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The Dunhuang Manuscripts and the Literature of the Tang and Five Dynasties

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Abstract

In 1900, the unsealing of the Library Cave in the Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes revealed seventy thousand premodern manuscripts. Among these was a significant number of literary resources that were introduced to the modern world for the first time. For researchers of Tang and Five Dynasties literature, these new sources were sufficient to rewrite Chinese literary history and further advance the knowledge and depth of literary research. This article will provide a succinct introduction to the achievements and significance of Dunhuang literary research over the past century.

Keywords

Dunhuang manuscript – literary research – achievements

The discovery of the Dunhuang manuscripts at the beginning of the 20th century has provided a wealth of primary sources for research on social and cultural history from the Tang dynasty (618–907) to the early Song dynasty (960–1276). Literary texts comprise only a small part of the Dunhuang manuscripts. However, in addition to literature that is recited and sung (*jiangchang wenxue* 講唱文學) found exclusively in Dunhuang—of which transformation texts (*bianwen* 變文) are a representative form—other traditional genres are also present, including poems (*shi* 詩), song lyrics (*ci* 詞), essays (*wen* 文), and rhapsodies (*fu* 賦). As a result, numerous literary works that have long

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been lost have re-entered the field of literary history. Valuable sources—previously lost or seldom seen among transmitted texts—have shed light on hidden or unresolved issues related to literary genres and literary history. The collation and study of Dunhuang literary texts have broadened the horizons of traditional literary research and enriched our understanding of literature from the Tang and Five Dynasties (907–979). The present article will utilize relatively common genre classifications to introduce important pieces of Dunhuang literature, along with relevant collation and research.

1 Dunhuang Transformation Texts and Oral Literature

Among the many literary genres found in Dunhuang, the most well-known is the transformation text, a genre of performance literature that emerged from folk music and became popular during the Tang Dynasty, featuring a mix of rhyming and prose elements, including Buddhist scriptures, historical stories, and folk legends. The reasons it the most well-known genre are twofold: first, the transformation text is a unique form of Tang dynasty popular literature found exclusively among the Dunhuang manuscripts; second, for a long time, scholars had only a vague understanding of the classification of Dunhuang's recited and sung literature, leading to the term "transformation text" being used as a general descriptor for all vernacular oral literature. The diverse range of pieces collected in Wang Zhongmin 王重民 (1903–1975) and Xiang Da's 向達 (1900–1966) *Dunhuang bianwen ji* 敦煌變文集 (Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1957) reflects this understanding.

Today, scholars continue to hold both broad and narrow conceptions of the transformation text. However, following advancements in research, there is a growing consensus concerning the identification and classification of Dunhuang's recited and sung genres. The transformation text is only one genre of oral literature, and while it is the most representative genre, it does not encompass all other genres that exist alongside it, such as scriptural texts (*jiangjing wen* 講經文), origin texts (*yinyuan* 因緣), lyrical texts (*ciwen* 詞文), and others. Each of these genres shares a similar oral narrative form while also possessing its own distinct content and aesthetic characteristics.

Transformation texts are the source texts for the Tang and Five Dynasties performance art called *zhuanbian* 轉變. The term *zhuanbian* itself refers to the performance of transformation texts. The titles of a small number of transformation texts appear scattered throughout historical records, but before the discovery of the Dunhuang manuscripts, these were largely overlooked. Examples include *Zhaojun bian* 昭君變 (recorded in Ji Shilao's 吉師老 poem

"Kan Shunü zhuan Zhaojun bian" 看蜀女轉昭君變), *Mulian bian* 目連變 (mentioned in the seventh section, "Chaoxi" 嘲戲, in Meng Qi's 孟棨 *Benshi shi* 本事詩), and *Houtu furen bian* 后土夫人變 (found in the entry "Li Longseng" 李聾僧 in the 4th *juan* of Huang Xiufu's 黃休復 *Maoting kehua* 茅亭客話 written during the Song dynasty). Among the Dunhuang manuscripts, eight pieces are clearly labeled as transformation texts (utilizing the terms *bian* or *bianwen*). These pieces are the *Pomo bian* 破魔變, *Xiangmo bianwen* 降魔變文, *Damu qianlian mingjian jiumu bianwen bingtu yijuan bingxu* 大目乾連冥間救母變文並圖一卷並序, *Baxiang bian* 八相變, *Pinpo suoluo wanghou cainü gongde yi gongyang ta shengtian yinyuan bian* 頻婆娑羅王后彩女功德意供養塔生天因緣變, *Hanjiang Wang Ling bian* 漢將王陵變, *Shunzi bian* 舜子變, and *Qianhan Liujia taizi bian* 前漢劉家太子變.

Some pieces with missing titles have also been identified as transformation texts. Among these are the *Wu Zixu bianwen* 伍子胥變文, *Li Ling bianwen* 李陵變文, *Wang Zhaojun bianwen* 王昭君變文, *Meng Jiang nü bianwen* 孟姜女變文, *Zhang Yichao bianwen* 張議潮變文, *Zhang Huaishen bianwen* 張淮深變文. Among the above mentioned pieces, the *Shunzi bian* is written in six-character-line verses and resembles a vernacular rhapsody in its composition, while the *Qianhan Liujia taizi bian* uses prose and has a structure similar to *huaben* 話本 texts. Aside from these two pieces, the others are prosimetric and alternate between recited and sung. Based on the written characteristics of transformation texts and illustrations found in some manuscripts, it has been proposed that performances were accompanied by visual representations such as paintings and drawings.

The themes of transformation texts can be divided into two types: Buddhist and secular. Buddhist-themed texts draw from scriptures without directly citing the scriptures themselves. Rather, they select interesting anecdotes from the scriptures and elaborate on them. Secular-themed texts predominantly center on historical figures and folk legends. They draw on historical events but are not confined to them; they incorporate folk legends, adding embellishments and details to recreate the narratives. Two pieces that describe real historical figures tell the story of the leaders of Shazhou's 沙洲 Guiyi Army (*guiyi jun* 歸義軍), Zhang Yichao 張議潮 (799–872) and his nephew, telling of their uprising against the Tibetan Empire, their submission to the Tang, and their efforts to protect of the common people. This is a significant historical event reflected in literary writing, demonstrating unique historical and regional characteristics.

The origin of the term "transformation text" has been a long-discussed problem in academia. There are no records providing a clear explanation, and the lack of textual evidence has led to a multitude of different theories.

To summarize, views can be split into the "native" and "foreign" camps, each reflecting different emphases. The former emphasizes the sources of the prosimetric narrative form,[1] while the latter focuses on the semantic origins of the term "transformation text."[2] Although there is still no universally accepted view, in-depth explorations of relevant texts and similar genres have revealed the cultural background behind the birth, growth, and maturation of Dunhuang's oral literature, most notably represented by transformation texts. This has greatly enriched our understanding of China's popular and vernacular oral literature.

Vernacular narration (*sujiang* 俗講) is another oral narrative form that was widely popular in Tang and Five Dynasties monasteries. The source texts for vernacular narration are the previously mentioned *jiangjing wen*: comments or lectures on scripture. The only completely preserved *jiangjing wen* piece is *Changxing sinian zhongxingdian ying shengjie jiangjing wen* 長興四年中興殿應聖節講經文. Other pieces, though originally missing titles, can be identified as *jiangjing wen* based on their content and form. These include *Jin'gang bore boluomi jing jiangjing wen* 金剛般若波儸蜜經講經文, *Foshuo amituo jing jiangjing wen* 佛説阿彌陀經講經文, and *Weimojie jing jiangjing wen* 維摩詰經講經文. Vernacular narration was a product of the increasing popularity of preaching scriptures. Consequently, these activities would have largely followed the forms and rituals used when preaching on Buddhist texts. There would be an opening chant (*yazuo wen* 押座文) before the sermon, which would conclude with another chant (*jiezuo wen* 解座文). Several of these chants are preserved in the Dunhuang manuscripts, including *Baxiang yazuo wen* 八相押座文, *Sanshen yazuo wen* 三身押座文, *Weimojie jing yazuo wen*

1 See Xiang Da's 向達 "Dunhuang sujiang kao" 敦煌俗講考, Cheng Yizhong's 程毅中 "Guanyu bianwen de jidian tansuo" 關於變文的幾點探索, and Zhou Shaoliang's 周紹良 "Tan Tangdai minjian wenxue" 談唐代民間文學. All of these appear in *Dunhuang bianwen lunwen lu* 敦煌變文論文錄, ed. Zhou Shaoliang 周紹良 and Bai Huawen 白化文 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1982). For more recent research, see Jiang Boqin 姜伯勤, "Bianwen de nanfang yuantou yu Dunhuang de changdao fajiang" 變文的南方源頭與敦煌的唱導法匠, in *Dunhuang yishu zongjiao yu liyue wenming: zongjiao pian* 敦煌藝術宗教與禮樂文明・宗教篇 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1996).

2 See chapter six of Zheng Zhenduo 鄭振鐸, *Zhongguo suwenxue shi* 中國俗文學史 (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1938) and Zhou Yiliang's 周一良 "Du *Tangdai sujiang kao*" 讀《唐代俗講考》, Guan Dedong's 關德棟 "Lüe shuo 'bian' zi de laiyuan" 略說 '變' 字的來源, and Sun Kaidi's 孫楷弟 "Du bianwen: bianwen bianzi zhi jie" 讀變文・變文變字之解, in *Dunhuang bianwen lunwen lu* 敦煌變文論文錄, ed. Zhou Shaoliang 周紹良 and Bai Huawen 白化文 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1982). See Victor H. Mair, *Huihua yu biaoyan: Zhongguo de kantu jiang gushi he tade Yindu qiyuan* 繪畫與表演—中國的看圖講故事和它的印度起源 (Beijing: Yanshan chubanshe, 2000).

維摩詰經押座文, *Wenshi jing jiangchang yazuo wen* 溫室經講唱押座文, and *Gu Tujian dashi ershisi xiao yazuo wen* 故圖鑒大師二十四孝押座文.

Narrations on *yinyuan* is another genre of oral literature used to promulgate Buddhist teachings. The source texts of these stories are called *yinyuan*, *yuanqi* 緣起, or *yuan* 緣. All of these tell stories of karma and reincarnation. Narrations on *yinyuan* are similar in form to the vernacular narration of scriptures. The difference between the two is that narrations on *yinyuan* recount stories from scriptures without expounding on the scriptures themselves. *Yinyuan* and transformation texts are also closely related. The previously mentioned *Pinpo suoluo wanghou cainü gongde yi gongyang ta shengtian yinyuan bian* contains both *yinyuan* and *bian* (transformation) in its title, and it is believed that *yinyuan* was a transitory style that existed between *jiangjing wen* and transformation texts.

Yinyuan pieces found in Dunhuang include *Xida taizi xiudao yinyuan* 悉達太子修道因緣, *Nantuo chujia yuanqi* 難陀出家緣起, *Mulian yuanqi* 目連緣起, *Huanxi guowang yuan* 歡喜國王緣, *Chounü yuanqi* 醜女緣起, and *Sishou yinyuan* 四獸因緣. Among them, *Sishou yinyuan* was written by a famous religious leader, the Tang dynasty monk Wu Zhen 悟真. It is one of the few pieces of recited and sung literature written by a well-known author.

The only complete piece of Dunhuang *ciwen* is *Dahan sannian Ji Bu mazhen ciwen* 大漢三年季布罵陣詞文, with the full title *Dahan sannian Chujiang Ji Bu mazhen Hanwang xiuchi qunchen bama shoujun ciwen* 大漢三年楚將季布罵陣漢王羞恥群臣拔馬收軍詞文. This piece is longer than the *Gushi wei Jiao Zhongqing qi zuo* 古詩為焦仲卿妻作, which has historically been recognized as the first narrative long poem. It is thus considered the longest seven-character narrative poem appearing before the Tang dynasty. Other *ciwen* pieces include *Bainiao ming: junchen yizhang* 百鳥名·君臣儀仗, *Ji Bu shiyong* 季布詩詠, and *Dong Yong* 董永 (recorded in manuscript S. 2204, with a title given by later generations).

The most influential compilation of Dunhuang oral literature and transformation texts is the *Dunhuang bianwen ji* compiled by Xiang Da and Wang Zhongmin. Following the release of this work, scholars continued to publish additional supplements and annotations. The most notable among these are Jiang Lihong's 蔣禮鴻 (1916–1995) *Dunhuang bianwen ziyi tongshi* 敦煌變文字義通釋 (Zhonghua shuju shanghai bianjisuo, 1959, with an expanded edition published by the Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1988), Pan Zhonggui's 潘重規 *Dunhuang bianwen ji xinshu* 敦煌變文集新書 (Zhongguo wenhua daxue zhongwen yanjiusuo, 1984), Guo Zaiyi 郭在貽 (1939–1989), Zhang Yongquan 張涌泉, and Huang Zheng's 黃征 *Dunhuang bianwen jiaoyi* 敦煌變文校議 (Yuelu Shushe, 1990), as well as a large number of scholarly articles. Supplementary

works of more recently discovered pieces include Zhou Shaoliang 周紹良 (1917–2005) and Bai Huawen's 白化文 (1930–2021) *Dunhuang bianwen ji xubian* 敦煌變文集續編 (Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1989). Selections include Xiang Chu's 項楚 (1940–2025) *Dunhuang bianwen xuanzhu* 敦煌變文選注 (Bashu shushe, 1990). Huang Zheng and Zhang Yongquan's *Dunhuang bianwen jiaozhu* 敦煌變文校注 (Zhonghua shuju, 1997) is a compilation built on the foundations of the previously listed works.

2 Dunhuang Poetry

Poetry makes up the majority of Dunhuang literary works and consists mostly of poems from the Tang and Five Dynasties. It includes both refined works written by literati and vernacular poetry, totaling around 3,000 pieces. Poetry can be divided into two types based on the nature of surviving manuscripts: copied manuscripts of poetry anthologies and individual poems. Among the former, a small number of poetry collections is seen in historical records, while the majority are compilations of various poems that share characteristics with poetry collections. The latter are verses found at the beginning or end of scriptures and on secular writings.

Among the Tang and Five Dynasties poetry collections from Dunhuang, those whose existence was already known to us are the *Zhuying ji* 珠英集, compiled by Cui Rong 崔融 (653–706) from the early Tang period, and the *Yaochi xinyong* 瑤池新詠, compiled by Cai Xingfeng 蔡省風 from the late Tang period. Each of these is an example of Tang poems compiled by Tang scholars. Although the titles of these anthologies are listed in Tang and Song bibliographies, the collections themselves had long been lost. The surviving parts of the two *Zhuying ji* manuscripts contain portions of *juan* four and *juan* five, comprising fifty-five poems altogether. Among them, thirty are lost works that were not recorded in the *Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩, but most can now be found in Wang Zhongmin's *Bu Quan Tang shi* 補全唐詩. For a complete compilation of the poems, see Fu Xuancong's 傅璇琮 (1933–2016) *Tangren xuan Tangshi xinbian* 唐人選唐詩新編 (Shaanxi renmin jiaoyu chubanshe, 1996).

The *Yaochi xinyong* is a selection of poems by women poets discovered in the Russian collection of Dunhuang manuscripts. With the addition of other newly discovered fragments, we now have twenty-three poems by four women poets: Li Jilan 李季蘭 (d. 784), Yuan Chun 元淳 (fl. 755), Ji Zhongfu's 吉中孚 (730–790) wife Lady Zhang 張夫人 (dates unknown), and Cui Zhongrong 崔仲容 (fl. 898). This accounts for roughly one fifth of the entire *Yaochi*

xinyong.[3] The discoveries of Cui Rong's *Zhuying ji* and Cai Xingfeng's *Yaochi xinyong* have increased the number of extant collections of Tang poems compiled by individuals from the Tang dynasty to eleven. Though artistic value was not the standard used when compiling these two collections, they both feature women poets from the early and late Tang periods. Without a doubt, these pieces have enriched our understanding of Tang poetry.

As for collections of poems by a single author, the *Wang Fanzhi shiji* 王梵志詩集 has the most surviving copies. The *Wang Fanzhi shiji* is listed in the *Nihon koku genzai shomokuroku* 日本國見在書目錄, compiled by Fujiwara Nosukeyo 藤原佐世 (847–898) and in the seventh section of the "Yiwen zhi" 藝文志 chapter of the *Song shi* 宋史, but the text has long been lost. Only around twenty of his poems survive, found among Tang and Song poetry notebooks such as the *Shi shi* 詩式, *Yunxi youyi* 雲溪友議, and *Jianjie lu* 鑒誡錄, as well as the recorded sayings of Chan Buddhists. The Dunhuang manuscripts contain over thirty copies of Wang Fanzhi's 王梵志 poetry, including single-*juan* and three-*juan* versions (two types), as well as one version with 110 poems.

Wang Fanzhi's poems vary significantly in content, and it is possible that not all of them are the works of a single author. Different versions of the poetry collection were produced at varying times, and, in addition, it has been discovered that poems by other writers have been mixed in or confused with his works.[4] This means that "Wang Fanzhi's poems" are most likely a combination of works by numerous vernacular poets. A total of approximately 390 poems attributed to Wang Fanzhi have been found both in Dunhuang and among transmitted texts.

It is worth noting that different versions of the manuscript contain no repeated works, and no works appear in both the Dunhuang manuscripts and transmitted texts. There is currently no reasonable explanation for this phenomenon. Additionally, modern compilations use the original preface found only in the three-*juan* version (comprising *shangjuan* 上卷, *zhongjuan* 中卷, and *xiajuan* 下卷) as a preface for all of Wang Fanzhi's poetic works. They even draw connections between the "over three hundred poems" mentioned in the

3 Rong Xinjiang 榮新江 and Xu Jun 徐俊, "Tang Cai Xingfeng bian *Yaochi xinyong* chongyan" 唐蔡省風編《謠池新詠》重研, in *Tang yanjiu* 唐研究, ed. Rong Xinjiang 榮新江 (Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2001), 7: 125–44.

4 Xiang Chu 項楚, "Wang Fanzhi shi zhong de taren zuopin" 王梵志詩中的他人作品, in *Dunhuang Tulufan yanjiu* 敦煌吐魯番研究, ed. Ji Xianlin 季羨林 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1995), 1: 91–100.

preface and the current number of extant poems. In truth, this is an inadvertent mistake.

Research on Wang Fanzhi's poems is among the most extensive scholarship on Dunhuang poetry, with several compilations available both inside and outside of China. Early publications include the French scholar Paul Demieville's (1894–1979) *L'Oeuvre de Wang le Zélateur* (*Wang Fan-tche*), *suivie des Instructions domestiques de l'Aïeul* (*T'ai-kong kia-kiao*) (Collège de France Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1982) and Zhang Xihou's 張錫厚 (1937–2005) *Wang Fanzhi shi jiaoji* 王梵志詩校輯 (Zhonghua shuju, 1983). Following these works, Zhu Fengyu 朱鳳玉 published *Wang Fanzhi shi yanjiu* 王梵志詩研究 (Xuesheng shuju, 1986–1987). Xiang Chu's *Wang Fanzhi shi jiaozhu* 王梵志詩校注 (Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990) is the most complete and accurate collection of Wang Fanzhi's poems. *Wang Fanzhi shi yanjiu huilu* 王梵志詩研究匯錄 (Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990), edited by Zhang Xihou, collects the collations and findings of scholars from the modern era, serving as a valuable reference.

Collections by a single author found in historical records include the *Li Qiao zayong zhu* 李嶠雜詠注 and Zhao Gu's 趙嘏 (806–853) *Dushi biannian shi* 讀史編年詩. In addition to these, it can be inferred from surviving poetic fragments that there are other collections, such as the *Gao Shi shiji* 高適詩集 with forty-nine extant poems, the *Cen Shen shiji* 岑參詩集 with eleven extant poems, the *Zhang Hu shiji* 張祜詩集 with seven extant poems, and a collection by unknown authors (in Dunhuang manuscripts S.6234, P.5007, and P.2672) with thirty-one extant poems.

Three additional fragmentary collections of literature by Tang scholars are worth mentioning, even though none of the poems survived (only other types of literature survived). The first is the four-*juan Gantang ji* 甘棠集 by the late Tang poet Liu Ye 劉鄴 (d. 880, P. 4093). It is a narrow booklet with a sewn binding, but both the front and back are damaged. Wang Zhongmin's research has shown that this is the same text recorded in the "Yiwen zhi" chapter of the *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書. The *Gantang ji* includes several types of official documents, such as *biao* 表, *zhuang* 狀, *shu* 書, and *qi* 啓. In this regard, it differs from other collections by Tang writers and shares characteristics with manuals used to teach writing (*shuyi wenfan* 書儀文範). For a collated version of the collection, see Zhao Heping's 趙和平 (1948–2020) *Dunhuang biao zhuang jian qi shuyi jijiao* 敦煌表狀箋啓書儀輯校 (Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1997). Another work, *Dunhuangben Gantang ji yanjiu* 敦煌本甘棠集研究 (Xin wenfeng chuban gongsi, 2000), not only records the fully collated and annotated text of the *Gantang ji*, but also includes an introduction to research about the work

and its author, Liu Ye. In addition, it features five supplementary papers, each providing an in-depth exploration of issues related to the text.

The second surviving collection is the *Gu Chen Zi'ang ji* 故陳子昂集, of which *juan* eight (in fragments), nine, and ten have survived. There is an attached biography, the *Chenshi biezhuan* 陳氏別傳, the end of which states "*Gu Chen Zi'ang ji* in ten *juan*, collected in one scroll." This is the ten-*juan* version compiled by Lu Cangyong 盧藏用 (655–713). Wang Zhongmin's *Bali Dunhuang canjuan xulu* 巴黎敦煌殘卷敘錄 (Volume 1, Guoli Beiping tushuguan, 1936) was the first to affirm its authenticity. Wu Qiyu 吳其昱 (1915–2011) later provided a thorough analysis in "Dunhuangben *Gu Chen Zi'ang ji* canjuan yanjiu" 敦煌本故陳子昂集殘卷研究 (in the *Xianggang daxue wushi zhounian jinian lunwen ji* 香港大學五十周年紀念論文集, Hong Kong University Press, 1966). The British collection's fragmented manuscript S. 9432 can be connected to the three previously mentioned volumes.[5] The last surviving manuscript is the five-*juan Wang Ji ji* 王績集, which contains three rhapsodies. See the section on rhapsodies for further discussion.

Poetry collections not seen in historical records include the *Xinhai ji* 心海集, compiled by an unknown author, and Li Xiang's 李翔 *Shedao shi* 涉道詩. The former is a poetry collection on Buddhist religious thought compiled by a Tang author and contains 155 poems, including "Puti pian" 菩提篇, "Zhidao pian" 至道篇, "Zhimi pian" 執迷篇, "Jiewu pian" 解悟篇, and "Qinku pian" 勤苦篇, among others. The latter includes twenty-eight poems that exclusively document Daoist figures, stories, and sagely works. It is hypothesized that the author is Li Xiang, a magistrate (*wei* 尉) of Putian 莆田 and a member of the royal family living during the middle to late Tang periods. Wu Qiyu and Lin Congming 林聰明 have done a complete analysis and collation of the work.[6]

Unlike the collections that are seen in historical records or that have titles, most of the poetry in the Dunhuang manuscripts is found in compilations of various poems that neither give a name for their collections nor their compilers. Among the large number of copied and transmitted individual poems, Wei Zhuang's 韋莊 (836–910) "Qinfu yin" 秦婦吟 (P. 3381, etc.) was one of the first

5 Rong Xinjiang 榮新江, *Yingguo tushuguan cang Dunhuang hanwen fei fojiao wenxian canjuan mulu* 英國圖書館藏敦煌漢文非佛教文獻殘卷目錄 (Taipei: Xin wenfeng chuban gongsi, 1995).

6 See Go kiiku 吳其昱, "Ri Shō oyobi sono shōdōshi" 李翔及其涉道詩, in *Dōkyo kenkyū* 道教研究, ed. Yoshioka Yoshitoyo 吉岡義豊 (Tokyo: Shyōshinsya, 1965), and Lin Congming 林聰明, "Dunhuang ben Li Xiang shedao shi kaoshi" 敦煌本李翔涉道詩考釋, *Dunhuang xue* 敦煌學 7 (1984): 103–22.

to gain scholarly attention. Though unrecorded by historical figures, its coincidental discovery has given it a place in history. This is not uncommon with Dunhuang manuscripts. Concerning modern research on the "Qinfu yin," see the *"Qinfu yin" yanjiu huilu* 秦婦吟研究匯錄 (Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990) compiled by Yan Tingliang 顏廷亮 and others.

The work of compiling Dunhuang poetry in its entirety began with Wang Zhongmin's *Bu Quan Tang shi*. Subsequent works include Ba Zhou's 巴宙 (1918–2017) *Dunhuang yunwen ji* 敦煌韻文集 (Gaoxiong fojiao wenhua fuwuchu, 1965), Huang Yongwu's 黃永武 (1936–2023) *Dunhuang de Tangshi* 敦煌的唐詩 (Taibei hongfan shudian, 1987), and the joint work by Huang Yongwu and Shi Shuting 施淑婷 *Dunhuang de Tangshi xubian* 敦煌的唐詩續編 (Taibei wenshizhe chuban she, 1989). Over the past several decades, many Chinese scholars have concentrated their efforts on fully compiling, recording, and verifying all poems found among the Dunhuang manuscripts, as seen in Xu Jun's 徐俊 *Dunhuang shiji canjuan jikao* 敦煌詩集殘卷輯考 (Zhonghua shuju, 2000). Overviews of Dunhuang poetry include Xiang Chu's *Dunhuang shige daolun* 敦煌詩歌導論 (Taibei Xinwenfeng chuban gongsi, 1993). This work categorizes and discusses a large number of examples based on their content and artistic characteristics, providing comprehensive and insightful explanations.

3 Dunhuang Lyrics

"Dunhuang lyrics" (*Dunhuang geci* 敦煌歌辭) is a general term used for all pieces in the Dunhuang manuscripts that could be sung with musical accompaniment. However, limitations in early research and the diversity of scholars' starting points have led to different understandings of their nature. As a result, Dunhuang lyrics have been given several different names. Those who emphasize the musical characteristics of the pieces call them "tunes" (*qu* 曲 or *quzi* 曲子, including terms such as *suqu* 俗曲, *liqu* 俚曲, and *foqu* 佛曲). Others emphasize their connection to traditional lyrics (*ci* 詞) and call them *ci* or *quzi ci* 曲子詞 (tune lyrics). These names are tied to interrelated concepts, and while there are pieces corresponding to each of these terms within Dunhuang lyrics, none fully encompass the entirety of these pieces. For this reason, the current article will use the broader label of "lyrics" and introduce them according to the traditional categories of song lyrics and folk songs.

Among the Dunhuang manuscripts, roughly 200 pieces can be considered traditional tune lyrics. Among these, the thirty songs of the *Yunyao ji za quzi* 雲謠集雜曲子 are of the greatest significance. There are currently two

surviving manuscript copies of the *Yunyao ji*,[7] both of which have the heading "thirty miscellaneous tunes of the *Yunyao ji za quzi*." Manuscript S.1441 preserves eighteen songs from the first half, while manuscript P. 2838 preserves fourteen songs. Two pieces titled "Feng gui yun" 鳳歸雲 are preserved in both manuscripts, and it can be ascertained from this that both were copied by the same person. Financial records for Anguo Temple are written on the back of manuscript P. 2838, including the dates the 4th year of the Zhonghe 中和 era (881–885) and the 2nd year of the Guangqi 光啓 era (885–888). The same manuscript also contains the *Za zhaiwen shi* 雜齋文式 from Dunhuang's short-lived Jinshan Kingdom 金山國 period, which lasted only two years (910–911).[8] Thus, it can be inferred that the *Yunyao ji* was being copied and circulated during the later years of the Later Liang (907–923), earlier than the *Huajian ji* 花間集, which was compiled in 940 of the Later Shu (934–965). Therefore, the *Yunyao ji* would have naturally been composed at an even earlier date.

The *Yunyao ji* was first referenced by Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877–1927), based on a transcription by Kano Naoki 狩野直喜 (1868–1947) , which includes only three pieces.[9] Subsequent printed versions were released, including Luo Zhenyu's 羅振玉 (1866–1940) *Dunhuang lingshi* 敦煌零拾 and Zhu Xiaozang's 朱孝臧 (1857–1931) supplemented edition of the *Jiangcun congshu* 疆村叢書 (these two works record eighteen pieces from the British collection), as well as Liu Fu's 劉復 (1891–1934) *Dunhuang duosuo* 敦煌掇瑣, which records fourteen pieces from the French collection.

The earliest work to compile the entirety of the *Yunyao ji* was Long Muxun's 龍沐勛 (1902–1966) *Jiangcun yishu* 疆村遺書. Pan Zhonggui's *Dunhuang Yunyao ji xinshu* 敦煌雲謠集新書 (Shimen tushu gongsi chuban, 1977) records and collates the work based on the original manuscripts and offers the most thorough review of the material. It also includes printed copies of the original manuscripts. There are numerous articles with collations, annotations,

7 Ren Bantang's 任半塘 *Dunhuang geci zongbian* 敦煌歌辭總編 notes that there is also a third manuscript of the *Yunyao ji*, called the "Ban xiaoniang" 伴小娘 manuscript, mailed to Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 by Pelliot. This is incorrect. See Jao Tsung-I 饒宗頤, "Yunyao ji yixie wenti de jiantao" 雲謠集一些問題的檢討, *Mingbao yuekan* 明報月刊, no. 6 (1988): 57–62, also collected in Jao Tsung-I 饒宗頤, *Dunhuang qu xulun* 敦煌曲續論 (Taipei: Xin wenfeng chuban gongsi, 1996).

8 See chapter six of Rong Xinjiang 榮新江, *Guiyijun shi yanjiu* 歸義軍史研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1996).

9 Wang Guowei 王國維, "Dunhuang fajian Tangchao zhi tongsu shi ji tongsu xiaoshuo" 敦煌發見唐朝之通俗詩及通俗小説, *Dongfang zazhi* 東方雜誌 17.8 (1920): 95–100.

prefaces, and postscripts on the *Yunyao ji*. It is recommended that the reader reference *Yunyao ji yanjiu huilu* 雲謠集研究匯錄 (Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1998), edited by Chen Renzhi 陳人之 and Yan Tingliang. Other individual works will not be listed here.

Other collections of tune lyrics with missing titles include manuscript S.2607, which contains over thirty tune lyrics, such as "Xijiang yue" 西江月, "Huanxi sha" 浣溪沙, and "Pusa man" 菩薩蠻, among others. According to relevant research, these tune lyrics include a famous piece written by Emperor Zhaozong 昭宗, Li Ye 李曄 (r. 888–904), when climbing a tower in Huazhou 華州, and other pieces written in response by his courtiers Han Jian 韓建 (845–912) and Prince Tan 覃王 (dates unknown).[10]

Manuscript P.2908 has eight tune lyrics, among them the famous piece "Wang Jiangnan" 望江南, which describes the people of Dunhuang leaving the Tibetan empire and returning to the Tang. Manuscript P.3128 contains fifteen tune lyrics, including "Pusa man," "Huanxi sha," "Langtao sha" 浪濤沙, "Wang Jiangnan," and "Gan huang'en" 感皇恩. Five pieces survive in manuscript P.3251; the final piece among them, the "Yuzhi lin zhongshang nei jiajiao" 御製林鐘商內家嬌, is the only piece from the *Yunyao ji* found in another manuscript. P.3821 contains sixteen pieces, including "Gan huang'en," "Sumozhe" 蘇莫遮, "Huanxi sha," "Ye Jinmen" 謁金門, "Shengzha zi" 生查子, and "Ding fengbo" 定風波.

Manuscripts P.3836 and P.3137 contain "Nange zi" 南歌子 (eight pieces) and "Genglou zi" 更漏子 (one piece). The manuscript Jinyi 津藝 134 (77.5.4473), stored in the Tianjin Art Museum 天津藝術博物館, has thirteen tune lyrics without melody titles. Other manuscripts that specifically transcribe lyrics for large suites (*daqu* 大曲) include six pieces of the "Datang wutai quzi wushou jizai Sumozhe" 大唐五臺曲子五首寄在蘇莫遮 as well as the "Dou baicao ci" 斗百草詞, "A Caopo ci" 阿曹婆詞, "He manzi ci" 何蠻子詞, and "Jianqi ci" 劍器詞, among others. There are around thirty similar manuscripts of musical *ci* with over 160 pieces. Aside from five of these pieces—Emperor Zhaozong's two pieces of "Pusa man," Wen Tingyun's 溫庭筠 (812–866) "Genglou zi," and

10 The two songs by Emperor Zhaozong are seen in transmitted texts, such as Wang Zhuo's 王灼 *Biji manzhi* 碧雞漫志. Jao Tsung-I has shown that among the other four pieces, one is by Emperor Zhaozong, two by Han Jian, and the last by Prince Tan. See Jao Tsung-I 饒宗頤, "Tangmo de huangdi, junfa yu quzi ci: guanyu Tang zhaozong yuzhi de 'Yangliu zhi' ji Dunhuang suochu ta suoxie de 'Pusa man' yu taren de hezuo" 唐末的皇帝、軍閥與曲子詞—關於唐昭宗御製的《楊柳枝》及敦煌所出他所寫的《菩薩蠻》與他人的和作, in *Dunhuang qu xulun* 敦煌曲續論, ed. Jao Tsung-I 饒宗頤 (Taipei: Xin wenfeng chuban gongsi, 1996), 131–47.

Ouyang Jiong's 歐陽炯 "Pusa man" and "Genglou zi"—the others are not found in transmitted texts. These manuscripts provide researchers of early tune lyrics' history with musical pieces and evidence of their transmission among the common people.

Pieces of folk songs far outnumber tune lyrics, but they are more unified in their content and form. These include "Wugeng zhuan" 五更轉, "Shier shi" 十二時, "Shier yue" 十二月, "Baisui pian" 百歲篇, "Shi ende" 十恩德, and "Huangdi gan" 皇帝感. They are vernacular songs composed of multiple stanzas, and their content generally conveys Buddhist teachings while encouraging listeners to act in a morally correct fashion.

The previously mentioned folk songs used vernacular melodies and were known in the past as "vernacular songs" (*liqu* 俚曲) and "small tunes" (*xiaodiao* 小调). Because their content often focuses on Buddhist themes, they have also been referred to as "Buddhist songs" (*foqu* 佛曲). However, Buddhist songs and folk songs are not the same. Buddhist songs are specialized types of melodies used to chant scriptures and eulogize the Buddha. Buddhist songs found in the Dunhuang manuscripts include *Liusu xitan zhang* 流俗悉曇章 and *Foshuo lengqiejing chanmen xitan zhang* 佛說楞伽經禪門悉曇章, each of which has eight pieces (P.2204). These were translated from Sanskrit, and their harmonies are also written as transliterations. Typical Buddhist songs also include pieces such as "Haozhu niang" 好住娘, "Sanhua yue" 散花樂, and "Guiqu lai" 歸去來. Similar tunes, such as "Zao chuchan" 早出纏, "Le zhushan" 樂住山, "Le rushan" 樂入山, and "Yinqu lai" 隱去來, were composed to praise Buddhism and exclusively sing about Buddhist matters. Buddhist songs were sometimes adapted into tunes for imperial banquets (*yanyue* 燕樂). For example, four songs from Dunhuang titled *Yongyue poluomen quzi* 詠月婆羅門曲子 all begin with "gazing at the moon" (望月), which is the same as the piece "Wangyue poluomen" 望月婆羅門 recorded in the *Jiaofang ji* 教坊記. This reflects the situation of the time: banquet music, Buddhist songs, and folk songs mutually borrowed from and influenced one another. Currently, research has focused on pieces that have melody titles. A significant number of Buddhist hymns in regular and irregular lines remain awaiting compilation.

Scholarship has long had differences of opinion on how to classify and identify the genres of the Dunhuang lyrics. One only needs to look at scholarly compilations to see how this is the case. Wang Zhongmin's *Dunhuang quzi ci ji* 敦煌曲子詞集 (Shangwu yinshu guan, 1950) was the first collection to compile Dunhuang lyrics, recording one hundred sixty-two pieces found in thirty-two manuscripts. The work's standard for selecting works followed a strict definition of tune lyrics. Starting with the publications of Ren Bantang's 任半塘 (1897–1991) *Dunhuang qu chutan* 敦煌曲初探 (Shanghai wenyi lianhe

chubanshe, 1954) and *Dunhuang qu jiaolu* 敦煌曲校錄 (Shanghai wenyi lianhe chubanshe, 1955) and continuing until the publication of *Dunhuang geci zongbian* 敦煌歌辭總編, Ren emphasized the need to eliminate the notion of Tang *ci* 唐詞, which he argued "put a Song hat on a Tang head," and replace it with the terms Tang tunes (*Tang quzi* 唐曲子) and Tang large suites (*Tang daqu* 唐大曲) instead. Jao Tsung-I's 饒宗頤 *Dunhuang qu* 敦煌曲 (Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1971) was also published during this time and demonstrated an understanding of the forms and structure of Dunhuang lyrics that was more rigorous than that found in Ren's work. The two also often disagreed on the dating of several pieces.

Another work that followed the narrow definition of tune lyrics following the publication of *Dunhuang geci zongbian* was Lin Meiyi's 林玫儀 *Dunhuang quzi ci jiaozheng chubian* 敦煌曲子詞斠證初編 (Taibei dongda gufen youxian gongsi, 1986), which collects 176 pieces, fourteen more than Wang Zhongmin's *Dunhuang quzici ji*. Ren Bantang's *Dunhuang geci zongbian* is considered the synthesis of previous research. Ren's research and compiling of Dunhuang lyrics are displayed together with his unique theoretical system. Because of this, his work is not only a complete collection of Dunhuang lyrics, but also combines these pieces with theoretical discussions, serving as a theoretical exploration on Dunhuang lyrics. After the publication of the work, scholars have continued to publish new explorations and supplementary works, the most concentrated effort being Xiang Chu's *Dunhuang geci zongbian kuangbu* 敦煌歌辭總編匡補 (Bashu shushe, 2000). Outside of errors made when collating and recording, the greatest shortcoming of Ren Bantang's *Dunhuang geci zongbian* is its reclassification and rearrangement of lyrics outside of the *Yunyao ji*. This led to the separation of some works that were part of the same manuscript, and even the separation of single pieces. It also resulted in the loss of important information concerning the form of transmission of these manuscripts and lyrical pieces, making it so the performative and artistic characteristics of Dunhuang lyrics emphasized by the author are not exhibited in an adequate fashion.

Two different works, both titled *Quan Tang Wudai ci* 全唐五代詞, have sections devoted to Dunhuang lyrics. The work compiled by Zhang Zhang 張璋 and others synthesizes the findings of Wang Zhongmin, Ren Bantang, Jao Tsung-I, Zeng Zhaomin 曾昭岷, Cao Jiping 曹濟平, Wang Zhaopeng 王兆鵬, and Liu Zunming 劉尊明, and is divided into primary and secondary volumes, with the latter including lyrics from Dunhuang with unclear genre boundaries. Their collation, while based strictly on the manuscripts, also draws on the strengths of past research, resulting in a significant improvement in quality when compared to previous works.

4 Dunhuang Rhapsodies

With the exception of the rhapsodies found in Xiaotong's 蕭統 (501–531) *Wen xuan* 文選—Zhang Heng's 張衡 (78–139) *Xijing fu* 西京賦, Zuo Si's 左思 (250–305) *Wudu fu* 吳都賦, Wang Can's 王粲 (177–217) *Denglou fu* 登樓賦, Chenggong Sui's 成公綏 (231–273) *Xiao fu* 嘯賦, and Jiang Yan's 江淹 (444–505) *Hen fu* 恨賦—all other pieces originate from the Tang and Five Dynasties. Among these, works such as *You Beishan fu* 游北山賦, *Yuanzheng fu* 元正賦, and *Sanyue sanri fu* 三月三日賦 are found in the five-*juan* edition of the *Wang Ji ji*. Others, such as Yang Jiong's 楊炯 (650–693) *Huntian fu* 渾天賦 and Shi Yanshou's 釋延壽 (904–975) *Guanyin zhengyan fu* 觀音証驗賦, appear in the *Yingchuan ji* 盈川集.

Aside from these, the seventeen remaining pieces are lost works from the Tang and Five Dynasties. These are Liu Xiyi's 劉希夷 (651–680) *Sima fu* 死馬賦, Gao Shi's 高適 (704–765) *Shuang liutou fu song Li canjun* 雙六頭賦送李參軍, Liu Xia's 劉瑕 (fl. 741) *Jiaxing wenquan fu* 駕幸溫泉賦, Liu Changqing's 劉長卿 (726–790) *Jiu fu* 酒賦, Bai Xingjian's 白行簡 (776–826) *Tiandi yinyang jiaohuan dale fu* 天地陰陽交歡大樂賦, Zhang Xia's 張俠 (dates unknown) *Ershi quan fu* 貳師泉賦, He Juan's 何鐲 (dates unknown) *Yufu ge canglang fu* 漁父歌滄浪賦, Lu Jing's 盧竫 (dates unknown) *Longmen fu* 龍門賦, Zhao Qia's 趙洽 (fl. 779) *Choufu fu* 醜婦賦, and pieces by unknown writers, including the *Yue fu* 月賦, *Qinjiang fu* 秦將賦, *Ziling fu* 子靈賦, *Qu sanhai fu* 去三害賦, *Yanzi fu* 晏子賦, *Han Peng fu* 韓朋賦, *Yanzi fu* (version A) 燕子賦 (甲), and *Yanzi fu* (version B) 燕子賦 (乙).

Apart from the works written by literati, the other previously mentioned pieces can be categorized as vernacular rhapsodies. Dunhuang vernacular rhapsodies employed narrative techniques and everyday language to represent the interests of popular culture, and they are among the most unique examples of Dunhuang's popular literary works. Dunhuang vernacular rhapsodies can be divided into two types based on their structural composition: narrative rhapsodies (*gushi fu* 故事賦) and comedic rhapsodies (*paixie zafu* 俳諧雜賦). Narrative rhapsodies are often written in a style where two figures engage in questions and answers to narrate a story, presented in a clearly comical or satirical manner. Representative works of this type include the *Yanzi fu* 晏子賦, the *Han Peng fu* 韓朋賦, and both versions of the *Yanzi fu* 燕子賦. Though there are few surviving original pieces, there are numerous copies, indicating that these texts were widely circulated.

The story of the *Yanzi fu* 晏子賦 comes from the *Yanzi chunqiu* 晏子春秋, and while the narrative of the *Han Peng fu* is derived from a tale about Han Ping's 韓憑 wife found in the *Soushen ji* 搜神記, it heavily revises both the

characters' depictions and the plot to create a richer and more vivid narrative. Both versions of the *Yanzi fu* share the same title but have minor differences in their content. Version A states, "in the 19th year of the Zhenguan 貞觀 era, the great general attacked Liaodong." Version B opens with "the sparrow and the swallow sing the song of the Kaiyuan 開元 era together." These sentences indicate that both works were written after the height of the Tang dynasty. Version A is written in parallel prose with a style that is both bold and fresh. It contains greater artistic value when compared to version B of the text, which is written in a style displaying the refined five-character poetry of a literati.

Comedic rhapsodies differ from narrative rhapsodies in two ways. First, in their narrative form; and second, in their use of extremely exaggerated and colorful descriptive techniques seldom seen in standard literary texts. For example, the *Jiu fu* writes on wild revelries and heavy drinking, demonstrating a strong proficiency in writing exaggerated descriptions. The *Choufu fu* depicts an ugly woman whose hair is unkempt and disheveled like weeds blown in the wind, and whose face is green with teeth that protrude like tusks. Her "forehead has a thousand wrinkles, and her neck is covered in hundreds of thick veins." It is not only her outward appearance that is ugly; she also has a cruel and wicked heart. Such depictions are very rare in literary history.

The *Qinjiang fu* portrays in vivid detail how the Qin general Bai Qi 白起 (d. 257 BCE) slaughtered four hundred thousand surrendered soldiers. The graphic violence of the massacre leaves the reader speechless. The writing in the *Tiandi yinyang jiaohuan dale fu* is unrestrained in its descriptions, explicit, shocking, and unprecedented. Dunhuang vernacular rhapsodies trace their origins to the comedic rhapsodies of the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). They have a long historical legacy and significant importance for research on the development of the rhapsody in Chinese literary history.

The earliest compilation of Dunhuang rhapsodies was Pan Zhonggui's "Dunhuang fu jiaolu" 敦煌賦校錄 (*Huagang wenke xuebao* 華岡文科學報, issue 11, 1978), which recorded eleven Dunhuang rhapsodies that are neither pre-Tang nor vernacular works. Following this, Zhang Xihou's "Dunhuang fuji jiaoli" 敦煌賦集校理 (*Wenxue yichan zengkan* 文學遺產增刊, issue 18, 1989) included the *Sima fu* and the *Yue fu*. Before the publication of this work, collated records of the text could be found in Wang Zhongmin's *Bu Quan Tang shi* and Chai Jianhong's 柴劍虹 "Dunhuang Tangren shiwen xuanji canjuan bulu" 敦煌唐人詩文選集殘卷補錄 (*Wenxue yichan* 文學遺產, issue 4, 1983). Fu Junlian's 伏俊璉 monograph *Dunhuang fu jiaozhu* 敦煌賦校注 (Gansu renmin chubanshe, 1994) was the first complete collection of Dunhuang rhapsodies. The work compiled, collated, and annotated copies of twenty-five different rhapsodies,

totaling forty-four individual manuscripts. With the exception of the three manuscripts from the Russian collection—unknown at the time—this monograph served as a complete collection of Dunhuang rhapsodies. Zhang Xihou's *Dunhuang fu hui* 敦煌賦彙 (Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1996), published after the *Dunhuang fu jiaozhu,* now serves as the most complete collection of Dunhuang rhapsodies.

5 Dunhuang Tales

One of the most unique types of Dunhuang tales is the *huaben* 話本 (storytelling script). *Huaben* serve as source texts for *shuohua* 説話 (storytelling), a type of folk performance prevalent during the Tang and Song dynasties. There are records of *shuohua* in Tang sources, the most famous of which is *Yizhi hua hua* 一枝花話, which tells the story of Li Wa 李娃 (found in the self-commentary *zizhu* 自注 of Yuan Zhen's 元稹 *Chou Hanlin Bai xueshi daishu yibai yun* 酬翰林白學士代書一百韻). However, aside from those found in the Dunhuang manuscripts, not a single early *huaben* piece from the Tang, Five Dynasties, or the early Song has survived. A colophon at the end of the Dunhuang manuscript *Lushan Yuangong hua* 廬山遠公話 states that it was copied by Zhang Changji 張長繼 (fl. 972) in the fifth year of the Kaibao 開寶 era (968–976). This is the earliest extant *huaben* piece with *hua* 話 in the title.

Additionally, both the *Han Qinhu huaben* 韓擒虎話本 and the *Ye Jingneng shi* 葉净能詩 are clearly labeled as *huaben*. The end of the former contains eight characters stating that "the *huaben* has concluded with no omissions made" 畫本既終，並無抄略 (note that *huaben* 畫本 is most likely a transcription error of *huaben* 話本). The latter is called a poem *shi*, but this is also likely an error, as the characters *shi* 詩 and *shu* 書 are similar in pronunciation (this interchanging of characters is common in the Dunhuang manuscripts). Some scholars believe that it could be an error for 話, stemming from the fact that the characters *shi* and *hua* are similar in form. Other *huaben* pieces include *Qiu Hu* 秋胡 (S. 133, tentative title), *Tang taizong ruming ji* 唐太宗入冥記 (S. 2630, tentative title), and others. Dunhuang *huaben* were the source for Song and Yuan *huaben* and have significant importance for research on the formation, composition, and literary value of the *huaben* genre.

Other pieces of Dunhuang tales can be divided into two types based on whether the texts have been transmitted or lost. Dunhuang tales found in transmitted texts or other records include the *Huanyuan ji* 還冤記, *Qiyan lu* 啓顏錄, *Soushen ji* 搜神記, and *Zhou Qin xingji* 周秦行記.

Additionally, many stories about filial piety can be found in folk tales and historical records. The *Dunhuang bianwen ji* has reconstructed the *Xiaozi zhuan* 孝子傳 based on the collation and editing of five manuscripts, which contain thirty-four stories of filial piety involving thirty-one figures. However, the pieces collected in the *Dunhuang bianwen ji* are not always based on original copies of the *Xiaozi zhuan*.[11] For example, manuscript P. 2621 contains twenty-three stories of filial piety and is, in fact, a surviving fragment of the reference book (*leishu* 類書) *Shisen* 事森 (sections on filial actions in other Dunhuang reference books also cite stories on filial piety). The earliest examples of these stories are found in the *Shiji* 史記, the *Hanshi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳, the *Shuo yuan* 說苑, and other classical texts. Of the stories, the one with the latest date is the story of Wang Wu's 王武 filial actions during the Kaiyuan era (713–741) of the Tang dynasty. Because of this, it can be speculated that some of the *Xiaozi zhuan* pieces from Dunhuang were not compiled until after the mid-Tang period.

Since some stories on filial sons come from reference books, their narration is relatively abbreviated. Other pieces conclude the narration with "the poems say" (*shi yue* 詩曰), as if a prototype of *huaben* narratives. Of particular interest to scholars is the story of the filial son Shanzi 睒子. This story is not seen in versions of the *Xiaozi zhuan* written before the Tang, and analysis has determined that it originates from the Buddhist scripture *Foshuo pusa Shanzi jing* 佛說菩薩睒子經.[12] After its transmission to China during the Northern and Southern Dynasties (420–589), it circulated alongside native stories of filial piety and serves as a classic example of the gradual integration of Buddhism into Chinese native culture.

Karma narratives circulated widely from the Northern and Southern Dynasties to the Sui dynasty (581–618) and Tang dynasty. Buddhist miracle tales found in the Dunhuang manuscripts are the remnants of these stories. In addition to the previously mentioned *Huanyuan ji*, these tales are found in transmitted texts, such as fragments of Shi Daoxuan's 釋道宣 (596–667) *Ji Shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* 集神州三寶感通錄. According to analysis, the piece provisionally titled *Chisong Fahua jing lingyan ji* 持誦法華經靈驗記 in the *Boxihe jiejing lu* 伯希和劫經錄, is actually the 9th to 23rd entries in the "Ruijing lu" 瑞經錄 chapter of the *Ji Shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*. Those pieces solely found among the Dunhuang manuscripts are of two types. The first type

11 Wang Sanqing 王三慶, "Dunhuang bianwen ji zhong de *Xiaozi zhuan* xintan" 敦煌變文集中的孝子傳新探, *Dunhuang xue* 敦煌學 14 (1989): 317–37.

12 Cheng Yizhong 程毅中, "Dunhuang ben *Xiaozi zhuan* yu Shanzi gushi" 敦煌本 "孝子傳" 與睒子故事, *Zhongguo wenhua* 中國文化, no. 2 (1991): 149–53.

is collections, an example of which is the *Chisong Jin'gang jing lingyan gongde ji* 持誦金剛經靈驗功德記, which recounts miracle tales from the Buddhist scripture, the *Jin'gang jing* 金剛經. The manuscript is complete and was copied during the Hou Liang period (907–923) of the Five Dynasties by the famous calendarist of Dunhuang, Zhai Fengda 翟奉達 (883–962). It contains nineteen miracle stories, and some entries are seen in Xiao Yu's 蕭瑀 (575–648) *Jin'gang bore lingyan ji* 金剛般若靈驗記 (cited in the *Fayuan zhulin* 法苑珠林), Tang Lin's 唐臨 (600–659) *Mingbao ji* 冥報記, and Meng Xianzhong's 孟憲忠 (dates unknown) *Jin'gang bore jing jiyan ji* 金剛般若經集驗記.

The second type is single miracle tales. Examples include the *Chanhui miezui Jinguangming jing mingbao zhuan* 懺悔滅罪金光明經冥報傳, of which twenty-six manuscripts survive, the *Huang Shiqiang zhuan* 黃仕強傳, with eight surviving manuscripts, as well as the *Longxing si pi Shamen tianwang lingyan ji* 龍興寺毗沙門天王靈驗記, the *Liu Sahe heshang yinyuan ji* 劉薩訶和尚因緣記, the *Daoming heshang ruming gushi* 道明和尚入冥故事, the *Tang jingshi dazhuangyan si seng Shi Zhixing mingzhong ganying ji* 唐京師大莊嚴寺僧釋智興鳴鐘感應記, and others.[13] The majority of Dunhuang miracle tales are pieces on merit accrued from copying or chanting Buddhist scriptures. Their most unique characteristic is that they are often written at the beginning of Buddhist scriptures, thus circulating alongside the texts themselves. This reflects the general way in which these tales circulated in popular culture during this period—as auxiliary teaching materials for Buddhists.

Translated by Jordan Palmer Davis

13 See Zheng Acai 鄭阿財, "Dunhuang Fojiao lingying gushi zonglun" 敦煌佛教靈應故事綜論, in *Foxue yu wenxue: Fojiao wenxue yu yishu yantaohui* 佛學與文學—佛教文學與藝術研討會論文集 (Taipei: Fagu wenhua chubanshe, 1998), 121–52.