

The Ways of the Dunhuang Library Formation

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1. In one of my papers, which I've delivered at the IDP conferences, I had spoken about the document discovered in the Dunhuang manuscript collection in Russia. It was written in 1002 and tells us that the Dunhuang governor (there are two versions of that document, one with the title of jiedushi, another with the name Wang of Dunhuang) named Tsao Tzung-show and his wife Fan ordered to fill in the Library, and to make a list of lacks in it. The masters of copying and book design were invited. According to the handwriting, the paper of the manuscript and some other features, some other manuscripts can be attributed to the period and can be connected with the document of 1002, named above. The first document is a passport in the name of Ying-pao, a monk, who had to travel to the capital and find books for filling up the lacks. Some of the documents are the lists of the missed items and perhaps these lists were created for the fulfilling of the library. Finally there is a document, dated 1003, informing us that the library had received the finished manuscripts. So we have an opportunity to observe the process of fulfilling the collection from the beginning to the end. And we can point out, that the first method of fulfilling the library was the completing of the library after the order of high authorities.
2. The second method of collecting the library is known to every specialist on Dunhuang studies. It was in details described by professor Fujieda Akira and M.I.Demidova, who reaffirmed his descriptions in her research. Briefly speaking, Empress Wu-how shortly before her transmission of the throne to emperor Chung-tsung in 704 had presented a big amount of manuscripts mainly buddhist to Dunhuang Library. Thanks to this we have a possibility to study the process of manuscripts manufacturing in the capital scriptorium under the Emperor's family protection. For example, we know almost all the names of scribes, controllers, designers, officials etc., of those who took part in the manufacturing process. Another fact of big donation took place in 852, when after Chang Yi-ch'ao's revolt in 848 a delegation came to capital Chang-an with a petition to incorporate Dunhuang in Chinese (Tang) Empire. According to investigation of Prof. Chen Tzu-lung the buddhist part of the delegation had received rights to select for copying every single manuscript kept in capital monasteries.
3. Above described ways of formation of the Dunhuang Library are the results of big offers of high authorities from emperors to the governors of Dunhuang monasteries. But there were other examples of the connections between the same aristocratic families and Dunhuang in the aim of

adding books to the monastery. So, for instance, governor (jiedushi) Chan Cheng-feng at the end of the 9th c. ordered to rewrite about thousand copies of one buddhist sutra (Amitayus sutra) both in Chinese and Tibetan. In 945-950 another governor Tc'ao Yuan-chung printed many copies of buddhist icon with image of Manjushri accompanied by a short invocation – dharani. The copies of those two texts are listed in every Dunhuang collection.

4. In Dunhuang collections we have many manuscripts rewritten or ordered by private people, sometimes in one example, sometimes in several copies. The best-known name is Hsiao Ta-yen, who ordered to make one thousand copies of a comparably large work Miao-fa lien-hua ching (The Lotus Sutra in 7 juans). We have the name of the person, who ordered it and the number of the copy in every manuscript written on colophon. Such an order is quiet common in parties of Chinese Buddhism. In early Buddhist encyclopedia Fa-yuan Zhi-lin of Tang period we find many records on ordering money for rewriting sutras, and name of the person, who gave money, the sum of money and number of copies. In any case the copies of Lotus sutra ordered by Hsiao Ta-yen we may find in every big collection of Dunhuang.
5. Some documents, discovered in Dunhuang Collections, show us the way of formation of the libraries more deatailed. It is the manuscript, rewrote inside Dunhuang monasteries. One of the documents is a list of a company, which decided to organize the copying of manuscripts (the titles of sutras were not pointed out). In the group of twelve persons was also a woman, who prepared the food. It means that the group planned to work for a long period till they finnish copying. Another document of the same content but with indication of the rewritten sutra also has the list of twelve persons, including the cook. It is possible to conclude, that such organizations were not rare.
6. The time of copying is possible to determine with help of other colophons applied to. In every Dunhuang Collections we can find a name of Zhang Ming-zhao (or Ming-zhao), who made a copy of vinaya work Ying shi di lun (Sutra on Yoga teacher land “Yogacarya bhumi sastra”), in one hundred juans. According to the records we can tell that the time, needed for rewriting of one juan (one scroll) is one month. Except for Ming-zhao, there were some other names of those, who made the second copy after Ming-zhao. The Ming-zhao's name was written on every copy and according to it took him nine years to make the copy. So, the group existed for a really long time.

A big quantity of the manuscripts in many copies was made for two reasons: the first is that the manuscripts were spread not only in Dunhuang districts but in other egions as well. Expeditions to Central Asia had collected manuscripts not only in Mogao Cavesbut also in Hotan (S.Ye.Malov), Turfan (S.Th. Oldenburg) etc. The second reason was practical: the demand for the great numbers of copies inevitably led to the invention and the use of printing. And it took its place in tenth century as a production in fact.