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**The Eight Protectors in Dunhuang. Khotanese kingdom's avatars in a Chinese visual context.
「敦煌石窟におけるコータン王国の八守護神の図像について」**Erika Forte (Kyoto University, Institute for Research in Humanities)
エリカ・フォルテ 京都大学人文科学研究所**Eight Protectors at Dunhuang 敦煌石窟での八守護神**

Between the end of the 9th and the last quarter of the 10th century a specific iconographic theme appears in some caves in Dunhuang 敦煌, which displays a group of eight deities designated by their captions as “protecting the kingdom of Khotan” (護于闐國). The deities are typically found on the slopes of the caves' entrance corridor ceilings, four on each side.

This group of deities played a fundamental role in the Buddhist religious panorama of the Khotanese people. They were known with the collective name of Eight Protectors (in Khotanese documents *haṣṭā parvālā*). Thus far, Dunhuang remains the only site that preserves visual evidence on the Eight Protectors of Khotan depicted as a group and identifiable by inscriptions.

List of deities (concordance between Sanskrit, Khotanese and Chinese names, modified after 荣新江 and 朱丽双 (2011) 「图文互证 — 于闐八大守护神新探」):

| Sanskrit | Khotanese | Chinese |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Aparājita | Aparājai[ja]tta (P. 2893) Aparājai jasta | Nansheng tianzi 難勝天子 (<i>Candragarbhasūtra</i>) Apoluozhiduo shen 阿婆羅質多神 (S. 2113, P. 3352, S. 5659, MG 126, MG 454) Nansheng tianshen 難勝天神 |
| Sanjaya Sañjaya, Saṃjñāya, | Samñī (P. 2893) Saṃjñāyaś, Saṃjayaś, Saṃjñāyasva | Sanzhi yecha dajiang 散脂夜叉大將 (<i>Candragarbhasūtra</i>) Shayemoli shen 莎耶摩利神 (S. 2113) |
| Gaganasvara | Gaganasvarā (P. 2893) | Guyangjue/Guyianjiao da yecha 殺羊脚大夜叉 (<i>Candragarbhasūtra</i>) Jiajianashali shen 迦迦那莎利神 (S. 2113) |
| Suvarṇamāla, Svarṇamāla | Svarṇamāla (P. 2893) | Jinhuaman yecha 金華鬘夜叉 (<i>Candragarbhasūtra</i>) Shanamoli shen 莎那末利神 (S. 2113, MG 126) |
| Grahavadatta Gṛhāvatapta | Grrahavadatti (P. 2893) Grahā' vidatta, Grrahavadatta, Grahavada nātām re, Grrahadatta | Reshe longwang 熱舍龍王 (<i>Candragarbhasūtra</i>) Mohejialuo shen 摩訶迦羅神 (S. 2113, MG 108) |
| Aṃkuśa, Añkuśavatī | Aṃgūśa' (P. 2893) Aṃkuśa, Agūśa' | Anajinshou tiannü 阿那緊首天女 (<i>Candragarbhasūtra</i>) Ayushe tiannü 阿隅闍天女 (S. 2113, MG 146) |
| Sthānava[ṭī] | Sthānāvā (P. 2893) Sthāṇava, Sthānāva | Tanansheli tiannü 他難闍梨天女 (<i>Candragarbhasūtra</i>) Xitana tiannü 悉他那天女 (S. 2113, MG 98, MG 126, MG 146) Gongtuona tiannü 恭陀那天女 (S. 5659) |
| Vaiśravaṇa | Vrīśamaṃ (P. 2893) Vrīśamā, Vrīśama, Vrraiśama | Pishamen wangshen 毘沙門王神 (<i>Candragarbhasūtra</i>) Pishamen tianwang shen 毗沙門天王神 (S. 2113, MG 45, MG 146) Pishamen tianwang 毗沙門天王 (MG 108) |

- The *lokapāla* Vaiśravaṇa, who is king of the yakṣas;
- the *yakṣa mahāsenāpati* Saṃjñāya;
- the *deva* Aparājita;
- the great *yakṣa* Gaganasvara;
- the *yakṣa* Svarṇamāla;
- the *nāgarāja* Grahavadatta (Gṛhāvatapta);
- the *devī* Aṃguśā’;
- the *devī* Sthānāva[ti].

Texts mentioning the Eight Protectors

The names of the Eight Protectors recur in texts in Chinese, Khotanese and Tibetan.

The Chinese *Candragarbhasūtra* (Chin. *Yuezangjing* 月藏經) (T. 397.13, 374–380), second half of the 6th century.

The Tibetan texts: *Ri glang ru lung bstan pa* (“Prophecy of Gośrīṅga,” composed before 850s); *Li yul lung bstan pa* (“Prophecy of the Li Country,” mid-9th century), and the Dunhuang manuscript P.t. 906, known as *Li yul chos kyī lo rgyus* (“Religious Annals of the Li Country,” ca. 9th century).

The Chinese manuscript S. 2113 (completed after 896);

The Khotanese manuscript P. 2893[1] (10th century).

Besides being part of a systematic list, the Eight Protectors’ names are found in other texts in Khotanese, especially the *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra* [sūtra of Golden Light], a scripture that was particularly popular in Khotan.

Previous studies on the Eight Protectors at Dunhuang (in chronological order)

- Zhang Guangda and Rong Xinjiang (1986; 1993/2008): highlight the occurrence of the names of Eight Protectors of Khotan among the list of Auspicious Statues.

Zhang Guangda 張廣大 and Rong Xinjiang 榮新江 (1986). “Dunhuang ‘ruixiangji’ ruixiangtu ji qi fanying de Yutian 敦煌瑞象記瑞象圖及其反應的于闐 [The ‘Records on the Auspicious Images’, the depictions of the Auspicious Images in Dunhuang and their reflections of Khotan]” in *Dunhuang Tulufan wenxian yanjiu wenji* 敦煌吐魯番文獻研究文集 [Essays on texts concerning Dunhuang and Turfan], ed. Beijing Daxue zhonggushi yanjiushi 北京大學中古史研究室 (Beijing 北京, 1986: Beijing daxue chubanshe 北京大學出版社) 3: 69-147.

- Sun Xiushen 孫修身 1999: first report about the existence of Eight Protectors from Khotan depicted in the caves at Dunhuang; identified one of the deities as Vaiśravaṇa 毘沙門天.

Sun Xiushen 孫修身, ed., *Dunhuang shiku quanji* 12: Fojiao dongchuan gushihua 敦煌石窟全集12: 佛教東傳故事畫 [Complete Collection of Dunhuang Caves 12: Paintings Concerning the Spread of Buddhism to the East] (Hong Kong: The Commercial Press, 1999), 74–81, figs. 62–64.

- Zhang Xiaogang 張小剛 2005: a systematic survey on representation of the Eight protectors in Dunhuang is presented, together with description of their iconography. According to Rong 榮新江 and Zhu 朱麗雙 there was some confusion in the identification.

Zhang Xiaogang 張小剛 (張小剛). “Dunhuang Ruixiangtu Zhong De Yutian Huguo Shenwang 敦煌瑞像图中的于闐护国神王. Protection Gods of Khotan in Dunhuang Auspicious Image Paintings.” *Dunhuang yanjiu* 敦煌研究 *Dunhuang research* 89, no. 1 (2005): 50-56; 114.

- Rong Xinjiang 榮新江 and Zhu Lishuang 朱麗雙 2011:

Rong Xinjiang 榮新江 (榮新江) and Zhu Lishuang 朱麗雙 (朱麗雙), *Tuwen huzheng — Yutian ba da shouhushen xin tan* 图文互证 — 于阗八大守护神新探 [Mutual Evidence of Image and Text. New Investigation on the Eight Guardians of Khotan], in *Dunhuang wenxian, kaogu, yishu zonghe yanjiu. Jinian Xiang Da xiansheng danchen 110 zhounian guoji xueshu yantaohui lunwenji* 敦煌文献,考古,艺术综合研究·纪念向达先生诞辰 110 周年国际学术研讨会论文集 [Comprehensive Studies on Texts, Archeology and Art of Dunhuang: Essays Presented at the International Conference in Memory of Prof. Xiang Da on the 110th Anniversary of his Birthday], ed. Fan Jinshi 樊锦诗 et al. (Beijing 北京: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 2011).
- Zhang Xiaogang 張小剛 2012: points that the content of the mss found in Dunhuang derives from the inscriptions inside the caves. The arrangement of the names in the mss matches that of the inscriptions in the caves. (This view was already exposed by and Alexander Soper in 1964 and in 1984 and Michel Soymie in their study about the Auspicious Statues 瑞像)

Zhang Xiaogang 張小剛 (張小剛), "Dunhuang gantong gushihua bangti chaolugao yanjiu 敦煌感通故事畫榜題抄錄稿研究. A Study on the Manuscripts of the Inscriptions of the Images of Miracle Stories in Dunhuang," in *Qingzhu Rao Zongyi xiansheng 95 huadan dunhuangxue guoji xueshu yantaohui lunwenji* 慶賀饒宗頤先生 九十五華誕敦煌學國際學術研討會論文集. Essays on the International Conference on the Occasion of the 95th Birthday of Professor Jao Tsung-I, ed. Yuan Xingpei 袁行霈 et al. (Beijing 北京: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 2012), 404–423; 356–377.
- Chen Suyu 陳粟裕 2012 and 2014 : iconographical analysis of the Eight protectors at Dunhuang, concluding that the style contains a mixture of both Chinese and Khotanese elements.
 - Chen Suyu 陳粟裕 (陳粟裕), —Dunhuang shiku zhong de Yutian shouhushen tuxiang de yanjiu 敦煌石窟中的于阗守护神图像的研究. Study on the Images of Protector Deities of Khotan in the Caves of Dunhuang, *Gugong bowuyan yankan* 故宫博物院院刊 *Palace Museum Journal* 4.162 (2012): 54–74;
 - Chen Suyu 陳粟裕 (陳粟裕), *Cong Yutian dao Dunhuang. Yi Tang Song shiqi tuxiang de dongchuan wei zhongxin* 从于阗到敦煌 — 以唐宋时期 图像的东传为中心. *From Khotan to Dunhuang: Based on the Images Spreaded (sic!) to the East During Tang and Song Dynasties* (Beijing: Fangzhi chubanshe, 2014), 127–154.
- Zhang Xiaogang 張小剛 2015: a section of his publication on Miracle Paintings at Dunhuang 感通話 includes a study on the Eight Protectors. His initial interpretation is revised in the light of Rong Xinjiang 榮新江 and Zhu Lishuang's 朱麗雙 study published in 2011.

Zhang Xiaogang 張小剛 (張小剛), *Dunhuang fojiao gantonghua yanjiu* 敦煌佛教感通画研究 [Research on the Buddhist Miracle Paintings in Dunhuang] (Shenzhen: Gansu jiaoyu chubanshe, 2015), 170–195.
- Rong Xinjiang, Zhu Lishuang 2019: English version of the report on the 2010 survey (Rong and Zhu 2011) with some updates.

Rong Xinjiang, Zhu Lishuang, "The Eight Great Protectors of Khotan Reconsidered: From Khotan to Dunhuang," *BuddhistRoad Paper*, 6.1(Special Issue: *Ancient Central Asian Networks. Rethinking the Interplay of Religions, Art and Politics across the Tarim Basin (5th–10th C.)*), edited by Erika Forte), 47-84. doi:10.13154/rub.br.117.102

Depictions of the Eight Protectors in Dunhuang Caves (work in progress):

Mogao 敦煌莫高窟: Caves 9, 25, 39, 45, 98, 100, 108, 126, 146, 334, 340, 342, 397, 401, 454

Yulin 榆林石窟: Cave 33

Eight Protectors in Khotan コータンでの八守護神

The importance of established groups of state tutelaries in Khotan is attested in the literature, but it is substantially difficult to connect the protectors mentioned in the texts with the deities appearing in Khotanese art. These deities, consistently clad in local (or, more generically, 'Central Asian') attire, remain largely unknown, also due to the 'fluid' character of Khotanese iconography.

Previous studies on the iconography of Khotanese deities (chronological order):

- Williams, Joanna. "The Iconography of Khotanese Paintings." *East and West* 23, no. 1/2 (1973): 109–54.
- Lo Muzio, Ciro. "Culti Brahmanici a Khotan: Note Sulle Pitture Del Tempio D13 a Dandan Oiliq." *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* n.s., LXXIX, no. 1-4 (2006) (2007): 185-201.
- Forte, Erika. "On a Wall Painting from Toplukdong Site No. 1 in Domoko: New Evidence of Vaiśravaṇa in Khotan?". In *Changing Forms and Cultural Identity: Religious and Secular Iconographies. Papers from the 20th Conference of the European Association for South Asian Archaeology and Art Held in Vienna from 4th to 9th of July 2010*, Vol. 1, South Asian Archaeology and Art, edited by Deborah Klimburg-Salter and Linda Lojda, 215-24. Turnhout: Brepols, 2014.
- Lo Muzio, Ciro. "Skanda and the Mothers in Khotanese Buddhist Painting." In *Interactions in the Himalayas and Central Asia. Processes of Transfer, Translation and Transformation in Art, Archaeology, Religion and Polity*, edited by Eva Allinger, Frantz Grenet, et al., 71-89. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 2017.
- Lo Muzio, Ciro. "Brahmanical Deities in Foreign Lands: The Fate of Skanda in Buddhist Central Asia." *Buddhist Road Paper* 6.1, no. Special Issue: *Central Asian Networks. Rethinking the Interplay of Religions, Art and Politics across the Tarim Basin (5th–10th c.)*, ed. Erika Forte (2019): 11-43.

Some evidence that could be related to the depiction of the Eight Protectors in Khotan is a votive inscription in late Khotanese found on a fragment of wall painting from the structure CD4 excavated in 2002 at Dandān-ōilīq. It says "The *dānapati* Budai ordered to paint these eight deities, wishing their blessing." Unfortunately the survived portion of the painting does not show the deities.

- Zhongguo Xinjiang wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 中国新疆文物考古研究所 Xinjiang Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology China, and Riben Fojiao daxue Niya yizhi xueshu yanjiu jigou 日本佛教大学尼雅遗址学术研究机构 The Academic Research Organization for the Niya Ruins of Bukkyo University Japan, eds. *Dandan wulike yizhi. Zhong-Ri gongtong kaocha yanjiu baogao* 丹丹乌里克遗址. 中日共同考察研究报告. *Dandan Oilik Site. Report of the Sino-Japanese Joint Expedition*. Beijing 北京: Wenwu chubanshe 文物出版社 (Cultural Relics Press), 2009, 138, fig. 40.
- Compareti, Matteo. "The 'Eight Divinities' in Khotanese Paintings: Local Deities or Sogdian Importation?" In *Proceedings of the Eighth European Conference of Iranian Studies (State Hermitage Museum and Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, St Petersburg, 14–19 September 2015). Volume I: Studies on Pre-Islamic Iran and on Historical Linguistics*, edited by Pavel B. Lurje, 117-32. Saint Petersburg: The State Hermitage Publishers, 2019.

The deities depicted on the murals of site Toplukdong n. 3 in Domoko, Khotan

In 2010 archaeological investigations in Khotan revealed new pictorial evidence from the remains of the Buddhist monastic site of Toplukdong (Chin. Tuopulukedun 托普鲁克墩), in the southern area of Domoko (Chin. Damagou 达瑪溝, district of Chira, Chin. Cele 策勒). Some mural fragments from the structure known as Site No. 3 display a group of tutelary deities associated with portraits of donors. This would be the first known representation of the kind in Khotanese territory, and its examination may fill in a blank in the previously known documentation of Khotanese painting.

More than sixty fragments of mural paintings have been found among the debris of the remains. The subjects represented in the fragments are deities and human figures, while no traces of Buddha or bodhisattva figures have been found. The deities are characterized by body and head haloes and wear Central Asian attire. Their physical features point to the category of *yakṣas* or like beings, often adopted from an Indian Buddhist background and superimposed onto local tutelary spirits.

It is possible that these deities represent a group of protectors, although the identity of the individual deities remains uncertain, beside Hārītī and maybe Saṃjñāya.

Reports on Toplukdong site and related material:

- Ando Yoshika 安藤佳香. 新出ダンドンウイリク壁画をめぐって—西域絵画におけるホータン様式を考える [On the Newly Discovered Dandan Oilik Murals. Thoughts on the Khotan Style in the Murals of the Western Regions]. In 丹丹烏里克遺跡學術調查報告書 (Dandan Oilik Site. Archaeological Studies: Research Report into an Ancient Town in Xinjiang, China), edited by Nicchū Kyōdō Dandan-uiliq iseki Gakujutsu Chōsatai 日中共同ダンドンウイリク遺跡學術調査隊 (The Japanese-Chinese Joint Research of the Dandan Oilik Site), 235-262. Kyoto: Bukkyō University, 2007.
- Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan Kaogu yanjiusuo Xinjiang dui 中國社會科學院考古研究所新疆隊. "Xinjiang Hetian diqu Cilexian Damagou fosi yizhi fajue baogao 新疆和田地區策勒縣達瑪溝佛寺遺址發覺報告 (Excavation of Buddhist Temple-Sites at Damago in Qira County of Hetian Prefecture, Xinjiang)." *Kaogu xuebao* 考古學報 2007, no. 4 (2007): 489-525.
- Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan Kaogu yanjiusuo Xinjiang dui 新疆社會科學院考古研究所新疆隊 [China Academy of Social Science Institute of Archaeology—Xinjiang Team]. "Xinjiang Cele xian Damagou 3 hao fosi jianzhu yizhi fajue jianbao 新疆策勒縣達瑪溝3號佛寺建築遺址發掘簡報. Excavation of Topulukdong 3 Buddhist Architectural Ruins at Damago Township in Qira County, Hetian Prefecture, Xinjiang." *Kaogu* 考古 *Archaeology* 10 (2012): 15-20, pls. 1-5.
- Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan Kaogu yanjiusuo 中國社會科學院考古研究所 [Chinese Academy of Science Archaeological Institute], Zhonggong Celexian wei 中共策勒縣委 [Chira County Chinese Communist Party Committee], and Celexian renmin zhengfu 策勒縣人民政府 [Chira County People's Government], eds. *Cele Damagou. Fofa huiji zhe di* 策勒達瑪溝. 佛法汇集之地. Hongkong: Dacheng tushu 达成图书 (The Dacheng Book), 2012.
- 百橋明穂. 「コータン仏教美術史の再検討」 東アジア美術交流史論, 157-169. Tokyo: Chūō kōron bijutsu 中央公論美術出版, 2012.

- 田林啓. 「中国新疆ウイグル自治区ホータン地区出土の仏教美術に関する調査研究 — 中国甘肅地域の仏教美術との関係を踏まえて」 鹿島美術財団年報 別冊30 (2013): 513-524.
- Zhang Huiming 張惠明. "Gongyuan liu dao ba sheji yutian fojiao hufashen ji zhong de yecha tuxiang. Yi Damagou fosi yizhi huaji we zhongxin de daolun 公元六至八世紀于闐佛教護法神系中的夜叉圖像. 以達瑪溝佛寺遺址畫跡為中心的討論. Yakṣa in Buddhist Iconography from Khotan (6th-8th Century): New Wall-Paintings Discovered at the Monastery of Domoko." *Yishushi yanjiu 藝術史研究. The Study of Art History* 17 (2015): 205-244.
- Zhang Xiaogang 張小剛. "Tianwang Yu Yecha. Shishi Yutian Yinyou Qixing Renwu De Shenfen 天王與夜叉. 試釋于闐引雁騎行人物的身份." [In cinese]. *Yishushi yanjiu 藝術史研究* 12 (2015): 183-204.
- Zhang Jianbo 張健波. "Damagou Topulukedong Diaosu Kaoxi 达玛沟托普鲁克墩雕塑考析. An Analysis of the Toprukun Sculpture in Damagou." *Xinjiang Yishu xueyuan xuebao 新疆艺术学院学报 Journal of Xinjiang University of the Arts* 16, no. 3 (2018): 103-111.
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