

Fig. 1. Standing Amitābha Buddha from Gamsansa Temple. Unified Silla, 719. National Museum of Korea (Author's photograph)

The Relationship between Buddhist Sculpture of the Unified Silla Period and Tang Dynasty Painting: A study of the Buddha and Bodhisattva Sculptures from Gamsansa Temple

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Introduction

To honor his deceased parents, Kim Jiseong (金志誠, active late seventh to early eighth century), a noble of the sixth rank (六頭品, K. *yukdupum*) according to the Silla bone rank system known as *golpumje* (骨品制), sponsored in 719 the construction of Gamsansa Temple (甘山寺) and the production of standing images of the Buddha Amitābha and the bodhisattva Maitreya (hereafter “Gamsansa Buddha” and “Gamsansa bodhisattva”) (Figs. 1 and 2). Each of these stone images bears on its reverse an inscription of close to 400 Chinese characters that describes their dedication to the patron’s ancestors, their date of production, and information on the motivation and religious context underlying their creation. The depiction of a Buddha in the crown of the Maitreya image is noteworthy, since it is iconography conventionally reserved for images of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. In fact, among all extant East Asian Buddhist sculpture, the standing image from Gamsansa Temple is the sole representation of a Maitreya bodhisattva with a Buddha in its crown.

The Unified Silla Kingdom (統一新羅, 676–935) is known for a century of close exchanges with the Tang dynasty (唐, 618–907) in China, starting from the mid-seventh century unification of the Three Kingdoms. The Gamsansa Buddha and bodhisattva reflect this period. As a result, Indian and, in particular, Central Asian (specifically the so-called Western Regions, or Xiyu [西域]) sculptural influences that

were widespread in Tang China during the seventh to eighth centuries considerably impacted these two sculptures. Central Asian influences are especially clear in the presentation of the clothing. Particularly, the densely overlapping U-shaped creases in the Amitābha Buddha’s full drapery are features that were popular in the region around the Khotan Kingdom (于闐國, 56–1006) along the Southern Silk Road in Central Asia. Ornaments on the Maitreya bodhisattva image, such as the butterfly-shaped knotting above the shoulders, also appear to reflect clothing conventions originating in this region. It is interesting to note that representations of Buddhas in the Khotan style of densely overlapping drapery and of bodhisattva images with knotted ornamentation above the shoulders are otherwise extremely rare, if not entirely absent, from Silla and Tang Buddhist sculpture of the seventh to eighth centuries. In short, these two images reflect a Central Asian style that came to be discontinued among Buddhist sculpture in Tang China and on the Korean Peninsula. For this reason, the two images from Gamsansa Temple hold a unique position in the development of Buddhist sculpture in East Asia. They reflect art historical features that appeared in Tang China at the end of the seventh century and beginning of the eighth.

The aim of this paper is to examine the art historical conditions that gave rise to the unusual formal characteristics apparent in these two images from Gamsansa Temple. To this end, I will first analyze the formal features of the Gamsansa Buddha and



Fig. 2. Standing Maitreya Bodhisattva from Gamsansa Temple. Unified Silla, 719. National Museum of Korea (Author's photograph)

bodhisattva images. It is clear that the novel features manifested in the Gamsansa Temple sculptures strongly reflect the demands of their patron, Kim Jiseong. Rhi Juhyeong has claimed that the iconography of the Maitreya Bodhisattva wearing a crown with the image of the Buddha was a reflection of Kim Jiseong's religious beliefs (Rhi Juhyeong 2010, 8-27). I also recognize this link between the specific form of the sculptures and Kim's patronage. It is highly likely that the image he presented to the artisans was not a three-dimensional sculpture, but painted models (畫本, K. *hwabon*) of a Buddha and bodhisattva that he had brought back from China upon his return from a diplomatic mission to the Tang court in 705. For this reason, I will examine the relation between sculpture and painted models at that time and the possibility that the Gamsansa Temple sculptures were created based on painted models. Finally, I will discuss the paucity of extant Buddhist sculptures dating from after the eighth century that show the same Central Asian characteristics as those found in the Gamsansa Buddha and Bodhisattva images. In other words, I will examine the phenomenon of the rupture with the Central Asian style, or its Sinicization, with a special interest in the rise and fall of the Yuchi Yiseng (尉遲乙僧) school in the late seventh to early eighth century. Through this analysis and discussion, it can clearly be observed that the Buddha and bodhisattva sculptures from Gamsansa Temple are not simply important for Korean art history, but hold a significant place in East Asian art history as well.

The Formal Characteristics of the Gamsansa Buddha and Bodhisattva Images

The Gamsansa Buddha and bodhisattva images are regarded as truly outstanding artworks that illustrate the assimilation of foreign styles into the Silla artistic mode. This not only speaks to the extent to which the two sculptures reflect the international cultural exchanges taking place during the Silla period, but how they impacted the development of an indigenous style of Korean figural sculpture. However, what is more exceptional than the phenomenon of Silla assimilation witnessed in these two sculptures is the application of a newly adopted foreign style of modeling that evokes an exotic atmosphere.

The most peculiar feature of the Amitābha Bud-

dha sculpture is the novel method of describing the drapery. The Buddhist robe covering both shoulders, extending from the base of the neck and closely adhering to the body, the raised creases spaced at equal intervals, and the hem on the lower left expressed in a zig-zag pattern are all characteristic of Mathura Buddhist sculpture from the Gupta period in India. However, the folds of the drapery are not manifested in an Indian style, but rather in one more characteristic of Central Asia. Generally speaking, the drapery is expressed in densely overlapping folds. From the upper body to the groin, the folds are depicted in successive U-shaped creases. At the thigh area, the folds split into two sets of several straight lines, and below each knee, individual sets of U-shaped folds continue through until the lower hem of the garment.

This representation of drapery folds was widespread from approximately the fourth to the sixth century in Central Asia, and examples can be widely found in clay sculptures from sites such as the Rawak Stupa of the Khotan Kingdom in the south or the Kizil Caves and the temple ruins at Shorchuk (also known as Shikchin) in the north. In China, examples from the Binglingsi Temple (炳靈寺) Grottoes and the Yungang (雲岡) Grottoes attest to the style's popularity in the fifth century. It all but disappeared under the process of Sinicization in the sixth century, but reemerged during the seventh century in the middle of the Tang period when Indian and Central Asian styles once again gained currency. The definitive example is a standing Buddha, presumed to be from the mid-seventh century, depicted in a niche in the north wall of the South Binyang Cave at the Longmen Grottoes (Fig. 3). Not only does this image include the characteristic drapery pattern, but also additional features generally considered to be representative of the Central Asian style, such as a prominent strap beneath the topknot and a hairline that juts sharply from the forehead.

However, there are relatively few examples of this type of Buddha image with densely overlapping drapery in the Central Asian style and a full-length robe in East Asian sculpture from the seventh to eighth centuries. The majority bear a simplified pattern in the drapery and, unlike the Gamsansa images, most wear a Sinicized style of robe with collars drooping from both shoulders to broadly reveal the chest (雙領下垂式, literally "double collar droop style") (Fig. 4). This indicates just how rapidly Central Asian stylistic



Fig. 3. Standing Buddha on the north wall of the south Binyang Cave in the Longmen Grottoes. Tang, mid-7th century (Longmen Office of Cultural Properties Preservation et al. 1992, Fig. 26)



Fig. 4. Standing Buddha on the exterior of the north wall of the Fengxian Temple Cave. Tang, first half of the 8th century (Longmen Office of Cultural Properties Preservation et al. 1992, Fig. 134)

elements became assimilated into a Sinicized mode in Tang China.

In the case of the Gamsansa bodhisattva, if we examine the manner in which the clothing closely adheres to the body, as in Gupta sculpture, and the similarities in the ornamentation with examples from India and Southeast Asia, such as a decorative string of beads (斜掛), the pendant of the necklace, and buckle of the belt, we find that, generally speaking, Indian conventions are prominent. Conversely, there are no examples of native Chinese adornments such as the sizable *pei* pendants (大佩) or silk ribbons (綬) that were broadly popular in Tang dynasty bodhisattva imagery. However, the most striking features are the large butterfly-shaped knotted ornamentation displayed above each of the shoulders and the long ribbons (垂飾) that flow down from these areas (Fig. 5). These are features that in general never appear in Buddhist sculpture from East Asia. This motif of shoulder ornaments and ribbons in the style of the Gamsansa bodhisattva is represented by a necklace of long strands that attach behind the neck in an ornamental knot and then run down in the form of two ribbons (Fig. 6). This system of ornamental knotting on each shoulder as in the Gamsansa bodhisattva image is difficult to replicate in the real world, and appears to reflect the influence of a type of ribbon ornamentation that was popular in the Sogdian area within the Persian cultural sphere. This convention passed into China through Bamiyan and Khotan along the southern route of the Silk Road. In East Asia, the motif appears essentially exclusively in wall paintings from the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang; in sculpture it is found only in the Gamsansa bodhisattva image.

Descriptions of shoulder ornamentation and ribbons that most closely resemble the Gamsansa bodhisattva image can be found in several examples from the *Bhaiṣajyaguru Sūtra Painting* from 776 on the northern portion of the east wall of Cave 148 in the Mogao Caves. The majority of the bodhisattvas, dancers (舞樂天), and musicians (伎樂天) in the painting display the exaggerated knotting above the shoulders and the broad ribbons found in the Gamsansa bodhisattva image (Fig. 7). In the years before the Tubo Kingdom (吐蕃, fl. early seventh to mid-ninth centuries) of Tibet seized Dunhuang, Cave 148 was constructed by Li Dabin (李大賓, active in the mid-eighth century) in order to celebrate his return



Fig. 5. Standing Maitreya Bodhisattva from Gamsansa Temple (detail: upper body). Unified Silla, 719. National Museum of Korea (Author's photograph)



Fig. 6. *Brahmā Viśeṣa Cintī Paripṛcchā Sūtra Painting* on the north wall of Cave 156 in the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang (detail). Late Tang period (Dunhuang Academy 1987, Fig. 140)



Fig. 7. *Bhaiṣajyaguru Sūtra Painting* on the east wall of Cave 148 in the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang (detail). Tang, 776 (Dunhuang Academy 1987, Fig. 38)

to the area after receiving a governmental promotion. The cave itself reveals the different approaches to construction at Mogao Caves in the early and late Tang periods. According to the *Datang longxi Li fujun xiu gongde bei* (大唐隴西李府君修功德碑, *Stele for the Accumulation of Merits by the Li Family of Longxi in the Great Tang*), the cave's detailed iconography was mapped out at the time of its construction. Numerous examples of novel topics and descriptive styles can be found in wall paintings of this cave, such as the *Devatā Sūtra Painting* (天請問經變圖) and the large-scale *Bhaiṣajyaguru Sūtra Painting* that appear for the first time at the Mogao Caves. It can be assumed that these novel topics and styles were either adopted by local Dunhuang artisans based on painted models brought from foreign areas, or introduced by artisans that noble Dunhuang families imported from areas such as Chang'an to assist with the construction. Taking into account that Li Dabin served Li Miao (李邕, d. 774), the Prince of Zheng (鄭王), who was the second son of Tang Emperor Daizong (代宗, r. 762–779), it can be presumed that the shoulder ornamentation and ribbons in the Gamsansa bodhisattva that also appear in the *Bhaiṣajyaguru Sūtra Painting* were transmitted to Dunhuang not through Central Asia, but rather from Chinese centers like Chang'an. It is notable that this motif became prevalent in the cave paintings at Dunhuang produced under Tibetan occupation in the middle and late Tang periods.

The Gamsansa bodhisattva is wearing a wide sash (絡腋) that stretches from the left shoulder to the right side (Fig. 5). The sash is a motif that appears in a great number of bodhisattva images from the mid-seventh century in Tang China and the Unified Silla Kingdom. In most cases, the sash crosses the chest on a diagonal and one end droops across the left area of the chest. However, in the Gamsansa Bodhisattva image the end of the sash does not hang in front of the figure's chest, but is rather tied in a large knot at the top of the left shoulder. Any other example of tying the sash in an ornamental knot is extremely difficult to find in East Asian Buddhist sculpture from this period. In paintings as well, this motif is only apparent in a few examples, such as a single bodhisattva image from the *Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra Painting* (觀無量壽經變相圖) on the north wall of Cave 172 from the Mogao Caves (Fig. 8), presumed to date to the mid-eighth century, or in figures seen in wall painting fragments from the Kizil Caves. However,



Fig. 8. Attendant Bodhisattvas from the *Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra Painting* on the north wall of Cave 172 in the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang (detail). Tang, mid-8th century (Dunhuang Academy 1987, Fig. 13)

this type of tying off of a belt, necklace, or the ribbons of a crown in large butterfly-shaped knotting was a convention originating in Persia that was widely adopted across the Middle East and Central Asia.

Another peculiar feature of the Gamsansa bodhisattva image that deserves attention is the way in which the lower portion of the fabric to either side of the body follows the legs in a serpentine fashion (Fig. 9). After the fabric spreads at the bottom, the drapery is expressed in repeated parallel U-shaped folds that represent an important method for connoting movement in the ends of the drapery. As can be seen in relief friezes currently housed in the Miho Museum in Japan, in sixth-century China this representational style appears in objects associated with Sogdian culture. It also can be found in great numbers in Persian metalware, depictions of Apsaras in the Bamiyan Caves, and cave paintings in the Kizil Caves in Central Asia, all presumably dating to the sixth and seventh centuries. From these examples, it can be deduced that the style originated in Persia or the Middle East. Although this representational mode does appear in Tang Buddhist sculpture from Chang'an in the eighth century, available examples are lim-

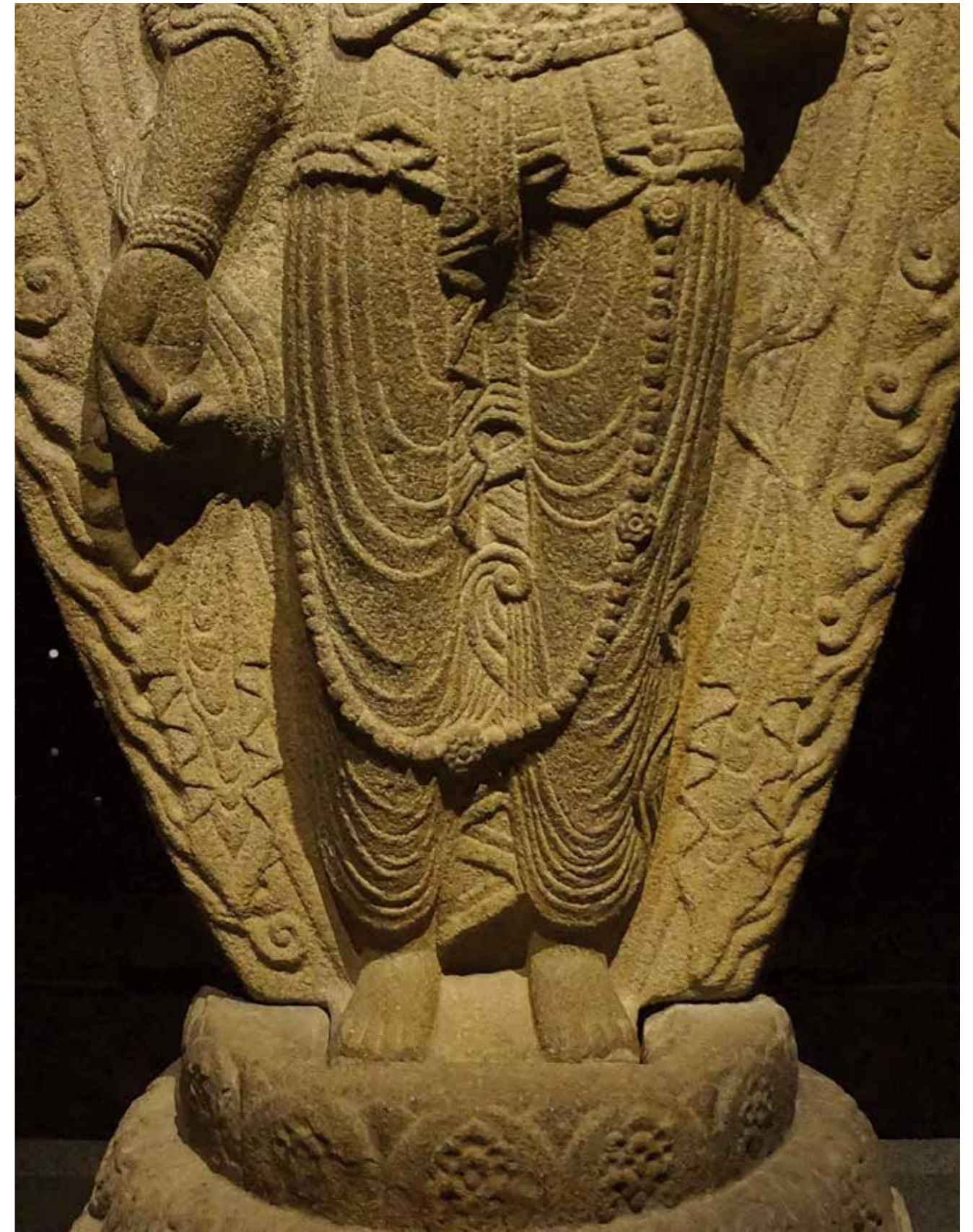


Fig. 9. Standing Maitreya Bodhisattva from Gamsansa Temple (detail: lower body). Unified Silla, 719. National Museum of Korea (Author's photograph)

ited, especially when compared with its prevalence in wall paintings from the Mogao Caves dating to the mid- and late Tang periods.

The Connection between Painted Models and Sculpture

As previously described, Indian and Central Asian motifs and styles are comparatively prominent in the two Gamsansa images. This is likely connected to the historical circumstances surrounding their patron Kim Jiseong, in particular his participation in a diplomatic mission to Tang China.

An aristocrat of the sixth rank, or *yukdupum*, Kim Jiseong was dispatched as an envoy to China in 705. Generally selected from among the royal family and aristocrats close to the throne, Silla envoys to Tang China served an important function in both consolidating royal power and facilitating cultural exchanges. In addition to Tang books on rituals, Confucian classics, and collections of writings, they brought back with them to Silla new translations of Buddhist sūtras and other Buddhist cultural products. As in the case of the Silla envoy Kim Sayang (金思讓, dates unknown) who entered Tang China in 703 and brought Yijing's (義淨, 635–713) translation of the *Jin guangming jingzui shengwang jing* (金光明最勝王經, *Sūtra of Golden Light*), or *Suvarṇaprabhāsa Sūtra* from that same year back to Silla only a single year later, new Tang translations of Buddhist sūtras were known to Silla very shortly after their production. Kim Jiseong, who travelled to Tang in 705, is believed to have returned with a Tang translation of *Wugou jingguang da tuoluoni jing* (無垢淨光大陀羅尼經, *Great Dhāraṇī of Immaculate and Pure Light*) produced in the previous year. Returning home, he would not only have brought sūtras, but also artworks such as the Buddhist paintings and sculptures that were widespread throughout Tang China. As a result, it is highly likely that when he decided to commission Buddhist sculpture in honor of his deceased parents, he referred to Buddhist artworks in new styles that he had carried with him from Tang China.

The transmission of new Buddhist imagery was chiefly accomplished through the diffusion of small, easy-to-transport bronze or clay Buddhist sculptures, as well as painted models. Accordingly, the models that Kim Jiseong carried from Tang China and provided to Silla artisans as a reference for the creation of the two works in question would likely have been

in one of these three forms. In the case of the Gamsansa Buddha and bodhisattva images, the drapery is extremely dense and, as we see in the description of the ends of the bodhisattva's robes, they are represented in great detail. Additionally, accessories such as the crown, beaded ornamentation (瓔珞, 斜掛), and belt are described with exceptional precision. For this reason, it is unlikely that small bronze or clay images, in which it would have been difficult to represent fine details, were used as models.

Since the two images from Gamsansa Temple are not sculptures in the round, but rather high-relief carvings that bear a number of similarities to paintings, in terms of the representational approach more common features can be found between them and Tang painting than with sculpture. The hairstyle of the Gamsansa bodhisattva is depicted with deeply engraved parallel horizontal lines (Fig. 10), a style that is remarkably similar to the description of bodhisattvas found in an engraving on the lintel of the east door of the Giant Wild Goose Pagoda (大雁塔, Ch. Dayanta) at Ci'ensi Temple (慈恩寺) that was restored during the Chang'an era (長安, 701–704) of the Tang dynasty. Furthermore, the lines on the palms of the two Gamsansa images appear as simple cross shapes, a convention that is found in painting and embroidery (one example being the Buddhist tapestry at Kaju-ji Temple [勸修寺] in Japan) more often than in sculpture. However, it does often appear in stone engravings (Fig. 11). In the Mogao Caves, most of the sculpted figures have palms rendered in a naturalistic style, while there are many examples of Buddha and bodhisattva images from wall paintings there that display a cross motif on the palms.

The Gamsansa bodhisattva's protruding knotted ornamentation and ribbons on the shoulders and the exaggerated knotting of the sash are only rarely found in any other extant Buddhist sculpture. However, since these features frequently appear in the Kizil Caves and in wall paintings from after the High Tang period (盛唐, early to mid-eighth century) in the Mogao Caves, it can be assumed that they were popular conventions in the field of painting. The fact that despite their extensive application in wall painting these features rarely appear in clay sculpted images from the Mogao Caves of the same period may be related to the practicality of representing elaborate clothing styles in a three-dimensional space. Portrayals of knotting or drapery that protrude too far from



Fig. 10. Standing Maitreya Bodhisattva from Gamsansa Temple (detail: head). Unified Silla, 719. National Museum of Korea (Author's photograph)



Fig. 11. Bodhisattva from the Memorial Stele for the Zen Master Dazhi (大智禪師碑) (detail), Tang, 736. Stone engraving. Xian Beilin Museum (Author's photograph)

the outlines of the body would be awkward to sculpt and more susceptible to damage. In other words, although it is simple to represent such features in painting, they would not have been adopted in sculpture due to practical concerns such as regarding the potential for damage. When all these observations are taken together, it seems highly likely that the finely expressed details in the two images from Gamsansa Temple must have been modeled after painted models.

The introduction and circulation of novel styles of Buddhist imagery through painted sketches was a nearly universal phenomenon throughout India as well as East Asia. The King Udayana image (優填王

像), currently believed to be the first-ever Buddhist image, was spread across India by means of painted reproductions. This image is also said to have been transmitted to China for the first time during the reign of Emperor Ming (明帝, r. 57–75) of the Eastern Han dynasty (東漢, 25–220) through the use of painted models. Similarly, the so-called “Ashoka image” (阿育王像) that was worshipped as an auspicious symbol in the Southern dynasties (南朝, 420–589) also achieved wide circulation via the dissemination of painted reproductions.

This trend continued into the Tang period. In the Chang’an and Luoyang area, clay sculptures were widely produced based on painted representations

of famous Indian Buddhist sculptures sketched by the painters who accompanied the envoy Wang Xuance (王玄策, dates unknown) in his multiple diplomatic missions to India in the early Tang period. A great number of silk paintings and painted models from the Tang period were also recovered from the so-called “Library Cave” (藏經洞) in Dunhuang. In Japan there are a number of extant examples, such as a plain drawing (白描畫) housed in the Shōsō-in Repository (正倉院) and a copy of the *Suiqui tuoluoni shenzhou jing* (隋求陀羅尼神咒經, *Sūtra of the Wish-fulfilling Dhāraṇī*) in the collection of the Japan Calligraphy Museum, that attest to the introduction there of Tang painted models. In light of these examples, it is certain that during the early eighth century, in an atmosphere of a vigorous exchange with Tang China, a great number of new painted models would also have been transmitted from Tang China to the Silla Kingdom.

The ruling dynasty in China was deeply involved in the production and circulation of painted models. The second volume of Zhang Yanyuan’s (張彥遠, c. 815–879) *Lidai minghua ji* (歷代名畫記, *Record of Famous Paintings of Successive Dynasties*) contains records of a great number of sketches being stored in the form of rubbings in the palace warehouse. The *Jiu Tang shu* (舊唐書, *Old Book of Tang*) also reveals that professional transcribers as well as painters were employed at the palace. The example of Wang Xuance also points to the dynasty’s involvement in managing the artisans who were dedicated copyists. Following the orders of Emperors Taizong (太宗, r. 626–649) and Gaozong (高宗, r. 649–683), a large number of artisans accompanied Wang Xuance on his various diplomatic missions to India and, among their many works, created painted copies of a Maitreya bodhisattva from Central Asia and an impression of the Buddha’s footprint (佛足石) from the Magadha Kingdom in central India. They also described in painting the diverse scenery and customs they encountered.

An imperial order was issued in the year 666 to compile a report on these journeys to the west based on the aforementioned records into a sixty-volume work titled *Xiguo zhi* (西國志, *Records of the Western Countries*), which was accompanied by forty volumes of paintings. According to the fourteenth volume of Dao Shi’s (道世, d. 683) *Fayuan zhulin* (法苑珠林, *Forest of Gems in the Garden of the Dharma*), this compilation project was directed by the Department

of State Affairs (尚書省), also known as “Zhongtai” (中臺), and featured the participation of the most famous artisans in the capital of Chang’an, including the craftsman official Fan Changshou (范長壽, dates unknown). By the time Dao Shi had completed the *Fayuan zhulin* in 668, the *Xiguo zhi* was already in wide circulation. Based on an old story by the Buddhist priest Hui Yu (慧昱) from Yizhou (益州) Province, this book seems to have become well known among the public through the numerous officials and painters who participated in the compilation effort. Therefore, beyond the direct transmission of individual Indian and Central Asian images, the diffusion of Indian and Central Asian styles of Buddhist sculpture would have also been due to materials such as copies produced by artisans or collections of paintings and drawings produced by the state. In addition, these painted models would have spread not only to areas falling within the boundaries of Tang China, such as Dunhuang, but also across the sea to the Korean Peninsula and Japan. In the case of the two images from Gamsansa Temple, when we consider features like the delicate representation of detail and exceptional application of line, it seems very probable that a high-quality official sketch of the type that was produced by the most skilled Tang artisans in the capital, such as the illustrations in the *Xiguo zhi*, was used as a reference.

Song Fazhi (宋法智, dates unknown), who accompanied Wang Xuance’s embassy to India and painted a copy of an image of Śākyamuni under the Bodhi Tree at Mahābodhi Temple, was originally considered a “modelling craftsman” (塑工). His example reveals the intimate connection between sculpture and painting in ancient China. Sculptors were often required to demonstrate basic painting skills as well, and there are many examples of craftsmen who excelled in both painting and sculpture. The famous sculptor Dai Kui (戴逵, d. 395) of the Eastern Jin dynasty (東晉, 317–420) was also a painter, and Yang Huizhi (楊惠之), who was active during the reign of the Tang Emperor Xuanzong (玄宗, r. 712–756), got his start in painting but switched to sculpture due to the great popularity of Wu Daozi. Wu’s student Zhang Ai’er (張愛兒) also studied painting before turning to sculpture. In addition, artisans active during Wu Zetian’s (武則天, r. 690–705) time, such as Dou Hongguo (竇弘果), Mao Poluo (毛婆羅), and Sun Rengui (孫仁貴), as well as Jin Yizhong (金義忠) from the period of Emperor

Dezong (德宗, r. 780–805), were all sculptors highly skilled in painting.

In the first volume of the book *Tuhua jianwen zhi* (圖畫見聞志, *Overview of Painting*) by Guo Ruoxu (郭若虛, active in the late 11th century) from the Northern Song (北宋, 960–1127) period, Tang Buddhist painting is divided into two representative styles: the “Wu type” (吳體) and the “Cao type” (曹體). In direct parallel, there were also two basic schools for sculpture. In fact, the close stylistic relationship between painting and sculpture up until the end of the Tang dynasty is a peculiar characteristic of Chinese art history. Therefore, examining contemporary trends in Tang Buddhist painting can help us to better understand the unique features of the two Gamsansa images.

The Gamsansa Temple Buddha and Bodhisattva Images and Tang Painting in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries

The two images from Gamsansa Temple demonstrate clothing features from Central Asia. However, among the extant Buddhist sculptures from the Tang period, a time when a Sinicized style was already beginning to predominate in China, there are only a handful of sculptures dated to the seventh and eighth centuries featuring the type of thick Buddhist robes with densely overlapping drapery that characterize the Gamsansa images. In contrast, the vast majority of this period’s sculptures were carved using simplified Sinicized folds for the drapery. In addition, there is no other example among all known East Asian bodhisattva statues demonstrating the clothing features found in the Gamsansa bodhisattva image. However, there are multiple examples of this type of depiction in wall paintings from the Mogao Caves. First appearing in the mid-eighth century under a strong influence from mainstream High Tang styles and increasing in frequency from the period of Tibetan occupation during the mid- and late Tang dynasty, these features in wall paintings can be connected to the growing influence of the Khotan Kingdom in Dunhuang of this day. In other words, the Central Asian clothing features that are observed in the two Silla images appear in Buddhist art produced in the Chinese heartland around the beginning of the eighth century, but starting in the eighth century it can be determined that these features underwent a process of Sinicization and eventually disappeared entirely

from the Tang cultural scope. This transformation is profoundly connected to the development of Tang Buddhist art in the seventh and eighth centuries.

Generally speaking, records from the Five Dynasties (五代, 907–960) and Song (宋, 960–1279) periods related to the history of painting explain how figure painting styles were divided into two categories according to their resemblance to either a foreign style or to an indigenous Chinese style. In his work *Yizhou minghua lu* (益州名畫錄, *Famous Paintings from Yizhou*), Huang Xiufu (黃休復) of the Five Dynasties period explains the division between dense “Cao-type” drapery folds and simple “Wu-type” drapery folds, while the Song critic Guo Ruoxu lists the respective progenitors of these so-called Cao and Wu types as Cao Zhongda (曹仲達, active in the late sixth century) of the Northern Qi dynasty (北齊, 550–577) and Wu Daozi (吳道子, c. 680–759) of the Tang dynasty. In reference to these painting styles, Guo quotes from the *Lidai minghua ji* to indicate that “Wu Daozi’s brushstroke was strong and rounded, and his drapery fluttered in the wind and flew upward. Cao Zhongda’s brushstroke was very thick, and his drapery stuck close to the body.” In other words, drapery is divided into the Indian or Central Asian “Cao-type,” in which the clothing remains adhered to the body and creases are expressed through densely overlapping lines, and the native “Wu-type” style that emphasizes the rhythmic flow of the brushwork. Taking these records together, it can be seen that there was a considerable conflict between two schools of painting in Tang China, with the Indian and Central Asian style emphasizing the description of the body through dense drapery while the indigenous Chinese style with its simple drapery folds highlighting flowing, rhythmic calligraphic lines.

Wu Daozi was active in the mainstream Tang art world from the time he was appointed by Emperor Xuanzong during the Kaiyuan period (開元, 713–741). Guo Ruoxu’s record does not provide a clear sense of the development of traditional painting styles in the early Tang period prior to Wu Daozi’s emergence, but this material can be supplemented with contributions from the ninth volume of the *Lidai minghua ji*. According to this record, with the exception of artists of Central Asian descent, the majority of early Tang painters, such as the brothers Yan Lide (閻立德) and Yan Liben (閻立本), as well as Fan Changshou and He Changshou (何長壽), all studied the style of

Zhang Sengyou (張僧繇, active in the first half of the sixth century) of the Liang dynasty (梁, 502–557). Wu Daozi also learned from Zhang’s style, and Wu’s contemporary Zhang Huaiguan (張懷瓘) claimed that “Wu Daozi was Zhang Sengyou born again.” These records indicate that Wu’s painting style was based on Zhang Sengyou. Zhang Yanyuan evaluates both artists together, stating, “Wu Daozi and Zhang Sengyou use the same brushstrokes, and in just one or two strokes they could create an image.” In other words, both painters mastered the simplified calligraphic stroke of the “Wu type” that differed from the Indian and Central Asian school of representing dense folds of drapery.

The representational style of dense folds of drapery manifested in the two Gamsansa images begins to grow more simplified in China in the early eighth century under the impact of Zhang Sengyou, Wu Daozi, and their followers. When Zhang’s painting style was prominent in the early and mid-seventh century and when Wu’s painting style proliferated during the Kaiyuan period of Emperor Xuanzong, there are few examples of Buddhist images with dense drapery folds. The fact that Central Asian styles of representing drapery do appear in Buddhist images from the middle years of the seventh century seems to be related to a wave of curiosity regarding exotic styles that was sparked by exploratory missions to India by the Buddhist monk Xuanzang (玄奘, d. 664) and by Wang Xuance. Publications such as the aforementioned *Xiguo zhi* and *Zhongtian zhuguo tu* (中天竺國圖, *Map of India*), published in 658 in connection to Wang Xuance’s Indian embassy, served to further heighten this upsurge of enthusiasm.

The painter best representing the new artistic expertise in Central Asian styles at this time is Yuchi Yiseng (尉遲乙僧, active in the seventh century). Born in the Khotan Kingdom, he was adept at painting foreign Buddha and bodhisattva images. His painting style is characterized by vivid colors, a remarkable three-dimensional sense of volume created through shading in light and dark, and skill in applying a powerful unmodulated so-called “iron-wire line” (鐵線描, Ch. *tiexianmiao*). His description of dense drapery that reveals the outline of the body underneath corresponds to the aforementioned style of Cao Zhongda.

Yuchi Yiseng entered Chang’an in the early years of the Zhenguan period (貞觀, 626–649) as a palace

guard, but afterward created a number of wall paintings for Buddhist and Taoist temples in the Chang’an and Luoyang areas. It is recorded in the *Tangchao minghua lu* (唐朝名畫錄, *On Famous Paintings of the Tang Period*) and in the chapter “*Si ta ji*” (寺塔記, Records of Temples and Pagodas) in the *Xuji* (續集, *Supplementary Collection*) of the *Youyang zazu* (酉陽雜俎, *Miscellaneous Morsels from Youyang*) that his wall paintings were featured in the pagoda at Ci’ensi Temple as well as the Seven-jewel Tower (七寶臺, Ch. Qibaotai) and Puxian Hall (普賢堂, Ch. Puxiantang) at Guangzhaisi Temple (光宅寺). The pagoda at Ci’ensi Temple was erected in 652 after Xuanzang returned from India, and it underwent large-scale repairs during the Chang’an era. Guangzhaisi Temple was built in 677 by Wu Zetian, China’s only empress regnant, who began as empress consort during the Tang dynasty. The Seven-jewel Tower would have been erected at around the same time, likely in order to enshrine local relics. Puxian Hall was originally Wu Zetian’s washroom (梳洗堂). According to these records, it seems that Yuchi Yiseng’s artistic efforts were confined to the mid- to late seventh century. Since he was active in China from the beginning of the Zhenguan period, the aforementioned elaborate wall paintings seem likely to be his creations.

The *Lidai minghua ji* also mentions that his paintings were found in Buddhist temples in Chang’an, such as An’guosi Temple (安國寺), Xingtangsi Temple (興唐寺), and Feng’ensi Temple (奉恩寺), as well as Dayunsi Temple (大雲寺) in Luoyang. However, An’guosi Temple was established by Emperor Ruizong (睿宗, r. 684–690, 710–712) in 710 at the site of his former residence. If we are to believe the statements in the *Lidai minghua ji*, Yuchi Yiseng must then have been active up until 710. However, considering the average human lifespan and the length of an active career, it is difficult to suppose that Yuchi continued painting into the early eighth century. For this reason, Nagahiro Toshio proposes that the artworks from the early eighth century were not direct creations of Yuchi Yiseng, but were likely produced by followers of the Yuchi Yiseng school (Nagahiro 1985, 322). Through an analysis of old records, Nagahiro also suggests that the Yuchi school flourished for approximately three decades starting with Yuchi Yiseng’s intensive artistic activities during Wu Zetian’s reign and continuing up until some point around 710.

The *Tangchao minghua lu* notes that “The foreign painting themes, paintings of ghosts, and exotic forms all practiced by Yuchi Yiseng were almost entirely discontinued in China.” Only a single individual, “the landscape painter Chen Ting (陳廷),” is listed as his follower. This supports the assumption that the Central Asian painting style centered on Yuchi fell quickly into decline after his death. The rise of Wu Daozi, who painted in an entirely different style, would also have greatly accelerated the demise of the Yuchi school.

However, before Wu Daozi’s style came to dominate in China, foreign and traditional painting styles co-existed in fierce competition during the Tang period. As Wu Hung (巫鴻) has pointed out, two mid-eighth century *Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra Paintings* in Cave 172 of the Mogao Caves provide a fitting example of this phenomenon (Wu Hung 1992). Whereas the Buddha on the south wall (Fig. 12) is depicted in Sinicized robes exposing the chest with collars drooping from both shoulders and showing rhythmical lines, the Buddha on the north wall (Fig. 13) wears a tightly fitted robe revealing the three-dimensional form of the body underneath and with the right shoulder exposed. Its attendant bodhisattvas are shaded in color without any outlines. In other words, the south wall displays Chinese traditional painting styles while the north presents Central Asian and Indian features. Furthermore, it is curious that the shoulder ornamentation and ribbons seen in the representation of the Gamsansa bodhisattva are absent from the images of bodhisattvas on the south wall. On the north wall, in contrast, this motif is prominently depicted in the two attendant bodhisattvas (Fig. 14) seated next to the Amitābha Buddha. In the group of bodhisattvas (Fig. 8) beneath the Buddha can be seen figures with a sash attached at the shoulder with exaggerated knotting that shows a strong correspondence to the Gamsansa bodhisattva image.

Other bodhisattva images (Fig. 15) from Cave 320, created at the same time as Cave 172, also include shoulder ornamentation and ribbons in the style of the Gamsansa bodhisattva. The two attendant bodhisattvas, outlined with strong so-called “iron-wire” lines and with strands of hair that resemble “bending iron or coiling wire,” recall features characteristic of the Yuchi school. Through these examples, the representation of the Gamsansa bodhisattva’s clothing can be seen to have an intimate connection



Fig. 12. *Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra Painting* on the south wall of Cave 172 in the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang (detail). Tang, mid-8th century (Dunhuang Academy 1987, Fig. 9)



Fig. 13. *Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra Painting* on the north wall of Cave 172 in the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang (detail). Tang, mid-8th century (Dunhuang Academy 1987, Fig. 10)

with Central Asian painting styles. Furthermore, it becomes clear that this motif was one of the major features of the Yuchi school active in the mainstream Tang art world in the late seventh to early eighth century.

A passage from the *Tangchao minghua lu* records that “Yuchi Yiseng’s works, such as his figure paintings and bird-and-flower paintings, all follow foreign models and thus lack the Chinese manner,” suggesting that in addition to the overall painting style, the clothing in figure paintings of the Yuchi school

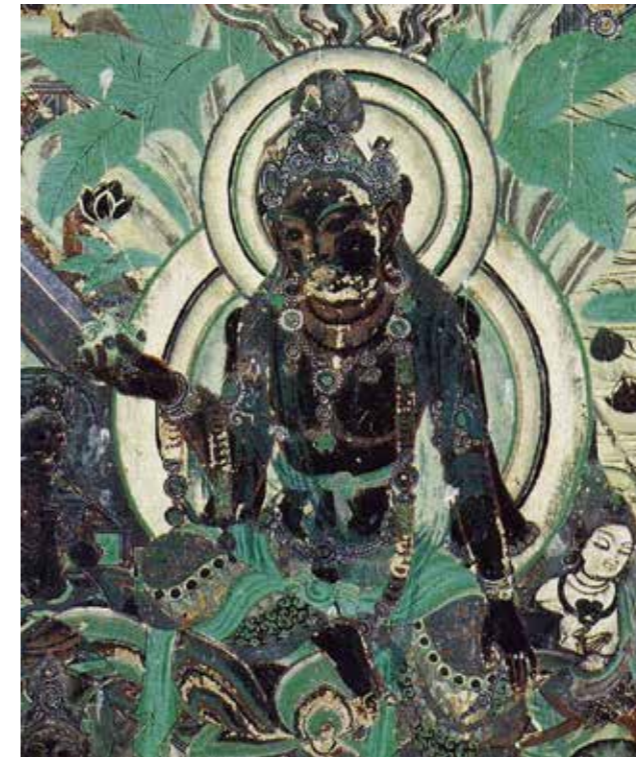


Fig. 14. Attendant Bodhisattva to the left of Amitābha from the *Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra Painting* on the north wall of Cave 172 in the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang (detail). Tang, mid-8th century (Dunhuang Academy 1987, Fig. 13)



Fig. 15. Mahāsthāmaprāpta Bodhisattva from the *Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra Painting* on the north wall of Cave 320 in the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang. Tang, mid-8th century (Taiyosa, ed. 1980, p. 101)

also followed Indian or Central Asian models rather than Chinese fashions. As previously mentioned, the Gamsansa bodhisattva lacks traditional Chinese decorations, such as large pendants or silk ribbons, but rather possesses multiple elements, such as string of beads and belt, that are in fact features of Indian ornamentation and Central Asian clothing styles. In general terms, they can be said to feature the characteristics of Indian or Central Asian styles. The patron of these Gamsansa images, Kim Jiseong, travelled as an envoy to Tang China in 705 during the golden age of the Yuchi school. When taken as a whole, it seems highly likely that the painted models brought back by Kim from Tang followed the style of the Yuchi school that was popular at the time.

Starting from the first half of the eighth century, the Yuchi school declined within mainstream Tang culture. In Dunhuang, however, it lingered through the mid- and late Tang periods, and clothing styles as represented in the Gamsansa bodhisattva image continued to be applied. With regard to the continuation of High Tang styles in Dunhuang, it has been pointed out that the Tibetan seizure of Dunhuang in 781 interrupted the introduction of new Tang styles into the region. However, when it comes to the popularity of the shoulder ornamentation and ribbons, we must consider a further possibility.

During the mid- and late Tang periods, new artistic topics and styles entered Dunhuang from India and the Khotan region, resulting in the emergence of a number of iconographic schemes related to Khotan, such as the founding legends of the Khotan Kingdom, as well as numerous examples of Indian and Khotanese paintings of auspicious image (瑞像圖), which are the concern of this paper. On the ceilings of Caves 231 and 237 are found multiple paintings of auspicious images originating in the two regions, and some of the bodhisattvas are represented with features such as ribbons and exaggerated ornamental knotting on the shoulders. The wall paintings in Cave 237 in particular show a comparatively strong Central Asian influence, particularly in the use of shading in light and dark, and almost all of the bodhisattva images in the *Bhaiṣajyaguru Sūtra Painting* and the *Devatā Sūtra Painting* on the north wall include shoulder ornamentation and ribbons in the style apparent in the Gamsansa bodhisattva image. Other auspicious images from the same cave, such as the painting *The Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara of the*



Fig. 16. *Avalokiteśvara of the Mojia Kingdom* inside the niche on the west wall of Cave 237 in the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang. Mid-Tang period (Sun Xiushen, ed. 2000, Fig. 91)



Fig. 17. *Auspicious Image of the Ākāśagarbha Bodhisattva from Western Jade River in Satkāya Temple* inside the niche on the west wall of Cave 237 in the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang. Mid-Tang Period (Sun Xiushen, ed. 2000, Fig. 99)

Mojia Kingdom (天竺摩伽國救苦觀世音菩薩) (Fig. 16) to the north of the niche on the west wall, as well as the paintings *The Auspicious Images of Śākyamuni and Bodhisattva on the Altar of the Mojie Kingdom* (摩竭國須彌座釋迦并銀菩薩瑞像) and *The Auspicious Image of the Ākāśagarbha Bodhisattva from Western Jade River in Satkāya Temple* (虛空藏菩薩於西玉河薩迦耶僊寺住瑞像) (Fig. 17) both on the east wall, similarly include such features. The designations “Mojia Kingdom” and “Mojie Kingdom” both refer to the Magadha Kingdom (c. 1200–322 BCE) in India, while “Western Jade River” seems to refer to the Karakash River to the west of the city of Khotan. However, the style of exaggerated shoulder ornamentation and ribbons depicted in the two Magadhan bodhisattvas mentioned above do not appear in bodhisattva images from the Indian region itself. In Caves 231 and 237, the painting *The Auspicious Image Carved of Sandalwood in the City of Bhīmā in Khotan* (于闐憐摩城中彌檀瑞像) (Fig. 18) is in fact an Indian image said to have been originally created by King Udayana, while the painting *The Auspicious Image of Vipāśyin Buddha* (微波施佛瑞像) depicts another Indian image that was claimed to have flown from Śrāvastī in India to the Khotan region. Despite these narratives, these two Indian images feature a similar type of crown with wide and long beaded cords that is one of the prominent clothing features found in images of a Khotan king in wall paintings, such as the example in Cave 98. Together, these examples suggest that some of the Indian and Khotan auspicious paintings in the Mogao Caves were based on models transmitted from Khotan.

Generally speaking, auspicious paintings have a telling political connotation. The appearance of Khonese auspicious paintings in Dunhuang indicates that the two regions maintained a certain political connection. It further signifies that there must have been direct contacts between the two regions that enabled Khotan influence to expand throughout Dunhuang. In this way, although the Yuchi Yiseng school was waning within mainstream Tang culture, the Central Asian style found in the Gamsansa bodhisattva’s shoulder ornaments and ribbons continued to be actively applied through the mid- and late Tang periods in Dunhuang under Tibetan occupation due to the strong influence from the Khotan region.



Fig. 18. *Auspicious Image Carved of Sandalwood in the City of Bhīmā in Khotan* inside the niche on the west wall of Cave 231 in the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang. Mid-Tang period (Sun Xiushen, ed. 2000, Fig. 59)

Conclusion

The Gamsansa Amitābha Buddha and Maitreya bodhisattva are Buddhist sculptures that clearly illustrate the transmission of Central Asian styles from Tang China to the Unified Silla Kingdom. Extremely few comparable examples of such prominent Central Asian features can be found in contemporaneous East Asian Buddhist sculpture. While there are no other examples of this Maitreya bodhisattva's shoulder ornamentation and ribbons in extant sculptures of bodhisattvas from East Asia, they do appear in great numbers in cave paintings from the Mogao Caves produced after the High Tang period. In this paper, I proposed that this phenomenon likely derives from the fact that the two Gamsansa images were carved based on painted models. I have further examined how the absence in East Asian sculpture of the formal characteristics prominent in these images is due to the historical circumstances of the rise and decline of the Yuchi Yiseng school.

That is to say, not only are these two Gamsansa images representative of Buddhist sculpture from Silla in the eighth century, but they also are significant in that they shed additional light on aspects of the Yuchi style of painting that dominated the region of Chang'an in Tang China from the mid-seventh to the early eighth century. However, it is advisable to remain cautious of the fact that among the motifs and representations of clothing adopted by the Yuchi school, some may have originated in India, but there were also a number of conventions that originated in Persia and spread widely in Central Asia. This synthesis of distinct influences reflects the multi-cultural characteristics of Central Asia. In addition, the fact cannot be overlooked that an interest in Persian styles also developed due to the large-scale immigration of Persians to Chang'an following the fall of the Sasanian dynasty (224–651) in Persia. For that reason, it can be fairly stated that the two images from Gamsansa Temple are a manifestation of the melting pot of artistic conventions from India, Central Asia, and Persia that emerged within mainstream Tang culture from the mid-seventh to early eighth century.

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TRANSLATED BY NATHANIEL KINGDON

This paper is an abridged and revised English version of “The Relationship between the Buddhist Sculptures of Unified Silla and Painting Style of the Tang Dynasty: Focusing on the Images of the Buddha and Bodhisattva in Gamsansa” (통일신라 불교조각과 당대 화풍: 감산사 아미타불입상과 미륵보살입상을 중심으로), previously published in 2014 in *Art History Forum* (미술사논단) 38.

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