

Manuscripts and Printing: East Asia

Although historically East Asia has been an arena where ethnically and politically diverse states alternated with one another, from the point of view of the history of Buddhism the region refers to an area now largely covered by China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. Having said that, it is important to keep in mind that this division reflects the modern geo-political reality, according to which state boundaries and national identities separate ethnically, culturally, and linguistically distinct regions. Diachronically, however, the situation was much more complex, as states, ethnicities, and languages interacted in a variety of ways. The languages and scripts used in the region today are merely the current state of affairs, which will no doubt continue to evolve in the future.

The written tradition of Buddhism in East Asia has been dominated by texts written in Chinese, and this shared tradition in turn helps to define the cultural boundaries of the region. The role of the Chinese language and script in this part of the world cannot be exaggerated, as it was used not only in the context of Buddhism but also for the spread of other cultural influences, most notably Confucianism. At the same time, the transmission of religious texts was also one of the primary reasons why the Chinese script was adopted as a writing system for a variety of languages in East Asia. Moreover, the majority of cultures that invented their own script did this either by modifying Chinese characters (e.g. Jpn. *kana*, Vtn. *chữ nôm*, and Khitan large script) or by drawing inspiration from them (e.g. Tangut and Khitan small script), while at the same time, they also continued to use Chinese texts. As a result of the overall dominance of the Chinese textual tradition and the Chinese writing system in East Asia, the material culture of Buddhist texts also largely follows the Chinese model.

There is no scholarly consensus regarding the time when Buddhism was first introduced in China, but it must have happened no later than the 1st century CE, that is, the second half of the Eastern Han dynasty (Zürcher, 1990; Rong, 2004). Translations of Buddhist literature appear from the mid-2nd century CE (Nattier, 2008), including works by renowned translators such as Lokakṣema (active

during the late 2nd cent. CE) and Kang Senghui (d. 280). In terms of archaeological material, however, the earliest surviving Buddhist manuscript written in Chinese dates to the late 3rd century and was discovered in 1908 at Toyuq near Turfan by the second Ōtani expedition. This is a fragment of the *Zhu Fo yaoji jing* (諸佛要集經; T. 810 756b20) translated by Dharmarakṣa with a colophon dating it to 296 CE (Inokuchi Taijun, 1980, 1–2, Plate 1; Ikeda On, 1990, 74; Okabe Kazuō, vol. I, 1983, 21–24; Chen Guocan, 1983, 6–13; Boucher, 1996, 80–81; Zacchetti, 2006, 165–167).

The majority of manuscripts dating to periods before the Song dynasty (960–1279 CE) survived in a sealed library cave at a Buddhist temple complex near the town of Dunhuang, at the eastern terminus of the so-called Silk Road. This is the single-largest collection of manuscripts from medieval China, and most of these are Buddhist texts. This is partly due to the fact that the collection most likely represents the original library of the Sanjie Monastery (三界寺) in the late 10th century (Rong, 2013, 119–130). But another reason behind the large proportion of Buddhist texts among surviving manuscripts is the tradition of *sūtra* copying for the sake of accumulating merits. The colophons of the manuscripts demonstrate that many of the scrolls found in Dunhuang were the result of such activity, and people either copied the *sūtras* themselves or hired professionals to do so (Ikeda On, 1990; Lin Congming, 1991, 290–308). *Sūtra* copying was not merely a mechanical process of creating a new copy of a *sūtra* from an existing scroll but – at least in theory – a spiritual undertaking in which the process of production was just as important as the end result. Especially in Japan, a strong emphasis was laid on the purity of the copying process, as the writing materials, the copyist, and the place all had to be void of contamination (Lowe, 2012). The colophons of the medieval manuscripts also reveal that many of the *sūtras* were produced “for the benefit” of deceased parents or children, in order to accumulate merits for family members or for the sake of all sentient beings (Giles, 1935a; 1935b; 1937; Ikeda On, 1990). Judging from the manuscripts with colophons, such offerings represented a sizeable portion of a medieval monastic

library. Hiring a monk to do the copying usually also involved a substantial donation, and some of the colophons mention cutting back on expenses in order to be able to afford a *sūtra*-copying offering.

Surviving Buddhist texts in China are predominantly on paper. In fact, the spread of paper more or less paralleled the spread of Buddhism in China, showing the intimate connection between technology and religion. Paper appeared in China already before the Common Era but is believed to have come to be used as a writing material only around the 1st or 2nd century CE (Tsien, 1962, 38). By the end of the 4th century, when we begin to have significant quantities of manuscripts, paper had almost completely replaced wood, silk, and other writing materials. Thus, while it is probable that some of the early translations of Buddhist texts were written on wood or silk, the oldest surviving Buddhist texts in Chinese are all written on paper. There are also individual instances of Buddhist *sūtras* written on silk scrolls, but these seem to have been created in imitation of paper scrolls and are more closely related to medieval silk paintings than to the earlier tradition of writing on bamboo and silk. On one of these scrolls (*Pelliot chinois* 4500), the brush-written characters are also embroidered over with silk thread, attesting to the extraordinary amount of work that went into the production of the object.

The origins and early spread of printing technology are intimately connected with Buddhism (Drège, 1999, 25–26; Barrett, 2008, 134–135). In fact, the earliest surviving examples of printing are predominantly Buddhist texts, even if this does not necessarily mean that other types of texts were not printed at this time (Chia & Weerdt, 2011, 2). Copies of the *Hyakumantō darani* (百萬塔陀羅尼) commissioned by the Japanese Empress Shōtoku (稱徳; 718–770 CE) in the 760s are understood as the earliest printed texts that can be dated with certainty (Kornicki, 2012). Some scholars claim that the *dhāraṇī sūtra* (*Wugou jingguang da tuoluoni jing* [無垢淨光大陀羅尼經]) found in 1966 at the Pulguksa Temple (佛國寺) in Korea is older, but, as P. Kornicki points out, its date is “open to argument” (2012, 48). The surviving pieces of evidence underline the vital role of Buddhism in the origins of printing. The mass scale of the application and spread of this technology may be connected with the rule of Empress Wu Zetian (武則天; r. 690–705 CE), who relied on Buddhism in her efforts to win legitimation (Barrett, 2008). In turn, the fact that printing was connected with her – and with Buddhism – may have been the reason why, after the restoration of the Tang dynasty in 705 CE, the technology remained largely unused,

especially by the state (Welch, 1981, 41, 115; Barrett, 2008). Thus in the Dunhuang corpus, the majority of the materials in which come from the 9th–10th centuries, well after the invention of printing, the number of printed texts is negligible. Even after the use of printing became widespread in the early Song, manuscript culture did not disappear but continued as an important tradition (McDermott, 2005, 90–93; see fig. 1).

When Buddhist scriptures were translated from Indic languages into Chinese, besides the obvious process of linguistic adaptation, texts were also converted to a new medium and format. Throughout the medieval period, Chinese sources continue to refer to texts in *pothi* format (*fanjia* [梵夾]; a book form originating from palm-leaf manuscripts, although other materials, e.g. paper, were also used in later periods) being brought from India to China, yet the Chinese versions are habitually referred to as scrolls (*juan* [卷]), even after the appearance of other book-binding formats. Thus the scroll has been the archetypal book form throughout Chinese history. Its physical format most likely derives from the rolls in use during the Warring States and Qin and Han periods, which were made from parallel slips of bamboo or wood and then tied together into a continuous writing surface. Medieval paper scrolls seem to have emulated this format not only in being rolled up but also by ruling the paper with vertical gridlines that resembled the parallel slips of bamboo rolls.

The standard *sūtra* form is best exemplified by the *sūtras* commissioned by the Tang court. There are dozens of such examples among the Dunhuang materials, and it is clear from the colophons that, even though the entire collection was found in what used to be a distant corner of the empire, these texts had been produced in the capital and only subsequently sent to other provinces. A court-commissioned *sūtra* was invariably written in a beautiful and even calligraphy with great attention to the aesthetic appeal of the manuscript. The scroll itself was produced with equally great care, as if it were an artifact in its own right. It consisted of rectangular sheets of paper that had been dyed with a yellowish dye, which also acted as an insecticide to prevent damage. The sheets were glued together into a long band of paper up to several meters long, depending on the length of the text to be written on it. At the end of the scroll, the corners of the last sheet were cut off, and to this narrowed end, a wooden or bamboo stave (*zhou* [軸]) was attached so that the scroll could be rolled up more easily (Fujieda, 1966, 16–19; Tsien, 1962, 155). The beginning of the scroll was enforced with extra paper to which a ribbon or cord

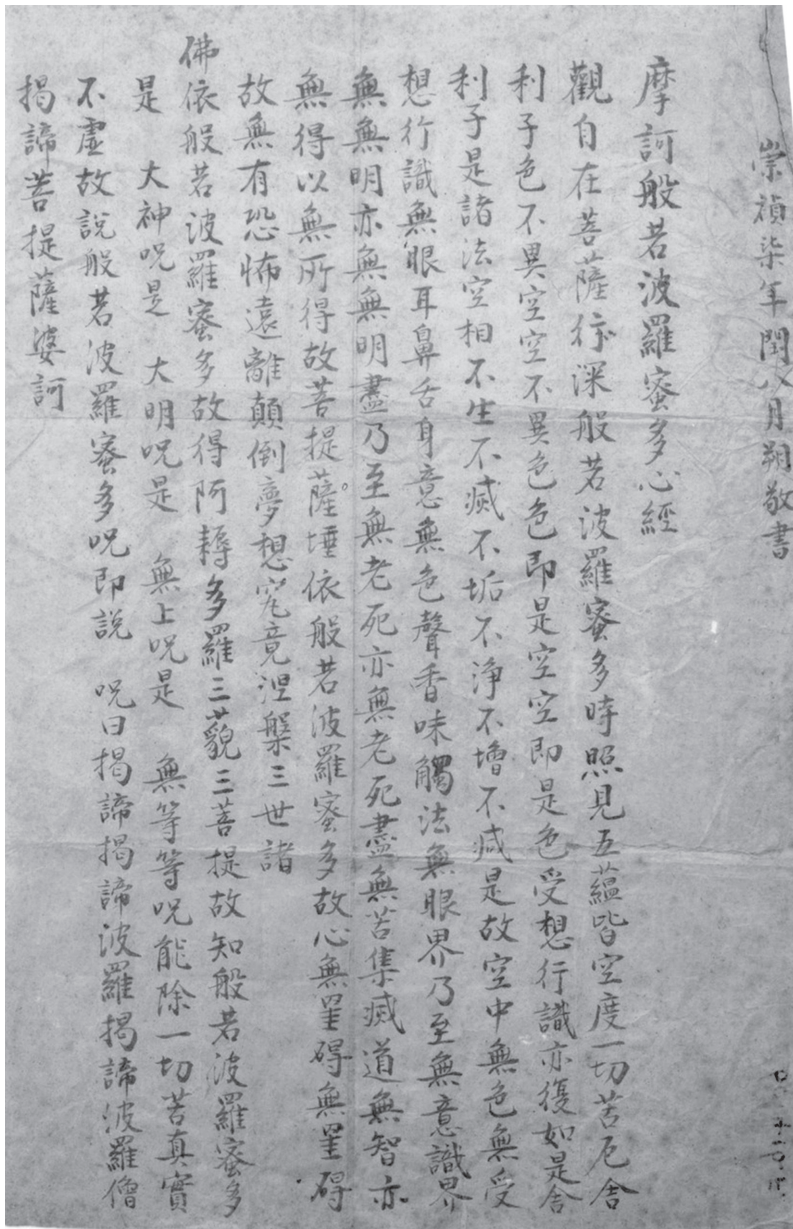


Fig. 1: A votive manuscript copy of the *Heart Sūtra* found interned inside a large statue of Avalokiteśvara dating to 1634 (© Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge, 1960, 416 F).

was attached, in order to tie the scroll and prevent it from unrolling.

In addition to the physical form of the scroll, the layout of the standard *sūtra* was also regularized. Each paper sheet contained 27–29 vertical lines of text, and each line had exactly 17 characters. Horizontal lines were drawn across the top and bottom of the sheet, thereby creating top and bottom margins, which were left empty. The sheets had no side margins, and vertical grid lines drawn between the

top and bottom horizontal lines continued from one sheet to another so seamlessly that today it is sometimes difficult to see where the sheets are glued together without examining the original manuscript. The title of the text was written at the beginning and end of the scroll, with characters tightly crammed together in order to visually set it apart from the main text. Typically, the beginning of the scroll had the complete title, while the end contained only an abbreviated one. The title was

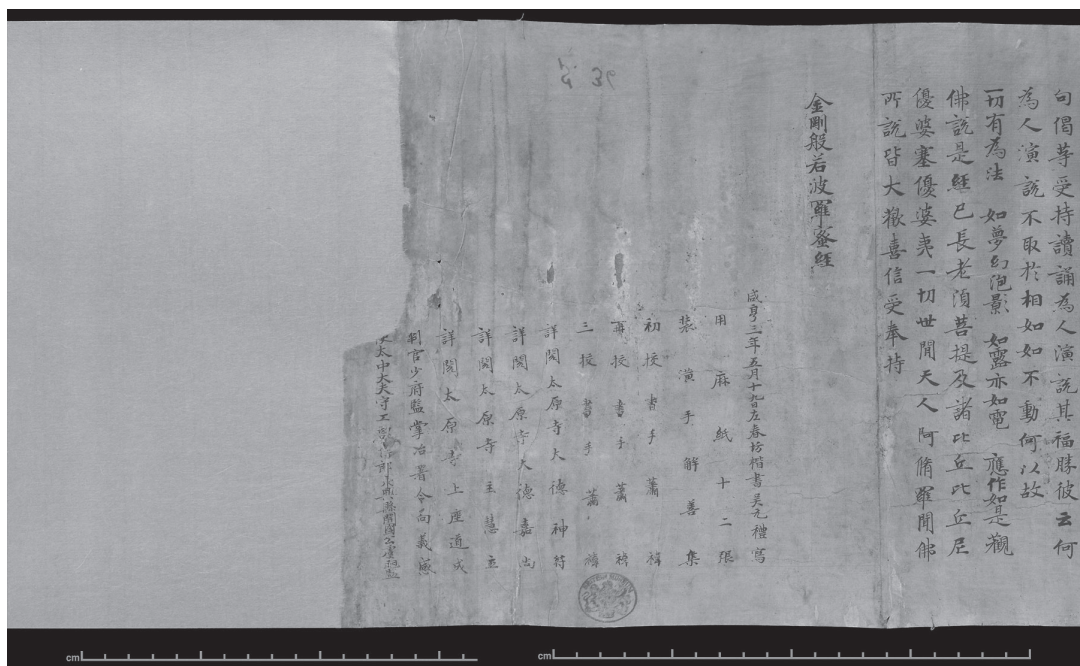


Fig. 2: The end of a court-commissioned copy of the *Diamond Sūtra* with the colophon listing the names of the people who checked the manuscript (© The British Library Or.8210/S.36).

also written on the outside of the rolled-up scroll, so that it could be identified without having to unroll it (Fujieda, 1966, 17–18).

In standard *sūtras*, the text was usually followed by a colophon, recording information relevant to the production of the scroll (Drège, 2007). For example, the colophon of manuscript Or. 8210/S. 36, a copy of the *Diamond Sūtra* (see fig. 2), has a lengthy colophon, which states that the scroll was copied on the 19th day of the 5th month of the 3rd year of the Xianheng (672 CE) reign by a certain Wu Yuanli (吳元禮; Giles, 1957, 23–24; McMullen, 2013, 108). In addition, the colophon also includes a count of paper sheets used; a statement about the dyeing of the paper; the names of the first, second, and third editors; the names and affiliations of four further “detailed proofreaders”; and, finally, two supervisors. This attests to the great care with which each scroll was produced and the number of persons and institutions that this elaborate process involved. Naturally, *sūtras* produced locally by ordinary people or hired monks were less regulated, and their colophons were also much shorter. About a thousand Dunhuang manuscripts have colophons (Fujieda, 1973, 121; Ikeda On, 1990), and the majority of these are quite simple, recording the time and name of the person making the copy and, less commonly, the reason for doing so. Occasionally we also find exam-

ples in which a colophon contains a more personal description of creating the scroll.

Within a monastic library, scrolls were often stored in larger bundles (*zhi* [帙]) wrapped together with *sūtra* wrappers (*zhizi* [帙子] or *jingzhi* [經帙]) made of silk or brocade (Fang Guangchang & Xu Peiling, 1995, 1–8; Fujieda, 1966, 19). When the Dunhuang manuscripts were first discovered, little attention was paid to their original arrangement, and when visitors to the library cave repeatedly examined the scrolls, the bundles were taken apart and the *sūtra* wrappers misplaced or lost (Rong, 2013, 115–127). As a result, a significant amount of information about the bundles and the overall arrangement of a medieval monastic library were lost. It is only much later that scholars realized the significance of these items and tried to collect what remained of the original *sūtra* wrappers and reconstruct the organization of the library (Rong, 2013, 112–115).

The large-scale production of texts also meant that manuscripts had to be stored, conserved, and, eventually, disposed of. Storage involved not only the safekeeping of the manuscripts but also an organizing system that would facilitate retrieval and use. Although the ways of storing manuscripts evolved over time and could also differ in various regions across East Asia, in general scriptures were stored in monastic libraries in bundles (*zhi*) or cases

(*han* [函]), which were marked sequentially with the characters of the *Qianziwen* (千字文; Fang Guangchang, 1990; 1995). These characters – and occasionally the titles – would have been seen from the outside of the shelves or cabinets used to store the scriptures, enabling quick access without having to examine them individually. The complete Buddhist canon may have also been kept in a revolving *sūtra* cabinet called *lunzang* (輪藏; Jpn. *rinzō*) or *zhuanlun jingzang* (轉輪經藏; Jpn. *tenrin kyōzō*), typically an octagonal pagoda-like structure ostensibly invented in the 6th century, but which is mentioned in transmitted sources only starting with the 8th–9th centuries (Goodrich, 1942; Guo, 1999; Eubanks, 2010). The revolving *sūtra* cabinet primarily functioned not as a storage facility but a mechanical reading and praying device, since according to contemporary belief, rotating it around its axis accrued the same amount of merit as if having recited all of the scriptures stored within (Guo, 1999, 103–105; Eubanks, 2010, 7–12).

Manuscripts, and later printed texts, were also placed in relic deposits to ensure the survival of the dharma during the final age called *mofa* (末法; end dharma), and many of the surviving manuscripts have been discovered in such repositories (Shen, 2001). In these cases, the *sūtras* functioned as relics, representing both the body of the Buddha and his teachings. The consecrated scriptures could be enshrined in large pagoda-size stūpas, as in the eastern parts of the Khitan Liao Kingdom during the 10th–11th centuries (Shen, 2001), or buried in *sūtra* mounds (經塚; Jpn. *kyōzuka*), as it was customary as part of the *sūtra* burial (埋經; Jpn. *maikyō*) practice in Heian Japan (Moerman, 2007; 2010).

The scroll remained one of the major forms of book well into the Song period. Even printed texts used the same form, as it is seen in the famous printed copy of the *Diamond Sūtra* from the Stein collection at the British Library (Or. 8210/P. 2), dated to 868 CE (Wood & Barnard, 2010). Starting with the 8th century, however, along with the spread of Buddhist texts and culture, a number of other book forms were introduced, most likely as an influence from Central Asian manuscript cultures such as Tibetan, Uighur, Khotanese, or Sogdian (Galambos, 2012, 76–77). Thus Buddhism, and religion in general (e.g. Manicheism and Christianity), played a vital role in the spread of various technologies related to writing. A typically Buddhist influence is the *pothi* format, which appeared in Dunhuang from the late 8th century, after the Tibetans extended their control over the Hexi region, including Dunhuang (Men'sikov, 1988, 124). More common book forms

were the concertina (Drège, 1984), notebook (Drège, 1979), codex, and the so-called whirlwind (*xuanfeng zhuang* [旋風裝]; Drège, 1996; Whitfield, 2004, 298; Du Weisheng, 1997) forms, which make up a sizeable portion of the total number of extant Chinese manuscripts (Fujieda, 1966, 24–27). These forms were, however, much more commonly used for manuscripts in other languages, such as Tibetan and Uighur, further testifying to their Central Asian origin.

Following the widespread use of paper, Chinese characters were typically written with a brush. In Dunhuang, however, which came under Tibetan control in 768 CE, the brush was replaced by the Tibetan-style hard pen, and manuscripts written after this date were almost all written with this type of pen (Fujieda, 1969, 37–39). However, in China proper, and in other East Asian regions, such as Korea and Japan, the brush remained the main writing utensil, even though it is likely that the hard pen was also used. The ink with which texts were written in East Asia was almost always black, and color ink was used only occasionally. Sometimes portions of manuscripts were written in red or orange, but this was relatively uncommon and appears only as an addition to a larger body of text written in black. A tradition specifically related to Buddhist culture is writing with one's own blood, thinned down with water (Kieschnick, 2000). Another typically Buddhist phenomenon evidenced in Korea and Japan is writing with gold or silver ink, typically on dark – for example indigo – paper (Mote *et al.*, 1988, 64). Sometimes the entire text was written in this manner, sometimes only the names of the Buddha or bodhisattvas, while the rest of the *sūtra* appears in black ink.

Punctuation and reading marks are quite common in the surviving texts. The marks were relatively uniform through different times, evidencing the continuity of the manuscript tradition throughout the dynastic period. Among the marks used in the Dunhuang corpus, the most common ones are those used to signify corrections, repetitions, abbreviations, divisions of text, and phonetic readings (Li, 1988; Ishizuka, 1970; 1981; 1993; Galambos, forthcoming). Reading marks became especially important in non-Chinese regions such as Korea and Japan, where they were used to facilitate parsing and reading the text, since written Chinese texts were often read (and pronounced) in Korean and Japanese, which have significantly different grammar and word order from Chinese (Frellesvig, 2010, 261–263; Ishizuka, 1995). Generally speaking, punctuation and reading marks were written in black or, less commonly, in red ink. There have also

been “inkless” reading marks created by impressing the sharp edge of a pen or other instrument: these are called by their Japanese name *kakuhitsu* (角筆; corner pen), as they are primarily known to us from Japanese manuscript culture (Kobayashi Yoshinori, 1989; Girard, 2005). However, examples of *kakuhitsu* are known in Korea and even among the Dunhuang manuscripts in China (Kobayashi Yoshinori, 1997).

The script used for writing Chinese texts was, of course, Chinese. Yet it should be pointed out that Dunhuang, from where most of our surviving medieval manuscripts originate, was a cosmopolitan city along the Silk Road, at the intersection of different cultures and peoples. People of different ethnicities and languages intermixed on a daily basis, and most of the population must have been to some extent multilingual. The manuscripts provide evidence for widespread multilingualism, showing how people of various backgrounds wrote in a variety of languages and scripts (Takata, 2000; Galambos, 2012). There are many bilingual manuscripts with examples of Chinese *sūtras* transcribed phonetically using the Tibetan, Khotanese, or Brahmi alphabets, or combinations of these, attesting to the fact that individuals who could read these scripts, but not the Chinese script, nevertheless wished to recite Buddhist scriptures in the Chinese language. These phonetic transcriptions of Chinese characters have been used by modern scholars to reconstruct the northwestern dialect of Chinese during the 9th–10th centuries (Luo Changpei, 1933; Csongor, 1969; Takata Tokio, 1988). The opposite phenomenon is also found. In the 10th-century Sino-Tibetan manuscript IOL Tib J 754, for example, Chinese is used, in addition to writing Chinese, to phonetically transcribe Tibetan and Sanskrit words (van Schaik & Galambos, 2012).

Most of the Chinese manuscripts extant from the medieval period come from northwestern China, from the peripheries, or even beyond the borders, of the Chinese empires. This geographical imbalance is partly due to coincidence, but a perhaps even more important reason is the desert climate of the sites where the texts were found. The largest collection of Chinese Buddhist manuscripts comes from Dunhuang, the last major Chinese city along the Silk Road. In 1900, a Daoist priest who lived at the Mogao caves near Dunhuang discovered in one of the temple caves a hidden chamber that contained tens of thousands of manuscripts in Chinese, Tibetan, and other languages. The bulk of the collection was acquired from the priest by the Hungarian-born British explorer Aurel Stein (1862–1943) and was subsequently shipped to the British Museum

(Stein, 1912, 182–194; Rong, 2013, 79–108). Other foreign explorers and scholars followed suit, and in several years, the collection became scattered around the world, with the most important portions held in London, Paris, Saint Petersburg, Kyoto, and Beijing. The cave had been sealed in the early 11th century, and the overall majority of the manuscripts comprised Buddhist texts, including *sūtras*, commentaries, works of popular literature, and documentation related to the life of the local Buddhist community. The vast quantity of manuscripts discovered at the library cave had a massive impact on the development of Oriental studies both in the West and in China and Japan (Rong, 2013, 205–266). In addition to the above-mentioned printed copy of the *Diamond Sūtra* from 868 CE, common printed Buddhist texts were one-leaf prayer models with an image of a buddha or a bodhisattva with a votive text beneath.

Catalogues have been compiled of the collections in Britain (Giles, 1957), France (Gernet & Wu, 1970; Soymié *et al.*, 1985–1995; Wang-Toutain, 2001), Russia (Men'shikov *et al.*, 1963–1967), and China (Chen Yuan, 1931; Fang Guangchang, 2013). There have also been attempts at compiling a union catalogue (Wang Zhongmin, 1962; Shi Pingting *et al.*, 2000), but to date this task has not yet been fully accomplished. Even though photographs of selected manuscripts appeared early on, such as the magnificent collection of Yabuki Keiki (矢吹慶輝) called *Meisha Yoin* (鳴沙餘韻; Yabuki Keiki, 1930), it was only from the 1960s onward, that microfilms of the French and British collections were released. The *Dunhuang Baozang* (敦煌寶藏) came out in 140 volumes with facsimile editions (from microfilms) of the main collections worldwide (Huang Yongwu, 1981–1986). This made it possible to study the manuscripts as a corpus, rather than just working on individual texts. Since 1995, the International Dunhuang Project based at the British Library has been digitizing the manuscripts and making them available online through their Web site – free of charge. As other holding institutions, such as the Bibliothèque nationale de France, joined the project, the number of manuscripts available through the Web site grew rapidly. Parallel with this, academic publishers in China began the publication of large multivolume editions of high-resolution photographs. The largest Japanese collections have also been published or are in the process of being published (Nogami Shunjō, 1965–1972; Oda Yoshihisa, 1984–2010; Kyōu shōoku, 2009–2013). As a result, by now the majority of the Chinese contents of the original library cave are accessible to researchers.

Another major collection of Buddhist texts comes from the dead city of Khara-Khoto in Inner Mongolia. In the 11th–12th centuries, this was an important city in the Tangut kingdom of Western Xia (Xixia [西夏]), which was later abandoned. The ruins of the city were explored by the Russian explorer Piotr Kozlov (1863–1935), who passed through in 1908 on his way to Tibet. On two subsequent visits, he excavated over two thousand manuscripts and printed books written in Tangut, and many more in Chinese (Kozlov, 1923). He shipped the entire cache back to Saint Petersburg, and this became the largest collection of Tangut material in the world (Kychanov, 2008). Aurel Stein also visited the site in 1914 and secured a collection of about six thousand fragments, which are currently kept in the British Library (Stein, 1928, vol. I, 429–506; Grinstead, 1961). Most of the Tangut texts comprise Buddhist *sūtras* and other writings, as Buddhism from the very beginning was adopted as the state religion in Western Xia. In addition to the Tangut material, however, the site also yielded a significant amount of Chinese texts, both printed and handwritten. Catalogues of the Saint Petersburg collection of Tangut (Kychanov, 1999) and Chinese (Men'shikov, 1984) texts were published relatively early, but no catalogue yet exists for the British collection. Facsimile publications of most of the non-fragmentary texts have come out for the Russian, British, Chinese, and French collections, even though the quality of reproductions in some cases is less than ideal. In addition, good-quality color images of a limited number of texts from the British and Russian collections have been made freely available through the International Dunhuang Project Web site.

Yet another important group of medieval Buddhist material are the Turfan texts – both handwritten and printed – from Xinjiang, China's westernmost region. The largest collection was acquired between 1902 and 1914 by four subsequent German expeditions to Turfan led by Albert Grünwedel (1856–1935) and Albert von Le Coq (1860–1930). The excavations yielded more than 30 thousand fragments in a large variety of languages and scripts, with the majority being in Chinese and Uighur. A large proportion of the texts is Buddhist, yet there are also many other types of material, such as Manichean and Christian writings, or copies of classical Chinese texts (Fuchs *et al.*, 2001). A catalogue of the Chinese Buddhist texts has been compiled by a team of Japanese scholars (Kudara *et al.*, 2005). Apart from the German collection of Turfan material, a significant amount of texts from Turfan was excavated by Chi-

nese archaeologists in the 1960s and 1970s, and these are preserved in China. In addition, new texts are being continuously discovered in caves in the region of Turfan, thus the Turfan corpus continues to grow. Smaller groups of texts, partly in Chinese, partly in a variety of local scripts and languages, have also been discovered at other sites in Xinjiang, and these represent important sources for the study of the spread of Buddhism in China and Central Asia. Buddhist manuscripts have been discovered at sites near Khotan, Kucha, and Loulan, although these cannot compare to the vast quantities found at Dunhuang, Khara-Khoto, and Turfan. Nevertheless, the manuscripts provide evidence for the use of Chinese in these oases, along with other regional languages.

Most of the medieval texts available today survived in the dry desert climate of western China. Yet in a number of cases, the colophons of the manuscripts testify that the scrolls actually came from central China, especially from the Tang capitals of Chang'an and Luoyang. For example, the court-commissioned *sūtras* – mentioned above – were sponsored by the Tang court and produced in the capital before they were sent out to various parts of the empire. Naturally, the monasteries of the capital region and other cultural centers of China proper also had extensive libraries, but these did not survive, and the occasional discoveries cannot compete with the wealth of manuscripts and prints found in the West. Among the important finds are the Buddhist printed and handwritten texts from the Liao dynasty discovered in 1974 in a wooden pagoda in Yingxian county, Shanxi province (Shanxi, 1991). More recently, in 2004 over three hundred Buddhist manuscripts, paintings, and printed texts from the 9th–10th centuries were found inside a tower at Shende Temple (神德寺) in Shaanxi province during renovation work. A catalogue (Huang Zheng & Wang Xuemei, 2012) and good-quality photographs (Huang Zheng *et al.*, 2012) of the texts have already been published.

Apart from western China, the largest number of Buddhist manuscripts in Chinese is preserved in Japan. These were brought over to the islands by Japanese monks who crossed over to China starting from the late 7th century. In Japan – as was also the case in Korea and Vietnam – Buddhism predominantly relied on Chinese texts, and vernacular translations were made only in the modern period. From the 8th century, the state supported Buddhism and a *sūtra*-copying office was established, producing large quantities of copies. Archival materials at the Shōsōin (正倉院), the imperial treasure house in

Nara, document in detail how *sūtras* were copied, including the measures taken to ensure the purity of the process (Lowe, 2012). The Shōgozō *sūtra* repository, originally part of the Sonshōin subtemple of the Tōdaiji (東大寺) Temple, houses nearly five thousand scrolls, including manuscripts copied in Japan and those imported from China and Korea. The Shōgozō collection is in the process of being published in digital form, with 101 discs already available (Kunaichō, 2000ff.).

In addition to the central repository of the Shōgozō, many Buddhist temples in Japan have significant collections of Buddhist texts, including Song editions of the canon, or manuscript copies made from both printed and handwritten texts. One of the important collections of Buddhist manuscripts is at the Nanatsudera (七寺) Temple in Nagoya, and these were recently identified as having been copied from Chinese manuscripts that came to Japan during the Nara period, thus predating the Song canon of 983 CE (Ochiai, 1991). Another recently “rediscovered” collection is that of the Amanosan Kongōji (天野山金剛寺) Temple, in which more than half of the manuscripts were copied from older manuscripts during the late Heian period (Ochiai Toshinori, 2007, 5). Yet another Japanese temple with a very large and well-known collection of early Buddhist manuscripts is the Ishiyamadera (石山寺) Temple in Ōtsu (Ishiyamadera, 1978). It is worth noting, however, that by now many manuscripts have left the temple collections and are kept in museums and libraries. For example, the library of Tenri University is well known for its collection of Nara-period manuscripts. Many of the Japanese collections have been published, and an increasing number of manuscripts are also becoming available digitally. Particularly worth mentioning is the Nihon Koshakyō database project, which provides high-quality images of Buddhist manuscripts from Japanese collections on its Web site. The best catalogue of Japanese manuscripts is by Tanaka Kaidō (1973), even though some of the information therein is by now out of date. For using manuscript archives and for an overview of the main collections, readers may consult B. Ruppert’s (2006) introduction.

The transmission of Buddhist texts to Korea is evidenced in transmitted sources since the 6th century. The transmission of texts intensified in the following centuries, as monks from the Korean kingdoms went to China to study and either brought or sent texts back home (Kornicki, forthcoming). A firsthand witness to the use of Chinese Buddhist texts in the kingdom of Silla is a manuscript copy

of the *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra* copied in the mid-8th century, which was discovered in 1979 and is now classified as national treasure (McBride, 2008, 97). The popularity of the *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra* in Silla is also evidenced in the about two hundred fragments of a copy carved in stone, believed to have been carved in the late 7th century (McBride, 2008, 98). Some of the early manuscripts, as well as copies made from them, have survived in Japan (Kornicki, forthcoming). A Tang-dynasty fragment of the travel account of the Silla monk Hyecho (704?–787 CE), who embarked on a pilgrimage to India in 723 CE, was also discovered among the Dunhuang manuscripts (Pelliot, 1908, 511–512; Jan, 1965, 55–63; Yang *et al.*, 1984). During the Koryō dynasty, when Buddhism functioned as a state religion, efforts were made to obtain printed editions of the Chinese canon from the Song and Liao (Khitan) states, which in turn led to the publication of two Korean editions of the canon, one in the 11th and another in the 13th century (Kornicki, forthcoming; Lancaster, 1996; the texts of the two editions – the whole of the second and the surviving texts of the first – are available online [see bibliography]). The printing blocks of the second edition are still preserved in the Haeinsa Monastery.

In Vietnam, Buddhism is attested from at least the 2nd century CE, and manuscripts must have been regularly brought in the south, even if there is little evidence remaining. After Vietnam separated itself from the Chinese domain in the 10th century and became a tributary state, we begin to have references to diplomatic contacts with China, which also include official requests for the Chinese canon made on several occasions during the 11th century (Kornicki, forthcoming). These printed editions were then copied locally by hand, although there are sources suggesting – without hard evidence – that a local edition may have been printed in Vietnam at the end of the 13th century (Kornicki, forthcoming).

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