BUDDHAS AND BODHISATTVAS: EMANATORS AND EMANATED BEINGS
IN THE BUDDHIST ART OF GANDHĀRA, CENTRAL ASIA, AND CHINA

DISSERTATION

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This dissertation examines images of Buddhas, and some bodhisattvas, that contain clusters of small Buddhas, or bodhisattvas, inside their aura or halo. Specifically, the study considers the formation and the development of this motif from Gandhāra, Central Asia (namely, Khotan and Kucha), and central China from about the third to seventh centuries, and analyzes them in relation to the essential teachings about the nature of a Buddha and nirmāṇabuddha (transformation-Buddha).

The depiction of small Buddha figures in the aura is a commonly seen convention in Chinese Buddhist art; however its history has not been thoroughly studied and its meaning is poorly understood. In Buddhism, the phenomenon that an awakened being can emit other awakened beings is a central Buddha concept. However, textual references are scattered in a wide range of scriptures over a long period of time, including doctrinal texts, commentaries and meditation manuals. These offer different, if not conflicting, explanations.
My detailed visual and typological analysis reveals that the depiction of small figures in the aura first emerged in Gandhāra, with conceptual (bhavana) Buddha images. In these images, the small figures are shown tilted with a sense of emanation. In Khotan, and especially in China from the fifth century, the motif became widespread, and the depiction became increasingly schematized.

In this study, I identify the emanated images with the nirmāṇabuddha and suggest that the above trend in visual representations correlates to textual descriptions of the nirmāṇabuddha. Early Mahāyāna texts describe a new type of miracle--a Buddha emanates rays which further transform into nirmāṇabuddhas. Around the turn of the fifth century, nirmāṇabuddhas in the aura became a prominent body mark of a Buddha (in addition to incidental events).

On a theoretical level, the ultimate body of a Buddha is the inconceivable dharmakāya. It is a fundamental feature (as his compassion and skillful means) for a Buddha to transform into nirmāṇabuddhas to save sentient beings. All Buddhas are said to possess such power. My study suggests that the special iconographies with this motif either exemplify individual Buddhas emanating nirmāṇabuddhas or illustrate important aspects of the nirmāṇabuddha concept.
Dedicated to John Huntington and Susan Huntington
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<td>Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra</td>
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<td>Avataṃsaka</td>
<td>Buddhāvataṃsaka-mahāvaipulya-sūtra</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chan Illness</td>
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<td>Druma</td>
<td>Druma-kinnara-rāja-paripṛcchā-sūtra</td>
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<td>Five Gates</td>
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<td>Kośa</td>
<td>Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam</td>
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<td>Śūraṅgama</td>
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Subject of Study

This dissertation examines images of a figure with small Buddhas, or occasionally bodhisattvas, depicted inside his halo/aura in Buddhist art. Specifically, I look at such representations found in the Gandhāra, Central Asian (Khotan, Kucha), and the central China areas (Map 1). My research shows that such depictions emerged in Gandhāra around the third and fourth centuries and developed into an important iconographic convention along the Southern Route of the Silk Road in the east part of Central Asia from the fourth to eighth centuries, primarily in the Khotan area. Such images also appear on the Northern Route, especially in Kucha from the fifth to the seventh centuries. They eventually reached China in the fourth century and thrived during the fifth and sixth centuries as a standard element of Buddha and bodhisattva images in general.

The representation of small Buddha or bodhisattva figures in the aura can be categorized into different types and sub-types. (Please see Table 1.) For example, the central figures can be either Buddhas (Table 1, no.4) or bodhisattvas (Table 1, no.5), who can be shown seated (Table 1, no.1) or standing (Table 1, no.2). The central figures are
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Table 1 Subjects of Study
always larger than the surrounding figures, and the surrounding figures are enclosed within the halo or aura of the central figure. The small figures in the aura in the early representations from Gandhāra and Central Asia are shown slanted, a visual convention that suggests the small figures are emanating or emerging from the larger figure, (Table 1, nos. 1 & 2), while the depictions from central China are generally shown in a leveled position (Table 1, nos. 4 & 5). On early images, they are in standing pose (Table 1, nos. 1& 2). The seated postures emerged at a later date (Table 1, nos. 3, 4 & 5). The above comprises the general configuration of the images in this study (Fig. 1.1). Throughout this study, I use the term “emanated Buddha” or “emanated bodhisattva” when referring to the small figures in the aura and “emanating Buddha” or “emanating bodhisattva” when speaking of the central figure.

Fig. 1.1 The Configuration of an Emanating Buddha with Emanated Buddhas.

Images with emanated Buddhas (or bodhisattva) in the aura may appear alone or may also appear as an element in a larger iconography in Buddhist art. For example, they can be a part of a larger composition as a secondary figure (Table 1, no.6 for top left and top right). In one extant example, the emanated figures are a variety of beings (Table 1, no.8). In two examples, the emanating Buddha is depicted with the cosmos and other figures
depicted inside his body (Table 1, no. 9). This is the renowned iconography referred to as the “cosmological Buddha” by Angela Howard for the “highest form” of Śākyamuni as the “lord of the phenomenal world.”

The term “cosmological Buddha” is problematic because it does not appear in Buddhist sūtras. The Buddhist term used in sūtras and inscriptions for this type of images, fajie 法界, or dharmadhātu, often translated as “realm of the Dharma,” is far better understood as “essence” or “fundamental quality” of the Dharma, or the “essence of the Buddhist teaching.” The complete expression appearing in inscriptions with this iconography is fajie renzhong xiang 法界人中像, “the image showing the dharmadhātu within an anthropomorphic body.”

To avoid confusion and creating a new concept, I will use the Buddhist term “dharmadhātu Buddha” when referring to the so-called “cosmological Buddha” figure. The last unique image involving emanated Buddhas is a Buddha figure that reveals the different realms of rebirth in his aura (Table 1, no. 10).

As I will show, the different types of representations usually have regional and chronological significance. The characteristics of each region and the main trends in the representation of the emanated Buddhas through typological analysis are unfolded in Chapter 2. This is followed by a discussion of the history and significance of the concept of one Buddha emanating other Buddhas in Chapter 3. The special iconographies

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2 Japanese and Chinese scholars translated this English word “cosmological Buddha” into yuzhou fo (宇宙佛) or yuzhou zhu (宇宙主). Yet nowhere in the sūtras can we find the terms “宇宙佛/宇宙主.”

3 The inscription of (Lushena) fajie renzhong xiang (盧舍那法界人中像, “image of Vairocana) [containing] dharmadhātu in his body,” or various abbreviations of the phrase appeared in China during the fifth-sixth centuries. For a study of these inscriptions and images, see Yoshimura Rei, “Roshana Hōkai Ninchūzo no kenkyū,” *Bijutsu kenkyū* no.203 (1959): 125-139. The term “dharmadhātu” is also used in Buddhist texts, especially in the Avataṃsaka sūtra, such as “佛身充滿諸法界” (the body of the Buddha suffuses the dharmadhātu) (Taishō 9:278.408).
exemplify the possible identities of the emanating Buddhas and meanings of these images. Iconographic studies of these specific images from each area are contained in Chapters 4 to 7. Detailed information about these images in Khotan and Kucha is made available in appendices.  

In previous scholarship, discussions of the visual materials examined in this study have generally clustered the imagery with other subject matter, such as the Great Miracle of Śrāvastī. Therefore, it is important to distinguish the subject under consideration from other distinct, but iconographically similar, topics. In Buddhist art, especially in Indian Buddhist art, there are a number of other types of iconographies in which multiple Buddha figures are represented surrounding a central Buddha image. These include 1) the Great Miracle at Śrāvastī, 2) one or two small Buddha figures on the upper part of a central figure, 3) the stele of the eight or four life events of the Buddha, such as those of the Pāla period (eighth-twelfth centuries), 4) the depiction of the jina (victor) Buddhas above a figure in Tantric Buddhist art, and 5) the thousand-Buddha motif. As I will clarify below, in these cases, the subsidiary figures are not integrated elements of the aura of the major image. Therefore, they are not included in this study.

A painting of the Great Miracle in Ajanṭā Cave 6 represents the first type. The multiple Buddha images are shown all on lotus flowers growing from the same stalk (Fig. 1.2). As noted, these Buddhas are not enclosed in the central figure’s aura. This type of representation of the Great Miracle closely resembles the textual description of the corresponding story. In order to confront the challenge of the heretics, Śākyamuni

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4 For the Gandhāra area, all images are in chapter 2. For the central China area, the extant images are too extensive to be covered within one appendix. Therefore, in this study, the appendices only discuss the Khotan and Kucha areas.

performed a series of miracles at Śrāvastī, including the instantaneous growth of a mango tree, the simultaneous emission of fire and water from his body (the “twin miracle,” *yamaka-pāññhāriya*), and multiplying of himself into numerous bodies (the “Great Miracle”), seen in Figure 1.2.

Sculptures from Aurangabad Cave 7 dated to the fifth or the sixth centuries, are an example of the second type, where one or two small Buddhas are placed on the two upper corners of the main image, as part of the whole composition (Fig. 1.3). Such depictions appear in quite a number of images at the cave sites in the Mahārāṣṭra area of this period. In this type of depiction, the small Buddha figures are not inside the aura of the main image. In addition, the relationship of the small Buddha figures to the central image is not clear, and it is unknown whether the central figure emanates the others.

The third and fourth types are assemblies of images on the same stele, organized by theme. This composition came to be popular in eastern India during the Pāla period. Fig. 1.4 shows the eight major events of the Buddha. Fig. 1.5 is a stele showing the five *jina* Buddhas depicted on top of Avalokiteśvara. In these two cases, the small Buddha images are not emanated from the central figure.

The thousand-Buddhas are a very enduring subject in Chinese Buddhist art. They are usually shown lined up in large quantity and nearly identical. Very often they serve as the secondary motif surrounding the large main images, and their formats and meanings have changed over time. For example, Dunhuang Cave 263 is covered by two layers of this motif (Fig. 1.6). The reddish painting was from the Northern Wei (386-534 C.E.), and the

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greenish was from the Xixia Dynasty (1035-1227 C.E.). A large sculpture of a seated Buddha and a painting of defeating Māra were placed in the middle of the thousand-Buddhas. At Dunhuang of the fifth and sixth centuries, the thousand-Buddhas are generally specified with names of the Buddhas of the past ākāla (eon) and the future ākāla in the cartouche. In this case, the thousand-Buddhas are independent from the central images. Overall, the thousand-Buddhas motif is a distinct and complicated subject but one that is beyond the scope of this study.

1.2 Importance

As noted, the depiction of small Buddhas in the aura is a commonly seen convention of Buddha or even bodhisattva images in Chinese Buddhist art. However, the history of its formation has not been thoroughly studied. In the previous studies, its meaning is often poorly, or not at all, understood. Central to my research is examining these works within the context of Buddhist theory, specifically the idea that a Buddha or bodhisattva can emit other Buddhas or bodhisattvas. This seemingly simple notion is central to Buddhist thought about the nature of enlightened beings. These images are also a demonstration how an iconographic convention and the ideas associated with it can be transmitted across cultures and achieve new lives in other lands. Therefore, an examination of this element in Buddhist art can lead to a greater clarity of fundamental Buddhist concepts, iconographies in art, and issues of transmissions across different cultures.

1.3 Previous Identifications and Problems

Regarding the identities and meanings of the images with emanated Buddha images in the aura, in the past, there has been no consensus among scholars regarding their meaning. In addition, the development of these images from Gandhāra to China has not been fully articulated. Overall, the studies of these images were very scattered. Images with emanated Buddhas have often been discussed under other topics: the Great Miracle, dharmadhātu Buddha, or the aura of Buddhist images. The principal arguments for these images are discussed briefly below, and a more detailed account of this historiography is presented when I address the specific iconographies.

I. Śākyamuni performing the Great Miracle at Śrāvastī

The image of a Buddha emanating other Buddhas appears on a number of Gandhāran sculptures (Table 1, no.1). In the beginning of the twentieth century, Alfred Foucher in his L’Art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhâra first referred to this iconography as “representations of the ‘Great Miracle (mahāprātiḥārya)’ of Śrāvastī,’ in which the central Buddha seated on a lotus miraculously created in the middle of the assembly of divine figures, radiates magical Buddhas.”

8 Foucher’s position has been widely accepted.9 A few of the well-known images from Khotan and Kucha are often included in this identification.

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However, as Ju-hyung Rhi pointed out, the known Gandhāra images with emanated Buddhas are divorced from narrative context. In addition, the emanating figures can be bodhisattvas, precluding a possible iconographic identification of the “Great Miracle” (Table 1, no.8). In fact, the Gandhāra, Kucha and Khotan images of the Buddha’s emanation that are the focus of this study have no clear attribute that exclusively relates them to the narrative of the Great Miracle.

II. Vairocana Buddha emanating Buddhas of the ten-directions and the three-times

In his study of the dharmadhātu Buddha images, Yoshimura Rei proposed that images with emanated Buddhas, such as those from Kucha, are a type of the dharmadhātu Buddha. Using textual evidence found in the Buddhāvataṃsaka-mahāvaipulya-sūtra (hereafter, the Avataṃsaka), Yoshimura Rei proposed that the emanating Buddha is Vairocana and that the emanated Buddhas are the Buddhas from the ten-directions of the three-times.

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10 Ju-hyung Rhi re-examined the iconographies of the Great Miracle at Śrāvasti at Gandhāra in his dissertation in 1991. Rhi related these images to the ubiquity of the description that the Buddha radiates splendid light from his body, and at the end of each ray of light there is a Buddha image in Mahāyāna accounts. However he still referred to the emanated Buddhas as “images of multiplication.” He translated the term haufo (nirmāṇabhuddha) as “buddhanirmāṇa” and “Buddha image.” My research suggests that, rather than simply being multiple images of the central figure, a more subtle and contextual meaning identifies that these figures relate to the important Buddhological topic of a Buddha’s radiant light. Ju-hyung Rhi, “Gandhāran Images of the “Śrāvasti miracle:” An Iconographic Reassessment” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1991), 91-100.
It is true that in the teachings from the *Avatamsaka*, Vairocana Buddha, Intensely Luminescent, is referred to as the embodiment of the Dharma, the source of all Buddhas. Any Buddha and every Buddha, including those so named or implied by the iconographic program, is Vairocana. However, my study suggests that important layers of understanding can be gleaned from acknowledging and examining the specific iconographically depicted identities of the Buddha and bodhisattva figures in any given image. In other words, while the examples referred to by Yoshimura are accurately understood as Vairocana in their essence, they are not necessarily literal depictions of Vairocana. As noted, some of the emanating figures are even bodhisattvas, and therefore not Vairocana (Table 1, nos. 5, 8).

III. Śākyamuni performing his meditation power

Besides doctrinal texts, Buddhist meditation texts for visualization practice have been very valuable corroborating sources in the study of images of the emanating and emanated Buddhas. As already noted by Alexander Soper in the 1940s, the *Ocean Sūtra* is filled with scenes of the miraculous display of the Buddha multiplying his body in the emanation of rays. Miyaji Akira matched images containing emanated Buddhas in the aura from Gandhāra, Central Asia (such as Table 1, nos. 1, 2, 9), and Yungang Cave 18, (where the small Buddhas are on the robe of the main Buddha figure and not in the aura) with the descriptions in the *Ocean Sūtra*. Miyaji believed that these images represented a transcendent Śākyamuni emanating light and *nimāṇabuddhas* via meditation. However,

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in other Buddhist meditation texts, as I will discuss later, other Buddhas and bodhisattvas can also emit rays which transform into Buddhas.

From a different perspective and based on a different text, Dieter Schlingloff also drew a link between Buddhist meditation and the images with emanated Buddhas in the aura from Gandhāra and Kucha (such as Table 1, nos. 1, 2, 9, 10). He relied on the *Buddhistisches Yogalehrbuch* (hereafter, the *Kizil Yoga Manual*), a Brāhmī manuscript on meditation dating from the seventh century and excavated at a Kizil cave. This text is filled with visions for visualization. According to this manuscript, in the state of meditation the practitioner constantly generates symbolic objects and figures from various parts of his body until the whole cosmos is filled. Self-multiplication and multiple Buddhas are among these visions. Therefore, Schlingloff proposed that the iconographies in question were visual representations of the Buddha’s meditative powers.\(^\text{13}\) In contrast to Miyaji, however, Schlingloff rejected any connection with Mahāyāna Buddhism in his interpretation. However, in the description from the *Kizil Yoga Manual*, generating other Buddhas is not related to emitting rays from the body. The visions in the *Kizil Yoga Manual* do not resemble the images under discussion as close as those in the *Ocean Sūtra*.

### IV. Identifications of the emanated Buddhas

The small Buddhas in the halo and aura are usually shown in specific numbers. (I will discuss this in Chapter 2.) These numbers seem to embody a specific meaning, therefore inviting speculation for identification. In Gandhāran Buddhist art, they most frequently appear in groups of eight (Table 2 in Chapter 2), although six figures also occur (Table 1, 13).

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Harald Ingholt speculated that they are “the seven human Buddhas of our age plus the Buddha of the future, Maitreya.” At Kucha, the small emanated Buddhas in the head halo of the Buddha also sometimes appear in groups of eight (Table 1, no.9). Howard also suggested that the Kucha images are the seven Buddhas of the past and Maitreya. In the representations from Kucha, besides in the halo, emanated Buddhas are also depicted in the body aura. Howard did not address the emanated Buddhas in the aura.

Neither of them provided any proof for the identification. Both Ingholt and Howard believed that the emanating Buddha image represents Śākyamuni. So far, no scholar has found a textual reference of Śākyamuni emanating the seven human Buddhas and Maitreya. Indeed, Śākyamuni, himself, is one of the seven historical Buddhas. The seven Buddhas of the past is an enduring subject in Buddhist art, and the figures do often appear with Maitreya, who is typically shown as a bodhisattva rather than a Buddha in such groupings.

In Chinese Buddhist art, there are often seven small Buddhas in the halo (Fig. 1.7). Frequently, scholars identify them as the seven Buddhas of the past or the seven medicine Buddhas. Other numbers of figures, especially three and five, are common in China as well (Table 1, nos.4, 5). Henmi Baiei proposed that three figures represent the Buddhas

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16 Ingholt and Howard have opposite readings regarding the overall theme of this type of images. In general, Ingholt followed Foucher—identifying the images as the Great Miracle at Śrāvastī—whereas Howard proposed a Mahāyāna theme.

of the past, present and future, while five figures stand for the Buddhas of the five directions.\textsuperscript{18}

In these studies, none of the identifications was supported by solid textual evidence. Therefore, one should consider them as tentative proposals that may or may not correspond to the originally intended meanings for the images. In Chapter 3, I will discuss the relationship between the emanated Buddhas and the Buddhas of the ten directions and three times; and in Chapter 7, I will discuss the issue about the specific numbers of emanated Buddhas are.

\textbf{V. Pratyekabuddhas}

In a recent study, Marianne Yaldiz identified the images of a Buddha emanating other small Buddhas in the aura in Kizil Cave 123 (Fig. 6.13-6.15) as Pratyekabuddhas.\textsuperscript{19} The Pratyekabuddhas are those who have achieved enlightenment without a teacher. They are isolated and act for their own sake. Owing to their merit and knowledge, and particularly the fact that they have attained enlightenment without a teacher, Pratyekabuddhas are considered greater than the Śrāvakas (the disciples of the Buddha). Yet, since they lack compassion for other beings and universal knowledge, they are considered to be inferior to Buddhas.\textsuperscript{20} As described in texts such as the \textit{Dīghanikāya}, the \textit{Mahāvastu}, and the \textit{Avadāna-śataka}, Pratyekabuddhas also possess the supernatural powers such as

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18}Henmi Baiei 逸見梅栄, \textit{Butsu no keishiki} 仏像の形式 (Tōkyō: Azuma Shuppan,1970), 316-317.
\end{itemize}
multiplying themselves. Through this textual support, Yaldiz attempted to show that Buddha images emanating other Buddhas in Kizil 123 are Pratyekabuddhas.\textsuperscript{21}

Yaldiz’s theory was soon dismissed by Adalbert J. Gail.\textsuperscript{22} None of the attributes numerated by Yaldiz are exclusive to Pratyekabuddhas to prove why these images are not simply Buddhas. As Gombrich pointed out, the Pratyekabuddha is usually mentioned in Buddhist texts only as a category in contrast to the fully enlightened Buddha and Śrāvaka. The Pratyekabuddha hardly has any significance outside of this context.\textsuperscript{23} In addition, Pratyekabuddhas are rarely depicted in Buddhist art.\textsuperscript{24} It is not surprising that the Pratyekabuddhas, who are not concerned with the suffering of others but their own spiritual quest, receive little attention from Buddhist devotees. Therefore, it is unlikely the emanating Buddhas images in question were Pratyekabuddhas.

The brief overview discussion above offers a sense of how controversial the iconography has been for scholars, even in the present day. Contradictory identifications include the Great Miracle, Vairocana generating Buddhas of the three times and ten directions, Śākyamuni manifesting his meditation power, Śākyamuni emitting seven Buddhas of the past and Maitreya, and the Pratyekabuddha performing supernatural power. Furthermore, as shown above, the previous studies often only acknowledge a few selective examples. This study proposes to look at these specific images in the overall picture of depictions of a Buddha or bodhisattva emanating other Buddhas and study the

\textsuperscript{21}Yaldiz, “One of Xinjiang’s Mysteries,” 250.


\textsuperscript{24}Grisworld published a small bronze image inscribed as Pratyekabuddha. This image is shown in the standard iconography of a Buddha. R. Kloppenburg, \textit{The Paccekabuddha: A Buddhist Ascetic} (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 27, no. 77.
iconography of individual images in light of the Buddhological meaning behind the textual descriptions of such phenomenon.

1.4 Issues

The main issues in this study are first, to determine the identities of the emanating Buddha and the emanated Buddhas, and second, to uncover the meanings behind such visual representations and related textual descriptions. Buddhist terminology for the emanated Buddhas, I suggest, can shed light on how the images are identified.

In Buddhist texts from the Chinese canon, the emanated Buddhas in the aura are known as *huafo* (化佛), or *nirmāṇabuddhas*. The term is usually translated as “transformation-Buddhas” or “emanated Buddhas.” It refers to transformed bodied of a Buddha. They can be the human Buddhas, as well as the multiple Buddhas in the cosmos worlds. The visual representation of small Buddhas in the aura corresponds to the textual descriptions of the physical features of the Buddha in a range of Mahāyāna, most evident in the *Guanfo sanmei hai jing* 觀佛三昧海經 *Sūtra on the Ocean like Samādhi of the Contemplation of the Buddha* (hereafter the *Ocean Sūtra*), and the *Guan Wuliangshoufo jing* 觀無量壽佛經 *Sūtra on the Contemplation on Amitāyus Buddha* (hereafter *Amitāyusdhīna-sūtra*).

becomes the essential quality of all the body marks (lakṣana) of the Buddha. For examples:

The Buddha told Ānanda, “The Tathāgata has thirty-two auspicious body marks and eighty minor marks, which all radiate golden light. And each ray of the light transforms into immeasurable nirmāṇabuddhas.”

In every lakṣanas (body marks of the Buddha), there are infinite nirmāṇabuddhas.

And the one fathom long halo, as one of the Buddha’s body marks, is also described of having nirmāṇabuddhas on lotus flowers inside. This feature of the Buddha’s body mark is directly related to Buddha images in the Ocean Sūtra. In this text, the Buddha gave Ānanda an instruction on image-making. In his instruction, Śākyamuni particularly mentioned to depict the nirmāṇabuddhas with the image:

The Buddha told Ānanda, “From now on, you spread the words of Tathāgata to all disciples. After the Buddha’s nirvāṇa, make fine Buddha images with complete representation of the lakṣanas, the immeasurable images of nirmāṇabuddhas, the whole body aura, and the life of the Buddha. Paint the āurṇā with the excellent color and inlaid with a lapis lazuli bead.”

The Amitāyusdhāna-sūtra is a visualization manual on Amitāyus Buddha. The translation of this sūtra was attributed to Kālayāsas in 424 C.E. Described in this text, the halo of Amitāyus Buddha also has nirmāṇabuddhas inside:

The halo of that Buddha [Amitāyus] is like a billion trichiliocosms (the three thousand and great thousand worlds). Inside the halo, there are billions and millions nayuta nirmāṇabuddhas, as the sands of the Ganges River. Each nirmāṇabuddha is also attended by numerable nirmāṇabodhisattvas.

26 佛告阿難。如來有三十二大人相八十種隨形好金色光明。一一光明無量化佛。” Taishō 15:643.687b.

27 “一一相中無量化佛。”Taishō 15:643.687b.


29 Taishō 15:643.675c.

30 The “nayuta” is a large number: 100,000, 1,000,000, or 10,000,000. William Edward Soothill, and Lewis Hodous, eds., A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd, 1937), 247b.
Not surprisingly, in the study of East Asia Buddhist art, Chinese and Japanese scholars follow the textual tradition and refer to the emanated Buddhas in the aura as *huafo*, or the *nirmāṇabuddha*. However, in the study of the images from Gandhāra and Central Asia western language scholars, in particular, generally do not use the term *nirmāṇabuddha*. Since the concept of the Buddha’s emanated bodies changed over the time, and we do not know for certain how the local Buddhist community may have referred to them, I reserve using the term “*nirmāṇabuddha*” for the Chinese section of this study, as well as related textual discussion, and use a more descriptive term “emanated Buddha” for the images from other areas.

The notion that a Buddha can multiply himself, however, has a long history in Buddhism. In the early *Nikāyas*, this ability was understood as a supernatural power that came with accomplished meditation. The Great Miracle at Śrāvastī is a specific performance of such power that occurred in a given place and at a given time. This miraculous phenomenon is brought to another level in Mahāyāna scriptures. Mahāyāna texts note that a Buddha can emit light from a body mark or all the pores of his body to the entire cosmos in the ten directions, and at the end of each ray there is a *nirmāṇabuddha*. The texts are very specific in noting that this emanation takes place in the context of rays of light (*prabha*) radiated from the body of the Buddha, suggesting that the emanated Buddhas can be best understood as luminous projections. Such

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32 *Sāmaññaphalasutta*, *Dīghanikāya*, i, 87.
Buddhas are intended as fully realized manifestations of the essence of the Dharma and conceptually could in turn radiate other Buddhas, and so on, ad infinitum.

I will discuss the meaning and significance of this concept in detail in Chapter 3. In order to fully understand the essence of Buddha images, there are a series of concepts need to be clarified in the beginning: the Dharma, the dharmakāya, and Vairocana.

Dharma, often defined as the “Law” in early Buddhist writing, is now primarily left to stand alone as a word adopted into English from Sanskrit. However, in order to understand its implications in this dissertation, I wish to discuss it more thoroughly. According to John Huntington, the Buddhist Dharma must be defined as a series of instructions and behaviors that are promulgated by teachers seeking to guide others to attainment. In this sense they may be considered a “behavioral methodology.” This is in keeping with the general use of dharma in Sanskrit, as a descriptor of a pattern of actions, e.g., that of a teacher, or those of a student. When referring to the Buddhist Dharma, I am discussing the teachings, and the methodologies of the teachings, especially those that lead to Buddhological advancement.33

Dharmakāya, literally the “body of the teachings,” is, by most definitions,34 without any physical corporeality. In the teachings from the Avataṃsaka sūtra, Buddha Vairocana, (“Intensely Luminescent”), is the traditional embodiment of the Dharma, and ultimate teacher of the dharma. Thus, in essence, any Buddha and every Buddha, is Vairocana (the teacher), as is any other Buddha so named or implied by the iconographic program. The Vairocana concept humanizes and reifies that teachings can generate

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33 John Huntington’s teaching note.

34 The teaching methodologies in which the dharmakāya can be physically manifest, do not come into the areas of concern of this dissertation.
Buddhas. Vairocana, embodied though he may be in hundreds of identified images, is also inherently the manifestation of the Dharmic behaviors that produce any and all Buddhas.

Much of the discussion of emanating Buddha has centered on whether the Buddha radiating is Vairocana or Śākyamuni. At a conceptual level, in fully developed Mahāyāna Buddhism, Śākyamuni is not seen as different than the Buddha of Vairocana at Akaniṣṭhāḥ. For example, in the Da fangbian fo bao’en jing 大方便佛報恩經, Vairocana is said to be a manifestation of Śākyamuni. In the Avatāṃsaka-sūtra, Śākyamuni ascended to Akaniṣṭhāḥ in his radiant Vairocana robes to preach the Avatāṃsaka-sūtra just after his enlightenment. No literary evidence has come to light to demonstrate the existence of this exact concept prior to the sixth century. John Huntington proposed that the depiction of a Buddha on a Sumeru platform might be the visual evidence of this idea. The earliest example is a stone sculpture from Mathura, India, showing Śākyamuni on top of Mt. Sumeru receiving offerings from the four Heavenly Kings (Fig. 1.8). The Sumeru platform is commonly seen in Chinese Buddhist art of the fifth century.

1.5 Methodologies

There are four aspects in my methodological concerns regarding how to analyze the visual forms, how to relate the image-making and the textual tradition, how to approach

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35 Taishō 3:156.127bc.


cross culture issues and limitations of my study. My methodology includes, first, establishing a typology of the images with emanated Buddhas in the aura and reconstructing the chain of their development. In the past, the studies were focused on a few well known examples. Further, the links between the Chinese representations to those from the Central Asia have not been clarified previously.

Secondly, I examine the images in question in the context of the Buddhist theory and history. Since the related textual references are immense and the meaning behind the notion of the *nirmāṇabuddha* changed over time, I raise the concerns below about relating images with Buddhist texts from three perspectives:

First, I have sought to be cautious about the original physical and ideological contexts of the images. In a recent paper, Foulk criticized art historians for turning to “textual sources, especially Buddhist *sūtras* and commentaries that circulated in Chinese, in an effort to shed light on the significance that the deities and personages portrayed had within the normative tradition” of Buddhism regardless of the native setting of a given image.\(^{38}\) He argued that the meaning of a particular image is intimately bound to its location and function.\(^ {39}\) Stanley Abe also called “greater attention to whether the text-its subject matter, author, and audience-corresponds with the backgrounds and interests of those who had the image made.”\(^ {40}\) Only texts shown to be co-existent with the site of the images in terms of time and place may have had currency when the images were produced and used. For these reasons, I consider the date and provenance of Buddhist

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39 Foulk, “Religious Functions of Buddhist Art in China,” 27.

texts, as well as the location of the images. Attention to local Buddhist practice traditions, as far as they are known, is also considered in establishing a context for examining the images.

Second, even when the texts and images can be tied to the same time period and location, issues of how to relate the meaning in the text and the meaning of a particular image still arise. In the past decades, scholars have emphasized the learned and philosophical basis of Buddhist image-making practices. With this perspective, theological concepts contained in texts are conceived to have been the foundation for the making of images. Buddhist works are of a “didactic nature.” They served as visible embodiment of the beings described in the sacred scriptures, and ultimately forms of these beings are based on religious visions coming from higher truth. The craftsmen typically were provided with precise theological framework and iconographical guidelines based on sacred scriptures, such as iconometric handbooks and ritual texts. This approach to image-making is still prevalent to the present day. Much of this scholarship relates to the propensity of modern scholars to correct the earlier viewpoint that images represented a “degenerate practice proscribed by the canon” or “a rueful


43 Seckel, Buddhist Art of East Asia, 186-188.


display of ‘folk piety.’”  

However, more recently, some scholars suggest the disjunction between the image cult and the sphere of metaphysical theories in the commentary tradition or scriptural authority. Foulk pointed out that there is “no guarantee that the people who produced and used a particular image were informed and motivated by, or even cognizant of, the literature and lore consulted by the modern scholar.” Abe argued that image making was “primarily a votive act” that “does not appear to have required textual justification or ecclesiastical sanction.” It is also possible that “many of the textual references to Buddhist imagery –from canonical sutras, biographies of monk or nuns, or dynastic histories –were preserved and disseminated by literate, elite-class Buddhists as a response to widespread image-making practice.”

All of these compelling opinions tell some truth about Buddhist images. In the argument of how to relate the textual tradition and image making, I will explain the position of this study. About the “image,” I see two defining aspects for image-making 1.) engendering a new iconography and 2.) mass-producing images by following a pre-shaped iconography. The former cannot come from nothing. Fortunately, sometimes explanations can be found in textual and epigraphic sources. In the production of individual images, the patron and image-maker may have been detached from the philosophical discourse in Buddhism. For example, they did not have to read the monumental Avataṃsaka-sūtra or comprehend the sophisticated Buddha-body theories to make an image of Vairocana. Once iconographic elements have been established, they


47 Foulk, “Religious Functions of Buddhist Art in China,” 27.

often become rules to follow and even become part of a convention of what an image of a
given subject should normally look like. Therefore, I have concerned myself with the
significance of the emergence of the representations of the small Buddhas in an area.
However, I do not assume that devotees were always aware of this detail on the image,
particularly once the image-making became a large-scale production.

Likewise, “texts” are treated according to their specific types and functions. In this
study, I will try to distinguish meditation/ritual manuals, canonical text, and Buddhist
treatises, because they relate to images at different levels. Descriptions in
meditation/ritual manuals, for example, are usually more directly linked to iconography.
Narratives in sūtras can sometimes also be very effective in determining iconographies,
such as the encounter of Śākyamuni and Prabhūtaratna in the Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra
(hereafter the Lotus Sūtra). However, it is often the theoretical discussions in sūtras and
commentaries, which, even though they are not normally the subject of images, expound
or fabricate the symbolic meanings in the imagery. These meanings may have been an
important factor in making certain descriptions in the text more significant than others
and contribute to the prevalence of certain images in Buddhist art. Passages pertaining to
nirmāṇabuddhas appear in Buddhist texts of all the three categories. My study first
considers meditation texts. The notion of the nirmāṇabuddha (not the supernatural power
of body multiplication) was absent in early Buddhism. Why, then, did it “suddenly”
become important? To explore the meanings embodied in this concept, I discuss the
theoretical aspects of it. However, I will not apply these theoretical aspects to individual
images.
Third, art historians, in many cases, interpret a Buddhist image by finding a similar description in a Buddhist text, sometimes in a manner as if the images were intended to represent the text. For some iconographies in Chinese Buddhist art, this method may not be incorrect. However, descriptions of a Buddha emanating other Buddhas are commonly found in a wide variety of texts. Making a one-to-one match between the images in question and the numerous textual references does not work well in this case. Previous scholars have found that the richest descriptions of the Buddha emanating rays and nirmāṇabuddhas appear in meditation texts on how to visualize the Buddha. How, then, should one use meditation texts for the study of the images of emanated Buddhas in the aura? I suggest that images and textual description can be described as parallel expressions of theoretical and practice-based cultural undercurrents. The descriptions of the Buddha in meditation and canon texts reflect how Buddhists perceived the qualities of the Buddha in that specific time and place, as well as possibly within a certain Buddhist tradition. Likewise, images also express the perceptions of the qualities of the Buddha in a given time and place. Both the text and image, then, are the external formalization of an intricate, ever-changing history of Buddhist ideology and practice.

The third of my methodological concerns, in the past, culture transmission was often simply described as “influence.” Not all Buddhist concepts and iconographies in India were well accepted in other areas. I would like to propose that the concept and image of the one Buddha emanating other Buddhas thrived because they stimulated resonance from the indigenous belief systems with which they came into contact. Therefore,

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49 A detailed list and study of these texts are in Chapter 3.
whenever possible, I investigate how the idea of a Buddha emanating other Buddhas was perceived in different regions.

Finally, surviving materials are fragmentary and documents are limited. As I will discuss in the following chapters, most of the images with small figures in the aura do not allow for a specific identification to be made. In addition, my understanding of them is certainly not a complete one. Therefore, instead of making futile assertions, I will attempt to present the works in a manner that allows for less rather than more certainty, in order to invite further study.

50 Stanley Abe emphasized this nature of Buddhist art in his _Ordinary Images_ (Chicago: University Press, 2001), 4.
1.6 Expected Contribution

First, although some of these images with emanated Buddhas are well known in the field, the whole development of this iconography is still largely unknown. Especially with images from Kizil and Khotan, this dissertation, for the first time, gathers and ties these scattered materials together. Second, the Buddha’s transformation body has been a very important yet intricate concept, whose definition has changed over time and throughout textual sources. Hopefully, this study provides a deeper understanding of the Buddha’s transformation body. Third, both images and texts are valid documents of the past. The result of this study will also shed light on a complex facet of Buddhist practice in these areas. Fourth, in Buddhist art, the representations of emanated Buddhas in the aura appeared in some of the most stunning iconographies in Buddhist art, for example, the dharmadhātu Buddha. Thus, this research also makes contribution to a number of other important iconographies in Buddhist art. Fifth, since the depiction of the emanated Buddha figures in the aura was transmitted across cultures, I hope that this study will also benefit our understanding of cross-culture transmission issues.
Fig. 1.2 Great Miracle at Śrāvastī. Ajanṭā Cave 6, Mahārāṣṭra, India. Fifth century. Drawing of wall painting.
After Dieter Schlingloff, Guide to the Ajanta Paintings, vol.1, 21, no.90.
Fig. 1.3 Buddha. Aurangabad Cave 7, Mahārāṣṭra, India. Fifth and sixth centuries. Stone. Photographed by John Huntington, courtesy of the Huntington Archive, no. 0007351.
Fig. 1.4 *Eight Events the Buddha’s Life*. Bihār, India.
Photographed by John Huntington, courtesy of the Huntington Archive, no. 0055982
Fig. 1.5 Śaḍakṣarī Avalokiteśvara. Bihār, India.
Photographed by John Huntington, courtesy of the Huntington Archive no. 0001969
Fig. 1.6 Two layers of the Thousand-Buddhas Motif.
Southern Wall, Dunhuang Cave 263, Gansu, China.
N. Wei (386-534 C.E.) and Xixia Dynasties (1035-1227 C.E.). Wall painting.
After Zhongguo shiku—Dunhuang Mogaoku I, fig.51.
Fig. 1.8 Śākyamuni Being Offered the Four Bowls by the Four Heavenly Kings. Detail of a railing pillar, Mathurā, India. Ca. first century C.E. Stone. Government Museum, Mathurā. Photographed by John Huntington, courtesy of the Huntington Archive.
PART I

IMAGES AND TYPOLOGY
Map 2 *Buddhist Sites in Gandhāra Area.*
Drawing by John C. Huntington
Map 3 *Buddhist Sites in Khotan Area.*
Author’s drawing.
Map 4 *Buddhist Cave Sites at Kucha.*
Author’s drawing.
CHAPTER 2

THE DEVELOPMENT OF IMAGES WITH EMANATED BUDDHAS IN THE AURA

This chapter analyzes images with emanated figures in the aura from Gandhāra, Khotan, Kucha and central China respectively. The goal is to define the characteristics of these images in each area, classify the different types of representation, and sum up the major trends in the development of this motif. From extant images in Buddhist art, the formation of this iconographic convention of depicting emanated Buddhas in the aura most likely started in Gandhāra, then thrived in the east of Central Asia, especially along the Southern Route in ancient Khotan. Finally, it was widespread in central China. The detailed information about the images from Khotan and Kucha, as well as the caves, temples and sites in which these images are located is provided in the appendices.

2.1 Early Examples from Gandhāra

The earliest known examples of emanated figures in the aura are found Gandhāra of the late Kuśāṇa Dynasty (first-third centuries). These images provide invaluable information for understanding the origin and meaning of this iconographic convention. In this section, after a brief background about Gandhāra, I introduce the general information
about these images regarding their original context, and then discuss the characteristics of Gandhāra type of depiction of the images with the emanated figures.

**Background**

The term Gandhāra is an ancient and somewhat historical name of the tract of country located at the Peshāwar Valley, with Swāt, Buner and Bajaur also sometime included in the northwest area of what is now Pakistan (Map 2). The term has also been used to designate a much wider territory including adjunct areas. The area was part of the Achaemenian Empire in the time of Cyrus of the Great (558-528 B.C.E.). It remained under Persian domination until Alexander the Great arrived in 327-326 B.C.E. In 305 B.C.E., Alexander’s successor, Seleucus, ceded it to the Indian King Chandragupta, the founder of the Maurya Dynasty. During the Maurya period, King Asoka (272-237 B.C.E.) converted to Buddhism, and in his reign Buddhism arrived at the Gandhāra region. Around 190 B.C.E., Greeks from neighboring kingdom of Bactria took over the area again. They fell before the attack of one of the many northern nomadic groups in 90 B.C.E., including Śākas and Parthians for about a century and half, followed by the Kuśāṇa (or Yuehji as called by the Chinese), who built the Kuśāṇa Dynasty (first-third centuries). Buddhism flourished in the region with the royal patronage from the Parthian and Kuśāṇa kings until Gandhāra reverted to Persia under Sasānids sovereignty. The region declined after 465 C.E. when the Ephthalites (or White Huns) swept over the country.¹

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The transmission of Buddhism and Buddhist art from its homeland in India to Central Asia and East Asia was filtered through the Gandhāra area. Occupied by peoples from non-Indic cultures, this area showed full originality in creating a different style and new iconographies in Buddhist art. Depicting emanated Buddhas around a central Buddha or bodhisattva image is one such example.

**General Information**

So far, I have found twenty-three sculptures with emanated figures from Gandhāra (see Table 2). According to Ju-hyung Rhi’s study, these images probably emerged around the late third to early fourth centuries. They are all stone sculptures, most of which are now detached from the original sites. None of them is inscribed. The study of their identification has been based on visual analysis.

The emanating figure can be either a Buddha or bodhisattva (Table 2, nos. 21-23). From their current condition, we can see that they can be part of a larger stele (Table 2, nos. 1-6) or large independent sculptures (Table 2, nos. 7-10). The rest of the surviving pieces are quite small and fragmentary (Table 2, nos. 11-14, 21-22). These small ones probably originally belonged to a larger composition.

There are two kinds of original context for the non-independent depictions. First, they are as a secondary motif in a unified scene of a preaching Buddha surrounded by bodhisattvas all of which reside on lotus flowers rising from a water pond (Table 2, nos. 1, 2). The image of a Buddha surrounded by emanated Buddhas is placed on the top corners of the stele. I will discuss this important iconography in Chapter 4.

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Second, images of a Buddha or bodhisattva emanating other Buddhas can be in an assembly of multiple images (Table 2, nos. 3-6). In this kind of composition, individual images are divided by architectural elements, like independent shrines.3 There is no indication whether these images are directly related in iconography. On the piece no.3 in Table II (Fig. 2.1), a Buddha (viewer’s left) and a bodhisattva (viewer’s right) image are shown in the top register. Both have small standing Buddha figures emanated on the two sides of their bodies. The location of these two figures at the top center of the overall stele suggests their importance, and their equal size and side by side position suggests an equal status between the emanating Buddha and emanating bodhisattva.

The height of the images of a figure emitting multiple Buddhas in all above large compositions (nos.1-6) ranges roughly from 10cm to 30cm. And the overall shape of these images is often round like a medallion (nos. 1-4, 6). This suggests that other small sized fragments of these images (between 10~30 cm), especially when they are in shape of a medallion (nos. 11-14, & 21-22), might have originally been part of a larger piece.4

It is important to note that, among the twenty-three images listed in the table, four emanating figures are bodhisattvas (nos. 3, 21- 23). Images nos. 3 and 22 show a bodhisattva emanating Buddhas. No. 23 is damaged. No.21, a unique piece in Buddhist

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3 The bottom part of these pieces is damaged. However, similar composition can be tested in other Gandhāran sculptures. For instance, Harald Ingholt, *Gandhāran Art in Pakistan* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1957), fig.257; Sir John Marshall, *The Buddhist Art of Gandhāra: The Story of the Early School Its Birth, Growth and Decline* (Cambridge: Department of Archaeology in Pakistan at the University, 1960), 88, pl. 87.

4 Based on the medallion shape, Spooner suggested that it was originally attached to the turban of an Avalokiteśvara figure. Following him, some scholars identified these medallion shaped pieces as the headdress for Bodhisattva sculptures. However, in the extant Buddhist images, such headdress is unknown. D. B. Spooner, “Excavation at Takht-i-Bahi,” *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report 1907-08* (1911): 143-145; H. C Ackermann, *Narrative Stone Reliefs from Gandhāra in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London* (Rome: IsMEO, 1975), pl.65b; Rhi, “Gandhāran Images of the ‘Śrāvastī Miracle,'” 205-206.
art, shows a bodhisattva emanating a diversity of beings (Fig. 2.5). I will discuss this subject in detail in Chapter 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Images</th>
<th>Collection</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Provenance</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Lahore Museum no. 1135 (G 155)</td>
<td>115x94 cm</td>
<td>Mohammed Nari</td>
<td>Ingholt, fig. 255; Taddei, 351, fig.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Peshawar Museum</td>
<td>H.c. 50cm</td>
<td>Sahri-Bahlol mound D.</td>
<td>FCPF 5: 397/1225; Marshall, 1960, fig.151</td>
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</table>

*Continued on the next page*

**Table 2 Images with Emanated Figures from Gandhāra**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part of an Assembly of Images</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formerly Lahore Museum no.1137 now in Chandigarh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay no.19</td>
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<td>Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay no.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peshawar Museum no.858</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79x91 cm</td>
<td>29x28 cm</td>
<td>27x20 cm</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammed Nari</td>
<td>Takht-i-Bāhī</td>
<td>Takht-i-Bāhī</td>
<td>Takht-i-Bāhī</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taddei, 351, fig.4, Foucher, 1905: fig. 78.</td>
<td>Chakravarti, pl. IVa; Chandra, fig.40; FCPF 6:119-947.</td>
<td>Chandra, 1974, fig.39; FCPF 10: 1757</td>
<td>Spooner, 44a.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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Continued on the next page
Table 2—Continued

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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Origin &amp; Accession</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Formerly in Peshawar Museum, no.1734 Now in the National Museum, Karachi</td>
<td>83X54cm Sahri-bahlol mound C (east)</td>
<td>ASI Annual Report* 1911-2, pl. 47, fig. 29; Bussagli, 188; Ingholt, pl. XX2; Kurita, pl.393.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Formerly Peshawar Museum no.835 Now in the Dept. of Archaeology, Peshawar University</td>
<td>Original H. c. 70 cm</td>
<td>Takht-i-Bāhī Spooner, pl. 44c, fig. 29; Ingholt, 38, pl. XXI2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Takht-i-Bāhī In situ</td>
<td>117x72 cm</td>
<td>Takht-i-Bāhī Ingholt, fig. 263.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Government museum, Madras no.95-38</td>
<td>43x34 cm Sahri Bahlol mound C</td>
<td>Taddei, 1969, 351, fig.2; FCPF* 5:310/113 8</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Image</th>
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<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Peshawar Museum no.1859</td>
<td>30x28 cm</td>
<td>Takht-i-Bahi</td>
<td>Kurita, fig.392; Tachikawa, 258, fig.13; Sehrai, fig.41; <em>FCPF</em> 6: 119/947; 9: 1675.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Peshawar Museum no.1296</td>
<td>H. c. 20 cm</td>
<td>Takht-i-Bahi</td>
<td>Kurita, fig.390; <em>FCPF</em> 3: 356.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>British Museum no.1949.7-18.38</td>
<td>25x24 cm</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>Zwalf, pl. 113.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Victoria &amp; Albert Museum I.S.4-1945</td>
<td>11x12.5 cm</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>Foucher, 1905, fig. 399; Ackerman, pl.65b.</td>
</tr>
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*Continued on the next page*
Table 2—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<th>Height</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Catalog Numbers</th>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Unpublished (incomplete)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>H. c. 56-60 cm orig. 70 cm</td>
<td>Sahri Bahlol mound C</td>
<td>FCPF 4: 286/1114</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Unpublished (incomplete) (part of a composition)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>52x43 cm Orig. 80 cm</td>
<td>Sahri-Bahlol mound C.</td>
<td>FCPF 5:322/1150; 329/1157; 6: 58/1432.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Unpublished (incomplete) (part of a composition)</td>
<td>Peshawar Museum no.1526</td>
<td>H.40 cm</td>
<td>Sahri-Bahlol mound D</td>
<td>FCPF 4:32/1231; 9:11628</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Unpublished (part of a composition)</td>
<td>Peshawar Museum no.861</td>
<td>H.24</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>FCPF 7: 1284</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Unpublished (Medallion shape)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>H. 12.5 cm</td>
<td>Sahri-Bahlol mound C</td>
<td>FCPF 5:326/1154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Unpublished Images</td>
<td>Peshawar Museum no.850</td>
<td>18.5x16 cm</td>
<td>Takht-i-Bahī</td>
<td>Taddei, 350, fig.1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Emanating Bodhisattva Images</td>
<td>Náprstek Museum 13 624 (Prague)</td>
<td>24.5x20cm</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Plaeschke, 45, fig. 11; Taddei, 352, fig.5.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>British Museum OA 1899.7-15.5</td>
<td>British Museum OA 1899.7-15.5 Purchased from General C.S. MacLean</td>
<td>46.4x36.9 cm</td>
<td>Takht-i-Bahī</td>
<td>Zwalf, fig. 116</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ASI Annual Report: Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report
*The unpublished examples are from FCPF: Frontier Circle Photo Files in the photo archive of Archaeological Survey of India in New Delhi (The author only saw descriptions).
The Characteristics of the Gandhāran Type of Depiction

First of all, the iconography of a figure emanating other figures from Gandhāra is strikingly consistent. The emanating figure is always shown seated in meditation on a lotus flower. On the pieces of which the top part is intact, there is a parasol above his head (Table 2, nos. 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 21, and 22). In image no.7 in the table, the parasol is held by two flying figures. Its meaning is uncertain. The attending figures (in nos. 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10) and devotee figures (in nos. 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, and 11) are much smaller than the emanating figure, the main Buddha in the composition. The attending figures are bodhisattva type of figures either standing on lotus (such as no. 8) or sitting (such as no.7). The devotee figures usually kneel on each corner in aṇjali mudrā, a veneration hand gesture (such as no. 11). All these portray a transcendent quality of a bhavana (imaginary, conceptual) Buddha. In Gandhāran Buddhist art, there were mainly two types of Buddha images, historical Buddha in a narrative and conceptual Buddha in a non narrative context. In the depiction of the conceptual Buddha, the main Buddha is frontal and residing on a lotus, the composition is symmetrical, and other figures are hierarchic in scale. Images of the emanated Buddhas from Gandhāra are all associated with the bhavana type of figures.

The emanated figures in the aura are all standing at a slanting angle in relation to the emanating figure. They are either three or four on each side, emitted generally from the knee to the shoulder of the emanating figure. They form a fan shape along the contour of

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5 David L. Snellgrove believes that there was a shift from emphasizing the historical Buddha to the conceptual Buddhas in Buddhism and Buddhist art. However, in Gandhāra, the former was never replaced by the latter. David L. Snellgrove, ed., The Image of The Buddha (Otowa/Paris: Kodansha International/ UNESCO, 1978), 83-109.
the aura from the central Buddha or bodhisattva. No. 9 in Table 2, an unfinished stele, shows traces of this design. The slanting manner is inherited in Central Asia.

Conclusions

In the formulization of depicting small Buddha figures in the aura, the Gandhāran images apparently represent the earliest extant examples of this iconographic convention. At this very early stage, this iconography already demonstrates a strong consistency. The emanating figure is always shown sitting in meditation on a lotus flower, and is a bhavana Buddha. Thus, the depiction of emanated figures emerged with the bhavana type of Buddhas. The emanated figures are enclosed in the aura, standing on a lotus, and always three to four on each side of the emanating figure. Some of the characteristics in their representation, such as the slanting angle of the emanated Buddhas, are followed in Central Asian Buddhist art. In the Gandhāran type of depictions, the emanated Buddhas are relatively large. The emphasis seems to be these emanated figures, not the aura.

Among these Gandhāra images, there are two special iconographies, a Buddha teaching on a lotus pond and a bodhisattva emanating a variety of beings. I will study them in Chapter 4.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standing Emanated Buddhas in the Aura</th>
<th>Dense Type</th>
<th>Loose Type</th>
<th>In the Aura</th>
<th>Seated Emanated Buddhas</th>
<th>In the Halo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rawak: Early Phase</strong>&lt;br&gt;(4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;-5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; c.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Rawak: Late Phase</strong>&lt;br&gt;(5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;-6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; c.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Rawak R13&lt;br&gt;Stein, 1907, fig. 64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4) Rawak R85,&lt;br&gt;Stein, 1907, II, pl. XVIIIc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Balawaste&lt;br&gt;Gropp, fig. 42.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5) Balawaste, Gropp, fig. 54.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6) Rawak, D17, Gropp, fig.101.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3 Various Types of the Emanated Images from Khotan**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aura Type</th>
<th>Rawak Style VI (5th-6th c.)</th>
<th>Dandän Oilik (6th-7th c.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crossing ankle &lt;br&gt;Pose &lt;br&gt;Lotus Type</td>
<td>1) Rawak D36 Gropp, fig.115</td>
<td>2) Rawak R19 Gropp, fig.104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodhisattva</td>
<td>3) Rawak D30 Gropp, fig.110.</td>
<td>4) Rawak R84 Stein, 1907, LXXXVII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padmāsana &lt;br&gt;Pose &lt;br&gt;Lotus Type</td>
<td>5) Rawak R84 Stein, 1907, LXXXVII</td>
<td>6) Rawak R2 Stein, 1907, LXXXVII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aura Type</td>
<td>7) Dandän Oilik, D.v Gropp, fig.148a</td>
<td>8) Dandän Oilik, D.v Gropp, fig.148b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9) Dandän Oilik, D.ii Stein, 1907, pl.LV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 Seated Emanated Figures from Khotan
2.2 Development in the Khotan Area

Various types of representation of the emanated figures in the aura developed at Buddhist sites along the Southern Route of the Silk Road, mainly in the Khotan area (but also including other centers, such as Niya). The format of the emanating figure, the emanated figures, and the aura or halo has gone through significant changes since the formation in Gandhāra. My study shows that Khotan images are an expansion from the Gandhāran style representations and are also closely connected to various Kuchaen and Chinese images of the same iconography that will be discussed later.

Background

Khotan was a major kingdom on the Southern Route of the Silk Road, now in Chinese Turkestan. Today, the name Khotan has been extended to include nearby sites (Map 3). Endere, a site in Niya, is also included in this study. The Southern Route is connected to Gandhāra and Kaśmīr in the further west via tracks cutting through the Kunlun and Karakoram Mountains, and to central China in the east through the Gansu corridor (Map 1). The history of Khotan is punctuated by its relationships with India and China. In the transmission and development of Buddhism and Buddhist art, it also played an important role.

The early history of the area is gleaned primarily from Chinese sources, manuscripts from archaeological excavations, and later Tibetan, Muslim, and Turkish writings. According to a legend from a Tibetan source, the Li-yul Annals, an exiled son of Aśoka from Taxila (in Gandhāra) established his kingdom in Khotan. Now, scholars believe

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that the inhabitants of Khotan (and other oasis kingdoms on the Southern Route) were Śakas, who came to the area before the second century B.C.E.⁷ China first extended its power to the area during the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.E.-220 C.E.). From the Han through the Tang dynasties (618-907 C.E.), with brief interregnums, Khotan basically appears to have been a supportive member of the Chinese alliance. Buddhism was introduced into Khotan around the first century B.C.E. It flourished from the first century CE until the Tibetan conquest in the ninth century, which was followed by an invasion by the Arabs around the eleventh century.⁸

**General Information**

The Khotan Buddhist sites are structural temples (in contrast to the caves at Kucha). Not only have they been severely damaged, but they were also buried in the desert for over a millennium. The extant fragments of images found in the expeditions in the beginning of the last century are scattered in museums all over the world. Therefore, the development of this iconography at Khotan is not entirely known to scholars. Only a few images have been extensively used in previous studies.

In the Khotan area, scholars have found that life-sized (and over life-sized) images of Buddhas and bodhisattvas standing on lotus flowers and the thousand-Buddhas are the major subjects on the walls of Buddhist monasteries.⁹ Extant Buddhist images from

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⁷ Harold Walter Bailey, *The Culture of the Sakas in Ancient Iranian Khotan, Columbia Lecture Series on Iranian Studies, No. 1* (New York: Caravan Books, 1982), 43. The origin of Khotan people reveals some significant aspects in their religious practices, which have not yet fully understood, e.g. the Zoroastrian elements in Khotan Buddhism and the Iranian elements in Buddhist art. Furthermore, a branch of these Śakas also migrated to Mathurā (an important center of Buddhist art from the first to the third centuries) in northwest India. Khotan Buddhist images bear some resemblance to the Mathurā style.


Khotan are mainly frescos and clay sculptures. The clay images of the emanated figures had often found fallen down from the original aura on the wall. Numerable fragments of such small clay Buddha images have been found from the Buddhist temple ruins in these areas. The quantity of these fragments indicates that depicting small Buddhas in the aura became more popular in the region than earlier in Gandhāra.

However, only very few examples contain some information about the original context: the formats of the aura or halo and the iconography about the emanating figure. They are the images from Rawak, Dandān Oilik, and Balawaste in the Khotan area, and Endere Fort in Niya. The detailed description of these images, and the discussion about the site and date is in Appendix A. In short, Rawak is an early site. Its early phase can be dated to the fourth and fifth centuries and its late phase to the fifth and sixth centuries. Dandān Oilik site is about the sixth and eighth centuries and Balawaste is roughly the same: the sixth and eighth centuries. Images from these sites show some sense of chronology in the development of different types of emanated figures. In terms of the subject, most of these images are not identifiable. Only one image from Balawaste has specific iconographic details that allow further study (Table 3, no.2). I will return this special iconography in Chapter 5.

The Characteristics of Different Types of Depictions from Khotan

From the extant images, we can see that both Buddhas and bodhisattva images can be adorned with emanated figures in the aura, but mainly the Buddhas. Contrasting with Gandhāra, most of the emanating figures in Khotan are shown standing. The emanated figures from Khotan are also shown a great diversity in their postures and compositions. Regarding the posture, they can be divided by standing images and seated images.
Different kinds of emanated figures further form different types of auras and haloes. The following section discusses them accordingly.

**Standing Emanated Buddhas**

The standing types of emanated Buddhas in the aura appeared only in Khotan from the early to the late phase (the fourth to the eighth centuries). They are shown with standing emanating Buddhas and in the aura (not halo) (Table 3, nos. 1-3). They can be further divided into two types: a dense type and a loose type.

The dense type is the earliest representations of the emanated figures in the aura from Khotan. They appear in the early phase (fourth-fifth centuries) at Rawak (Table 3, no.1). In this type of representation, the emanated Buddhas are shown tilted. They are so crowded that they overlap with each other. The same style also appears in the painting from Balawaste of a much later period (the seventh and eighth centuries). It seems that this type (in both sculpture and painting formats) had been used in Khotan from the fourth to the eighth centuries. However, at Rawak, it appears only in the early phase but not in the late phase, which suggests that this type of depiction might have been more popular in the early period. So far in Khotan, this dense type of representation is not found from other sites.

Nonetheless, images with this dense type of standing emanated Buddhas were known in the Buddhist world at least to the ninth century. In fact, it was such a stunning iconography that it became a *ruixiang*, “famous image,” circulated in China. It appears in a silk painting of an assembly of famous images found by Stein from the Dunhuang library cave (Fig. 2.2). The painting is datable to the mid-Tang (ninth century). The
second image on the second row closely resembles these Khotan images. It is an image of a standing Buddha. His drapery folds are very closely set, another characteristic of some of the Khotan images. He is adorned with a large necklace hanging on his chest, which indicates the bhavana nature of this Buddha. It is probably beyond a life event (the Great Miracle at Śrāvastī) of Śākyamuni. Interestingly, the second image from the left on the top row on this Dunhuang silk painting is also adorned the same style of aura. Since it is more damaged, it is less known to scholars. The central Buddha image is seated with two legs pending down. It indicates that this type of aura was adorned to seated images as well, although no extant images of such survived from Khotan. The assembly of a series of ruixiang became a popular subject for paintings at Dunhuang in the ninth and tenth centuries. Fig. 2.3 shows a row of such ruixiang images painted on the slop of the ceiling above the entrance in Dunhuang Cave 9 (Late Tang, 848-906 C.E.). The one in the middle is another example. This style of aura is not seen copied in China outside the assemblies of ruixiangs.

The loose type of standing Buddhas in the aura appeared later. One example is found from Dandan Oilik, the sixth to eighth centuries (Table 3, no.3). The small Buddhas in the aura are shown with complete body and not overlapping with each other. Since the original aura is severely damaged, we do not know whether these small Buddhas are titled or not. This might have been simplified from the early dense form. Small standing clay Buddha figures have also been found in other sites, such as Mailikawati, in the

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11 Mailikawati is a large Buddhist temple site of 8000 m², located 25 km south of Khotan. Chinese archaeologists excavated the site in 1979. Xinjiang Uigur zizhiqu wenwu shiye guanlijiu 新疆維吾爾自治區文物事業管理局 et al. eds., *Xinjiang wenwu guji daguan* 新疆文物古蹟大觀 (A Grand View of Xinjiang’s Cultural Relics and Historic Sites) (Urumqi: Xinjiang meishu shying chubanshe, 1999), 92.
samples collected by Harding from Khotan, and Khādalik (in the middle between Khotan and Niya). There must have been more images adorned with this type of aura in Khotan than we know today.

Seated Emanated Figures

There is more diversity of the seated emanated figures in Khotan. They appear with both aura and halo of the emanating figure. And there are also a range of variations of the postures of them.

1. Seated Emanated Figures in the Aura

The seated small Buddha figures in the aura appeared from the late phase of Rawak, the fifth and sixth centuries (Table 3, no.4). These small Buddha images are tilted. As an important new feature, the miniature Buddha images are confined within a concentric band, or annular shaped frame. I name this configuration, the annular type. Using annular band became popular for images from Kucha and central China. At Khotan, this style of representation also appears in a standing Buddha image at Dandān Oilik, and Endere Fort (Niya).

At Khotan, this type appear in late period as well, such as a seated bodhisattva from Balawaste (Table 3, no.5). It demonstrates that this type was continuously used in the area and applicable to both standing and seated images. In the fragment of painting from Balawaste, the small Buddha images are not confined within a band.


14 Gerd Gropp, *Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch* (Bremen: Verlag Friedrich Röver, 1974), 104, fig. 38. For description of the image from Endere, see Appendix A.
This annular type of depiction with seated nirmānabuddhas inside also appears on one of the famous images in the silk painting from Dunhuang mentioned above. The second image on the left in the second row, a bodhisattva or a bejeweled Buddha, is adorned with a large aura with two rows of seated Buddha images inside (Fig. 2.2).

2. Seated Emanated Figures in the Halo

A number of standing images in the late phase of Rawak (fifth-sixth centuries) are adorned with a new type of halo (Table 3, no. 6). When a figure is adorned with this type of halo, he has no body aura. The halo consists of a round circle of swirling patterns with a pointed flaming motif at the top. The small seated Buddha figures, almost always five are evenly spaced out in the background patterns. For convenience, I name this the “scattered type halo.” In the scattered type halo, the small images in the halo are all leveled not titled.

The halo type of representation is absent in other sites in Khotan. However, it is unclear whether it is due to the short life-span of the motif, or that the upper part of the images, in general, did not survive. Both the aura and halo forms appear equally applicable to Buddha and bodhisattva images.

3. Variations of the Seated Emanated Figures

The seated emanated figures can be first divided into two groups: in the crossing-ankles pose and double-cross pose (padmāsana). The former is relatively earlier than the latter. Within each group, there are also four variations regarding the lotus seat and mudrā. These variations within a group seem to have no chronological significance.

The type of emanated figures seated with crossing-ankles has so far not been found in Gandhāra, Kucha, or Central China. These unique Khotan depictions first appeared in the
late phase of Rawak (the fifth-sixth centuries). They are all shown sitting on lotus flowers. Some of the lotus flowers are shown in profile beneath the Buddha (Table 4, nos.1, 2), while others are shown in a frontal view holding the Buddha like a medallion (Table 4, no. 3, 4). In the former, the small Buddha is enclosed in his own aura and halo. I name these two sub-types: the aura type and the lotus type respectively. For the hand gesture, they display either the dhyāna mudrā (Table 4, nos.1, 3) or a form of dharmacakra mudrā (Table 4, nos. 2, 4). The small Buddha figures seated with crossing-ankles appear at other sites as well, e.g. Ak-terek,\(^{15}\) Khâdalik,\(^{16}\) and Tumsuk on the Northern Route.\(^{17}\)

bodhisattva figures in this format also appear at Rawak (Table 4, no.5). Overall, nirmāṇabodhisattva figures are rare. So far, they have not been found in other formats or from other sites in Khotan. And their original contexts are not clear, such as the iconography of their emanating figure.

The type of the emanated Buddha figures seated with two legs double crossed (padmāsana) was probably also created in Khotan. It appears in the late phase of Rawak as well, but it is not as common as the crossing-ankles posture during this period. However, it became the dominate style at sites of later period at Kucha, such as Dandân Oilik. They are also found at a number of other sites: Khâdalik,\(^ {18}\) Kumrabat,\(^ {19}\) Harding’s

\(^{15}\) Stein, *Serindia*, pl.VIII; Gropp, *Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch-Ostturkestan*, 255, fig. 129.

\(^{16}\) Stein, *Serindia*, pl. XV.

\(^{17}\) Louis Hambis, M. Hallade, and M. Paul-David, *Tourchouq (Mission Paul Pelliot, Documents archéologiques)*, 2 vols. (Paris:Librairie Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1961-1964), Fig. 6c.

\(^{18}\) Stein, *Serindia*, pl.XV.

\(^{19}\) Kumrabat is located in the desert, 25 km north of Moyu County. Three temples were found at the site. Xinjiang Uigur zizhiqu wenwu shiye guanliju et al. eds., *Xinjiang wenwu guji daguan*, 103, fig. 242.
collection,20 Farhād-Beg-yailaki21 and so on. Some are shown in the aura type and the other are in the lotus type. Regarding the hand gestures, they are either shown with the *dhyāna mudrā* or *abhaya mudrā*. It is the type of images seated in *padmāsana* displaying *dhyāna mudrā* without the lotus medallion that reached to Kucha and became prominent in China.

**Conclusions**

It is in Khotan Buddhist art that the convention of showing emanated figures in the aura developed and various types appeared. A number of changes occurred. The emanating Buddhas are no longer restricted to meditation posture. Preceded by the standing type of emanated Buddhas, seated emanated Buddha images appeared. Among different variations, two trends are particularly important: confining the emanated figures within an annular shaped band and showing them in a leveled position. A decorative border also appeared in the depiction of the aura. These trends suggest that the depiction of the emanated Buddhas became schematic.

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20 Stein, *Innermost Asia*, pl. XII.

21 Stein, *Serindia*, pl. CXXXIX.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similar Images from Khotan (6th-8th c.)</th>
<th>Kucha Images</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5) Dandān Oilik, (6th-7th c.) Stein, 1907, pl.LIV.</td>
<td>Fifth century 2) Taitai’er Cave 16 Schlingloff, 2004: fig.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Rawak R85, (5th-6th c.) Stein, 1907, II, pl. XVIII c.</td>
<td>Seventh century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Balawaste (6th-8th c.) Gropp, fig. 42a-f.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5 Kucha Types of Images of a Buddha Emanating Other Buddhas**
2.3 Transmission to Kucha

At Kucha, there are over thirty images with emanated Buddha figures in the aura survived in Buddhist caves. These Kucha representations have the most intricate iconographies that did not occur in the other areas. The original context of the Kucha images is better preserved than those from Gandhāra and Khotan. Appendix B provides the detailed information and a study of the date of these images. This section focuses on analyzing the formats of the Kucha representations, proceeded by some general information about the history, the caves, and the images.

Background

Kucha was a sovereign state located on the Northern route, south of the Tianshan Mountains, now part of China in Xinjiang province. It was one of the largest and most powerful states in the Eastern Central Asia. As is the case for Khotan, the early history of Kucha is mainly preserved in Chinese documents.

In short, although Kucha was subject to invasions from Xiongnu (Huns), Chinese, Tibetan, and Turkic peoples, it maintained relative independence until Islam took control in the eleventh century. The allied relationship between Kucha and China started from the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.E.-220 C.E.). Kucha king Jiangbin married a daughter of the Chinese princess Wusun and visited the Chinese court in 65 B.C.E. Jiangbin called himself “grandson of the Han.” Chinese established its first government, Xiyu Duhu (Protector General of the Western Regions), in the area in 59 B.C.E. For the following centuries, frequent missions and occasional wars between Kucha and China were recorded in Chinese Annals. In 658 C.E., Kucha became once again the seat of Chinese authority in Eastern Central Asia. However, because of Tibetan inroads, Chinese
headquarters in the Tarim Basin had to be removed from Kucha to Turfan. In the eighth century, the Tibetans conquered vast areas of the Eastern Central Asia and Uighurs also made some inroads. Kucha kept up sporadic relations with China and finally dropped from Chinese Annals in the eleventh century.²²

Kucha is also a major Buddhist center on the Northern Route. According to the Chinese textual sources, Buddhism was present at Kucha at least by the first and second centuries and flourished until the mid-tenth century when Islam arrived (active ca. fourth-ninth centuries).²³ Recorded in the Jin shu 晉書, there were already 1,000 stūpas and temples at Kucha by the beginning of the fourth century.²⁴ Activities of Kuchean monks in China, such as their sūtra-translations, were an important part in the early history of Chinese Buddhism, especially from the third to fifth centuries.²⁵ Kucha’s reputation as a renowned Buddhist center is justified by the large quantity of the Buddhist sites, mostly caves, and wall paintings from those caves surviving today (Map 4).

**General Information**

At Kucha, paintings of emanated Buddhas in the aura appear in nine caves from five sites: Kizil Caves 17, 47, 123, 160, and 175, Taitai’er Cave 16, Kumtura Cave 50, Mazhabaha Cave 12, and Simsim Cave 45. Detailed descriptions and studies of these images are in Appendix B. Since the largest cave site, Kizil, has been well studied, it

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makes it possible for me to further locate the images with emanated Buddhas in the overall chronology and iconographic program of the cave paintings at Kucha. The following is a brief summary of my study.

A variety of types of caves appeared at Kucha, including the central-pillar caves, square caves, monk quarters, and meditation caves and they usually form different types of groups. Caves of the same type of grouping usually appear together in one area at a large site or at one small site. In contrast to the other types of caves, the central-pillar caves are always elaborately painted. The images with emanated Buddhas all appear in the central-pillar caves.

The subjects and styles of Kucha cave paintings are divisible into two phases: the traditional Kucha phase and the Chinese/Uighur phase. The former is characterized by narrative depictions showing seated Śākyamuni preaching scenes on the walls and stories of causation on the ceilings. The latter is distinguished by images of multiple Buddhas and bodhisattvas. The Chinese/Uighur style flourished only at the Kumtura site and after the eighth century. Paintings with emanated Buddhas belong to the pre-Chinese/Uighur phase. More precisely, these images emerged with a new motif, that is, life-sized standing Buddha images, replacing the seated Buddha scene on the walls. The standing Buddha images are shown on lotus flowers. This change of subject is a shift of depicting historical Buddha to bhavana Buddha. In other words, the convention to show the emanated Buddhas in the aura emerged in Kucha with the emergence of the bhavana Buddha images. Based on an analysis of the history of the Kizil site, inscriptions in the cave, and other dated minor motifs in the cave, I propose that this shift occurred probably about the seventh century. Most of the paintings with emanated figures can be dated to
this time period, with exceptions of the two images in Kizil Cave 17, which are of the fifth century (Table 5, no. 1).

In Kizil Cave 160, Kumtura Cave 50, Mazhabaha Cave 12, and Simsim Cave 45, the aura with emanated Buddhas is adorned with the main shrine figures. In Kizil Cave 47 it was applied with the reclining Buddha images on the back wall. In other occasions, images with emanated Buddhas often appear in multiple numbers in a cave. Very different from other regions, the emanating figures are always Buddhas, not bodhisattvas. Most of the emanating Buddha figures are shown standing. The emanated Buddha figures are shown slanting. Most of them are standing, a few are seated. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the dharmadhātu Buddha images in Kizil Cave 17 and the Buddhas images revealing the gatī realms in his aura (from Kizil Cave 175, Table 5, no. 4) are very unique, which I shall return in Chapter 6.

The Characteristics of Kucha Types of Depictions

Visually, these Buddha images with emanated Buddhas in the aura from Kucha (except the one in Kizil Cave 175) can be categorized into two groups: an annular-type (Table 5, nos. 1, 2) and a web-type (Table 5, nos. 3). Most of the depictions belong to the annular type, with only three of the web type.

Images in the annular-type are the two images in Kizil Cave 17; five other images in Kizil Cave 123; fifteen images in Taitai’er Cave 16; three images in Mazhabaha Cave 12; and one image each in Kizil Cave 47 and Simsim Cave 45. In the annular-type of depiction, the main Buddha figure bears both a halo and a body aura. The aura and halo consist of concentric, or annular, shaped bands. The small Buddhas are confined within the annular band. The small Buddhas are all shown slanting at different angles, seem to
be projected out from the central Buddha. In the paintings from Kizil Cave 17, the two early examples, the aura is composed of multiple bands of small Buddha figures (Table 5, no. 1). The emanated Buddhas are in seated position. The rest of the representations have only one band, and most of the emanated Buddhas in the aura are shown standing (Table 5, no. 2).

The configuration of the annular-type representation resembles the Khotan images closely. The tendency to organize the small emanated Buddha figures already appeared in the late phase at Rawak (Table 5, no. 6). Showing the emanated Buddhas in standing pose in the manner as those in the Kucha annular-type was also present at Khotan Dandān Oilik site (Table 5, no. 5). The late phase of Rawak is of fifth to sixth centuries, which is close the fifth century date of Kizil cave 17. Dandān Oilik is of the sixth to seventh centuries, which is the time period with most of annular-type of images from Kucha.

The annular-type is relatively austere in contrast to previous narrative depictions of the preaching scene with seated Buddha image. For example, in the painting from Kizil Cave 17 (Table 5, no. 1), the attendants of the emanating Buddha figure are reduced to a minimum, often only one in a corner, paying homage to the Buddha. The annular-type of images at Kucha does not seem to tell any specific story.

In the web-type, the small emanated Buddha images are enclosed in lozenge-shaped cells, which form a web pattern in the body auras of the central Buddhas (Table 5, no.3). No separate halo is depicted for the main Buddha figure. The three paintings on the side walls in the main chamber of Kizil Cave 123 and the main shrine on the central pillar in Kizil 160 share the same format. In the ones from Kizil Cave 123 (Table 5, no.3), the emanating Buddha is surrounded by monks, celestial figures. The painting seems to be
about a particular event. Applying emanated Buddha in the aura to a narrative scene is unique at Kucha.

No exact the same type of aura with emanated Buddha from other regions can be found. However, the dense type of depiction of the standing emanated Buddhas in the aura from Khotan (Table 5, no. 7) show commons with the web-type at Kucha. The difference is that in the former, the emanated Buddha figures are overlapping and in the latter, the emanated Buddhas are shown complete bodies.

Conclusions

The subject of cave paintings at Kucha is the narratives of Śākyamuni and stories of causation. Emanated Buddhas in the aura emerged with the bhavana Buddha images in the seventh century, replacing the old iconographic program of Buddhist caves. In addition, the depictions of emanated Buddhas in the aura at Kucha are close to those from Khotan. Therefore, those Kucha images could be an influence from the Southern Route.

Compared to the variety of Khotan types, Kucha representations are relatively simple, mainly in two types, an annular type and a web-type. The annular type is more popular. Both the two types appear in the same cave in Kizil 123. Therefore, by the seventh century, the two coexist with each other. Overall the annular-type of representation seems to be conceptual and abstract, and not related to any particular event. Two of the web-type images appear with narrative paintings.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. in the book</th>
<th>Dynasty</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Height (cm)</th>
<th>Nirmāṇabuddhas</th>
<th>The Central Figure</th>
<th>Inscription</th>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>451</td>
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<td>image</td>
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<td>Āmitābha</td>
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</table>

* Unless specified “in the halo,” the *nirmāṇabuddhas* are all depicted on the aura.

**Table 6 Dated Images with Nirmāṇabuddha Figures from China**
Based on the *Zhongguo lidai jinian foxiang tudian*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scatter Type in Early Stage</th>
<th>Scattered Type On Flame Aura</th>
<th>Annular Type On Flame Aura</th>
<th>Scattered Type On Halo</th>
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<table>
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<td>Flame Aura -- ca. 534 C.E.</td>
<td>Halo ca. 534 C.E.--</td>
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</table>

Table 7 The Major Types of *Nirmāṇabuddha* Images from China
2.4 Central China

In Chinese Buddhist art, the representation of small Buddha figures in the aura became very common, especially during the fifth and sixth centuries. The extant images from China are numerous with a long span of time and great diversity from different regions. A full study will have to be reserved for the future. Here, I limit myself mainly to the pre-Tang period and focus on the emergence and the major types of the nirmāṇabuddha images in China.

General Information

Unlike the images from Kucha and Khotan, which are mainly the life-size murals and clay sculptures from monastic sites, the extant Chinese Buddhist images range from bronze, independent stone sculpture, to stone or clay sculptures from caves. The format of the aura on bronze images during the fifth and sixth centuries follows a different tradition from those on stone stele and cave sculptures.

Due to the persecution (by the Northern Wei Emperor Taiwudi 太武帝) between 446-452 C.E., Chinese Buddhist images before the mid-fifth century have barely survived. In addition, most of the extant Buddha images from this early period have lost their aura pieces. Therefore, the precise beginning of depicting of nirmāṇabuddhas in the aura is unclear. A few examples showing primitive forms of later conventions can be found from the fourth century.

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26 Presently, Kucha and Khotan are in Chinese territory, but are culturally non-Han. For convenience, I use the term “Chinese representation” to refer to the area east of East Turkestan (or modern day Xinjiang province).

27 Regarding the depiction of a Buddha (or Bodhisattva) with nirmāṇabuddha figures in the aura, there are also fragments of wood and bronze, however, since they are out of context and undatable, they are therefore not included in this study.
After the fifth century, the depiction of nirmāṇabuddhas in the aura in Chinese Buddhist art became highly formulized and stable. To illustrate the major characteristics of these images, I made a table (Table 6) with data from all images with depictions of nirmāṇabuddhas in the Illustrated Catalogue of the Dated Buddha Images from China. This book is a collection of over 300 dated independent bronze and stone sculptures of Buddhas and bodhisattvas throughout all periods of China (some of which are now in collections outside of China). I want to point out two features from the table: the configuration of the nirmāṇabuddhas and a chronology of the different types of auras.

First, the compositions of the nirmāṇabuddha figures in Chinese images are normally shown in two variations (with various sub-categories): a scattered type and an annular type. As mentioned in previous sections, in the scattered type a few small Buddhas are evenly placed in the aura or halo. In Chinese Buddhist art, the most common numbers are: three, five and seven. There is considerable space between each figure. In the annular type, the small Buddhas are placed one next to the other. Their number is not important. They form an annular shaped band in the aura. On auras, the scattered type is associated with bronze sculptures; and the annular type appears on both independent stone sculptures and cave sculptures. Shown in the table, these bronze sculptures are usually small. This difference could also be a matter of size, in addition to medium. On halos, only the scattered type is found.

Second, the format of the aura and halo in Chinese Buddhist art in the fifth and sixth centuries can be classified into two primary categories: the flame aura of the Northern

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28 Jin Shen 金申, Zhongguo lidai jinian foxiang tudian 中國歷代紀年佛像圖典 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1994). It needs to be explained that the book only reflects a small portion of the extant images from China. A great deal of them, especially the newly discovered pieces from the last fifty years, are scattered in local museums in China and are not very well documented. Nonetheless, the table can illustrate the basic points.
Wei (386-534 C.E.) and various haloes after the Northern Wei to the Early Tang of the early seventh centuries. This feature is more visible in table 7. Before the fall of the Northern Wei Dynasty, images from northern China are known for the flame pattern around the border of the aura. At that time, a manner of adorning the image only with a halo became more popular. The table ends at the early Tang period. Actually, the convention of depicting nirmāṇabuddhas in the aura did not disappear in Chinese Buddhist art after the seventh century; it just became less popular.

Below, the characteristics of the major Chinese types of representations of the nirmāṇabuddhas are discussed according to their chronological order: the early stage in the fourth century, the flame aura types before 534 C.E., and the halo types after 534 C.E.

**The Early Stage**

In extant Chinese Buddhist art, the earliest images with small Buddhas in the aura that I found are two bronze sculptures. The two are different from each other and their archaic formats were not followed in later representations.

The first one is a seated Buddha image purchased by the Beijing Palace Museum in 1960. Shown in Fig. 2.4 (also Table 7, no.1), the Buddha sits on a lion throne with legs folded and hands in dhyāna mudrā. He has a large uṣṇīsa whose shape is almost like a ball. His hair is suggested with straight incised lines. He wears his robe in the covering mode. The drapery folds on the chest appear in a very angular “U” shape. When viewed from the side, the folds look like steps. Marylin Rhie called this type of modeling the “step fold.”

The Buddha image is accompanied with an aura at the back. The halo from the head of the Buddha is extended over his body aura. Thus, the back piece appears in a

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gourd shape, a unique stylistic feature of bronze images from this period.\(^{30}\) There are two standing bodhisattvas and five seated Buddha figures attached to the aura. The two bodhisattvas are attending on either side of the central Buddha image. The five small Buddha figures sit on lotus flowers also with legs folded and hands in *dhyāna mudrā*. The five figures are scattered evenly along the edge of the aura and halo. They are shown slanted as if they are radiated out from the center. The meditation pose of the main Buddha and the strong slanted angle of the small Buddha figures recall the Gandhāran depictions (Table 2, and Table 7, no.2). However, in the Gandhāran style, the small figures are all standing along the sides of the central Buddha, and nothing similar to this found among the extant Khotan images.\(^{31}\)

The second is in a Japanese collection. Shown in Fig. 2.5, the central Buddha figure appears in the same style as the first one but it is more elaborate. The central Buddha is accompanied by four attendant bodhisattvas, two flying *apsarās* (one lost), and seven small seated Buddha figures. The small Buddha images are arranged along the contour of the aura piece. They are adorned with halos as well. They are not shown slanted. Their connection with central image is not as clear as the first one. The border of the aura is decorated with large flame patterns.

Although neither of the two sculptures is dated, their style is congruent with the earliest dated Chinese bronze Buddha image now in the Asian Art Museum (San Francisco). This piece (Fig. 2.6) is inscribed with a date corresponding to 338 C.E.

Scholars have long used it as a benchmark for Chinese Buddha images of the fourth


\(^{31}\) There is a disjunction between the Gandhāran and the Khotan styles. This Chinese representation seems to fit into an intermediate stage between the two.
century (or even earlier). Accordingly, these two bronze images probably can be dated to the same period of the fourth century.

Overall, these two pieces seem to be uncommon images of the period. It is impossible to discern precisely how these two images are related to the general depictions of showing small Buddhas in the aura. On both of the images, the small Buddha figures are shown seated in meditation. Their size is relatively large in contrast to the later representations. They are shown in high relief and were probably cast separately. They are all arranged at the border of the aura with part of their body crossed over the aura. This feature is also absent on images from later periods.

The Flame Aura: the Scattered Typed and Annular Type

--The Scattered Type of Representations on Bronze Images

Shown in the aforementioned table, on the bronze sculptures, the *nirmāṇabuddhas* are usually shown in odd numbers: 3, 5, 7, and occasionally 9. Such as shown in a bronze image, Śākyamuni known from inscription dated to 498 C.E. (Fig. 2.7, no. 64 in Table VI), three *nirmāṇabuddhas* are scattered in the aura. Perhaps due to the small scale of the sculpture, the lotus seats of the *nirmāṇabuddhas* are omitted. In contrast to those images from Khotan and Kucha, it is common to find *nirmāṇabuddha* images in China that are missing the lotus seat, aura or halo. The exact prototype of this kind of representation is unknown. Most small bronze images from Central Asia have not survived. The Sven

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32 Bronze Buddha images with nine small Buddha figures in the aura are not as common as the others. Although, when nine *nirmāṇabuddhas* are depicted, it looks very similar to the annular type. For examples in colored plates, see Ji Chongjian 季崇建, *Zhongguo jintong fo* 中國金銅佛 (Taipei: Yishu tushu gongsi, 1995), 34-36, fig. 16, 17.

33 Rhie related this type of body aura of the Northern Wei to Rawak style VI because it sometimes contains five *nirmāṇabuddha* images. As I showed in Table 7, other numbers occurred as well. I suggest that the halo format in Rawak style VI is close to a type of halo popular during the Sui and early Tang Dynasties, although the drapery style bears a resemblance to the fifth century Northern Wei Style. Rhie, *Early Buddhist Art of China And Central Asia*, 1: 303.
Hedin Mission (1893-1897) found a 16 cm high bronze Buddha from Yotkan, the capital of Khotan, in 1896 (Fig. 2.8; Table 7, no. 4). The central Buddha is shown in meditation posture. Seven small seated Buddhas are depicted in the aura. It is comparable to Chinese bronzes. Unfortunately, this Yotkan piece is not dated. Therefore, it is impossible to make any firm conclusion at this point.

--The Annular Type

The annular type appears with independent stone sculptures, sculptures in caves (in stone or clay sculptures). The earliest examples are found from Binglingsi Cave 169, dated ca. 420 C.E. based on the inscription found from the cave, for instance, Niche 22 (Fig. 2.9; Table 7, no. 5). This niche features a standing Buddha on a lotus platform with a bodhisattva figure on his left side. The Buddha is adorned with a large painted aura, which consists of a row of small seated Buddha images inside. Flame motifs are shown along the halo and the aura of the Buddha. The small *nirmāṇabuddha* images inside the aura are shown seated in meditation on lotus flowers. They are not tilted. They are static, frontal, and almost identical to each other. They are also adorned with halos and auras. Their composition resembles the annular type of representation from Kucha (Table 7, no. 6) and Khotan. This is one of the most common formats of the *nirmāṇabuddha* images in Chinese Buddhist art in the fifth century.

The Halos: the floral scroll and the swirling patterns

Adorning images with a halo alone appeared in the sixth century in China, to both the bronze and stone sculptures. Only the scattered type is used for haloes. There are different variations of the format of the halo. Here I will only bring forth two issues: the
emergence of the floral scroll motif and a swirling pattern (or a counterpart of the Khotan style depiction of the scattered Buddhas in the halo).

---The Floral scroll---

Scattered nirmāṇabuddha with the undulating floral scroll band became a new norm on the halo of the Buddha images from the middle of the sixth century. Among Buddhist cave sites, this type of halo with a band of floral scrolls first became popular in the Northern Qi caves at Xiangtang Mountain (Fig. 2.10). Fig. 2.10a is the main image, a seated Buddha with only a halo, in Southern Xiangtang Cave 1 (565-577 C.E.). Seven small Buddha figures are shown sitting within the floral band in the halo.

This type appeared on independent images as well, such as a standing Buddha of the Northern Qi from Qingzhou (Fig. 2.11; Table 7, no. 7). The Buddha is adorned with a halo that has a band of floral patterns. Scholars believe that the Northern Qi style of Buddha image, with the clinging thin robe, is a result of influence from the Indian Gupta style. Round halo with a band of ornate floral motif of Buddha images is also a characteristic of Gupta sculpture (Fig. 2.12; Table 7, no. 8). The resemblance of the halo decoration between the Northern Qi and Gupta is evident. However, on this Northern Qi sculpture, seven Buddha figures are shown scattered at the rim of the halo. This feature is absent in the Indian originals.

The floral scroll became an enduring motif for halo and aura decorations in Chinese Buddhist art even after the seventh century. On the floral scroll type of halo and aura, the nirmāṇabuddhas can be shown either inside or outside of the floral band. On large size images, the nirmāṇabuddha figures usually are seven in number. This is the new norm that came to be common after the seventh century. In this new norm, the nirmāṇabuddhas
are always shown seated with the dhyāna mudrā, relatively small, no slanting, and in an odd number (generally seven). The nirmāṇabuddhas can be in the halo or in the aura of the body, and can be within or without the confine of a band. The renowned Vairocana Buddha image from Fengxiansi at Longmen cave (completed ca. 675 C.E.) demonstrates a fully developed Tang style that had a great influence in East Asia (Fig. 2.13). Such a style of halo/aura can be found in Japanese art as well. When compared with the Gandhāran and Central Asian representations, the nirmāṇabuddha images are almost too small to be noticed, but they are there. Interestingly, the nirmāṇabuddhas in the halo are also shown flanked by two bodhisattva figures on either side. This unique detail must be a Chinese innovation.

--The Swirling Pattern

The counterparts of the scattered type of halo from Rawak can be found on sculptures of the Sui (581-618 C.E.) and Tang Dynasties. Fig. 2.14 shows an Amitābha triad in the Shanghai Museum. It is not inscribed, but the iconography is clear and the style is Sui. All of the three figures are adorned with a halo that has openwork of swirling patterns. (Open-worked halos became popular on bronze images from the end of the sixth century.) Shown in the detail, in the halo of Amitābha, five tiny Buddha images are mingled with the swirling patterns. The halo has a thin edge of flame, which forms a pointed end on the top via zigzag waves. All of these recall the halo style of the Rawak (Table 7, no. 10, Fig. 2.16). At this period of time in Chinese Buddhist art, the nirmāṇabuddha images had became very small in proportion to the halo or the central image. The same halo can also be shown with bodhisattva figures, such as a Sui bronze image shown in Fig. 2.15.34 This

34 Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan 奈良国立博物館, Nihon Bukkyō bijutsu no genryū 日本仏教美術の源流 (Nara:
Sui bodhisattva image has a long narrow waist and dazzling ornaments hanging over his body. All these elements on this piece, especially the halo, are very comparable with the Rawak sculpture of the same type (Fig. 2.16).

**Conclusions**

In Chinese Buddhist art, depicting *nirmāṇabuddha* figures in the aura was extremely prevalent during the fifth and sixth centuries. Following the tradition developed in Khotan, in Chinese Buddhist art, both Buddhas and bodhisattvas can be adorned with *nirmāṇabuddhas* in the aura, but mainly the Buddha images. The major figure (emanator) can be either seated or standing. And the format of the *nirmāṇabuddhas* became more and more formulized—they are shown seated in *dhyāna mudrā*, level, and small.

The representation of *nirmāṇabuddha* figures in the aura or halo in early Chinese Buddhist art appears mainly in two types: the annular type and the scattered type. The annular type appears on fame aura of stone sculptures and sculptures in caves. The scattered type appeared with both flame auras of bronze images and haloes. In this convention, the *nirmāṇabuddha* figures are mostly in numbers of 3, 5, or 7.

After the second half of the sixth century, floral scrolls became a major decoration of the aura and halo. A counterpart of a Khotan type of scattered Buddhas in a halo with swirling patterns can also be found in Chinese Buddhist art of the late sixth and early seventh century. The resemblance between the different types of Chinese depictions and those in Central Asia is evident. However, it has to be said that, none of these Chinese images are exactly the same as those Central Asian images. Renovations in depicting the *nirmāṇabuddha* figures occurred from time to time in Chinese Buddhist art (as well as in

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*Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, 1978*, 18, pl.16.
Japanese Buddhist art). There are also regional differences among the extant images. However, further investigation has to wait until future studies.

2.5 Concluding Remarks

I have demonstrated that the depiction of small Buddhas in the aura was a phenomenon in Buddhist art. It was like a sequence of waves that probably started from Gandhāra, developed in Central Asia, and eventually greatly affected the appearance of Buddhist images in large scale in East Asia.

This convention emerged with images of bhavana Buddhas. When it first appeared in Gandhāra in the third century, the representation was very consistent. The emanating figure is always seated in meditation on a lotus flower. The emanated Buddhas are always shown standing slanted to suggest a sense of emanation. There is only one type of representation known in Gandhāra.

The Gandhāran style representation changed greatly over time. A variety of types and subtypes were developed in other areas. The general trend of these changes is an intensified elaboration in Khotan area, followed by increasing schematization. The emanated Buddhas were increasingly smaller, and, in the end, became visually secondary to the aura.

In these changes, a couple of shifts are particularly remarkable. The first is that the emanating figure is changed from only the meditation pose to also include the standing pose. This shift is evident at Khotan from the fourth century. It perhaps indicates that the emanation was moving away from meditation. The second is the position of the emanated Buddhas from slanted to level. This occurred at Khotan and China since the fifth century.
This may suggest that the depiction of small Buddhas in the aura became less related to the actual action of emanation. The third is a shift from a body aura to a head halo. This shift happened at Khotan in the fifth to sixth centuries and China in the sixth and seventh centuries. What was behind all these fundamental changes? In other words, how did Buddhists perceive the notion of a Buddha generating other Buddhas over the time? I will pursue answers to these questions in the next chapter.

Besides Buddhist images in general, in Gandhāra, Khotan, and Kucha, the depiction of emanated Buddhas in the aura has been occasionally used for certain special iconographies. I will study these iconographies one by one in part II. However, in China, depicting small Buddhas in the aura or halo is not an attribute of any particular iconography. The special quality of this representation seems lost in Chinese Buddhist art.

From Gandhāra to Khotan and then China, a small portion of the images where bodhisattvas that are shown with emanated Buddhas in the aura or halo. Bodhisattva related ideas will be discussed also in Chapters 3 and 4.
Fig. 2.2 Ruixiang. Dunhuang Library Cave, Gansu, China. Ninth century. Silk Painting. After Whitfield, “Ruixiang at Dunhuang,” fig.1, 2.
Fig. 2.3 Ruixiang Images and Detail. Ceiling slop above the entrance, Dunhuang Cave 9, Gansu, China. Late Tang, 848-906 C.E. Wall painting. After Zhongguo siku—Dunhuang Mogaoku IV, fig 173.
Fig. 2.4 Seated Buddha. China. Ca. fourth century. Bronze. H: 20 cm. Palace Museum (Beijing). After Li Jingjie, Zhongguo jintong fo, 22, fig.4.
Fig. 2.6 Śākyamuni Buddha. China. 338C.E. Gilt bronze, H: 39.4cm. Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, the Avery Brundage Collection, B60B1034. Author’s photo.
Fig. 2.7 Śākyamuni Buddha. China. 498 C.E. Bronze. Japanese private collection. After Jin Shen, Zhongguo lidai jinian foxiang tudian, fig.64.
Fig. 2.8 *Bronze Buddha*. Yotkan, (capital of Khotan), Xinjiang, China. Fifth-seventh centuries (?). Bronze. H: 16cm, L: 11.5cm. Stockholm, National Museum of Ethnography 1903.11.344.A-C. After Marie-France Cocheteux et al eds., *Sérinde, Terre de Bouddha*, 107, fig. 55.
Fig. 2.9 *Standing Buddha at Niche 22*. Binglingsi Cave 169, Gansu, China. 420-431 C.E. Clay sculpture and fresco background. After *Zhongyuo shiku: Yongjing Binglingsi shiku*, fig 47.
Fig. 2.10a Seated Buddha. Southern Xiangtang Cave 1, Hebei, China. 565-577 C.E. Stone. After Zhongguo meishu quanji: Diaosu pian 13, 129, pl.145.

Fig. 2.10b Halo Pattern. Southern Xiangtang Cave 2, Hebei, China. 565-577 C.E.

Fig. 2.10c Halo Pattern. Northern Xiangtang Southern Cave, Hebei, China. 565-577 C.E. After Li Yuqun, Beichao wanqi shikusi yanjiu, 36, fig. 22.
Fig. 2.11 *Standing Buddha*. Qingzhou hoard, Shandong, China. Northern Qi (550-577 C.E.). Stone. After Lukas Nichel ed., *Return of the Buddha*, 126 and 127, no.22, fig.75.
Fig. 2.13 Vairocana Buddha. Fengxiansi cave (Longmen Cave 19), Henan, China. Completed ca. 675 C.E. Limestone. Modified after Zhongguo meishu quanji: Diaosu pian 11: Longmen shiku, pl. 157.
Fig. 2.15 Bodhisattva. China. Sui (581-618 C.E.). Gilt bronze. After Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Nihon Bukkyō bijutsu no genryū*, 18, pl.16.
Fig. 2.16 Standing Buddhas. Rawak, Xinjiang, China. Fifth and sixth centuries. Clay. After Xinjiang wenwu guji daguan, fig.171.
PART II

BUDDHIST MEANINGS AND ICONOGRAPHICAL STUDIES
CHAPTER 3

THE NOTION OF GENERATING OTHER BUDDHAS IN BUDDHISM

This chapter sets to examine the notion of one Buddha (or bodhisattva) generating other Buddhas as presented in Buddhist texts. How important is this phenomenon? Who can emanate other Buddhas? And who are the emanated Buddhas? These questions are associated with a wide-range of aspects that are fundamental to Buddhism, and most of them are not amenable to a simple answer. To focus on issues immediately related to images of this phenomenon and to reduce the scope of the problem, I propose to confine my remarks to two concepts: the general development of this notion with focus on theories of the Buddha-body, and the nirmāṇabuddhas in Buddhist cosmology.

Early Dīghanikāya and Hinayāna tradition acknowledge the concept of body-multiplication, seen as the supernatural power (ṛddhi) from meditation. In Mahāyāna texts, there are generally three types of references that mention one Buddha generating other Buddhas: 1) narrative descriptions about a Buddha in the act of performing this phenomenon in sūtras, 2) visions for visualization exercise in meditation texts, and 3) introductions about the body and the nature of the Buddha in sūtras, commentaries, and treaties. These texts from different perspectives in turn reveal three major aspects and phases of this concept: as miracles in Hinayāna and Mahāyāna texts, as body marks of all
Buddhas described in meditation texts, and as the nature of the conceptual Buddha and the dharmakāya in Mahāyāna theories. This chapter discusses these three aspects respectively, followed by an examination of the identities of the emanated Buddhas. Then, I will address the issue of bodhisattvas as the emanator. In the concluding remarks, I will comment on how the change of nirmāṇabuddhas in the aura according to texts might relate to the general trend of the visual representations discussed in Chapter 2.

3.1 The Rddhi Power in Early Buddhism

The idea of a Buddha being able to multiply his body, or body-multiplication, first appeared in the Dīghanikāya as a type of miracle which one can perform with rddhi (Pāli: iddhi), or supernormal power. Rddhi (“an ornament of the mind”) is a pre-Buddhist, pan-Indic concept accepted by all Buddhist traditions throughout all periods of time.1

According to the Nikāyas and Āgamas, rddhi constitutes the first item of the six Supernormal Knowledges.2 With the power of rddhi, one can conduct eight kinds of miraculous transformations, the first one being body-multiplication:

1. Having been one, he becomes many; having been many he becomes one. 2. He appears and disappears. 3. He goes unimpeded through walls, ramparts and mountains as if through space. 4. He dives in and out of the earth as if it were water. 5. He walks on water without sinking as if it were dry land. 6. Sitting cross-legged, he flies through the air like a winged bird. 7. He touches and strokes the

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2 The six Supernormal Knowledges(Pāli: abhiññā) are: 1. the supernormal knowledge of supernatural power (called the iddhividhanā); 2. the supernormal knowledge of divine hearing; 3. the supernormal knowledge of the mind of another; 4. the supernormal knowledge of the memory of the past existences; 5. the supernormal knowledge of the death and birth of all beings; 6. the supernormal knowledge of the destruction of the cankers. This appears in the Pāli Dīghanikāya and Majjhimanikāya (Sāmaññaphalasutta, Dīghanikāya, i, 77-8; Akankheyyasutta, Majjhimanikāya, i, 34; Mahāvacchagottasutta, Majjhimanikāya, i, 494; Mahāsaṅkulasāyasantasutta, Majjhimanikāya, ii, 17; Gopakamoggallānasutta, Majjhimanikāya, iii, 11-12.), the Chinese Dirghaṅga (Taishō 1:1.86a), and Ekottaragāmmana (Taishō 2:125.711a.), as well as the Sarvāstivādin Abhidharma texts (Louis De La Vallée Poussin trans., Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam, 4: 1157).
sun and moon with his hand. He exercises influence with his body that reaches as far as the Brahma worlds. Anyone can access the ṛddhi power through meditation. ṛddhi powers are “the fruit of the homeless life.” In a sense, they are a natural outcome after one achieves a higher stage on the path to spiritual liberation.

In his Visuddhimagga, Buddhaghosa, a fifth-century Theravādin theorist, provides a detailed account on how to obtain and exercise this power via meditation. In Buddhaghosa’s expression, it is the “success” (Pāli: iddhi) of the meditation “succeeding” (Pāli: iijhana), or the effectiveness of the practice towards arhat-hood. In other words, ṛddhi is not some sort of mythical magic exclusive to the Buddha.

The concept of a ṛddhi power of body multiplication obtained from meditation is the ground of Dieter Schlingloff’s argument. He identifies the aspect of meditative power in the depiction and notion of nirmāṇabuddhas. This is also probably why Yaldiz finds it possible to identify the images of the Buddha in emanation as Pratyekabuddhas because, hypothetically, Pratyekabuddhas can possess such ṛddhi power too.

Early Buddhists seemed to believe that the magically created bodies were not independent from their creator. It fits in the Hīnayāna belief that only one Buddha exists at a time. The power of ṛddhi as understood cannot work against any universal principles

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3 Sūmaññaphalasutta, Dīghanikāya, i, 87.
4 Dīghanikāya, i, 88.
5 There are also other ways to access ṛddhi, such as through gaining merit in previous lives.
in Buddhist beliefs. This has turned out to be one of the most distinct differences from Mahāyāna beliefs. In the *Janavasabha-sutta* from the *Dīghanikāya*, there is a stanza describing the created bodies sharing the same vocal action as their creator. This stanza became one of the focal points of discussion among the Buddhist theorists of later times.

In early *Nikāya* and Āgama texts, the Buddha clearly despised the *ṛddhi* power, for it has little to do with realization of the *Dharma* and *nirvāṇa*. In the *Sampasādanīya-sutta* from the *Dīghanikāya*, the Buddha said that *ṛddhi* power such as those eight miracles “is bound up with the corruptions and attachment.” In some instances, he reproached his disciples for using *ṛddhi* and imposed monastic rules prohibiting any display of miracles. In the *Kevaddha-sutta* of the *Dīghanikāya*, Kevaddha pleaded with the Buddha three times to perform miracles at Nālandā to enhance the faith of Buddhist followers. Every time, the Buddha refused him. The Buddha explained that there were three types of miracles: the miracle of *ṛddhi* (*Pāli: iddhi-paññāriya*), the miracle of telepathy, and the miracle of instruction. Only the last one is the right method for Buddhist teaching. The

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10 In this text, Brahmā Sanankumāra multiplied himself by thirty-three to talk to the thirty-three gods. Therefore every god thought the Brahmā spoke to him alone. In Indic tradition, gods possess the power of self-multiplication and transformation, as well. The narrative is then followed by a stanza:

All the forms assumed with one voice speak
And having spoken, all at once are silent.
And so the Thirty-three, their leader too
Each thinks: ‘He speaks to me alone.’ *Dīghanikāya*, ii, 212.

11 It is referred in the Sarvāstivādin commentaries and the *Dazhidu lun* (*Mahāprajñāpāramitopadesā*), *Taishō* 25:1509.115c.


13 *Vinaya-aṭṭakathā* (*Samantapāsādikā*), ii, 110-113; *Jātaka*, iv, 263.
Buddha disapproved of the first two. However, by the time of the fourth Nikāya, the Aṅguttaranikāya (Ekottarāgama, 增壹阿含經), all three of the miracles became legitimate methods for Buddhist teaching. The miracles of ādhi as a means for spreading the Dharma gained more recognition in commentary texts and especially in Mahāyāna Buddhism.

The Buddha is recorded to have used miracles on various occasions in his life. The most notable event regarding body-multiplication is the Great Miracle at Śrāvastī. The Great Miracle is described in the Dharmaguptaka-vinaya (Taishō 22:1428.946-951), the Fo benxing jing (Taishō 4:193.83c-87a), the Vinayakṣudrakavastu (Taishō 24:1451.329-333), the Divyāvadāna (Cowell 1887: 143-166), and the Xianyu jing (Taishō 4:202.360c-366a). In all of the first four texts (except the last text), the multiple bodies of Śākyamuni emerged with lotus flowers, but there was no light. The Xianyu jing (The Sūtra of the Wise and the Foolish) is a late avadāna text compiled between 505 and 515 C.E., based on the stories circulated at Khotan.

In conclusion, in early Buddhism as shown in the Nikāyas, body-multiplication is a supernatural power derived from meditation. There is no mention of emitting light from the body. The multiple bodies created by ādhi are not other independent Buddhas in

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14 Dīghanikāya, i, 211-217. The three miracles are also mentioned in the Dīghanikāya iii, 220; Sāmyuttanikāya iv, 290.

15 Aṅguttaranikāya, i, 170; Ekottarāgama 增壹阿含經, Taishō 2:125.622b.

16 This idea can certainly be traced back to the early period of Buddhism. Katz found that many of the canonical and commentatorial examples of performing miracles arise for the purpose of teaching. Nathan Katz, Buddhist Images of Human Perfection: The Arahant of the Sutta Piṭaka Compared with the Bodhisattva and the Mahāsiddha (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1982), 108-116.


their own Buddha-lands. It bears no particular doctrinal significance, even when seen as a
distraction from the pursuit of nirvāṇa. Compare to the āddhi concept in early texts, the
images in this study represent something different: the small figures or nirmāṇabuddha
images are integrated in the aura of the Buddha. This feature suggests that these images
represent more than āddhi.

3.2 A New Type of Miracle in Mahāyāna Texts

A different type of miracle appears in Mahāyāna sūtras, that is, the description of the
Buddha emitting the nirmāṇabuddhas in his light in front of the Buddhist assemblies
before he begins teaching a certain text. It became so ubiquitous that it is almost like a
prologue in Mahāyāna sūtras.

The Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra is probably among the earliest and
best-known texts that describe this phenomenon. The text was first translated into
Chinese in 286 C.E., then in 291 C.E. and 403 C.E. As described in the beginning of the
text, before the Buddha preached the sūtra, he entered into samādhi and then emitted five
kinds of light from various parts of his body by supernormal power. These rays of light
illuminated the trichiliocosm and all Buddha lands in the ten directions. Living beings
who encountered these rays were said to have attained the saṃyak-sambodhi (supreme
enlightenment). The fifth light was the infinite rays from the tongue of the Buddha. These
rays transformed into flowers with Buddhas seated on each of them.¹⁹

¹⁹“爾時世尊。出廣長舌遍三千大千國土。遊已從其舌根。復放無央數億百千光明。一一光明化為千葉寶華其
色如金。一一華者上皆有坐佛。一一諸佛皆說六度無極。” Taishō 8:221.1bc; Taishō 8:222.147bc; Taishō
8:223.217bc.
At that time, the World-Honored One extended his long wide tongue and completely wrapped the chiliocosm with it. From the bottom of his tongue, he emanated countless and infinite rays of light and each ray transformed into a thousand-petaled flower whose color is like gold. On top of every flower, there was sitting Buddha. And every Buddha recited the six pāramitās.\(^{20}\)

First, the above astonishing miracle is still described as shenli 神力, the “divine power” or “supernatural power” of the Buddha derived from meditation (samādhi).\(^{21}\) However, in comparison to the rddhi of self-multiplication in early texts, the emanated Buddhas are transformed from Buddha’s rays, and they also preach. This new type of miracle in Mahāyāna texts is a coalescence from two originally separate concepts, body-multiplication and body rays.

The notion of the Buddha’s body light did not gain much importance in the Nikāyas. In early Buddhist texts and the Theravādin tradition, the Buddha emitted rays only a couple of times in his lifetime. According to the Mahāparinibbāna-sutta from the Dīgha-nikāya, there were two such occasions: the night when he attained enlightenment and the night when he passed away.\(^{22}\) Theravādin commentaries provide more details about the Buddha’s rays (Pāli: raṃsi). These rays are described as consisting of six colors, each of


\(^{21}\) The idea of rddhi from meditation never went way. Later Buddhists often incorporate early ideas. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, emanating the kind of miraculous light that transform into Buddhas is seen, in one perspective, as meditation power. Such as articulated in a commentary text, the Da Zhīdu lun: “The Buddha told the monks, ‘……When the Buddha enters into the samādhi such as the king-samādhi, lion-playing-samādhi and etc., he can cause the worlds of the ten directions to tremble in six ways and emit great light which transforms into infinite Buddhas filling the ten directions.’” (如三昧王三昧師子遊戲三昧等。佛入其中能令十方世界六種震動。放大光明化為無量諸佛遍滿十方。) Taishō 25:1509.220b. Similar descriptions also appear in other places in the text, such as Taishō 25:1509.399b, 220b. Else where in the text, it was called shentong guanming 神通光明, or “rddhi-prabhā.” Taishō 25:1509.308c. shenguang 神光 (rddhi-prabhā) has become an alternative term for the Buddha’s light. See Ciyi et al, Foguan da cidian, 2174ab.

\(^{22}\) “There are two occasions, Ānanda, when the skin of the Tathāgata appears exceedingly clear and radiant. Which are these two? The night, Ānanda, when the Tathāgata becomes fully enlightened in unsurpassed, supreme enlightenment, and the night when the Tathāgata comes to his final passing away into the state of nibbāna in which no element of clinging remains.” Dīghanikāya ii. 134; see also the Chinese Dirghāgama, Taishō 1:1.19c.
which comes from different parts of the Buddha’s body. There is a tendency to relate this body light with meditation. However, there are no figures inside the rays.

In the third-century Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, the emanated Buddhas do not assume a specific term. However, in later texts as I introduced in Chapter 1, they are generally called the nirmāṇabuddha. This definition comes appears in the nirmāṇabuddha given in the Dharmaśamgīti-sūtra (translated by Bodhiruci in the early sixth century):

What is the nirmāṇabuddha? All the Buddha Tathāgatas and all the bodhisattvas obtained the ‘samādhi (meditation) of manifesting all form-bodies’ (sarvaripasadarsāna-samādhi). Those Buddhas and bodhisattvas, having attained freedom at will and the great compassion, all can display form bodies. [They] manifest into Buddhas of form-bodies to save all living beings. This is what is called the nirmāṇabuddha.”

In the above definition, the purpose of the nirmāṇabuddhas is enhanced: to save all beings. A given text usually only describes a certain Buddha emanating other Buddhas. Scholars often identify the emanating Buddha in visual representations exclusively to one Buddha. From the above quote, it could not be clearer that all Buddhas and bodhisattvas can emanate nirmāṇabuddhas.

To conclude, a new type of miracle derived from meditation became prevalent in Mahāyāna scriptures—The Buddha emanates rays and the rays transform into Buddhas. The emanated Buddhas can be called the nirmāṇabuddha. It was understood that all

23 According to the Atthasālinti, the Buddha emitted the rays when he was contemplating on the Patthāna (Mahāpārāna, or the “Great Book”), the seventh and last book of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka during the fourth week after the Buddha’s enlightenment. Dhammassaṅgīti-atthakathā (Atthasālinti), 13-14. Some texts mention that the Buddha emitted six-colored rays from the body when performing the Twin Miracle. In this context, the Sumangalavilāsinī and Madhuratthavilāsinī explain that the rays are result of the kasia meditation. Dīgha-atthakathā (Sumangalavilāsinī), i, 57; and Buddhavamsa-atthakathā (Madhuratthavilāsinī), 31-32.

24 “云何化佛，化佛者，諸佛如來及諸菩薩，得示現一切色身三昧，彼諸佛菩薩成就自在，大慈大悲皆能示現，化佛色身度諸眾生。是名化佛。”Foshuo faji jing 佛說法集經, Taishō 17:761.613b, trans. Bodhiruci, 508-535 C.E.
Buddhas and bodhisattvas have the power and compassion to create nirmāṇabuddhas to save sentient beings.

3.3 Nirmāṇabuddhas in the Halo as a Body Mark of Buddhas

The most extensive descriptions of a Buddha emanating other Buddhas appear in Buddhist visualization texts, especially the buddhānusmṛti (“calling the Buddha to mind”) in the Ocean Sūtra. The buddhānusmṛti has a long history in Buddhist meditation practice and the visions of a Buddha from different texts also vary from each other. Such differences reflect different understandings of the Buddha concept and the qualities of the Buddha body in different periods of time and Buddhist traditions. They range from details of his body, his spiritual qualities, events of his life and previous lives, his land, and even to his transformation bodies. In this section, I focus on the meditation texts to examine the change of the imagery of the Buddha regarding the nirmāṇabuddhas.

Buddhānusmṛti has been a form of Buddhist practice since the Pāli Nikāyas. In Pāli Nikāyas, the buddhānusmṛti (Pāli: buddhānussati) is a practice reciting the formula of the “ten epithets” (adhivacana) of the Buddha.25 No visualization is involved.

However, attested in sūtras such as the Pratyutpanna-buddha-sammukhāvasthitā-samādhi-sūtra 般舟三昧經 (“The Samādhi of Direct Encounter with the Buddhas of the Present,” hereafter, Pratyutpanna), a new form of buddhānusmṛti practice using a

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25 In Nikāyas, buddhānusmṛti is only one of a series of anusmṛtis (“calling to mind”), including the anusmṛti of the Dharma, the sangha (community), and the devata (divinities) and so on. Shown in the Visuddhimagga (Path of Purification) by Buddhaghosa and the Vimuttimagga (Path of Liberation) by Upatissa, this tradition is closely followed in the Theravāda school of the fifth century. Recitation of the virtues of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the sangha functions as an apotropaic incantation in Theravādin ritual till the present day. Paul M. Harrison, “Commemoration and Identification in Buddhānusmṛti,” in Mirror of Memory—Reflections on Mindfulness and Remembrance in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism, ed. Janet Gyalts (New York: State University of New York Press, 1992), 215-238.
visualization technique appeared at least by the second century C.E. Seeing the Buddha with one’s very own eyes is equivalent to hearing the Dharma preached by the Buddhas and understanding the nature of Buddha. The Pratyutpanna teaches the method of visualizing the physical form of the Buddha through the thirty-two marks. The Buddhas who are being called to mind in this text are all Buddhas in the ten directions. Seeing the Buddhas is to hear their teachings and to be reborn in their lands. In the second-century Pratyutpanna, the Buddha is shown emitting only light, no nirmāṇabuddhas.

This was changed in a group of meditation texts brought to China by the late fourth to early fifth centuries known as chanjing 禪經 (dhyāna sūtra) and guanjing 觀經 (visualization sūtra). In a way, the Buddha’s emanation of light in conjunction with Buddhas becomes an outstanding feature of the Buddha outside the list of the thirty-two lakṣanas (body marks of the Buddha); in another way, it is also the characteristic of every lakṣana. The halo/aura is one of the lakṣanas of the Buddha and this halo/aura is described as containing Buddhas by this time.

The chanjing manuals are represented by:

Wumen chanjing yaoyong fa 五門禪經要用法 The Essential Method of the Five Gates Meditation, hereafter the Five Gates
Chanfa yaojie 禪法要解 The Essential Explanation of the Meditation Methods

26 The text was translated into Chinese by Lokaksema in 179 C.E. However, it may not have been widely practiced in China in a couple of succeeding centuries. In the Gaoseng zhuany Biography of Eminent Monks) by Huijiao慧皎, only one monk is mentioned practicing the Pratyutpanna (Taishō 50:2059.407a). Yun-Hua Jan 冉雲華, “Gaoseng zhuanh 僧傳・Xichan pian de yige wenti” 《高僧傳・習禪篇》的一個問題, in his Zhongguo chanxue yanjiu lunji 中國禪學研究論集 (Taipei: Dongchu chubanshe, 1990), 50-54.
27 Most of the chanjing texts show Mahāyāna elements. The guanjing texts are certainly Mahāyāna in nature.
28 Taishō 15:619.325c-333a. It is attributed to Buddhamitra 356-442 C.E. in the Taishō canon and the Kaiyuan shijiao la 開元釋教錄 (Record of Buddhism during the Reign of Kaiyuan) (Taishō 55:2154.622c). Dharmanitra was a Kusmirian, came to China through Kucha, and arrived at Nanjing, the southern capital, about 424. It is believed that the “five gates of meditation” method taught in this text is from Kasmīr, and authentic for at least its fundamental parts.
Siwei lueyao fa 思惟略要法 The Abridged Essence of Meditation
Zuochan sanmei jing 坐禅三味經 The Sūtra on the Sitting Samādhi
Chanmi yaoфа jing 神秘要法經 The Sūtra on the Secret Essentials of Meditation
Guan jing 觀經 Visualization Sūtra
Zhi chanbing miyao fa 治禪病祕要法 The Secret Method Curing Chan Illness

Hereafter the Chan Illness

The chanjing usually has five groups of subjects for meditation abbreviated from the traditional methods. The visualization on the Buddha is one of the five. Among these chanjing texts brought to China, the Five Gates, Chanmi yaofa, and Chan Illness have direct visions of the Buddha emanating other Buddhas in his light. The emanated Buddhas, by then, were formally called by the term nirmāṇabuddha. The fantastic quality of the Buddha’s physical body is said to have come from his spiritual

30 Taishō 15:617.297c-300c. The translation is attributed to Kumārajīva based on the Lidai sanbao ji 歷代三寶紀 (597 C.E.) (Taishō 49:2034.78c), which is not a reliable source. However, the Siwei Lueyao fa resembles other meditation texts translated by Kumārajīva. Scholars generally believe that this text dates from Kumārajīva’s time, and likely compiled by someone belonging to his school, if not by himself. Paul Demiéville, “La Yogācārabhūmi de Sāntaharakaṇḍa,” Bulletin de l’École Française d’Extrême-Orient 44, 2(1954): 359.

31 Taishō 15:614.269c-286a, trans. Kumārajīva, 401 C.E.

32 Taishō 15:613.242c-269c. It is attributed to Kumārajīva according to the Lidai sanbao ji and may not be reliable. Sakaino attributes it to Dharmamitra based on the Chu sanzang ji 出三藏記 (Taishō 55:2145.12c). Nobuyoshi agrees with him because this identification is further confirmed in the Mingseng zhuan 名僧伝 (Biography of Emanate Monks) in the Dai nihon zokuzōkyō 大日本續藏經 (1B.7.1a-17c). Tsukinowa suggests that the text is compiled by Chinese based on oral transmission from India. Sakaino Kōyō, Shīna Bukkyō sesshi 大日本續藏經 (Tōkyō: Sakaino Kōyō Hakushi Ikkō, 1935), 862-63; Yamabe, The Sūtra on the Ocean-Like Samādhi, 107; Tsukinowa Kenryū, Butten no hihanteki kenkyū (Kyoto: Hyakkaen, 1971), 106-9.

33 An anonymous manuscript excavated from the library cave at Dunhuang Taishō 85:2914.1459c-1461a. According Chen Zuolong, the text is datable from 424-441 C.E. Chen Zuolong 陳作龍, “Kan le Dunhuang guchao Fo shuo guan jing yihou” 看了敦煌古抄佛說觀經以後, in Di’erjie Dunhuang guoji yantaohui lunwenji 第二屆敦煌學國際研討會論文集 (Taipei: Hanxue yanjiu zhongxin, 1991), 29-46.

34 Taishō 15:620.333a-342b, trans. Juqu Jingsheng 楚京聲. The text is a collection of different sūtra styles. Tsukinowa suspects that the text was compiled in Central Asia. Yamabe suggests that the very last section was added later. Tsukinowa, Butten no hihanteki kenkyū, 106; Yamabe, The Sūtra on the Ocean-like Samādhi, 111.

35 The five methods are: meditation on the unpleasant, mindfulness breathing, meditation on the Four Elements, meditation on dependent origination and buddhānusmṛti.

36 Taishō 15:619.329c.

37 Taishō 15:613.255bc, 256a, 264b.

38 Taishō 15:620.333c.
body, the *dharmakāya*. Visualizing the Buddha’s form body is, ultimately, for the purpose of understanding the *dharmakāya*.

The *guanjings* are best known by six scriptures:

- **Guan Wuliangshoufo jing** 觀無量壽佛經 (*Sūtra on the Contemplation on the Amitāyus Buddha*), translated in 424 C.E. by Kālayaśas 當良耶舍 (*Taishō* 365).
- **Guan puxian pusa xingfa jing** 觀普賢菩薩行法經 (*Sūtra on the Methods of Practicing the Contemplation of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva*), trans. Dharmamitra 曼摩蜜多 (*Taishō* 277).
- **Guan Mile pusa shangsheng Doushuaitian jing** 觀彌勒菩薩上生兜率天經 (*Sūtra on the Contemplation of Bodhisattva Maitreya’s Ascent to Birth in Tuṣita Heaven*), translated in 455 C.E. by Juqu Jingsheng 沮渠京聲 (*Taishō* 452).
- **Guan Yaowang Yaoshang er pusa jing** 觀藥王藥上二菩薩經 (*Sūtra on the Contemplation of the Two Bodhisattvas Medicine King and Superior Medicine*), trans. Kālayaśas 當良耶舍 (*Taishō* 1161).

Scholars believe that most of them, if not all, originated in Central Asia, specifically in the Turfan area, or even China. They are devoted solely to the *buddhānusmṛti* practice on an individual Buddha and a bodhisattva. The descriptions of emanating *nirmāṇabuddhas* with the light occur in all of these *guanjings*. Two of the texts are about meditating on the Buddhas: The **Ocean Sūtra** on Śākyamuni, and the **Amitāyusdhyaṇa-sūtra** on Amitāyus. In both of them, emanating *nirmāṇabuddhas* with the light is seen as a primary

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feature of the Buddha. The two, although dated to the same period, also present different focuses.

In the Ocean Sūtra, the Buddha is intensively shown emitting lights, and the lights are further transformed into a myriad of nirmāṇabuddhas. Such description is much more prevalent in the Ocean Sūtra than in any other text. Emanating lights and a myriad of other Buddhas is no longer a rare miraculous event; it becomes the essential quality of all the thirty-two body marks and eighty minor marks:

The Buddha told Ānanda, “The Tathāgata has thirty-two auspicious body marks and eighty minor marks, which all radiate golden light. And each ray of the light transforms into immeasurable nirmāṇabuddhas.”

In every lakṣanas (body marks of the Buddha), there are infinite nirmāṇabuddhas.

In the Ocean Sūtra, Indra made a wish: “May I and all the gods have the body just like the Buddha.” Then immediately he saw that millions of rays of light radiated from his heart with each ray turning into hundreds and thousands of nirmāṇabuddhas, and his body appearing in gold color (one of the body marks of the Buddha). It is remarkable that, as shown here, emanating light and nirmāṇabuddhas almost becomes the benchmark to symbolize the quality of the Buddha’s body.

In the list of the Buddha’s lakṣana that should be visualized, both the yuanguang 圓光 (halo) and changguang 常光 (constant light) are mentioned as the subjects of contemp-

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41 佛告阿難。如來有三十二大人相八十種隨形好金色光明。一一光明無量化佛。*Taishō* 15:643.687b.

42 “一一相中無量化佛。”*Taishō* 15:643.687b.

43 “願令我等及諸天眾猶如佛身。作是語時。自見心中百萬光出。一一光明化成無量百千化佛。自見己身身真金色。”*Taishō* 15:643.682c.
The halo is one fathom long and inside the halo, there are nirmāna-buddhas on lotus flowers. In this text, the lakṣana of the Buddha’s constant light refers to the light emitted from the Buddha’s uṣṇīsa, the middle point between the eyebrows and the pores. These lights can transform into Buddhas, who also emit light.

The buddhānusmṛti practice in chanjing texts and the Ocean Sūtra focuses primarily on Śākyamuni. This suggests that the feature of emitting light and Buddhas may be originally most strongly associated with Śākyamuni. However, it became a prominent mark of other Buddhas (and even bodhisattvas) as well by the early fifth century.

In the Amitāyusdhyāna-sūtra, the visualization is formulized into sixteen steps, with the emphasis on building up the vision of Amitāyus’s pure land, Sukhāvatī. This practice is not only calling Amitāyus to appear in front of one’s eyes, but to place oneself into the world of the Buddha. It is set out for the goal of rebirth into Sukhāvatī. Only the ninth vision is about contemplating on Amitāyus himself. As I cited before, although just a few body marks (his height, eyes, ārṇā, pores and halo) are mentioned in the section, a halo (yuanguang) filled with infinite nirmāṇabuddhas is selected as an important characteristic of Amitāyus’s body.

The change about the nirmāṇabuddha figures in visions of the Buddha from the buddhānusmṛti practice is shown in contemporary image-making. I quoted in Chapter 1

44 There are variations of the list of the thirty-two lakṣanas of the Buddha. It is perhaps an attempt to comprehend the pre-existing opinions that the number of the lakṣanas in the Ocean Sūtra is more than thirty-two.

45 Taishō 15:643.659bc.

46 Taishō 15:643.663ab.

47 The idea of rebirth in the Buddha’s land also exists in other buddhānusmṛti practice of the time. The Ocean Sūtra promises a rebirth with Maitreya. However, the goal is most direct and strong with the buddhānusmṛti on Amitāyus.

48 “彼佛圓光如百億三千大千世界。於圓光中。有百萬億那由他恒河沙化佛。一一化佛。亦有眾多無數化菩薩。以為侍者。” Taishō 12:365.343b.
that when he gave Ānanda an instruction on image-making in the Ocean Sūtra, Śākyamuni particularly mentioned the nirmāṇabuddhas.\textsuperscript{49}

There is no mention of the Buddha’s one-fathom long aura in the Nikāyas or Āgamas. In those canonical texts, the Buddha is only described as having golden colored skin in the list of his thirty-two laksana. The one-fathom long aura first became an attribute of the Buddha in the Buddhavaṃsa and the Vimānavaṭṭhū of the Khuddakanikāya.\textsuperscript{50} Some of the biographical sūtras of the Buddha began to include it in the list of the thirty-two body marks while many others did not. It finally became one of the thirty-two marks and a standard expression in all relevant Mahāyāna sūtras.\textsuperscript{51} The Pratyutpanna of the second century is silent about whether a Buddha emanates other Buddhas in his light.

By the time when the Ocean Sūtra and the Amitāyusdhyāna-sūtra were compiled, emitting nirmāṇabuddhas with his light had become a substantial feature of the body of a Buddha. In particular, the halo, as a Buddha’s body mark, is defined of having nirmāṇabuddhas inside. Here, the halo and nirmāṇabuddhas are in a consistent static status, and no emanation is mentioned. This is a completely different concept from the miracle performed by Śākyamuni on special occasions.

\textbf{3.4 As an Aspect of the Dharmakāya}

Why did the descriptions of a Buddha emanating other Buddhas become so pronounced in Mahāyāna texts? What is the importance of a Buddha to generate other Buddhas? How did contemporary Buddhists perceive this new type of miracle described

\textsuperscript{49} Taishō 15:643.675c.

\textsuperscript{50} Buddhavaṃsa, I v 45; Vimānavaṭṭhū-atṭhakathā, V 213; Endo, Buddha in Theravada Buddhism, 146.

\textsuperscript{51} Xing, The Concept of the Buddha, 148.
in Mahāyāna texts? Behind these narrative descriptions in the sūtras and visions on meditations, what is the change about the concept of the Buddha, upon which Buddhists developed complicated theories on the Buddha-body centered around the dharmakāya (Dharma-body). The notion of the Buddha’s Dharma-body is part of the core of Buddhist philosophy, and is notorious for its complexity. However, some scholars have already associated the image of the emanating Buddha with the dharmakāya. Therefore, it is an inevitable task to clarify this concept regarding its nature as the generator of all Buddhas.

A New Concept of Buddha

In early Buddhism when the body-multiplication was discussed just as a ājñā power, Buddhas were seen as historical persons with corporal bodies. The term dharmakāya, Dharma-body, is identified with the Buddhist teachings, namely Buddhist scriptures. However, there is little evidence of forming a coherent Buddha-kāya system.

A new concept of the Buddha emerged in Mahāsāṃghikas, which eventually became the base for Mahāyāna philosophy. In the Lokānavartana-sūtra, one of the earliest Mahāyāna (or perhaps more precisely Mahāsāṃghikas) text translated into Chinese by Lokakṣema in 179 C.E., this new concept of Buddha is discussed in conjunction with the


53 Lai Pengju, Silu fojiao de tuxiang yu chanfa (Xinzhu: Yuanguang foxue yanjiusuo, 2002), 76-93.

54 Besides the Form-body and Dharma-body, the Pāli Nikāyas and Sanskrit Āgamas also recognized a concept of a mind-made body (manomayakāya) with which the Buddha traveled to the world of Brahmā. Early Buddhist scholars considered these three bodies as a prototype of the three-kāya theory. e.g. Maryala Falk, Nama-Rupa and Dharma-Rupa. Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1943; Lamotte, History of Indian Buddhism, 622.
idea of the transformation Buddhas. According to the Lokānavartana-sūtra, the Buddha is fundamentally empty (śūnyatā).\textsuperscript{55} All Buddhas have one body, the body of the Dharma (scripture).\textsuperscript{56} For the sake of the world, a Buddha displayed a human life from birth to nirvāṇa. In reality, there is no coming and going for the Buddha.\textsuperscript{57} This conception of a Buddha marks a departure from what was taught in the Nīkāyas and Āgamas. The emphasis on the doctrine of śūnyatā shares commonality with the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, another early Mahāyāna sūtra. Although a Buddha is essentially empty, he “can manifest himself into numerous split-bodies and appear in countless Buddha lands. But the quantity of the body of the Buddha neither increases nor decreases. Following the rules of the mundane world, the Buddha makes display as such.”\textsuperscript{58}

Here, with the notion of a conceptual Buddha, Śākyamuni in this eon and this world is merely a display. It is a fundamental nature and ability for the conceptual Buddha to transform into different forms to appear in various Buddha’s worlds. Although this concept is very close to the dharmakāya, it needs to point out that Mahāsāṃghikas did not use the term dharmakāya in their extant literature.\textsuperscript{59} The word used for the transformed bodies in the Chinese text is only fenshen 分身, or the “split-body.”

The Two-kāya System

Around the early fifth century, a two fold interrelated Buddha-kāya theory was introduced to China, especially through the translations and works by Kumārajīva, such

\textsuperscript{55} Taishō 17:807.752a.

\textsuperscript{56} Taishō 17:807.753a.

\textsuperscript{57} Taishō 17:807.752a-753a.

\textsuperscript{58} Taishō 17:807.753b.

\textsuperscript{59} Xing, The Concept of the Buddha, 59-61.
as the *Dazhidu lun* (*Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa*). The *Dazhidu lun*, attributed to Nāgārjuna (150-250 C.E.), is a commentary of the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*. It is an encyclopedia-like Mahāyāna treatise translated by Kumārajīva (350-409 C.E.) in 402-405 C.E. The aforementioned miracle of the Buddha emitting rays and other Buddhas from his tongue from the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* was explained explicitly in this commentary:

The Buddha has two kinds of bodies. The first is the body derived of the nature of the Dharma (*dharma-tākāya*), and second is the birth-body given by the parents. The *dharma-tākāya* pervades the infinite space of the ten directions. Its form is majestic. Its marks (*lakṣaṇa*) are marvelous. Its light is limitless. And its voice is boundless. The audiences also pervade the space. (They are *dharma-tākāya* as well and not visible to the human beings who are subject to birth and death.) The *dharma-tākāya* is constantly producing various bodies under various names at various places to save all the beings through skilful means (*upāya*) without a single moment of rest. This *dharma-tākāya* Buddha can save beings from the worlds in the ten directions.61

The body from the Dharma-nature (*dharma-tākāya*) possesses the skilful means (*upāya*) of creating various form bodies to save living beings. A similar message occurs in a number of places in this text.62 Here the *dharma-tākāya* is not a formless body that equals the Dharma and *śūnyatā*. Note that the audiences are also *dharma-tākāyas*.

Kumārajīva was a very influential figure in Chinese Buddhist history. It is generally conceived that as a result of Kumārajīva’s lucid translations and activities, Mahāyāna doctrine became widespread in Chinese Buddhist communities. Kumārajīva had an extensive discussion on the *dharma-kāya* in his correspondence with the Chinese monk

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61 "佛有二種身。一者法性身。二者父母生身。是法性身滿十方虚空無量無邊。色像端正相好莊嚴。無量光明無量音聲。聽法眾亦滿虛空。(此眾亦是法性身非生死人所得見也)常出種種身種種名號種種生處種種方便度眾生。常度一切無須臾息時。如是法性身佛。能度十方世界眾生。" *Taishō 25*:1059.121c.

62 *Such as Taishō 25*:1059.278a-b.
Huiyuan (334–417 C.E.). In his response to Huiyuan, Kumārajīva quoted the above passage from the *Dazhidu lun*, but he replaced the term “dharmatākāya” with the “dharmakāya” and called the emanated Buddha the *nirmāṇabuddha*.\(^{63}\)

Several points are important in this definition. First, the dharmakāya becomes a source of the *nirmāṇabuddhas*, or other Buddhas. This remains as the core in the full-fledged tri-kāya system. Second, both the rays and *nirmāṇabuddhas* are mentioned. Third, creating *nirmāṇabuddhas* has a direct purpose here: “to save sentient beings.” In Hīnayāna Buddhism, displaying miracles is a demonstration of one’s achievement and the success of Buddhist practice, and which therefore can enhance the faith of Buddhist followers. In Mahāyāna theory, creating *nirmāṇabuddhas* is for teaching the Dharma and saving all beings. In Buddhist terminology, this is a direct expression of *upāya* (skillful means).\(^{64}\) The *upāya* is an important notion in Mahāyāna Buddhism.

Lai Pengju’s identification of images of the emanating Buddha as the dharmakāya is based on Kumārajīva’s letter to Huiyuan. Then, what is the meaning of the dharmakāya in this context? According to Kumārajīva in the same group of letters, the term dharmakāya denotes multiple meanings. It is also used to call all of the bodies a Buddha and bodhisattva assumes in between the human body and the absolute nirvāṇa.\(^{65}\)

**The Three-kāya System and Beyond**

What is best known to late Mahāyānists and modern scholars is the tri-kāya theory developed from the Yogācāra school. The theory is represented in the writings of Asaṅga,

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63 “真法身者。遍滿十方虛空法界。光明悉照無量國土。……從是佛身方便現化。常有無量無邊化佛。遍於十方。隨眾生類若干差品。而為現形。” *Kumārajīva fashi dayi (Correspondence)*, *Taishō* 45:1856.122c.


65 *Kumārajīva fashi dayi (Correspondence)*, *Taishō* 45:1856.127c.
such as the Mahāyānasūtrālāṃkara and Mahāyānasamgraha. The Mahāyānasamgraha presents three bodies of the Buddha: the body of self-nature (svabhāvikakāya), the body of enjoyment (sāmbhogakāya), and the body of transformation (nirmāṇakāya). The svabhāvikakāya is the dharmakāya. The dharmakāya is the true body of the Buddha, which is devoid of material substance and is formless and therefore imperishable. The sāmbhogakāya and nirmāṇakāya are derived from the dharmakāya at different levels. The sāmbhogakāya is the body dwelling in the Buddha’s land teaching to bodhisattvas. The nirmāṇakāya is the body manifested in the human realm to teach human beings.

The tri-kāya theory is generally believed to have emerged around the third century. However, it was not introduced to China until the late fifth century.

In the discussion of kāyas in the commentaries, the process from one body to other bodies is better understood as transformation and manifestation. Whether it is direct emanation through rays is not the concern. However, occasionally, rays and nirmāṇabuddhas being emanated from the dharmakāya is mentioned. For example, it is said in the Sandhinirmocana-sūtra, a Yogācāra treatise translated by Xuanzang in 645 C.E., that “the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata, for sentient beings, emits the great light of wisdom, as well as the infinite shadow-like images of the nirmāṇakāya.”

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66 Habito and Makransky believe that the Mahāyānasūtrālāṃkara is the first text which gives a systematic explanation of the tri-kāya theory. Makransky, Buddhahood Embodied, 54-55.
67 The Suvarṇaprabhāśa-sūtra and Lankāvatāra are also influential texts in the Chinese tri-kāya tradition.
69 “如來法身為諸有情放大智光。及出無量化身影像。” Sandhinirmocana-sūtra 解深密經, Taishō 16:676.711a, trans. Xuanzang, 645 C.E. This passage is absent in Bodhiruci’s translation (Taishō 16:675) in 486-534 C.E.
To analyze with the vocabulary of the tri-*kāya* theory, Buddhas in all three *kāyas* can emanate other Buddhas. The emanated Buddhas, or *nirmāṇabuddhas*, can be the *sāṃbhogakāya* or *nirmāṇakāya*. And the aforementioned *dharmatākāya* in the *Dazhidu Lun*, although rephrased as *dharmakāya* by Kumārajīva, is actually the *sāṃbhogakāya*.

Besides the two-*kāya* and three-*kāya* theories, one can also find lists of four, five, or ten bodies in Buddhist texts. There is no clear linear chronology of these theories. And Buddhists did not settle on one coherent *kāya* system. Although later Mahāyāna Buddhists and modern scholars like to refer to the tri-*kāya* theory and the *dharmakāya* as its meaning in the tri-*kāya*, most of the *sūtras* are not based on the tri-*kāya* model, including the well-known *Lotus Sūtra* and *Avataṃsaka*. The *Lotus Sūtra* does not mention *dharmakāya* or *rūpakāya*. The *Avataṃsaka* text lists several sets of ten bodies of the Buddha and the ten Buddhas.

**Vairocana vs. Śākyamuni**

In Mahāyāna theories, because the phenomenon of a Buddha creating other Buddhas is seen as ultimately related the nature of Buddhas and the *dharmakāya*, it becomes a competitive issue as to who plays the role as the emanator. Although all Buddhas can emanate other Buddhas, textual descriptions of such emanating mostly appear with Vairocana and Śākyamuni.

In *sūtras* from the *Avataṃsaka* family, Vairocana personifies the source of all Buddhas. Numerable passages in the *Avataṃsaka* describe Vairocana emanating Buddhas of the ten directions and three times out of his body. Just to list a few:

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“All Tathāgatas of the ten-directions and from the three-times, Manifest their forms in the body of the Buddha (Vairocana).”\textsuperscript{72}

“Vairocana Buddha attained the perfect enlightenment. He radiates great light that illuminates the ten directions, Transformation bodies emerge from all his pores like clouds.”\textsuperscript{73}

“From one pore, The nirmāṇabuddhas come out like clouds, unthinkably. They suffuse all the space in the ten directions, And save multitudes of beings with immeasurable skill-in-means.”\textsuperscript{74}

In some traditions of Buddhism, Vairocana is a sāṃbhogakāya Buddha who represents the dharmakāya.

In the meanwhile, descriptions of Śākyamuni emitting rays and nirmāṇabuddhas from his body before his preaching are common in Mahāyāna sūtras. Buddhist theorists also attempted to match Śākyamuni up with the dharmakāya and Vairocana, especially in commentaries and apocryphal texts.

Take the \textit{Lotus Sūtra} for example, even though the \textit{sūtra} presents a message that the Buddha is eternally preaching the \textit{sūtra}, it never identifies the Buddha with the Dharma, and the word “dharmakāya” never appeared in the original body of the text, but was later inserted into its chapters.\textsuperscript{75} However, in Chinese orthodox tradition confirmed by Zhiyi 智顗 (538-597 C.E.), this text was interpreted as teaching the “eternity of the dharmakāya” and Śākyamuni as one with the Dharma or dharmakāya.\textsuperscript{76} There is an episode in

\textsuperscript{72} “十方三世諸如來，於佛身中現色像.” \textit{Taishō 9:278.403a.}

\textsuperscript{73} “盧舍那佛成正覺, 放大光明照十方, 諸毛孔出化身雲.” \textit{Taishō 9:278.405c.}

\textsuperscript{74} “或有於一毛孔中，化佛雲出不思議，充滿一切十方界，無量方便化眾生.” \textit{Taishō 9:278.412a.}


the sūtra where Śākyamuni summoned back his split-bodies. In the Fahua yishu 法華義疏, a commentary of the Lotus Sūtra, Jizang 吉藏 (549-623 C.E.) has thus interpreted this episode: Before Śākyamuni summoned together his split-bodies, he was preaching at Vulture Peak on earth. After he collected all his split-bodies from the ten directions, Śākyamuni manifested in the dharmakāya, and transformed the Vulture Peak into the pure land of the Buddha.\textsuperscript{77}

The Bao’en jing is a text based on jātaka (birth stories of Śākyamuni’s previous lives) and avadāna (birth stories focused on cause and effect) stories from pre-existing Buddhist literature and it promotes filial piety. Its translation date is unknown. There has been suspicion about the authenticity of the text since the sixth century.\textsuperscript{78} It is said in the beginning of the text that Śākyamuni makes transformations according to circumstances for the sake of all beings; for example, Vairocana in the other land and the eight-years life in human world are just two of these transformations.\textsuperscript{79} In the Guan puxian pusa xingfa jing 觀普賢菩薩行法經 (Sūtra on the Methods of Practicing the Contemplation of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva), translated by Dharmamitra 景摩蜜多 (356-442 C.E.), “Śākyamuni is called Vairocana and present everywhere.”\textsuperscript{80} This text is one of the visualization sūtras (guanjing) that appeared in China during the late fourth and early fifth centuries and it is similar to other visualization texts appeared in China in this period, its authenticity is questionable.

\textsuperscript{77} Taishō 34:1721.587c.

\textsuperscript{78} Chu sanzang ji ji 出三藏記集 (A Collection of Records on Translating the Three Canons), Taishō 55:2145.21, by Sengyou 僧祐, 502-519 C.E.

\textsuperscript{79} “或於異剎。稱盧舍那如來。” Taishō 3:156.128a.

\textsuperscript{80} “釋迦牟尼名毘盧遮那遍一切處” Taishō 9:277.392c, trans. Dharmamitra 景摩蜜多, 356-442 C.E.
In summary, emanating other Buddhas from the body was transformed from a particular event in Śākyamuni’s life into a generic yet quintessential quality of the Buddha in Mahāyāna Buddhism. The idea that the Buddha can split into a myriad of other Buddhas are intricately related to the formulization of the Buddhist kāya system. According to the Buddha-kāya theories, all Buddhas are manifestations of the same ultimate source called the body of the Dharma. Theoretically, all Buddhas can emanate other Buddhas from their bodies. However the textual references are focused on Śākyamuni and Vairocana. As aforementioned in Chapter 1, at a conceptual level of Buddhahood, Śākyamuni is not different from Vairocana. Vairocana personifies the dharmakāya in some Buddhist traditions.

3.5 The Emanated Buddhas and the Multiple Buddhas of Mahāyāna

Who are the emanated Buddhas? As discussed above, we can see that they are usually described as Buddhas sent to the whole cosmos in the ten directions. In the stock phrase used in Buddhist texts, they are Buddhas of the ten directions (daśadīgbuddhas). In the context of rddhi power in Hinayāna Buddhism, the emanated Buddhas do not appear with independent identities. Hinayānists hold strongly that only one Buddha exists at a time. Mahāyānists believe that other Buddhas besides Śākyamuni are present. Each of these Buddhas dwells in his own cosmic land (kṣetra), such as Aksobhya in Abhirati and Amitābha in Sukhāvatī. This belief becomes extremely significant in Mahāyāna Buddhism. How did the emanated Buddhas come to be the multiple Buddhas in

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Mahāyāna Buddhism? This section traces the descriptions of the Buddha’s emanation in different versions of some major Mahāyāna texts to find when they were in a single Buddha’s world and when they were in the cosmology of multiple Buddhas.

**Within the Trichiliocosm**

The most ancient Buddhist cosmology possibly consisted of only one cakravāla. However, from the canonical Pāli Aṅguttara Nikāya to the Sanskrit Lokaprajñāpatti in the Prajñapātisāra, an Abhidharma text of the Sarvāstivādin school, claims were made for a thousand-fold world system (above the cakravāla). The one-thousand-small-thousand worlds are composed of 1,000 cakravāla universes. The twice-thousand-middle-thousand worlds are 1,000 of the one-thousand-small-thousand worlds. The triple-thousand-great-thousand worlds (trichiliocosm) consist of 1,000 of the twice-thousand-middle-thousand worlds. This triple-thousand-great-thousand world/trichiliocosm is the cosmic domain (kṣetra) of Śākyamuni called Sahā (in some texts). Each

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82 La Vallée Poussin, “Cosmogony and Cosmology (Buddhist),” in Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1911), 4: 137.


84 The most systemically developed Buddhist cosmography appears in the Lokaprajñāpatti. The Sanskrit original may be dated to the fourth century. Sanskrit fragments of the text are found from Gilgit and Turfan. The Chinese equivalent appears to be an independent translation (sixth century): Lokaprajñāpattyabhidharma, see Taishō 32:1644.174a-b. It was translated into Tibetan in the eighth-ninth centuries (To.4086). For a translation-summary from the Tibetan translation, see Louis La Vallée Poussin, Vasubhadra et Yaçomitra, Troisième chapitre de L’Abhidharmakośa Kārikā, Bhāṣya et Vākhya, Avec une analyse de la Lokaprajñāpatti et de la Kāraṇaprajñāpatti de Maudhalyāyana. Bouddhisme, Études et Matériaux, Cosmologie: Le monde des êtres et le réceptable, Kegan Paul, Trench. (London: Trubner & Co. 1918), 326-350; For a review of the study on this text, see Willemen, Sarvāstivāda Buddhist Scholasticism, 189-197.

85 There are numerous examples in Buddhist texts endorsing the trichiliocosms as the field of Śākyamuni, such as in the Lotus Sūtra: “The three-thousand-great-thousand-worlds are the field of the Buddha (三千大千佛之國土)” Taishō 9: 263.102b. In the Yogācārabhumi this concept is raised in the systematic introduction of the Buddhist cosmology; Yūichi Kajiyama, “Buddhist Cosmology as Presented in the Yogācārabhumi,” in Wisdom, Compassion, and the Search of understanding, ed. Jonathan Silk (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000), 199. This is also accepted by modern scholars, see Louis La Vallée Poussin, “Cosmogony and Cosmology (Buddhist),” 129-138. There are also different opinions concerning the extent of Sahā. For a short review, see Akira Sadakata, Buddhist Cosmology, 114.
Buddha has his *kṣetra*-- the scope of his authority, the sphere of his influence-- where his light and wisdom can reach.\(^86\)

Modern scholars are more familiar with the Buddhist cosmologies of one *cakravāla* world and the multiple Buddha-*kṣetras* in Mahāyāna cosmology. The thousand-fold world system has usually been overlooked.\(^87\) Randy Kloetzli proposes that the Buddha’s multiplication is associated with the plurality of the cosmography of the trichiliocosm. Just as the cosmos multiplies itself, the Buddha multiplies his body.\(^88\) Whether he is correct or not, there seems to have been a belief that the Buddha’s multiplication takes place in the trichiliocosm. This point of view is reflected in several early Mahāyāna texts, such as the *Dousha jing* �兜沙經 (the second century), *Fo sheng Renlitian wei mu shuofa jing* 佛昇忉利天為母說法經 *Sūtra of Buddha’s Ascension to the Trayastriṃśa Heaven to Preach the Dharma to His Mother* (hereafter *Trayastriṃśa Sūtra*) (the third century), *Pañcavimśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* (the third century), and *Mahāyānasamgraha* (the fourth century).

The *Dousha jing* 霹沙經 is one of the earliest extant Mahāyāna texts translated by Lokaśema in 178-189 C.E. and was later assimilated into the *Avatāṃsaka* as a chapter. It is a short *sūtra* introducing the different names of Śākyamuni in a billion worlds in the

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\(^{87}\) For more study and references on the trichiliocosm, see Randy Kloetzli, *Buddhist Cosmology—From Single World System to Pure Land: Science and Theology in the Images of Motion and Light* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983), 51-72; Tianshu Zhu, “In the Thousand-fold World System,” in *Vanamala: Festschrift Adalbert J. Gail*, eds. Falk Reitz, and Gerd Mevissen (Berlin: Weidler Buchverlag, 2006), 253-264. Kloetzli brings attention to this subject, and proposes four phases of the Buddhist cosmology: the single world, the “cosmology of thousands,” the “cosmology of innumerables,” and the cosmology of the Pure Land sects. These different types of cosmology may not follow a chronological order in an absolute sense. The cosmology of the multiple Buddhas may not be later than the “cosmology of thousands.” In addition, he believes the “cosmology of thousands” is associated with Sarvāstivādin school. However, I should add that it is also embraced by Theravāda and Mahāyāna, at least the term if not the concept.

\(^{88}\) Kloetzli, *Buddhist Cosmology*, 68.
ten directions. By the end of the text, the Buddha emits light that reveals a billion worlds, all of which constitute the Buddha-\(kṣetra\) of Śākyamuni called Sahā:

....All is the domain of Śākyamuni Buddha. In each of the ten directions, there are 100,000,000 worlds. Each has a cosmic ocean, a Mount Sumeru, and reaches up to the Trāyāstrimśa Heaven. Every small world is constructed as such. The total of 1,000,000,000 worlds constitutes one Buddha-\(kṣetra\) (Buddha-field) called Sahā. The Buddha split his body reaching all the 1,000,000,000 worlds. Each of these small worlds has a Buddha and 1,000,000,000 Buddhas in all.\(^{89}\)

1,000,000,000 = 1000×1000×1000 and is the exact number of the \(cakravālas\) in a trichiliocosm. In this early text, the \(daśadīgbuddhas\) as the split-bodies of Śākyamuni are inside the Sahā, or the trichiliocosm. In the fifth and seventh centuries’ translations of the complete version of the \(Avataṃsaka\), the text (\(Dousha\ jing\)) became much longer and the above passage was missing. The worlds in the ten directions are enumerated three times: inside Sahā, outside Sahā and beyond.\(^{90}\) All the Buddhas inside Sahā and beyond are manifestations of the Tathāgata with different names.

The \(Dousha\ jing\) is not alone in matching the Buddha’s multiplication bodies with the thousand-fold world system of Sahā. Similar descriptions can also be found in the \(Trayāstrimśa\ Sūtra\) translated by Dharmarākṣa in 270 C.E. A variation of the text was translated as the \(Foshuo\ daoshenzu\ wujibianhua\ jing\) \(Sūtra\ on the Unlimited Changes of the Supernatural Powers,\) hereafter \(Sūtra\ on \(Rddhi\)) by Faqin in the same period, 265-316 C.E. In these texts, the multiple worlds of the Buddhas in the ten directions are said to be inside the trichiliocosm. And “the trichiliocosm is the

\(^{89}\)“释迦文佛。都所典主。十方面一一方。各有一億小國土。皆有一大海一須彌山。上至三十三天。一小國土。如是所部。凡有十億小國土。合為一佛剎名為蔡呵祇。佛分身。悉遍至十億小國土。一一小國土。皆有一佛。凡有十億佛。” Taishō 10:280.446ab.

\(^{90}\)The chapter \(Rulai\ minghao\ pin\) 如來名號品 in the \(Avataṃsaka\). Taishō 9:278.418a-420b, trans. Buddhabhadra, 317-402 C.E.; Taishō 10:279.57c-60a, trans. Śīksānanda, 695-699 C.E.
domain of one Buddha.” In this trichiliocosm, the Buddha does not appear only in one place, but in all the worlds for the needs of all sentient beings.\textsuperscript{91} Teaching the Dharma in all the worlds in the trichiliocosm is the duty of the Buddha. This is the so-called “unlimited changes of the \textit{ṛddhi} power” of the Buddha, which surpass the power of the monks and Pratyekabuddhas.\textsuperscript{92}

The \textit{Prajñāpāramitā sūtras} are the earliest and most fundamental Mahāyāna philosophical texts. These texts emphasize the cosmology of the multiple Buddhas’ worlds in the ten directions and the empty nature of a Buddha. The \textit{Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra} translated by Lokakṣema in 179 C.E. is the earliest of this group of texts. In this \textit{sūtra}, both concepts of \textit{daśadigbuddhas} and \textit{nirmāṇabuddhas} exist but are not related to each other. And the Buddha is only shown emitting light, no \textit{nirmāṇa-buddhas} appearing at the end of the rays.\textsuperscript{93} The direct description of emitting Buddhas appears in the \textit{Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā}. It has been translated into Chinese three times: 放光般若經 (\textit{Taishō 8:221}) by Mokṣa in 292 C.E.; 光讃經 (\textit{Taishō 8:222}) by Dharmarakṣa in 286 C.E.; and 摩訶般若波羅蜜經 (\textit{Taishō 8:223}) by Kumārajīva in 403-404 C.E. In the third century versions of the translation, which I just quoted in the previous section, the Buddha emits Buddhas inside the trichiliocosm.\textsuperscript{94}

\textsuperscript{91} \textit{Taishō} 17:815.795b; \textit{Taishō} 17:816.811a.

\textsuperscript{92} \textit{Taishō} 17:815.795b-799a; 17:816.813-816. The discussion in the \textit{Trayastrīmsa Sūtra} is extended in the end implying that the same can apply to the other Buddha’s world outside trichiliocosm. The idea is represented very vaguely and perhaps a later addition to the text.

\textsuperscript{93} Daoxingbanruo jing 道行般若経 (\textit{Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra of the Practice of the Way}), \textit{Taishō} 8:224.470c-473c, trans. Lokakṣema, 179 C.E.

\textsuperscript{94} “爾時世尊。出廣長舌遍三千大千國土。遍已從其舌根。復放無央數億百千光明。一一光明化為千葉寶華其色如金。一一華者上皆有坐佛。一一諸佛皆說六度無極。一切眾生聞說法者。皆發無上正真道意。其舌光明一一華像。復照十方恒邊沙國土。一切眾生見其光明聞說法者。亦發無上正真道意。” \textit{Taishō} 8:221.1b; also \textit{Taishō} 8:222.147c.
To the Buddhists who believe in a cosmology of the multiple worlds of infinite Buddhhas, the idea that the nirmāṇabuddhas can only fill one trichiliocosm must not have sounded grandiose enough. In the fifth-century translation of this text, the passage of emanating Buddhhas is gone. There is only light emitted from the tongue of the Buddha that reaches out to the worlds in the ten directions.95

The idea that Buddha’s multiplication is associated with the trichiliocosm is also traceable in the treatise of the Yogācāra school. In his Mahāyānasāṅggraha, Asaṅga (ca. 4th c.) lists eight reasons for the existence of the transformation-body (nirmāṇakāya) of the Buddha. The eighth is described as follows: “The doctrine of a multiplicity of bodies of transformation does not contradict the sacred text, which says that two Tathāgatas do not arise in the same world since the term ‘world’ in the text indicates the four continents of a single Jambudvīpa and not a trichiliocosm.”96 Although, Asaṅga’s arguments appear to reconcile with the Hinayānist belief of only one Buddha in one world at a given time, associating the nirmāṇabuddhas with the trichiliocosm must make sense to large number of Buddhists at that time; otherwise Asaṅga would not have used it as a defense. If the whole trichiliocosm is the Kṣetra of Śākyamuni, his power (such as his light and bodies) has to be able to be present in all the worlds of this thousand-fold cosmos. And, if all the nirmāṇabuddhas are in just one kṣetra, they only form one identity as a single Buddha. Then Hinayānists would have no problem.

However, in Mahāyāna Buddhism, even when the nirmāṇabuddhas are confined in the thousand-fold world system of trichiliocosm, they possess more individuality than the

95 Taishō 8:223.230ab.
multiple bodies created by ṛddhi in Hinayāna Buddhism. In the *Dousha jing*, *Trayastriṃśa Sūtra*, and *Sūtra on Rddhi*, the *nirmāṇabuddhas* have individual names. In the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā* and *Trayastriṃśa Sūtra*, Śākyamuni taught Subhūti and Maudgal- yāyana respectively that the *nirmāṇabuddhas*, in many ways, function the same as the real Buddha. ⁹⁷ Eventually, it is this independent aspect of the *nirmāṇabuddhas* that was emphasized in Mahāyāna.

**In the Worlds of the Ten Directions outside the Trichiliocosm**

Mahāyānists believe that infinite Buddhas coexist in the ten directions throughout the past, present and future. The interest is beyond the world of one Buddha. In Mahāyāna texts, especially after the fifth century, these transformations of Śākyamuni are said to be the multiple Buddhas outside trichiliocosm. Here, I will give two examples from two of the most fundamental Mahāyāna doctrinal texts, the *Lotus Sūtra* and the *Avatāṃsaka*, and one example from the *Śūraṅgamasamādhi-sūtra*, an essential Mahāyāna meditation text.

The eleventh chapter (“Apparition of the Jeweled Stūpa”) of the *Lotus Sūtra* portrays a dramatic encounter between two Buddhas, Śākyamuni and Prabhūtaratna. When Śākyamuni was about to teach the *Lotus Sūtra*, suddenly, the stūpa of Prabhūtaratna Buddha from the remote past rose up in the air. If Śākyamuni can assemble his split-bodies from all the worlds, the Prabhūtaratna Buddha will make an appearance. So:

> [Śākyamuni Buddha said,] “The Buddhas who are emanations of my body, who in the world-spheres of the ten directions preach Dharma, are now to gather.”

At that time, the Buddha emitted a single glow from his white hair-tuft, by which straightaway were seen Buddhas of lands in the eastern quarter equal in number to the sands of five hundred myriads of millions of nayutas of Ganges rivers…. The Buddhas of those lands preached the *dharmas* with a great, subtle sound….To the south, the west, the north, to the four intermediate directions as

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⁹⁷ *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā*, Taishō 8:221.113bc.
well as upward and downward, wherever the glow of the white hair-tuft reached, it was also thus.

At that time, the Buddhas in the ten directions all addressed their multitudes of bodhisattvas, saying “Good men! We are now to go to the Sahā world-sphere, to the place of Śākyamuni Buddha…

In this way, by turns the [lands of the] thousand-million fold world were filled, and still there was no limit to the emanations of Śākyamuni Buddha in even one quarter….in the four hundred myriads of millions of nayutas of lands in every quarter, the Buddhas, the Thus Come One, filled every direction.⁹⁸

The passage makes it very clear that Śākyamuni’s split-bodies are outside Sahā. They dwell in the worlds of the ten directions as independent Buddhas saving beings.

Interestingly, the above quote appears in Kumārajīva’s translation in the early fifth century and the translation by Jñānagupta and Dharmagupta in 601 C.E. The sūtra was also translated by Dharmarakṣa in 265-316 C.E. In the early version, to venerate Prabhūtaratna, first, the Buddhas from the ten directions came to Sahā; then Śākyamuni assimilated his split-bodies in the trichiliocosm together. The daśadigbuddhas and nirmāṇabuddhas, which used to be two different concepts and related to different cosmologies in Dharmarakṣa’s translation, merged together in the translations after the fifth century.

There are other texts that have been translated over times also show traces of nirmāṇabuddhas becoming daśadigbuddhas outside one kṣetra. I already demonstrated how the nirmāṇabuddhas were shown expended from the Sahā to the beyond in the different translations of the Avataṃsaka (Dousha jing). In the complete translations of the Avataṃsaka after the fifth century, the compatibility of all Buddhas is personified by Vairocana Buddha. Vairocana in this sūtra is known for his all-embracing nature. The phenomenon of Vairocana’s body is described over and over again. Even just one of his pores contains

all of the Buddhas from all of the other worlds. In the *Avatamsaka*, it is no mistake that the *nirmāṇabuddhas* can also be the *daśadīgbuddhas*.

Besides the doctrinal texts, similar patterns also appear in the meditation texts. The *Pratyutpanna*, which was first translated by Lokakṣema in 179 C.E., represents the earliest extant Mahāyāna meditation text. This text assumes a cosmology of the multiple Buddhas’ worlds in the ten directions, and the concept of the *nirmāṇabuddhas* does not play any role. The *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra* ("The Concentration of Heroic Progress," hereafter, *Śūraṅgama*), which was translated by Kumārajīva during 402-409 C.E., typifies the Mahāyāna method of meditation because it incorporates the Mahāyāna doctrines such as śūnyatā. Although it might be apocryphal, the text is well-known among Chinese Buddhists. According to this text, after the gods, Śrāvakas, and bodhisattvas were convinced by Śākyamuni’s *ṛddhi* powers inside the trichiliocosm, and they wondered whether his power can reach to other universes. Knowing the doubts of the assembly, Mañjuśrī informed Śākyamuni that he had visited a Buddha’s land called *Ekapradīpa* ("light of single lamp") in the zenith region. When he asked the name of that Buddha, Mañjuśrī was told to go to find Śākyamuni for the answer. Here is how Śākyamuni explained to Mañjuśrī:

“He who expounds the Dharma in the Ekapradīpa universe is the Buddha named Sarvagunaśadharmaśaṅdarśakivuṇaprabhārāja ‘King of Wondrous Brilliance

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manifesting all the Virtues.’ O Mañjuśrī, the Buddha Sarvaguṇadharmasamāṅdarāśakavikurvaṇaprabhārāja of the Ekapradīpa universe is myself. ……
Mañjuśrī, you should know that I exercise this supernormal power everywhere in innumerable koṭinayutāśatasahasraṇis of Buddha-field. “101

Elsewhere in this text, Śākyamuni is also identified with Vairocanaraśmipratimāṇḍita-vikurvaṇarāja Buddha (‘Prodigious King adorned with Solar Rays’) in the east.102 In the Śūraṅgama, Śākyamuni is understood to have manifested himself as different Buddhas of different names in other lands outside Sahā.

By the fifth century, it became common that the nirmāṇabuddhas were ascribed in the worlds of the ten directions in Mahāyāna texts. Especially after we examine the texts that have been translated over time, the restriction of the nirmāṇabuddhas within the trichiliocosm, the land of one Buddha, seem to be subconsciously erased and forgotten. The Trayāṣṭrimśa Sūtra, which was translated in the third century, has not been retranslated later. However, the author of the Dāzhīdu lun has referred to the text regarding the nirmāṇabuddhas.103 The Dāzhīdu lun was translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva in the early fifth century. When the same story was retold in the Dāzhīdu lun, the nirmāṇabuddhas of Śākyamuni were described not only as being inside the trichiliocosm but also beyond.104

Overall, the concept of the nirmāṇabuddhas went through a fundamental change in Mahāyāna Buddhism —from manifestation of one entity inside Sahā to the independent daśadīg buddhas outside Sahā. This shift was complete by the beginning of the fifth century. The visual representations of small Buddha images in the aura do not seem to

102 Taishō 15:642.644c; Lamotte trans., Śūraṅgamasaṃādhisūtra, 235-236.
104 Taishō 25:1509.302bc.
relate to this shift directly. Based on translations of the *Avatamsaka* after the fifth century, Yoshimura Rei identifies the emanated Buddha images in the aura as the ten directions three times.\(^\text{105}\) Within the teachings in the *Avatamsaka*, Yoshimura’s identification about the *nirmāṇabuddha* is correct. However, it is important to be aware that the *nirmāṇabuddhas* can be human Buddhas and the multiple Buddhas in the trichiliocosm as well.

### 3.6 Bodhisattvas as the Emanator

In Buddhist art from Gandhāra, Khotan, and central China, a small portion of bodhisattva figures are shown as the emanator. How does the bodhisattva relate to the concept of emanating *nirmāṇabuddhas* in the body rays? Bodhisattva, meaning “enlightenment beings,” refers to beings who have vowed to become a Buddha. However, they have also promised to postpone Buddhahood until all sentient beings have attained enlightenment. Like the notion of multiple Buddhas, the bodhisattva concept is another benchmark of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Furthermore, similar to the Buddha concept as I explored earlier in this study, emanating *nirmāṇabuddhas* is also related to bodhisattvas in three aspects: as the *ṛddhi* power, as a nature of bodhisattvas, and as a body mark.

**The Rddhi Power of Bodhisattvas**

Bodhisattvas possess the *ṛddhi* powers as described in the early *Nikāyas*. The practice of a bodhisattva has developed into the ten-staged path. According to the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*,\(^\text{106}\) a bodhisattva masters the *ṛddhi* in the third stage.\(^\text{107}\)

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\(^{105}\) Yoshimura, “Roshana Hōkai Ninchūzō sairon,” 41-44.

\(^{106}\) The text is thought to have been first composed during the second and third centuries C.E. in the northwestern part of India or Khotan. Nakamura Hajime 中村元, “Kegonkyō no shishōshitōki iki” 華厳経の思想史的意義, in *Kegon shisō*, ed. Hajime Nakamura (Tōkyō: Hōzōkan, 1960), 91-95; Takasaki Jikidō 高崎直道, “Kegon shisōno tenkai” 華厳思想の展開, *Kōza daijō bakkyō* no.3 (1983), 14-16.
As I just discussed in the beginning of this chapter, *ṛddhi* is a series of supernatural powers, the first of which is self multiplication. As a fundamental change of *ṛddhi* in Mahāyāna Buddhism, it becomes a skillful means to save sentient beings. This stays true to the *ṛddhi* of bodhisattvas. In his commentary of the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*, Vasubandhu explained that the *ṛddhis* here function for the sake of reaching out to all sentient beings. Miracles such as self-multiplication are means which enable the bodhisattva to appear to sentient beings at any place.  

**As a Nature of Bodhisattvas**

Saving beings by employing multiple bodies becomes fundamental in the bodhisattva concept. There are two levels of bodhisattvas. One refers to the human bodhisattvas, those Buddhist practitioners who aim for full enlightenment (*bodhi*) in the human realm. The second refers to the enlightened bodhisattvas in Buddhas’ lands (or the Tuṣita heaven), especially those who have already reached the highest level of attainment, but chose to postpone their *nirvāṇa* out of their compassion to save sentient beings. In the *Dazhidu lun*, the former is called the birth-body bodhisattva and the latter is called the Dharma-body (*dharmakāya*) bodhisattva. The *dharmakāya* bodhisattvas (or...

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109 The idea of human Bodhisattva is not exclusive to Mahāyāna.

110 The term *dharmakāya* Bodhisattva is also used intensively by Kumārajīva in his letters to Huiyuan. In his explanation, here, it refers any non-corporal body of a Bodhisattva. For example, in one letter, he said, “Now, repeat again, there are two kinds of dharmakāya. The first one always dwells in the Dharma-nature, like the void space. It is neither existed nor non-existed and so on. The second, all the forms of a Bodhisattva in the mediate stages after obtaining the six supernormal powers and before becoming a Buddha are called dharmakāya.” *Kumārajīva fashi dayi* (Correspondence) *Taishō* 45:1856.126b. And, he further expounded, “To the dharmakāya Bodhisattvas, …
enlightened bodhisattvas) have eliminated all kleśas (defilements, all of which cause beings to be trapped in the cycle of rebirth) and obtained the six ādhis. Some of them focus on a career of making offerings to all Buddhas in the ten directions, while others focus on saving sentient beings. Elsewhere in the text, the dharmakāya bodhisattvas are characterized by manifesting themselves into multiple bodies to save other people:

“Those coming from the two places (other Buddha’s lands and Tuṣita) are dharmakāya bodhisattvas. [They] transform into infinite bodies to save all beings.”

The same idea is also expressed in the Daśabhūmika-sūtra. At the eighth-stage, a bodhisattva acquires enumerable transformation bodies to be simultaneously present everywhere in the trichiliocosm either for saving other beings or for making offerings to Buddhas. It is like the sun reflecting his image on the water in all places. However, here, the emphasis is on the diversity of a bodhisattva’s transformation bodies. (I will discuss the diverse bodies of bodhisattvas in Chapter 4.) In the above theoretical discussions about the nature of bodhisattvas, the notion of aura is lacking.
As the Body Mark of Bodhisattvas

A halo with nirmāṇabuddhas inside also became a body mark of bodhisattvas by the fifth century. As described in Buddhist texts, a number of those enlightened bodhisattvas are no less superior to the Buddhas. They receive wide veneration from Buddhist followers. In the aforementioned five visualization texts, three are for such kinds of bodhisattvas. In the Amitāyusdhīyāna-sūtra, the text ascribed nirmāṇabuddhas to the halo of Amitābha Buddha, also describes that nirmāṇabuddhas are inside the halo of bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara:

Envision Avalokiteśvara bodhisattva. This bodhisattva is eight billion (nayuta) yojanas tall. His body is of purple gold color. He has usṇīsa on top of his head and halo from his neck, which is hundreds and thousands of yojanas large. There are five hundred nirmāṇabuddhas in the halo, just like Śākyamuni. Each nirmāṇabuddha has five hundred bodhisattvas and immeasurable devas as attendants.  

This text demonstrates that the halo with nirmāṇabuddhas became a body mark of a bodhisattva in the same period as it also became a body mark to the imagery of a Buddha.

Overall, the direct description of a bodhisattva emanating nirmāṇabuddhas via body light is not as prominent as that of Buddhas in Buddhist scriptures. However, the fundamental nature of the bodhisattva as the saver of sentient beings is bounded with their multiple bodies. There is evidence that the halo with nirmāṇabuddhas inside can be a body mark of a bodhisattva.

I have just discussed in this chapter that the Buddha’s nirmāṇabuddhas are understood as ultimately coming from the dhammakāya. It is, then, inevitable here to address the dhammakāya of bodhisattva. Theoretically, a bodhisattva also has the

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114 觀世音菩薩。此菩薩身長八十億那由他恒河沙由旬。身紫金色。頂有肉髻。項有圓光。面各百千由旬。其圓光中有五百化佛。如釋迦牟尼。一一化佛。有五百菩薩無量諸天。以為侍者。”TaiShō 12:365.343c.
According to the Avataṃsaka-sūtra, there is no difference between the Buddha’s dharmakāya and the bodhisattva’s dharmakāya with regard to the nature of the dharmakāya. However, the power and merit from the former is greater.\textsuperscript{115}

3.7 Concluding Remarks

The idea of a Buddha generating other Buddhas underwent a significant shift from early Buddhism to Mahāyāna Buddhism. What lies behind these changes is a revolution of the concept of a Buddha. In early Buddhism, the Buddha is seen as a historical person. Performing a miracle of body-multiplication is a life event of the Buddha, the Great Miracle at Śrāvastī. By rddhi power from meditation, Śākyamuni (or anyone) can multiples himself. The multiple bodies lack individuality and purpose. In Indian Buddhist art, the Great Miracle at Śrāvastī is a commonly seen subject. However, as pointed out in Chapter 1, the representation of other Buddhas in this subject is not related to the aura of the central Buddha.\textsuperscript{116}

Mahāyānists identified a Buddha with the Dharma and śūnyatā, it then became the nature and upāya of a Buddha to appear in every corner of the cosmos in his transformation bodies to save all sentient beings. In early Mahāyāna texts, a new type of

\textsuperscript{115} Taishō 10:293.808ab, trans. Prajñā, 796-798 C.E.

\textsuperscript{116} There are mainly two types of representations of the Great Miracle at Śrāvastī in Indian Buddhist art. Besides the one introduced in Chapter 1, there is also a simplified version which only shows with two Buddhas sitting on the sides of the central Buddha. This type often appears in small format as one in a group of life events of the Buddha. Records of the disciples of the Buddha performing body-multiplication are not lacking either. (For examples, see Nathan Katz, Buddhist Images of Human Perfection, 106-116.) However representing a monk performing body-multiplication is rare in Buddhist art. The author knows one example of Kāśyapa in body-multiplication in the iconography of the conversion of Kāśyapa from Kucha. In this iconography, the body-multiplication is suggested only by depicting two additional heads (e.g., in Kizil Cave 8). The story is described in the Guoqu xianzai yinguo jing 過去現在因果經 Taishō 3:189.0650c, trans. Gunabhadra, 420-479 C.E. and the Fo benxing ji jing 佛本行集經 Taishō 3:190.867c, trans. Jñānagupta, 561-592 C.E. In both cases above, the images of multiple bodies have little to do with the aura of the main figure.
\textit{rddhi} appeared—the power is still derived from meditation; however, the \textit{nirmāṇabuddhas} are bounded with the Buddha's rays.

By the late fourth and fifth century, as shown from the meditation texts, emanating other Buddhas with rays became a very prominent feature of the Buddha's body and as a body mark of the Buddha, the Buddha's constant halo and aura have \textit{nirmāṇabuddhas} inside.

To some extent, these changes in texts mirror the trend in the general depictions of the small Buddhas in the aura and halo. First, a new type of miracle emerged from early Mahāyāna texts that share commonalities with the earliest extant visual representations of emanated Buddhas in Gandhāra. In texts, the emanating Buddha became conceptual. In images, the emanating Buddha is a \textit{bhavana} figure. In texts, the miracle is still believed to be from a meditation power. In images, the emanating Buddha is invariable shown seated in meditation postures. In texts, \textit{nirmāṇabuddhas} come from the rays. In images, the emanated Buddha figures are enclosed within the body aura. The date of the emergence of the images and these new types of miracles are also very close. The Gandhāra type of representations can be dated from about the third century. The presence of texts with this new concept of the Buddha and new type of miracle can be tested by the \textit{Druma-kinnara-rāja-paripṛcchā-sūtra} (hereafter \textit{Druma}). The \textit{Druma}, one of the earliest reliable Mahāyāna texts, was first translated into Chinese by Lokakṣema in 170-190 C.E.\textsuperscript{117} According to Zürcher, it is a genuine work of Lokakṣema.\textsuperscript{118} Lokakṣema was a

\textsuperscript{117} \textit{Dun zhentuoluo suowen rulai sanmei jing} 鏡真陀羅所問如來三昧經, \textit{Taishō} 15:624. Kumārajīva translated it again in the early fifth century: \textit{Dashu jinnaluowang suowen jing} 大樹緊那羅王所問經, \textit{Taishō} 15:625. The two Chinese translations are very close to each other. According to the two translation dates, the text probably was circulated during the end of the second century to the early fifth century. There are also two copies of the Tibetan translation of the text. The Chinese versions do not differ substantially to the Tibetan translation. For the Tibetan versions, see Paul Harrison, \textit{Druma-kinnara-rāja-paripṛcchā-sūtra: A Critical Edition of the Tibetan Text (Recension A) based on Eight Editions of}
monk from Yuezhi (Gandhāra, Kuṣṭāṇa). The texts brought by him probably can reflect some aspects of Kuṣṭāṇa Buddhism. The Druma teaches that “all Buddhas are just one Buddha” because of the pervading power of the dharma. The text also describes that the Buddha rose up in the air, emitting multiple bodies from the light coming out of the pores of his body.

Second, the new imagery of Buddhas emerged in the meditation texts share some commonalties with the types of representations in Central Asian, and especially, in Chinese Buddhist art. In the meditation texts, emanating other Buddhas became more of a distinguished wonder of the Buddha’s body than a meditation power associated with special events around the beginning of the fifth century. In visual representations, more emanating Buddha figures are shown in standing pose from the fifth century on. In meditation texts, the static nirmāṇabuddhas inside the halo had became a body mark of a Buddha. In Buddhist art, the type of representation of small Buddhas only appearing in the halo agrees with Rawak, who went to China about the fifth and sixth centuries. In this type of configuration, the small Buddhas are always shown leveled, though not tilted.

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119 E. Zürcher, The Buddhist Conquest of China (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1959), 34-38. There have been scholars using this text to study Gandhāran Buddhism. For example, Ku Chengmei 古正美, Guishuang fojiao zhengzhi chuantong yu dasheng fojiao 貴霜佛教政治傳統與大乘佛教. Taipei: Yunchen wenhua, 1993.

120 Taishō 15:624.358b.

121 Taishō 15:624.359b. In this early text, what emanated from the Buddha are nirmāṇabodhisattvas with the thirty-two lakṣnas. This is somewhat unusual. However, the thirty-two lakṣnas are the body marks of a Buddha (or a wheel-turning king). Thus, possessing these marks, the nirmāṇabodhisattvas would be no much different than Buddhas in their appearances.
Chinese Buddhist art in general, the small Buddhas in the aura and halo are leveled. Depicting the *nirmanabuddhas* in a leveled position could be a result of many reasons, such as an aesthetic choice. However, it is probably not just a coincidence that a constant halo with *nirmanabuddhas* inside came to be an important body mark of a Buddha in the same time period.

In the meanwhile, complicated Buddha-Śākya theories were used to explain the nature of the emanating Buddha and the emanated Buddhas. In Mahāyāna Buddha-Śākya theories, emanating *nirmanabuddhas* to every direction of the cosmos to teach sentient beings became a *upāya* (skillful means) of the *dharmaśākya*. In the fully-developed tri-Śākya scheme, all Buddhas are manifestations of the *dharmaśākya* at different levels (celestial realm for the *sāṃbhogaśākya* Buddhas and human realm for the *nirmanakāya* Buddhas). Although the increasing importance of the *nirmanabuddha* in Buddhist philosophies was not directly related to Buddhist art, it was perhaps because of such importance that emitting *nirmanabuddhas* became a prominent attribute of the Buddha in meditation texts. Envisioning this feature of the Buddha became a highly repetitive exercise in *buddhānusmṛti* practice. In Mahāyāna theory, all Buddhas can emanate other Buddhas; however, the ultimate emanator of all Buddhas is the Dharma, or in another word, the *dharmaśākya*. This entity is often personified by Vairocana Buddha. In visual representations, the emanating Buddha can be any Buddha. Their identity, sometimes, can be approached from iconographic studies. In the next chapter, I will carefully analyze the special images of emanated Buddhas from different areas.

As for the emanated Buddhas, they were not always the infinite co-existed Buddhas in Mahāyāna doctrine. In the earliest extant versions of Mahāyāna texts (such as the
Pratyutpanna and Aṣṭasāhasrikā), there are evidences that the nirmāṇabuddha and multiple Buddhas of Mahāyāna started from two independent concepts. The early descriptions of the Buddha emanating other Buddhas are clear that the nirmāṇabuddhas are all inside the trichiliocosm, the kṣetra of Śākyamuni. However, by the fifth century, the nirmāṇabuddhas are outside the trichiliocosm, that is they become the multiple Buddhas in Mahāyāna Buddhism. The visual representations of the emanated Buddhas in the aura, whether they are many or few, whether they are of a certain number, and whether they were called so and so by later Buddhists (such as the seven medicine Buddhas), perhaps originally were intended to represent the plurality of a Buddha’s emanated body.

Enlightened bodhisattvas certainly possess the power of emanating nirmāṇabuddhas as well. They are known for their compassion and saving sentient beings with their transformation bodies. As for Buddhas, this is conceived as the upāya of bodhisattvas. And a few powerful bodhisattvas, such as Avalokiteśvara, are described of having nirmāṇabuddhas in his halo. However, direct description of a bodhisattva emanating nirmāṇabuddhas is not pronounced in Buddhist texts. This is probably why this motif is associated with bodhisattva images only to a much less extent.
CHAPTER 4

EXCEPTIONS IN GANDHĀRA

This chapter studies the two exceptional depictions of images with emanated figures from Gandhāra. The first iconography is associated with, perhaps, Amitābha; and the second is related to the transformation-bodies of bodhisattvas. The rest of the depictions of a figure emanating other figures from Gandhāra are virtually unidentifiable. Although these two special iconographies cannot represent other images, they reflect some important aspects of the concept and representation of emanating multiple bodies.

4.1 Amitābha (?)

The Gandhāran depiction of a preaching Buddha surrounded by bodhisattvas, who are all residing on lotus flowers rising from a water pond, has attracted much attention among scholars, especially the piece from Mohammed-Nari. Not only is the subject important to understand Buddhist practice at Gandhāra, it is also directly related to the iconography of the Buddha emitting multiple Buddhas in the aura. Therefore, it is an unavoidable task to touch this controversy subject. I will briefly describe the image, synthesize previous arguments, and then add my suggestions.
The Image

There are two Gandhāra steles in which the image of a Buddhas emanating other Buddhas is shown in a large coherent scene. One is from Mohammed-Nari (Fig. 4.1), the other from Sahri-Bahlol mound D (Fig. 4.3). Both of these scenes feature a large Buddha figure seating on a lotus in the center. His hands are shown in a teaching gesture, or the dharmacakra mudrā (“wheel-turning hand gesture”). The Buddha is surrounded mainly by bodhisattva-type of figures that are all residing on the lotus as well. They all reside upon a water pond, which is clearly depicted on the bottom of the stele. Above the Buddha’s head, there are depictions of jeweled trees and two winged figures are just going to crown the Buddha with a wreath. In both cases, a Buddha attended by Vajrapāni is shown at the top right of the stele pointing at the central Buddha image to a monk kneeling at his side. The image of a Buddha surrounded by emanated Buddhas is placed on the top corner of the stele. The one from Mohammed-Nari (Fig. 4.1) has two of such depictions on two upper corners (Fig. 4.2, detail). The other one from Sahri-Bahlol mound D (Fig. 4.3) has only one in the top left corner.

Previous Identifications

So far, the identification of the subject has been divided mainly among three opinions: the great miracle at Śrāvastī, Śākyamuni preaching a Mahāyāna sūtra, and Amitābha in his Sukhāvatī paradise. Alfred Foucher originally identified the Mohammed Nari sculpture as the Great Miracle of Śrāvastī.1 Although some scholars still endorse him in the present day, serious doubts to this particular iconography were raised from very early times even among Foucher’s followers. In the Gandhāran Art in Pakistan (1957), while

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1 Foucher, The Beginning of Buddhist Art and Other Essays in Indian and Central-Asian Archaeology, 147-184.
identifying the Mohammed Nari stele as the Śrāvastī miracle, Harald Ingholt acknowledged the predominant bodhisattva figures in the scene and perceived them as Mahāyāna elements.\(^2\) Ingholt represents the general point of view of many scholars toward this stele.\(^3\)

In *The Dynastic Arts of the Kushans* of 1967, John Rosenfield identified the subject of the Mohammed Nari stele with the Buddha’s miraculous display before the Buddha preached an important text commonly described in Mahāyāna scriptures, for example, the *Lotus Sūtra*, *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* and the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*. He suggested calling them a Buddhist theophany because they represent the immenseness and splendor of the Buddhist pantheon rather than simply a narrative of the Śrāvastī miracle.\(^4\) Vidya Dehejia adopted Rosenfield’s term and called Mohammed Nari stele “non-narrative theophany” in her *Discourse in Early Buddhist Art*.\(^5\) Japanese scholars in general are convinced that this type of image is a depiction just like the introductory scene of the *Lotus Sūtra*, i.e., Śākyamuni emitted light illuminating the real pure land of the Buddha to the assembly. Other Buddhas and bodhisattvas came to pay veneration and listen to his teaching. Various beings made offerings to the Buddha, most commonly the canopy, flowers and jewels, which seem to correspond well to the images.\(^6\) Ju-hyung Rhi further

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\(^2\) Ingholt, *Gandhāran Art in Pakistan*, 121-122.


\(^4\) Rosenfield, *The Dynastic Arts of the Kushans*, 236-238.

\(^5\) Dehejia, *Discourse in Early Buddhist Art*, 192-194.

proposed that this scene is an elaborate form of a much more common iconography in Gandhāra Buddhist art: a seated preaching Buddha attended by two standing bodhisattvas all on lotus flowers. He articulated the theme with the term “‘adornment,’ a prominent idea in Mahāyāna literature.” It represents “the adorning and purifying of the Buddha and his Buddha-field and was an eloquent statement of the sacred and transcendental nature of the Buddha.”

There are a couple of problems with the above interpretation. First, for a handful well-known Buddhas, each world has its own individual characteristics. The lotus pond is unique to the Sukhāvatī of Amitābha Buddha. The world of Śākyamuni is Sahā which, to our contaminated eyes, is the cakravāla world system centered around rings of mountains, while to the eyes of the Buddha, it is a flat pure land. In the preaching scenes in Mahāyāna texts such as the Lotus Sūtra, Śākyamuni changed the impure land of Sahā into the pure land of a Buddha, but no water is mentioned. Second, the Buddha attended by Vajrapāni in the scene is likely to be Śākyamuni. Why is he pointing at the central Buddha image? This episode here is only satisfactorily explained in John Huntington’s interpretation, as outlined below:

7 Rhi, Gandhāran Images of the “Śrāvastī Miracle,” 147-155, 187.
John Huntington proposed that the Mohammed Nari stele represents the Sukhāvatī of Amitābha/Amitāyus\(^8\) as described in the two Sukhāvatīyūhas (the larger Sukhāvatīyūha Taishō 12:361, 360 and the smaller Sukhāvatīyūha Taishō 12:366) and the Amitāyus-dhyāna-sūtra (Taishō 12:365).\(^9\) According to the larger Sukhāvatīyūha, Śākyamuni introduced the wonderful world of Sukhāvatī through his conversation with Ānanda. At Ānanda’s request, Amitābha revealed himself. He emitted light which illuminated the worlds of all Buddhas. Other important attributes of Sukhāvatī, e.g. the bejeweled trees, sin-washing lotus pond, singing birds, giant canopy, bodhisattvas residing on lotus blossoms, and human beings reborn upon lotus flowers, all closely match the depiction in the Mohammed Nari stele. As early as 1925, Toyomune Minamoto has pointed out the similarities between the Mohammed Nari stele and the pure land scenes in Chinese and Japanese Buddhist art, namely the murals from Dunhuang and Hōryūji.\(^10\) After Huntington’s elaborate theorization, this identification gained support of many scholars.\(^11\)

However, the interpretation of the small Buddha image emanating other Buddhas in the aura at the top of this scene is still unclear. Additionally, some scholars doubted the

\(^8\) Amitāyus and Amitābha are alternative names of the same Buddha. For sake of consistence, I will use Amitābha in my discussion. However, the term Amitāyus may occur in the direct translations.


appearance of the Amitābha cult in this area at such an early date.\textsuperscript{12} Below, I will make two comments, first to explain the image of the Buddha’s emanation in this scene, and the second to support the identification of the iconography as that of Sukhāvatī paradise.

**The Nirmāṇabuddhas of Amitābha**

As for the Buddha with emanated Buddhas in the aura at the top corner in the scene, John Huntington suggested that it may refer to the lotuses in Sukhāvatī described in the larger *Sukhāvatīyūha* translated by a Sogdian named Kang Sengkai (Saṃghavarman) in 252 C.E.: “And from each gem-lotus there proceed thirty-six hundred thousand *kotis* of rays of light. And from each ray of light there proceed thirty-six hundred thousand *kotis* of Buddhas, …”\textsuperscript{13} This identification did not seem to have satisfied scholars. Later, Taddei proposed that this iconography in the Mohammed Nari stele can be “interpreted as meditational reflections of the Buddha, emanations that go and teach the Dharma in every direction, especially on the ground of the larger *Sukhāvatī-vyūha*.”\textsuperscript{14} However, no such wording appears in the extant copies of the larger *Sukhāvatīvyūha*.

I suggest that it may have something to do with the concept of the transformation-bodies in the cult of Amitābha. In the history of Buddhism, Amitābha did not emerge just as another Buddha. The practice associated with him marks a new path to salvation based on faith. In this cult, besides the traditional merit-making, morality and meditation practice, one can become free from the suffering and the endless transmigration of *saṁsāra* by the request for a rebirth in Sukhāvatī. Amitābha made a vow, one of series of


\textsuperscript{14} Taddei, “Non-Buddhist Deities in Gandharan Art,” 352-353.
his vows, that he would appear at the deathbed to welcome whomever wished to be reborn in his world. In the larger *Sukhāvatīvyūha*, this is explained as a *nirmāṇabuddha* of Amitābha:

When the man is about to die, Amitāyus transforms his body whose light and body marks are all like a real Buddha, to appear in front of him with an entourage. The man will follow the *nirmāṇabuddha* and be reborn instantly in the Buddha’s land.

The same idea also appears in the *Amitāyusdhyāna-sūtra*. To ensure the future rebirth, it is important for the practitioners to call Amitābha Buddha to mind and see him in the meditation during life time. How can Amitābha appear in meditations, and how can he appear to people all over the world at the same time? If he does, what does he look like? According to the *Amitāyusdhy āna-sūtra*, Amitābha is said to have infinite transformation bodies, the means by which he reaches out to the practitioners. And Amitābha also has “complete *ṛddhi* power and can appear in the world of the ten directions by his transformations at will. Sometimes, he manifests into a giant body enveloping all space; at other times, he appears in a small body around sixteen or eighteen *chi* high (over twelve feet). All the bodies transformed from him are in the color of real gold, with *nirmāṇabuddhas* in a round aura/halo, and lotus flower.”

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15 “設我得佛。十方眾生發菩提心修諸功德。至心發願欲生我國。臨壽終時。假令不與大眾圍遶現其人前者。不取正覺。” *Taishō* 12:360.268ab. It also appears in *Taishō* 12:361.281c, as the eighteenth in the total of twenty-four vows.

16 “其人臨終。無量壽佛。化現其身。光明相好具如真佛。與諸大眾現其人前。即隨化佛往生其國。” *Taishō* 12:360.272bc.

17 “Amitāyus has infinite *nirmāṇakāyās*, who often come to the practitioners in the accompany by Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta.” (無量壽佛化身無數。與觀世音及大勢至。常來至此行人之所。) *Taishō* 12:365.344b.

18 “阿彌陀佛神通如意。於十方國變現自在。或現大身滿虛空中。或現小身丈六八尺。所現之形皆真金色。圓光化佛及寶蓮花。” *Taishō* 12:365.344b.
What mentioned by Taddei--teaching the Dharma in all the worlds of the ten
directions-- is a primary function of nirmāṇabuddhas of Śākyamuni and the dharmakāya,
but not generally associated with Amitābha. To Amitābha, the primary role of his
nirmāṇabuddha seems to introduce the practitioner to Sukhāvatī. It is necessary for the
practitioner to be able to see Amitābha if he or she wishes to go to Sukhāvatī. And the
image of Amitābha is identified with gold color, nirmāṇabuddhas in aura/halo, and lotus
flower. Such imagery resembles the iconography under discussion (as on the Mohammed
Nari stele). On the stele from Sahri-Bahlol mound D (Fig. 4.3), interestingly, the
depiction of a Buddha emanating multiple Buddhas in the aura on the top left corner of
the stele is attended by two kneeing devotees with their hands in the aṅjali mudrā, that is,
this image is relatively independent and important to receive veneration.

The visualization practice in the Amitāyusdhīyāna-sūtra was formalized into sixteen
steps. The transformation-bodies in these visualizations became important subjects for
visual representation in Chinese Buddhist art, particularly the paintings of Sukhāvatī from
the eighth-ninth centuries at Dunhuang, such as a mural in Dunhuang Cave 148 (High
Tang 712-781 C.E.) (Fig. 4.4). The lower right part represents the Vision Nine to
Thirteen (Fig. 4.5). In Visions Nine to Twelve, one envisions Amitābha, Avalokiteśvara,
Mahāsthāmaprāpta and the lotus respectively. In the painting, all four are shown emitting
nirmāṇabuddhas just as described in the text.

These Dunhuang images of the Tang period in China seem to have been designed
according to the Amitāyusdhīyāna-sūtra. The overall representation of the Tang painting,
with the Sukhāvatī paradise depicted in the center and important relevant visions shown
at periphery area, recalls the Gandhāran sculptures under discussion. I do not propose that
the former were derived from the latter. However, Amitābha’s transformation body welcoming the deceased has been an import subject in the ritual practice and Buddhist art associated with Amitābha. If the overall subject of the stele is Amitābha and Sukhāvatī, it is possible that the image of a Buddha in emanation in the scene may represent the Amitābha Buddha with his nirmāṇabuddhas.

The larger Sukhāvatīyūha was translated into Chinese ten times prior to the sixth century. Most of the translators came from western Asia or Kaśmīr.¹⁹ The text must have been quite prevalent in those areas, which include Gandhāra. In addition, there is a smaller version of the text and the Amitāyusdhīyāna-sūtra, which were transmitted into China in the early fifth century. Scholars generally are of the opinion that the Amitāyusdhīyāna-sūtra is an apocryphal text. Nevertheless, the descriptions of Sukhāvatī in the Amitāyusdhīyāna-sūtra are basically consistent with the primary texts.²⁰ Sanskrit editions of the two Sukhāvatīyūhas are also found. It is likely that different versions of texts on Amitābha Buddha and his Sukhāvatī were practiced in different communities.²¹ There might be a version that was circulated in the Gandhāran area, however, none has survived. Maybe the Gandhāran version of the text portraits Amitābha with the concept of his nirmāṇabuddha, as in the larger Sukhāvatīyūha translated by Kang Sengkai and the Amitāyusdhīyāna-sūtra. In any case, the idea that Amitābha has nirmāṇabuddhas to lead the faithful to Sukhāvatī has been an important comportment of the Amitābha cult.


²⁰ For a comment on the authenticity of the text, see Huntington, “A Gandhāran Image of Amitāyus’ Sukhāvatī,” 656, ft.22.

²¹ Some held that the smaller Sukhāvatīyūha to be earlier than the larger one and by others to be a summary or recapitulation of the later. Despite which side is true, both the versions were in circulation.
The Image of “One Buddha and Fifty Bodhisattvas”

In Mahāyāna theory, infinite Buddha worlds exist. How can we tie the depiction of the preaching Buddha on a lotus pond from Gandhāra only to Amitābha’s Sukhāvatī? For example, in the Karuṇāpuṇḍarīka-sūtra, first translated by Dharmakṣema (384-433), Śākyamuni introduced a variety of Buddha worlds. The first one, called the Lotus World, has very similar features to Sukhāvatī: lotus, bejeweled trees, and etc. Among Huntington’s followers, some identified this iconography with a more generic term: “paradise scene.” Furthermore, in most of the studies, the Mohammed Nari stele was mentioned as if it was an isolated representation of such (Sukhāvatī) from Gandhāra. Its resemblance to the later paintings of Sukhāvatī in China and Japan has been mentioned in the previous studies, however, very vaguely. For these two reasons, I want to bring attention to the so-called “one Buddha and fifty bodhisattvas,” a particular representation of Amitābha transmitted into China as ruixiang. Literally, “ruixiang” can be translated as “auspicious image,” or “famous image.” It is used in China to refer to a category of images as imitation of important images in Buddhist history, especially for images from India and Central Asia. The link between the iconography on the Mohammed Nari stele and “one Buddha and fifty bodhisattvas” might be able to reinforce the identification of the Grandhāran representation as Amitābha in Sukhāvatī.

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24 This was criticized by Robert Brown. See Brown, “The Śrāvakī Miracles in the Art of India and Dvāravatī,” 81.
The iconography of “one Buddha with fifty bodhisattvas,” also called “Amitābha and the fifty bodhisattvas,” is very consistent. In this iconography as shown in a painting from Dunhuang Cave 332 (698 C.E.), Amitābha sits on a lotus flower in the center displaying dharmacakra mudrā, which is the same as to the Gandhāran images under discussion (Fig. 4.6 and 4.7). He is attended by two primary bodhisattvas. The Amitābha triad is shown surrounded by around fifty bodhisattvas. And a small newborn is usually shown in front of Amitābha paying homage to the Buddha. All figures in the scene are supported by lotus flowers generated from the same root in a water pond. Sometimes, trees and a parasol are shown above Amitābha.

Over forty such images are found in China, with twenty seven from Sichuan province, ten from the Longmen cave site, three from Dunhuang, and one from Junxian Qianfodong cave site (Henan province). The subject also appears in Japanese art, on the wall in the Golden Hall (kondō) of Hōryūji temple (ca. 710 C.E.) (Fig. 4.8). The earliest extant example is from 634 C.E., Niche 3 at Wolong Mountain, Sichuan province. However most of the remaining examples are dated to the period of Empress Wu (684-704 C.E.). In Chinese Buddhist art, it appeared to be an archaic representation of Sukhāvatī before the full-scale depiction became popular (Fig. 4.4). The latter is characterized by a predominant architecture setting, three-dimensional space, and countless figures inside the paradise. The identification of this group of images is confirmed by the stele with the earliest image of 634 C.E., on which the “Transformation

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of the Image of ‘Amitābha and Fifty-two bodhisattvas’ was inscribed. This inscription agrees with the textual reference of the image with only minor differences.

In the textual tradition, this ruixiang is known in the Catalogue of Beneficial Influences of the Three Jewels on the Divine Continent (Ji shenzhou sanbao ganying lu 集神州三寶感通錄, 664 C.E.) and the Xu Gaoseng zhuan 續高僧傳, all written by Daoxuan 道宣 (596-667 C.E.). According to the former, the first image of this iconography was bestowed by Amitābha for the faithful who aim to be reborn in Sukhāvatī. It appeared miraculously in the Kurkuṭāra temple at the city Pāliputra in Central India. Indian monks brought an image of this iconography to Luoyang before the Wei-Jin period (220-420 C.E.). However, the knowledge of such image had been long forgotten until the time of Northern Qi (550-577 C.E.), Cao Zhongda, originally came from a Sogdian family, revived it by producing faithful copies of the Indian original. Soon this image became widespread in China.27 This is a legendary account. Nevertheless, we can glean some truth from this description: First, the iconography is certainly about Amitābha and the cult of Sukhāvatī. Second, it is of foreign origin. Third, the image was first transmitted into China long before it became popular in the Sui and early Tang (late sixth and seventh centuries). This pushes the date of origin of this image prior to the sixth century. The Xu Gaoseng zhuan describes that the image was transmitted to southern China after 581 C.E. by monk Huihai.28

Among the extant images in the pan-Indic area, where can we find the counterpart of the Chinese images of “one Buddha and fifty bodhisattvas”? The closest examples are the

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27 Taishō 52:2061.421ab.
28 Taishō 50:2060.515c.
stele from Mohammed Nari and Sahri-Bahlol mound D. Both of them share in common the fundamental attributes, and only differ in the number of bodhisattvas that are depicted in Sukhāvatī. Most of the Chinese representations have fifty bodhisattvas, but forty-eight and twenty-four also appeared. The bodhisattvas on the Mohammed Nari stele are twenty-four in number, and twelve on the one from Sahri-Bahlol mound D. The numbers of the bodhisattvas seem to be significant. In Buddhist art, the bodhisattvas in the entourage of Amitābha can symbolize his vows. The number of Amitābha’s vows vary in different Chinese translations and the Sanskrit version of the larger Sukhāvatīvyūha. Amitābha made twenty-four vows in the Han and Wu texts, and forty-eight vows in the Wei and Tang translations. Whether the number of bodhisattvas can match up the number of Amitābha’s vows is beyond the scope of this study. The bottom line is that twenty-four, forty-eight, and fifty are all meaningful numbers related to Amitābha in different textual traditions. The Gandhāran image with twenty-four bodhisattvas and the Chinese images with fifty bodhisattvas may be variations due to different transmissions, time periods and local practice.

In conclusion, these two Gandhāran steles may represent Amitābha in Shukavātī. The format of the two steles resembles the iconography of “Amitābha and fifty bodhisattvas.” Subsequently, the Buddha image with emanated Buddhas in the aura in the composition, perhaps, represents Amitābha and his nirmāṇabuddhas.

29 For a review of these studies, see John Huntington, “Rebirth in Amitābha’s Sukhāvatī,” in The Pure Land Tradition: History and Development, ed. James Foard et al. (Berkeley: Regents of the University of California, 1996), 42-105.

30 About the number fifty, according to the Shi wangsheng Emituo fuguojing 十往生阿彌陀佛國經 (The Ten Conditions of a Rebirth in the Buddha Land of Amitābha), Śākyamuni and Amitābha will each send twenty-five Bodhisattvas to protect the practitioners who wish to ascend to Sukhāvatī and follow this text. Xuzangjing 總藏經 87:908b-909a. The text is known as an apocryphal. In any case, the notion and depiction of the fifty Bodhisattvas might be a creation of Chinese Buddhist from perhaps originally a much smaller or free number.
4.2 The Body-transformation and the Bodhisattva Ideal

One image from Gandhāra shows a bodhisattva emanating a variety of beings from his body (Fig. 4.9; Appendix I, Table II, nos. 21). It is the only extant example of such iconography in Buddhist art. This image brings in the concept of body-transformation. Actually body-transformation is an important feature to the bodhisattva ideal. For this image, identifying textual sources has not been a problem. Therefore, the goal of this section is to discuss the significance of body-transformation in the bodhisattva concept and the change in representing a bodhisattva’s transformation bodies in later period in Buddhist art.

The Image and Previous Studies

The general format of the image with different emanated figures shares is the same to those with emanated Buddhas (Fig. 4.9). However, in this image, from the top left in counter-clockwise direction, the emanated figures are 1.) a Buddha with abhaya mudrā; 2.) an armored figure holding a spear in his right hand and a bird in his left hand; 3.) a half-naked man; 4.) a bearded man with knotted hair and wearing a large cloak; 5.) a man holding a trident in his right hand and a water vase in his left hand; 6.) a Buddha-like figure. Taddei identified the second figure as Kumāra, the third as Yakṣa, the fourth as Brahmā, and fifth as Śiva. Taddei’s identifications are basically convincing. Taddei was the first who noticed this Gandhāra in image 1987 and identified it with passages about bodhisattva’s transformation bodies from the Lotus Sūtra and the Daśabhūmika-sūtra.

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an opinion also followed by Rhi. Below, I analyze these passages at two levels: general theories about body-transformation and specific bodhisattvas who are particularly associated with body-transformation.

The Body-transformation to a Bodhisattva Ideal

Body-transformation is a different ṛddhi power from body-multiplication. As an independent concept, it emerged slightly later in Pāli texts. The late canonical text *Paṭisambhidāmagga (The Path of Discrimination)* describes a supernormal ability called vikubbhanā iddhi, “the power of transformation.” Through meditation, one can transform himself into whatever form and as many as he wishes: gods, animals, or even inanimate objects. The *Paṭisambhidāmagga* was composed not long after King Aśoka. It occupies a literary position between *Nikāyas* and early *Abhidhammas*. From this point of view, as with the other kinds of ṛddhi power, every Buddha and high level practitioner would possess the power of body-transformation. However, in Mahāyāna Buddhism, body-transformation became more strongly associated with bodhisattvas. And it is the skillful means (upāya) for bodhisattvas to save sentient beings.

In Buddhist practice, some practitioners set up the goal for the full enlightenment (bodhi) to become a Buddha. They call themselves bodhisattvas. The bodhisattva’s path toward Buddhahood in this system is formulized into ten stages, called daśabhūmi. The daśabhūmi became an important doctrine in Mahāyāna Buddhism. Obtaining the power

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33 “He abandons his normal appearance and shows the appearance of a boy or the appearance of a nāga, the appearance of a supanna [winged demon], the appearance of an āṣura, the appearance of the king of the gods [Indra], the appearance of some deities, the appearance of a Brahmā, the appearance of the sea, the appearance of a rock, the appearance of a lion, the appearance of a tiger, the appearance of a leopard; he manifests as an elephant, he manifests as a horse, he manifests as a chariot, he manifests as a foot soldier, or he manifold military array.” *Paṭisambhidāmagga,* 388.

of body-multiplication is an import step on the ten-staged path. The daśabhūmi is taught most thoroughly in the Daśabhūmika-sūtra. The text is thought to have been first composed during the second and third centuries C.E. in the northwestern part of India or Khotan. It is also a part of the Avataṃsaka-sūtra, but has circulated independently. In terms of the date and provenance, the text is compatible with the Gandhāran images under discussion.

In the doctrine of the Daśabhūmika-sūtra, a bodhisattva gains the power of producing transformation bodies at the eighth bhūmi (ground, stage):

There was formerly a showing of conduct by the showing of one body. Now for the bodhisattva who has reached this stage the power of bodhisattva-conduct is attained through the diversity of innumerable bodies, the production of innumerable voices, immeasurable bodies, immeasurable number of birth, immeasurable purification of realms, immeasurable maturation of the living beings, immeasurable reverence and service to Buddha, awakening to the immeasurable dharmakāya, the immeasurable production of diversity in circles of the assemblies……all the powers of bodhisattva-conduct are attained by the production of acts of body, voice and mind which have acquired immeasurable dimensions because of the immovability.

At this eighth bhūmi, the bodhisattva fully understands the supreme knowledge of non-differentiation of suchness. He is free from the false thinking and action, and has abided in the ultimate essence of maturation. However, the Buddhas would not let the bodhisattva cease into nirvāṇa abandoning his duties towards all the sentient beings.

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The bodhisattva’s power of creating a diverse of bodies is used in this context to help sentient beings in various realms and various forms to reach their liberation.  

It is the compassion for the suffering of living beings that makes a bodhisattva a bodhisattva. And the body-transformation is the upāya for bodhisattvas to save sentient beings and, in particular, protect the wellbeing of the faithful in the mundane world.

**The Transformation Bodies of Avalokiteśvara and Kṣitigarbha**

The emergence of cults of salvific enlightened bodhisattvas is one of the most distinguishing characteristics of Mahāyāna practice. All the enlightened bodhisattvas are supposed to have the ability to manifest in human realm in any form. However, Avalokiteśvara and Kṣitigarbha are particularly known for their transformation bodies. Although so far we cannot identify the Gandhāra image under examination with any specific bodhisattva, the comparison to the later representations of the body transformation of a bodhisattva can suggest, to some extent, the difference between a bodhisattva’s body-transformation and the nirmāṇabuddha of a Buddha, and why the Gandhāran image of a bodhisattva’s body-transformation did not became a norm in later Buddhist art.

Avalokiteśvara is one of the earliest and certainly the most popular of all Mahāyāna bodhisattvas. The earliest source for his cult is in the *Lotus Sūtra*. According to Japanese scholars, who have carried out extensive studies on the text, most sections of this sūtra had appeared by the end of the second century. The text describes how Avalokiteśvara

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39 “When he got the knowledge to deliberate on the triple world, he with the light of well produced knowledge, being skilful in knowledge to distinguish the bodies of living beings and the bodies or realms, decides to produces the places of birth of living beings. He adapts and sustains his own body in accordance with the birth and the attainment of bodies of living beings in order to mature them.” Honda, “Annotated Translation of the Daśabhūmika-sūtra,” 224.

will answer the prayers of whoever calls upon him, and save them from eight perils, such as fire, rivers, storms on the ocean, murderers, demons, prison, and robbers. He appears in manifold different forms, which later on are known as the thirty-three bodies of Avalokiteśvara:

Should there be beings in the realm who require the body of a Buddha in order to attain liberation, Avalokiteśvara bodhisattva will manifest the body of a Buddha in order to preach the Dharma. For those who require the body of a Pratyekabuddha in order to attain liberation, he manifests the body of a Pratyekabuddha in order to preach the dharma….

Figures who are particularly concerned about the wellbeing of humans in their mundane life tend to gain more adoration among Buddhist followers. Not surprisingly, Avalokiteśvara saving people from the eight perils became a popular subject in Buddhist art. Fig. 4.10 is such a depiction in Aurangabad Cave 7 in Mahārāṣṭra, India. Walter Spink dated the cave to the mid-sixth century. This is an over life-sized panel showing Avalokiteśvara standing in the center. On either side of him, there are four scenes of the perils, each with a small flying image of the bodhisattva. The bending legs and the up-sweeping scarves of the flying Avalokiteśvara figures vividly suggest that the savior is coming at lightning speed. Fig. 4.11 is a painting from Dunhang Cave 45 in China dated to 712-781 C.E. It shows the thirty-three forms of Avalokiteśvara saving people. For


42 A very similar panel of the same period in the same region can be found in Kānheri Cave 90. See Susan Huntington, The Art of Ancient India—Buddhist, Hindu, Jain (New York: Weatherhill, 1985), 264, fig. 12.26.

43 Walter Spink, Ajanta to Ellora (Bombay: Marg Publications from the Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan, 1967), 9, chart, 5-6. (also published as Mārg 20, no. 2, March 1967).
example, in the detail of the painting (Fig. 4.12), he manifests as Vaiśravaṇa, a general, Iśvara, a prince, and a monk.

Kṣitigarbha is another bodhisattva popular in East Asia. He is known for saving beings from all the six realms of rebirth, even from hell. In Buddhist art, as one subset of his iconography, Kṣitigarbha is often shown with figures that represent the six realms. In chapter two of the Dizang pusa benyuan jing 地藏菩薩本願經(Sūtra on the Vows of Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva), he also assumes variant forms in response to the specific needs of those who call upon him. Similar to the thirty-three bodies of Avalokiteśvara, in the Dafangguang Shilun jing 大方廣十輪經, forty-four different types of transformation bodies of Kṣitigarbha are enumerated. According to this text, Kṣitigarbha has the supernatural power from samādhi (meditation) that can bring all beings to mature, and his power is like lightening and thunder. The text then lists a dozen perilous situations from which one can be saved only if the devotee calls upon his name. Two paintings of this sūtra from Dunhuang, which have been recently identified, depict the multiple bodies

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44. “All varieties and classes of living beings are liberated through the manifold and distinct reduplication-bodies [of Kṣitigarbha]. These bodies may manifest as men, women, gods, dragons, spirits, or ghosts. They may manifest as mountains, forests, streams, springs, and rivers, or as lakes, fountains, or wells, in each case bringing benefit and liberation to people. They may manifest as the bodies of divine emperors, Brahmā kings, wheel-turning kings, laypersons, kings of countries, prime ministers, officials, bhikṣus, bhikṣunīs, upāsakas, upāsikās, śrāvakas, arhats, Pratyekabuddhas, Bodhisattvas, and so on, all in order to transform and save [living beings]. It is not only the body of a Buddha that will appear before [one in need].” Taishō 13:412.779b, trans. Śikṣānanda, 695-700 C.E.

45. Taishō 13:410.486c, trans. anonymous. At least twenty-three copies of this text are found among the manuscripts excavated from the Dunhuang library cave. The text was retranslated again by Xianzang in 651 C.E.


47. Taishō 13:410.684a-c.

of Kṣitigarbha: Cave 321 dated to 650-705 C.E., and Cave 74 dated to 742-760 C.E.④9 Fig. 4.13 shows the painting from Dunhuang Cave 321, where the central Buddha is surrounded by gods and monks. The monk-like figure kneeling in front of the Buddha with a jewel holding in his hand might be Kṣitigarbha. Shown in detail in Fig. 4.14, Kṣitigarbha is also represented as a monk sitting on a cloud flying to rescue various devotees in various devastating situations.

Note that in all these depictions, the multiple bodies of the bodhisattvas are completely independent from the aura of the central image. In the textual tradition, the body-transformation is not found described in conjunction with the emanation of light. Perhaps, this is perhaps one of the reasons why in later Buddhist art, the representations of a bodhisattva’s transformation bodies were developed into completely different iconographies from the image of an aura with emanated figures inside.

4.3 Concluding Remarks

The depiction of emanated Buddhas in the aura emerged in Gandhāra with images of bhavana Buddhas. Amitābha has been one of the most popular bhavana Buddhas. It would not be too surprising if in two of the Gandhāra representations from Gandhāra, the emanating Buddha can be related to Amitābha.

As a unique piece in these Gandhāra images, as well as in the extant images in Buddhist art, a bodhisattva is shown emitting various beings. Like the concept of bhavana Buddhas, the emergence of the bodhisattva ideal is another hallmark of the

④9 For the dates of the caves, see Fan Jinshi 樊錦詩 and Liu Yuquan 劉玉權, “Dunhuang Mogaoku Tang qianqi dongku fenqi”敦煌莫高窟唐前期洞窟分期, in Dunhuang yanjiu wenji: Dunhuang shiku kaogu pian (Lanzhou: Gansu minzu chubanshe, 2000), 159, 181.
Mahāyāna movement. Bodhisattvas are known for their compassion for sentient beings. They postpone their own nirvāṇa to save beings from suffering. Body-multiplication, in particular, is an upāya of bodhisattvas. However, body-transformation is normally discussed without rays in Buddhist texts. Eventually, the idea of the bodhisattva’s body-transformation was developed into a number of different iconographies later in India and China.
Fig. 4.2 Detail of Fig. 4.1
Fig. 4.4 Sukhāvatī. East wall, Dunhuang Cave 148, Gansu, China. Tang Dynasty, 712-781 C.E. Wall painting. After Zhongguo Shiku—Dunhuang Mogaoku IV, fig. 39.
Fig. 4.5 *Meditating of Amithāba, Two Bodhisattvas, and the Lotus.* Detail of Fig. 4.4.
Fig. 4.6 *Amitābha Triad and Fifty Bodhisattvas*. East Wall, Dunhuang Cave 332, Gansu, China. Tang Dynasty, 698 C.E. Wall painting. After *Zhongguo Shiku -- Dunhunag Mogaoku III*, pl.94.
Fig. 4.7 Amitābha Triad and Fifty Bodhisattvas. East Wall, Dunhuang Cave 332, Gansu, China. Tang Dynasty, 698 C.E. Drawing of wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Dunhuang Mogaoku III, 214, fig. 4.
Fig. 4.8 Amitābha Triad. Kondō, Hōryūji temple, Japan. Ca. 710 C.E. Drawing of wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Dunhuang Mogaoku III, 214, fig. 3.
Fig. 4.9 Bodhisattva with His Transformation Bodies in His Aura. From Takht-ī-Bāhī, Pakistan. Ca. fourth century. Stone. Peshawar Museum no. 850.
Fig. 4.10 *Litany of Avalokiteśvara.* Left of central door on veranda, Aurangabada Cave 7, Mahārāṣṭra, India. Mid-sixth century. Stone. Author’s photo.
Fig. 4.11 *Avalokiteśvara*. South wall, Dunhang Cave 45, Gansu, China. Tang Dynasty 712-781 C.E. Wall painting. After *Zhongguo Shiku—Dunhuang Mogaoku III*, fig. 131.
Fig. 4.12 Avalokiteśvara (detail). South wall, Dunhang Cave 45, Gansu, China. Tang Dynasty, 712-781 C.E. Wall painting. After Zhongguo Shiku—Dunhuang Mogaoku III, fig. 132.
Fig. 4.13 Shi Lun Jingbian. South wall, Dunhuang Cave 321, Gansu, China. Tang Dynasty, 618-712 C.E. Wall painting. After Zhongguo Shiku—Dunhuang Mogaoku III, fig. 53.
Fig. 4.14 detail of Fig. 4.13
After Zhongguo Shiku—Dunhuang Mogaoku III, fig. 53.

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CHAPTER 5

EXCEPTION FROM KHO'TAN

This chapter sets to examine a special iconography from Khotan. It is a wall painting from Balawaste. In this painting, the image of a Buddha emanating other Buddha is surrounded by an assembly of deities. At Khotan, the same as in Gandhāra, most of the images with emanated figures in the aura and halo are not identifiable. This special example is the only extant piece that allows iconographic study.

5.1 The Image

A painting form Balawaste shows a unique representation of a Buddha’s emanation that is not found else where.¹ In the drawing which recovers their original composition (Fig. 5.1), the center of the painting shows a life-size figure standing on lotus flowers. He has a large round aura filled with clusters of small Buddha figures (Fig. 5.2). This is the dense type of representation of standing emanated Buddhas. The small Buddhas are shown standing slanted. They overlap with each other.

More interestingly, the emanating figure is surrounded by various deities and small seated Buddha images. From the drawing, three figures are depicted at the bottom section

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¹ Gerd Gropp, Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch-Ostturkestan (Bremen: Verlag Friedrich Röver, 1974), 111-119, 146-149.
below the main figure. Two multi-armed deities are seated on each corner. A figure riding on a camel-like vehicle is shown between them. At the right side of the feet of the main image, a figure is shown carrying a caurī (fly-whisk) hanging over his shoulder. All four of these figures are adorned with a halo, indicating their divinity. The most striking figure is the one under the feet of the central figure. A tiny female figure is kneeling (?) and holding up the feet of the main figure with her hands (Fig. 5.3). She is shown in Iranian costume. A couple of paintings with this interesting detail are found in Khotan. The central figures in those paintings are Buddhas. Presumably, this is also the same for this figure. There are two small seated Buddha images in the painting. Their appearance in the composition seems to fill the space.

Balawaste is an important Buddhist temple site at Khotan. The paintings found at this site yield a couple of unique iconographies, such as the several well-known dharmadhātu Buddha/bodhisattva images. And a seated bodhisattva image with small emanated Buddhas in the aura is also found from the site (Table III, no.5).

Scholars often dated the Balawaste site to the period between the fifth and seventh centuries, except Williams who dated virtually all Khotan paintings to the eighth century, including Balawaste. The site might have been used for centuries. Regarding the particular date of the paintings under discussion, the way of placing a Buddha or bodhisattva with deities surrounded in the corners and margins as shown in Fig. 5.1 is a new format of painting in Buddhist art. It appeared in Dunhuang during the Middle Tang

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2 The cosmological Buddha image from Balawaste was dated to the seventh century in the Buddhism in Afghanistan and Central Asia (Simone Gaulker et al. ed., 23, fig. 39), fifth-sixth centuries in The Art of Central Asia (Rowland, 135), and the mid-sixth century in the Painting of Central Asia (Bussagli, 55).

(781-847 C.E.) in a highly standardized form. The representation in the Balawaste painting appears less formulized than the Dunhuang paintings. The position of the two seated Buddha figures seems random. Therefore, the Balawaste painting might be dated slightly earlier than the mid-Tang paintings at Dunhuang, to the seventh and eighth centuries.

5.2 The Identification

In this particular from Balawaste painting (Fig. 5.1), a female figure is shown at the bottom holding up the feet of the Buddha. This interesting detail occurs in a number of other paintings from Khotan, one from Dandān Oilik (Fig. 5.4), and two from Bugaiwuyulaik (Fig. 5.5, 5.6). Bugaiwuyulaik is a Buddhist temple site in the desert 40 km north of Khotan city. The two paintings from this site do not show the female figure holding the feet of the Buddha. In one of the paintings, this female figure is instead emitting light suggested by wavy lines around her head. In the painting from Dandān Oilik, her whole body is surrounded with flame motif. She is likely a deity. Scholars identified her as the earth–goddess Drīḍha from the Suvarṇabhāṣottama-sūtra (The Sūtra of Golden Light, hereafter Suvarṇabhā).5

The Suvarṇabhā is a major Mahāyāna sūtra, and is counted as one of the nine Dharmas in Nepal. In this text, various gods and goddesses vowed to protect this sūtra, as well as whoever teaches and follow this sūtra. The earth–goddess Drīḍha was one of the

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4 Xinjiang Uigur zizhiqu wenwu shiye guanliju et al. eds., Xinjiang wenwu guji daguan, 93.

protective deities listed in this text. It states that she will hold the feet of whoever will preach the *Suvarṇabhā*: 

Then indeed the earth –goddess Dṛḍha spoke thus to the Lord:

“In whatever village, city, settlement, district, forest-region, mountain-cavern or royal place this excellent *Suvarṇabhāsa*, king of *sūtras*, dear Lord, now and in future time shall go forth, I, dear Lord, the earth-goddess Dṛḍhā will approach that village, city, settlement, district, forest-region, mountain-cavern or royal place. Wherever this excellent *Suvarṇabhāsa*, king of *sūtras*, shall be expounded in detail, in which ever region of earth, Lord, the seat of the law will be been provided for the monk who preaches the Law, wherever the preacher of the Law, having sat on that seat, shall expound in detail this excellent *Suvarṇabhāsa*, king of *sūtras*, there I, dear Lord, the earth-goddess Dṛḍhā will come to those regions of the earth. Having gone up to the seat of the Law with my invisible body I will lean with my head upon the soles of the feet of the monk who is preaching the Law.”

Furthermore, Dṛḍha will ensure the prosperity of the land and the people where this *sūtra* is preached. In this way, she can also become a local protector of Khotan and wealth goddess for Khotanese:

“I will cause to increase in respect of the savour of the earth a mass of earth six million eight hundred thousand leagues in extent as far as the foundation of the earth made of the thunderbolt.”

“The great earth will become stronger. And, dear Lord, all those beings who are dependent upon the earth will find increase, extension and expansion. And they will become great.”

This is possibly one of the reasons why she is often shown in local costume. Depicting Dṛḍhā at such a position seem to have been a strong tradition in this region. In Khotan,

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7 Emmerick, *The Sūtra of Golden Light*, 52; *Taishō* 16:663.354c.

the image of Vaiśravaṇa (Heavenly King of North) sometimes is also shown with a figure holding his body. Scholars have identified that figure as the earth goddess.⁹

The *Suvarṇabhā* is strongly associated with the Khotan area. The text has been translated into Khotanese, and the Khotanese translation is the closest text to the extant Sanskrit version.¹⁰ Over thirty copies of the text have been identified among the manuscripts excavated from Buddhist sites in Khotan, including Balawaste.¹¹ If this female figure is the earth goddess, other deities in this painting could therefore be other various celestial beings who made promises for special protection of the devotees. Since this identification seems convincing, the central Buddha would be Śākyamuni preaching the *Suvarṇabhā*.

In the painting from Balawaste, the Buddha is adorned with a large aura filled a myriad of miniature Buddha figures. (The other paintings with the earth goddess Drdhā only have the bottom section remaining.) Is the representation of *nirmāṇabuddhas* related to the *Suvarṇabhā*? What is the concept of the Buddha in the *Suvarṇabhā*?

The *Suvarṇabhā*, like other Mahāyāna texts, became increasingly elaborate as time went on. It has been translated into Chinese four (or five) times and three times in Tibetan. The present Sanskrit edition agrees to a great extent with the first Chinese translation by Dharmarakṣa in 412-426 C.E.¹² This is also the version which the Khotanese translation was based upon. In this version of the text, before the well-known chapter on tri-kāya was added, the Buddha is seen to be identical with the body and field

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of the Dharma, that is the dharmakāya and dharmadhātu. The Buddha is eternal and inconceivable. For sake of living beings, he manifests his transformed-bodies (nirmāṇa-bodies). This is expounded thoroughly in chapter two, “The Chapter of the Measure of Life of the Tathāgata:”

All the Buddhas have the same appearance: this is the normal condition among Buddhas. This Lord Tathāgata is not created and has not arisen. His body that is as hard as the thunderbolt manifests his transformed body (nirmāṇakāya)……the body of the Law (dharmakāya) is the one fully enlightened; the sphere of the Law (dharmadhātu) is the Tathāgata. Such is the Lord’s body; such the exposition of the Law. ……The Lord Buddha is inconceivable. The Tathāgata has an eternal body. He shows various manifestations by reason of the welfare of beings.”

In short, the text portrayed a two-fold Buddha concept: as a body of Dharma and at the same time, as the transformation body of the Dharma-body. This concept leaves no place for a human Buddha who had only an eighty-year life span on earth. This idea is so strong in the Suvarṇabhā that the text even claims that the Buddha has no relics. This Buddha concept taught in the Suvarṇabhā seems to have been fully understood by Khotanese. It is reinforced in the preface of the Khotanese translation of the Suvarṇabhā. “And the body of the divine Buddhas is called by it the body of the Law (dharmakāya). And (their) manifestation of life is unlimited.” Perhaps because of such emphasis, the visual representations of the text show the Buddha as a transcendental figure emanating nirmāṇabuddhas. To conclude, the painting from Balawaste most likely represents a Suvarṇabhā related theme.

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14 Hokei Idzumi pointed out that this concept of the Buddha is expressed in almost identical terms in chapter XV of the *Lotus Sūtra*. The is a fundamental idea in Mahāyāna Buddhism that is taught in more than one scripture. Idzumi et al. eds., *The Suvarnaprabhasa Sutra*, xvii-xviii.

5.3 Concluding Remarks

The painting of a Buddha emanating a myriad of other Buddhas from Balawaste can be related to the *Suvarṇabhū*. In this case, the iconography accords with the concept of the Buddha stressed in this text: the true body of the Buddha is the body of the Dharma. However, for sentient beings, he transforms into *nimmāṇabuddhas* throughout every corner of the world. Accordingly, the central Buddha image would be Śākyamuni who preached the *Suvarṇabhū*.

Previously, scholars have identified the images of a Buddha emanating other Buddhas from Khotan mostly as the Great Miracle at Śrāvasti,\(^{16}\) or Vairocana.\(^{17}\) This example demonstrates another possibility of identification. Perhaps, this motif is beyond an attribute of a particular Buddha or bodhisattva in the area.

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\(^{16}\) For instance, Simone Gaulier, Robert Jera-bezard, and Monique Maillard, *Buddhism in Afghanistan and Central Asia* (Leiden: D. J. Brill, 1976), 8; Rhie, *Early Buddhist Art of China And Central Asia*, 1: 293. Marylin Rhie, while identified images of R12 and 13 as the Great Miracle at Śrāvasti, suspected that the type of halo with five small Buddha images in Rawak Style VI may have some specific meanings, and she proposed that images with *nimmāṇabodhisattva* figures were Maitreya. Rhie, *Early Buddhist Art of China And Central Asia*, 1: 305-311.

\(^{17}\) Rowland believed that these two Rawak images are Vairocana, which as he described, “appear to derive from Gandhāra reliefs representing the Great Miracle, a prototype of Vairocana.” Gerd Gropp discussed the type of representations in the late phase of Rawak and those from Balawaste. He called the *emanated Buddhas in the aura or halo* as “Spriessenden Buddhas” (Sprouting Buddhas) and identified the image with these kinds of halo/aura as Vairocana. Rowland, *The Art of Central Asia*, 126; Gropp, *Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch*, 111-119, 146-149.
Fig. 5.1 A *Buddha among Deities*. Balawaste, Xinjiang, China. Seventh and eighth centuries. Drawing of Wall painting. After Gropp, *Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch-Ostturkestan*, fig. 42a-f.
Fig. 5.2 Nirmāṇabuddhas in the Aura. Balawaste, Xinjiang, China. Seventh and eighth centuries. Wall painting. After Gropp, Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch-Ostturkestan, fig. 42e.
Fig. 5.3 The Earth Goddess (Ḍṛḍhā). Balawaste, Xinjiang, China. Seventh and eighth centuries. Wall painting. After Gropp, Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch-Ostturkestan, fig. 42d.
Fig. 5.4 Drdhā. Dandan Oilik, Xinjiang, China. Wall painting.
After Gropp, *Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch-Ostturkestan*, 102, fig.37.
Fig. 5.5 Drdhā. Bugaiwuyulaik, Xinjiang, China. Wall painting. After Xinjiang wenwu guji daguan, 93, fig. 210.
Fig. 5.6 Drdhā. Bugaiwuyulaik, Xinjiang, China. Wall painting. After Xinjiang wenwu guji daguan, 93, fig. 211.
CHAPTER 6

EXCEPTIONS FROM KUCHA

This chapter investigates three types of special iconographies from Kucha that involves images of emanated Buddhas: the two well-known dharmadhātu Buddha images (an iconography that displays the cosmos within the Buddha’s body) from Kizil Cave 17, the two narratives from Kizil Cave 123, and the depiction of a Buddha revealing various realms of rebirth in his aura from Kizil Cave 175. Buddhist paintings surviving from Kucha are mainly from caves. They are in a much better condition than those from free-standing temples at Khotan. In addition, the most intricate images of a Buddha emanating other Buddhas survive in this region. All these allow me to explore the meaning of the depictions of emanated Buddhas in the aura from a variety of aspects, and through which to look into Kucha Buddhist art in depth.

6.1 The Dharmadhātu Buddha Images

The two images of the dharmadhātu Buddhas in Kizil Cave 17 are probably the most renowned paintings from Kucha (Fig. 6.2, 6.3). Among all dharmadhātu Buddha images before the tenth century, the two Kizil images are unique in that they also incorporate images of emanated Buddhas in the aura. The dharmadhātu Buddha has been a
remarkable iconography in the study of Buddhist art, and the identification has been notorious for its controversy. In this section, I review the previous studies and make my remarks on the meaning of the dharmadhātu body of a Buddha. Finally, I discuss the special feature of the two Kizil dharmadhātu Buddha images.

The Images

Kizil Cave 17 is a central-pillared cave. On either side of the corridors near the entrance to the main hall (no. 4 and 5 in Fig. 6.1, the layout of the cave), there is a life-sized standing Buddha image shown with small Buddha figures in his aura. These two paintings (Fig. 6.2, 6.3) are the renowned dharmadhātu Buddhas.¹ The two are mirror images of each other. The one from the left corridor has been taken to Berlin (Fig. 6.2).²

In these two paintings, the Buddha stands in a relaxing pose on a cosmic lotus flower and a shower of flowers shown in the background. The lotus pedestal indicates the transcendent nature of the Buddha. Kizil cave paintings at this phase normally portray the Buddha as a historical person in an earthly setting.

On the example now in Berlin (Fig. 6.2), a ring of beads, which seems to be an ornament, is shown around the neck of the Buddha. This also suggests that this Buddha may be intended portray bhavana (imagined, conceptual) Buddha, rather than a historical Buddha. The image that still remains in the cave (Fig. 6.3) is too damaged to tell whether that Buddha was originally bejeweled. In the Berlin example, the Buddha’s head tilts to his right, where a kneeling monk is in the corner, possibly in aṅjali mudrā. The eyes of

¹ For explanation of the term, see Chapter 1.

² In the first publication of the image now in Berlin, Von Le Coq described that this piece came from the fifth cave east of the Sechzehn Schwerträgerhöhle cave, i.e. Kizil Cave 13. However, from the traces left in the caves, this painting must have been taken from Cave 17. Albert von Le Coq and E. Waldschmidt, Buddhistische Spätantike in Mittelasien (Berlin: Reimer, 1923-1933), 6: 70.
the monk appear closed. In the example still in situ, the accompanying monk kneels down to the left side of the Buddha holding something in his right hand, and there is a tray of offerings laid on the ground. Both Buddha figures are depicted much larger than the kneeling monks. Adorning the Buddha with ornaments and showing him is a hierarchic distinguish these two images from the normal subject of the paintings on the walls of the central-pillar cave at this time, in which a seated Buddha is shown surround by Buddhist assembles.

In a typical manner of Kucha Buddha images of this time, both the central Buddha and the small Buddhas in the aura wear the saṅghāṭī (outer robe) covering both shoulders, that is, in the covering mode. The robe on the central Buddha figure is almost transparent, (except for the wrap-around skirt,) to show what it is inside the body of the Buddha. A striking feature of these images is the representation of the Buddha’s body, on which the Buddhist cosmology of the cakravāla world system is painted. These two paintings have only minor differences. Mount Sumeru, the center pole of the universe, is depicted on the belly area of the Buddha. Three rows of architectural structures filled with figures are illustrated above Mount Sumeru, and probably represent celestial beings in heavenly palaces. Big, oval-shaped medallions are depicted along the four limbs of the Buddha. Figures often with haloes in various poses are enclosed in these ovals. They seem to be different gods and goddesses. Due to the damage, not all of them are identifiable. An elephant is shown on the Buddha’s left arm. Two cakras (the wheel

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3 The covering mode and open mode (draping the garment beneath the right arm with right shoulder bare) are the two basic methods of wearing the monastic robe. A. B. Griswold, “Prolegomena to the Study of the Buddha’s Dress in Chinese Sculpture (Part I and Part II),” *Arteus Asiae* 26, no.1 (1963): 85-131 and vol. 27, no.4 (1965): 335-348.

4 For some observations of these differences, see Howard, *The Imagery of the Cosmological Buddha*, 53. Since the small details became rather illegible, especially in poor reproductions, I cannot do further analysis.
symbol) are depicted at the knees of the Buddha. Yen Wenru identified the two figures (Fig. 6.3) over the Buddha’s knees as “devotees kneeling and offering a tray of fruits.”\(^5\)

Angela Howard recognized that small running figures (Fig. 6.2) at the bottom between the Buddha’s legs may represent “sinners.”\(^6\) Their bony bodies and sunken stomachs are typical of the iconography of the hungry ghosts (pretā). At each ankle of the Buddha, the literal bottom of the cosmos imagery, is the depiction of a cauldron boiling in fire. This vital element, symbol of the torments of hell, has not been identified in previous studies. Celestial beings, humans, animals, pretas, and the hell constitute the realms of rebirth (gati). Overall, the cosmos world on these two Buddha’s bodies seems to be systematically designed. It is the cakravāla world system with gati realms.

Both of these Buddhas are portrayed with a double-banded aura around the body and a halo around the head. The aura and the halo are occupied with small Buddha figures. These small Buddha images are laid out along concentric bands, or annular-shaped bands, with one next to another. The Buddhas are almost identical--all sit on lotuses in the meditation posture with legs double crossed and hands in dhyāna mudrā. These small Buddhas are all slanted to form an angle with the central Buddha figure. Above the aura of these small Buddhas, there are bold black lines meeting at a pointed end to suggest an upwards directed flame pattern. The slanted angle and these lines give these small Buddha figures a sense of direction, making them look like they are being projected out from the central Buddha figure, and thus that they are emanating from the central figure.

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\(^5\) Yan Wenru 阎文儒, “Xinjiang Tianshan yì nán de shiku” 新疆天山以南的石窟, Wenwu (July-August 1962): 44.

\(^6\) Howard, The Imagery of the Cosmological Buddha, 53.
Details about the iconographic plans of the central-pillar cave at Kizil, cave grouping, and the history of the site are studied in appendix C. Below is related information about Cave 17. Paintings in the cave as a whole typify the traditional scheme of the iconographic program of central-pillar caves at Kucha —Buddhist assemblies on the side walls, jātākas on the ceilings and parinirvāṇa-related scenes in the back corridor.

Scholars are aware that the images of the dharmadhātu Buddha are situated within an iconographic program that is centered around Śākyamuni. Another comparable example is Dunhuang Cave 428, in which the other panel paintings are all about Śākyamuni. However, most of the extant dharmadhātu Buddha figures in Buddhist caves are in conjunction with other Buddhas or bodhisattvas. This location is one of the reasons that led Angela Howard to identify the images from Kizil Cave 17 and Dunhuang Cave 428 as Śākyamuni and not Vairocana.⁷

Cave 17 is located in the western section, one of the areas that was developed early.⁸ In recent studies of the last twenty years, scholars generally agree on an early date of this cave around the fifth century. The cave was first grouped with Caves 15 and 16 in the fourth to early fifth centuries (Fig. 6.4).⁹ Caves 18 and 19 (both residential caves) joined this group in the fifth and sixth centuries. Cave 14 (a painted square cave) was added later in the seventh and eighth centuries.¹⁰ The location of Cave 17 within a group that included both a square cave and residential cave demonstrates that the cave was used as a

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⁷ Howard, The Imagery of the Cosmological Buddha, 57.


¹⁰ Vignato, Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu, 67-72.

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monastery space.\footnote[11]{Archaeologists tend to identify the cave groups as temples. One residential cave usually has two beds for two people. Two people seem to be too little a number to form a temple. I suggest that the cave groups at the site were used as compounds or cloisters of a large monastery, rather than independent temples.} The history of this group shows that Cave 17 was continuously in use and the iconography of the \emph{dharmadhātu} Buddha would be available to people of later times.

According to the preface of a \emph{vinaya} text (\emph{Bhikṣunīprātimokṣa}) from Kucha, the \textit{Biquini jieben suo chu benmo xu} 比丘尼戒本所出本末序 which dates to the fourth century, three temples were located in the mountains north of the capital, (which point to the location of the Kizil site,). The temple’s population ranged from fifty to seventy monks, who exchanged beds or even temples every three month.\footnote[12]{北山寺名致隷藍(五十僧), 剑慕王新藍(六十僧), 溫宿王藍(七十僧), 右四寺佛圖舌彌所統。寺僧皆三月一易屋床座或易藍者。” in \textit{Chu sanzang ji ji} 出三藏記集, \textit{Taishō} 55:2145.79c. The text was obtained in Kucha from Fotushemi 佛圖舌彌, who was an Abhidharma master and abbot of four major temples at Kucha. It was obtained by the Chinese monk Sengchun 僧純 and translated in 379-380 C.E.} If the monks were meant to constantly move around, Cave 17 would be equally accessible to the whole community instead of under the control of two or four monks living in the nearby cave, and a seemingly unique image such as the \emph{dharmadhātu} Buddha would be more ubiquitous and notable at the site than it appears today.

There might have been more images of the \emph{dharmadhātu} Buddha at Kizil or Kucha that did not survive to the present-day. A wooden arm with images enclosed in oval-shaped medallions and a Surya (“sun god”) near the shoulder were found in Kizil Cave 60 (Fig. 6.5).\footnote[13]{Le Coq and Waldschmidt, \textit{Buddhistische Spätantike in Mittelasien}, 6: 71.} It most likely came from a sculpture of a \emph{dharmadhātu} Buddha.
So far, five dharmadātu images are found along the Northern Route.\(^{14}\) A number of them are also found from the Khotan area. In my most recent study, I found total of near forty images of this iconography from China.\(^{15}\) They can be dated from the fifth to the twelfth centuries. The dharmadhātu Buddha images from Kucha and most of the images of this iconography from central China feature symbols of the cakravāla and gati world system depicted on the body of the Buddha image. However, the two paintings from Kizil Cave 17 differentiate from the other dharmadhātu Buddhas images by the striking representations of the emanated Buddhas.

**Previous Studies and Sources**

Previously, the identification of the iconography of the dharmadhātu Buddha images has been sharply divided between Vairocana and Śākyamuni Buddha based on different texts. Recently, inscriptions with this iconography have been found and solved the some of the puzzles of the identification.

--The *Avatamsaka* and Vairocana

The dharmadhātu Buddhas have been identified as Vairocana based on the *Avatamsaka* by Japanese scholars since the 1930s.\(^{16}\) Matsumoto’s opinion and approach have been largely followed and still dominates the field today, especially among Japanese

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\(^{14}\) Besides the two in Kizil Cave 17, the other three are from Kumtura Cave 9 and A’ai cave at Kucha, and Sorcuq Cave 11 at Karashahr on the east end of the Northern Route (Map 1). These depictions resemble each other closely. The dharmadhātu depicted on the Buddha-body is the single cakravāla world system with gati realms. And on the Buddhas limbs, figures are enclosed in the oval shaped medallion. This is the Kucha type. However, the two paintings from Kizil Cave 17 are in the early traditional Kucha style, and the other three are in the Chinese/ Uighur style.


\(^{16}\) Matsumoto Eicchi, “Seiiki Kegonkyōbutsu no tōzen (The Eastward Propagation of the Avatamsaka Sūtra),” *Kokka* no. 548 (1936), 195-200; *ibid.* no.549 (1936), 243-248; *ibid.* no.551 (1936), 278-284.
and Chinese scholars.\textsuperscript{17} The \textit{Avataṃsaka} is known for promoting Vairocana Buddha in his universally penetrating quality. Numerous passages in the text ascribe the whole \textit{dharmadhātu} to him. For instance, the \textit{sūtra} states “The infinite, equal, and mystic \textit{dharmadhātu}, all fill in the body of the Tathāgata.”\textsuperscript{18} However, the most applicable reference in the \textit{Avataṃsaka} occurs in the description of the bodhisattva Samantabhadra’s body and not Vairocana. The \textit{Avataṃsaka} was compiled over several centuries and different sections of the text were translated into Chinese over time. The first full ranged text and also one of the most influential translations was introduced by Buddhabhadra (410-421 C.E.) in the beginning of the fifth century, and it is also the version from which scholars quote extensively.\textsuperscript{19} In Buddhabhadra’s translation, at the end of the \textit{Gandavyuha}, Sudhana finally met the bodhisattva Samantabhadra as the completion of his pilgrimage. Here is what he saw in Samantabhadra’s body:

Suddhana … further saw, from every part of his body and every pore, the three-thousand-great-thousand-world: the wind disk, water disk, fire disk, and earth disk; the great ocean, jewel mountains, Mount Sumeru and \textit{cakravāla} mountains; all dwellings and palaces of human kind; all hells, hungry ghosts, animals in the Yama’s domain; all gods, Brahmā, human beings and non-human; the realm of desire, the realm of form and the realm of formless; in all \textit{kalpas}, Buddhas and bodhisattvas teaching to sentient beings; things as such all emerged. Same did all the worlds in the ten directions. Such is the power...


\textsuperscript{18} “無盡平等妙法界,悉皆充滿如來身” \textit{Taisho} 9:278.397b.

\textsuperscript{19} The second translation of the \textit{Avataṃsaka Sūtra} was by Śīkṣānanda in 695-699 C.E., and the third was by Prajñā in 796-798 C.E.
of complete mastery (īśvara) manifested from the perfect enlightenment of the Sahā world Vairocana Tathāgata, Worshipful and so on. \(^{20}\)

What is enumerated above is a systematic description of the cakravāla cosmic structure with the six gatis. This is the world of Śākyamuni, also called “Sahā” as above mentioned. Shown in the diagram in Fig. 6.6, this cosmos is centered around Mount Sumeru, surrounded by seas, four continents, and enclosed with a ring of iron mountains (cakravāla). Above it are layers of heavens, increasingly larger and purer. Beneath it, are hells. All beings are subjected to the cycle of six realms (gati) of rebirth between the hells and the lower heavens.

The world of Vairocana is called the Lotus Repository World. The Lotus Repository World consists of layers upon layers of wind circles rotating concentrically, supporting a fragrant ocean, from which raises a giant cosmic lotus flower (Fig. 6.7). There are no mountains, no hells or low realms of rebirth. \(^{21}\) Vairocana dwells on the lotus. This world system by virtue of the supernatural power of the Buddha can reveal all other Buddhas’ worlds of various shapes, which are enumerated elaborately in Śīkṣānanda’s translation of the Avataṃsaka-sūtra (695-699 C.E.):

All Buddhas from the three ages (i.e., the past, present and future) and their lands are all revealed in one Buddha’s land (of Vairocana). All by means of the supernatural power of the Buddha, multiple worlds appear in one dust. Their various forms are seen clearly. They are like shadow and are not real. Some worlds are in the shape of a vast ocean; some are like Mount Sumerus, whose world is beyond words. Some worlds are wonderful abodes with the

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\(^{21}\) Taishō 9:278.412.
shape of Indra’s net; some have the shape of groves of trees filled with all the Buddhas. Some form the shape of the jeweled wheels; some have the form of lotuses and are adorned with octagons and are all pure. Some have shapes like thrones; some have the shape of triangles. Some are like measures of grains, like walled cities, like Brahmārāja’s body. Some are like devas’ crowns; some are like half-moons. Some are like mountains of manī jewels; some like shapes of sun disks; some shapes of the worlds are like the spinning fragrant oceans. Some are like disks of light, [as the result of] the Buddha purity and solemnity from the past. Some display shapes of wheels, some of altars. Some resemble Buddha’s ārṇā, uṣṇīsa, and big, elongated eyes; some are shaped like Buddha’s hands. Some are like vajras, some like flaming mountains filled up with bodhisattvas. Some are like lions’ shapes; some like oysters of the sea; There are, indeed, infinite appearances of all kinds. The essence of each is different from the others. 

These variously shaped worlds that can be seen in Vairocana’s world correspond very well to the Khotan type of representation of the dharmadhātu Buddha images, such as the image from Balawaste shown in Fig. 6.8. In this painting, the Buddha is seated in a meditation pose. Symbolic forms and some geometric shapes are shown on the body of the Buddha. The images of the sun and moon near the shoulders suggest a cosmic scale, or maybe just two of the different shapes of worlds as listed in the Avatāṃsaka-sūtra. Two vajras, and palm-leaf books with leaf-like flames are shown on the arms. Coincidentally, some lands in the Lotus Depository World as quoted above are in the shape of vajras. In this painting, the Mount Sumeru in the center is not a constituent pole of the universe, but only one of the variant shaped worlds in Vairocana’s cosmos. A horse is shown running in front of the Mount Sumeru world. A stūpa and a bird are depicted on the leg. Depicting a stūpa at this

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22 Taishō 10:279.52c-53a. A much more brief account also appears in Buddhhabhadra’s translation, Taishō 9:278.414a.

23 Lee Yu-min, “Fajie renzhong xiang,” 34. Part of the translation is modified from Angela Howard’s translation. Howard, The Imagery of the Cosmological Buddha, 93.

24 A horse in this location became a prominent element in a number of dharmadhātu Buddha images from China. Such as the two images from Freer Gallery, and Gao’an temple. It made its appearance in the afore-mentioned paintings in Kumtura Cave 9 and A’ai cave at Kucha in the wave of new iconographies and styles from China. There is a wide
place seems to be a convention of the iconography of the dharmadhātu image at Khotan. The geometric shapes throughout the body are presumably the other different shaped worlds. This Khotan type of dharmadhātu Buddha image adheres to the description of the Lotus Repository World of Vairocana as described in the Avatāmsaka. This is not surprising because it is believed that the Avatāmsaka texts were compiled from this area.

--The Lotus Sūtra and Śākyamuni

In the 1980s, Angela Howard challenged the identification of Vairocana. She identified this iconography as Śākyamuni in the “cosmological form,” as the “lord of the phenomenal world.” She pointed out that these “cosmological Buddha” images, especially in Kizil Cave 17 and Dunhuang Cave 428, are shown as “one facet of a larger iconographic program whose aim is to glorify the Buddha Śākyamuni.” She also pointed out that the cosmos centered with Mount Sumeru, the cakravāla world system, is the most fundamental Buddhist cosmology and details of this cosmic structure are provided in Hīnayāna doctrinal texts. Howard successfully analyzed the cosmic structure of the dharmadhātu Buddha statue in the Freer Gallery based upon the Sūtra of Cosmology in the Dirghāgama. However, the Hīnayāna texts do not attribute this cosmos

variety of interpretations of the horse. For example, Banerjee suggests that it is Indra as Uchaisravas (the lord of horses) who emerged from the cosmic ocean when it was churned. P. Banerjee, “Vairochana Buddha from Central Asia,” Oriental Art no.18 (1972): 166-170. I suggest that it may represent the realm of animals.

It also appears on a painting of a dharmadhātu figure (bejeweled Buddha, or bodhisattva) from Balawaste. Gerd Gropp, Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch-Ostturkestan: die Trinkler-Sammlung im Übersee-Museum (Bremen: Verlag Friedrich Röver, 1974), fig.52 a-e.


Howard, The Imagery of the Cosmological Buddha, 57.

Howard, The Imagery of the Cosmological Buddha, 111.
to the body of the Buddha. To identify the Buddha, she had to turn to a Mahāyāna text, the *Lotus Sūtra*, in which Śākyamuni plays the central Buddha. She quotes the following verse from the *sūtra* which is related to the iconography under discussion:

As a pure, bright mirror
Reveals all forms
Likewise the bodhisattva, in his pure body,
Sees everything in the world.
He, himself, clearly sees
What others do not see.
All the common multitude,
In the three thousand-fold world,
*Devas*, men, *asuras*,
The [denizens] of hell, demons, and animals.
All such forms and images
Appear without exception in his body.
All the heavens and their palaces
To the summit of all existence,
The *cakravāla* as well as Śumeru Mountain,
Mount Mahāsumeru,
All the great oceans and waters,
All appear in his body.
Buddhas and *śrāvakas*,
Sons of Buddha and bodhisattvas,
Alone or preaching to the multitude,
All appear in him.
Thought not yet possessed of the flawless,
The wonderful body of the Dharma-nature (*dharmatā*),
By virtue of its purity
Everything is revealed.  

Howard’s opinion is well taken (although still controversial), and the term “cosmological Buddha” has now become a standard term in the field of Buddhist art.  

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Howard’s argument generated a debate among scholars world wide. In recent studies, a trend to identify the dharmadhātu Buddha as the dharmakāya and coalesce Vairocana and Śākyamuni aroused.

However the “cosmological Buddha” and “lord of the phenomenal world” are not Buddhist terms. And pointed by Yoshimura, the aforementioned quotation from the *Lotus Sūtra* was taken out of context.\(^{31}\) This verse was spoken by Śākyamuni and refers to the “pure body” (qingjingshen 清淨身) of the Dharma-nature (dharmatā) that a zealous bodhisattva can gain from the merit of holding fast the *Lotus Sūtra*.

---Inscriptions and Vairocana

Recently, three dharmadhātu Buddha images are found inscribed as Vairocana. They are the sculpture in Dazhusheng cave dated to 589 C.E. (Fig. 6.9), the wall painting in A’ai cave of the eighth century (Fig. 6.10),\(^ {32}\) and an image in Dunhuang Cave 449 of the Mid-Tang, 781-848 C.E. (Fig. 6.11).\(^ {33}\) Based upon these inscriptions, there is little doubt that the dharmadhātu Buddha depictions of this period in Chinese culture spectrum represent Vairocana.

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\(^{31}\) Yoshimura, “Roshana Hōkai Ninchūzō sairon,” 40.

\(^{32}\) Peng Jie 彭傑, “Xinjiang Kuche xinfaxian de Lushenafo zhouyi” 新疆庫車新發現的盧舎那佛詮議, *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* (Beijing) 94, no.2 (2001), 76.

\(^{33}\) Dunhuang yanjiu yuan 敦煌研究院, *Dunhuang shiku neirong zonglu* 敦煌石窟內容總錄 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1996), 185.
Questions and Interpretations

Although the identification of the dharmadhātu Buddha images is no longer an issue, questions raised by scholars in the past have not been satisfactorily answered. Why would Vairocana Buddha assume the cakravāla, the cosmic land of Śākyamuni? Besides symbols and figures associated with the cakravāla and gati, there are also other images, such as Buddhas, events in the Buddha’s life, Maitreya, Mañjuśrī and Vimalakīrti, are depicted on some of the dharmadhātu Buddha images. How to relate this type of images to Vairocana (or Śākyamuni)? These questions have puzzled scholars deeply. For instance, Lin Baoyao tried to match all the scenes on the dharmadhātu Buddha sculpture in Freer Gallery, the central piece in Howard’s book, to the different chapters of the Lotus Sūtra and tie them together with the text. He identified this piece as the dharma-body and eternal Buddha-body of Śākyamuni.  

34 For the same sculpture, Li Jingjie made every effort to find segments in the Avatāṃsaka that can match all the details on this image.  

The arguments of tying the dharmadhātu Buddha image solely to Śākyamuni, or Vairocana all seem to have found their textual supports and therefore cannot be totally wrong. Yet their results cancel each other out and therefore they cannot be completely right either. Actually, these contradicting studies very powerfully demonstrate that something is wrong how we use texts for this iconography. They also made it evident that the notion of the dharmadhātu body is by no means exclusive to one text.

In fact, in Buddhist theory, manifesting in form of a dharmadhātu body is a power of all Buddhas and bodhisattvas at the tenth stage. According to the Daśabhūmika-sūtra,


which is also a part of the *Avatāṃsaka*, a bodhisattva attains the ability of containing the entire *dharmadhātu* within his body at will at the tenth stage (called Dharma-cloud) on the ten-staged path to the Buddha-hood.\(^{36}\)

However, traditionally in Buddhist literature, Vairocana Buddha is coincidental with the condition of voidness and manifests the *dharmadhātu* (based on the *Avatāṃsaka*) and Śākyamuni has a finite lifetime (shown in the *Lotus Sūtra*).\(^{37}\) Therefore, in Buddhist art in China, the depiction of a Buddha enclosing Buddhist cosmos world inside his body became an iconography of Vairocana.

And yet, even to medieval Chinese Buddhists, Śākyamuni can certainly manifest a *dharmadhātu* body as well. In the *Bao’en jing*, an apocryphal scripture that promotes filial piety, Śākyamuni manifests the five realms of rebirth (*gatis*) in his body before he starts preaching.\(^{38}\) And as I mentioned previously, in this text, Vairocana is a transformation body of Śākyamuni.\(^{39}\) And Śākyamuni in the *dharmadhātu* body also appeared in Buddhist art. At Dunhuang, six images of the *dharmadhātu* Buddha are

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\(^{38}\) “At that time, Śākyamuni rose from his seat and ascended to the lotus platform. Having sat with his legs interlocked, he revealed his pure body. He manifested the five *gatis* in his body. Each *gati* body contained eighteen thousand different shapes and types; each shape and type manifested hundreds and thousands of bodies. Within each body, there were infinite bodies as many as the sands of the Ganges River. In each of the bodies as many as the sands of four Ganges Rivers, these further appeared bodies as many as the dust in the lands of the four continents. In each of these minute bodies, appeared again bodies as many as the dusts in the three thousand great thousand worlds. Within each these minute bodies, there further appeared bodies as many as the dust of all the Buddha’s lands in the ten directions with thousands and billions of Buddha’s lands in each direction, as many as the unimaginable number of beings in the void *dharmadhātu*.” “爾時釋迦如來。即從座起昇花臺上。結加趺坐即現淨身。於其身中現五趣身。一一趣身有萬八千種形類。一一形類現百千種身。一一身中復有無量恒河沙等身。於四恒河沙等一一身中。復現四天下大地微塵等身。於一微塵身中。復現三千大千世界微塵等身。於一塵身中。復現於十方面各百千億諸佛世界微塵等數身。乃至虛空法界不思議眾生等身。” Taishō 3:156.127bc.

\(^{39}\) Taishō 3:156.128a.
depicted inside the *Bao’en jing bian* 報恩經變, the transformation of the *Bao’en jing*. All of these images can be dated to the ninth century.\(^{40}\)

To return to our questions—how to make the link between Vairocana and the *cakravāla* as well as other Buddha and bodhisattva figures that often appear on the *dharmaḍhātu* Buddha image? This is a test of whether we truly understand the meaning of this iconography. The iconography of the *dharmaḍhātu* Buddha is not about a certain Buddha with his own Buddha land, or is it about Śākyamuni (or Vairocana) as the lord of the cosmos. It represents a *dharmaḍhātu* body of a Buddha. The Buddha’s *dharmaḍhātu* body symbolizes the oneness between a Buddha and the world of *samsāra*. It is a personification of the all-encompassing nature of a Buddha.

What is the importance to bring in the notion of *dharmaḍhātu* to the nature of the Buddha? In his study of the construction of a series essential concepts (*dharmatā*, *dharmaṇa*, and *dharmaḍhātu*) in early Mahāyāna Buddhism, Jikidō Takasaki has pointed out that identifying the Buddha-nature with the *dharmaḍhātu* supports the theory of non-duality, another important doctrine in Mahāyāna Buddhism.\(^{41}\) From the perspective of non-duality, the *samsāra* (reincarnation) is no different from *nirvāṇa*; the defiled world of suffering is one with the perfect body of the enlightened one, because everything is only a manifestation of the ultimate Dharma. Therefore, to go even further,

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every sentient being possess Buddha nature and can be a bodhisattva, only if he realizes this Buddha-nature within himself.

In the iconography of the dharmadhātu Buddha, the six gatis in the cakravāla is the world of saṁsāra; and all figures represent the dharmadhātu in one way or the other. Certain Buddhas and bodhisattvas were chosen to be depicted because of the all-embracing nature of Buddhas (particularly Vairocana), although the Avatamsaka sūtra does not enumerate them inside Vairocana’s body.

A Dharmadhātu Body Emanating Other Buddhas

The dharmadhātu images from Kizil have a unique feature: the emanated Buddha figures in the aura. In general, a Buddha’s dharmadhātu body and transformation bodies are two independent concepts. In the Avatamsaka, the most prominent canonical text emphasizing the universality of the Buddha, emanating nirmāṇabuddhas is not necessarily related to the dharmadhātu body. This is perhaps because the two are from two completely opposite ways to represent that the Buddha becomes one with the cosmos.

Maurizio Taddei once pointed out that the iconography of a Buddha radiating out innumerable Buddhas from his body portrays the Buddha multiplying himself to

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42 In the Avatamsaka, the dharmadhātu Buddha and nirmāṇabuddha are understood as different forms of existence of the Buddha. The text lists several sets of ten bodies of the Buddha, and ten Buddhas. The so-called ten Buddhas are the ten ways for a bodhisattva to see the Buddha. The dharmadhātu Buddha occurs in number six. The nirmāṇabuddha is also one of the ten manifestations (number four). The ten Buddhas are: 1. the Buddha of Full Enlightenment, 2. the Buddha of the Vow, 3. the Buddha of the Reward, 4. the Buddha of Transformation, 5. The Nirvāṇa Buddha, 6. the Dharmadhātu Buddha, 7. the Buddha of Mind, 8. the Samādhi Buddha 9. the Tathatā Buddha (the Buddha of fundamental nature), 10. the Buddha of Wish fulfillment. “知分別說十種佛。何等為十。所謂正覺佛。願佛。業報佛。住持佛。化佛。法界佛。心佛。三昧佛。性佛。如意佛。” Taishō 9:278.634c, 663b, trans. Buddhabhadra.; Taishō 10:279.282a, 308a, trans. Śikṣānanda. The ten Buddhas are also mentioned in the Daśabhūmikasūtra-śāstra Taishō 26:1521.327c. by Vasubandhu, trans. Bodhiruci, 508-511C.E. Similar list also appears in the Buddhabhūmisūtrasāstra 佛地經論, Taishō 26:1530.327c, by Bandhuprabha, trans. Xuanzang, 649 C.E.
envelope the whole cosmos; and the dharmadhātu Buddha shows the Buddha containing inside of himself all of the existing worlds.43

However, in one phase in the development of defining the nature of a Buddha, the dharmadhātu and emanating nirmāṇabuddhas are bounded together. And it is related to Kucha. This is the so-called the true dharmakāya defined by Kumārajīva. Kumārajīva is native of Kucha. In a way, the exceptional depictions of the images from Kizil Cave 17 reflect an important aspect to both of the dharmadhātu Buddha and nirmāṇabuddha.

I have touched this in Chapter 3, in his correspondence with Huiyuan, Kumārajīva explained extensive about the dharmakāya. In one of these letters, he wrote:

The true dharmakāya envelops and pervades the void space of the dharmadhātu in ten directions. Its rays illuminate the immeasurable worlds. ....... Transformed constantly with skillful means from this Buddha-body, there are infinite nirmāṇabuddhas spreading through the ten directions. These nirmāṇabuddhas manifested in different forms according to the types and levels of the living beings. 44

Here, the dharmakāya is identical with the dharmadhātu. And the dharmakāya emanates rays and creates nirmāṇabuddhas as its upāya to save beings. Kumārajīva knew only two-kāyas. This is in a two-fold Buddha-body system (as I discussed in Chapter 3), in which the nirmāṇabuddhas is seen as the necessary manifestation of an essential body of a Buddha that has no substance. The image in Kizil Cave 17 is like a visualized expression of this highly conceptual idea.

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44 “真法身者，遍滿十方虛空法界，光明悉照無量國土。……從是佛身方便現化。常有無量無邊化佛，遍於十方。隨眾生類若干差品。而為現形。” Kumārajīva fashi dayi (Correspondence), Taishō 45:1856.122c.
Kumārajīva’s understanding is based Buddhist literature. Identifying the dharmakāya with the “void space of dharmadhātu” has a long tradition in sūtras from the Avataṃsaka family. This can be traced back from the Buddhist texts translated by Dharmarakṣa (266-313 C.E.), most of which are equivalent to different chapters of the Avataṃsaka. For example, in the Rulai xingxian jing 如來興顯經 (corresponding to chapter thirty-two of Buddhhabhadra’s translation of the Avataṃsaka), the dharmakāya is said to be like empty space that neither has form or is formless. There is nothing it does not hold and there is no place that it does not enter. It manifests in form only for the sake of sentient beings. At this stage (in Dharmarakṣa’s translations), the term dharmadhātu was not used. When the full text of Avataṃsaka was translated in the early fifth century, (same time to Kumārajīva,) the dharmakāya became identical with the dharmadhātu and in addition it also carries a salvific power:

The dharmakāya of the Tathāgata equals to the dharmadhātu
It manifests itself according to the inclinations of sentient beings for their needs
The Tathāgata, king of the Dharma, liberates all sentient beings

45 As mentioned in Chapter 3, Kumārajīva based his definition on the Dazhidu lun. The original phrases in the Dazhidu lun is the following:

The Buddha has two kinds of bodies. The first is the dharmatākāya, and second is the birth-body given by the parents. The dharmatākāya pervades the infinite space of the ten directions. Its form is majestic. Its marks (lakṣaṇa) are marvelous. Its light is limitless. And its voice is boundless. The audiences also pervade the space. (They are dharmatākāya as well and not visible to the human beings who are subject to birth and death.) The dharmatākāya is constantly producing various bodies under various names at various places to save all the beings through skilful means without a single moment of rest. This dharmatākāya Buddha can save beings from the worlds in the ten directions. Taishō 25:1059.121c.

The differences between the two are remarkable. Kumārajīva replaced the term “dharmakāya” with “dharmatākāya,” the “void space” with the “void space of dharmadhātu.” The dharmatākāya is a body from the Dharma-nature (dharmatā) other bodies created from the dharmakāya is formally called nirmāṇabuddha. The dharmatākāya in the Dazhidu lun indicates an anthropomorphic formed body of Buddhas and bodhisattvas.

46 Xing, The Concept of the Buddha, 81.

47 “(法身…..)如虚空界。無所不苞。無所不入。或至一切有色無色。有形無形。有處無處。亦無所至。亦無所從來。則無有身。以無身故。無所不周。佛身如是。普入一切。群萌之類。悉於諸法。一切佛土。靡所不遍。亦無所去。亦無所從來。所以者何。用無身故。如來身者。欲以開化眾生之故。因現身耳。” Taishō 10:291.598b; “法身陰雲。靡不周遍。因其眾生所信樂者。而示現之。” Taishō 10:291.603c.
He tames them according to various dharmas.  

Most importantly, in this phase of Buddhist texts, we began to find the anthropomorphic formed dharmadhātu body of a bodhisattva or Buddha described in detail, which scholars intensively quoted in previous studies. In a strict sense, the dharmadhātu body with anthropomorphic form can not be the dharmakāya. However, it is its intricate relationship with the dharmakāya that makes the dharmadhātu important and makes it beyond an ordinary manifestation. It is not accidental that the body of Samantabhadra in the Avatāṃsaka possesses the ability to manifest in the form of the dharmadhātu body. In the Avatāṃsaka, Samantabhadra represents the dharmakāya of all Buddhas. As in the Lotus Sūtra, the “pure body” of the bodhisattva, which is shown in the dharmadhātu form, is the “body of the Dharma-nature” (dharmatākāya).

The Possible Connections to Kucha

Copious Buddhist manuscripts written in Brāhmī were found at the Kizil site. The doctrinal texts, Vinayas (“monastic rules”) and Abhidarmas (treatises), all point to a

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48 如來法身等法界，善應眾生悉對現。如來法王化眾生，隨順諸法悉調伏。"Taishō 9:278.399c.

49 In the Dengmu pusa suowen sammei jing 等目菩薩問三年經 (Sūtra on the Samādhi Asked by the Bodhisattva Samacākṣus), also a chapter of the Avatāṃsaka, Samantabhadra represents the dharmakāya of all Buddhas: “[Samantabhadra] in the three ages is equivalent to the dharmakāya of all Buddhas.”(Taishō 10:288.576a. trans. Dharmarākṣa 256-316 C.E.) Samantabhadra also consumes a pure dharmakāya in the Avatāṃsaka. His dharmakāya, like the description of the body of Vairocana is composed of multiple Buddha lands in various shapes (Taishō 9:278.785c.). It is an ocean-based cosmological system that consists of differently shaped Buddha lands just like the world of Vairocana. The aforementioned description of Samantabhadra’s body with only one cakravālā world system inside is meant to refer to the Sahā world, the world of Śākyamuni. It is particularly emphasized in the text that it is the manifestation of Vairocana’s power in the Sahā world, not the Lotus Repository World (Taishō 9:278.784c.).

strong association with the Sarvāstivāda-Mūlasarvāstivāda.\textsuperscript{51} No obvious Mahāyāna text were found. The Avatāṃsaka is absent. There is no direct reference regarding the dharmadhātu body of the Buddha in Sarvāstivādin texts.\textsuperscript{52} The dharmakāya is conceived as a series of special qualities of the Buddha in Sarvāstivādin doctrine.\textsuperscript{53} There is no link from the dharmakāya to the cosmos or to the Buddha’s multiplied bodies. What exactly happened in the transmission of Buddhist images and ideas from a remote past in Central Asia is probably beyond fully recovery. Nonetheless, I would like to point out a factor that may be associated this issue: Kumārajīva’s activity at Kucha.

\begin{flushright}

\textsuperscript{52} In a recent dissertation, Nobuyoshi Yamabe found a reference in a meditation manual from Kizil that is very close to the notion of the dharmadhātu body, although he did not know the images in Kizil Cave 17. Nobuyoshi Yamabe quotes another message from the Kizil Yoga Manual (a meditation text excavated from a Kizil cave) and relates it to the depiction of the dharmadhātu Buddha in Dunhuang Cave 428:

\begin{quote}
Again, he (thinks thus): “By me all the sentient beings ……afflicted by burdens…as mothers in the womb (?) … afflicted. How …should I lift up (the sentient beings).” (Schlingloff, \textit{Ein Buddhistisches Yogalehrbuch}, 123 (143R5); Yamabe, \textit{The Śūtra on the Ocean-Like Samādhi}, 318.)
\end{quote}

If this sentence means that all the sentient beings are afflicted with the body of the practitioner, it indeed can be related to the idea of a dharmadhātu body. Unfortunately, the passage is too fragmentary to convey a clear meaning. This meditation manual is filled with miraculous visions. Some of these images express the potential of ideas that one encompasses all. For instance, in one place, after the practitioner raised up from the trance of meditation, his body felt like a cosmic boundless golden cave from the gold disk to the Akaništā, which contains living beings sitting on lotus flowers. And the Buddha’s body marks appeared on their bodies. (Schlingloff, \textit{Ein Buddhistisches Yogalehrbuch}, 130-131) However, all these visions only conceptually resemble the dharmadhātu body. They are not as close as those descriptions in the \textit{Lotus Śūtra} or \textit{Avatāṃsaka} to the iconography of the dharmadhātu Buddha. First, they are just transitory images in the flux of visions in the meditation exercise. In this context, neither are they attributes of the Buddha of clear doctrinal significance. Second there is no mentioning of the realms of rebirth and cosmos structures (besides the gold disk and Akaništā) which are all essential to the iconography of the dharmadhātu Buddha images. Yamabe, \textit{The Śūtra on the Ocean-Like Samādhi}, 318-320.

\textsuperscript{53} In Sarvāstivādin texts, the dharmakāya is defined as the five skandhas (anāsrava-skandhas, or the “five constituents of the dharmakāya”) and the eighteen exclusive dharmas (āvenīka-dharmas). The “five constituents of the dharmakāya” are precept (sīla), meditation (samādhi), wisdom (prajñā), liberation (vimukti) and the perfect knowledge of the state of liberation (vimukti-jñāna-dārsana). (Vibhāṣā-sāstra, Taishō 28:1547.416a-523a, trans. Saṅghabhūti, Dharmanandin, and Buddharakṣa, 383 C.E.; Abhidharma-vibhāṣā-sāstra 阿毘達磨毘婆沙論, Taishō 28:1546.1a-415a, trans. Buddhavarman and Daotai, 437-439 C.E.; Abhidharma-mahā-vibhāṣā-sāstra 阿毘達磨毘婆沙論 Taishō 27:1545.1a-1004a, trans. Xuanzang, 656-659 C.E.) The “eighteen exclusive dharmas,” which is the ten powers (daśabala), the four assurances (catvāri vaśāradyānti), the three applications of mindfulness (smṛtyapāsthāna three), and the great compassion (mahākarunā), (Abhidharma-kośa-sāstra 阿毘達磨三藏分論, Taishō 29:1558.140a-141b; Abhidharma-mahā-vibhāṣā-sāstra 阿毘達磨毘婆沙論, Taishō 27:1545.156c-160c; Abhidharma-nyāyānusāra-sāstra 阿毘達磨正理論, Taishō 29:1562.746a-750a; and the Abhidharma-piṭaka-prakaraṇaśāsana-sāstra 阿毘達磨藏陳論, Taishō 29:1563.955c-958a.) From this point of view, the dharmakāya is understood as the body that consists of the qualities required to obtain enlightenment.

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It is notable that the association of the *dharmadhātu*-body and the *nirmāṇabuddhas* is most pronounced in the texts and teachings associated with Kumārajīva around the fifth century. Kumārajīva came from Kuchean. He was born in the Kuchean royal family and became an eminent master at a very early age. He was first a Sarvāstivādin and then later converted to Mahāyāna. Kumārajīva was at Kucha during the end of the fourth century vigorously promoting Mahāyāna Buddhism. According to the *Gaozeng zhuan* (*Biographies of Eminent Monks*), not only did he receive honor and patronage from the Kucha King, he also convinced the Kuchean Hīnayāna master Pantoudaduo 盤頭達多 with the doctrine of emptiness, although it took Kumārajīva more than a month to convince him.\(^{54}\)

In addition, the date of the Kizil Cave 17 is close to the time of Kumārajīva, who lived at Kucha by the end of the fourth century. As aforementioned, the studies from various aspects of the cave all confirm an early date of Kizil Cave 17 varies around the fifth century.\(^{55}\) It is therefore possible that the vision of the *dharmadhātu* formed Buddha with *nirmāṇabuddhas* became significant (as being the true body of the Buddha) through Kumārajīva’s proselytizing.\(^{56}\)

**Conclusion**

Confirmed by inscriptions, the representation of the *dharmadhātu* Buddha came to be an iconography of Vairocana. It expresses the oneness of the impure realms of rebirth and

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\(^{54}\) *Taishō* 50:2059.331ab.


\(^{56}\) Su Bai, “Kizil bufen dongku jieduan huafen,” 10-23.
the pure realm of the Buddha. It is also about the equivalence of a Buddha and the totality of all existence. Although the notion of a *dharmadhātu* body appeared to a number of figures, Vairocana is the traditional personification of the all-encompassing nature of Buddhas.

On one hand, all bodhisattvas on the tenth stage and all Buddhas would be able to manifest in the *dharmadhātu* body; on the other hand, the *dharmadhātu* body of is particularly significant because in one perspective, the *dharmakāya* is identical with the *dharmadhātu*.

Among the images of the *dharmadhātu* Buddha, the two from Kizil are distinguished by the *nirmāṇabuddha* figures in their auras. The textual references mentioning the *dharmadhādu* body and *nirmāṇabuddhas* simultaneously occur in Kumārajīva’s works and the *Avataṃsaka*. According to Kumārajīva, (who rephrased from the *Dazhidu lun*,) the true *dharmakāya* envelopes the *dharmadhātu* constantly emanating a myriad of *nirmāṇabuddhas* in order to save the sentient beings in the ten directions. Kumārajīva was a native Kuchean. He enthusiastically promoted Mahāyāna Buddhism at Kucha around the same time of the Kizil Cave 17.

### 6.2 The Two Narrative Depictions

This section is devoted to identifying the subjects of two narratives in Kizil 123. I have discussed in Chapter 2 that the paintings of a Buddha emanating other Buddhas at Kucha can generally be divided into two types—those with auras in an annular form and those in a web form. The former is non-narrative. Among the three belonging to the web-type, the two from Kizil 123 are clearly related to certain stories, which have not been
satisfactorily identified. The subjects of the stories are directly related to the identity of the central Buddha, which will shed light on this iconography in general. I will first introduce the general information about the cave and the mural paintings in the cave and then discuss the two narratives.

The Images and the Previous Identifications

Kizil Cave 123 is an unconventional cave at the site in a number of ways. This cave is situated relatively far away from the other caves (Fig. 6.12). It is the only central-pillar cave added in that particular area and was excavated in isolation. It has a copula ceiling, instead of the conventional vault. The pattern of the “flying geese holding wreath” found in the cave is a remarkable motif that can be used for dating. This motif also appears in Kizil Cave 69, which is dated to 625-647 C.E. Presumably, Kizil Cave 123 is from the same period. Both the web-type and the annular-type of depictions of emanated Buddhas occur in this cave. The two web-type images (Fig. 6.13 & 6.15), or narratives, are shown on the two side walls in the main hall. In contrast to the static annular-type of representation, the shimmering wave pattern of the aura and the slanting angle of the small Buddha figures give a vivid sense of emanation. The Buddha on the left wall clearly wears a gem in his headdress. (The one on the right side has suffered some damage at this part of the painting.) This feature suggests that the central Buddha is probably not a depiction of Śākyamuni during his earthly life.

As part of the study of images with emanated Buddhas in general, scholars have no consensus on the identification of these two emanating Buddhas. In earlier studies, these two paintings have been identified as the “Śrāvastī miracle.”\(^5^7\) They have no Buddhist

\(^5^7\) Such as in Gaulier et al, Buddhism in Afghanistan and Central Asia, 1: 8-9, fig. 31-32.
cosmos depicted on the Buddha’s body. However, because of the astonishing depiction of the Buddha’s emanation, they have sometimes been included in the debate about the dharmadhātu Buddha images. Lai Pengju included the painting from the left wall in his identification that all the Buddha figures shown emanating other Buddhas were dhāmkaṇḍa. More recently, Yaldiz proposed that all the Buddha images with emanated Buddhas in Kizil Cave 123 are Pratyetabuddhas. However, the narrative contents of these two paintings have been ignored in all of the recent studies. I propose that these two paintings represent very particular stories and the clues are in the painting.

**Right Wall Painting** (Fig. 6.13)

In the painting on the right wall of Cave 123 (Fig. 6.13), the Buddha is depicted with a huge aura filled with a myriad of small standing Buddha images. The emanating Buddha is looking at a figure to his lower left. That figure, while turning his head looking at the Buddha, is stretching his hands towards a big tray of flowers (Fig. 6.14). The tray is held by a dark-colored servant-like figure. Behind them, there are three celestial beings and Vajrapāṇi standing in the background. On the right side of the Buddha, there are seven monks and an ascetic.

This painting has been taken to Berlin, and its lower part is now absent. Grüwedel, in his expedition in the early twentieth century, noted that there was a head of a figure in this place. If this statement is true, the figure was probably prostrating (performing obeisance) to the Buddha. He thereupon identified the painting as the Dīpankara

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59 Lai Pengju (Lai Pen Jeu), *Silu fojiao de tuxiang yu chanfa*, 55.

60 Yaldiz, “One of Xinjiang's Mysteries: Cave 123 in Kizil, the Cave with the Ring-bearing Doves,” 245-251.
jātaka.61 His observation has almost been forgotten.62 The Dīpaṅkara jātaka is one of the most critical pre-incarnations of the Buddha. In a remote past eon, Śākyamuni was born as a Brahman youth called Megha. The king at that time monopolized the flower market in order to offer flowers to Buddha Dīpaṅkara himself. Yet, Megha managed to find some flowers and offered them to Dīpaṅkara. In addition, when Dīpaṅkara was about to pass a muddy road, Megha poured his hair on the mud for the Buddha to step on. Having received these arduous offers from him, Dīpaṅkara predicted to Megha that he would in the future become a Buddha called Śākyamuni. In some of the biographies of the Buddha, the story with Dīpaṅkara Buddha marks the beginning of the life of Śākyamuni.

Numerous Buddhist literary sources from various sectarian backgrounds describe the story: the Xiuxing benqi jing 修行本起經,63 Guoqu xianzai yinguo jing 過去現在因果經,64 Dharmaguptaka-vinaya 四分律,65 and Ekottarāgama-sūtra 增壹阿含經66 in the Chinese canon. It is also found in the Sanskrit Divyāvadāna and Mahāvastu. In addition, it appears in the Pāli Jātaka Nidānakathā and Apādana.67 The narratives basically agree

61 Grüwedel, Altbuddhistische Kulstätten in Chinesisch Turkestan, 119; Le Coq, Buddhistische Spätantike in Mittelasien, 7: 74.

62 Karetzky mentioned Grüwedel’s identification. However, she mistakenly placed it in Cave 118. Karetzky, Patrica E. Early Buddhist Narrative Art: Illustrations of the Life of the Buddha from Central Asia to China, Korea and Japan. (New York: University Press of America, 2000), 38.


64 Taishō 3: 189.621a-622c, trans. Guṇaabhadra 求那跋陀羅, the fifth century.

65 Taishō 22:1428. 782a-786b, trans. Buddhayanasas 佛陀耶舍 & Zhu Fonian 典佛念, 405 C.E.

66 Taishō 2:125.587a-599c, trans. 瞿曇僧伽提婆 Gautama-sanghadeva, 383-398 C.E.

67 It also appears in a number of other Chinese texts: Liudu jijing 六度集經 (Śat-pāramitā-saṅgraha-sūtra), Taishō 3:152.47c-48b, trans. Sanghapāla 康僧会 (third century); Taizi ruixing benqi jing 太子瑞應本起經, Taishō 3:185.472c-473a, trans. Zhiqian 支謙, the third century; Yichu Pusa benqi jing 異出菩薩本起經, Taishō 3:188.617bc, trans. Nie Daozhen 聶道真, Western Jin (265-420 C.E.); Fo benxing jing 佛本行經, Taishō 4:193.91c-93c, trans. Baoyun 寶雲(fifth century); Fo benxing jijing 佛本行集經, Taishō 3:190.665a-667c, trans. Jhānagupta 閩那崛多, 561-
with one another and contain only minor variations. Among them, the *Divyāvadāna* (*Heavenly Avadāna*) is an *avadāna* text that belongs to the Sarvāstivādin school.

Fragments of the text have been found in the “red dome cave” at Kizil.\(^6^8\)

The Dīpankara *jātaka* is a major subject in early Buddhist art, especially in Gandhāra (Fig. 6.16).\(^6^9\) The standard iconography of the Dīpankara *jātaka* developed in Gandhāra appears at Kucha as well, such as in Kizil Cave 69 (Fig. 6.17).\(^7^0\) In the painting from Kizil Cave 69, as the convention in this iconography, Megha wears an animal (deer) skin and his flower offering is shown as a bunch of five flowers instead of on a tray. He also appears once more in the painting at the upper left corner kneeling down. After he paved the road with his hair for Dīpankara, Megha was raised into the air by the supernatural power of the Buddha. If the painting in Kizil Cave 123 is meant to represent Dīpankara and Megha, it does not follow the tradition of the iconography.

The question, then, is whether the painting in Cave 123 refers to another story of making flower offerings. The clues of the subject are offering flowers from a tray and performing prostrations. I will examine the two elements respectively to identify the painting.

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\(^7^0\) Chinese scholars also identify two paintings in Kizil Cave 63 and 114 as the Dīpankara *jātaka*. There are depictions of performing prostration to the Buddha in these paintings. Hamada believes that they are representations of King Ajatasatru. Ding Mingyi et al, “Kizil shiku de fozhu an bihua,” 186; Tamami Hamada 浜田瑞美, “Kizil chushichūkutsu no busetsu hōzu ni tsu i te (Preaching Buddha Scenes in Central-pillar Caves at Kizil),” *Fūdo to bunka* no.4 (2003), 21-34.
Offering flowers is fairly common in the cave paintings in Kucha as well as in *avadāna* texts. This theme appears on the vaulted ceiling in nine caves at Kizil, but none of them show a tray.\(^{71}\) Offering flowers to a Buddha also frequently occurs in *avadāna* stories as well, such as in the *Zhuanji baiyuan jing* (Avadāna-śataka).\(^{72}\) *Zabaozang jing* (Sanñyuktaratnapīṭaka-sūtra?),\(^{73}\) and *Xianyu jing* (The Sūtra of the Wise and Foolish).\(^{74}\) Overall, flower offerings are very common in a wide-variety of texts. However, none of the descriptions from the above texts specify any particular detail that can be tied to the painting in Kizil Cave 123.

Prostrating figures also appear frequently in Kucha paintings, especially in the subjects identified as the conversion of Purna Maitrāyaniputra (one of the ten chief disciples of the Buddha) and King Ajatasatru.\(^{75}\) In these paintings, the prostration, called *pañca-mañḍalā-namkāreṇa vandate*, occurs as the highest form of salute to the Buddha. However, since the painting is incomplete, there is no way of knowing whether the prostration in the painting of Cave 123 has the detail of pouring the hair in front of the Buddha or is just a depiction of a general *pañca-mañḍalā-namkāreṇa vandate*.

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\(^{71}\) They are Kizil Caves 8, 38, 58, 100, 104, 163, 171, 175, 184, and 193. Xinjiang Qiuci shiku yanjiusuo 克孜爾石窟研究所, *Kizil shiku neirong zonglu* 克孜爾石窟內容總錄 (Urumchi: Xinjiang meishu sheying chubanshe, 2000), 296.

\(^{72}\) *Taishō* 4:200.229b-c, trans. Zhiqian 支謙, 222-280 C.E.

\(^{73}\) *Taishō* 4:203.473a, trans. Kekaya 吉迦夜 & Tanyao 曇曜, 472 C.E.

\(^{74}\) The *Zhuanji baiyuan jing* and *Zabaozang jing* tell different versions of the same story: an inhabitant at Śrāvastī picked up some flowers from the woods. On her way home, she met the Buddha and scattered all of the flowers around the Buddha. By virtue of this deed, she was reborn in Trāyastriṃśa as a goddess. The *Xianyu jing* tells a story from the time of Vipaśyin Buddha. A man was too poor to make any offerings. So he picked up some wild flowers and scattered them to the disciples of Vipaśyin. By means of this merit, in a later rebirth, he became a monk following Śākyamuni and soon attained Arhat-hood. Similar descriptions of a flower-offering rewarded by some miraculous event also appears in a couple of stories in the later Sanskrit *Avadāna-sūtaka*. *Taishō* 4:202.359a, trans. Dharmākṣa or Prajñābodhi 慧覺 (Huijue), 424-452 C.E.; L. Feer, *Avadāna-çataka. cent légends (bouddhiques) traduites du Sanskrit*, vol. 18 of the Annales de Musée Guimet, (Paris: E. Leroux, 1891), 41-43, 108-109.

\(^{75}\) Such as Kizil Caves 14, 181 for *Purna Maitrāyaniputra*, and Caves 17, 80, 224, and 205 for King Ajatasatru.
Overall, the right wall painting in Cave 123 is about making flower offerings and venerating the Buddha. It is uncertain if it is the Dīparīkara jātaka. In any case, only the historical Buddhas have walked among human beings and have stories of receiving flower offerings. Therefore, the central Buddha has to be one of the past Buddhas (including Śākyamuni), but is unlikely to be one of the bhavana Buddhas. Therefore, the identifications of the emanating Buddha being a bhavana type of Buddha in previous studies would be incorrect.

**Left Wall Painting** (Fig. 6.15)

The left wall painting in Kizil Cave 123 still remains in the cave. The emanating Buddha here is also surrounded by devotees, monks, and celestial beings. Most of its important iconographic attributes have survived to the present-day. Based upon these elements, I suggest that the painting is related to offering a bath to the Buddha.

In this painting (Fig. 6.15), the Buddha gazes to his right, where a figure is holding up a handful jewels or flowers as an offering to the Buddha. Shown in the detail of the painting (Fig. 6.18), behind this figure, there is a round shelter enclosing several water vases inside. This is an iconographic convention used in bathing related themes in Kucha Buddhist art and may serve as a key to deciphering the story.

The same architectural form that houses the water vases appears in a number of other paintings at Kizil, as shown on the wall in Cave 206 (Fig. 6.19) and on the ceiling in Caves 80 (Fig. 6.20), 32 (Fig. 6.21), and 38 (Fig. 6.22). Particularly in this group of paintings, the Buddha has his legs hanging down. The subject is clearly revealed in a painting from Kizil Cave 206 (Fig. 6.19); at the lower right of the Buddha there is a figure that looks like a celestial being wearing a scarf, washing the feet of the Buddha.
This cave was therefore named the “feet-washing cave” (Höhle mit der Fusswaschung / Höhle 18) by German scholars. A total of thirteen caves has this subject painted on the ceiling, and the depictions have been identified as a god (deva) offering a bath to the Buddha.\(^{76}\) According to the *Xianyu jing*, a god from the Śuddhāvāsa (*jingjutian* 淨居天), “the pure abode heaven,” made offerings of food and a bath to Śākyamuni. He is reported to have performed such offerings to the seven Buddhas of the past and will eventually become a Buddha himself in the future.\(^{77}\) Although the narrative paintings at Kizil are filled with figures, such as the Buddha’s disciples and various devas, the vital elements to identify the story are highly selective and repetitive. The image of the vase-shelter only occurs with this group of paintings. It seems to represent washing with water and therefore suggests a bath offering.

Returning to Kizil Cave 123, the subject of the left wall painting may therefore have something to do with offering a bath to the Buddha. Since a venerating figure is the focus of the painting and not the actual washing, a close textual reference would be “King Jiabu’s (迦步) offering” in the *Zabaozang jing* 雜寶藏經. It was translated and compiled by Kekaya and Tanyao in 472 C.E.\(^{78}\) The story takes place numerous *asaṅkhya kalpas*

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\(^{76}\) They are Kizil Caves 8, 32, 63, 80, 163, 176, 186, 188, 192, 193, 205, 224, and 227. Xinjiang qiuci shiku yanjiusuo, *Kizil shiku neirong zonglu*, 296. Ma Shichang and Ding Mingyi identify this iconography as “Rāhula washing the feet of the Buddha,” based on the *Jinglu yixiang* 經律異相 (Taishō 53: 2121.35c-36a, complied by Min Baochang 曼寶唱 et al., 516 C.E.). See Ma Shichang and Ding Mingyi, “Tuban shuming,” in Zhongguo shiku-Kizil shiku II, 249 no. 62. The relevant passage in the *Jinglu yixiang* is quoted from the *Faju biyu jing* 法句譬喻經, Taishō 4:211.599c-600a. “Rāhula washing the feet of the Buddha” has a different iconography from the paintings in this discussion. In this subject, a fallen basin is usually shown at the feet of the Buddha and Rāhula is shown as a monk. For a discussion of the painting of “Rāhula washing the feet of the Buddha” in English, see Emmanuelle Lesbre, “An Attempt to Identify and Classify Scenes with a Central Buddha Depicted on Ceilings of the Kizil Caves,” *Artibus Asiae* 61, (2001): 305-354.

\(^{77}\) Taishō 4:202.409c.

ago and it relates the tale of King Jiabu and his son Candana, who became a Buddha. In order to avoid a forthcoming twelve-year drought, the king offered a bath to Buddha Candana with perfumed water. Then, King Jiabu distributed the water to eighty-four thousand countries with eighty-four thousand flasks, and enshrined them into *tamiao* (塔廟, caitya?), “stūpa-temples.” The merit from these acts brought them rain. A passer-by saw the *tamiao* and was so delighted that he scattered a handful of flowers over the shrine. Śākyamuni revealed at the end of the story that “With my Buddha eyes looking at the remote past, all people to whom the merit of enshrining the perfumed bath water of Candana Buddha had transferred, have become Buddhas and obtained nirvāṇa long ago. The one who offered a handful of flowers is me. Because I have this cause in the past, now as the last one, I became a Buddha myself.”

The stories in the *Zabaozang jing* were selected and compiled in China. Therefore, it is probably not the direct source for the Kizil paintings since tales are subjected to change during their transmission. Therefore, I only suggest that this painting may refer to a story that is similar to “King Jiabu’s offering” in its Kuchean version, which perhaps was lost long ago.79

If my interpretation is correction, the person holding the offering in the painting is Śākyamuni in one of his previous incarnations and the Buddha in the center of the painting would be Candana. Śākyamuni’s journey of performance and sacrifice over numerous life times have become a standard path for Buddhists to follow. These performances are summed up as the six perfections of the bodhisattva, the first of which

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79 Many parables from this *sūtra* are set in Gandhāra and Kaśmīr where Sarvāstivāda was popular during and after Kaniṣka, when its doctrinal points were raised. Therefore, Charles Willemen who translated the text into English suggests that the doctrinal affiliation of the *Zabaozang jing* is Sarvāstivāda, the school closely related to Kucha. Willemen, *The Storehouse of Sundry Valuables*, 3-4.
is making offerings/donations. Like the flower-offering, the bath-offering is also a typical alms-giving in Buddhist texts.

Similarly, because the painting depicts an event involving human beings, the central Buddha must be a historical Buddha (a past Buddha or Śākyamuni) instead of a bhavana Buddha. Further, the painting shows the Buddha with a gem in his headdress. It is rare or even unknown to bejewel the historical Śākyamuni in narrative depictions in Buddhist art. Therefore, he is unlikely to be Śākymuni. Apparently, depicting the past Buddhas with ornaments was a convention in some parts of Central Asia. The best known examples are the so-called pranidhi (“vow”) paintings at the Bezeklik cave site. The “vow paintings” illustrates Śākyamuni in his previous lives after he vowed to become a Buddha—how he venerated and made offerings to the past Buddhas and received predictions from them.80 The vow paintings are based on the Mūlasarvāstivāda-Bhaiṣajyavastu, a vinaya of the Mūlasarvāstivādin school. Offering a bath to a past Buddha marks an important pre-incarnation of Śākyamuni in this text, as well as in the pranidhi paintings.81 Shown in Fig. 6.23, a typical pranidhi painting (from Bezeklik Cave 9), the central life-sized standing Buddha is a past Buddha, who is always shown wearing a long garland of jewels. Therefore, even if the painting does not represent “King Jiabu’s offering” but a similar story, the central Buddha in the painting would likely be a Buddha of the past. In the extant painting from the right side wall in Kizil Cave 123, the Buddha wears a hair band. It is possible that, originally, he had ornaments too.


81 “我曾作國王，有佛名梵志，以浴室香湯，依時沐浴佛.” Taisō 24:1448.74b, trans. Yijing, 695-713 C.E.
Conclusion

To sum up, the two web-type representations in Kizil Cave 123 are probably the only extant examples of a Buddha figure with nirmāṇabuddhas in his aura that are depicted in a narrative context. The one on the right wall shows the act of a flower offering. If Grüwedel’s observation is reliable, it could be Buddha Dipaṅkara and Megha, although it would be an unconventional representation of the story. It may also be any historical Buddha receiving flower offerings. The left side one shows water vases in addition to making offerings. It could be a story similar to “King Jiabu and Buddha Candana.” Both stories refer to the past lives of Śākyamuni and how he venerated other Buddhas of the past. Both are jātaka-avadāna type of stories, which counts as one of the main subjects in the cave paintings in the central-pillar caves at Kucha. The Buddha on the left wall wears a gem and the same might be true for the image on the right wall. It is likely that the primary Buddha is a Buddha of the past, even if not Candana or Dipaṅkara. In other words, also in response to previous identifications, these paintings do not depict the “Śrāvastī miracle,” “cosmological Buddha,” Vairocana, dharmakāya, or Pratyetabuddha.

Furthermore, the subjects of these two paintings are a demonstration of localization. The convention of showing emanated Buddhas in the aura emerged and developed in Buddhist art with bhavana Buddha figures in Gandhāra and Khotan. The traditional subjects of Buddhist cave paintings in Kucha are predominantly narrative: preaching scenes on the walls in the main chamber, parinirvāṇa related events at the back, jatāka/avadāna stories on the ceiling for the central-pillar caves, and Śākyamuni’s life.

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82 The iconographies of the Great Miracle at Śrāvastī are very different. The Indian style depiction of the Great Miracle shows the multiplied Buddhas on lotus, not in the aura of the central Buddha. The Gandhāra style depiction shows no narrative context and the identification is subjected to speculation.
events in the square caves. Among them, jatāka, especially avadāna stories is an important theme. None of the avadāna story describes a Buddha emanating other Buddhas from his body rays. However, Kuchean Buddhists used this iconographic convention for the subjects to which they were familiar. In these two cases, an aura of nirmāṇabuddha figures serves as an adornment to the image of the Buddha. It is not part of a story as far as literary sources are concerned.

6.3 The Image of a Buddha Showing Realms of Rebirth in His Aura

This section studies the painting from Kizil Cave 175 of an image of a seated Buddha whose aura shows the different realms of rebirth. In this painting, a Buddha’s emanated body is illustrated with each scene of these realms. This is a unique representation of emanated Buddhas in extant Buddhist art. It touches upon the fundamental meaning of the emanated Buddha bodies. The first part of the following study gives a visual analysis of the image, and the second part highlights previous studies and presents my own interpretation.

The Image (Fig. 6.26)

Kizil Cave 175 is part of a group of five central-pillar caves from Caves 176-180 (Fig. 6.24). According to an archaeological study conducted by Vignato, Caves 178 and 179 consist of the original core of this group and are dated to the fifth and sixth

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83 Avadānas were incorporated with the doctrine of pāramitās, the six perfections of a bodhisattva. The first of the six perfections is dāna-pāramitā, the perfection of giving and donating. Avadāna literature promotes simple acts of worship that are easy to conduct for ordinary humans—paying homage to the Buddha; offering flowers, or lamps; and honoring a stūpa. These acts never fail to bring desirable results to the devotee, such as attaining Arhat-hood or rebirth in heaven. J. S. Spery, ed., Avadāna-sataka: a Century of Edifying Tales Belonging to the Hinayāna (The Hague: Mouton; 1958), v; Dutt, Aspects of Mahāyāna Buddhism and its Relation to Hinayāna, 36; Sharma, Buddhist Avadānas, 19.
centuries. Other caves were added to the group over time. The date of Cave 175 from the C\textsuperscript{14} test and the results of archaeologists, all point to the end of sixth to seventh centuries.

The iconographic program of the cave is mostly in the traditional scheme. However, the niches and \textit{jātakas} in the corridor are certainly new themes belonging to later period (Fig. 6.25). Paintings in Cave 175 feature the blue color scheme. That is, the cave was excavated when the mural subject just started to shift and before the site declined. Cave 180 is covered by the thousand-Buddha motif, which was painted sloppily with predominantly red colors. The motif and style of Cave 180 are characteristic of the last stage of the site’s decline. It looks like Cave 175 is part of the expansion of an earlier group of caves. This group was continuously in use until the very end of the use of the site. In terms of the history of the cave, like the \textit{dharma}\textit{dātu} Buddha image in Kizil Cave 17, the Buddha’s aura showed realms of rebirth, which although very unique, is integrated with the tradition in the area.

The painting under discussion is located on the right wall of the central pillar in the corridor (Fig. 6.26). An image of a Buddha sits on a giant lotus in the middle of the painting, and the aura from his body consists of three extended bands covering the entire wall. Two unidentifiable figures with halos at the lower left corner are shown venerating the Buddha with the \textit{aṇjali mudrā}. Circles representing a sun and a moon are still recognizable at the top of the painting. The extended three bands of the aura are further divided into smaller sections. About thirteen scenes survive, mostly from the right side of

\textsuperscript{84} Vignato, \textit{Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu}, 50.

\textsuperscript{85} The C\textsuperscript{14} date is 543-635 C.E. Waldschmidt attributes the cave to 600-650 C.E. Li Chongfeng attributes it to his Phase III, 600-647 C.E. Vignato dates it to Phase IV, 530-750 C.E. See Vignato, \textit{Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu}, 55, 60; Le Coq and Waldschmidt, \textit{Buddhistische Spätantike in Mittelasien} (1933), 7. 27-29; Li Chongfeng, \textit{Zhongyin fojiiao shikusi bijiao yanjiu}, 151, 176.
the Buddha. I will introduce them in the number sequence marked in the drawing (Fig. 6.27).

The inner band

1. The top section depicts the Buddha teaching six Brahmās (Fig. 6.28). God Brahmā appears frequently in Kucha Buddhist art. These six Brahmās are represented by their standard iconography at Kucha: a big hair bun on top of the head and wearing a simple robe with no ornamentation.\(^{86}\) This is the highest level of existence in the diagram.

2. A male sits in the center on a square pedestal. Two musicians flank him on either side. They all have halos (Fig. 6.29).

3. Two musicians and a female dancer, both with halos, are depicted (Fig. 6.30).

4. Two figures carrying a corpse are depicted on the upper right. The other three figures’ activities are not clear. No one has a halo in this section (Fig. 6.31).

5. A male with a halo sits on a high pedestal. Two other figures with no halos are on his left side. It is not clear what they are doing (Fig. 6.32).

The inner register is divided into five sections. The figures in nos. 1, 2, 3, and 5 have halos. No. 1 represents Brahma’s realm. No. 2, 3, and 5 are probably different realms of devas (gods). There are either five or six realms of rebirth in Buddhist texts. In the structure of the five realms, there is no realm of asuras (semi-gods). Sarvastivādin texts generally use the term “five-realms.”\(^{87}\) No. 4 could be the realm of the humans. Only in this inner circle, each realm, except the human realm at the bottom, is marked by a stripe

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86 They were wrongly identified as seven Buddhas in Ma Shichang, “Kizil zhongxinzhuku zhushi quanding yu houshi de bihua,” Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku II (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe), 218.

87 It is also possible that five or six realms are just variation of the texts with no sectarian indications. Taishun Mibu 壬生台舜, “Rokudosetsu ni kansuru nisan no mondai ni tsuite,” in Bukkyo to bunka: nakagawa zenkyo senseishotoku kinen ronshu 中川善教先生論著紀念研究集 (Tōkyō: Dohosha Shuppan, 1983).
of geometric patterns at the top. This kind of motif is often seen in Buddhist cave paintings symbolizing architectural structure made of precious materials in celestial worlds. In short, the inner band mostly represents the higher realms of rebirth: *devas* and human beings.

**The middle band**

6. A man is ploughing with two farm animals (cattle?) (Fig. 6.33).

7. Two men are hoeing (Fig. 6.34).

8. A man is making a vase on a wheel table (Fig. 6.35).

9. The scene is not clear. According to Ma Shichang’s observation, a kneeling figure holding a knife seems to be killing an animal. And another one seems to be removing skin (Fig. 6.36).  

The middle band is divided into six sections on both sides, but only four remain. This band looks like the world of humans with human figures engaging in various activities: farming, making pottery, and butchering. No one in this realm has a halo. Although making pots is symbolic of karma formation, the second in the twelve-membered chain of dependent origination, it may not carry such symbolism here in the context with farmers and butchers.

**The outer band:**

10. Five hungry ghosts (*preta*) are depicted (Fig. 6.37). They are naked, with extremely small stomachs, and hair hanging loosely. They are jumping, running, or screaming and look like they are suffering painfully. There are flames depicted in the lower part of this section.

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11. A half-naked ghost is burning in fire (Fig. 6.27).

12. Several animals are depicted here: a peacock, a rabbit, an elephant, and a wolf-like animal eating his prey (Fig. 6.38).

13. A giant boiler sits on fire waiting for sinners (Fig. 6.39).

The outer band probably depicts the three lower realms of rebirth: animals, hungry ghosts and hell. Fire and the big pot are typical symbols of hell in Buddhist art.

Overall there seems to be an axial symmetry in this diagram: 2 and 3 are all about entertainment; 6 and 7 are all farming activities; 10 and 11 are all naked ghosts suffering in fire. There is also a hierarchy of the sections from the top to the bottom, (i.e., Brahmā is higher than deva; farming is better than butchering; and the world of the hungry ghosts is higher than the hells) and from the inner ring to the outer ring.

Pictorially, the painting depicts a Buddha revealing various existences of saṃsāra in his light and emanating nirmāṇabuddhas who are reaching out to all sentient beings in these realms. The painting is located at the right corridor. The right side corridor is often for subjects after nirvāṇa. The placement of the image at this location is quite significant. It seems to express a belief that after the historical Buddha ceased his worldly existence and before the next Buddha yet to come, there is a celestial body of the Buddha present, in which the Buddhist followers can still take refuge.

As I discussed in Chapter 3, the salvific function shown in this painting is a fundamental nature of the nirmāṇabuddhas stressed only in Mahāyāna texts. Sarvāstivādin treaties, which are mostly dated earlier than this painting, do not acknowledge this aspect of the nirmāṇabuddha. However, like the texts, images are also a form of historical documentation. This image demonstrates that, at Kizil in the seventh
century, not only were images of nirmāṇabuddhas in the aura present, but the function of the nirmāṇabuddha was also understood.

**Previous Identifications and My Interpretation**

This painting was first identified as the wheel of existence in previous studies. In recent studies, scholars have identified the diagram around the Buddha as his aura and the small Buddhas in the aura as his emanated bodies. Both Dieter Schlingloff and Lai Pengju found references in meditation texts, although they used different manuals and arrived at different conclusions. These identifications revealed different facets of this image. I will review these studies and further investigate the iconography of the wheel of existence and the related subjects in the meditation tradition, with the goal of finding the meanings of this image from previously contradictory identifications.

--As bhavacakra (the wheel of existence)

The wheel of existence, bhavacakra, is a type of iconography created in Buddhist art to illustrate the transmigration of lives in the saṃsāra world and the chain of causation in a circular diagram. It primarily consists of scenes of the five or six realms which life transmits through rebirth (gods, semi-gods, humans, hungry ghosts, animals, and hells) and the symbols of the twelve-membered chain of dependent origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*). The resemblance of the image in Kizil Cave 175 to the textual description of the bhavacakra cannot be ignored. The convention of depicting an image of the

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bhavacakra in the Buddhist monastery can be found in the Sarvāstivādin vinayas and avadāna texts.

According to the Vinayakṣudrakavastu (a vinaya of the Sarvāstivadin school), in the instruction which the Buddha gave Anāthapiṇḍada on how to decorate a monastery, an image of bhavacakra should be painted in the vestibule. In the story of the Bhikṣunī-vibhaṅga in the Divyāvadāna, the Buddha gives further details of the bhavacakra diagram:

“The five forms of existence -- hells, animals, ghosts, gods, and men should be represented in five compartments; the hells, animals and ghosts in the lower half, the gods as well as the human beings in the four continents of the upper half. Passion, hate and delusion should be depicted in the hub of the wheel: passion in the shape of a turtle-dove, hate in the shape of a snake, and delusion in the shape of a pig.”

Depicting the dove/rooster, snake and pig in the center is most common in the extant bhavacakra paintings. However, the Kizil mural has a Buddha in the center. The parallel text of this account also appears in the Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya. In its Chinese translation by Yijing, the Buddha is in the center together with the three symbolic animals. This is usually used as the reference for the painting at Kizil. However, the Kizil painting does not have the three animals in the center but a Buddha only. In his visit to Kanheri in the 1870s, James Burgess noted a painting of Bhavacakra featuring a

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91 Taishō 24: 1451.399bc, trans. Yijing, 695-713 C.E.


94 Taishō 23:1442.811ab, trans. Yijing, 695-713 C.E. However, Bhavacakra paintings with both the Buddha and the three animals in the center are rare.
Buddha in the middle in the porch of Cave 86 (30 in the revised numbering). Unfortunately, the painting already perished when Schlingloff visited the site in 1969. Schlingloff suggests that if Burgess’s observation is accurate, there were perhaps two traditions in the iconography of the Bhavacakra: one with the three animals in the center and one of the Buddhas, and they both merged in the Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya. If so, the location of the central Buddha in the painting in Kizil 175 resembles one of the conventions of the Bhavacakra painting.

Sarvāstivādin vinayas also provides the canon of Tibetan monasticism. In the Tibetan version of the Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya and the Vinaya-sūtra of Guṇaprabha (one of the most authoritative works dealing with the Vinaya of the Sarvāstivādins), the image of the Buddha is said to be shown above the wheel and pointing to “the full moon of nirvāṇa.” In the Tibetan tradition of the Bhavacakra image (Fig. 6.40), the Buddha is usually depicted outside the wheel at one of the upper corners of the painting. Sometimes, small Buddha figures (or Avalokiteśvara) are shown in each realm of the bhavacakra diagram, the same manner in which the nirmāṇabuddhas are portrayed in the Kizil painting. This iconography is said to have come from India.

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95 James Burgess, *Report on the Buddhist Cave Temples and their Inscriptions: being part of the result of the fourth, fifth, and sixth seasons' operations of the archaeological survey of western India: 1876-77, 1877-78, 1878-79* (London: Trübner & Co., 1883), 70.


99 According to the Chronicles of the first Dalai Lama, there are two transmissions of the bhavacakra paintings from India to Tibet: “the old style” in the eighth century and “the new style” by Atīśa in the eleventh century. The new style differs from the old style only in the addition of the images of the Buddha and Avalokiteśvara. L. A. Waddell,
Symbols of the twelve-membered chain of the dependent origination should be depicted around the rim of the wheel (clockwise and counter clockwise). These symbolic images vary from text to text. In the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*, they are:\(^{100}\)

I  ignorance is to be symbolized by a demon  
II  intentions by a potter’s wheel  
III consciousness by a monkey  
IV name-and-form by passengers riding a boat  
V the six bases should be portrayed by the six sense organs  
VI contact by a man and woman touching each other  
VII feeling by a man and woman experiencing joy and pain  
VIII craving by a woman nursing her child  
IX apprehension by a man taking water out of a jar  
X becoming by Mahābrahmā  
XI birth by a woman giving birth  
XII age, death, pain, lamentation, suffering and spiritual torment by human beings in these conditions

Among the above list, the subjects of the “potter’s wheel,” “Brahma,” and “death” appear in the Kizil painting. However, in the Kizil painting, I suggest that they are not in the composition to represent the dependent origination.

Overall, in spite of some resemblances, the painting in Kizil Cave 175 is not following the standard iconography of the wheel of life (Fig. 6.41), which is normally centered with three animals and with the one circle depicting the five/six realms and the rim depicting the twelve symbols of the chain of dependent origination. The painting also lacks the basic elements such as the representation of the dependent origination. More importantly, as Stephen F. Teiser points out, the Kizil image is not a “wheel” in its format,

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100周圍復畫十二緣生生滅之相。所謂無明緣行乃至老死。無明支應作羅剎像。行支應作瓦輪像。識支應作獼猴像。名色支應作乘船人像。六處支應作六根像。觸支應作男女相摩觸像。受支應作男女受苦楽像。愛支應作女人抱男女像。取支應作丈夫持瓶取水像。有支應作大梵天像。生支應作女人誕孕像。老支應作男女衰老像。病支應作男女帶病像。死支應作興死人像。憂支應作男女憂懼像。悲支應作男女啼哭像。苦支應作男女受苦之像。惱支應作男女挽難調駱駝像。 *Taishō* 23:1442.811ab.
the circle is not complete, and there are neither spokes nor a hub. In any case, the above cited vinayas and avadāna texts all belonged to the Sarvāstivādin school. Sanskrit fragments of parallel passages are also found in Central Asia. Had they survived to the present day, the porches of the Buddhist monasteries at Kucha would be without doubt found decorated with paintings of bhavacakra. In the iconography of the bhavacakra, there might also have been conventions to depict a Buddha figure in the hub and small Buddha figures in each of the saṃsāric world. The different existences in the five saṃsāric realms are very well organized in the Kizil painting. The design of the image might have benefited from the local bhavacakra image tradition, if not directly inspired by it.

--As Visions in Meditation: Saving Sentient Beings in All Realms

Schlingloff also touched on this Kizil image briefly in his studies. He stresses the Sarvāstivādin background. He believes that the image in Kizil Cave 175 is just a variation of the other images with emanated Buddhas from Kucha. To him, they all represent the meditative power of the Buddha as shown in the Kizil Yoga Manual, and the performance of such power is called mahāprātiḥārya, or the “great miracle.” It is true that the ultimate source of the Buddha’s supernatural power comes from meditation. However, Schlingloff did not discuss that a different message is shown in this variation -- that, as I suggested, this painting depicts the function of nirmāṇabuddhas —teaching and saving sentient beings all over the saṃsāra worlds.


Lai Pengju is probably the only one who studied the *nirmāṇabuddha* figures in this painting in association with the scenes depicted in the aura. He points out that this image represents the meditation on *maitrī* (friendliness/love) in Mahāyāna Buddhism.\(^\text{104}\) *Maitrī* constitutes the first of the four immeasurables (*apramāṇa*). The four immeasurables consist of friendliness (*maitrī*), compassion (*karuṇā*), joy (*muditā*), and equanimity (*upekṣā*). In the four immeasurable contemplations, the practitioner concentrates in turn upon friendliness, compassion, joy and equanimity, diffusing these emotions throughout the cosmos and all sentient beings. Finally, the practitioner achieves the state of equanimity wherein he is even-minded toward all creatures and makes no distinction between enemy and friend, self and other. Lai quotes from the *Dazhidu lun*: in the four immeasurable contemplations, “when a bodhisattva obtains all kinds of wisdom, he emits light from his body illuminating immeasurable worlds. And each ray of the light transforms into immeasurable bodies saving immeasurable beings in the ten directions.”\(^\text{105}\) It is a contribution to bring the meditation on *maitrī* into consideration. However, the above quotation only addresses the bodhisattva, and the painting under discussion is about the Buddha. Was the painting meant to represent the meditation on *maitrī*? Or how do we relate the methods in the meditation on *maitrī* to the idea of saving all sentient beings with the multiple bodies represented in the painting?

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\(^\text{104}\) At the same time, Lai Pengju also identified the Buddha in this painting as the *dharmakūya* and related the scenes in his aura to the pure-land. The four immeasurable contemplations, the *dharmakūya* concept and the pure-land cult are all large subjects in the Buddhist practice and theory whose meaning never stay the same. Mixing them together makes the interpretation even more confusing than the image already is. And it requires further study to determine whether these interpretations are applicable to Kucha Buddhism. It is true that the *dharmakūya* are described as being able to emanate transformation bodies to all the directions in some texts. As I explained in previous chapters, it is a perspective of a particular period of time in Buddhist theories and may not be the direct subject of the painting. The Buddha-*Kṣetra* (Buddha-field) is, in nature, demarcated by the light of the Buddha. However, the images depicted in the aura do not necessarily to represent the pure-land belief. Lai Pengju, *Silu fojiao de tuxiang yu chanfa*, 145-146.

\(^\text{105}\) “菩薩得一切種智時，身出光明照無量世界。一一光明變化作無量身，度十方無量眾生。” *Taishō* 25:1509.210c.
Actually, the closest textual reference of this painting appears in the four immeasurable contemplations of the Buddhānusmṛti practice in the Ocean Sūtra, not the Dazhidu lun. In terms of the meditation on the Buddha, the earliest Mahāyāna Buddhānusmṛti method known from the second-century Pratyupanna does not involve the four immeasurable contemplations. However, in the Ocean Sūtra translated in the early fifth century (the same time as the Dazhidu lun), the Buddhānusmṛti practice became a complicated method that accommodates other subjects of meditation, such as the four elements, the four immeasurables, and so on. The four immeasurables, in particular maitrī, which used to be the nature of the Brahmās, are here meditated on as the nature of the Buddha’s heart:

Ten kinds of white light were emitted from the heart of the Buddha. These lights illuminated the world in the ten directions. In each ray of the light, there were immeasurable nirmāṇabuddhas riding on the precious lotus flowers. At that time, the masses saw the light of the Buddha like water of glass or milk. They saw the nirmāṇabuddhas coming from the Buddha’s heart, entering into the Buddha’s navel and passing the Buddha’s heart on a large precious boat. They went to the places of the suffering sinners in the five realms of rebirth. Every sinner saw the nirmāṇabuddhas like his/her parents and good friends. Then, [the Buddhas] taught them the out-of-the-world Dharma. At that moment, a voice appeared in the air instructing the masses: “You now should meditate/visualize the heart of the Buddha. The heart of all Buddhas is the great maitrī. The great maitrī comes from the compassion for the suffering of the sentient beings.”

The text describes a vision of the Buddha emitting rays from his heart to illuminate the world. Each ray has infinite nirmāṇabuddhas inside. The nirmāṇabuddhas go to teach the Dharma to suffering beings in the five realms of rebirth. The key elements in the Kizil image— the Buddha’s light, the nirmāṇabuddhas in the act of teaching all beings, and the five realms of rebirth— are all mentioned in the above description.

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106 Taishō 15:643.674b.
At this point, normally one would conclude that the painting in Kizil Cave 175 depicts the meditation on maitrī in the Ocean Sūtra. However, I have discussed in Chapter 3 that in Mahāyāna theories, emanating nirmāṇabuddhas functions as the skillful means (upāya) of the Buddha and bodhisattva to save the sentient beings. The motivation is said to come from the compassion for the suffering of all beings. The great compassion (mahākaruṇā) is perceived as a fundamental nature of the Buddha. This idea occurs commonly in sūtras and commentaries long before the translation of the Ocean Sūtra. In addition, there is no evidence that the Ocean Sūtra was ever practiced in the Kucha area. The meditation on maitrī is not the ultimate source of the idea, or the direct subject of the painting at Kizil. Therefore, in terms of how to relate this painting and the Ocean Sūtra as well as the related discussions in a wide range of other texts, I propose that the idea of a Buddha emanating nirmāṇabuddhas to save beings in all realms because of his compassion became a specific vision for visualization practice in the Ocean Sūtra. At the end of the passage quoted from the Ocean Sūtra, the text specifies very clear that this is the nature of the heart of all Buddhas. The same idea is represented in the painting in Kizil Cave 175.

Conclusion

The painting in Kizil Cave 175 depicts a Buddha revealing the five realms of rebirth with rays from his body and emitting multiple bodies to reach out to the various beings in these realms. The format of the painting resembles the bhavacakra. The design of this image could be inspired from the iconography of the bhavacakra. However, considering

107 In his commentary on the Daśabhūmikasūtra, Vasubhandhu enumerated all the supernormal knowledges as ways to better reach out sentient beings. Taishō 26:1522.157a. Similar expression also appears in the Chanfa yaojie, Taishō 15: 611.295b.
the structure of the painting and all the key elements, the painting is closer to the visions of a Buddha’s heart described in the *Ocean Sūtra* than to descriptions of the *bhavacakra*.

The painting in Kizil Cave 175 is elaborated from the conventional representations of the emanating Buddha. In general, the depiction of emanated Buddhas in the aura corresponds to the descriptions and ideas commonly seen in Mahāyāna texts -- a Buddha emanates *nirmāṇabuddhas* to save all beings out of compassion. In this elaborated painting, by representing the five *gatis*, the function of the *nirmāṇabuddha* and the significance of creating *nirmāṇabuddhas* are expressed fully.

### 6.4 Concluding Remarks

The three types of exceptions from Kucha are important to the iconography of emanated Buddhas and Buddhist art at Kucha. In one way, they reinforce some of the basic meanings behind the phenomenon of a Buddha emanating other Buddhas; in another way, they also reflect how the idea and image of the emanated Buddhas were received in this particular area.

In Kizil Cave 17, we found that the emanated Buddhas were depicted with the *dharmadhātu* Buddha images. In Buddhist theory, the ultimate source generating all Buddhas is conceived as the *dharmakāya*. The notion of *dharmakāya* is complicated and denotes multiple meanings. According to one perspective from Kumārajīva’s work and the *Avataṃsaka*, the *dharmakāya* is identical to the *dharmadhātu* and it is constantly generating *nirmāṇabuddhas* for sentient beings. The visual languages in the paintings from Kizil Cave 17 embody this idea. This idea may have been made available to Kucha Buddhists through Kumārajīva’s activities.
The painting in Kizil Cave 175 shows the emanated Buddhas teaching all types of beings in the five *gatis*. Developed in Mahāyāna Buddhism, teaching and saving sentient being through *nirmāṇabuddhas*, or transformation bodies, is the *upāya* and compassion of a Buddha. This is the function of the *nirmāṇabuddhas*.

The visual representations of the *nirmāṇabuddhas* had been developing in the Gandhāra and Khotan areas long before they emerged at Kucha. The paintings in Kizil Cave 17 and 175 demonstrate that at Kucha the source of the emanated Buddhas and the purpose of emanating multiple Buddhas were acknowledged at a fairly deep level. Depictions of the emanated Buddhas are relatively new at Kucha; however, they became an integrated part of Kucha Buddhist art. Textual reference about the ideology of the *nirmāṇabuddha* concept is not found from the Brahmī manuscripts yielded from Kizil caves. These images, then, are employed to supplement our knowledge of an aspect of Kucha Buddhism in the fifth and seventh centuries, which did not survive in the textual tradition.

In Kizil Cave 123, the emanated Buddhas were depicted with historical Buddhas in the *avadāna* type of stories. This is an exception in Buddhist art. In Buddhist art, the representation of emanated Buddhas in the aura usually emerged with *bhavana* Buddhas. However, narrative *avadāna* stories were popular at Kucha. These two are examples that this motif was adopted for local use.
1. Side walls in the main hall: Buddhist teaching assemblies
2. Ceiling in the main hall: jātaka stories
3. Lunette above the entrance: Maitreya in Tuṣita
4.5. Near the entrance of the two side corridors: dharmadhātu Buddha images
6. Back wall in the back corridor: parinirvāṇa
7.8. Left and back walls of the central pillar: mostly damaged
9.10.11 Right wall of the central pillar and walls of the side corridors: rows of stūpas

Fig. 6.1 *Ground Plan, Section, and Elevation of Kizil Cave 17.*
*After Kizil shiku neirong zonglu, 24.*
Fig. 6.2 Dharmadhātu Buddha. Left corridor, Kizil Cave 17, Xinjiang, China. Fifth century. Wall painting. Museum für Indische Kunst, Berlin. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku III, fig. 181.
Fig. 6.3 Dharmadhātu Buddha. Right corridor, Kizil Cave 17. Xinjiang, China. Fifth century. Wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku I, fig. 55.
Fig. 6.4 *Layout of the Group of Kizil Cave 14-19.*
After Vignato, “Kizil guxi do shiku siyuan,” 200, fig.2.
Fig. 6.5 A Wooden Arm. Kizil Cave 60, Xinjian, China. Fifth-seventh centuries(?). Gilt wood, 6.5X2.1 cm. Museum für Indische Kunst, Berlin, MIK III8133. After Along the Ancient Silk Road, 120, fig.55.
Fig. 6.6 The Diagram of Cakravāla World System
By John Huntington
Fig. 6.7 The Structure of the Lotus Repository World. Drawing. After Akira Sadakata, *Buddhist Cosmology*, 145, fig. 25.
Fig. 6.8 Vairocana. Balawaste, Khotan, Xinjiang, China. Seventh and eighth centuries. Drawing of Wall painting. After Gropp, Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch-Ostturkestan, fig.50 a-c.
Fig. 6.9 *Vairocana*. Dazhusheng Temple at Baoshan Mountain, Henan, China. Sui Dynasty, 589 CE. Drawing of stone sculpture. After Henansheng gudai jianzhu baohu yanjiusuo, *Baoshan Lingquan si*, 147, fig. 29.
Fig. 6.10 *Overview of the Left Wall*. A’ai Cave, Xinjiang, China. 
Eighth century. Wall painting.
From Sheng Chunshou, *A’ai shiku*, 7. 22.
Fig. 6.11 Vairocana. Dunhuang Cave 449, Gansu, China. Middle Tang (781-847 C.E.). Drawing of Wall painting. After Yin Guangming, “Dunhuang Lushenafo fajie tuxiang yanjiu zhi yi,” 47, fig. 2.
Fig. 6.12 Buddhist Caves at Kizil.
Modified after Kizil shiku nei­rong zonglu, title page.
Fig. 6.13 *Standing Buddha*. Right wall in the main chamber, Kizil Cave 123, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. 
After *Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku III*, fig.200.
Fig. 6.14 Drawing of the Detail of right side wall painting of Kizil Cave 123. After Grünwedel, *Altbuddhistische Kultstätten in Chinesisch Turkestan*, 122, fig. 265.
Fig. 6.15 *Standing Buddha*. Left wall of the main chamber, Kizil Cave 123, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Fresco.
After Duan, *Zhongguo Xinjiang bihuang quanqi: Kizil*, vol. 3, 27, fig. 33.
Fig. 6.17 Dīpankara and Sumegha. Kizil Cave 69, Xinjiang, China. Ca. 625-647 C.E. Wall painting. 
After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku II, fig. 3.
Fig. 6.18 Detail of the Left Wall Painting in Kizil Cave 123. Kizil, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku II, fig. 156.
Fig. 6.19 Washing Feet of the Buddha. Kizil Cave 206, Xinjiang, China. Sixth-Seventh centuries. Drawing of Wall painting. After Grünwedel, Altbuddhistische Kultstätten in Chinesisch Turkestan, 160, fig.362.
Fig. 6.20 Washing Feet of the Buddha. Kizil Cave 80, Xinjiang, China. Sixth-Seventh centuries. Wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku II, fig.62.
Fig. 6.21 Washing Feet of the Buddha. Kizil Cave 32, Xinjiang, China. Fifth-Seventh centuries. Wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku I fig.76.
Fig. 6.22 Washing Feet of the Buddha. Kizil Cave 38, Xinjiang, China. Fifth-Seventh centuries. Wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku I, fig.115.
Fig. 6.23 *Vow Painting*. Bezeklik Cave 9, Xinjiang, China. Ninth-eleventh centuries. Drawing of fresco. After Albert von Le Coq, *Chotscho*, pl.22.
Fig. 6.24 Layout of the group of Kizil Cave 175-180.
After Vignato, Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu, 51, fig.26.
1. The main shrine: Indra’s visit
2.3. The side walls of the main hall: Buddha’s assemblies
4. The ceiling of the main hall: jātakas and avadānas
7.8.9. The left side corridor: 3 niches and a jātaka (unidentified)
14. The left side wall of the central pillar: a row of 8 monks and 4 heavenly Kings
10. The back wall of the back corridor: parinirvāna
15. The back wall of the central pillar: dividing the relics and cremation
11. niche, unidentified
12. niche, defeating Mara
13. niche, with a Kuchean devote and monk
16. A Buddha figure revealing gati in his aura

Fig. 6.25 Layout of Kizil Cave 175.
Modified after Kizil shiku nerong zonglu, 195
Fig. 6.26 A Buddha Showing Realms of Rebirth in His Aura. 
Right wall of the central pillar. Kizil Cave 175, Xinjiang, China. 
Seventh century. Wall painting. 
After Zhongguo Xinjiang Bihua quanjí II, pl.146.
Fig. 6.27 A Buddha Showing Realms of Rebirth in His Aura.
Right wall of the central pillar. Kizil Cave 175, Xinjiang, China.
Seventh century. Drawing of wall painting.
After Schlingloff, “Mūrdhacchidra,” 115, fig.11.
Fig. 6.28 *Brahma’s World*. The detail of the painting from Kizil Cave 175, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. Modified from T’an Shu-ung et al., *Shinkyō no hekiga* II, pl.88.

Fig. 6.29 *Musicians*. The detail of the painting from Kizil Cave 175, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. Modified from T’an Shu-ung et al., *Shinkyō no hekiga* II, pl.88. The drawing is from *Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku* II, 218, fig.146.
Fig. 6.30 *The Musician and Dancer.* The detail of the painting from Kizil Cave 175, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. Modified from T’an Shu-t’ung et al., *Shinkyō no hekiga* II, pl.88. The drawing is from *Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku II*, 218, fig.147.

Fig. 6.31 *Carrying a Corpse.* The detail of the painting from Kizil Cave 175, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. Modified from T’an Shu-t’ung et al., *Shinkyō no hekiga* II, pl.90. The drawing is from *Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku II*, 218, fig.145.
Fig. 6.32 *Unknown Scene*. The detail of the painting from Kizil Cave 175, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. Modified from T’an Shu-t’ung et al., *Shinkyō no hekiga* II, pl.88. The drawing is modified from Schlingloff, “Mūrdhacchidra,” 115, fig.11.

Fig. 6.33 *Farming*. The detail of the painting from Kizil Cave 175, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. After from *Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku II*, 219, fig.149.
Fig. 6.34 *Hoeing*. The detail of the painting from Kizil Cave 175, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. After T’an Shu-t’ung et al., *Shinkyō no hekiga* II, pl.92. (Drawing)After from *Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku II*, 219, fig.150.

Fig. 6.35 *Making Pottery*. The detail of the painting from Kizil Cave 175, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Drawing of Wall painting. After from *Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku II*, 218, fig.148.
Fig. 6.36 *Butchering (?)*. The detail of the painting from Kizil Cave 175, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. Modified from T’an Shu-t’ung et al., *Shinkyō no hekiga* II, pl. 90. The drawing is modified from Schlingloff, “Mūrdhacchidra,” 115, fig.11.

Fig. 6.37 *The Realm of the Hungry Ghosts*. The detail of the painting from Kizil Cave 175, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. After T’an Shu-t’ung et al., *Shinkyō no hekiga* II, pl. 89.
Fig. 6.38 *The Animal Realm*. The detail of the painting from Kizil Cave 175, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Drawing of Wall painting. After from *Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku II*, 219, fig.151.

Fig. 6.39 *Hell*. The detail of the painting from Kizil Cave 175, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. The photo is modified from T’an Shu-t’ung et al., *Shinkyō no hekiga*, II, 90. The drawing is made by author.
Fig. 6.40 Bhavacakra. Tibet, China. Fifteenth-seventeenth centuries. Mineral colors with organic matter. Private Collection. Photographed by John Huntington, courtesy of the Huntington Archive 0051322.
CHAPTER 7

GENERAL DEPICTIONS FROM CENTRAL CHINA

This chapter studies the overall identification of images with small Buddhas in the aura/halo in Chinese art of the fifth and sixth centuries. To further explore why this motif was prevalent in China, I will discuss how the concept of the nirmāṇabuddha was perceived by the Chinese as the resonant-body in the native cosmology.

7.1 The Identification

Previously, the depiction of the small Buddha images in the aura in Chinese Buddhist art did not raise much interest among scholars. Overall, the studies about this motif are very scattered,¹ and the arguments were usually based on selected texts or even assumptions. In Chinese Buddhist art, the motif of small Buddhas in the aura did not come to be associated with special iconographies. However, Chinese images are often inscribed. Therefore the identification can be studied from the statistical data of the

inscriptions, instead of visual analysis of exceptional examples. Therefore, in this section, I will focus on inscriptions.

In Table 6 from Chapter 2, I listed all dated images with *nirmāṇabuddhas* before the seventh century in China from the *Lidai jinian foxiang tudian*. The last two columns show information about the main figures. Just as in Gandhāra and Khotan, the main figures are mostly Buddhas and occasionally bodhisattvas. Regarding their identities, most of them are not specified in the inscription. However, among those that were indicated, we find that images of Śākyamuni predominate. Maitreya, unspecified bodhisattvas, and Amitābha are the next. In particular, unspecified bodhisattva and Amitābha images appear at a later date. Vairocana is also not entirely absent in this collection of images. We can understand these results better when we examined them in a larger picture of Buddhist practice of the fifth and sixth centuries. (This is to avoid jumping into a wrong conclusion that the image of *nirmāṇabuddha* is associated more with a certain figure than others.)

Chisui Satō and Hou Xudong conducted the most comprehensive statistical studies of Buddhist inscriptions of the fifth and the sixth centuries. Chisui Satō collected 1,360 inscriptions from both independent sculptures and Buddhist caves.² Hou Xudong collected 1,602 by adding inscriptions that survived only in rubbings and new discoveries

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from 1949-1979. The following table is a result of Hou’s statistics. They are some of the most frequently reoccurring dedications. 

<table>
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<th>Maitreya</th>
<th>Avalokiteśvara</th>
<th>Amitāyus</th>
<th>Vairocana</th>
<th>Prabhūtaratna</th>
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<td>184(^1)</td>
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(The superscript numbers indicate when the inscriptions have multiple dedications)

Table 8 The Subjects of Chinese Buddhist Images in the Fifth-Sixth Centuries

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3 Hou estimated that around 1,800 inscriptions of the period have survived to the present day. Therefore, his statistics are fairly sufficient to illustrate Buddhist practice of the fifth and sixth centuries. Hou Xudong 侯旭東, *Wǔliù shìjì beifāng mínzhòng fójiào xīnyǎng* 五六世紀北方民間佛教信仰 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1998), 105, Table B2-1.
Overall, Śākyamuni, Maitreya, and Avalokiteśvara appear most frequently among these inscriptions in almost equal numbers. Images of Śākyamuni with small Buddhas in the aura outnumber the images of Maitreya and Avalokiteśvara with this motif. Maitreya and Avalokiteśvara are bodhisattvas. This indicates that this motif is certainly more related to Buddha images.

Amitābha was never as prevalent as the three previous figures. However, his image appeared with increasing frequency after the sixth century. Vairocana became particularly favored during the Northern Qi in Shandong province. In short, the numbers of other Buddhas are much smaller than images of Śākyamuni. Therefore the fact that fewer numbers of other Buddha images adorned with an aura with nirmāṇabuddhas is likely to be a result of less prevalence of those Buddhas at that time.

Furthermore, as shown in Table 8, in 213 inscriptions the devotee only expressed that they made an “image,” in 184 inscriptions a “stone image,” in 103 a “jade image,” and in 24 a “Buddha image.” Here the term “jade” refers to a stone image as well. Together, there are 524 unspecified images, which are over three times more than the images of Śākyamuni. In Table 6, among the images with nirmāṇabuddhas figures, 7 pieces are Śākyamuni, and 22 images are not specified. Similar to the ratio of the comprehensive

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4 Śākyamuni images predominate at cave sites and in stone sculptures, while Avalokiteśvara predominates on bronze sculptures. The Maitreya image came to be popular after 460 C.E. and declined after the Northern Wei (ca. 530 C.E.). Satō, “Hokucho zozomei ko,” 1421-1467.


6 Images of Prabhūtaratna normally appear together with Śākyamuni. The depictions of the two-Buddhas slightly increased after 470 and decreased after the Northern Wei. These images are usually not adorned with nirmāṇabuddhas in the halo. There were very a few instances that Dipankara and other Buddhas were the subject of representation.
statistics of the inscriptions, the unspecified images with \textit{nirmāṇabuddhas} in the aura are over three times more than those of Śākyamuni.\footnote{The unspecified images might be a result of multiple reasons. At the same, the devotee might have a specific Buddha or bodhisattva in mind, or the iconography of the image indicates a specific figure, when the identity of the image is not clarified in the inscription. Since this is the phase which Śākyamuni was the most popular Buddha, scholars often assume that the unspecified Buddha images are likely to be this historical Buddha. However, if we are more faithful to the original concept of the image maker, they are just “images” that transcend the notion of any specific Buddha. Buddhist scriptures countenance the production and veneration of Buddhist icons. It is said that by making images one can gain great merit. \textit{The Scripture on the Production of Buddha Images} enumerates various kinds of better rebirths which one can obtain through making images. This short \textit{sūtra} was very popular and often deposited inside the images in medieval China. From this perspective, it matters little whose image is made, but rather the act of making the image itself that is important. Robert H. Sharf, “The Scripture on the Production of Buddha Images,” in \textit{Religions of China in Practice}, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 261-267.}

This is the landscape of the Buddhist “pantheon” of the fifth and sixth centuries in China. Śākyamuni was the most common Buddha among the Buddhas who were specifically represented. It is in this premise that the aura with \textit{nirmāṇabuddhas} appears to be more associated with Śākyamuni. It does not mean that this motif is less applicable to images of other Buddha images. However, the opposite is true to bodhisattva images.

Regarding the small Buddha figures in the aura, I have explained their general meanings in the textual tradition in Chapter 3. Unique in Chinese Buddhist art, these small figures are often shown in odd number: three, five, and mostly seven. As mentioned in Chapter 1, some scholars tend to interpret them as specific Buddhas. The only textual bases for such assumptions are secondary documents of very late date. For example, in Japanese temple records, the \textit{nirmāṇabuddha} images with Bhaiṣajyaguru are described as the seven Buddhas of Medicine.\footnote{For quotes from these temple records, see He Heming 何和明, \textit{Zhuangshi guangbei zhong de huoyanwen zhi yanju: Zhongguo riben bufen} 裝飾光背中的火焰紋之研究: 中國日本部份 (Taipei: Zhongguo wenhua daxue, 1982), 99.} This does not explain the original identity of the \textit{nirmāṇabuddhas} or when they are depicted with other Buddhas or bodhisattva images. As shown in table 9, when the iconography of the \textit{nirmāṇabuddhas} developed in the fifth and sixth century, Bhaiṣajyaguru was hardly a popular figure. In general,
symbolic meanings can be developed later and affiliated with preexisting images. Nevertheless, I want to point out that whether an image is adorned with the annular type of aura or the scattered type with a particular number of small Buddhas usually has more to do with the medium and the size of the sculpture rather than the meaning and iconography. When this iconographic convention first appeared in Gandhāra, the numbers are 6 and 8. In Khotan, the *nirmāṇabuddha* figures are either too many to count or in the number of 5. In Kucha, in both the annular and the web types of depictions, the number does not seem to be intentional or significant. In this overall tradition, the small Buddhas in the aura are probably not intended to represent particular Buddhas. Odd numbers are auspicious in Chinese Buddhism. Intentionally choosing odd numbers in such manner can also be found in other places.⁹

### 7.2 The Resonant-body

How did the image and concept of the *nirmāṇabuddha* gain popularity in China? In other words, how did the Chinese perceive the Buddha’s transformation bodies? Robert Sharf called attention to the ubiquitous and persistent influence of native Chinese cosmology that facilitated the transposition of Indian Buddhism into Chinese Buddhism. He has elucidated how Chinese cosmology was centered around the idea of *ganying* 感應, or “sympathetic resonance/stimulus-response,” and informed a Chinese understanding of the Buddha-nature and the logic of Buddhist practice and worship. The notion of

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⁹ Such as in pagodas structures, Chinese pagodas usually have 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, or 13 stories.
nirmāṇabuddha found its place in the theory of ganying, and was even given a new term yingshen 應身, or the “resonant-body/ response-body.”\textsuperscript{10}

The Sympathetic Resonance in Chinese Cosmology

It is difficult to overemphasize the significance of classical cosmology on virtually all aspects of pre-modern Chinese thought. However, a comprehensive introduction of sympathetic resonance would be well beyond the scope of this study. Here, based upon Sharf’s analysis, I will summarize the basics that ultimately lead to the concept of nirmāṇabuddha:

In the Chinese conception, the phenomenal world can be broken down into five basic elements called wuxing 五行, or the five phases. The universe is in a state of continual motion and flux of the five phases through the medium of the qi 氣 of yin and yang. Qi is the subtle material ethers that pervade the cosmos and enliven all things. The human body and human behavior are part of this harmonious whole. Therefore, the patterns of the night sky can manifest the rise and falls that take place in the human realm. An emperor’s wildness can cause excessive rain and his arrogance can create excessive drought.\textsuperscript{11} Everyone’s good and evil deeds will result in corresponding retributions.\textsuperscript{12} These seemingly mysterious workings of the cosmic mechanism are explained by the notion of ganying, “sympathetic resonance” or “stimulus response.” In his commentary on the Laozi, Cheng Xuanying classified cosmic resonance into two kinds: universal

\textsuperscript{10} Robert Sharf, \textit{Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism--A Reading of the Treasure Store Treatise} (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), 77-133.


response (tongying 通應) and differential response (bieying 別應). When Heaven responds to all out of compassion and without distinction, it is called a universal response. Things of the same category spontaneously resonate with each other as do two identically tuned strings on a pair of zithers. This is called a differential response.\textsuperscript{13}

The principle of sympathetic resonance serves to maximize the potency of rituals with the goal to elicit a response from Heaven. The sacrifice is exposed, and the ritual is properly performed in order to move Heaven to respond compassionately. So that Heaven will keep nature in harmony and bestow wellbeing on mankind. In the Chinese concept, Heaven, or tian 天, functions like an abstract divine and impersonal principle.

Traditionally, Zou Yan 鄒衍 (ca. 250 B.C.E.), the father of the Yinyang school (yinyang jia 陰陽家), is credited with originating the five phase and yinyang system, while Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179-104 B.C.E.) developed this system into a full-fledged cosmology. However, the fundamental ideas of the cosmology of sympathetic resonance can be found scattered throughout the Zhou classics.\textsuperscript{14} In any case, the organic holism of Chinese cosmology with sympathetic resonant relations between Heaven and human beings was fully established and had been in ritual practice for thousands of years by the time Buddhist thought was gradually brought into China.

\textbf{The Resonant-body in Chinese Buddhism}

There are striking resemblances between the Indic Buddhist and native Chinese perspectives, namely the karmic law in Buddhist and the impersonal principles of the working of the universe in Chinese belief, the conceptual dharmakāya and the notion of


\textsuperscript{14} Sharf, Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism, 79, ft5.
*tian*, and nature of the *dharmakāya* and *tian* response to phenomenal world. These similarities paved the way for the Chinese to understand the *nirmāṇabuddha* in light of the notion of sympathetic resonance and give rise to a new term: the resonant-body.

Early Buddhism, as shown in the *Nikāyas*, emphasized that the universe works according to the Dharma, or the law. Namely, it is the impersonal principle of *karmic* causation that Śākyamuni realized when he was meditating under the *bodhi* tree. In contrast to the native Chinese view, in Buddhism the *karmic* cause and its retribution are extended beyond this lifetime to all previous incarnations and future rebirths. The Buddha is merely an enlightened one who discovered and taught the Law of the cosmos. The true essence of the Buddha is not in the flesh body of the historical Buddha but rather in his teachings: the Dharma. Therefore, the Buddha proclaimed very clearly: “Whoever sees the Dharma sees me; whoever sees me sees the Dharma.”

The Mahāyānists brought this impersonal understanding of a Buddha to the forefront (which I have touched on in Chapter 3). Mahāyāna doctrine stresses that the true embodiment of a Buddha is the *dharmakāya*—eternal and abstract. The *dharmakāya* is true suchness devoid of phenomenal characteristics, and, yet, according to some texts, it also is the totality of the phenomenal universe. In terms of the most fundamental qualities, this impersonal true body of the Buddha resembles the concept of *tian*, or Heaven, in Chinese cosmology closely. And just like the Heaven, the formless *dharmakāya* responds to all sentient beings out of compassion. The difference is the Heaven responds in nature phenomenon or events; but the ultimate true body of the Buddha manifests into anthropomorphistic formed *nirmāṇabuddhas* to every corner of the cosmos. For example, in

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15 *Samyuttanikāya* 3.120; Mus, *Barabudur: Sketch of a History of Buddhism Based on Archaeological Criticism of the Texts*, 51-90.
the *Dazhidu lun* translated in the beginning of the fifth century, the Buddha’s true body is the body derived from the nature of the Dharma. This body of the Buddha (*dharmatākāya*) “always emanates various bodies in various names at various places with various means to save all beings, with no single moment of rest.”\(^{16}\) Elsewhere in the text, this Buddha is said to be “always emanating immeasurable *asaṅkhya* Buddhas from every pore of his body. All of these Buddhas are non-differentiated. Manifestations further come from the *nirmāṇabuddhas* to save beings in response to their needs. (隨應度眾生)”\(^{17}\)

In the meanwhile, Mahāyāna texts are replete with references to Buddhas and bodhisattvas emanating a myriad of multiple bodies to spread the Dharma to all of the cosmos or assuming variant forms in response to those who call to them. The idea that a Buddha, bodhisattva, or the true body of the Buddha responds when called upon caught the full attention of the Chinese, who then felt very comfortable with Buddhist concepts in the light of the stimulus-response theory. No texts can be more revealing than indigenous Chinese treatises to illustrate how the Chinese cosmology was adapted into Buddhism. A very good early example is the *Shilao zhi* 釋老志 written by Wei Shou 魏收 (506-572 C.E.).

The *Shilao zhi*, or “Chronicle of Buddhism and Taoism,” is a chapter of the official history of the North Wei Dynasty written in the sixth-century. The author, Wei Shou, was a court official of the Northern Qi. Although he was not a monk, his wrote an overview of the tenets of Buddhism and demonstrated a deep knowledge of Buddhist doctrine. His

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\(^{16}\) *Dazhidu lun*, *Taishō* 25:1059.121c.

\(^{17}\) *Dazhidu lun*, *Taishō* 25:1059.712b.
words, perhaps, can to a large extent represent a general view of a Chinese scholar at that
time.\textsuperscript{18} Here is how he summarized the doctrine on the \textit{dharmakāya}:

The \textit{dharma}-bodies of the Buddhas have two aspects. One is the true[-body],
the other that of expedient response (權應). “True-body” refers to the ultimate
substance, wondrously surpassing all bonds and impediments, which cannot be
situated in space and time, and cannot be delimited by form or measure. When
there is a stimulus it responds, but its substance is ever tranquil.

“Body of expedient response” (權應身) refers to the one that blends its light
with that of the six paths of existence, that shares defilement with the myriad
kinds [of beings], whose birth and death accord with the times, and whose life
span is in response to things. Its form arises due to a stimulus, but its substance is
not really existent. [Therefore] although the expedient form [of a Buddha] may
take its leave, true substance does not move. It is only because at times there is no
wondrous stimulus that he is not always seen. It is clear that a Buddha’s birth is
not a real birth, his death not a real death.\textsuperscript{19}

In Wei Shou’s understanding, the \textit{dharmakāya} has two meanings. It is, first, the true-
body free from form. However, when there is stimulus it responds. The body of response
appears in a particular form according to the stimulus. As Sharf pointed out, the
fundamental activity of both bodies (and thus of the dharma-body itself) is that of
response (yingsheng), and if one does not perceive the eternal presence of the Buddha, it is
because of the lack of appropriate stimuli (gan).\textsuperscript{20} Thus, body-multiplication, which
was purely a \textit{śuddhi} power in the Pāli \textit{Nikāyas}, became a function of sympathetic
resonance in Chinese Buddhism.

Wei Shou used the word “body of expedient response,” \textit{quanyingshen} 權應身. It is an
elaborate form of the term \textit{yingshen} 應身, the resonant-body. Sharf found that the term

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Robert Sharf, \textit{Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism--A Reading of the Treasure Store Treatise} (Honolulu:
University of Hawaii Press, 2002), 77-133.
\item Leon Hurvitz, “Wei Shou, Treatise on Buddhism and Taoism: An English Translation of the Original Chinese Text of
Wei-shu CXIV and the Japanese Annotation of Tsukamoto Zenryū,” in \textit{Yin-kang: The Buddhist Cave-Temples of the
Fifth Century A.D. in North China} (Kyōto: Kyōto daigaku jinbun kagaku kenkyūyo, 1959), 16: 41-42; the translation is
modified by Sharf, \textit{Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism}, 106.
\item Sharf, \textit{Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism}, 107.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
has no Sanskrit origin. However, it appears widely in Chinese translations of Buddhist texts, Buddhist treatises and commentaries. In the tri-kāya system, “yingshen” is used to refer to both the nirmāṇakāya and saṃbhogakāya.\(^{21}\) In the Mahāyānasamāgraha translated by Buddhāśānta in 531 C.E.,\(^ {22}\) and the Mahāyānābhisamaya-sūtra translated by Jñānayaśas in 570 C.E.,\(^ {23}\) the term resonant-body is functionally equivalent to the Sanskrit term nirmāṇakāya. The Suvarṇabhāsottama-sūtra (Sūtra of Golden Light) is a very influential text in the Chinese trikāya tradition, although the relevant section is absent in the early translation by Dharmakṣena in 397-439 C.E. and the Sanskrit version of the text. The teaching on trikāya appears in the edition complied by Baogui in 597 C.E. and the translation by Yijing in 703 C.E., in which the term resonant-body corresponds with the Sanskrit saṃbhogakāya.\(^ {24}\) It is this variation of understanding that became more popular in China,\(^ {25}\) i.e., the ultimate essence of the Buddha is beyond concept, time and space. He manifests in form in response to stimulus. The body visible only to bodhisattvas is called the resonant-body; and the body that can be seen by all beings is called the transformation-body (nirmāṇakāya). The latter is plural, and can be in any form that is the most suitable to the intended audience.

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\(^{21}\) Sharf, *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism*, 103-104.

\(^{22}\) This sūtra has been translated three times. The use of “yingshen” only appears in the earliest translation by Buddhāśānta in 531 C.E. *Taishō* 31:1592.109c.

\(^{23}\) *Taishō* 16:673.651c. This sūtra was translated by Jñānayaśas in 570 C.E.

\(^{24}\) *Taishō* 16:664.359b-402a. This sūtra was complied by Baogui 寶貴 in 597 C.E.

\(^{25}\) This can be tested in treatises written by Chinese Buddhists, for example the Dasheng ershi’er wen 大乘二十二問 (Twenty-Two dialogues on the Great Vehicle) written by Tankuang 愚曇, in 780s. The author was a local monk at Dunhuang. Acknowledging the complex scheme of theories on Buddha-bodies and the confusion of all the terms, he confirmed that the resonant-body is the body that “appears in response to the bodhisattva of the ten sages.” *Taishō* 85:2818.1185b. W. Pachow, “A Study of the Twenty-Two Dialogues on Mahāyāna Buddhism,” *Chinese Culture* 20, 1 (1979): 15-64; Sharf, *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism*, 110.
To sum up, the idea of a Buddha creating nirmāṇabuddhas in Buddhism was understood by Chinese in their own terms. Thus, this idea became familiar to Chinese. This might be one of the factors that contribute the prevalence of the nirmāṇabuddha images in Chinese Buddhist art.

7.3 Concluding Remarks

During the fifth and sixth centuries, adorning images with small Buddhas in the aura was common practice in China. The inscriptions show that by this time, this motif had become a standard convention in Buddhist imagery, especially for images of the Buddha. This result, in a way, corresponds to the change of the concept of the nirmāṇabuddha which I described in Chapter 3. By the turn of the fifth century, nirmāṇabuddhas in the aura/halo became a general body mark of Buddhas and, to a less extent to bodhisattvas.

Moreover, the Chinese images could also be a result from copying Buddha images from western regions, a process which does not necessarily accord with metaphysics in Buddhology. However, not all Buddhist teachings in India were appreciated in China and not all iconographic conventions that reached China became popular. It should not be passed over in silence that the idea of a conceptual Buddha transforming into nirmāṇabuddhas found a home in China by its native Chinese cosmology. In the form of Buddhism understood by the Chinese, the nirmāṇabuddha is seen as the resonant-body of a Buddha in response to the calling of devotees. This could be one of the reasons why the notion of the nirmāṇabuddha and the depiction of small Buddhas in the aura are well acknowledged in China.
CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation studies the representations of Buddhist figures that have small Buddhas or bodhisattvas in their auras, from their origin in Gandhāra, through development in Khotan and transmission in Kucha, to central China, where the concept thrived. Images from these four regions represent important steps in the transmission and development of this motif. Some of these images reveal, to some extent, an intricate aspect of Buddhist practice in the area in which they are found. This study not only reveals the development of this motif, but also discusses the meanings behind the visual representations of a Buddha or bodhisattva figure generating multiple Buddha figures in the aura around it. Since this convention was transmitted across different regions and culture, my research also examines, whenever possible, how this motif and related concepts were perceived in the indigenous culture.

The Configuration and Development

The depiction of emanated figures in the aura first emerged in Gandhāra during the late Kuśāṇa period and is shown with lotus-residing bhavana (conceptual) Buddha and bodhisattva figures. The configuration of these images is very consistent. In the Gandhāran style of representations, the emanating figure can be either a Buddha or
bodhisattva, but is usually the former. He is always shown sitting with the dhyāna mudrā on a lotus flower. The emanated figures, on the other hand, are always shown standing at a slanted angle and are enclosed in the aura of the main image. Usually, there are three or four small images on each side of the emanating figure. Such visual representation emphasizes the sense of emanation and the notion that such an emanation is raised from the power of meditation.

This convention was fully developed in the Khotan area, the kingdoms along the Southern Route in the Tarim Basin, from the fourth to eighth centuries. The Khotan images show a great variety of representations, and their links to the early Gandhāran and contemporary Kuchean and Chinese images are evident. Following the tradition from Gandhāra, the emanated figures are shown slanted in the early phase of Khotan imagery, and bodhisattva figures still are occasionally found as the emanating image. However, a number of changes from the Gandhāra works occurred by this time, effecting the Kucha and Chinese depictions. The emanating Buddhas are no longer restricted to meditation posture, and there is a tendency to confine the emanated figures within an annular shaped band. A great variety of seated emanated Buddha images appeared, however, only some of which appeared in Kucha and central China. Overall, representation of emanated Buddhas became increasingly generalized, simplified, and abstract.

Kucha is located on the Northern Route in the Tarim Basin. The indigenous cave paintings at Kucha are centered around various types of narratives about events in Śākyamuni’s life and stories of causation. Cult images of bodhisattvas did not occur until Chinese influence arrived in the late eighth century. Around the seventh century, images of bhavana Buddhas emerged and replaced the narratives. Most of the representations of
the emanated Buddhas in the aura came to be present at this time with the *bhavana* Buddhas. In Kucha, only Buddha images, rather than Buddha and bodhisattva images, with the aura of emanated Buddhas are found. The depiction of the *nirmanabuddha* figures can be generally divided into the annular type and the web type. The former resembles the loose type of the standing emanated Buddhas from Khotan. Most of the depictions in Kucha belong to this type. They are non-narrative images of *bhavana* Buddhas. The latter might be inspired from the dense type of the standing emanated Buddhas from Khotan. Only three images in Kucha are shown in the web type. Two of the web type images are narrative.

In China, images with small Buddhas in the aura appeared in the fourth century. It is in China, especially during the fifth and sixth centuries, that this motif became more commonly found in Buddha images and sometimes was applied to bodhisattva images as well. As characteristics of Chinese representations, the small Buddha images are always shown seated in meditation posture. They are not usually tilted, and they became increasingly small in size. Following the traditions formulized in Khotan and Kucha, the small Buddhas are arranged either in the annular band or scattered in the aura/halo in odd numbers (for example, three, five and seven).

**The Meaning and Iconographic Studies**

Generating other bodies is noted as the first of all a supernatural power from meditation of high level practitioners since early Buddhism. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, in particular, all Buddhas and bodhisattvas possess this power. Images of emanated Buddhas in the aura correspond to the type of miracle described in Mahāyāna texts, in which the emanation of multiple Buddhas is bounded with the rays of the body. In
Mahāyāna theories, such miracles are interpreted as the essential nature of a Buddha. In short, the concept of a Buddha is seen at multiple levels. The true body of a Buddha is identified with the Dharma and śūnyatā (emptiness). It is the upāya (skilful means) of a Buddha to transform into nirmāṇabuddhas to teach the Dharma in the ten directions of the cosmos. The body as the Dharma is the dharmakāya (Dharma-body). In some textual traditions, the dharmakāya is personified by Vairocana.

For the nirmāṇabuddhas, there is evidence in early versions of Mahāyāna texts that they represent the plurality of Śākyamuni within his Buddha-kṣetra (Buddha-field), i.e., the multiple-folded trichiliocosm. However, they were soon perceived as the independent Buddhas that constitute the infinite co-existing Buddhas in Mahāyāna belief. If we have to classify the nirmāṇabuddhas with the terms of the three-kāya (three-body) theory, they can be the nirmāṇakāya (transformation-body) for all beings or sāmbhogakāya (bliss-body) for bodhisattvas.

Around the turn of the fifth century, shown in the Buddhist visualization texts translated into Chinese, emanating nirmāṇabuddhas became the most prominent feature of the Buddha’s body and the constant halo, as a lakṣana (body mark) of all Buddhas, had nirmāṇabuddhas inside. These changes are reflected in new trends of the visual representations of the nirmāṇabuddhas. In Buddhist art, the image of the emanating Buddha became freed from the meditation posture. A type of halo with nirmāṇabuddhas in static position appeared. Based on inscriptions on images from China, an aura/halo with nirmāṇabuddhas, like a lakṣana, can be an adornment of all Buddhas and bodhisattvas.
Most of the images with small Buddhas in the aura have no specified iconographic attributes that can be used for identification. However, there are a few exceptional examples of particular iconographies from Gandhāra, Khotan and Kucha involving emanated Buddhas. These show the range of iconographic possibilities for the emanating Buddha and from different aspects represent the meanings behind this motif.

In two cases from Gandhāra, this motif appears in the scene of a particular Buddhist assembly on a lotus pond. I suggest that this scene might be a prototype of the so-called “one Buddha and fifty bodhisattvas,” an iconography of Amitābha Buddha. Hence, the Buddha with emanated Buddhas in this iconography may represent Amitābha and his nirmāṇabuddhas. Amitābha is the most popular bhavana Buddha. The notion of the nirmāṇabuddha plays an important role in the cult of Amitābha. It is the nirmāṇabuddha of Amitābha that appears in front of the practitioner in meditation and that guides the devotee to his Pure Land at the time of death.

The emanating figure can be a bodhisattva as well, and in one example from Gandhāra the emanated figures are shown as a variety of beings. This is the body-transformation of all Buddhas and bodhisattvas, but is particularly associated with the bodhisattva ideal. A bodhisattva obtains the power of body-transformation at the eighth bhūmi (stage). These images demonstrate that the bodhisattva concept and body-transformation also took part in the creation of depicting small figures in the aura.

In Khotan, a painting with emanated Buddhas in the aura is identified with the Suvarṇabhāsottama-sūtra (Sūtra of the Golden Light), a very influential Mahāyāna text. The central Buddha in the sūtra is Śākyamuni and, therefore, the painting may represent Śākyamuni. The extant Sanskrit and Khotan versions of the sūtra underline the
dharmakāya of the Buddha, and it is the dharmakāya that manifests into transformed bodies for the sake of all beings.

In Kucha, two dharmadhātu Buddha images are adorned with emanated Buddhas in the aura in Kizil Cave 17. The dharmadhātu Buddha image is an iconography of Vairocana, although any Buddha and bodhisattva at the tenth bhūmi can manifest a dharmadhātu body. According to Kumārajīva’s works and the Avataṃsaka, the true dharmakāya is particularly identified with the dharmadhātu and constantly emanating nirmāṇabuddhas. In the painting from Kizil Cave 175, a Buddha is shown revealing gatis (realms of rebirth) in his aura and each scene in the gati is accompanied by an emanated Buddha figure. It illustrates the reason and purpose to create nirmāṇabuddhas: for the sake of sentient beings. Depicting the nirmāṇabuddhas with the dharmadhātu and gatis are significant because it is related to the essence of the emanator and the purpose of the emanation.

The two web type paintings in Kizil Cave 123 are narratives, possibly jātaka-like stories. Consequently, the emanating figures would probably be past Buddhas. Jātaka-like narrative is a major theme of cave paintings at Kucha. Images of emanating nirmāṇabuddhas emerged and developed with bhavana Buddha images as a departure from the narrative depiction of the Buddha as historical personage. However, Kucha Buddhists employed this motif in the subjects that were more familiar to them.

Contextualization

The ideologies and visual representations associated with the nirmāṇabuddha are multi-faceted (e.g., their relationships with Indo/Hindu and Irano-Zoroastrian/Manichaean beliefs, which I did not touch upon). It is a progression of human knowledge
about Buddhahood. It is also a history about transmission among different people. In the ongoing process of absorption, assimilation and transformation from Gandhāra to East Central Asia and to central China, they were appropriated by people with different cultural and religious backgrounds. Since this motif is not original in Kucha and China, the assimilation in these two areas is noteworthy.

In case of Kucha, Mahāyāna texts with references of the nirmāṇabuddha are absent from the Brahmī manuscripts excavated from Kizil caves. The representations of the emanated Buddhas from Kucha reveal that the idea about the nirmāṇabuddha was fairly acknowledged and the motif was even taken to local use. That is to say, these images provide us a facet of Kucha Buddhism that is not available in the textual tradition.

Transmission of Buddhist teachings and images is often described by scholars as “influence.” However, in case of China, I would like to borrow the term from the native Chinese cosmology: stimulus-response. The concept and image of the nirmāṇabuddha thrived in China because they stimulated resonance from things of a similar kind in the indigenous belief system. The Chinese used their native cosmology of “stimulus-response” to explain the relation between the dharma and nirmāṇabuddhas, and even gave the “transformed bodies” a new term called resonant-body.
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408 C.E.


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This appendix introduces images of a figure emanating other figures in the aura/halo from the Khotan areas, specifically, images from the Buddhist temple sites of Rawak, Endere Fort (Niya), Dandān Oilik, and Balawaste (Map 3). Numerable fragments of small clay Buddha images, originally from an aura, have been found from the Buddhist temple ruins in the area. However, only a few images from above sites contain some information of the original context. Therefore, the focus is on those images. This part of study is the foundation of further typological analysis and iconographical studies. However, it is also descriptive and often tedious. For greater centralization, I put this section into the appendix.

**Rawak Site**

The site of Rawak is located twenty-five miles northeast of Khotan (Map 3). Aurel Stein first discovered the site and excavated the south corner in 1901. The Trinker Expedition from Germany excavated the west quadrant in 1928. Chinese archaeologists excavated the north wall in 1942, and again in 1994. This monastery is centered around a
“cruciform” stūpa.\(^1\) A rectangular enclosure wall with four gateways at the four sides surrounded the stūpa court 163 x 141 feet (Fig.A.1). The enclosure walls and outer passages are adorned with life-sized clay sculptures, mostly standing Buddhas. The quantity and quality of these sculptures is greater than other early sites on the Southern Route.

Regarding the date of the site, Stein found an abundance of wuzhu coins, a currency of the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220 C.E.), which were circulated until the beginning of the Tang Dynasty. Therefore, he dated the site to between the third and seventh centuries. Following this time frame, other scholars have generally assigned a date to the sculptures at Rawak that differ by one or two centuries. Rowland agreed with Stein’s dating.\(^2\) Gropp dated the site to the sixth century.\(^3\) Whitfield generally dated the images from the fourth to sixth centuries.\(^4\) Stein noticed two different styles from the Rawak sculptures. The depictions of miniature Buddha figures in the aura appear in both of the two styles. Yim Youg-ae conducted the first detailed classification and stylistic analysis on these Rawak sculptures. She compared the first style with the Gandhāran sculptures and dated it between the mid-fourth to early fifth centuries. She compared the second style with the Binglingsi Cave 169 (ca. 420 C.E., Gansu, China) and dated it to the fifth century.\(^5\) Marylin Rhie further divided the sculptures into six styles. Images with small Buddha

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\(^1\) The stūpa has a square-shaped high base and stairway on the four sides.


figures in the aura fall into her Style I and Style VI, which were dated to the third-early fifth centuries, and the late fourth - first half of the fifth centuries respectively. Style I and VI belong to Yim and Stein’s early and late phases respectively. Here, I will use the term “early phase” and “late phase” and with the most recent stylistic analysis from Rhie’s classification. Thus, the early phase is fourth-fifth centuries, and late phase is the fifth-sixth centuries.

I. Early phase (fourth-fifth centuries, Style I) Fig.A.2 (R12), and 3 (R13)

--Buddha with condensed standing Buddhas in the aura:

Images R12 and 13 are located right on the south corner (Fig.A.1). Shown in the photos taken by Stein, the two are almost identical (Fig.A.2, 3). The central image is a colossal (over life-sized) standing Buddha with only the lower part survived. The large aura around the Buddha’s body is filled with a myriad of small Buddha figures. These small Buddhas are shown standing at a slanting angle with their right hands in the abhaya (fear-not) mudrā. They overlap with each other and no Buddha is shown with a complete body. They are very small in comparing to the size of the central image. And they look identical. The density in these images is absent in other types of representations of the emanated Buddha.

These two sculptures belong to Style I. More accurately, R12 to R41 represent a variation of Style I. The heaviness of the robe, the three-dimensional quality of the drapery folds between the legs, and the sense of a natural and relaxed manner in the overall pose and drapery seem to be the remote descendent of the Gandhāra style (Fig.A. 4). In the mean while, the drapery reveals the body shape. This characteristic resembles

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Mathurā style (Fig.A.5). On the legs, the two figures have alternating broken rib folds. This manner, which is absent in India, became a pronounced feature of the Khotan style. It also appears on some of the Northern Wei Buddha images of the fifth century (Fig.A.6), and more prominent in the Northern Zhou style of the sixth century. It seems that Khotanese absorbed from both of the two major artistic schools of Buddhist art in northwest of India, and created its own convention of image-making. This Khotan convention influenced Chinese Buddhist art, regardless if it was directly or indirectly. When they are compared to Indian images of the late Kuśāṇa period and Chinese images of the fifth and sixth centuries, a fourth and fifth centuries date would seem to be reasonable for this Khotan style.

II. Late phase (fifth-sixth centuries, Style VI)

--Buddha Images with scattered seated Buddhas in the halo: Fig.A.8 (D17), 9 (D19), 11 (R2), R8, 12 (D29), and 13 (D30)

A very different type of halo emerged in the later phase at Rawak. It appears with relatively smaller sized standing images alternated with colossal Buddha images, such as Buddha images D17 and 19 (Fig.A.7, 8, and 9). In this type, the main figure is adorned only with halos (no aura). And the halo contains five scattered small Buddhas. The halo is filled with spiral patterns and crowned with a sharp pointed top with a zigzag lines seemed to be steam or flame motif. The small Buddhas in the halo are not slanted. At Rawak, they are all seated with their ankles crossed (Fig.A.10). There are two variations about their mudrās and lotus seats. In the halo with D17 (Fig.A.8), D19 (Fig.A.9), and

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8 The heads of the two images D17 & 19 are now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, no. 30.32.1 and 30.32.3.
D29 (Fig. B. 12), they display the *dharmacakra mudrā*; and they sit on the side-view lotus and are surrounded by a halo and aura. With R2 (Fig.A.11), D30 (Fig.A.13), they display the *dhyāna mudrā*; the lotus seat of the small Buddha figure is shown in a front view like a roundel. I will call this type the halo with scattered Buddhas. In Stein’s report, R8 has the same style halo; however, no photo was published.⁹

--**Bodhisattva Images with scattered seated Buddhas in the halo:** R4 (Fig.A.11) and R50.

Besides Buddha images, a number of bodhisattva images at Rawak are also shown with a halo that contains five scattered Buddhas, such as R4, and R50. R4 (Fig.A.11) and R50 are standing images, around two third of life-size, placed in between two colossal Buddha sculptures. The halo of these figures, especially the format of the small Buddhas in the halo, closely resembles that of R2, but is more damaged. The belt hanging over an extremely narrow waist is also a commonly seen feature on devotee figures. The depiction of this type of belt on a bodhisattva figure is probably a reflection of local costume.

--**Bodhisattva with annular type of aura:** Fig.A.14 (R85)

R85 is located at the outer passage way (Fig.A.14). The extant part starts from below the hips of the main figure. In the photo taken by Stein, the figure has a large body aura that contains two rows of small Buddha images confined within annular-shaped bands. The small Buddha images are shown in the meditation *mudrā*. Each figure is enclosed in a rosette. The edge of the aura is decorated with wide spiral patterns just as in the other halos in Style VI.

All of the images discussed above from Fig.A.8 to 14 belong to Style VI. This style is distinguished by its very mannered drapery. As described by Marylin Rhie, the folds are portrayed by “closely set, parallel, raised, crease-like lines covering the whole surface in repetitive abstract patterns and wave-like clusters.” She called it the “combed line.”10 The drapery completely reveals the form of the body. Best shown in Fig.A.11 (R2 and 4), the legs of the body are very stiff, and the waists are constricted and elongated. D17 and 19 have the heads of the Buddha figures intact (Fig.A.8 and 9). The face in this style is characterized by a round and broad forehead in contrast to a small pointed chin. The hair is depicted with natural wavy pattern. The eyebrows are highly arched. The upper eyelids are sharply defined and projecting out. The nose is raised up high with a long narrow ridge and sharply pointed end. The lips have a sensitive curve with a pronounced upward turn at the ends that convey a sweet smile.

The overall arrangement of the folds and the techniques of making the folds of Rawak Style VI are not found in either the pan-Indian traditions or in the styles of Chinese Buddhist art.11 These two characteristics appear to be unique creations of Khotan. It

10 Rhie, Early Buddhist Art of China And Central Asia, 1: 302-303. Stein called it a “conventionalized wave pattern.”

11 Rhie pointed out the relationship of this style with a prevailing drapery style during a late phase of the Gandhāra and Swat schools in particular. Seen in sculptures from Butkara I in Swat and stucco images on the Dharmaśākta Śāpa at Taxila, the Buddha figures of this period are shown with very dense and stylized drapery lines. This type of drapery treatment can be traced back to Parthian sculpture traditions. However, the similarity between the late Kuśāna style from Gandhāra and the Style VI at Rawak is only the density of the drapery folds. Rhie, Early Buddhist Art of China And Central Asia, vol.1, 311-312. Both Stein and Rowland suggested that this type of drapery is an attempt to copy the famous Udayana image. (Stein, Ancient Khotan, 490-491; Benjamin Rowland, The Art of Central Asia (New York: Crown Publishers INC., 1974), 126. The Udayana image, perhaps one of the most celebrated ruixiang, is said to be the first Buddha image made under the commission of King Udayana of Vasta during the Buddha’s life time. Based on the inscribed Udayana Buddha sculpture from Seiryōji, scholars now believe that the Chinese fifth century Archaic Style (Fig.A.6) is the Udayana style. Rawak Style IV (string fold type, R54, 55, 57, 61, 63, 66, 67, 68, and 69) resembles the Udhayana style closer than Style VI. The legend of the Udayana image is recorded in the Ekottarrāgama-sūtra, the Ocean Sūtra, and the Record of Buddhist Kingdom by Faxian. For a literary review, see Soper, Literary Evidence for Buddhist art in China, 258-265. For more studies on the Udayana image, see Marthal L. Carter, The Mystery of the Udayana Buddha (Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1990),17-36; Rhie, Early Buddhist Art of China and Central Asia, 2: 432-445; Gregory Henderson and Leon Hurvitz, “The Buddha of Seiryōji—New Finds and New Theory,” Arthab Asiae 19, (1956): 5-60.
seems to be part of the inclination to depict the drapery increasingly abstract and compact after the Kuśāṇa period.

Scholars in previous studies all believed that Style VI is later than Style I. The bodhisattva image and the ornate halo only appear in Style VI. Most of the images from Trinkler’s excavation at the west quadrant were produced in this style. The style also occurs in a number of life-sized images located in between the colossal Buddhas of Style I from the south quadrant. Rhie suggested that images of Style VI were added in a later renovation during the late fourth or first half of the fifth centuries. Since the site was active until the seventh century, and more importantly, the same configuration of a halo appeared in China in the second half of the sixth centuries, I tend to choose a wider range of the dates for this style at Khotan: the fifth and sixth centuries.

III. Miscellaneous Images

--Emanated Bodhisattvas: Fig.A.15

In addition to emanated Buddha figures in the halo, emanated bodhisattvas are also found at the site. They are fragments fallen from D38 and R84, and a piece found by the Chinese in 1904 (Fig.A.15). The configuration of these small bodhisattva figures resembles those from R2 and D30. The bodhisattva is seated in the dhyāna mudrā with ankles crossed against a rosette medallion. So far, depictions of bodhisattvas in the aura

12 The archaeological evidence supports this opinion. For instances, shown in Fig.A.11, R2 in Style VI was certainly made after R3, which was in Style I, had fallen off the wall. The edge of the drapery of R4 in Style VI was distorted to cooperate with the pre-existing R5 in Style I.

13 She also believed that the Style I was belonged to Hinayāna and the Style VI was Mahāyāna. Rhie, Early Buddhist Art of China and Central Asia, 1: 311-313.

14 See chapter 2 for detail.

15 Stein, Ancient Khotan, 505.

16 Rhie proposed that the style of the emanated Bodhisattva is close to the Bodhisattva images of the fifth century (e.g.,
have not been found in other areas. The iconography and style of the emanating figures are unclear.

--Image from the Khotan Museum: Fig.A.16

Yim published a photo showing two images, now in the Khotan Museum, that have a large body aura filled with standing Buddha figures (Fig.A.16). The style of the two is similar to R12 and 13. Their original location is unclear.

The Rawak site is still half buried in the desert and has not been completely excavated yet. Besides the images introduced above, the site also yielded numerous fragments of plaques of small Buddhas that had fallen from the wall. There must be more images along the walls that have adorned halos or auras with emanated figures.

Endere Site

Endere is an important Buddhist temple site at Niya (Map 3). The site yielded fragments of Buddhist manuscripts written on birch-bark, in an upright Gupta type of Sanskrit, and Chinese secular documents. Stein also observed Tibetan scrawl on the wall, which was almost completely effaced by Chinese scrawl. During the eighth century, Tibetans had been frequently harassing the Chinese borders and invaded the area shortly afterwards. The monastic buildings are enclosed in a circular fort (Fig.A.17). Maybe the fort was built to against the Tibetan invasions and harassment. Based upon the evidences from the site and the historical documents, Stein proposed that the site had already been deserted in the seventh century when Xuanzang passed by and then was again inhabited


17 This area was involved in a Dharmaguptaka movement, which spread in Central Asia (including the Northern Route) before the arrival of the Sarvastivadins and Mahayanaists. Lore Sander, “Buddhist literature in Central Asia,” in *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, ed. Jotiya Dhirasekera (Colombo: the Government of Sri Lanka, 1981), 4: 55.
as the seat of a Chinese garrison in the eighth century. Finally, it was abandoned no later than the end of the eighth century.\textsuperscript{18} Regarding the images at Endere, Stein remarked that they were distinctly older than those from Dandān Oilik. It also accounts for the fact that among all of the coins collected from Endere, there is only \textit{wuzhu}, but no Tang coins, which are common at Dandān Oilik.\textsuperscript{19} Thus, the paintings from Endere can be dated back to the fifth and the sixth centuries.

**Standing Bodhisattva with annular type seated Buddhas in the aura: Fig.A.18**

The image important to this study is a wall painting in the chapel of E. ii, a building that consists of a row of small rooms (Fig.A.17). The narrow south wall was decorated with fresco paintings of which only the lower portion remains (Fig.A.18). In the center is a life-size standing figure. He is probably a bodhisattva because his lower garment looks like \textit{dhotī} and he wears a scarf. He is shown standing on lotus flowers floating on a water pond with geese and lotus flowers and leaves. In his large body aura, a row of small seated Buddha figures are depicted along the contour of the aura.\textsuperscript{20} The format of the aura resembles the R 85 at Rawak (Fig.A.14): seated Buddha arranged in annular shaped bands of the aura. The difference is that the former is a painting and the latter a relief sculpture.

\textsuperscript{18} Stein, \textit{Ancient Khotan}, 426-430, 436.

\textsuperscript{19} Stein, \textit{Ancient Khotan}, 429.

\textsuperscript{20} Since only a small black and white photo was published by Stein, we have to rely on Stein’s description to confirm other details. According to him, the small seated Buddhas in the aura were painted alike, each surrounded by a light green halo about 4 in. in diameter. Immediately next to the Bodhisattva, a monk with a halo is shown kneeling at his right side. The monk is extremely small in comparison to the central figure. In addition to this monk figure, there seems to be some sort of narrative depicted on each corner. On the right side, a seated (or kneeling?) figure is shown in Iranian costume. Behind him, a figure is lifting up his sword and seems to be attacking the Iranian man. The other side is illegible in the photo. I suspect that the central figure might be Avalokiteśvara, and the other narratives might be scenes from the eight perils. Stein, \textit{Ancient Khotan}, 430-431.
Dandān Oilik Site

Dandān Oilik ("the house of ivory") is north of Rawak (Map 3). Stein found sixteen temple sites within a 1km radius from Dandhān Oilik.21 As is typical at Khotan, the temples usually consisted of a rectangular cella with the main statue set on a base in the center or occasionally at the back. The building is made of timbers and mud, which are covered with plaster. The interior and exterior walls are decorated with elaborate paintings. Fragments of miniature standing and seated Buddha and bodhisattva (D. i 94) images are found throughout the site. They probably came from the aura of some large sculptures. Among them, I found two new features of representations that are not seen at Rawak.

I. The loose type of standing Buddhas in the aura: Fig.A.20 (from Dii)

D. ii in Dandān Oilik is a rectangular temple with double walls (Fig.A.19). Stein found a number of small reliefs of standing Buddhas in the southeast corner of the inner cella. Some of them are still attached to a stucco background like an aura. They are probably all fallen from the image on the south wall (the main wall) of the cella. The small Buddha figure is standing on a lotus flower with the right hand in abhaya mudrā (Fig.A.20). The border of this aura is decorated with the same motif as Rawak R12, 13 of Style I (Fig.A.2, 3). Compared to the standing type of emanated Buddha images from Rawak, at Dandān Oilik, these small Buddhas have larger spaces between each other. The fragments are all detached from the wall and in the photo taken by Stein, they are shown

21 My study on Dandān Oilik is mainly based on Stein’s report. Stein, Ancient Khotan, 236-273.
standing straight. Originally, they may have been slanted to form an angle with the main image.

The format of this type of representation resembles the annular type of images from Kucha, which I will introduce in appendix C. Trinker found fragments of the same style aura in D. v, building V at Dandān Oilik. This type of representation does not seem to be rare at Khotan.

From D. v, Trinker also found a very different representation of the aura (Fig.A.21). It is only 7 cm high. In this fragment, a standing Buddha is shown with a row of emanated Buddha figures along his sides in the aura. The slanting emanated figures are closely set, but are not overlapping. However, it is too small and coarse to fit into any category.

II. Various seated emanated Buddha Figures: Fig.A.22

Stein and Trinkler found small seated Buddha figures which likely had fallen from auras of the figures on the walls. Fig.A.22 shows samples from D. ii and D. v. The Buddhas are all shown seated in padmāsana (“lotus sitting posture”), whereas at Rawak, the crossing-ankle sitting pose is predominant for the emanated figures. One Buddha figure displays dhyāna mudrā and the other two abhaya mudrā. For seated emanated Buddha images, the former is more common than the latter.

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22 Interestingly, the drapery of the emanated Buddha figures from Dandān Oilik is also the most common style at Kucha. Compared to the paintings of standing Buddha at Kucha, both of them have asymmetrical folds across the torso and long vertical lines suggesting the shape of the thighs. Overall, the drapery lines are convincing and relaxed.

23 Gropp, Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch, 272-275.

24 Gropp, Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch, 278-280.
The Dandān Oilik site has particular importance at Khotan because it yielded dated documents. Stein found five Chinese documents with dates ranging from 781-790 C.E. The few legible coins picked up at the sites were all also of the eighth century: kaiyuan (713-741 C.E.), and qianyuan (758-760 C.E.). The archaeological evidence at Dandān Oilik led Stein to believe that the site was finally deserted in the eighth century, therefore he dated all of the paintings to the eighth century. However, those Chinese documents are secular in nature. The Buddhist manuscripts from the site and inscriptions on the paintings are all in local dialect or Sanskrit. Stein found short cursive Brāhmī scripts in Eastern Iranian language on the paintings. They often appear at the feet of the life-size figures. These Brāhmī epigraphs look like dedications, although they are unreadable now. Stein also found Sanskrit pūthīs (Indian book format) written in the upright Gupta style from D. iv and fragments of Buddhist canonical texts written with Brāhmī script in local language. Unfortunately, these texts are not dated. Nonetheless, they demonstrate that the temples were constructed by Khotanese who communicated through Brāhmī and had little to do with those Chinese documents. Therefore, scholars generally believe that the temples had been used for centuries and only were abandoned in the eighth century.

25 Stein, Ancient Khotan, 266-277, 525-533.
26 As a reference, Gropp dated the site to the eighth-tenth centuries. Gropp, Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch, 101.
27 One of such inscription was found in D. ii. Stein, Ancient Khotan, 248.
Without new evidence, I will follow these scholars and date these images to the sixth and seventh centuries.

Among the Sanskrit texts found here by Stein, a *Prajñaparamitā sūtra* of the Gupta period and a *Vajracchedika* text of the seventh or eighth century were identified. These texts confirmed Mahāyāna practice at the site.

**Balawaste Site**

Balawaste is also an important Buddhist temple site at Khotan (Map 3). The paintings found at this site yield a couple of unique iconographies, such as the several well-known *dharmadhātu* Buddha/bodhisattva images.29 Among these distinctive representations, a standing Buddha image and a seated bodhisattva image both have small Buddhas in their auras. These two images are fragments found by Trinkler. Gropp recovered their original contexts in his report.30

**I. A Buddha with condensed standing Buddhas in the aura:** Fig.A.23

This is a wall painting of an assembly of deities (Fig.A.23). The center is a life-size figure standing on lotus flowers. He has a large round aura filled with clusters of small Buddha figures. The small Buddhas are standing images with their right hands in the *abhaya mudrā*. They overlap with each other, in the same manner with the condensed type of standing Buddhas in the aura from Rawak. The border patterns are also similar. The image from Balawaste is almost a painted version of the Rawak sculptures. More interestingly, the emanating figure is surrounded by various deities. I have discussed in Chapter 5 that this iconography may related to the *Sūtra of Golden Light.*

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29 Gropp, *Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch*, fig. 50, 52, and 58(?).

II. A Seated Bodhisattva with seated emanated Buddhas in his Aura: Fig.A.24

This is a seated bodhisattva figure but only two fragments survived (Fig.A.24). On one of the fragments, three seated Buddha figures are present in the aura of the main bodhisattva image. The small Buddhas are all tilted at different angles. They are shown seated in dhvāna mudrā. All the Gandhāran images with emanated Buddhas in the aura are seated Buddha or bodhisattvas. So far, this is the only seated figure with this iconography found in Khotan.

The paintings at Balawaste appear to be comparable to those at Dandān Oilik. Scholars often dated the two sites to the same time period (between the fifth and eighth centuries). The site might have been used for centuries. Regarding the date of the particular paintings under discussion, the composition of placing a Buddha/bodhisattva in the center surrounded with an assembly of deities as shown in Fig. B.23 is a new format of painting in Buddhist art. It appeared in Dunhuang during the Middle Tang (781-847 C.E.) in a highly standardized form. The representation in the Balawaste painting appears looser and freer than the Dunhuang paintings. The position of the two seated Buddha figures seems random. Therefore, the Balawaste painting is probably dated prior to the Mid-Tang paintings at Dunhuang, to the seventh and eighth centuries.

Overall, Buddhist sites from the Southern Route are structural temples, and images with emanated figures are mainly clay sculptures and paintings. The two mediums show no distinct difference in the configuration of the aura.

31 The cosmological Buddha image from Balawaste was dated to the seventh century in the Buddhism in Afghanistan and Central Asia (Simone Gaulker et al. ed., 23, fig. 39), fifth-sixth centuries in The Art of Central Asia (Rowland, 135), and the mid-sixth century in the Painting of Central Asia (Bussaglia, 55). Williams dated virtually all Khotan paintings to the eighth century, including Balawaste. Williams, “The Iconography of Khotanese Painting,” 109-110. Angela Howard followed Williams’s dating. Howard, The Imagery of the Cosmological Buddha, 53-54. The eighth-century dating was also followed in Cocheteux et al. eds., Séride, Terre de Bouddha, 378-379.
In these Khotan depictions, the presence of the aura or halo is often reinforced with an ornamental border or filled with swirling decorative motifs. The decorative border motifs appeared in Kucha as well. All of these visual depictions speak to the fact that these images are not simply representing body-multiplication, but the concept—that the Buddha or bodhisattva can emit light, and in his light, there are a myriad of Buddhas on lotus flowers.

Following the tradition from the Gandhāran, both Buddha and bodhisattva figures can be adorned with the aura/halo with emanated figures. And the earlier images of the small Buddhas in the aura are slanting. In contrast to the Gandhāra type of representation of this motif, the aura became increasingly prominent; while the emanated figures became smaller. In Khotan, the standing pose is common to the emanating figure and the sitting postures became popular for the emanated figures. Emanated bodhisattva figures also appeared and were unique to the Khotan area. There are a variety of types of the emanated figures and their configurations with the aura and halo. Typological and chronological synthesize summary is in Chapter 2. In general, in the depictions of the emanated images from Khotan, there seems to be a trend from dense to sparse, from tilted to leveled, from standing to seated. The emanated images, although small, are still shown as full figures with all the necessary details. This will change in the Chinese style of depictions.
Fig. A.1 Layout of Rawak.
Fig. A.2 *Standing Buddha with Emanated Buddhas in the Aura (R13)*. Rawak, Xinjiang, China. Fourth and fifth centuries. Clay. After Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, I, fig. 64.
Fig. A.3 Standing Buddha with Emanated Buddhas in the Aura (R12). Rawak, Xinjiang, China. Fourth and fifth centuries. Clay. After Stein, Ancient Khotan, I, fig. 64.
Fig.A.4 Dipamkara Jātaka. Gandhāra (Pakistan?).
Photographed by John Huntington, courtesy of the Huntington Archive, no.0020962.
Fig. A.6 Maitreya Buddha. 443 CE. Bronze. Private collection.
After Saburō Matsubara, Chūgoku Bukkyō chōkoku-shi kenkyū, pl. 12.
Fig.A.7 *Standing Buddhas (D 17, 18, 19).* Rawak, Xinjiang, China. 
Fifth and sixth centuries. Clay. 
After Gropp, *Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch-Ostturkestan*, 226, fig.100.
Fig. A.8 *Standing Buddhas (D17)*. Rawak, Xinjiang, China.
Fifth and sixth centuries. Clay.
Fig. A.9 Standing Buddhas (D19). Rawak, Xinjiang, China. Fifth and sixth centuries. Clay. After Gropp, Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch-Ostturkestan, 228, fig. 103.
Fig. A.11 Buddha R2 and Bodhisattva R4. Rawak, Xinjiang, China. Fifth and sixth centuries. Clay. After Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, I, fig. 61.
Fig. A.14 *Standing Bodhisattva (R85)*. Rawak, Xinjiang, China. Fifth and sixth centuries. Clay.
After Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, II, pl. XVIII c.
Fig.A.15a *Emanated Bodhisattva* from R84. Rawak, Xinjiang, China. Fifth and sixth centuries. Clay. After Aurel Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, pl. LXXXVII.

Fig.A.15b *Emanated Bodhisattva*. Rawak, Xinjiang, China. Fifth and sixth centuries. Clay. After *Xinjiang wenwu guji daguan*, fig.170.
Fig. A.16 *Emanated Buddha Figures in the Auras.*
Rawak, Xinjiang, China. Fifth and sixth centuries (?). Clay.
After Yim, “Hotan Rawak sawŏnchi sobulsang ui Yŏn’gu,” fig. 10.
Fig.A.17 Map of the Endere Site.
After Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, pl. XXXVI.
Fig.A.18 A Standing Bodhisattva. E. ii, Endere, Xinjiang, China. Fifth and the sixth centuries. Fresco. After Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, pl. X.
Fig.A.19 *Ruins of Temple D.ii after Excavation.*
Dandān Oilik, Xinjiang, China. Sixth and seventh centuries. Clay.
After Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, fig.29.
Fig. A.20 Standing Emanated Buddhas in the Aura. D. ii, Dandän Oilik, Xinjiang, China. Sixth and seventh centuries. Clay. After Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, pl. LIV.
Fig.A.21 A Standing Buddha with Emanated Buddhas. D. v, Dandän Oilik, Xinjiang, China. Sixth and seventh centuries. Clay. H: 6 cm. After Gropp, Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch-Ostturkestan, fig.149.
Fig. A.22ab Emanated Buddha. Dandān Oilik D.v, Xinjiang, China. Sixth and seventh centuries. Clay. After Gropp, Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch-Ostturkestan, fig.148ab.

Fig. A.22c Emanated Buddha. Dandān Oilik D.ii, Xinjiang, China. Sixth and seventh centuries. Clay. After Stein, Ancient Khotan, pl.LV.
Fig.A.23 A Buddha among Deities. Balawaste, Xinjiang, China. Seventh and eighth centuries. Drawing of wall painting. After Gropp, *Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch-Ostturkestan*, fig. 42a-f.
Fig.A.24 A Seated Bodhisattva with Buddhas in the Aura. Balawaste, Xinjiang, China. Seventh and eighth centuries. Wall painting and recovered drawing. After Gropp, *Archäologische Funde aus Khotan Chinesisch-Ostturkestan*, fig.54a-c.
APPENDIX B

IMAGES IN KUCHA

At Kucha, images of a Buddha emanating other Buddhas in the aura appear in eight caves from four sites: Kizil Caves 17, 47, 123, 160, 175, Taitai’er Cave 16, Mazhabaha Cave 12, and Simsim Cave 45 (Map 4). This appendix first introduces the images from each of these caves and then analyzes characteristics of these representations in terms of their visual form, their location in relation to other motifs in the cave, and their possible date of creation.

Kizil Site

The Kizil site is located around 80 km northwest of Kucha city. Three hundred and thirty-five caves are found on the cliffs along the northern bank of the Murart River (Map 4). Kizil is the largest Buddhist cave site of the ancient kingdom of Kucha and it contains examples of the highest quality of cave paintings and imperial patronage. Two images in Kizil Cave 17, one in Kizil Cave 47, eight in Kizil Cave 123, and one in Kizil Cave 160 bear representations of emanated Buddhas in the aura. As a special case, a painting in Kizil Cave 175 which was previously identified as bhavacakra, “the wheel of existence,” also has small Buddha images depicted around the central Buddha. Below, I discuss the images in the order listed above. Chinese archaeologists named all the caves at Kizil with systematic numbers.
However for very long, the Kizil site is known to the western language spoken world mainly through German scholar’s publications. For the convenience of the reader, while using Chinese scholars’ numbering, I also provide the German names of the caves.

**Kizil Cave 17 (mit dem bodhisattvagewölbe) (Fig.B.1-3)**

Kizil Cave 17 is a central-pillared cave. On either side of the corridors near the entrance to the main hall, there is a dharmadhātu Buddha images (Fig.B.1). Both of the images have a Buddhist cosmological world depicted inside the Buddha’s body and emanated Buddhas in the aura (Fig.B.2-3). The Buddha stands in a relaxing pose. And a monk, in hierarchic scale, kneels at one lower corner. The dharmadhātu Buddha image is a renowned iconography in Buddhist art. Depicting the emanated Buddhas with the dharmadhātu Buddha image is unique. I discussed these two images in detail in Chapter 6.

**Kizil Cave 47 (Fig.B.4-6)**

Kizil Cave 47 is a colossal Buddha cave in the format of a central-pillar cave (Fig.B.4). The main chamber is 16.7m high. The platform for the sculpture of the parinirvāṇa at the back is 9.4 m long. Unfortunately, none of these colossal Buddha sculptures are extant today. Only some of the paintings in the back chamber survive. The halo and aura of the reclining Buddha image has a row of small standing Buddha figures decorated along the border. The halo is composed of bands of the “flying geese holding wreaths” motif, standing Buddhas, bead patterns, and the flame motif from the inner layer to the outermost border (Fig.B.5). The body aura consists of a row of standing Buddhas and flames at the outer border (Fig.B.6).

This is the only case in Kucha showing small Buddhas in the aura with a reclining Buddha. It is also rare in Buddhist art in general to have this motif depicted with a
parinirvāṇa Buddha. The parinirvāṇa Buddha is Śākyamuni. This is also one of the very a few images with this motif for which we can identify the emanating Buddha.

Kizil Cave 123 (ringtragenden Tauben) (Fig.B.7-13)

Kizil 123 is also a central-pillar cave but crowned with an unusual dome ceiling. According to Yaldiz’s study, perhaps, originally eight Buddha images were drawn with emanated Buddhas in the aura.¹ They are located on the front walls, the side walls of the main hall and the corridors (Fig.B.7). Five of them have survived.

On either side of the door on the front wall, there is a life-sized standing Buddha image (no. 4 &5 in Fig.B.7). The Buddha on the right side (no.5 in Fig.B.7, Fig.B.8) holds an alms-bowl and stands in a more erect position than the Buddhas in Kizil Cave 17. Holding an alms-bowl is a new feature of emanating Buddha images and is only found at Kucha. His halo and aura are filled with small Buddha figures. The Buddhas in the halo are shown sitting on lotus flowers in meditation poses. In the extant part, four remain on one side and the top center one is empty. Therefore, presumably, there are total of eight of them in the halo. They look almost identical. Those in the aura are standing images, except for the bottom one, which is seated, perhaps due to the limitation of space. They are shown in various hand gestures. Similar to the images in Cave 17, these small Buddhas are positioned at an angle that suggests they are radiating from one source.

In a manner that is very unconventional to the Buddha images at Kucha, the halo and the aura are adorned with decorative motifs at the outer borders. Specifically, the outer border is decorated with a very Sassanian motif, flying geese (hamsa) holding a wreath in their beaks.²


² Sassan is a large empire in Mesopotamia from 224 to 651C.E. Their decorative motifs are distinguished by beads, static
As will be discussed later, this distinctive motif only appears in three caves at Kizil and is an important benchmark for dating the caves. The lower part of the painting is largely damaged and the attending figure is missing. It has flowers and petals depicted in the flat background.

The painting on the left side of the front wall (no.4 in Fig.B.7, Fig.B.9) and the one on the right side corridor near the entrance to the main hall (no. 12 in Fig.B.7, Fig.B.10) are in the same format as the one described above. The former has only a part of the halo and aura extant. The emanating Buddha image is so heavily damaged that little information can be gleaned from it. In the latter, the Buddha is shown holding a bowl and standing erect. Two attending figures are depicted at the two upper corners. The one on the Buddha’s left is shown performing the aṅjali mudrā. As can be seen from the remains on the wall, the one on the right of the Buddhas appears to be holding a caurī ("fly-whisk"). The lower section has been lost. Since the design of the caves at Kucha is highly symmetrical and the images with small Buddhas in the aura often appear in pairs (e.g., in Kizil Cave 17), scholars have suggested that its counterpart in the left corridor would also bear similar iconographic features.3 Unfortunately, it does not survive. According to Marianne Yaldiz’s report, the two standing Buddha figures on the back of the central pillar (nos. 13 & 14 in Fig.B.4) also had small Buddha figures shown in their aura, but the paintings have not survived.4

The two paintings on the side wall in the main hall feature the most dramatic depictions of the Buddha’s emanation in all of Kucha (nos.1 &15 in Fig.B.7). The emanations are all centered on a life-sized standing Buddha surrounded by a variety of beings with some sort of

animals often holding ribbon or wreath etc. Sassanian decorative patterns reached China and became popular during the Tang dynasty (618-907 C.E.).

narrative. On the right wall, the Buddha is depicted with a huge aura filled with myriad small standing Buddha images, but no separate halo (Fig.B.11). The small Buddhas display a diversity of hand gestures. All stand on a lotus and bear the body auras and head halos roughly similar to the replicas of the central Buddha. These small Buddha figures are shown rising in the shimmering waves. The wave pattern frames each of the small Buddhas into a lozenge-shaped cell and gives the whole aura the appearance of a web-like grid. The small Buddhas are slanted at different angles, and eventually merge into the supreme flame around the head of the main Buddha. The visual representation seems to capture the motion of the Buddha’s radiance.

The central Buddha on the right side wall is looking at a figure to his lower left. That figure, while turning his head looking at the Buddha, is stretching his hands towards a big tray of flowers (Fig.B.12). Behind them, there are three celestial beings and Vajrapāṇi standing in the background. On the right side of the Buddha, there are also seven monks and an ascetic.

The painting on the left side wall is in the same format (Fig.B.13). However, the Buddha in this painting wears a large gem in front of his uṣṇīṣa. He gazes to his right, where a man is holding up a jewel-like object to the Buddha. Behind the man, there are several water pots enclosed in an architectural structure. In the background, celestial beings, monks and Vajrapāṇi are shown attending the Buddha.

Paintings in Kizil Cave 123 are unique and in high quality, especially the two narratives on the side walls, which were frequently included in the previous studies. I discussed the possible identifications of the subjects in Chapter 6.
Kizil Cave 160: (Fig.B.14)

Kizil Cave 160 is also a central-pillar cave with a copular ceiling. In this cave, the image of small Buddhas in the aura appears at the main niche on the central pillar. The main Buddha figure, in this case a sculpture, and a large part of the painting on the central pillar are not extant any more. Shown in the drawing (Fig.B.14), the proportion indicates that the main Buddha must have been a standing image. Only a partial painting of the Buddha’s aura survives. The aura consists of multiple layers of small standing Buddha figures enclosed in the lozenge-shaped flame/waving pattern, very similar to the form that was previously described from the side walls in Cave 123. The paintings of this cave are severely damaged and are not published.

Kizil Cave 175 (Versuchungshöhle) (Fig.B.15-16)

An image previously identified as the wheel of existence is depicted on the right wall of the central pillar in Kizil Cave 175 (no.16 in Fig.B.15). In the center of the painting, a Buddha sits with the ankles crossed on a giant lotus (Fig.B.16). He has an extended aura of three circles, which are further divided into sections. A small Buddha image, either standing or sitting, appears in each section. Some of the sections are recognizable, although not every one of them has been clearly identified. One can see running hungry ghosts (at the viewer’s top left corner), ploughing with oxen, hoeing, making pottery, playing musical instruments, dancing, and carrying dead bodies. Two circles, symbols of the sun and the moon, are depicted on top of the painting. Two figures with halos are shown in the aṅjali mudrā at the bottom left. Discussion about this iconography is in Chapter 6.
**Taitai’er Site**

Taitai’er is a small Buddhist cave site located in Kucha, 56 km away from downtown Kucha and 20 km north of the Kizil site (Map 4). Eighteen caves are scattered along two hills for around 400 m. Images of the Buddha with emanated Buddhas in his aura appear in Taitai’er Cave 16, a central-pillar cave with a very unusual flat ceiling.

**Taitai’er Cave 16 (Fig.B.17-20)**

Taitai’er Cave 16 consists of an antechamber, a main hall and a back corridor (Fig.B.17). The paintings in the antechamber have not survived to the present-day. There are fifteen life-sized standing Buddha images painted on the walls throughout the cave from the entrance to the main hall (one on each side, nos. 1 & 15 in Fig.B.17), the front wall of the main hall (one on each side of the door, nos. 2 & 14 in Fig.B.17), side walls of the main hall (one on each side, nos. 3 & 13), side corridors (three on each side, nos. 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, and 12 in Fig.B.17), to the back corridor (three images, nos. 7, 8, 9 in Fig.B.17). All these Buddha figures stand erect on lotus flowers. The ones at the entrance, front wall and the middle of the back wall are frontal (Fig.B.18, or no. 8 in the layout). The rest all face left, which seems to follow the direction of circumambulation. Most of these Buddhas hold a bowl in the hand.\(^5\) Their halos and auras are all adorned with small Buddhas, four in the halo around the head and eight or ten in aura around the body. Most of these small Buddhas are standing images. They are confined within the annular-shaped band similar to that on the front wall of Kizil 123. However, unlike those at Kizil, the small Buddhas in the halo are also standing images. The paintings at the back are in better condition. Fig.B.19 is the image on the left wall of the back corridor (also no. 6 in Fig.B.17). A flame pattern is shown rising from the right thigh of the

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Buddha. Fig.B.20 (also no. 9 in Fig.B.17) shows the Buddha image on the back wall of the back corridor. And Fig.B.21 (no. 10 in Fig. 4.17) is the one on the right wall of the back corridor. The Buddha in this painting is shown holding an alms-bowl. This is the best preserved painting from the cave. The outer border of the halo and aura are adorned with zigzag band and bead pattern (Fig.B.22).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Main Buddha</th>
<th>Lower corner</th>
<th>Upper corner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>? (damaged)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 Kuchean devotee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 seated Buddha in a stūpa</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 seated Buddha in dhyāna mudrā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1 devotee (?)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 stūpa with a meditation Buddha seated inside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Buddhas’s right: 1 stūpa with a meditation Buddha seated inside</td>
<td>1 seated Buddha in dhyāna mudrā</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Buddhas’s left: 1 male Kuchean devotee holding a incense burner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1 male Kuchean devotee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1 male Kuchean devotee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1 male Kuchean devotee holding a incense burner</td>
<td>1 seated Buddha in dhyāna mudrā</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Buddhas’s right: 1 male Kuchean devotee Buddhas’s left: 1 stūpa with a seated Buddha inside in abhaya mudrā</td>
<td>1 seated Buddha in dhyāna mudrā</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1 stūpa with a meditation Buddha seated inside</td>
<td>1 seated Buddha in dhyāna mudrā</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1 male Kuchean devotee holding a incense burner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>? (damaged)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(For location of each number of the Buddhas, see the diagram in Fig.B.17)

**Table 9 The Small Images Between the Standing Buddhas in Taia’er Cave 16**

375
Small images of devotees dressed in Central Asia costumes (Fig.B.20, 21) and small stūpas (Fig.B.19) are depicted at the lower corners between the large standing Buddhas. Sometimes, small seated Buddha figures fill the space in the upper part between the fifteen standing Buddhas. The complete list of these images and their locations are shown in the above table.

**Mazhabaha Site**

The Mazhabaha site is located 45 km northeast from the downtown area of Kucha. Thirty-two caves are found at this site but only four of them are painted with images. The images of Buddhas with small Buddhas in the aura are found in Mazhabaha Cave 12, which, again, is a central-pillar cave.

**Mazhabaha Cave 12 (Fig.B.23)**

In Mazhabaha Cave 12, three standing Buddha images are shown in the main chamber. One is at the main shrine on the central pillar and two are located on the side walls (nos. 1, 2, and 3 in Fig.B.23). They all have emanated standing Buddha images painted in their halos and their body auras. The emanated Buddha figures are lined up within the annular-shaped frame of the halos and auras. They are all slanted and are similar to the images from the front wall of Kizil Cave 123. The Mazhabaha site is not well-known to scholars. Only a brief account of the site is seen in a short survey of the small-sized cave sites at Kucha. No paintings from this site have been published.

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7 Li Li, “Small and Medium-sized Caves in the Kucha Region of Xinjiang,” 163-182.
**Simsim Site**

Simsim, located 45 km northeast of downtown Kucha, is a medium-sized Buddhist site at Kucha with 52 caves. Besides caves, there are structural architectural elements along the banks of the river and on the hill (Fig.B.24). Only very brief reports with a few illustrations have been published. The image of the Buddha with emanated Buddhas in his aura appears at the main shrine in Cave 45 (also a central-pillar cave).

**Simsim Cave 45 (Fig.B.25)**

In Simsim Cave 45, the main sculpture in the niche, a standing Buddha, has not survived (Fig.B.25). Similar to the case in Kizil Cave 160 and Taitai’er Cave 16, only the background painting is still extant. In this painting, a row of slanted small Buddhas are confined in the annular-shaped band of the halo and aura. These small Buddhas are shown seated. There seems to be no strong narrative elements present.

**Other Fragments**

Fragments of wooden panels and other materials of auras depicted with small Buddha figures in the aura are also found in the Buddhist sites at Kucha. Some of them have been published, such as a painted wooden panel found in the “third cave from the pass” (Kizil Cave 184?) at Kizil, a relief wooden panel and fragments of gilt terracotta recovered

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9 Chhaya Bhattacharya, Art of Central Asia-with Special Reference to Wooden Objects from the Northern Silk Route (Delhi: Agam Prakashan, 1977), 66, pl. 39.

from the temple site of Duldul-Akur, a wooden panel from Subashi, a structural monastic site, and a complete wooden aura that came from the Kumtura cave site. Fragments like those from Kucha (as well as from the broader region that includes the Buddhist sites along the Northern and Southern Silk Routes) are innumerable. These fragments demonstrate the popularity of images with small Buddhas in the aura. However, unlike the wall paintings in the cave, these panels display a variety of styles and are generally out of their original context. We usually know nothing about the central figures of these images; therefore it is impossible to narrow down a date for further study. In addition, these pieces are often too fragmentary or too small for a convincing iconographic and stylistic analysis. Therefore, this study will focus exclusively on the wall paintings from the caves.

Characteristics of the Buddha Images with Emanated Buddhas in the Aura at Kucha

For the cave paintings introduced above, these images of a Buddha with emanated Buddhas share some common pictorial characteristics. First of all, just like the Gandhāran and early Khotan images, the emanated Buddha images are all enclosed and integrated within the pattern of the aura or halo of the main Buddha figure. They are also all slanted in a systemic order.

11 Madeleine Hallade et al., Pelliot's Mission, Documents archéologiques, 3: fig. 51.
14 Such as in the case of the wooden panel from Duldul-Akur. That Buddha is shown with a fleshy round face, displaying dharmacakra mudrā, which is entirely absent in the Kucha style. It may have come from Tang China and perhaps can be dated to the eighth or ninth centuries.
Second, by visual forms and subject matters, these images (except the painting in Kizil Cave 175) can be categorized into two groups: a web-type and an annular-type. The two paintings on the side walls in the main chamber of Kizil Cave 123 and the main shrine on the central pillar in Kizil 160 share the same format. In this type, the small Buddha images emanated from the central Buddha are enclosed in lozenge-shaped cells, which form a web pattern in the body auras of the central Buddhas. No separate halo is depicted for the main Buddha figure. I have named them the web-type. The web-type can be used in narratives, such as the two paintings in Kizil Cave 123, although the one from Kizil Cave 160 is too fragmentary to discern the nature of the image.

Most of the rest of the images belong to the annular-type. In this group, the main Buddha figure bears both with a halo and a body aura. The emanated Buddhas are confined within the annular-shaped bands of the halo and aura. Only in the paintings from Kizil Cave 17, the aura is composed of multiple bands of small Buddha figures. The rest of the representations have only one band.

The annular-type is relatively austere in contrast to that of the web-type. The attendants of the main Buddha figure are reduced to a minimum, often only one in a corner. They seem to represent a generic type of devotee, e.g., a monk or a celestial being, in the act of veneration (performing the anjali mudrā and holding an incense burner, etc.) rather than recognizable figures in any particular story. Except for the depiction of the parinirvāṇa in Kizil Cave 47, the subjects of the images in the annular-type seem to be un-specified. Most the wooden fragments also belong to the annular-type as well.

As a characteristic already seen at Khotan, the annular-type of aura often has border decorations. Among the images published, except those from Kizil Cave 17, the rest of them
(from Kizil 123, 47 and Taitai’er Cave 16) all have decorative patterns on the borders. These motifs—flying geese holding wreaths, and zigzag bands with beads—further divorce the painting from a natural representation.

Both the two types appear in the same cave in Kizil 123. Therefore, despite how these two developed, they did coexist at Kucha at least for a period of time. By the quantity of the extant examples, the annular-type was presumably much more prevalent than the web-type. (I have analyzed in Chapter 2 that images similar to these two types are found in Khotan area).

Third, most of these images, except the three at the main niche, are life-sized standing Buddhas on the walls. In the development of the iconographic plan of the central-pillar caves at Kucha, the appearance of large Buddhas standing on lotus flowers as the major theme on the wall marks an important stage. The motif of small Buddhas in the aura seems to coincide with the increased occurrence of the life-sized standing Buddha images. Since the iconographic program of the cave is important to understand the significance of the images under discussion, in the following section, I will examine other motifs of the aforementioned caves in which the depictions of small Buddhas in the aura are found.

Fourth, the iconography of a Buddha with small Buddhas in the aura only appears to selected caves at Kucha. At the Kizil site, Cave 47 is the largest cave and the paintings in Cave 123 are at the highest quality. At small sites of Taitai’er, Mazhabaha and Simsim, only one cave was depicted with this iconography. This is different from other areas, such as central China where this motif became ubiquitous to Buddha or bodhisattva images after the fifth century. So, was this apparently special iconography part of Kucha Buddhism or was it alien at Kucha? To study thoroughly the appearance of these images in the region, I will also
discuss in the later part of this appendix how caves with this iconography are related to other caves at the site, and their possible date.

**The Iconographic Programs of the Central-pillar Caves**

Buddhist caves at Kucha consist of a variety of differently shaped caves: the central-pillar cave, the square cave, the residential cave, and the meditation cave. These caves served different functions and were formed into groups. All of the images showing small Buddhas in the aura appear exclusively in the central-pillar caves. Unlike the other types of caves, the central-pillar caves are always covered with images from wall to wall in a consistent manner. Unfortunately, only the two largest sites, Kizil and Kumtura, have been published to some extent and only Kizil has been intensively scientifically studied. Therefore, I will focus on Kizil when discussing iconographic programs of the related caves, cave grouping, and the chronology at the site. Other cave sites display a larger variety of types of caves; however, the iconographic programs of the central-pillar caves at other sites are mostly in the same scheme.

At Kizil, there are around 60 central-pillar caves. The paintings of these central-pillar caves are highly repetitive. The iconographic plan of these caves went through three schemes chronologically: Buddhist assemblies, standing Buddhas, and thousand-Buddhas.

Most central-pillar caves are in the first scheme (Fig.B.26), which is most recognizable by the scenes of the Buddhist assemblies depicted within large square panels on the side walls of the main hall. The subjects are the post-enlightenment events of Śākyamuni and

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most of them can be associated with either the non-Buddhists converting to Buddhism or the Buddha subduing non-Buddhists. In these panels, the Buddha is always shown sitting in the center surrounded by monks, celestial beings, and human beings. He is only slightly larger than the attendants. In addition, there is usually a small amount of landscape elements, such as the tree atop the Buddha.

Even though none of the sculptures in the niches are extant, scholars have identified the principal image of the main niche in about thirty caves as the visit of Indra, or the so-called “Indraśalaguha” from the remains of the paintings and the molded mountain peaks around the niche. According to the story, when the Buddha was meditating in a cave on Mount Vediya in Magadha, Indra paid a visit and consulted the Buddha with questions concerning rebirth and causality. The ceilings are painted with jātaka and avadāna stories arranged in lozenge-shaped mountains. The jātakas are the birth stories exclusively related to the Buddha. The avadānas include tales of the Buddha’s disciples or any being professing the Buddhist faith, in addition to the Buddha himself. The back of the corridors are for scenes associated with the parinirvāṇa. The side corridors are painted either with stūpas or post-

17 Ding Mingyi, Ma Shichang, Xiong Xi, “Kizil shiku de fozhuan bihua,” Zhongguo shiku--Kizil shiku I (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1989), 211; Tamami Hamada, “Kizil chushichukutsu no buisetsu hôzu ni tsu i te (Preaching Buddha Scenes in Central-pillar Caves at Kizil),” Fudo to bunka no.4 (2003), 21-34.


19 Lesbre does not accept them as avadānas, but calls them more descriptively as “Lozenge scenes with a central Buddha.” Therefore, there are a number of stories that do not fit in any categories in her classification. Emmanuelle Lesbre, “An Attempt to Identify and Classify Scenes with a Central Buddha Depicted on Ceilings of the Kizil Caves (Former Kingdom of Kutch, Central Asia),” Artibus Asiae 61, (2001): 305-354.

20 Eight caves are shown with the stūpa motif in the side corridors: 7, 13, 17, 38, 80(2), 91, 171 and 172 (2).
parinirvāṇa events, such as the first council. The lunette above the entrance on the front wall, which is the last image one sees after circumambulating the cave, is the depiction of Maitreya, the future Buddha, waiting in Tuṣita heaven.

This tidily constructed iconographic program is broken down by the standing Buddhas motif, which is then followed by the thousand-Buddhas. The standing Buddha motif refers to the life-sized images depicted on the walls and at the main niche. They first appear in the side corridors, such as in Kizil Cave. Then they extend to the back corridor replacing the paintings of parinirvāṇa, and to the main hall replacing the panels of the Buddhist assemblies. In addition, the standing Buddha also became a new motif for the main niche.

This subject also appears in a number of the square caves in the late phase.

The change from the seated Buddha in the Buddhist assemblies to the standing Buddha images is not just about posture, but a shift to a different concept of the Buddha. The Buddhist assemblies are all stories taking place during the Buddha’s life time. Most of the

21 Eight caves are shown with the post- parinirvāṇa events in the side corridors: 4, 98(2), 101, 178, 193, 205, 219, and 224.

22 The painting subject in the side corridors of the central-pillar caves at Kucha display more diversity than other areas. It seems to be the easiest place that is subjected to new motifs. For other painting subjects, see Vignato, Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu, 17.


24 They also appear on the dome ceilings. The standard ceiling of the central-pillar cave is a barrel vault. Since the dome-shaped ceiling are exceptional, and the chronology of the painting on the dome are not clear, I am not including them in the discussion.

25 Other central-pillar caves with the standing Buddha motif in the side corridors are: Kizil Cave 4, 27, 47, 48, 98, 104, 163, 176, 192, 219, 224.

26 In Kizil Cave 63 (sculpture), 100, 123, 154 (sculpture), and 176. This subject also appears in the back chamber of the colossal caves: 47, and 48.

27 In Kizil Cave 43, 01(sculpture), 69(sculpture), and 123, the standing Buddha motif appears in the main hall.


29 Kizil Caves 33, 76, 81, 183, 185, and 188.
standing Buddha images are non-narrative. In these non-narrative depictions, a couple of new conventions occurred. First, the Buddha is shown standing on a lotus, and the background seems to be set in an empty void; in contrast, in the depiction of the Buddhist assemblies, the setting is relatively natural and the Buddha sits on an ordinary rectangular platform. The difference between the paintings of Buddhist assemblies and standing Buddhas are the difference between a historical personage and the bhavana Buddha (imagined, conceptual Buddha). Second, the attendants with the standing Buddha images are reduced in number and in size. These attending figures, usually at the four corners, perform simple acts of worship, such as making offerings. The emphasis is shifted from historical events to the act of veneration and making offerings. Third, images of the local Kuchean devotees in Central Asian costume also join the retinue with the Buddha. Incorporating contemporary figures enhance the expression of devotion to the bhavana Buddha.

In the last phase at Kizil, images of the thousand-Buddhas came to be popular. They appear in around seven caves virtually replacing all the other subjects from the walls to the ceilings. Paintings of the thousand-Buddha also appear in a different style. They were painted very roughly, with fewer color palettes, mainly the earthen red. The vibrant mineral blue which was probably imported from the Near East is completely absent. In addition, a new convention of wearing the monastic robe appeared with this motif, that is, hanging the

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30 Very few of the standing Buddha images are in narrative contexts. For these narrative depictions, the subject matter seems move away from the post-enlightenment events of converting non-Buddhists to the depiction of venerating and making offerings to the Buddha. The image on the left wall of Kizil Cave 69 has been identified. It depicts the Buddha Dipaničaka and the Brahmin Sumeda. Sumeda is a previous incarnation of Śākyamuni. In the painting, he is shown offering flowers to Dipaničaka. From Dipaničaka, he received the prediction of his own enlightenment. The other important narrative image with a standing Buddha in the center appears in Kizil Cave 123 and it is also shown making offerings. Since they are images with emanated Buddhas, an independent section will be devoted to them in chapter IV.

31 Caves 47, 107B, 117, 180, 189, 190 and 197. The later date of the motif can be testified by the painting in Kizil Cave 117. This cave has been painted three times. The top layer is the thousand-Buddhas motif. See Chao Huashan 晁華山,”Kizil shiku de dongku fenlei yu shiku siyuan de zucheng” 克孜尔石窟的洞窟分類與石窟寺院的組成, in Qiuci Fojiao wenhua lunji (Urumchi: Xinjiang meishu sheying chubanshe, 1993), 161-200; Li Chongfeng, Zhongyin fujiao shikusi bijiao yanjiu 中印佛教石窟寺比較研究(Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2003).154.
robe down from both shoulders. The old conventions at Kucha are the covering mode and the open mode only. These new elements were common in Buddhist art from the Southern Route and central China.  

The Buddha images with small Buddhas in the aura belong to the standing Buddha type (except the painting of the “wheel of life” in Kizil Cave 175). Having introduced the three schemes, I will describe the other motifs in the caves in the following.

Kizil Cave 17 manifests the first scheme of the Buddhist assemblies. As shown in the layout in Fig.B.1, in the main hall, panels of Buddhist assemblies are painted on the side walls (no.1), jātaka stories are depicted in the lozenge-shaped mountain patterns on the ceiling (no.2), and Maitreya sitting in Tūṣā is shown on the lunette above the entrance on the front wall (no.3). The main shrine images and front walls paintings are all damaged. In the two side corridors, rows of stūpas are depicted beside the two dharmaḥatv Buddha figures (nos. 9, 10, and 11). In the back corridor, an image of the reclining Buddha is on the back wall (no.6), while the painting on the back of the central pillar is largely damaged (no.8).

Kizil Cave 47 is a colossal Buddha cave with its main hall open. No paintings or sculptures in the main hall survive. As shown in Fig.B. 4, the ground plan and section of the cave, there are low platforms along the two side walls for sculptures. Based upon the number of holes and marks remained on the walls, there were originally seven standing sculptures on each side (no. 1). Paintings in the corridors and back chamber show traces of repaint and lack of coherent design.  

The Vyāghrī jātaka, the Buddha sacrificing himself for a hungry tigress in one of his previous incarnations, is depicted on the wall of the left corridor (no. 3). Jātakas

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32 Su Bai suggests Buddhist centers on the Southern Route, such as Khotan, as the primary source for the new motifs at Kucha. Su Bai, “Kizil bufen dongku jieduan huafen,” 20, ft. 19.

33 Xinjiang qiuci shiku yanjiusuo, Kizil shiku neirong zonglu, 58.
are usually painted on the ceiling vault in the main hall. This subject appearing at this location is unconventional at Kizil. Life-sized standing Buddha images are scattered on the wall of the right corridor (no. 4) and the back of the central pillar. A niche appears on the back and on both sides of the central pillar. None of the sculptures in the niches are extant.

As described before, the extant paintings on the wall level in Kizil Cave 123 are all standing Buddhas (Fig.B.7). The upper part of the front wall from the left to the right depicts merchants Trapiṣa and Bhallika offering food to the Buddha, the First Sermon at Sarnāth, and Brahmā and Śakra/Indra asking the Buddha to preach the Dharma (Fig.B.27). The lower part is depicted with two standing Buddhas with small Buddhas in annular-type aura. The main hall is crowned with a dome ceiling, in which eight figures of standing Buddhas and bodhisattvas alternate with each other (no.2). Each of the walls of the side corridors is depicted with three large standing Buddha figures (nos.1, 6-8, 10-12, and 15). The one near the entrance in the right corridor has small Buddhas in the aura (no.12). The two standing Buddhas on the back of the central-pillar are said to also have small Buddhas in the aura.34 Paintings on the side of the central-pillar and the back wall did not survive.

The paintings in Kizil Cave 160 have been completely damaged by smoke. Shown in the drawing in Fig.B.14, the upper part of the side walls there are rows of niches. The cave also has a dome ceiling. Dome ceilings are usually for standing figures or decorative patterns, not the jātakas and avadānas. Paintings on the sides of the central pillar might be jātakas. In any case, this cave does not belong to the first scheme.

Kizil Cave 175 belongs to the first scheme. As illustrated in Fig. 4.15, the subject at the main niche (no.1) is “Indra’s visit.” The side walls in the main hall are shown the Buddhist

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assemblies (no. 2, 3). The ceiling vault is covered with jātakas and avadānas (no. 4). Walls of the corridors have three small niches on each side. The main sculptures of these niches did not survive and most of the subjects are unidentifiable. Niche No. 11 is shown “defeating Mara.” Niche No. 13 shows paintings of Kucheon devotee figures on the side of central image. There are jātakas depicted below the niches. The left wall of the central pillar is depicted with a row of eight monks and four heavenly Kings. The painting on the back of the central pillar is dividing the relics and cremation (no.15). The subject on the back wall is parinirvāṇa (no.10).

With fifteen standing Buddhas on all of the walls, Taitai’er Cave 16 typifies the second scheme. The rest of the paintings in the cave are mainly on the central pillar and the ceiling. Shown in the drawing (Fig. 4.17), each side of the central pillar has a large niche. On both the front and the back side, there are five small niches around the large central niche. On the left side of the central pillar, besides the niche, there are paintings of a standing Buddha and a reclining Buddha. On the right side, a reclining Buddha is painted below the niche and a stūpa is painted on the right side of the niche. None of the sculptures in the niches have survived. The ceiling is flat and decorated with lotus medallions.

Mazhabaha Cave 12 also belongs to the second scheme (Fig. 4.23). A standing Buddha with small Buddhas in the aura is depicted on each side wall of the main hall (no. 2, 3) and the central niche (no.1). In terms of other paintings, the ceiling vault in the main hall is covered with avadāna stories in the lozenge-shaped panels mountain. All the three walls of the three corridors are depicted with life-sized standing Buddha images, with three on each wall (nos.4-12).
In Simsim Cave 45 (Fig.B.25), standing Buddha images appear at the main niche and the side corridors. In the main hall, the *avadāna* stories are depicted in the lozenge-shaped mountains on the ceiling. The subject on the side walls is the Buddhist assembly with a seated Buddha in the center. Each side of the four walls of the side corridors is occupied with a standing Buddha image. In the back corridor, the *prinirvāṇa* is shown on the back wall and the dividing of the relics is depicted on the back of the central pillar.

To conclude, only Kizil Cave 17 belongs to the traditional scheme: Buddhist assemblies. In this cave, the standing Buddha is a single image in the side corridor. And most of the rest of the cave belong to second scheme: standing Buddha. In Simsim Cave 45 and Kizil Cave 160, it extends to the main niche. In Kizil 123 and Taitai’er Cave 16, it also appears in the main hall and the back chamber.

**Cave Grouping and Location**

Caves at Kizil usually appear in groups. There are only a limited number of caves that were excavated in isolation. Caves in the same group are unified with the same façade architecture, ante-chamber or the passage way. Chao Huashan first discovered some cave groups. Vignato conducted a thorough study on grouping. He identified two main types of cave groups. Type I consists of one or more square caves and one or more residential caves. Around 80 caves belong to this type. Type II consists of one or more central-pillar caves. Around 100 caves belong to this category. Interestingly, among the caves with the small Buddha images in the aura, only Kizil Cave 17 is in a group.

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Vignato also discovered that the 335 caves at the site can be divided into seven areas (Fig.B.28). Caves in one area share similar features and differ noticeably from caves in other areas. The caves with representations of emanated Buddhas, Kizil Cave 17, 47, 123, 160, and 175, appear mostly in different areas. The development of cave groups is the history of the site, an import background from which emanated Buddha images occurred. The following is summed up from Vignato’s discovery on cave grouping at Kizil:  

The earliest caves excavated at Kizil (90-11 to 90-24) appear in Area 1 (Kizil Caves 71-85). They are all located close to the ground and usually appear in Type I groupings. No central-pillar caves are found in this area. There are also no paintings or sculptures in these earliest caves.

Area 2 (Kizil Caves 44-77) was initially used for storage caves. Monastic caves (such as Cave 47) were added later.

Caves in Area 3 (Kizil Caves 127-156) are all in the Type I groupings and there are no central-pillar caves among them. Almost none of the paintings are extant. The painting from cave 149a, now in Berlin, belongs to the German scholars’ first style. It is the earliest painting style at Kucha and can be recognized by the warm color scheme and subtle modeling.

Area 4 (Kizil Caves 1-43) was constructed throughout most of the periods that the site was active. The typical grouping in this area is Type II: one central-pillar cave together with one square cave and one residential cave. Cave 17 is in one of such groups.

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37 German scholars (Grüwedel, Von Le Coq, and Waldschmidt) first established a chronology of Buddhist paintings from the East Central Asia. Three paintings styles are found at Kucha, two of which are applicable to Kizil. I will discuss this in the next section on dating.
Area 5 (Kizil Caves 158-201) is located on higher part of the cliff above the caves in Area 3. Half of the central-pillar caves appear in this one area. They are in various kinds of Type II groupings. Cave 175 is located in the area and in the group of five central-pillar caves. Paintings here belong to the German scholars’ second style, which is characterized by the blue color scheme.

Area 6 is located inside the valley far from the other Areas. Caves in the area appear on high cliffs facing south. They are mostly square caves and residential caves in a variety of grouping types. The square caves are often painted. Some subjects are unique and do not occur in other areas.

Area 7 (Kizil Caves 220-229) is located at the back of the mountains, far from the center of the site. The cave groups in the area are centered with square caves (Kizil Caves 209-215), but they are surrounded with central-pillar caves that appear in the periphery.

Cave excavation started in Area 1 before the third century. As mapped out in Fig.B.29, from the fourth and the early fifth centuries, activity was focused on Areas 3 and 4. The fifth to the sixth centuries witnessed a growth in excavation in all the Areas. Both Areas 6 and 7 were developed later than the other Areas.

Overall, the central-pillar caves are mainly located in Areas 4 and 5, while a few were added in Area 2. These are the Areas where the caves with emanated Buddha images are evenly distributed. In the following, I list the grouping information and location of the relevant caves.

Cave 17 is located in Area 4 and grouped with Caves 14-19 (Fig.B.30). According to Vignato, Cave 15 (a living cave), Cave 16 (a square cave), and Cave 17 (a central-pillar cave)

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38 1.) a square cave and a living cave, 2.) two central-pillar caves, and 3.) five central-pillar caves from the later phase of the site.
are the original core of this group and date from the fourth to early fifth centuries. Caves 18 and 19 (both living caves) are carved later during the fifth and sixth centuries, and Cave 14 (a painted square cave) was added even later during the seventh and eighth centuries.\(^{39}\)

Kizil Cave 123 is located in an area relatively isolated from most of the other caves. It shows no evidence of grouping. The few nearby caves are all in Type I groupings.\(^{40}\) Cave 123 is the only central-pillar cave here. According to Vignato’s study, it was later added to the area and can be dated to his Phase IV, 530-750 C.E.\(^{41}\)

Cave 47 is a unique colossal Buddha cave and not grouped with other caves as most normal sized caves. It was excavated later in Area 2, an area used to be small storage caves.\(^{42}\)

Cave 160 is located in Area 5, a place with intensive caves in Type II grouping. However, it does not seem to be grouped with any nearby caves.

Cave 175 is also in Area 5. It appears in a group of five central-pillar caves from 175-180 (Fig.B.31). Caves 178 and 179 are the original core of this group.\(^{43}\)

To sum up, caves with emanated Buddha images are usually the sole cave with this particular iconography in one area or at a small site.\(^{44}\) At Kizil, all these caves are spread out quite evenly throughout the site and seem to be the highlight in each area. Except Cave 17, Cave 12, \(^{39}\) Vignato, *Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu*, 67-72.

\(^{40}\) Near Cave 123, Cave 120 (spare cave) and 121 (residential cave) form a group. Cave 124 (square cave) and 125 (living cave) are also connected to one another. The four caves can all be dated to the fifth and sixth centuries. Vignato, *Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu*, 42.

\(^{41}\) Vignato, *Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu*, 55.

\(^{42}\) Vignato, *Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu*, 55-56.

\(^{43}\) Vignato, *Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu*, 50.

\(^{44}\) For caves from sites other than Kizil, only Taitai’er Cave 16 appears in a group. It is paired with Cave 15, a residential cave (Fig.B.32). Only one type of grouping appears at the Taitai’er site: a central-pillar cave with one (or two) living cave. At the Mazhabaha site, the typical grouping consists of a longitudinal square cave and a living cave, all of which have no paintings. Only three caves at the site are painted with images. Since it is a central-pillar cave with paintings, Mazhabaha Cave 12 stands out at this site. Grouping at the Simsim site is complex. The façades of the caves at the site are often too damaged to allow a systematical study of cave grouping. Nonetheless, shown in Map 4, Simsim Cave 45 is isolated and far from other caves at the site. Vignato, *Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu*, 86.
the other three caves seem to be added later and not grouped with other caves. The question is how late were these caves added? The nature of these caves will be further revealed if we know the chronology of the site and the dates of these images.

**Chronology and Dating**

Chronology has been the central issue in the study of Buddhist art at Kizil for almost a century. Since none of the caves is concretely dated, scholars have relied on the painting styles, inscriptions, paleography of the script, typology of the caves structures and the C\textsuperscript{14} tests to date the caves. The results from different scholars are not consistent. I will briefly review the previous studies and discuss the possible date of the images under discussion.

**Previous Studies on Chronology**

Alfred Grünwedel and A. Von Le Coq first distinguished two styles of Kizil paintings in the early twentieth century: Style I, which is found in a few square caves, usually features dark cinnabar backgrounds. It is believed to be derived from the Gandhāra style. Style II, which includes the majority of the paintings, is characterized by strong blue and green colors and appears primarily in the central-pillar caves. This style has been associated with the Sassanian tradition.\textsuperscript{45} Based upon paleographic study, the Turkestan-Brāhmīn script and a few inscriptions found in the caves, Le Coq and Waldschmidt attributed Style I to the sixth century.

\textsuperscript{45} Albert Grünwedel first classifies paintings from Xinjiang into five styles, two of which can be found at Kizil. The first style appears mainly in the square caves (76, 77, 83, 84, 92, 149A, 167, 207, and 212) and the second appears in the central-pillar caves (4, 7, 8, 17, 38, 58, 63, 67, 80, 114, 123, 193, 198, 205, 206, 219, and 224). He dates the Kizil caves from the mid-fourth to eighth centuries. See Albert Grünwedel, *Altbuddhistische Kultstätten in Chinesisch Turkestan* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1912), 5-6, 42-43; Grünwedel, *AltKutscha*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Reimer, 1920), 1: 17, 32. A. Von Le Coq accepts Grünwedel’s stylistic analysis but dates the early phase to the six and seventh centuries and the late phase to the first half of the eighth century. See Von Le Coq and E. Waldschmidt, *Buddhistische Spätantike in Mittelasien*. 7 vols. (Berlin: Reimer, 1923-1933), 3: 21-23, 7: 27-29.
century and Style II to the seventh century. That is:

- **Style I**: ca. 500 C.E.
- **Style II**: 500-600 C.E. (Kizil Caves 67, 198, 199, 110, and 129)
  - 600-650 C.E. (Kizil Caves 114, 38, 205, 224, 7, 206, 8, 219, 3, 4, 63, 58, 178, 175, and 181)
  - 650~ C.E. (Kizil Caves 123, 186, and 184)

Most western scholars adhere to the traditional German dating with slight variations. The problem with this dating becomes evident when we compare the Kizil paintings to those in Dunhuang caves. Dunhuang is another renowned Buddhist cave site in China and its chronology and date are more certain. Some stylistic features of the Northern Liang (421-439 C.E.) caves of the early fifth century at Dunhuang resemble and are probably even indebted to those from Kizil. The Kizil caves should therefore be dated earlier. Alexander Soper and Benjamin Rowland have pointed out this problem. Based on stylistic analysis, they concluded that the Kizil caves, whether Style I or II, can be dated earlier to the late fourth to sixth centuries. There are also questions regarding the time frame of the two styles and whether they developed simultaneously or sequentially. However, few scholars have accepted these opinions or give an early date to Kizil.

With better access to the caves and decades of scientific research, Chinese archaeologists made further contributions to the chronology and dating of the Kizil caves. Among them, Su

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Bai’s theory has become the most influential. Based on a typological analysis of the structure and painting of the caves, with reference to C\textsuperscript{14} testing, Su Bai established a three-phased chronology started from the fourth century:

- **Phase I:** 310 ± 80 -- 350 ± 60 C.E.
- **Phase II:** 395 ± 65 -- 465 ± 65 C.E.
- **Phase III:** 545 ± 75 -- 685 ± 65 C.E.

The standing Buddha motif appears in Phase III.

Besides the Chinese institutes, German scholars also conducted the C\textsuperscript{14} test on the Kizil paintings in the collection from the Museum of Indian Art in Berlin. Based on the test results, Marianne Yaldiz regrouped the Kizil paintings into four phases and dated them from the third to the eighth centuries. These C\textsuperscript{14} tests yield a much wider time span of the site than the traditional German dating and propose an early date for some of the caves. However, the C\textsuperscript{14} testing alone is not accurate and consistent enough to date a cave.

Recently, in his comprehensive study of central-pillar caves, Li Chongfeng incorporated the datable inscriptions from Cave 69 and 205 and the history of Kucha in addition to

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52 Group I: first half of the third century (Kizil Cave 13)
- Group II: mid fourth- mid fifth centuries (Kizil Caves 224, 206, 114, 219, 171, 207, 38, 123, and 7)
- Group III: fifth-sixth centuries (Kizil Caves 207, 8, and 114)
- Group IV: seventh century (Kizil Caves 198, 199, 178, and 8)
The tests were conducted by the Rathgen Forschungslabor and Leibniz-Labor für Altersbestimmung und Isotopenforschung.

Yaldiz, Marianne. “The Traditional German Chronology of the Murals of Kizil, Xinjiang, in the Light of Recent C\textsuperscript{14} – Analysis.” Conference presentation at International Symposium on Art and Religion of Xinjiang 新疆的藝術與宗教國際研討會, Hong Kong University, Dec.7-8, 2000.
typology studies and $^{14}C$ tests. He classified central-pillar caves at Kizil into four phases:

Phase I: end third –mid fourth centuries (Caves 13, 7, 38, and 32)
Phase II: mid fourth –end fifth centuries (Caves 172, 171, 4, 98, 17, 114, 87, 91, 80, 155, 101, 34, 219, 196, 104, and 195.)
Phase III: end fifth –mid seventh centuries (Cave 58, 63, 175, 99, 193, 192, 179, 178, 205, 224, 198, 159, 206, 207, 100, 163, 160, 123, 199, 69, and Now Cave 1.)
Phase IV: Mid seventh –late eighth centuries (Cave 176, 97, 126, 43, 186, 184, 8, 197, 180, 27, 227, 107A, 107B, 201, 181, and 23.)

The standing Buddha images emerged in his Phase III, which ended in 647, the year when the Chinese arrived. The zenith of Kizil history took place during Phase III and the cave paintings of this Phase display a greater variety of motifs in this period. The last phase ends in 790 C.E., when the Tibetans finally defeated the Chinese government (called Anxi) in the area.

Both Su Bai and Li Chongfeng did not include all of the caves at Kizil. Giuseppe Vignato conducted a full-ranging archaeological survey that includes all the cave types except meditation caves. In his 2004 dissertation, he classified the caves into four phases. By including a group of newly discovered caves, he dated the first phase of Kizil to the third century. The following are the dates of his four phases:

Phase I: The third century
Phase II: The fourth century and the early fifth century
Phase III: The fifth and sixth centuries
Phase IV: The seventh and eighth centuries

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53 Li Chongfeng 李崇峰, Zhongyin fojiao shikusi bijiao yanjiu 中印佛教石窟寺比較研究 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2003), 148-176.


55 Vignato, Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu, 74-80.
According to Vignato, the standing Buddhas were a new motif that came to be popular during the last phase after 530 C.E. However, Phase IV consists of 43 central-pillar caves, more than two thirds of the total of the 60 central-pillared caves at the site. This Phase spans two centuries and includes both the flourishing and declining periods. His study does not provide a close date for the emanated Buddha images.

The following are dates given by scholars to individual caves under discussion:

Kizil Cave 17 shows an early date in different C\textsuperscript{14} tests. The test from the Museum für Indische Kust at Berlin dates this Cave to 237-321 C.E.\textsuperscript{58} The test by Archaeology department of the Beijing University dates to 465±65 C.E.\textsuperscript{59} Scholars all agree that the cave dates to a relatively early period in their chronologies despite differing opinions on the absolute date. Waldschmidt attributes the cave to the early seventh century.\textsuperscript{60} Su Bai dates this cave to the second phase, 395±65-465±65 C.E.\textsuperscript{61} Li Chongfeng dates it to his Phase II from the mid fourth to end fifth centuries.\textsuperscript{62} Vignato classifies the cave into Phase II, 300-450 C.E.\textsuperscript{63}

Angela Howard also provides her insight on the date of the dharmadhātu Buddha images in the cave based on stylistic analysis. The dharmadhātu Buddha image in Dunhuang Cave 428 (Fig.B.33) is known for its close resemblance to its Kizil counterpart in both format and

\textsuperscript{56} Vignato, \textit{Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu}, 20.
\textsuperscript{57} Vignato, \textit{Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu}, 19.
\textsuperscript{58} Vignato, \textit{Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu}, 61.
\textsuperscript{59} Su Bai, “Kizil bufen dongku jieduan huafen,” 10-23.
\textsuperscript{60} Waldschmidt, \textit{Buddhistsche Spätantike in Mittelasien} (1933),7: 27-29.
\textsuperscript{61} Su Bai, “Kizil bufen dongku jieduan huafen,” 10-23.
\textsuperscript{62} Li Chongfeng, \textit{Zhongyin fojiao shikusi bijiao yanjiu}, 151, 176.
\textsuperscript{63} Vignato, \textit{Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu}, 52.
style. The latter is probably the prototype for the former. Dunhuang Cave 428 is dated to the Northern Zhou (557-581 C.E.) period based on the study of the donor’s inscription found in the cave. The Kizil dharmadhātu Buddha images are therefore unlikely to be later than 550 C.E. Howard believes that the iconographic feature of showing Buddha emanations in the aura in these two Kizil paintings are derived from the late Gandhāra formula. Taking the date of the Gandhāra images into consideration, she then dates the Kizil representations to “no later than 450 C.E.”

For Kizil Cave 123, the C¹⁴ test by the Museum für Indische Kust at Berlin dates it to 431-533 C.E. The C¹⁴ test performed by the Chinese Social Science Academy dates the cave to 540-670 C.E. Waldschmidt attributes this cave to the third phase of the second style, 650-700 C.E. Li Chongfeng dates the cave to his Phase III, from the end of the fifth to the mid-seventh centuries. In Vignato’s study, it belongs to Phase IV, 530-750 C.E.

For Kizil Cave 160, Yan Wenru dates the cave to his Phase IV, the last period of the site, which is after the seventh century. Li Chongfeng dates the cave to his Phase III, from the

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⁶⁴ Lee Yu-min 李玉珉, “Dunhuang 428 ku xintuxiang yuanliu kao”敦煌四二八窟新图像源流考, Ku-kung hsueshu chik’an 故宮學術季刊 10, no.4, (Summer 1993): 1-2; For the date of the cave based on typology study, see Fan Jinshi, Ma Shichang, and Guan Youhui 樊錦詩, 馬世長, 關友惠, “Dunhuang Mogaoku Beichao dongku de fenqi”敦煌莫高窟北朝洞窟的分期, in Zhongguo shiku: Dunhuang Mogaoku I (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1981), 194-197.

⁶⁵ Howard, The Imagery of the Cosmological Buddha, 56-57.

⁶⁶ Vignato, Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu, 60. The date from Chinese Social Science Academy is comprised in the Chinese Social Science Academy Archaeology Institute 中国社会科学院考古研究所, Zhongguo kaoguxue zhong tan shi xian dai jiu chuang shi jie 中国考古学中碳十四年代数据集. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1992. The tests by Berlin have not been published completely.

⁶⁷ Waldschmidt, Buddhistsche Spätantike in Mittelasien (1933), 7: 27-29.

⁶⁸ Vignato, Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu, 55.

end of the fifth to the mid-seventh centuries. Vignato classifies it to Phase IV, 530-750 C.E.  

Cave 47 was excavated relatively early. The result of the C\textsuperscript{14} test from Beijing University dates the cave to 350±65 C.E. Su Bai dates the cave to Phase I, 310±80-350±60 C.E. Vignato classifies the cave as his Phase II, 300-450 C.E. However, a couple of the characteristics of the cave structure point to a later date. According to Li Chongfeng, using a low platform in the main hall and adding niches on the other sides of the central pillar are methods used during later periods at Kizil. These features appear in his Phase III, end of the fifth to middle of the seventh centuries. In addition, the murals in the cave have been repainted over the time, which complicates the date of the cave. The painting associated with the \textit{parinirvāṇa} is likely the result of one of these refurbishments.  

For Kizil Cave 175, the C\textsuperscript{14} test from the Museum für Indische Kust dates the cave to 543-635 C.E. Waldschmidt attributes the cave to 600-650 C.E. Li Chongfeng attributes it to his Phase III, 600-647 C.E. Vignato dates it to Phase IV, 530-750 C.E.

\begin{itemize}
\item Li Chongfeng, \textit{Zhongyin fojiao shikusi bijiao yanjiu}, 151, 176.
\item Vignato, \textit{Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu}, 55, 60.
\item Su Bai, “Kizil bufen dongku jieduan huafen,” 10-23.
\item Su Bai, “Kizil bufen dongku jieduan huafen,” 10-23.
\item Vignato, \textit{Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu}, 52.
\item Vignato, \textit{Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu}, 37.
\item Vignato, \textit{Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu}, 60.
\item Le Coq and Waldschmidt, \textit{Buddhistische Spätantike in Mittelasien} (1933), 7: 27-29.
\item Li Chongfeng, \textit{Zhongyin fojiao shikusi bijiao yanjiu}, 151, 176.
\item Vignato, \textit{Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu}, 55, 60.
\end{itemize}
Overall, despite the difference on the actual dates, scholars generally agree upon an early date for Cave 17 (ca. the fifth century) and date the rest of the caves a later phase (the sixth-eighth centuries). Although these studies gave a time range for the caves, they do not directly address the dating for the paintings of the standing/emanated Buddhas. In addition, the paintings in Cave 47 were done at a later date after the cave was excavated. Therefore, it also demands further study.

**The Date of the Standing Buddha Images as the Major Motif**

Fortunately, one of the only two datable inscriptions on the Kizil cave paintings appears in Kizil Cave 69, the main chamber of which is painted with the standing Buddha images. In this section, I will discuss the inscription, the decline of the site and other datable motif, in order to narrow down the possible date of the paintings with emanated Buddhas.

In Kizil Cave 69, the first sermon is depicted on the lunette above the entrance. This painting includes images of a king and queen of Kucha. In the halo of the king (Fig.B.34), there is a line of Brāhmī script in Tocharian language claiming that the cave temple was constructed for the deceased King Suvarṇapuṣpa (金花王) by his son. The reign of King Suvarṇapuṣpa took place during the first quarter of the seventh century, and all his three sons died in 647 C.E. Therefore, Cave 69 can be dated to 625-647 C.E.\(^{81}\)

In the main hall of this cave, there is a low platform for sculptures placed along the side wall. Unfortunately, the sculptures are no longer extant. Yet from the holes and the marks of paints on the wall, we can tell that originally there were four life-sized standing figures on each side. The background painting shows flowers, gems, Vajrapāṇi and devotee dressed in

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the local Central Asian costume (Fig.B.35). Vajrapāṇi is usually depicted as attending to the Buddha. Therefore, the sculptures are probably Buddhas, instead of bodhisattvas or other types of figures. In addition to the sculptures, the side wall is also adorned with a painting of a standing Buddha at the inner end. The one on the left wall depicts Megha offering flowers to Dīpānkarē Buddha. The one on the right wall also shows flower offering; however, the subject is unidentified. Each corridor wall also shows a standing Buddha figure surrounded by celestial beings and monks. These paintings are partially damaged and the subjects are unidentifiable. The back wall is depicted with the reclining Buddha. In the development of the iconographic plan of central-pillar caves, Cave 69 exemplifies the second scheme (standing Buddhas). Therefore, this cave is an important reference to the date of when the expansion of the standing Buddha images from the corridors to the main hall occurred.

In the painting of the parinirvāṇa on the back wall, the border of the halo and the aura of the Buddha image are decorated with a row of flying geese holding a wreath by the beak (Fig.B.36). This is a very distinctive motif and probably originated from the Sassanian culture. Decorative patterns are usually very significant for dating. The sudden appearance of this pattern in Buddhist caves at Kucha during 625-647 C.E. is not a coincidence. Sassanian motifs were also used in textiles. In Xinjiang, Sassanian motifs also appeared on silks from the seventh century.82 As aforementioned, the same pattern of “flying geese holding a wreath” is found in other two caves at Kizil as well, all of which have emanated Buddha images: 47 and 123.83 It is likely that the paintings in the three caves belong to the same time frame. In both Cave 69 and 47, the motif appears in conjunction with the reclining Buddha

83 The motif of the “flying geese holding the wreath” can also be found at Tumshuk (Toumchouq), another Buddhist site on the Northern Route. Louis Hambis, M. Hallade, and M. Paul-David, Tumchouq (Mission Paul Pelliot, Documents archéologiques) 2 vols. (Paris: Librairie Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1961-1964), 26, pl. XVII.
image. Cave 69 was patronized by a son of King Suvarṇapuṣpa. Paintings in Cave 123 are among the best quality at the site. Cave 47 is the largest cave at Kizil. It would not be surprising if the three were related by royal patrons or workshop.

Unfortunately, paintings in Kizil Cave 160 are damaged. However, even with its limited remains, Cave 160 still shares several similar features with Kizil Cave 123. As rare and unconventional caves at the site, both of them have the copula ceiling and are not grouped with other caves. They have the only web-type of depictions at Kizil. The two caves may have been excavated during the same period in the same artistic tradition.

The history of the Kizil site also supports the seventh century date. According to historians’ studies, the Kizil site is located directly on a primary ancient transport route along the Weigan River valley and the Qeu’erdage Mountain range. Beginning in the seventh century, the Tibetans and the western Turks (Tujishi 突騎施) mounted vigorous resistance to Tang rule. The Tibetans came through Khotan. The Tujishi spilled through the passes of Tianshan. They used to move via the Muzart River to invade Anxi, the Chinese government at Kucha. Thus, Kizil became a strategic western entrance for the Chinese government at the Kucha capital and an important site for military occupation. These wars could be a direct reason for the decline of the Kizil site.84

Archaeological evidence shows that Kizil may have been under military occupation by the eighth century. In the early eighteenth century, a broken stele was found at Kizil. The stele, dated to 715, commemorates a Chinese victory of a battle in which they defeated the

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Tibetans.\textsuperscript{85} The Kizil site where the stele was found is far from the downtown and or the major residential areas. Such a stele would not have been set up there unless the location was of military significance. In 1928, Huang Wenbi found several fragments of Chinese military documents in Kizil Caves 18 and 105 (monk’s residential caves). They are datable to 724 C.E.\textsuperscript{86} Today, ruins of a sentry station are still extant on top of the highest peak at the valley mouth at Kizil. It was probably built during Tang.\textsuperscript{87} In addition, a number of inscriptions written by Chinese visitors can be found on the walls of some of the Kizil caves from the early to late eighth centuries.\textsuperscript{88} These are all tourist inscription. They demonstrate that some of the caves at the site were already abandoned by the eighth century.

The decline of Kizil may have started even before the Chinese military occupation of the early eighth century. Shortly after emperor Gaozong began his reign (650 C.E.), the Tibetans first invaded the Kucha area until the Tang re-established its authority in 658 C.E.\textsuperscript{89} Then the Tibetan occupied Kucha again for as long as 22 years from 670 to 693 C.E.\textsuperscript{90}


\textsuperscript{86} Huang Wenbi 黃文弼, Tarim pendi kaogu lun 塔里木盆地考古論 (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 1957), 36, 37.

\textsuperscript{87} Chao Huashan, “Kizil shiku de dongku fenlei yu shiku siyuan de zucheng,” 39, It 1; Wu Zhuo, “On the Rise and Decline of the Kizil caves,” 207. Huang Wenbi dates it to the Qing Dyanisty. Huang Wenbi, Mengxin kàocha riji (Beijing: wenwu chubanshe, 1990), 348.

\textsuperscript{88} In Kizil Cave 105, which is a residential cave, there is a visitor’s poem in Chinese inscribed on the wall that is dated to 726 C.E. The two inscriptions in Caves 220 and 222 (square caves) are dated to 754 C.E. One inscription in Cave 220 is dated to 766-779 C.E. The one in Cave 222 is dated to 794 C.E. Chao Huashan, “Kizil shiku de dongku fenlei yu shiku siyuan de zucheng,” 39-42.

\textsuperscript{89} Liu Xu, Jiu Tang shu 189: 5304.

\textsuperscript{90} Three caves at Kizil, Cave 93, 95 and 131, are extensively inscribed with images of goats, horses, camels, birds and human figures on the wall. Su Bai points out that they resemble the cliff carvings throughout western Tibet and the Jiayuguan area of Gansu province in both style and subject matter and therefore attributes them to Tibetan painting of the ninth century. Wu Zhuo discovered some unidentifiable writing in Cave 131, which looks like an archaic form of Tibet. He suggests that these traces could be dated to the Tibetan occupation in the late seventh century, which then would be the date of the site’s decline. Su Bai, “Diaocha Xinjiang fojiao yij yiyingyu zhuo de jige wen” 調查新疆佛教遺跡應予注意的幾個問題, Xinjiang shixue no.1 (1980), 31; Wu Zhuo 吳焯, “Kizil shiku kehua tuhua de nei rong, zhuo zhe he shidai” 克孜爾石窟刻畫圖畫的內容與時期, 402.
In any case, the wars and military occupation seem to have greatly affected the rise and fall of Kizil. Images of the standing Buddhas came to be the major motif at Kizil before its decline. Some of the Buddha images with emanated Buddhas are among the best paintings at Kizil and still have the rich blue color scheme (the German scholars’ Style II). The stunning saturated blue color is believed to be the result of imported mineral pigments from the Near East. As the trading route was blocked by the Turks, the Buddhist cave paintings after the seventh century in Central Asia, including Turfan, were dominated with earthy red colors. In addition, as I discussed in the previous chapter, the life-sized standing Buddha images are dominant in Khotan. The sudden prevalence of the motif in Kucha may have come from Khotan. That is to say, the standing Buddha motif is more likely to have occurred in Kucha before the route between the two areas was interrupted by the Tibetans. Taking all of these into consideration, I would suggest that the date of Buddha images with emanated Buddhas in the aura is the seventh century, more likely the mid-seventh century (625-670 C.E.).

Other sites at Kucha yield no datable material and have not been well studied. Paintings from the other sites generally show the same iconographic program seen at Kizil, mainly the scheme I and scheme II. (There is almost no scheme III except Kumtura). Scholars usually date them by comparing them with Kizil caves. The representations of emanated Buddhas in Taitai’er Cave 16, Mazhabaha Cave 12, and Simsim Cave 45 resemble the annular-type of images in Kizil Caves 123 and 47. Since the Kizil paintings are datable to the seventh century, the date of the Taitai’er paintings can be approximated by comparing them with Kizil. 

91 Previously, Xu Wanyin conducted a brief survey of the Taitai’er site. She classified the Taitai’er caves into three phases and attributed Taitai’er Cave 16 to Phase III. This is equivalent to the last phase of Kizil which is dated to the seventh century. Yan Wenru briefly touched upon the date of some caves at Simsim. Yan paralleled Simsim Cave 45 to Phase III in his chronology of the Kizil caves, which dates them from the Southern Dynasties (420-589 C.E.) to the Sui (581-618 C.E.). Xu Wanyin, "Taitai’er shiku tacha ji" 台台尔石窟踏察记, in Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku I (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1989), 223-235; Yan Wenru, "Xinjiang Tianshan yi nan de shiku," 41-59.
century, those paintings with this iconography at other sites may be from the seventh century
as well.

At Kucha, about thirty Buddha images in eight caves are depicted with emanated Buddhas in their halos and auras. Compared with over a hundred painted caves, eight is a small number. The motif must have possessed a special value to glorify the Buddha. For a special iconography from only one period in a small area, thirty is not a small number. The appearance of this group of paintings seems to be an acceptable part of Kucha Buddhism. To put these images in the original context of the iconographic program of the cave paintings and the history of the cave site, we can see:

1. The images with the emanated Buddhas appeared at Kucha as part of the wave of the standing Buddha scheme, gradually sweeping away the traditional narrative depiction of the historical Buddha. The new theme represents the bhavana Buddha--the Buddha is shown standing on the celestial lotus flower and is much larger than the attendant figures in a hierarchic scale. The attendant figures are shown performing act of worship. Images of Kuchean devotees also appear in conjunction with these images.

2. A variety types of caves appeared at Kucha and they usually form groups. Primarily, there are two types of grouping, Type I, with square cave with a residential cave, and Type II, with central-pillar cave with other types of caves. Caves in different Areas at Kizil and different small sites at Kucha emphasize one type of grouping. Kizil Caves 17 and 175 appear in a group. Caves 47, 123, and 160 are all in isolation and seem to be added in a late phase of the site. The isolated caves perhaps are the result of the devotion from the patron more than the need of expansion of monastic space. The location of these five caves probably,
to some extent, represents their position in Kucha Buddhism. In part, they were accepted in the Kizil Buddhist community; in part, they were outburst only in the periphery area.

3. Images of emanated Buddhas are all depicted in the central-pillar caves and most in the traditional Kucha style. At Kizil, Cave 17 can be dated to the fifth century, while the others probably date to the seventh century.

4. Representations of emanated Buddhas at Kucha can be divided into two types: annular-type and web-type. The counterparts of them can be found in Khotan. From a very early time (1982), Su Bai has pointed out that the larger Kaśmīr area and the kingdoms along the Southern Route may have been the source for the new motifs at Kizil—standing Buddhas, emanated Buddhas in the aura, thousand-Buddhas and dharmadhātu Buddha images.92 Among these Kucha images, the two dharmadhātu Buddha, the web-type paintings in Kizil 123, and Buddha image revealing gati in his aura, are all unique in Buddhist art and also represent important aspects of the emanated Buddhas. Chapter 6 is devoted to studying these images in depth.

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1. Side walls in the main hall: Buddhist teaching assemblies
2. Ceiling in the main hall: jātaka stories
3. Lunette above the entrance: Maitreya in Tusita
4. Near the entrance of the two side corridors: dharmadhātu Buddha images
5. Back wall in the back corridor: parinirvāṇa
6. Left and back walls of the central pillar: mostly damaged
7. Right wall of the central pillar and walls of the side corridors: rows of stūpas

Fig. B.1 Ground Plan, Section, and Elevation of Kizil Cave 17.
After Kizil shiku neirong zonglu, 24.
Fig. B.2 Dharmadhātu Buddha. Left corridor, Kizil Cave 17, Xinjiang, China. Fifth century. Wall painting. Museum für Indische Kunst, Berlin. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku III, fig. 181.
Fig. B.3 Dharmadhātu Buddha. Right corridor in Kizil Cave 17. Xinjiang, China. Fifth century. Wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku I, fig. 55.
1. The side walls in the ante-open chamber: holes for standing images
2. The back wall in the back chamber: parinirvāṇa with emanated Buddhas in the aura
3. The left side corridor: Vyāghrī jātaka
4. The right side corridor: standing Buddha images
The side and back walls of the central pillar: standing Buddha images

Fig.B.4 The Section, Elevation, and Ground plan of Kizil Cave 47. 
After Kizil shiku nerong zonglu, 57.
Fig. B.5 *The Halo and the Aura of the Relining Buddha.*
Fig. B.6 The Halo of the Relining Buddha. Back wall in Kizil 47, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku I, fig. 149.
1. The side walls of the main hall: Standing Buddha with web-typed emanated Buddhas in the aura, one on each wall.
2. Dome ceiling: 8 standing Buddhas and Bodhisattvas alternated with each other.
3. The upper part of the front wall: 3 subjects: merchants offering food to the Buddha, the First Sermon, and Brahmā and Śakra/Indra asking the Buddha to preach the Dharma.
4.5. The front wall: 2 standing Buddhas with annular-typed emanated Buddhas.
6-8, 10-12 Side corridors: standing Buddha images. 6, 7, 8, and 10 are mostly damaged.
12, 13, & 14: standing Buddhas with annular-typed emanated Buddhas. 13 and 14 are mostly damaged.
9. The back wall: no paintings extant
Side walls of the central pillar: no paintings extant.

Fig.B.7 *Ground Plan, Section, and Elevation of the Kizil Cave 123.*
After Xinjiang Qiuci shiku yanjiusuo, *Kizil shiku neirong zonglu*, 152.
Fig.B.8 Standing Buddha. Right side of the front wall, Kizil Cave 123, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting.  
After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku III, fig. 201.
Fig. B.9  *Standing Buddha.* Left side of the front wall, Kizil Cave 123, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. After *Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku III*, fig. 201.
Fig.B.10 Standing Buddha. Right side corridor, Kizil Cave 123, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. After Henshū Chūgoku Bijutsu Kenkyūjo eds., Shinkō no hekiga, vol.1, fig. 71.
Fig.B.11 Standing Buddha. Right wall in the main chamber, Kizil Cave 123, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku III, fig.200.
Fig. B.12 Drawing of the Detail of Right Side Wall Painting of Kizil Cave 123. After Grünwedel, *Altbuddhistische Kultstätten in Chinesisch Turkestan*, 122, fig. 265.
Fig. B.13 *Standing Buddha*. Left wall of the main chamber, Kizil Cave 123, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting.
After Duan, *Zhongguo Xinjiang bihuang quanqi: Kizil*, vol. 3, 27, fig. 33.
Fig. B.14 *Ground Plan, Section, and Elevation of the Kizil Cave 160.*
After Xinjiang Qiuci shiku yanjiusuo, *Kizil shiku neirong zonglu*, 181.
1. The main shrine: Indra’s visit
2.3. The side walls of the main hall: Buddha’s assemblies
4. The ceiling of the main hall: jātakas and avadānas
7.8.9. The left side corridor: 3 niches and a jātaka (unidentified)
14. The left side wall of the central pillar: a row of 8 monks and 4 heavenly Kings
10. The back wall of the back corridor: parinirvāṇa
15. The back wall of the central pillar: dividing the relics and cremation
11. niche, unidentified
12. niche, defeating Mara
13. niche, with a Kuchean devote and monk
16. A Buddha figure revealing gati in his aura

Fig.B.15 Layout of Kizil Cave 175.
Modified after Kizil shiku nerong zonglu, 195.
Fig. B.16 A *Buddha Showing Realms of Rebirth in His Aura*. 
Right wall of the central pillar. Kizil Cave 175, Xinjiang, China. 
Seventh century. Wall painting. 
*After Zhongguo Xinjiang Bihua quanji II*, pl.146.
Fig. B.17 *Ground Plan and Elevation of Taitai’er 16.* Modified after Li Li, “Small and Medium-sized Caves in the Kucha Region of Xinjiang,” 176, fig. 20.
Fig. B.18 Standing Buddha. Back wall, Taitai’er Cave 16, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. After Zhongguo Xinjiang bihua quanji III, 163, fig.192.
Fig. B.19 *Standing Buddha.* Left wall of back corridor, Taitai’er Cave 16, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku I, fig. 174.
Fig.B.20 Standing Buddha. Back wall of back corridor, Taitai’er Cave 16, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku I, fig. 175.
Fig. B.21 Standing Buddha with Kucheian Devote. Right wall of back corridor, Taitai’er Cave 16, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku I, fig. 176.
Fig.B.22 Drawing of Fig. 2.18.
After Schlingloff, “Mūrdhacchidra,” 115, fig.10.
1. 2. 3. Main shrine and the two side walls of the main hall: standing Buddha with small Buddhas in the aura
4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12. Three corridors: three standing Buddhas on each wall.
13. Ceiling of the main hall: *avadānas*

Fig.B.23 *Layout of the motifs in Mazhabaha Cave 12.*
Author’s drawing.
Fig.B.24 *Simsim Site*.
After Yan Wenru, “Xinjiang Tianshan yi nan de shiku,” 48, fig. 10.
Fig.B.25 Layout of the motifs in Simsim Cave 45. Author’s drawing.
Fig.B.26 *Diagram of the Kizil Central-Pillar Cave.*
Author’s drawing.
Fig.B.27 Front Wall of Kizil Cave 123. Kizil Cave 123, Xinjiang, China. Seventh century. Wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku III, fig. 201.
Fig. 4.28a *Buddhist Caves at Kizil.*
Modified after *Kizil shiku neirong zonglu,* title page.
Area 1. --the earliest caves; --close to the ground, --a square cave and living cave grouping. --no central-pillar caves. --no paintings or sculptures.
Area 2 (Kizil Caves 44-77) --initially for storage caves; --monastic caves were added later.
Area 3 (Kizil Caves 127-156) --square cave and living cave grouping, --no central pillar caves. --Almost no paintings are extant, --first style.
Area 4 (Kizil Caves 1-43) --throughout most of the periods; --The typical grouping in the area is one central-pillar cave with one square cave and one living cave, with more living caves added on in later phases. (Cave 17)
Area 5 (Kizil Caves 158-201) --above caves in Area 3. --Half the central-pillar caves at Kizil appear in this one area. --Three types of grouping occur: 1.) a square cave and a living cave, 2.) two central-pillar caves, and 3.) five central-pillar caves in the late phase of the site (Cave 175). --second style.
Area 6 --far inside the valley. --Most of them are square caves and living caves. The square caves are often painted. --a variety of grouping, --some unique painting subjects.
Area 7 (Kizil 220-229) --the back of the mountains far from the center; --later. --The grouping centered with square caves (209-215) appear in the center of the area, and the grouping centered with central-pillar caves appear in periphery.

Fig.B.28b Cave Grouping at Kizil.
Modified after Vignato, Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu, 65, fig.54.
Fig. B.29 Kizil Caves in Vignato’s Phase II: the fourth and early fifth century. After Vignato, *Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu*, 69, fig. 56.
Fig. B.30 *Layout of the Group of Kizil Cave 14-19.*
After Vignato, “Kizil guxi do shiku siyuan,” 200, fig.2.

Fig. B.31 *Layout of the group of Kizil Cave 175-180.*
After Vignato, *Kizil dongku zuhe diaocha yu yanjiu,* 51, fig.26.
Fig.B.32 Ground plan of Taitai’er 15 and 16. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku I, 235.
Fig.B.33 Dharmadhātu Buddha. Dunhuang Cave 428, Gansu, China. Northern Zhou (557-581 C.E.). Wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Dunhuang mogaoku I, fig. 162.
Fig.B.34 *King Suvarṇapuṣpa and Queen*. Lunette above the door, Kizil Cave 69, Xinjiang, China. 625-647 C.E. Wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku II, fig. 2.
Fig.B.35 Vajrapāṇi and Kucheān Devotee. East wall of the main hall, Kizil Cave 69, Xinjiang, China. 625-647 C.E. Wall painting.
After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku II, fig. 5.
Fig. B.36 Flying Geese Holding Wreath. Back wall of back corridor, Kizil Cave 69, Xinjiang, China. 625-647 C.E. Wall painting. After Zhongguo shiku—Kizil shiku II, fig. 174.