

Delving into the Origins of the Chang Clan of Tun-huang:  
A Match in BD15411 + P. 2625

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The *Yüan-ho hsing-tsuán* 元和姓纂 contains only simple information on the origins of the Chang 張 clan and lists only twelve prefectures such as An-ting 安定, Fan-yang 范陽, and Tun-huang 敦煌, which is far fewer than the forty-three places mentioned in the notes, and there is no textual research on oral traditions and the lineage of individuals. This special phenomenon is very rare in the *Yüan-ho hsing-tsuán*, and it indirectly reveals that the Chang clan had not reached a consensus regarding their place of origin.

According to transmitted historical sources, Tun-huang was regarded as the place of origin of the Changs represented by Chang Huan 張奐 and his son Chang Chih 張芝 at least at the end of the Eastern Han dynasty, but the Tun-huang Changs commonly mentioned in extant Tun-huang inscriptions, genealogies, and other documents have Ch'ing-ho 清河 or Nan-yang 南陽 as their place of origin. The phenomenon of having an attachment to famous places on the Central Plains was quite commonly seen in the Tun-huang area during the later T'ang dynasty and the Five Dynasties, with the Tun-huang So 索 clan having an attachment to Chü-lu 鉅鹿 as their place of origin and the Tun-huang Fan 范 clan having an attachment to Chi-pei 濟北 as their place of origin. However, the case of the Chang clan in Tun-huang is more complicated, as some of them regarded Nan-yang and others Ch'ing-ho as their place of origin. This confusion has made descendants ignore an important question, namely, the real origins of the Changs of Tun-huang.

P. 2625 (*Tun-huang ming-tsu chih* 敦煌名族志 [Account of Famous Clans of Tun-huang]) records the origins and officials of the Chang, Yin 陰 and So clans of Tun-huang, but they are all incomplete. The records of the Chang clan and the So clan are incomplete, especially that of the Chang clan at the beginning of the account, which is difficult to interpret because only 13 lines are extant and the upper part of the paper is damaged. With the successful matching of BD15411 (7 lines) with P. 2625, it is

clear that there were three places of origin for the Chang clan of Tun-huang, which were differentiated by the “first ancestor,” the “second ancestor,” and the “third ancestor” in the early T’ang dynasty, or the “Mo-ch’ih 墨池 Changs,” “Nan-fu 南府 Changs,” and “Pei-fu 北府 Changs.” This discovery provides us with another way of thinking about the study of places of origin in the medieval period. There were changes such as divisions, migration, and so on after the formation of a particular clan, which evolved into the phenomenon of multiple branches and sub-branches of a clan, but the “common ancestor” was still a relatively unified term for each branch and family when tracing back to their ancestor. However, there existed another model in which many clans from different places merged into a new Chang clan in Tun-huang. After the formation of the Changs of Tun-huang, they experienced emigration and division into more sub-branches, which was commonly seen for large clans in the medieval period. Therefore, in the T’ang dynasty the Tun-huang Changs, from a unified view of counties, were widely recognized outside Tun-huang. But because their ancestors had moved from different places of residence and they recognized different ancestors, in the Tun-huang area they preferred to cling to Ch’ing-ho and Nan-yang, which were more thriving areas in the Central Plains, and they also wished to show their different origins in this way.

The three ancestors representing the origins of the Chang clan of Tun-huang also show the diversity and complexity of the composition of residents in Tun-huang as an immigrant city. At the same time, in recent years some scholars have analyzed the phenomenon of attachment and fiction when some prefectures trace their origins back to their forefathers, and they then conclude that the composition of the system of prefectures and lineages in the medieval period was all fictitious and spurious. By delving once again into the origins of the Chang clan of Tun-huang, the speaker holds that although there are certain elements of attachment and fiction in the formation of places of origin, some ancestral memories can be duplicated, and the discussion of this question should be explored from both fictional and factual aspects, such as the disaster of Huo Kuang 霍光 and banishment to Tun-huang, which appears many times when seeking the ancestral origins of the Changs of Tun-huang. The ancestral deeds of the “Pei-fu Changs” developed into a relatively unified recollection of their ancestors among the confusion of the genealogy of the Changs of Tun-huang.