

敦煌叢刊初集

一

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Descriptive Catalogue
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in the
British Museum

by
LIONEL GILES, D. Litt.

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敦煌掇瑣

劉 復輯

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PREFACE

Dr. Lionel Giles was Keeper of Oriental Printed Books and Manuscripts in the British Museum until his retirement in 1940. But he has continued ever since the work to which he has devoted himself single-handedly since 1919 of preparing this Descriptive Catalogue of the Chinese Manuscripts recovered from the sealed chamber at Ch'ien Fo Tung, Tun-huang by Sir Aurel Stein. Now the passing for press of the last proofs marks the end of his long task on the completion of which all his colleagues would now wish to congratulate Dr. Giles. Some idea of the magnitude of the work accomplished may be derived from the total of 8,102 entries, but the variety and above all the fragmentary character of the material catalogued must also be considered. This Catalogue is an instrument of research which the Museum owed to world scholarship and of which it is a great satisfaction to greet the publication.

April, 1957.

BASIL GRAY.

*Keeper of the Department
of Oriental Antiquities.*

INTRODUCTION

The manuscripts described in this Catalogue once formed part of a huge collection which was discovered about fifty years ago in a walled-up chamber adjoining one of the "Caves of the Thousand Buddhas" (*Ch'ien Fo Tung*) a few miles south-east of the Tunhuang oasis on the border of Kansu. Hollowed out in irregular tiers along the face of a steep cliff, these cave-temples were known in the T'ang dynasty as *Mo Kao K'u*, or "Grottos of Surpassing Height". They are said to have owed their origin to a saintly monk, one Lo-tsun, who began the work of excavation in A.D. 366. An account of him is given in an inscription of 698, and his name occurs again in a topographical fragment some 200 years later. (See no. 7180v^o of this Collection.) The manuscripts, mostly in the shape of long paper rolls, together with a large number of religious paintings, would appear to have been removed from different monasteries in the neighbourhood and hurriedly stowed away here for safety on the approach of an invading tribe, probably the Hsi Hsia, early in the eleventh century. And here they lay, apparently undisturbed and forgotten, for a space of nearly 900 years.

The news of the discovery soon spread abroad, and the late Sir Aurel Stein was the first foreigner to visit the spot with the definite object of acquiring by purchase some of the available treasures. And although he lacked the necessary knowledge of Chinese to make a wholly satisfactory selection, as is shown by the inclusion of far too many duplicate texts, the mass of Buddhist and other literature which he eventually sent home proved to be of outstanding value and importance. These were the fruits of his second great expedition (1906-1908), jointly financed by the Government of India and the Trustees of the British Museum. By January, 1909, the whole collection had been safely deposited in the British Museum, to which all the Chinese MSS. were ultimately allotted.

For many years no serious effort was made to deal systematically with the collection as a whole. It was not until 1919, just after the first world war, that it was placed under my charge, and I was able to embark on the formidable task of sorting it out and compiling a full, descriptive catalogue. Meanwhile, Stein's third expedition had produced yet another large batch of manuscripts which came to swell the total in London, but again little or no attempt seems to have been made at a judicious selection. Not that this now mattered very much, for only a year after Stein's first visit to the Caves the brilliant French sinologist, Professor Paul Pelliot, had spent three weeks on the site and carried away almost everything of first-rate importance to the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Shortly afterwards the Chinese Government, realizing at last the full value of the hoard, removed most of what was still left to the security of the National Library of Peking.

A preliminary examination of what had reached the British Museum showed that the Buddhist works amounted to more than three-quarters of the whole, and included all the principal sūtras, Vinaya and Abhidharma texts. It seemed best, therefore, to adopt the arrangement followed by Bunyiu Nanjio in his standard *Catalogue of the Chinese translation of the Buddhist Tripitaka*, supplementing it with the many uncanonical works and miscellaneous pieces which

had been acquired with the rest. There were also a number of Taoist works and two very interesting Manichean texts. The rest of the Collection, which was non-religious, could then be reserved for separate treatment under the comprehensive heading of "Secular Texts".

The information given for each item in the Catalogue begins with a serial number, and contains the Chinese title, if any, with its transcription according to the Wade System; the *chüan* and *p'in*, or chapter and section, and any short description of the contents that may be thought necessary; a rough indication of the quality of the handwriting, graded from "fine" to "very bad"; the colour and texture of the paper; a measurement of length (in feet only, for ordinary rolls); and finally, the "Stein number" given to each MS. when first catalogued. Knowing the Stein number of a MS., one can also obtain its serial number by means of the Conversion Table at the end of the volume. For all canonical Buddhist texts references are given to Nanjio's Catalogue (N.), to 大日本校訂大藏經, known as the "Kyōto reprint" of the Tripitaka (K.) and to 大正新修大藏經 *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (T.). All the texts selected by Dr. Yabuki for his 鳴沙餘韻 *Meisha Yōin* are indicated by a Y.

The width of the rolls does not vary enough as a rule to be worth recording except when it is less than 25 cm. or more than 30 cm. In the case of small fragments and booklets, both width and length are given in centimetres, the vertical measurement coming first. A dash at the beginning of a fresh entry indicates that the title is the same as in the one preceding. This only applies of course to the first title *recto*, if there are more than one. An asterisk placed before any transliterated title, or description, or dash, indicates that the beginning of the text in question is wanting; coming after them, either that the end is lost or that the manuscript has been left incomplete. Incidentally, it may be noted that a large majority of the rolls are imperfect at the beginning, where there has been constant wear and tear. Badly mutilated rolls have been repaired and mounted, either wholly or in part, in the binders' shop on the Museum premises, and special care has been taken to preserve any writing on the back. Many of the rolls and booklets, especially in the non-Buddhist sections, will be found to contain a series of different texts, of which only the first may belong to the section under which it stands in the Catalogue. In all such cases, the texts are separately numbered, and cross-references are provided from all the sections to which they severally belong. These cross-references have also been given serial numbers.

A prominent feature in the Buddhist sections is the tail-piece or "colophon" (as it is here somewhat loosely termed) which is sometimes appended to the copy of a sūtra or some other holy text. Its main purpose is to make known the person who has acquired "merit" by having the copy made at his own expense, and the beneficiary (usually deceased) in whose direction he wishes the merit to flow. An exact date is generally included. Many of these colophons run to a few words only, while others are long and elaborate compositions with a pronounced literary flavour about them. Most of them are translated here in full, though in a few cases, owing to difficulties of decipherment or interpretation, only the main facts have been extracted. A list of the colophons, excluding very short notes, is given on page xv, those with an asterisk being imperfect. Twenty-four of them, marked *t*, are drawn up in a carefully tabulated form, where the names of the copyist, the revisers, the dyer of the paper, and various other persons concerned

in the production are all duly noted. The number of sheets of paper used is also stated, which enables us to tell how much of an imperfect text is missing. The earliest of the tabulated colophons (no. 2580) is dated 671, and exceptionally good specimens will be found under nos. 2298, 2454, and 3011. It is due mainly to these tail-pieces that the date of copying has been preserved for us in so many cases—about 380 altogether. A detailed account of all the dated MSS. in chronological order, from A.D. 406 to 995, is given in a series of six articles in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* (see Bibliography, p. 333). Of the undated MSS. it is quite possible that some may be a little earlier than 406, and it is still more likely that several are a few years later than 995.

Another occasional appendage to Buddhist sūtras, occurring for some reason with special frequency in copies of the *Chin kuang ming tsui shêng wang ching* (N. 126), is what I have ventured to call a phonetic glossary. This consists of just a few words selected from the preceding text, with their *fan-ch'ieh* (initial plus final) pronunciation. See, for example, nos. 1932 and 2051.

The fact that paper was still quite unknown in Europe during the whole period covered by the Tunhuang MSS. has made a regular notice of it desirable in most of the following entries. For a general survey of the subject of early paper-making, as well as an expert examination of certain papers of different dates in the Stein Collection, those interested should consult R. H. Clapperton's *Paper: an Historical Account*, pp. 1-26. A list of the papers thus analysed, to which both serial and Stein numbers have been added, appears below on page xvi. Broadly, it may be said that even the earliest fifth-century papers known to us are of remarkably good quality; they are generally a dull or brownish buff in hue, for the application of colouring matter does not appear to have been practised much before A.D. 500. (See no. 5524.) An agreeable lemon-yellow is characteristic of the earlier part of the sixth century: see 1646, 1690, 1714, 1723, and 1735 among others. Then, a little later on, a beautiful golden-yellow paper, thin and crisp, makes its first appearance. More uncommon shades of colour are orange-yellow, slate-blue, greenish-buff, pink or pinkish, sulphur-yellow, etc.; see especially 2530, 4722, 5784, 5844, 6053, 7076, 7456. And one roll (no. 1262) is actually composed of twelve variously coloured sheets. The staining fluid was evidently of an oily nature; sometimes it has been applied on both sides of the paper, but usually on one only. During the seventh century and part of the eighth, the texture of the paper used in the monasteries continues to be fine and smooth, and its colour a bright or brownish-yellow; but after the An Lu-shan rebellion a marked deterioration sets in, and most of it now becomes coarse and drab-coloured.

The handwriting of the copyists also passes through a series of changes which are similarly useful in furnishing a rough clue to the date. Throughout the fifth century and perhaps even later, a stubby kind of brush seems to have been in common use which was incapable of producing the fine, delicate strokes that are characteristic of Chinese calligraphy at its best. It was during the Sui dynasty that the art of handwriting appears to have reached its zenith—at any rate, as far as the present Collection is concerned. For a series of particularly fine manuscripts see those of the Avatamsaka-sūtra, nos. 1612-1647. Only the most carefully trained scribes were entrusted with the task of copying sūtras (supposed to be the pronouncements of the Buddha himself), as opposed to Vinaya and Abhidharma texts, commentaries, and the like; and that is probably the main

reason why we find the production of sūtras suddenly diminished almost to vanishing point after the disastrous upheaval mentioned above, which must have affected every monastery in the country. Handwriting, then, is another of the features that receive particular attention in the pages of this Catalogue (the term "MS." being used, for the sake of brevity, in its stead).

A new departure of another kind also begins to be noticeable during the tenth century at Tunhuang. Ever since the invention of paper by Ts'ai Lun eight hundred years before, books had been written and circulated in the form of long paper rolls; hence the use, down to the present day, of 卷, the word for "roll", to designate a section or chapter. By far the greater part of the Stein Collection consists of such rolls; they are made up of a number of sheets, each about $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet in length, very neatly and efficiently fastened together with glue. The earliest dated roll, a Vinaya text of A.D. 406 (no. 4523), is 23 feet long, which is slightly less than the average length of ordinary sūtra rolls. The longest of all the rolls are to be found among the commentaries, of which nos. 5587 (99 feet), 5597 (90 feet), 5287 (86 feet), and 5523 ($80\frac{3}{4}$ feet) head the list in this respect. The handling of such rolls, or even those of more moderate length, cannot but be awkward for the reader, who has to be constantly unrolling and rolling up again as he goes along, and any reference to a required passage may involve serious loss of time. It is surprising, therefore, that the invention of some more convenient device for the construction of books should have been so long delayed.

The first step in advance was taken when, instead of being rolled up, the paper was folded into leaves of a reasonable size thus forming a volume that could be quickly opened at any point and shut up after consultation. A fairly good specimen, containing as many as 211 leaves, is no. 5591 in the Catalogue. The next innovation was the stitching of all the leaves together at one side, so that they should no longer fly apart in a long chain. This is the style in which Chinese books are still produced. It has the disadvantage, however, of leaving one side of the paper unused; and as scarcity of paper was becoming a problem in the Tunhuang region, booklets were generally made up of small separate sheets, intended for writing on both sides, as with us in the West. Of these there are several hundred specimens, varying greatly in size, in the Stein Collection; but it is fairly clear that even by the end of the tenth century they were far from having superseded the roll, for of the last fifty dated manuscripts only two are in booklet form.

About 70 of our MSS. may be confidently assigned to the fifth century, and for the next 200 years or so the output continues steadily to increase. The great majority of these early MSS. are copies of Buddhist sūtras that happened to be in particular favour at the time. During the following period, when the Tunhuang district passed temporarily under Tibetan rule, the flow of Buddhist literature rapidly dried up, and never returned to anything like its earlier level. On the other hand, after the re-establishment of Chinese sovereignty in 848 by the famous leader Chang I-ch'ao (for whose autograph as a youthful copyist see no. 5656), miscellaneous texts of a "secular" kind begin to appear in ever-increasing numbers: parts of the Confucian classics, literary, topographical, and didactic fragments, verses, legal documents, club circulars, account notes, and so on. Divination, medicine, and calendar-making have always been regarded as specifically Taoist activities by the Chinese, and are therefore included in the Taoist section of the Catalogue.

A number of manuscripts in which other languages appear as well as Chinese are listed together in nos. 8049-8082, besides which there are some 50 or more elsewhere, which contain miscellaneous scraps in Sanskrit, Soghdian, Uighur, Khotanese, and especially Tibetan.

The Buddhist paintings brought back from the *Ch'ien Fo Tung* by Sir Aurel Stein have been catalogued in a separate volume by Dr. Arthur Waley (see Bibliography, p. 333), and apart from these there is very little of a pictorial nature that demands special attention. However, it has been considered worth while to draw up a list of cross-references to any drawings or diagrams, however crude, that may occur here and there (see p. 276).

A small but very precious part of the Collection consists of 20 early specimens of block-printing, one of which, a complete and remarkably well-preserved copy of the Diamond Sūtra, bears a date corresponding to the 11th May, A.D. 868. Among the other printed documents are two calendars of A.D. 877 and 882, several prayer-sheets from the middle of the tenth century, and a very well printed set of Buddhist verses on the 24 examples of filial piety.

In the year 689, during the reign of the usurping Empress Wu, new forms are known to have been officially substituted by her command for a certain number of Chinese characters, variously given as 12, 16, or 19; and that their use was rigidly enforced until her abdication in 705 is proved by their regular appearance in the manuscripts copied during this period. I have found examples occurring in at least 47 different rolls, and there may well be others that have escaped my notice. For a list of these MSS. see p. xvi. See also Chavannes, *Mission Archéologique dans la Chine Septentrionale*, tom. i, pp. 542-3 and Index 1731; BSOS. viii, pp. 21 seq. (A.D. 691-704).

There are certain markings of an enigmatical kind, such as the "shooting stars" which appear in 7380 (1), 7381, and 7408, and a curious "bird-character" (the figure of a bird perched on radical no. 162, 𪇑) which may possibly represent the signature of the Commissioner or other important official: see 5231v^o (1), 7399, and compare also 7444, 7511.

SPECIAL REFERENCES

(1) Colophons.

Those marked with a "t" are in tabulated form. Those with an asterisk are imperfect.

Those with a "+" are not translated in full.

816vo	1735	2575	3924	5670
843	1759	2577	4019 (2)	5686
845	1763	2580t	4196	5695
1074t	1774	2600	4215	5709
1076	1780	2601	4293	5765
1083t	1795	2623t	4298	5928
1137	1797	2631t	4329	6307
1178	1811	2705t	4330	6436
1179	1817	2714t	4335	6466
1223	1846	2759t	4353	6491
1242	1878	2771	4444vo (3)	6766t
1297	1881	2817t	4523	6767t*
1355	1885	2818t	4631	6800
1357	1905	2858t	4671	6814
1358	1932	3006*	4683	6830
1372	1936	3011†*	4687	6845
1376	1967	3026*	4696	7053
1378	1983	3151	4774	7107
1384	2097	3182	4817	7140
1388	2102t	3195	4826	7148
1389	2104	3198	4843	7170*
1396	2105	3207	5145	7186
1423	2107	3215	5177	7193 (1)
1437	2172	3260t	5227	7198
1438	2174	3264	5259 (1)	7209 (1)
1440	2195	3281	5265 (1)	7896
1491	2199	3471	5324 (2)*	8083
1496	2274	3515t	5335	8084
1589	2298t	3574*	5394	8087
1612	2308t	3597	5407	8093
1623	2136	3694	5417A	
1626	2411t	3705	5444	
1635	2432	3709	5454	
1644	2445	3745	5459	
1647	2449t	3748	5497	
1670	2453	3752	5516	
1690	2454t	3807	5524	
1693	2529	3861	5530	
1715	2547	3863	5539vo	
1725	2569t	3881	5606	
1726	2572t	3898	5624	

(2) Papers analysed.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Serial No.</i>	<i>Stein No.</i>
406 A.D.	4523	797
early 5th cent.	1795	116
5th cent.	3519	88
506	1725	81
561	1763	2082
593	4232	227
673	2759	312
710	3752	2424
756	3006	717
803	5299	912
875	5335	4476
929	6196	4012
968	7391	4632
989	7048	3985
991	7959	86

(3) Empress Wu characters.

New forms substituted for a certain number of characters by command of the Empress Wu will be found in copies of sūtras made towards the end of her reign. Specimens have been discovered in the following 47 rolls.

296	2352vo	3982	5477
412	2354vo	4103	5888
520	2577	4109	6120vo
698	2771	4114	6680 (2)
770	3182	4123	6779
1076	3309	4293	6834
1549	3515	4348	7192
2048	3629 (colophon only)	4386	7250
2078	3754	4461	7339
2102	3766	4554	7340
2107	3781	4594	7794
2221	3894	4647	

ABBREVIATIONS

abbr.	= abbreviated	MS.	= manuscript, hand-writing
Abh.	= Abhandlungen	mid.	= middle
Akad.	= Akademie	mtd.	= mutilated
art.	= article	N.	= Nanjio's <i>Catalogue of the Chinese translation of the Buddhist Tripitaka</i>
B.	= bilingual document	P.	= printed document in Stein Collection
begin.	= beginning	pl.	= plate
bk.	= book	P.P.	= Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra class
B.N.L.P.	= <i>Bulletin of the National Library of Peiping</i>	prec.	= preceding entry
B.S.O.S.,	= <i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental (and African) Studies</i>	pt.	= part
B.S.O.A.S.		Q. & A.	= questions and answers
ca.	= circa	r ^o .	= recto
cent.	= century	ref.	= reference
ch.	= chüan	S.	= manuscript in Stein Collection
chap.	= chapter	sec.	= section
char.	= character	seq.	= and following
col.	= column	ser.	= series
comm.	= commentary	sim.	= similar
contd.	= continued	sq.	= square
d.	= died	supp.	= supplement
diff.	= different	T.	= Taishō Tripitaka
do.	= ditto	T.T.	= Tao Tsang (Taoist Canon)
f.	= folio (leaf)	tr.	= translated by
F.P.	= Fonds Pelliot (at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris)	unfd.	= unfinished
frag.	= fragment	v ^o .	= verso
J.A.	= <i>Journal Asiatique</i>	W.	= Wieger's <i>Canon Taoïste</i>
Jahrg.	= Jahrgang	Wissn.	= Wissenschaften
J.R.A.S.	= <i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>	Y.	= Yabuki's <i>Meisha Yoin</i>
K.	= Kyōto Reprint of the Chinese Tripitaka	§	= paragraph
K.L.	= Klasse	*	= incomplete (at beginning or end)
K.S.	= Kyōto Supplement to the Tripitaka		
lit.	= literally		