

蘇瑩輝著

敦

煌

論

集

江北中題



台灣學生書局印行

**A COLLECTION
OF
ARTICLES ON TUNHUANG**

Contents

I. The Mystery about the Discovery of Manuscripts in the Tunhuang Stone Cave.....	1
II. On Tunhuang Studies	11
III. The Tunhuang Stone Cave and the Thousand Buddha Caves.....	50
IV. Kua Sha Shih-Shih Hsi-Nien, Annals of Historical Events in Old Tunhuang	73
V. The Determination of the Date of Fall of Tunhuang to the Tibeans in T'ang Dynasty (Abstract).....	76
VI. Changes of Area under the Jurisdiction of the Imperial Commissioner of the Kuei-I Chün in Shachow (Abstract)	79

I

The Mystery about the Discovery of Manuscripts in the Tunhuang Cave

Although the news of the discovery of manuscripts stored in the Tunhuang stone cave had astonished the academic circle in the world and had been spread far and wide, there has been no way to guess the motive of having these manuscripts kept in secret store and the time when they had been stored. Moreover, the actual fact and time of the discovery also have been remained a riddle to us.

We all know that in spite of that there have records about the date of this discovery, different dates have been estimated by writers, and incessant debate has been aroused without agreeing to a definite conclusion. As to the date of the sealing of the cave, since the time was even more distant, there have been no documents left for evidence. Thus a good deal of guesses have been advanced.

The first writer discussing the closing time of the cave was Sir Aurel Stein. In his "On Ancient Central Asian Tracks" he said: "On the exact period recorded at end and in the contents of the manuscripts, the years of these manuscripts mostly ran from the very beginning of 5th century to the end of 10th century. Besides the years obtained through my study, with Professor Pelliot's material as a comparison in addition, we know that the closing of this large library was surely in the first period of 11th century. At that time the Tanguts conquered this region and might have been a threat to the religious

temples; thus this was done." (translated from the Chinese version of the book, page 151, Chapter 13, The Discovery of the Secret Chamber...Translator.) Professor Paul Pelliot also thought that the closing of the stone cave had been in the beginning of Sung dynasty when West Hsia took Shachow (Shachow was taken by Chao Yuan-hao in the second year Ching-yu of Emperor Jen-tsung). The monks, ready to flee from the invaders, had the manuscripts assembled together and sealed in the cave.

The Remains of Plunder by Chen Yuan pointed out: "The Encyclopedia Tung Kao recorded that at the end of the period of Ta-chung Hsiang-fu (the reigning years of Emperor Chen-tsung of Sung, A.D. 1008-1016) Tsao Hsienhsun, governor of Kuei district, Shachow, sent a petition to the imperial court asking for gold-letter sutra for safe-keeping. In the period between the reigning years of Ching-yu to Huang-yu (all under the reign of Emperor Jen-tsung, A.D. 1034-1053) tributes were paid to the court regularly." On the basis of these facts, Mr. Chen concluded that the closing and sealing of the cave should be after the 5th year of Huang-yu. Mr. Shih Chang-ju supported Mr. Chen's conclusion in his recent essay "Several Questions regarding the Manuscript-Storing Cave" on the evidence of the inscription at the side of the image of three-face Avalokitesvara under the caves outside of Chang's No. 224 cave. That inscription said: "an inscription for the picture of the goddess at the cave entrance, the 12th lunar month, the 6th year of Ching-li, the year of Ping-shu." However, even tributes were paid by Shachow down to the 4th year of Huang-yu, they were not sent by Governor Tsao, and the conquest of Kuachow and Shachow by the Hsia people was in name only. So tributes from Kuachow and Shachow had not been interrupted on account of the seizure of that district by Hsia people. This point had been dealt with in detail by Mr. Lo Cheng-ju, and it is not necessary to say more about it here.

In Mr. Shih's essay he quoted some statements of Mr. Kiang Liang-fu, saying: "On the material discovered in the Mocao cave we make a deduction that during the invasion of West Hsia in Sung dynasty the monks of the lower temple at the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas intended to flee to other places, and secreted their Buddhist sutras and pictures and miscellaneous books in the big cave near to the north end of the main group of stone caves by the side of the lower temple. That cave is numbered by Mr. Chang Ta-ts'ien as No. C 151. It was originally built by the Monk Huang-Fien... On a study of the inscriptions in the manuscripts from cave No. C 151, the latest year was the 1st year of Chi-tao. Then the closing of the cave should be in A. D. 995 or a little later." But Mr. Shih did not agree with Mr. Kiang's conclusion.

In 1944 Mr. Chang Wei of Ling-tiao was the first to show a different opinion. In Chapter 5 of his *Records of Bronzes and Stones in the Southeast Corner of Kansu* he wrote: "The distressed condition caused by soldiery at the end of Yuan dynasty resulted in the loss of Kuachow and the closing of the stone cave. This thing should have happened in the transitional period between Yuan and Ming dynasties. It was probably done by Monk Shou Long and Shiran-honan with their disciples." This kind of explanation is quite new but cannot be supported by facts. Sometime ago Mr. Hsia Tso-ming in his *Supplementary Corrected Copy of Records of Bronzes and Stones in the Southeast Corner of Kansu* enumerated three facts to show the mistake made by Chang. After the writer came to Taiwan, he read a bulletin published by the museum of Honan province by chance, and found an article by Kuan Peh-yi on *A Brief Study of Tunhuang Stone Cave*. It pointed out: "The location of the stone cave was originally the site of the Big Buddha Temple before Yuan dynasty. After years of collection a great treasure store was kept there. When Genghis Khan, Emperor Tai-tsu of Yuan, launched his expedition to the west, his

trusted military advisor Chiu Chu-chi, being a prominent Taoist, was a dead enemy of Buddhist religion. Before the main expeditionary force passed through Tunhuang district, Buddhist temples were destroyed everywhere and monks were forced to become Taoist devotees by having their hair grown long and their attire changed. The monks in this temple got the information beforehand. In order to forestall the vandal destruction, they built this stone chamber to store their valuable antids and sealed it tightly. When the troops of Genghis Khan came to Tunhuang the monks were driven away and the temple was destroyed to be turned in to a Taoist shrine. This condition lasted down to Ch'ing dynasty. When Paul Pelliot heard the name of the cave and went there for discovery, he still had to get the consent of the resident Taoist abbot." This statement was made eight or nine years earlier than the one made by Chang Wei. In reading the dates in the manuscripts discovered in the stone cave, the period extended from the 6th year of Chien-chu under the administration of West Liang down to the 1st year of Chi-tao of North Sung dynasty. The later the date the more are the manuscripts, and none of them belongs to the years after Chi-tao reign. Another evidence is that the fresco on the cave entrance built with brick to conceal the cave was not the work of Yuan artist. On the evidence of these fact, Kuan's interpretation of the incident is also hardly believable.

In summary of the above different interpretations, there are only two ways of ascertaining the time of sealing the cave: one was in the middle of Sung dynasty and another, in the transitional period between Yuan and Ming. Mr. Shih Chang-ju thought that though the explanations advanced by Sir Aurel Stein, Chien Yuan and Kiang Liang-fu were based on different sources of material—Chen on official history and the other two on the inscription at the end of the manuscripts—the time they fixed did not go over the time limit of the middle of North Sung dynasty. Although they had different estimates

for the year of closing the cave, the earliest being A. D. 995 and the latest being A. D. 1053, a time span of 58 years, the period has not gone beyond the reign of two emperors, Chen-tsung and Jen-tsung. Their opinion seems to be different yet the objective fact is the same: that is, these manuscripts and other treasures were stored in the cave to avoid the destruction of West Hsia conquerors. The lack of Sung tablets and Sung inscriptions in the Moca cave also offers a strong support to this kind of conclusion.

As to the interpretation offered by Chang wei who estimated the closing time of the cave in the transitional age between Yuan and Ming, Mr. Shih expressed his idea as follows. "On a first look it seems too late in time, yet not so groundless. (1) There was no such thing as the removal of Chinese (Han) people into Chiayu Pass before the reigning years of Chen-tung. Then, of course Chinese people were still active outside of the Chiayu Pass. There had been many instances about the construction and repair of Caves of the Thousand Buddhas. People of west Hsia were also believers of Buddhism. They built six caves at least,..... and their frescos have been found in the Nos. 1, 2, 3, 6, 20 caves in the group of caves at Yulin. It seems not possible for them to engage in religious persecution. In fact, not a trace of Ming construction has been found in these caves. (2) According to the announcement of Institute of Tunhuang Art Studies, the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas are 486 in number. Among them there are 32 Wei caves, 110 Sui caves, 272 T'ang caves (besides 35 rebuilt caves of former dynasties), 36 of the Five Dynasties (besides 82 rebuilt caves of former dynasties) and 45 Sung caves (besides 92 rebuilt caves of former dynasties.) Although no new cave was built in the time of west Hsia, 10 of the former caves rebuilt. In addition, there are 8 caves the building time of which are unknown. (The total number is 503 which does not tally with the announced total of 486). The number of Sung caves, includ-

ing the rebuilt ones, is the second largest. Yet inscriptions of Sung people have been found only in three of the 137 caves. We cannot but doubt on this small number of inscriptions in such a large number of caves, and wonder whether some of them were built during the time of West Hsia administration. When the Chinese built the caves they still did them in the usual way but left out the inscription of the building date, because the West Hsia people did not use the Sung reigning years in their calendar. (3) The frescos in cave No. C 151 were painted completely in the same way as the ones in cave No. C 64. But Cave No. C 64 was rebuilt by Prince Hsi-ning of Solai Tribe in the 11th year of Chicheng of Yuan dynasty. The Record of the Rebuilding of Huang Ching Temple said: '....This tablet is placed in the front corridor of Cave No. C 64. The frescos in it are the same as those in Cave No. C. 151.... They should be frescos left from the same period.' At that time, no attention was paid to how many layers of the frescos in Cave No. C 151 and whether there was another layer over the late T'ang period frescos and under the layer showing the the Thousand Buddhas of Hsien Chieh. If there were only two layers, attributing them as Yuan painting may be considered.... To judge Chang Wei's explanation on the above three facts, his idea is not at all unreasonable. In consideration of the two estimates on the cave sealing date, the first one seems to be more attractive and influential. However, we cannot deem it conclusive, because there are still doubtful questions in it." Mr. Shih's conclusion is: "On the present facts known it seems that the hiding of the valuable objects in the cave for the reason of avoiding of trouble encountered in the invasion of West Hsia gets a little better over the other explanation. If we want to go into further study, we have to wait for a solution until more new material appears." (Cf. Continental Magazine, Special Bulletin No. 2.) This is also what Hsia Tso-ming.

said twenty years ago when he wrote an essay on "The Year of the Closing of Manuscript-storing Cave." His conclusion stated: "The closing of this manuscript-storing cave was probably at the time when Shachow was taken by West Hsia." (Cf. the column of "Culture in Northwest China" No. 32, Northwest China Daily, Langchow.)

Even if the motive and time of the closing and discovery of the stone cave remain to be a riddle to us, should we give up our study and not to find more facts in further research just because of difficulties?

The material available for ascertaining the time of the discovery includes the grave epitaph of Taoist Abbot Wang Yuan-lu, the "Open Letter for Raising Sutra Fund," the facts recorded by Sir Aurel Stein, Yeh Chang-chi and others, and the writing on the wood tablet by Kuo Ling in the 32rd years of Kuang-hsu called "The Record of the Rebuilding of the Three-storey Hall at the Cave of the Thousand Buddhas." This tablet still remains on the wall of Cave No. C 151. About the date of discovery it said: "the cave wall was newly opened in the first summer month of the year Keng-tzu." This checks with the statement in the "Open Letter for Raising Sutra Fund" which fixed the date of discovery in the summer of the 26th years of Kuang-hsu (1900), but does not agree with the date recorded in the grave epitaph of Taoist Wang Yuan-lu (the 25th years of Kuang-hsu mainly), the archives in the Tunhuang Hsien government (the 27th year of Kuang-hsu) and the General Record of Kansu Province (the 29th year of Kuang-hsu). Besides, a report submitted by Tunhuang magistrate Huang Wan-chun to Wan Jen-tsun said it in the year of Keng-tzu (1900). When Paul Pelliot reached Tunhuang in the 34th year of Kuang-hsu, Taoist Abbot Wang Yuan-lu also told him that the cave had been discovered in 1900 (Cf. Hsia Tso-ming's essay, op. cit.). One thing worthy of notice is that while the year of discovery mentioned by

these writers do not agree (but all are within the time of the 25th, 26th, 27th, and 28th years of Kuang-hsu) the season was in summer (with some difference in dating: as "the first month of summer," "the 1st of the 5th moon," "the morning of the 26th of the 5th moon," and "the 26th of the six moon").

In order to solve the question of the date of discovering the cave we should understand the man Taoist Wang first. His name was Wang Yuan-lu and he was a native of Maching Hsien, Hupeh province. When he went to Kansu, he joined the city garrison as an ordinary soldier. Later he went to the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas to become a Taoist and lived together with the fellow working lamas. Because he knew some Chinese literature and could read Taoist canons, his life was getting better gradually. To meet his need of preaching the religion, he engaged a certain man Yang to copy the canons for him. One day, when Yang was smoking with his long Chinese pipe at his leisure, he tried to knock out the tobacco ashes by stiking it against a wall. As he heard an echoing sound in the wall, he became curious and went to tell Taoist Wang of his doubt. In that very night, they decided to break down the wall with a lamp for their light to find out the cause. First they saw a small door behind the wall about the height of a man filled with bricks. when the bricks were taken down, they discovered a small chamber filled with manuscripts and painting scrolls (that is the world famous "Tuntuang Cave"). All people believed this incident happened in the 26th year of Kuang-hsu. In fact, it took place in a summer night in the 25th year (1899).

Somebody asked me that since the "Open Letter for Raising Sutra Fund" (published in two illustrations in my book "Outlines of Tuntuang Science," Book 1) had been written by someone by the the order of Taoist Wang, why did he had the date recorded as the early morning of the 26th day of the 5th moon of the 26th

year of Kuang-hsu without giving out the real fact? I believe this open letter was written by the request of Taoist while he was living, and he intentionally had the time fixed in the "26th year" to avoid diverting the secret in the 25th year. Thus he purposely had the character for "six" in the "big letter." Such a way of concealing his secret is no different from that proverb: "The more one wants to cover, the more the thing is exposed."

But why did Taoist Wang wanted to conceal the truth of discovery in the 25th year? There was a secret in it. When he first saw the abundant heaps of antics, his greatest aspiration was to have this treasure stock sold to the high-ranking officials in exchange for great wealth to be used for repairing and maintaining the temple at that place. Thus he had the chamber sealed up again with bricks. However, since the cave had been opened, cultural objects and manuscripts were gradually taken out and went in circulation outside. For instance, in the 25th year of Kuang-hsu (1899), Yen Ching-tsing obtained a portrait of the Goddess Avalokitesvara from the Cave of the Thousand Buddhas. In the next year (1900) a Frenchman C. E. Borrin got a Buddha portrait from the Mccao cave. From 1902 on, many more items were acquired by other people such as Yen Chang-chi, Wang Tsung-han and Lu Chi-liang. The writer thinks that before Taoist Wang and the man Yang had the chamber sealed with bricks they had hidden a part of these cultural objects to wait for gradual sales. Such an action was done secretly without telling the lamas. Thus when the cave was reopened in the next year (1900) they made it openly. On this reason Taoist Wang had to cover the fact that the chamber had been discovered a year before. It was after his death when another man wrote his grave epitaph the secret was leaked out. As to the date recorded in Kuo's wood tablet and in the official docu-

ment, it is quite possible that they based on the erroneous date in that open letter.

II

On the Tunhuang Studies

Since the late years of Ch'ing dynasty there have been many new discoveries one after another in the field of learning of our country. The most outstanding four which are rich in historical value include the oracle bones excavated from the Yin burial ground in Anyang, the wood and bamboo tablets found in the desert, the hand-written scrolls discovered from the Tunhuang caves and the various official documents ferreted out of the imperial archives. The cultural objects discovered from Tunhuang and Anyang have been systematically studied by Chinese and Western scholars for the last forty years and both kinds of study have become a branch of scientific learning with the names of "Tunhuang science" and "oracle-bone science."

Before and after the discovery of oracle-bone script the bronze wares, being the ritual vessels of Shang and Chou dynasties, were excavated from various localities in good quality and considerable quantity. Before and after the discovery of Tunhuang scrolls an astonishing number of books of old editions since the Sung and Yuan periods were either sold in the bookstores or passed out of the hands of private collectors. But why do we not include these two classes of cultural objects into the same class as the four outstanding discoveries? Here is my answer. The inscribed characters on the Shang vessels are too few in number. Although the inscriptions on Chou vessels are comparatively rich in number—such as

the 500 characters on the Mao Kung Tripod--most of their contents have been appeared in our historical records, such as the Book of History and the Spring and Autumn Annals and they cannot be compared with so much new historical material found in the oracle-bone inscriptions. As to book of Sung edition, because they were printed in comparatively more copies there are some remaining to the present both in public collections and in the sales market. Of course even more copies of books printed in Yuan dynasty and thenceforth are available at present. The real value of Sung printed books lies mainly on their less errors in the printing. That is the reason why reprints (or transcriptions) of later periods have used Sung editions as their standard copies. Not only great many of the hand-written scrolls stored in the stone caves at Tunhuang can provide us a source for the correction of errors made in the printed books of Sung and Yuan editions, but also have furnished us with many rare writings which have long been unknown to us. So their service to our culture has far exceeded that rendered by those books of Sung and Yuan editions.

The dates of the start of these two new kinds of learning, the oracle-bone science and Tunhuang science, was but a difference of one year, as the stone caves were discovered just one year before the excavation of oracle-bones in Anyang. The contributions made by the oracle-bone science are on the Chinese history, geography, ritual practice, religion, social system, custom, calendar and astronomical observation, culture and archaeology of the Yin or Shang period, while those made by the Tunhuang science are on the history, geography, languages, races, social system, economy, religion, literature and art of Central Asia. The former offers documental evidence to the events occurred in the earliest part of our ancient history, while the latter adds much new material to the most important part of our history of relations with foreign countries, i.

e., the history of China's relations with the West. It has made many ancient cultural records which have considered to be scattered and lost reappear for our study. It has rendered it possible for us to use such new material to check the ancient writings which have long been circulated but have been scattered with some errors. It also makes it possible for us to have the chance to obtain some renewed knowledge of ancient language terms which have long been forgotten. It makes us able to read many Chinese characters with ancient pronunciation. It makes us understand more clearly the geographical condition and military facilities of the Western Territory in Han dynasty. It let us secure even more authentic evidences of the history of fine arts in China from the Six Dynasties through Sui, Tang to the Five Dynasties. At the same time, it has added much new material to the study of Buddhism, Taoism, Nestorianism and Manichaeism.

Before we are going into our discussion of the Tunhuang science we have to understand the geographical and natural environment of Tunhuang first, then to proceed to investigate into founding of Tunhuang, the construction of the Caves of Thousand Buddhas, the discovery of caves where the scripture scrolls were hidden and the contents of these manuscripts.

I. The Hosi Corridor and the Founding of Tunhuang

Since ancient time the territory west of the Yellow River—the present-day provraces of Suiyuan, Shensi, Ninghsia and a part of Kansu are all within the Hosi territory—has been called "Hosi." The part projecting out in the northwest of Kansu is specially named "Hosi of Kansu." Because this place had been in the important route of communication with the western territory it is also called

the "Hosi Corridor."

The Hosi Corridor is situated right at the converging point of Chinese Plain, Sinkiang, Mongolia and Tsinhai-Tibetan Plateaus, thus it has also become the key district in Chinese geography and history. It is an independent district on the side of its natural geography, with whole-year snow-capped Chi-lien mountain on its south and the North mountain on its north. North of the North mountain is the Mongolian desert plateau. The violent desert wind often brings along a lot of sand, dry and wild in movement, so to creat many sandy hills. Thus this corridor becomes a desert place, windy and lack of water. However, several places in this district are oases. Any place with springs is populated with farming population to form a town. The source of water of this places comes mostly from melted snow in the mountains. That is reason why in spite of not many acres of cultivated land all of them are fertile in soil.

The whole province of Kansu is a district scarce in rainfall. Other places in the province have to depend upon rain water, and people there will be in difficulty in case of a draught. But the Hosi district alone relies on its irrigation work and has no fear of draught. Thus Hosi is considered as a rich place within the Kansu province. The rice cities in the Hosi Corridor, such as Wuwei, Changyi, Chiuchuan and Kactai are all in the east of Chiayu Pass. Only the three Hsien of Yumen, Ansi and Tunhuang are in the west of Chiayu Pass and Tunhuang is the most fertile place of the three. Both Tunhuang and Ansi were under the jurisdiction of Tunhuang prefecture in Han dynasty. In T'ang dynasty the present-day Ansi was called Kuachow and the present-day Tunhuang was called Shachow.

Both Kuachow and Shachow, adjacent in territory, are situated at the western end of the Hosi Corridor. Thus they had been China's

important gateway to the west since Han dynasty. The founding of Tunhuang prefecture was in the reign of Emperor Wu of Han. In the years of Taichu (104 to 101 B.C.) when two expeditions were sent to Tawan (an ancient state in Central Asia) the troops passed through this route back and forth. After that time the district was occupied by the successive rulers of Anterior Liang, Chin under Hu rulers, Posterior Liang, North Liang and Yuan Wei. During the Six Dynasties Buddhism became popular there. It also turned into a commercial center in Sui dynasty. Kuachow was founded in Ansi in T'ang dynasty and the Yumen Pass was moved to the north of Ansi, thus Tunhuang was somewhat off the trade route. After the Tienpao uprising the place was taken by the Tibetans. Down to the early years of Tachung in the reign of Emperor Hsuan Tsung, Chang I-chao brought the district of Kuachow, Shachow, I-chow and Hsichow to be subjected under T'ang administration and this Hosi Corridor became prosperous once more.

Tunhuang was one of the four prefectures in Hosi during Han dynasty. On the question of the time order in the founding of the four Hosi prefectures there have been many different explanations advanced by the historians and no common conclusion has been reached. So we shall leave this question out in our discussion.

According to the record in the History of Han the Tunhuang prefecture was divided into six hsien viz., Tunhuang, Min-an, Hsiacku, Yuanchuan, Kuangchi and Lungle, with 11,200 families of 38,335 persons in population. The Geographical Record in the History of T'ang said: "The name of Tunhuang hsien was changed to Mingsha hsien in the time of North Chow after the name of the mountain at its border. It was changed back to Tunhuang in Sui dynasty. Kuachow was founded in the third year of Wuteh taken from the idea of a former ancestor had been driven to Kuachow. (In the commentary to the chapter on mountains, rivers, lakes and