign monks in the translation of Buddhist scriptures from the original Middle Indo-Aryan language into Chinese, the Xuanwu Emperor invited eminent monks, such as Bodhiruci and Ratnamati, to oversee the translation of Buddhist scriptures. Fascicle 6 of the *Xuefo kaoxun* 學佛考訓 (*Admonitions for the Students of Buddhism*) records that: “During the Wei, the Xuanwu Emperor taught himself the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa Sūtra* in the Shigan Hall 式乾殿,[[7]](#footnote-7) he requested the *śramaṇa* Bodhiruci to translate the treatises in the Ziji Hall 紫極殿, and he built the Yongming Temple 永明寺 and the Yaoguang Temple 瑤光寺, bringing to the region a total number of thirteen thousand temples and two million monks.[[8]](#footnote-8)

1. Bodhiruci (Putiliuzhi 菩提流支)

Bodhiruci can be considered the foremost among the key figures who influenced the development of Buddhist thought during the Northern Wei period. Bodhiruci, a native of Northern India, reached Luoyang by traveling through the Pamir Mountains in the first Yongping year (508 C.E.) of the Xuanwu Emperor, who appointed him to preside over the translation of Buddhist scriptures at the Yongning Temple. In Luoyang, Bodhiruci translated Buddhist scriptures along with seven hundred foreign monks.[[9]](#footnote-9) From Luoyang, Bodhiruci continued on to the capital of Wei, where he translated and wrote commentaries on the scriptures. He translated thirty-nine scriptures, with a total of one hundred and twenty-seven fascicles, and his translations also include several important commentaries. He worked with Ratnamati on the translation of the Shidijing lun 十地經論 (*Daśabhūmivyākhyāna Śāstra*), which is an explanatory treatise of the Shidi pin 十地品 (*Daśabhūmika*), a chapter of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*.[[10]](#footnote-10) In addition, Bodhiruci worked together with *śramaṇas*, such as Senglang 僧朗 and Daozhan 道湛, as well as the palace attendant Cui Guang 崔光 and others who served as scribes. Bodhiruci taught the dharma in China for more than twenty years. Although he was still alive in the Tianping 天平 period (534–537), details of his later life are unknown.[[11]](#footnote-11)

In the context of Buddhist thought, Bodhiruci promoted mainly the doctrines of the *Nirvāṇa* and the *Avataṃsaka Sūtras*, although he also had a profound influence on Pure Land thought. Tanluan 曇鸞 (476–542 C.E.), the first patriarch of the Pure Land tradition, received the method of the Pure Land teachings contained in the *Guan jing* 觀經 (*Contemplation Sūtra*) from Bodhiruci. While Bodhiruci was in China, Tanluan was eagerly seeking out these teachings in order to to attain deliverance or perhaps even immortality. Soon after arriving in Luoyang, Tanluan met Bodhiruci, and asked him whether any of the Buddha’s teachings contained practices to cultivate longevity that were superior to those of the Daoists. The methods of the Daoists, replied Bodhiruci, could in no way be superior to the Buddha’s dharma. Ultimately, although the Daoist immortals could attain a long life and escape death, they were still bound to be reincarnated in *saṃsāra*. However, had they followed the practices which the Buddha taught in the *Guan jing*, they would also be capable of attaining liberation from the cycle of life and death. Thus, Bodhiruci taught the *Guan jing* to Tanluan, who is said to have burned the scriptures of the Daoists after learning the methods of the *Guan jing*. From then on, Tanluan practiced and taught according to the *Guan jing*. The Xiaojing Emperor 孝静帝 of the Northern Wei Dynasty took note of Tanluan and bestowed upon him the title of “Divine Luan 神鸞,” appointing him as the abbot of the great Bingzhou Temple 并州 (Because Bingzhou is the present-day Taiyuan 太原, scholars have shown that the Bingzhou Temple is today’s Kaiyuan Temple 開化寺). In his later years, Tanluan resided in the Xuanzhong Temple 玄中寺 by the stone of Beishan 北山 in Fenzhou 汾州.[[12]](#footnote-12)

2. Ratnamati (Baoyi 寶意)

Another eminent monk who had a profound influence on the spread of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* during the time of the Xuanwu Emperor was Ratnamati. Known in Chinese as Bao Yi, he came to China in the early Yongping years (508–511) of the Northern Wei Dynasty. While Bodhiruci translated Buddhist scriptures in the Ziji Hall 紫極殿Ratnamati did so in the Taiji Hall 太極殿. Ratnamati was well-versed in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* and in the *Daśabhūmika Bhāṣya*, and the Xuanwu Emperor often asked Ratnamati to expound on the *Avataṃsaka*, for the Indian monk could explain its essential meaning in depth. According to tradition, Ratnamati once preached the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* from his teaching throne. Suddenly, someone resembling a heavenly official displayed a tablet with Ratnamati’s name. Having addressed Ratnamati, the official said that the Heavenly Emperor wished to invite the venerable master to teach the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*. In response, Ratnamati said he was still lecturing to his assembly. He would go only after delivering his lecture. Besides, Ratnamati added, he would not be able to perform the religious assembly alone; he would need to have everyone else who delivered the lectures, performed the offerings, enforced the rules, and chanted the hymns accompany him. Only under these conditions would he go to the heavenly realms. As soon as Ratnamati’s religious assembly was over, the heavenly official came to invite him again, this time together with the monks Ratnamati had said were necessary, to teach the *Avataṃsaka* in the Heavenly Emperor’s realm. Something remarkable then came to pass. Ratnamati immediately smiled and bid farewell to the assembly. He then died on his teaching throne, while the other members of the saṃgha, including those who lectured, performed the offerings, enforced the rules, and chanted the hymns, also passed away with him. These amazing events unfolded during the reign of Yanchang 延昌. To a certain degree, these events not only had an impact on the spread of the *Avataṃsaka* in the society of Northern China, but they also strengthened the Xuanwu Emperor’s faith in the Buddha’s teachings.

Fascicle 1 of the *Xu gaoseng zhuan* records that:

[...] From the beginning, the *śramaṇa* Ratnamati was endowed with the uncommon signs of psychic powers. He understood the official documents and Wei poetry. He tended toward deep knowledge. Each time the Emperor solicited him to explain the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, he explained the supreme truth of awakening. One day, while he was on a high throne, suddenly someone came holding a tablet with his name. With the appearance of a high official, this person said: “The Heavenly Emperor has issued an order, so I should come and invite you, venerable master, to teach the meaning of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*.” He said: “Now, this religious assembly is not yet over, please wait until the texts are completed, then come back with another order.” He could not prepare everything that was necessary to carry out the religious activities alone, for everyone, including those who lectured, those who performed the offerings, those who enforced the rules, and those who chanted the hymns were also needed. Nevertheless, another order could be issued, so that the envoy could explain why all monks were needed as per Bodhiruci’s request. Once the religious activities were over, the envoy appeared as before. He said: “I received an order from the Heavenly Emperor to come down and welcome you, yet [Ratnamati] smiled and joyfully bid farewell to the assembly, suddenly passing away on the teaching throne, while the other monks, including those who lectured, and so on, also died on the spot. Later, no one who heard about this in the realm of Wei could help but gasp in admiration.”[[13]](#footnote-13)

3. Tan Wuzui 曇無最

Another monk who promoted the *Avataṃsaka* at the same time as Ratnamati was Tan Wuzui (Tan Mozui 曇謨最, or Shi Tanwu Zui 釋曇無最), a native of Wuan 武安 in Hebei 河北 (today the city of Handan 邯鄲 in the Hebei Province). Although his dates of birth and death are unclear, we know he had demonstrated an uncommon grasp of the Buddha’s teachings from a very young age. He excelled both in the practice of meditation and in monastic conduct. He led one thousand monks, and he was skilled in explaining both the *Nirvāṇa* and the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*s. His cultivation of moral condcut was renowned throughout the courts and among the public. Furthermore, the Emperor held him in high regard and appointed him as the abbot of Luoyang’s Rongjue Temple 融覺寺, while everyone praised him as an *arhat*. Bodhiruci and his contemporaries showed great respect for Tan Wuzui, referring to him as a *bodhisattva*. After reading Tan Wuzui’s *Dasheng yi zhang* 大乘義章 (*Treatise on the Meaning of the Mahāyāna*), Bodhiruci praised its subtleties and, as a result, wrote about and circulated the *Dasheng yi zhang* in Western Central Asia. Here, monks read who Tan Wuzui’s treatise all extolled his work. Tan Wuzui soon became respected throughout the East as well as in China. Furthermore, Tan Wuzui was given the honorific titles of “Eastern Sage” and “Eastern Bodhisattva.”

Fascicle 23 of the *Xu gaoseng zhuan* records that:

Buddhist monk Tan Wuzui. His family name was Dong 董. He was native of Wuan. His mind was illuminated and could penetrate the subtle. His eating and sleeping habits were recondite. He entered the Path at a young age. He was renowned within and outside the royal court. [Tan Wu] Zui was extremely well-versed in Śākyamuni’s doctrines. The people of his time constantly admired him. Subsequently, he was appointed by imperial decree as the abbot of the Rongjue Temple 融覺寺 in the capital, Luoyang. The temple, established by Qinghe Wenxian Yi 清河文獻懌, had many corridors and rooms and it occupied a surface of three leagues. Zui was an excellent teacher. He understood particularly Nirvāṇa and the Avataṃsaka Sūtras well. The thousand monks at the temple were all diligent in their activities. Bodhiruci, the *śramaṇa* who came from India, met Zui and paid him homage. He conferred on him the title “bodhisattva of the Eastern lands.” Every time Bodhiruci read Zui’s *Dasheng yizhang*, he snapped his fingers and praised its greatness. He translated the work into the language of India and dispatched it to the Great Xia 大夏. Here, anyone who read it honored him as a sage. At all times, he took the transmission of the teachings as his main duty. In the first Zhengguang year of the Wei Dynasty, when ascending to the throne, the Ming Emperor 明帝 ordered a great amnesty.[[14]](#footnote-14)

The Rongjue Temple, where Tan Wuzui served as the abbot, was erected by Yuanyi (487–520), the King of Qinghe, during the Northern Wei Dynasty. Its scale was spectacular. Based on the records in Fascicle 4 of the *Luoyang Jialan* entitled “Chengxi 城西 – Rongjue Temple,” the temple’s corridors stretched for three *li* 里, or “leagues.” The Buddha’s hall and the monks’ quarters measured more than one mile in length. [[15]](#footnote-15)

From this overview of the work of the three eminent monks from the time of the Xuanwu Emperor — Bodhiruci, Ratnamati, and Tan Wuzui — all of whom were either excellent Buddhist translators or excellent teachers of the *Avataṃsaka*, we may infer that they strongly influenced the spread of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* during the Northern Wei period.

3. The Manuscript Scrolls of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* from Dunhuang and Turfan

Thus far, we have discussed the influence of these three monks as well as the activities, such promoting the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, in which they engaged at the court of the Xuanwu Emperor. Now moving on to examine the manuscript scrolls of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* from the Dunhuang Buddhist Library, we see from the fragments of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* listed in the Appendix, which bear different dates and volume numbers, that there are nine extant pieces from the Northern Wei with an unequivocal date (513 C.E.). All such pieces were Buddhist scriptures written as offerings in the second Yanchang year of the Northern Wei Dynasty. While we may surmise from this that many other manuscripts dating to this same period have been preserved in Dunhuang or in Turfan and still exist, there is no written record of them. In the next section, we will examine the activities and the related figures relating to the writing of the *Avataṃsaka* under the Xuanwu Emperor.

(1) The Dunhuang Scribes and their Relationship with Luoyang

To discuss the conditions under which the manuscripts of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* were produced, the development of Buddhist and Huayan thought in Northern China should be examined, beyond the influence of the eminent monks at the time of the Xuanwu Emperor. The presence of the Northern Wei General An Fenwang Yuan Yanming 安豐王元延明 (484–530 C.E.), at the court of the Xuanwu Emperor is of especial importance.

As recorded in the *Huayan jing zhuanji* 華嚴經傳記 (*Memoirs of the Avataṃsaka Sūtra*) and in the *Bianzheng lun* 辯正論 (*Treatise Discerning the Correct*), Yuan Yanming had vast knowledge and was deeply talented. He was in charge of the affairs of the country’s steles of metal and stone. He and Yuanxi 元熙 (d. 515 C.E.) were generals at the time of the Xuanwu Emperor. The two were also pious Buddhist disciples and upheld Buddhist teachings. Not only did they establish a place of practice where it was possible to have meals and hold meetings during which the scriptures were expounded upon, they also made donations to have one hundred copies of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* transcribed with perfumed ink, as well as to transcribe one copy of the Avataṃsaka Sūtra with gold characters on thin silk. These *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*s were placed in caskets adorned with four kinds of precious stones and then stored on shelves. It was said that anyone with a pure heart who walked by in the quiet hours of the night would see the multicolored lights of the stored scriptures shining out onto the terrace, inspiring the viewer on the path of awakening. The fifth fascicle of the *Huayan zhuanji* records that:

During the Wei, Anfeng Wang Yanming 安豐王延明 and Zhongshan Wangxi 中山王熙 belonged to the imperial clan. Both were conversant in ancient learning. Together, they established a place of practice where they could eat meals and hold lectures. They transcribed one hundred copies of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* with perfume and ink, as well as one copy of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* with golden characters on a support of white silk. These were placed on shelves with five kinds of fragrances and enveloped in caskets with four kinds of precious gems. In the quiet hours of the night, anyone with a pure heart who walked by the room would see each casket emit multicolored lights, which would shine through the terrace, causing anyone who viewed this sight to strengthen their aspiration to awakening.[[16]](#footnote-16)

This is the first account of the largest number of copies of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* from the written records of the early Buddhist period ever since the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* had been translated ninety or eighty years earlier by the Southern translators during the Jin 晉 Dynasty. The extant fragments of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* from Dunhuang and Turfan do not bear inscriptions that relate them directly to the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* copied by Yuan Yanming. Searching for more details about the identity of Yuan Yanming, we find that Yuan Yanming’s wife Feng Shi 馮氏 was Feng Xi’s 馮熙 daughter. And who was Feng Xi? He was Feng Jinguo 馮晉國, the commander of Luozhou 洛州 during the Northern Wei Dynasty. Among the manuscripts unearthed from the Dunhuang Library Cave, there is a *Za apitan xinjing* 雜阿毗曇心經‧卷第六 (*Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya*, *Scripture on the Heart of Abidharma with Miscellaneous Additions in Six Fascicles*), which was transcribed by the commander of Luozhou, Feng Jinguo. Toward the end, the text bears a very important annotation:

Za apitan xin. Taught by the great being, Fasheng 法盛. 以法相理玄，□[[17]](#footnote-17)籍浩博，懼昏流迷於廣文，乃略微以現約，瞻四有之局見，通三界之差別。以識同至味，名曰《毗曇》。是以使持節、侍中、駙馬都尉、羽真、太師、中書監領秘書事、車騎大將軍、都督諸軍事、啟府洛州刺史昌梨王馮晉國，仰感恩遇，撰寫十「一切經」，一一經一千四百六十四卷，用答皇施。願皇帝陛下、太皇太后，德苞九元，明同三曜。振恩闡以熙寧，協淳氣而養壽。乃作贊曰：

麗麗毗曇，厥名無比。文約義豐，捴（總）演天地。

盛尊延剖，聲類斯視。理無不彰，根無不利。

卷云斯苞．見云亦帝（諦）。諦修後翫，是聰是備。

大代太和三年歲次己未十月己巳廿八日丙申於洛州所書成訖。(Figure 1)

In addition to donating Buddhist scriptures, Feng Jinguo also used his wealth to build seventy-two stūpas and vihāras across various prefectures and towns. In the *Weishu* 魏書 (*Book of the Wei*), the “Biography of Feng Xi 馮熙傳” explains: “In the exercise of government, Xi was not allowed to be kind-hearted, yet he had faith in the Buddha’s dharma. Therefore, in surrendering his own wealth, he built funerary monuments and monasteries in all prefectures and towns across seventy-two sites, and commissioned the compilation of sixteen copies of the *Yiqie jing* 一切經 (*All Sūtras*) [namely the first complete Chinese Buddhist Canon].” Now the *Yiqie jing* appeared in Dunhuang, having been taken there from Luoyang, where the Luozhou governor Feng Xi offered it to the Emperor in 476. Drawing on the evidence of the *Yiqie jing*, it becomes clear that Feng Xi performed the offerings of Buddhist scriptures to repay the Emperor’s benevolence, to pray for the fate of the realm, and to pray for the long life of the Empress Dowager.[[18]](#footnote-18) Thanks to his offering of Buddhist scriptures, Feng Xi ingratiated himself with the pious and devoted Emperor as well as with the Empress. Feng Xi’s offering also solidified his political status in the dynasty. Furthermore, the family clan of Yuan Yanming and Feng Jinguo created a relationship with Buddhist devotees. Through this relationship, perhaps, and because of his position in the dynasty, Yuan Yanming had an influence on the collection of Buddhist scriptures at the court of the Northern Wei. The question then arises as to when Yuan Yanming’s one hundred copies of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* were transcribed. We have no way of providing a precise answer, but we can surmise that while serving at the court of Emperor Xuanwu, Yuan Yanming must have met with some hardships. Scholars have shown that from 499 to 514 C.E., the Northern Wei Dynasty met with the most frequently recurring natural disasters in China’s recorded history. According to statistics, fifteen natural disasters occurred in the span of only fifteen years, especially in the first Yanchang year of the Northern Wei Dynasty (512 C.E.), when floods, droughts, and famines occurred throughout China. Yuan Yanming used his own property to help dozens of starving families.[[19]](#footnote-19) We do not know whether the famines of those years related in any way to the subsequent appearance of manuscripts in Dunhuang during the Yanchang years. However, what we can say with certainty is that this sort of offering of the Buddhist Canon and of handwritten Buddhist scriptures, performed in order to collect merit, avert disasters, and engage in prayer, had become a common occurrence in the Northern Wei court between the end of the fifth and the early sixth century.

Examining the numerous Buddhist manuscripts found at Dunhuang and in Turfan, we can observe three types of Chinese Buddhist scriptures dating from the manuscript period before the rise of printing: (1) the *Yiqie jing*, that is, the official manuscripts of the Buddhist Canon, for which an original and a duplicate copy were often transcribed, and for which the official scribes variously employed the *zhengshu* 正書, “standard script,” or the *lishu* 隸書, “clerical script”; (2) the “scriptures for everyday use,” which Buddhist devotees employed in daily personal practice; and (3) the “scriptures for worship,” which were copied and widely used in society for performing devotional practices, such as prayers and hymns for the collection of merit. Many people performed offerings of Buddhist scriptures of this latter type, frequently using the duplicate copies.[[20]](#footnote-20) The “scriptures for daily use,” as well as the “scriptures for worship,” compiled both for the purpose of performing devotional practices, were written in a variety of different calligraphic styles, such as the *zhengshu*, “standard script,” the *hangshu* 行書, “running script,” the *caoshu* 草書, “cursive script,” or the *lishu*, “clerical script,” based on specific conditions.

From an analysis of the manuscripts of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* from the Dunhuang Library Cave and dating from the fourth Yongping year (511) to the third Yanchang year (514), it is evident that the copyists included master scribe supervisor Linghu Chongzhe, among others. Indeed, the dates are concentrated between the Yongping and the Yanchang periods of the Northern Wei Dynasty. At the same time, the manuscripts bear annotations by official scribes, such as the following: “Written by the scribe of the Dunhuang governmental scripture-copying office, Linghu Litai 令狐禮太, with master scribe supervisor Linghu Chongzhe”; “written by the scribe of the Dunhuang governmental scripture copying office Zhang Xianchang 張顯昌, with master scribe supervisor Linghu Chongzhe”; “written by the scribe of the Dunhuang governmental scripture-copying office He Changtai 和常太.” The *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* in forty-one fascicles was written by the scribe of the Dunhuang governmental scripture-copying office Cao Fashou 曹法壽. The *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* in forty-seven fascicles, preserved in Japan, was written by the scribe of the Dunhuang governmental scripture copying officer Zhan Xianchang 張顯昌, together with master scribe supervisor Linghu Chongzhe. In addition, BNF P. 2110, the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* in thirty-five fascicles was written by the master scribe supervisor of the Dunhuang governmental scripture copying office Linghu Chongzhe and others, showing that the scrolls were produced by the official Northern Wei scribes. Thus, the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*s compiled by the Northern Wei government reveal several pieces of information:

1. The *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* occupied a very important position in Northern Wei Buddhism, its influence reaching even the Dunhuang region, where the scripture was also actively copied and circulated.

2. Dunhuang had a formal official scribe organization during the Northern Wei Dynasty, where scribes were appointed by the government.

3. In Dunhuang, during the Northern Wei Dynasty, the Chinese and the foreign members of the official scribal organization worked in harmony. These members included Chinese individuals (Zhang Xianchang), Sogdian individuals (Cao Fashou), and, most commonly, the scribes of the Linghu clan,[[21]](#footnote-21) who played a very important role in the official scribal organization of the Northern Wei Dynasty.[[22]](#footnote-22)

4. At the Northern Wei court, the offering the Buddhist Canon and the writing of Buddhist scriptures in order to collect merit, to avert calamities, and to pray for blessings, had become a common practice between the end of the fifth and the early sixth centuries.

The Appendix at the end of this article lists the official scribes from the Dunhuang District supervised by Linghu Chongzhe in 513. In addition to the nine translations of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* from the Jin Dynasty, there is also a copy of the *Cheng Shi Lun* 成實論 translated by Kumārajīva. This copy of the *Chengshi Lun* (Fascicle 14 of S.1547), transcribed by the Dunhuang official scribe Liu Guangzhou 劉廣周, is the earliest extant manuscript of the *Chengshi Lun*. Research finds it to be consistent with the corresponding title in the Taishō Buddhist Canon. Likewise, the fragment scrolls of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* compiled between the Yongping and the Yanchang years of the Northern Wei are the earliest manuscripts of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* from any historical period. Overall, these manuscripts represent the highest concentration and the highest number of volumes within the same time frame. Thus, a variety of different Buddhist scriptures were copied in the same short period. Yet, different volumes of the same books were also copied at different times. According to Fang Guangchang, this may be due to the fact that the Buddhist Canon was simultaneously being copied at Dunhuang. He observed: “Based on scattered writings from Dunhuang, it seems as if the official creation of the Buddhist Canon was ahead of schedule […]”[[23]](#footnote-23)

We mentioned the *Za apitan xinjing*, compiled in 479 by Feng Jinguo (Feng Xi), the commander of Luozhou. An annotation at the end of this text reads, “[...] we are grateful for this meeting, for we have transcribed ten copies of the *Yiqie jing*, scripture by scripture for a total of 1464 fascicles, through which we repay the Emperor’s generosity [...]”[[24]](#footnote-24) This passage from the annotation demonstrates that Feng Jinguo produced ten copies of the *Yiqie jin*g, each containing 1464 volumes. He wrote and offered these scriptures out of a feeling of gratitude for the Emperor. The *Weishu* records that sixteen volumes of the *Yiqie jing* were offered. Nonetheless, the annotations in the Dunhuang manuscripts record only ten volumes. Despite the discrepancy between the two figures, this data constitutes the earliest recorded annotation by a Northern Wei scribe from the time when the *Yiqie jing* was first written. It also provides insight into the creation of the Buddhist Canon in Northern China during the second half of the fifth century.

Based on the evidence of these manuscripts, we will further discuss the initial process whereby the handwritten scrolls of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* were translated and compiled during the Northern Wei Dynasty. We will also analyze the mutual relationship through which the Xuanwu Emperor, who was based in Luoyang, communicated with Dunhuang and the South, drawing on the perspective of the scribal styles of calligraphy.

(2) The Scribes of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* in the Northern Wei Dynasty and their Southern Influences

A foundation was gradually laid for the translation of Buddhist scriptures during the Wei, the Jin, and the Northern and Southern Dynasties. In the early fifth century, a few main centers existed in China where Buddhist scriptures were translated. During the Liang Dynasty, Buddhist scriptures were translated in the North mainly by Tan Wujing 曇無讖, who was based in the Hexi 河西 region, as well as in Liangzhou 涼州 and in Dunhuang. In central China, Kumārajīva’s translation bureau was the largest center and the one that made the most outstanding contributions. During the Southern Dynasties, the centers of translation in Southern China were located in Emperor Liu Songwen’s 劉宋文 capital Jiankang 建康 and in the city of Jingzhou 荊州.[[25]](#footnote-25) Here, the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* in sixty fascicles from the Jin Dynasty was translated by Buddhabhadra in 418 at Yangzhou’s 揚州 Daochang Temple 道場寺, where over one hundred monks were active in the translation bureau. The main scribe overseeing the work was the monk Faye 法業. It took two years altogether to complete the translation, after which it took another year to check the accuracy of the Chinese version against the original. The leading patrons were Meng Yi 孟顗, who held the office of *neili* 內吏, or “chief governor” of the Wu District 吳郡, and Chu Shudu 褚叔度, who served as *youwei jiangjun* 右衛將軍, or “general in charge of the garrison on the right flank.”[[26]](#footnote-26) Once the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* was translated, it began to circulate in areas of the Southern Dynasties. At this early stage, the official who proved important in promoting the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* in the South was Liu Yixuan 劉義宣 (415–454). Liu Yixuan, the sixth son of the Wu Emperor 武帝 during the Liu Song 劉宋dynasty served as the governor of Jingzhou during the same dynasty. Wei Daoru 魏道儒 observed:

[...] Liu Yixian 劉義宣 was an important personage who promoted the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* during the Liu Song period. In 446, when Liu Yixuan was elected as the Jingzhou governor, he was accompanied by the famous translator monk Guṇabhadra (c. 394–468 C.E.), whom he regarded as a teacher. Liu Yixuan encouraged Guṇabhadra to teach the *Avataṃsaka* and to spread this scripture to areas outside the capital.[[27]](#footnote-27)

In addition, Xiao Ziliang 蕭子良 (460–494 C.E.), that is, King Wen Xuan 文宣 of Qi Jingling 齊竟陵 in the Southern Dynasties, also copied thirty-six scriptures, including the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*. In terms of calligraphy, the scriptures from this set, which was a product of the imperial court, were of an excellent quality.[[28]](#footnote-28) Later, under the joint promotion of eminent monks and ruling emperors, the southern manuscripts of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* quickly flowed into the north.

The earliest surviving handwritten scroll of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* was unearthed in Turfan. The scriptural fragment was copied under Qiequ Anzhou 且渠安周 (the name Qie can also be transcribed as Ju), King of the Northern Liang Dynasty, and was perhaps transcribed as an offering. The scriptures copied under Qiequ Anzhou include the *Chishi jing* 持世經 (*Lokadharaparipṛcchā Sūtra*), the *Shizhu piposha lun* 十住毘婆沙論 (*Daśabhūmikavibhāṣā Śāstra*), and the *Fo huayan jing juan dinianba* 佛華嚴經卷第廿八 (*Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra* in Twenty-Eight Fascicles). It is also worth noting that both the fragments of the *Chishi jing* (Table 2) and of the *Fo huayan jing juan dinianba* (Table 3) were copied in various Southern styles of calligraphy.[[29]](#footnote-29)

In his 1927 collection titled *Uiki shutsudo bokuhō shohō genryū kō* 禹域出土墨寶源流考, the Japanese scholar Nakamura Fuzetsu 中村不折 writes:

*Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra* is in Twenty-Eight Fascicles. It is one foot and seven inches long, with twenty-two lines of characters, it is in the current clerical script, and it was unearthed in Shanshan 鄯善. The last paragraph says: “A scripture offered by Qiequ Anzhou, King of the Northern Liang, in twenty books.” In this scripture, the style of calligraphy is a mixture of the current clerical script with the running script.

The two volumes mentioned above [the other is the *Shizhu piposha lun*] were both offered by Qiequ Anzhou. The year of compilation is not annotated, yet we can still infer the date.[[30]](#footnote-30)

Nakamura Fuzetsu speculated that this fragment must certainly belong to the time of Qiequ Anzhou, who resided in Gaochang 高昌 during the Northern Liang Dynasty. The court scribes of the Dynasty copied these scriptures for Qiequ Anzhou as offerings. In turn, the scribes may have transcribed this copy of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* based on a manuscript that was perhaps brought there from the Southern Dynasties. Based on these foundations laid during the Northern Liang Dynasty, when the Northern Wei officials supervised the creation of the Buddhist Canon, the scribes must have collected the manuscripts of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* from Central or Southern China. They must have then copied and circulated them in Dunhuang. At the time of the Xuanwu Emperor, the Northern Wei Dynasty was in power in Northern China. However, the Emperor’s ambition to conquer the South never abated. Starting in 500 C.E., Emperor Xuanwu began his expedition to the South, taking advantage of the weak and desolate period of Xiao Baojuan (蕭寶卷) (483–501) from the Southern Qi 齊. By 508, the cities of Yangzhou 揚州, Jingzhou, Yizhou 益州, and others had been occupied by the Northern Wei.

III. Analysis of the Calligraphy

In the early period, the foundations of Buddhism in China were for the most part established based on translations of Buddhist classics into the Chinese language. The circulation of Buddhist translations and writings was a crucial link in the transmission of Buddhist culture. This period, which spans from the Western and Eastern Han Dynasties to the Wei, Jin, and Southern and Northern Dynasties, represents the peak of the evolution of Chinese calligraphy. Indeed, this period witnessed the flourishing of the work of many calligraphers, as well as the rise of many different styles of calligraphy. It was also a key stage for the transformation from the *lishu*, “clerical script,” into the *zhengshu* (or *kaishu* 楷書), “standard script.”

Toward the end of the Eastern Han 東漢 Dynasty, the development of various scripts, including the *li*, the *cao*, the *kai*, and the *hang* scripts were perfected. In simply terms, this evolution occurred as follows: *lishu* → *zhangcao* 章草 → *hangshu* → *kaishu*. Yet, in fact, there is no one-way, straight chronological progression connecting these scripts. Instead, several overlapping, fluid evolutions, as well as profound changes, occurred among them. The fragments of the 296 *Zhufo yaoji jing* 諸佛要集經 (*Essential Collection of Buddhist Scriptures*) unearthed in Tuyugou 吐峪溝 are typical examples of Western Jin standard script, developed from the tradition of Zhong Yao’s 鍾繇 style of calligraphy. In fact, Zhong Yao’s standard script is the script that was employed in the writing of Buddhist scriptures during the early period.[[31]](#footnote-31) Later, Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303–361) created another style following the tradition of Zhong Yao, and Wang’s calligraphy style eventually became the prevailing one.[[32]](#footnote-32) Over the course of time, Wang’s writing style gradually began to have an influence on the development of Buddhist writing. As a result, the script employed in Buddhist writing in Southern China became permeated with influences from Wang’s writing style.[[33]](#footnote-33) From the scrolls and stone carvings from the Wei, Jin, and Southern and Northern Dynasties found in Dunhuang and Turfan, we can observe a gradual transformation of the official script. In his *Wenzixue gaiyao* 文字學概要 (*Essentials of Philology*), Qiu Xigui 裘錫圭 states that the main reason for this transformation was that Zhong and Wang’s official script originated from the running script. The script they devised was then employed as an official style on tablet inscriptions. However, because their script’s composition and brushwork was not considered sufficiently solemn and dignified, scribes from the Southern and Northern Dynasties began making changes to Zhong and Wang’s official script. However, it was not until Ouyang Xun 歐陽詢 in the early Tang Dynasty that such changes were perfected.[[34]](#footnote-34)

Zhai Xigui 裘錫圭 noted that Zhong and Wang’s official script changed into the classical *tangkai* 唐楷, “Tang official script,” only with the advent of Ouyang Xun during the early Tang Dynasty. Still, as we know, Ouyang Xun derived the structure of his official style from the Wei Dynasty tablets. In addition, we can also find illustrations of fully developed official writing styles from the Northern Wei Tang Dynasty in Dunhuang Buddhist writing. For example, when considering the Northern Wei scribes from Dunhuang regarding the manuscript of the BNF P. 4506, the *Suvarṇabhāsottama Sūtra* dated 471 from the fifth Huangxing 皇興 year of the Northern Wei Dynasty, Ikeda On observed: “By this time, Wang Xi’s agile and polished kind of style of calligraphy was thoroughly widespread.” Concomitantly, by 479, Feng Xi’s writing also came to show the influence of Wang’s style of calligraphy.[[35]](#footnote-35) Feng Xi’s S. 996 manuscript, the *Apitan xinjing* in six fascicles is the earliest extant fragment of this scripture from Dunhuang. Feng Xi, who served as the governor of Luozhou, was perhaps driven to pray for the Emperor. Thus, he likely chose the best manuscript in the court collection as the model from which he could reverently make his copies. Although Feng Xi’s is not a manuscript of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, it is clear from his calligraphy that, at this point, the standard script of the Northern Wei Tang Dynasty was maturing. In addition to illustrating the transition from clerical script to Northern Wei standard style, Feng Xi’s style also integrates the style of Wang’s writing technique. To further explain this complex process of development, I will focus on several examples of calligraphy from scriptures as well as from inscriptions dating from 449 to 506 and compare their development.

The specimens of Buddhist scriptures I analyze here include the *Chishi diyi* 持世第一 dating to 449, the *Da bannieban jing* 大般涅槃經 (*Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*) (Figure 3) and the *Za apitan xin jing* in six fascicles (Figure 4) S. 996, both from 506, as well as the *Niujue zaoxiang ji* 牛橛造像記 (Figure 1) dating to 495. The characters I selected as examples (Figure 5) employ either the strokes or the radicals developed by the mature standard script (*kaishu*), including: the horizontal stroke “*yi* 一,” as well as “*ren* 人,” “*da* 大,” “*xin* 心,” “*ge* 戈,” “*wei* 為,” and others. To compare the nature of the transformation of calligraphy from the Northern Liang to the Northern Wei Dynasty, I chose two dated inscriptions as standards, distinguishing them as specimens from the time of the Northern Liang and the Northern Wei Dynasties. The first factor to take note of (Figure 9) is that the engraving of calligraphy on stone differs from writing on paper. The handwritten words are drawn on rice paper by the very same calligrapher who then writes them down directly on stone employing red ink. Nevertheless, the tip of the chisel employed by the stone carver is different from the tip of the writing brush that is employed to write in on the original paper. Therefore, it is necessary to see the tip of the writing brush through the tip of the chisel.[[36]](#footnote-36) After comparing these elements, the handwriting shown in Figure 9 clearly conveys several pieces of information:

1. First, the Southern style from the scriptures written in 449 later appeared in the North, when Wang’s Southern style of calligraphy began to permeate the calligraphy employed to write Buddhist scriptures during the Northern Liang Dynasty;

2. Secondly, from the structure of the written characters and from the features given to the radicals *xin* and *ge*, it becomes clear how the 479 *Za apitan xin jing*, written by Feng Jinguo during the Northern Wei Dynasty, had developed into a mature standard script.

3. Consider the calligraphy of the *pie* 撇 (left-falling stroke) and the *na* 捺 (right-falling stroke) of the *ren* 人 character in the 495 *Niuping zaoziang ji* 牛橛造像記 from the Longmen Caves. When you compare these strokes with the *pie* and the *na* of the *da* 大 character in the 449 *Chishi diyi*, the writing looks very similar. Here, the way of writing the *xin* radical is also very similar in structure to that of Qiequ Anzhou’s *Zaosi gongde pi*造寺功德碑, where the structure of the *xian* 咸 character is similar to that of the *sui* 歲 character found in the *Chishi diyi*.

4. Through this portion of the writing sequence, it becomes evident that, beginning from the Northern Liang Dynasty, the calligraphy employed in Buddhist scriptures continued to blend with the beautiful and free-flowing styles of the South. Thus, the transformation of calligraphy began during the Northern Liang Dynasty. By the Northern Wei Dynasty, the transformation was complete. This development can be seen in the manuscript of the BNF P. 4506, the *Jinguangming jing* 金光明經 (*Suvarṇaprabhāsa Sūtra*), compiled in the fifth Huangxing 皇興 year of the Northern Wei Dynasty(471), and in the *Za apitan xinjing* in six volumes written by Feng Jinguo in 479.

In 513, the Linghu family supervised the writing of a set of Buddhist scriptures. A close inspection reveals that such scriptures bear a style of calligraphy particular to the Linghu clan. During the Northern Wei Dynasty, the styles of calligraphy employed by the Linghu family had a wild and unrestrained style, characterizing the writing techniques of the Linghu clan minority. In addition to the habitual top-right inclination of the characters, the sharp edge of the brush is also particularly prominent when the stroke is drawn horizontally, while the writing is relatively unrestrained in the *pie* and the *na*. To explore the source of the style of calligraphy employed in Dunghuang by the scribe organization of the Linghu clan (Figures 7 and 8), let us draw another parallel between Buddhist scriptures and stone inscriptions. Figure 9 includes the 479 *Za apitan xin jing* in six volumes, the 495 *Niujue zaoxiang ji*, the 506 *Da bannnieban jing*, and Linghu Chongzhe’s 513 *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*. Examples of single characters or radicals are: the “*yi* 一” horizontal stroke, “*ren* 人” or “*da* 大”, “*xin* 心”, “*g*e 戈”, “*wei* 为”, “*fo* 佛”, “*you* 有”, “*ge* 戈”, as well as the frequent term “*yiqie* 一切.”(Figure 12) From the comparison in Figure 12, it is clear that Linghu Chongzhe’s *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* follows the style of calligraphy of the 479 *Za apitan xin jing* by Feng Jinguo and of the 506 *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*. Athough he took great care in copying the scripture, Linghu Chongzhe’s calligraphy cannot conceal, at least in terms of imitation, its unrestrained character. Hence, when we compare it with Yan Liang Wei’s 譙良顒 *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* from 506, the writing of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* seems calm and imbued with restraint. The writing technique also reveals differences with respect to the northern or the southern inclinations of the scribes, as well as cultural differences between the Han and the national minorities.

Based on the Dunhuang manuscripts of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, I was able to uncover the direction of their writing and circulation and then traced their source to the version of a southern translation bureau. The manuscript was perhaps carried to Central China from the Southern Dynasties. Indeed, the scribe made his copy based on the Southern manuscript, which, in turn, was copied and transmitted to either Dunhuang or Turfan. The fact that the scriptures by Feng Xi, who served as the governor of Luozhou during the Northern Wei Dynasty, were transmitted to Dunhuang, illustrates that a close relationship existed between Dunhuang and Luoyang whereby the scriptures and their culture were exchanged. Now, if one refers to the styles of calligraphy from several Dunhuang scriptures and compares them in chronological order, one may observe how Feng Xi’s writing and calligraphy, dating to the year 479 in the Northern Wei Dynasty, actually display the influence of Southern calligraphy. Take, for example, the 506 *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* from the Southern Dynasties, compiled by Qiao Liangyong in Jingzhou’s Zhulin Temple 竹林寺. In comparing the calligraphy of this scripture with the stone inscription on the Wei stele of the *Niupang zaoxiang ji* dating to 495, as well as with the calligraphy of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* written by Linghu Chongzhe in 513, one observes that the brushwork and structure of the characters can be traced to the same line. Moreover, the trajectory of calligraphy in the scriptures clearly demonstrates that the copy of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* written by the Linghu clan of Dunhuang during the reign of Emperor Xuanwu was already imbued with traces of the blending of Northern and Southern styles of calligraphy.

IV. The Early Manuscript of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* and Its Relationship with the *Yiqie jing*

In the history of the transmission of the manuscripts, we should notice that several individuals made copies of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* as offerings. One such individuals is Xiao Ziliang 蕭子良, King Wenxuan of Jingling in the Southern Dynasty of Qi, who produced thirty-six copies. Another is Yuan Yanming 元延明, a general at the court of the Northern Wei who copied and circulated one hundred *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*s. At the same time, Feng Xi, who served as a court minister, made copies of the *Yiqie jing* in order to repay the Emperor’s kindness. This may indicate that in this period, the Northern Wei Dynasty engaged in the official activity of copying the Buddhist Canon as a whole. Fang Guangchang speculated that: “The discovery of Buddhist scriptures compiled by the official scribes from the Dunhuang Township indicates that in Dunhuang, during the Northern Wei Dynasty, the Buddhist faith was flourishing. In the Hexi 河西 area, at least, copying Buddhist scriptures had become an official endeavor. This also indicates that the Buddha’s teaching occupied an important position in society at that time.”[[37]](#footnote-37)

The phenomenon of copying and circulating Buddhist scriptures was also reflected in the cultural exchange of the manuscripts of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* between the North and the South. It is also possible that such activity can be traced to the Northern Liang Dynasty. In my 2013 essay. “Tulufan chutu beiliang juequ anzhou gongyang Huayan jing yanjiu 吐魯番出土北涼沮渠安周供養” (*The Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra from Turfan Offered by Juqu Anzhou during the Northern Liang Dynasty: A Study*), I discussed how, soon after the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* was translated in Southern China in the fifth century, the monk Daoyang 道養, who served as the court scribe for the Northern Liang Dynasty, immediately copied and circulated the text in Turfan.[[38]](#footnote-38) Moreover, through a comparative study of Northern Liang inscriptions on stone steles and stūpas with fragments of Buddhist scriptures written on scrolls, I verified the existence of several official scribes at the Northern Liang court. In this period, the culture of translating Buddhist scriptures and writing was developing throughout China in an organized and systematic manner.[[39]](#footnote-39) Hence, in my article, after analyzing the calligraphy styles adopted by Buddhist scribes during the Northern Liang Dynasty, I went on to discuss the so-called “Northern Liang script” as well as the Northern Liang scribes. Moreover, I illustrated how, in the history of calligraphy, the styles of this period—marked by a dense, exotic rhythm of the ink—constitute an unprecedented, valuable trace of handwriting left by monks from Western Central Asia.[[40]](#footnote-40) In a 2014 article, “Deguo shoucang tulufan chutu zaoqi Huayan jing xieben canpian yanjiu 德國收藏吐魯番出土早期《華嚴經》寫本殘片研究” (*The Early Manuscript Fragments of the Avataṃsaka Sūtra Unearthed in Turfan and Collected in Germany: A Study*), I drew on handwritten manuscripts and inscriptions carved on stone monuments from the Northern Liang Dynasty to examine the circumstances through which the early manuscripts of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* came into existence. Here, having compared the calligraphy on tablet inscriptions, stone stūpas, and on written fragments from the Northern Liang Dynasty, I illustrated how during the early fifth century, soon after Buddhabhadra’s translation of the *Dafangguang fo huayan jing* 大方廣佛華嚴經 (*Mahāvaipulya Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra*) during the Eastern Jin東晉Dynasty, the scripture began to be copied and circulated very quickly in Northern China.[[41]](#footnote-41)

It should also be noted that when King Qiequ Anzhou of the Northern Liang Dynasty began to make offerings of handwritten Buddhist scriptures, the Buddhist scribes at the Northern Liang court also took part in writing and offering Buddhist scriptures. The Buddhist texts copied by the Northern Liang scribes included the collection of scriptures produced by various translation bureaus in Southern and Northern China. In addition to the aforementioned translation of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* from the Southern Jin Dynasty which also appeared in the Northern Liang Dynasty, there were also other Buddhist scriptures translated by Kumārajīva. The scriptures that were copied and offered in the Northern Liang Dynasty include *jing* 經 (*sūtra*), *lü* 律 (*vinaya*), and *lun* 論 (*śāstra*). This phenomenon may indicate that the government of the Northern Liang had begun to systematically collect and make copies of Buddhist scriptures from Central and Southern China. However, this does not rule out the possibility that, during the Northern Liang Dynasty, the Buddhist Canon was undergoing a stage of formation which dates to the period of the early manuscripts.[[42]](#footnote-42)

V. Conclusion

Drawing on Buddhist and historical sources, this article first discussed the three monks Bodhiruci, Ratnamati, and Tan Mozui who promoted Huayan thought at the time of the Xuanwu Emperor and who made important contributions to the early transmission and establishment of Huayan thought in China. Through the history of the transcription of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, the article then discussed the development of Buddhist styles of writing and the early compilation of the Buddhist Canon. Based on the handwritten scrolls of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, which were written at the time of the Xuanwu Emperor of the Northern Wei Dynasty, and which were uncovered in the Dunhuang Library Cave, the article examined the historical background of the transmission of the handwritten scrolls of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, as well as geographical pathways of the writing and spread of the scripture. Subsequently, based on the sequences of handriting emerging from the handwritten scrolls of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* and from the stone carvings of the Northern Wei, both of which reflected the court policies of collecting and circulating Buddhist scriptures, the article further speculated about the compilation of the *Yiqie jing*, or Buddhist Canon, commissioned by the Northern Wei government in the context of its historical circumstances. It is possible that the initial developments of these activities were already under way during the Northern Liang Dynasty. Hence, the set of official scriptures from Dunhuang copied at the time of the Xuanwu Emperor reflect the manner in which the writing style of the standard script (*kaishu*) developed and was eventually perfected during the Northern Wei Dynasty. Undoubtedly, the structure in square blocks employed to frame Chinese characters and the coming-of-age of the *kaishu* laid the foundation for the later developments of the art of printing.

**Appendix: The *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* and related manuscripts from the Northern Liang to the Northern Wei Found in Dunhuang and in Turfan**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Location of Collection/Number** | **Handwritten Scroll Name** | **Dynasty** | **Year** | **Scribe/Patron** |
| Before 455 | Japanese Collection of Nakamura Fuzetsu 013  ((Japan Calligraphy Museum) | *Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra*  in Twenty-Eight Fascicles. | Northern Liang  (Found in Tuyugou 吐峪溝, Shanshan 鄯善 County) | Thirteen years before Chengping 承平 | Offered by Qiequ Anzhou, King of the Northern Liang |
| 511 |  | *Cheng weishi lun* in Forty Fascicles |  | The Seventh Month of the Fourth Yongping Year |  |
| 512 | S. 1547 | *Cheng weishi lun* in Forty Fascicles |  | Eighth Month of the First Yanchang Year | Using twenty-eight sheets of paper.  Completed in the fifth day of the eighth month of the first Yanchang Year (512), by Liu Guangzhou 劉廣周, the official scribe of the Dunhuang District.  Master-scribe supervisor Linghu Chongzhe  Proofreader Hong Jun 洪儁 |
| 513 | Northern Map  (Loose 648/Bew 672) | *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* in Eight Fascicles | Northern Wei Emperor Xuanwu | The seventeenth day of the fourth lunar month of the second Yanchang Year | Written by the scribe of the Dunhuang government scripture-copying office, Linghu Litai, with master-scribe supervisor Linghu Chongzhe. |
| 513 | Beijing’s Forbidden City | *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*  Forty One Fascicles | Northern Wei Emperor Xuanwu | Fifteenth day of the fourth lunar month of the second Yanchang Year | Written by the scribe of the Dunhuang District scripture-copying office, Cao Fashou, with master-scribe supervisor Linghu Chongzhe. |
| 513 | Shelf P. 2110 | *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* in Thirty-Five Fascicles | Northern Wei Emperor Xuanwu | The twenty-third day of the sixth lunar month of the second Yanchang year. | Master-scribe of the Dunhuang scripture-copying office Linghu Chongzhe. |
| 513 |  | *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Śāstra*  in Thirty-Two Fascicles |  | Sixth lunar month of the second Yancheng year |  |
| 513 | Sixth lunar month of the second Yancheng year | *Da loutan jing* 大樓炭經 |  |  |  |
| 513 | S. 9141 | *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*  Thirty-Nine Fascicles | Northern Wei Emperor Xuanwu | Fifteenth day of the seventh lunar month of the second Yanchang year | Master-scribe of the Dunhuang scripture-copying office Linghu Chongzhe. |
| 513 | Otani Library 大谷圖  (Loose 105/ yuyi 23) | *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*  Seventeen Fascicles | Northern Wei Emperor Xuanwu | Eighteenth day of the seventh month of the second Yanchang year | Written by the scribe of the Dunhuang District scripture-copying office, Zhang Xianchang, with master-scribe supervisor Linghu Chongzhe. |
| 513 | S. 2067 | *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*  in Sixteen Fascicles | Northern Wei Emperor Xuanwu | Nineteenth day of the seventh month of the second Yanchang year | Master-scribe of the Dunhuang scripture-copying office Linghu Chongzhe. |
| 513 | *Dunhuang miji fan* 敦煌秘笈番 (Dunhuang Secret Books) No. 4 (Li Shengduo 李盛鐸: san 193) | *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* in Twenty-Four Fascicles | Northern Wei Emperor Xuanwu | Twenty-seventh day of the eighth lunar month of the second Yanchang year | Scribe of the Dunhuang District Linghu Chongzhe. |
| 513 | Guotu 國圖, xin 新 0672 | *Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra* in Eight Fascicles. | Northern Wei Emperor Xuanwu | Second Yanchang year |  |
| 513 | Japan Mitsui Bunko 三井文庫 bei sanjin 北三井 051 (025-14-2)  Mitsui Hachirōemon 三井 八郎右衛門 | *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*  Fourteen Fascicles | Northern Wei Emperor Xuanwu | Second Yanchang year | Written by the scribe of the Dunhuang District He Changtai. |
| 514 |  | *Da fangdeng tuolonijing* 大方等陀羅尼經 (*Mahāvaipulya Dhāraṇīsūtra*) in one fascicle | Northern Wei Emperor Xuanwu | Fourth lunar month of the third Yanchang year |  |
| 514 |  | *Cheng weishi lun* in  Eight Fascicles | Northern Wei Emperor Xuanwu | Sixth lunar month of the thirt Yanchang year |  |
| 514 |  | *Dapin jing* 大品經 (*Mahāprajñāpāramitā Sūtra*) in Eight Fascicles | Northern Wei Emperor Xuanwu | Seventh lunar month of the third Yanchang year |  |
| 522 | S. 2724 | *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* in Three Fascicles | Emperor Xiaoming of the Northern Wei Dynasty | Third Zhengguan year | Written by *bhikṣu* Fading 法定 |
| 523 | Collection of Nakamura Fuzetsu 023  (Japan Calligraphy Museum) | *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*  Twenty-Nine Fascicles | Emperor Wu of the Southern Liang (Tuyugou, Shanshan County) | Fourth month of the fourth Putong year | Written by Zhengfa Wujincang 正法無盡藏 of the Liang |

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4. Fang Guangchang, *Zhongguo xieben dazangjing yanjiu*, p. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Fascicle 2 of the *Shishi jigu lue* 釋氏稽古略 states that: “Emperor Shizong Xuanwu 世宗宣武帝 of the Wei built the Yaoguang Temple 瑤光寺, yet before it was completed (516), that

   same year, Empress Dowager Hu built the Yongning Temple 永寧寺, and both were located to the side of the imperial palace. In addition, they created a cave temple in Yiquekou 伊闕口, with a six-feet tall golden statue, ten images of medium rank, and two of jade. They made a nine-story stūpa, its height was ninety feet, its *chattra* spire added a further ten feet, and on quiet nights one could hear the sound of its bells for ten leagues. Since the introduction of the Buddhadharma to China,

   there were no stūpas and monasteries quite like them (*Beishi*)” (Taishō: “Shishi Jigulüe,” CBETA, T. 49, no. 2037, p. 796 a19–24). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. **Zenryū Tsukamoto 塚本善隆, trans. Lin Baoyao 林保堯 and Yan Juanying 顏娟英, *Longmen shi ku: Bei Wei fo jiao yan jiu* 龍門石窟: 北魏佛教研究 (Xinzhu shi 新竹市: Juefeng fojiao yishu wenhua jijin hui 覺風佛教藝術文化基金會, 2005), p. 13.** [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. One of the seven halls of the Northern Palace in the Luoyang Imperial City during the Wei and the Jin Dynasties. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. *Xuefo kaoxun* 學佛考訓, Fascicle 6 (Taishō: *Xuefo kaoxun*, CBETA, J34, no. B295, p. 14c11-13). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. *Foguang dacidian*, p. 5204 (https://www.fgs.org.tw/fgs\_book/fgs\_drser.aspx). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. *Shidi jing lun* 十地經論 (*Daśabhūmika Sūtra Bhāṣya*), Fasicle 1: “In the first Yongping year,

    the Xuanxiao 玄枵 year, on the first day of the fourth month, by imperial decree the *trepiṭaka* masters

    Bodhiruci from Northern India, called Daoxi 道希 in the Kingdom of Wei, and Ratnamati from Central India, called Baoyi in the Kingdom of Wei, as well as the translator *śramaṇa* Buddhaśānta from Northern India, along with more than ten monks familiar with the teachings, translated this treatise in more than ten volumes in the Taiji and in the Ziji [Halls]” (Taishō: *Shidi jing lun*, CBETA, T. 26, no. 1522, p. 123b1-5). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. [Tang 唐] Dao Xuan 道宣, *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, Fascicle 1: (Taishō: Xu gaoseng zhuan 續高僧傳, CBETA, T. 50, no. 2060, pp. 428a22-429c5). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. [Tang] Dao Xuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, Fascicle 6 (Taishō: *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, CBETA, T. 50, no. 2060, pp. 470b23-c4). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. [Tang] Dao Xuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, Fascicle 1 (Taishō: *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, CBETA, T. 50, no. 2060, pp. 2060, p.429a17-b4). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. [Tang] Dao Xuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, Fascicle 23 (Taishō: *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, CBETA, T. 50, no. 2060, pp. 2060, pp. 624b22-625a18). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. [Northern Wei] Yang Xuanzhi 楊衒之, *Luoyang jialan ji*, Fascicle 4 (Taishō: *Luoyang jialan ji*, CBETA, T. 51, no. 2092, p. 1017b8-18). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. *Huayan jing zhuanji* 華嚴經傳記, Fascicle 5 (Taishō: *Huayan jing zhuanji*, CBETA, T. 51, no. 2073, p. 170c20-24); see also Bianzheng Lun 辯正論, Fascicle 4 (Taishō: Bianzheng Lun, CBETA, T. 52, no. 2110, p. 514c23-28). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. This symbol stands for a fragmented or missing character. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. [Northern Qi北齊] Wei Shou 魏收, *Weishu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1974), p. 1818. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Qian Long 錢龍, *Beiwei anzhi liuzhen ‘jimin’ shiwu jianlun* 北魏安置六鎮「饑民」失誤淺論,” in *Cangsang* 滄桑 1 (2007): 18-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Zheng Acai 鄭阿財, “Jijian jiju shenyi de dunhuang teshu xiejing 幾件極具深意的敦煌特殊寫經,” in *Rensheng fokan* 人乘佛刊 (consulted on September 12, 2007) http://www.zgs.org.tw/epaperSystem/periodical/9609/epaper6-2-2.htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Kong Lingmei 孔令梅 and Du Doucheng 杜斗城, “Shiliuguo shiqi dunhuang linghu shi yu fojiao guanxi tanjiu 十六國時期敦煌令狐氏與佛教關係探究,” in *Dunhuang yanjiu* 敦煌研究 5 (2010): 99-104. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Ibid., 99-104. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Fang Guangchang, *Zhongguo xieben dazangjing yanjiu*, p. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Tōru Funayama, *Butten wa dō kan’yaku sa reta no ka: Sūtora ga kyōten ni naru toki* 仏典はどう漢訳されたのか ： スートラが経典になるとき (Tōkyō: Tōkyō-to Chiyoda-ku 東京都千代田区: Iwanami Shoten 岩波書店, 2013), p. 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. [Liang 梁] Sengyou 僧祐, *Chu sanzang jiji* 出三藏記集, Fascicle 9 (Taishō: *Chu sanzang jiji*, CBETA, T. 55, no. 2145, pp. 60c29-61a8). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Wei Daoru 魏道儒, “Dongjin nanbeichao huayan xue de fazhan quxiang 東晉南北朝華嚴學的發展趨向,” in *Shijie zongjiao yanjiu* 世界宗教研究 (January 1999): 65-72. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. [Liang] Sengyou, *Chu sanzang jiji*, Fascicle 5: “Thirty-six volumes, from the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*

    to the *Pinnü wei guowang furen*, were copied by King Wen Xuan of Qi Jingling; all annotations in the *sūtra* titles say that the texts were copied by Wenxuan” (Taishō: *Chu sanzang jiji*, CBETA, T. 55, no. 2145, p. 38a16-18). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. See Cui Zhonghui 崔中慧, “Tulufan chutu beiliang juequ anzhou gongyang Huayan jing yanjiu 吐魯番出土北涼沮渠安周供養《佛華嚴經》研究,” in *Huayan xuebao* 華嚴學報 Vol. 6 (December 2013): 217-61. For the present article, I have also researched the official style of calligraphy that was representative of the Northern Liang. In the article I treat in detail the emergence of a Southern style of writing during the Northern Liang, but the above is omitted here. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Nakamura Fusetsu, *Yucheng chutu mobao yuanliu kao* 禹域出土墨寶源流考 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2003), p. 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. On the script employed to write Buddhist scriptures during the early period, such as, for example, in the standard script (*kaishu*) of the 296 *Zhufo yaoji jing* 諸佛要集經 (*Buddhasaṅgīti Sūtra*), and for its relationship with the writing styles of other calligraphers in the history of calligraphy,please refer to Cui Zhonghui, “Liusha moyun─Dunhuang tulufan fojiao xiejing shufa tanmi 流沙墨韻──敦煌吐魯番佛教寫經書法探秘,” in *Yishu xue* 藝術學 Vol. 28 (Taibei 臺北: Guoli yishu daxue國立藝術大學, 2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Liu Tao 劉濤, *Zhongguo shufa shi weijin nanbeichao juan* 中國書法史魏晉南北朝卷 (Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江蘇教育出版社, 2009), p. 190, “Concerning Wang Xizhi’s 王羲之 calligraphy masters, the general clue is: in his young age, instructed by Lady Wei 衛夫人, he obtained the technique of the standard script. From about the age of ten to the age of twenty,

    having changed teachers, namely his uncle Wang Yi 王廙, he obtained the techniques of a multitudeof scripts. After he turned twenty, [師師之所師:], he praised Zhong Yao 鍾繇 for the *zhengshu* and the *hangshu*, and followed the example of Zhang Zhi 張芝 for the *caoshu*. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Wang Hanwei 王菡薇 and 陶小軍 Tao Xiaojun, *Dunhuang nanchao xieben shufa yanjiu* 敦煌南朝寫本書法研究 (Beijing: Renmin shuju, 2011), p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Qiu Xigui 裘錫圭, Wenzixue gaiyao 文字學概要 (Taibei: Wanjuanlou tushu gufen youxian gongsi 萬卷樓圖書股份有限公司). On the formation of the *zhengshu* (*kaishu*), see also Cui Zhonghui, “Silu shang de ‘shudao’ ─ jiekai shufa shishang kaishu qishi zhi mi 絲路上的 ‘書道’ ─ 揭開書法史上楷書起始之謎,” in *Dianzang du tianxia* 典藏讀天下(July 2013): 48-55. Cui Zhonghui, Liusha moyun─Dunhuang tulufan fojiao xiejing shufa tanmi 流沙墨韻──敦煌吐魯番佛教寫經書法探秘,” in *Yishu xue* 藝術學 no. 28 (May 2012): 9–50. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Ikeda On, trans., Zhang Mingxin張銘心 and Hao Tiejun 郝鐵君, *Dunhuang wenshu de shijie* 敦煌文書的世界 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 2007), p. 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. See Qi Gong 啓功, *Lunshu jueju* 论書絕句 (annotated by Zhao Rengui 趙仁珪) (3-2), in the following

    passages: “As for the inscriptions at Longmen, the characters are powerful and imposing. Reading books has

    its own ways other than contemplating tablets, for one sees the edge of the brush through the edge of the

    chisel,” and further, “I do not mean to say that stone carvings cannot be imitated. Yet, only those who are

    capable of distinguishing *dao*刀 from *hao* 毫 in their minds, only those will begin to imitate the engraving

    through language, or if that is not the case, when you see a ventriloquist learn the voices of one hundred

    beasts, would you then say that his speech was like that from the beginning, would that not be out of place as

    to be laughable?” (Beijing: Shenghuo, dushu, xinzhi sanlian shudian 生活. 读書. 新知三联書店, 2002), p.

    4. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Fang Guangchang, *Zhongguo xieben dazangjing yanjiu*, p. 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Cui Zhonghui 崔中慧 (2013b), “Tulufan chutu beiliang juequ anzhou gongyang Huayan jing yanjiu 吐魯番出土北涼沮渠安周供養《佛華嚴經》研究,” in *Huayan xuebao* 華嚴學報 6 (Dec. 2013), pp. 217-61. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Cui Zhonghui, “You Liangwang da qiequ anzhou zaosi gongde pi tantao beiliang gongtingxiejing yu guangfang zuzhi 由《涼王大且渠安周造寺功德碑》探討北涼宮廷寫經與官方組織,” in Wang Sanqing 王三慶, Zheng Acai 鄭阿財, eds., *2013 Dunhuang tulufan guoji xueshu yantaohui lunwenji* 2013 敦煌吐魯番國際學術研討會論文集 (Taiwan tainan guoli chenggong daxue zhongwen xi chuban 台灣臺南國立成功大學中文系出版, December 2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Cui Zhonghui, “Moying huyun－beiliang shiqi gongting fojiao shufa 墨影胡韻－北涼時期宮廷佛教書法,” in *Jiuzhou xuelin xuebao* 九州學林學報 35 (May 2015, City University of Hong

    Kong 香港城市大學). [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Cai Zhonghui, “Deguo shoucang tulufan chutu zaoqi Huayan jing xieben canpian yanjiu 德國收藏吐魯番出土早期《華嚴經》寫本殘片研究,” in *2014 nian disan ju huayan zhuanzong guoji xueshu yantaohui* 2014年第三屆華嚴專宗國際學術研討會 (Taibei: Huayan zhuanzong xueyuan 華嚴專宗學院, October 2014): 23-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Fang Guangchang, *Zhongguo xieben dazangjing yanjiu*, p. 14-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)