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RETHINKING THE INTERPLAY OF
RELIGIONS, ART AND POLITICS ACROSS
THE TARIM BASIN (5TH–10TH C.)**

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BRAHMANICAL DEITIES IN FOREIGN LANDS: THE FATE OF SKANDA IN BUDDHIST CENTRAL ASIA

CIRO LO MUZIO

Abstract

The relationship between Brahmanism and Buddhism is a very inspiring field of inquiry, with which scholars have so far dealt applying different, often antithetic, methodological approaches and attitudes of mind. The question of the ‘borrowing’ of Brahmanical deities by the Buddhist theistic system is one of the major issues of the debate. On this occasion, it will be addressed from an iconographic viewpoint, with a focus on the Brahmanical god Skanda/Kārttikeya, a multifaceted and metamorphic deity in its own original milieu. Formerly a demon, later promoted to divine rank, Skanda plays a role in Buddhism as well. An analysis of the diverse iconographic contexts in which his depictions occur, from Gandhāra to Central Asia, offers interesting clues to a possible explanation of his presence in the local Buddhist repertoires.

1. Introduction

This paper aims at presenting an overview of the representations of the Brahmanical god Skanda in Central Asian Buddhist art, with an analysis of his iconographic features and of the contexts in which his image occurs. Following the tracks of any Brahmanical deity in Central Asian Buddhism also means facing the question of the relationship between Buddhism and Brahmanism, a question which cannot be reduced to an art historical issue, as it concerns religious, philosophical, as well as political thought.¹ The topic has been matter of a lively debate, engaging authoritative scholars and showing a tendency to polarize on conflicting or even antithetical approaches.

¹ Cf. Johannes Bronkhorst’s reassessment of the relationship between early Buddhism and Brahmanism: Johannes Bronkhorst, *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism* (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

A major role in starting and constantly stimulating the discussion has been played by David Seyfort Ruegg, who in 1964 formulated his own approach to the matter and reasserted his views in the following years, defending them from criticism in several publications covering a long-time span². Seyfort Ruegg interprets the presence of Brahmanical gods or notions in Buddhism within a hierarchical frame based on the distinction between the supramundane (Skt. *lokottara*) and mundane (Skt. *laukika*) plans. He argues that in the *laukika* realm, no clear-cut separation can be drawn between Buddhism and Brahmanism without producing artificial and misleading results, as both systems share a common background or ‘religious substratum.’ This is the argument Seyfort Ruegg³ opposes, for instance, to Marie-Thérèse de Mallmann’s view of the part Brahmanical gods play in Tantric Buddhism, in which—as she claimed—they appear as subjugated deities.⁴

In turn, the notion of a ‘religious substratum’ is refuted by Alexis Sanderson. Based on his analysis of the tradition of *Yoginītantras*, Sanderson argues that Buddhism and Brahmanism remain two distinct entities, and that any similarity between them can only be explained with borrowing:

The problem with this concept of a ‘religious substratum’ or ‘common cultic stock’ is that they are by their very nature entities inferred but never perceived. Whatever we perceive is always Śaiva or Buddhist or Vaiṣṇava, or something else specific. Derivation from this hidden source cannot

² David Seyfort Ruegg, “Sur les rapports entre le Bouddhisme et le ‘substrat religieux’ indien et tibétain,” *Journal Asiatique* 252 (1964): 77–95; David Seyfort Ruegg, “Review: *Introduction à l’iconographie du Tāntrisme bouddhique* by Marie-Thérèse de Mallmann,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 98.4 (1978): 543–545; David Seyfort Ruegg, “A Note on the Relationship between Buddhist and ‘Hindu’ Divinities in Buddhist Literature and Iconology: the *Laukika/Lokottara* Contrast and the Notion of an Indian ‘Religious Substratum’,” in *Le parole e i marmi. Studi in onore di Raniero Gnoli nel 70° compleanno*, ed. Raffaele Torella (Rome: Istituto Italiano per l’Africa e l’Oriente, 2001), 735–742; David Seyfort Ruegg, *The Symbiosis of Buddhism with Brahmanism/Hinduism in South Asia and of Buddhism with ‘Local Cults’ in Tibet and the Himalayan Region* (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2008).

³ Seyfort Ruegg, “Review,” 544–545.

⁴ Marie-Thérèse de Mallmann, *Introduction à l’iconographie du Tāntrisme bouddhique* (Paris: Librairie d’Amérique et d’Orient Adrien Maisonneuve, 1975), 30ff.

therefore be the preferred explanation for similarities between these specific traditions unless those similarities cannot be explained in any other way.⁵

The idea of a ‘religious substratum’ or of a common theological background on the *laukika* level has recently received even sharper criticism by Ronald Davidson, who labels Seyfort Ruegg’s theorem as a metaphysical scheme based on unacknowledged suppositions and implied formulae, and, above all, out of time and space:

It is inconceivable, for example, that monasteries in Nāgapaṭṭiṇam [*sic*] in eleventh-century South India would have had the same relationships to ‘Hindu’ cults that were evinced by the Buddha’s immediate disciples in Magadha fifteen centuries before.⁶

In fact, the necessity of a historical perspective in retracing the interaction between Buddhism and Brahmanism was a major assumption in an essay on *vaiṣṇava* and *śaiva* motifs in Mahāyāna *sūtras* published more than forty years ago by Constantin Regamey.⁷ On a higher level, the two systems are distinct, yet linked by constant contacts and mutual borrowings. Buddhism mirrors the changes that occurred in Brahmanism during the time; in a sense, it provides a parallel history of Brahmanical theistic cults.⁸ On the other hand, Regamey admitted the existence of a common background shared by both systems of beliefs, though mainly in the field

⁵ Alexis Sanderson, “Vajrayāna: Origin and Function,” in *Buddhism into the Year 2000: International Conference Proceedings* (Bangkok: Dhammakāya Foundation, 1994), 92–93. With “common cultic stock” Sanderson quotes a phrase formulated by Stephan Beyer (Stephan Beyer, *The Cult of Tārā. Magic and Ritual in Tibet*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973, 42).

⁶ Ronald Davidson, “Review: *The Symbiosis of Buddhism with Brahmanism/Hinduism in South Asia and of Buddhism with ‘Local Cults’ in Tibet and the Himalayan Region* by David Seyfort Ruegg,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 129.1 (2009): 117.

⁷ Constantin Regamey, “Motifs vichnouites et śivaïtes dans le Kāraṇḍavyūha,” in *Études tibétaines dédiées à la mémoire de Marcelle Lalou* (Paris: Librairie d’Amérique et d’Orient Adrien Maisonneuve, 1971), 411–432.

⁸ “[O]n a reconnu depuis longtemps quels texts canoniques du bouddhisme nous conservent l’image de la période de la religion populaire brahmanique intermediaire entre le védisme et l’hindouisme épique et pouranique sur laquelle la littérature brahmanique (à l’exception des parties les plus archaïques du Mahābhārata) ne nous dit rien. Les textes brahmaniques conserves de cette époque (les Brāhmaṇa et les Upaniṣad les plus anciennes) ayant un caractère élitaire sont en principe opposes aux cultes populaires sinon franchement athées.” (Regamey, “Motifs vichnouites et śivaïtes”, 414).

of popular beliefs and minor mythological, semi-divine, and demoniac figures.⁹

It is worth highlighting, in this regard, Robert DeCaroli's original reappraisal of the worship of *yakṣas*, *nāgas* and other semi-divine beings and of the part they played in the religious mentality and everyday life of early Buddhist monks.¹⁰ Spirit-deities are ubiquitous in the iconographic programs of the earliest preserved Buddhist monuments as well as in Buddhist literature, and their presence is usually explained as a compromise with the beliefs of the laymen. DeCaroli rather argues that Buddhist monks

undertook an ongoing and intentional practice whereby various sorts of spirit-deities were transformed into Buddhist devotees. [...] Images of spirit-deities were consistently positioned on the periphery of early monastic complexes to reveal the new status of these beings as supporters of Buddhism [...].¹¹

In this way, Buddhist monks acted as mediators between the lay community and these beings; still

they had obligations to these spirit-deities, and many members of the monastic community believed that they risked dire consequences if these responsibilities were ever ignored.¹²

It is evident that the relationship between Buddhism and Brahmanism is a vast and manifold matter and that there is no univocal strategy to face it in all its complexity. There are several possible approaches, each of them with its own effectiveness depending on the single case or specific text or iconographic issue we are investigating.

The imagery of Skanda in Buddhist art, and particularly in Central Asia, represents a very inspiring case study as it summarises the terms of the debate I have sketchily accounted for. It clearly demonstrates how advisable a flexible approach is in interpreting the presence of deities of ultimate Brahmanical origin in Buddhist art and cult.

⁹ Regamey, "Motifs vichnouites et śivaïtes," 416.

¹⁰ Robert DeCaroli, *Haunting the Buddha. Indian Popular Religions and the Formation of Buddhism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

¹¹ DeCaroli, *Haunting the Buddha*, 173.

¹² DeCaroli, *Haunting the Buddha*, 174.

Skanda is a Brahmanical god with a long history, during which he underwent substantial transformations and received many names and iconographic forms. Skanda is also known as Kārttikeya (as he is usually named in Buddhist sources), Kumāra, Mahāsenā; he is the much worshipped Murugaṅ or Subrahmanya of the Tamil region, which has remained a stronghold of his cult, whereas in the north he receded into the background after the 8th century¹³

His first representations, as a six-headed male figure, occur on Yaudheya coins dating from the 1st to the early 2nd century.¹⁴ In Mathurā and in Gandharan art (Kushan period, 1st to 3rd centuries), the god is cuirassed, holds a spear and—in Gandhāra only—a cockerel.¹⁵ His classical iconography as a youth riding a peacock becomes established in the Gupta age (ca. 4th to 6th centuries).¹⁶

The Central Asian artistic evidence of Skanda has so far been documented only in Buddhist sites of what is Xinjiang (新疆) today. Part of

¹³For a recent insightful and innovative reappraisal of the history of Skanda, see Richard D. Mann, *The Rise of Mahāsenā. The Transformation of Skanda-Kārttikeya in North India from the Kuṣāṇa to Gupta Empires* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

¹⁴Mann, *The Rise of Mahāsenā*, 103–107, 113–115, figs. 3a–c.

¹⁵On the iconography of Skanda in Gandhāra, see R.C. Agrawala, “Gandhāra Skanda with Flames,” *East and West* 18.1–2 (1968): 163–165; R.C. Agrawala, “Skanda with Cock and Peacock: A Rare Device in Gandharan Art,” in *Eastern Approaches: Essays on Asian Art and Archaeology*, ed. T. S. Maxwell (Dehli: Oxford University Press, 1992), 130–132; R.C. Agrawala, “Skanda-Ṣaṣṭhī in Gandharan Reliefs—A Review,” *East and West* 45 (1995): 329–332; Wladimir Zwalf, *A Catalogue of the Gandhāra Sculpture in the British Museum*, 2 vols (London: The Trustees of the British Museum, 1996), I, 121–122, II, 65–66 (nos. 102–104); Srinivasan, Doris Meth, “Skanda/Kārttikeya in the Early Art of the Northwest,” *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 5 (1997–98): 233–268; Anna Filigenzi, “Maître du ciel, héros de la terre: la triade Bouddha—Vajrapāṇi—Skanda dans l’art du Gandhāra,” in *Art et archéologie des monastères gréco-bouddhiques du Nord-Ouest de l’Inde et de l’Asie centrale. Actes du colloque international du CRPOGA, Strasbourg, 17–18 mars 2000*, ed. Zmaryalai Tarzi and Denyse Vaillancourt (Paris: De Boccard, 2005), 93–111; Mann, *The Rise of Mahāsenā*, 123–129; Kirsten Southworth, “Skanda in Gandhāra: A Hindu God in a Buddhist Environment,” in *Changing Forms and Cultural Identity: Religious and Secular Iconographies*, 1. *South Asian Archaeology and Art. Papers from the 20th conference of the European Association for South Asian Archaeology and Art held in Vienna from 4th to 9th of July 2010*, ed. Deborah Klimburg-Salter and Linda Lojda (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 71–75. On Skanda in the art of Mathurā, see Mann, *The Rise of Mahāsenā*, 117–121 (with previous bibliography).

¹⁶On the iconography of Skanda in Gupta sculpture and coinage, see Mann, *The Rise of Mahāsenā*, 203–230.

the material presented in this overview—which, for reasons that will be clear in a short while, extends beyond the borders of Central Asia—was already discussed by Benoytosh Mukherjee.¹⁷ I will reconsider it here, integrating it with the new interesting evidence unearthed in the Khotan oasis during the last two decades. In Central Asia, Skanda occurs in diverse iconographic contexts; in spite of the variability of certain iconographic details, his depictions are moulded upon the Gupta model (fig. 1). To my knowledge, there are no Central Asian specimens of the Kushan Skanda standing in front view, holding a spear and a cock in his hands.



Figure 1. Skanda, in a Gupta relief from Sarnath. Varanasi, Bharat Kala Bhavan Museum. After Mann, *The Rise of Mahāsenā*, fig. 31, courtesy Paolo Cassi.

¹⁷ Benoytosh Mukherjee, “The Development of the Iconography of Kārttikeya (Mahāsenā) in Central Asia,” in *Investigating Indian Art. Proceedings of a Symposium on the Development of Early Buddhist and Hindu Iconography, held at the Museum of Indian Art, Berlin, May 1986*, ed. Marianne Yaldiz and Wibke Lobo (Berlin: Museum für Indische Kunst, 1987), 249–259.

2. Skanda in Yungang

The reason why I will start my overview with Yungang (雲崗) is that this site provides the earliest iconographic evidence of Skanda north of Gandhāra; that the iconographic rendering of the god is particularly generous and clear; and that it shows, as we shall see, a close relationship with the images of Skanda from Dunhuang (敦煌) and Khotan.

Skanda appears in a relief on the eastern doorjamb of the entrance to Yungang Cave 8,¹⁸ dating from the second half of the 5th century (fig. 2). The god is five-headed (the heads are probably intended to be six, with one turned back, therefore not visible) and six-armed, and holds the sun and moon discs, a bow and, very likely, arrows in his middle right hand no longer extant, and a cockerel in the lower left hand. His lower right is in his lap, with a small, round attribute between the thumb and the forefinger. His animal vehicle (Skt. *vāhana*) seems to merge the body and the tail of a peacock with the head of a bird of prey, with a pearl (or a fruit?) in its beak. A relief on the western doorjamb shows a three-headed and eight-armed Maheśvara sitting on the bull Nandī, holding sun and moon, a bow and arrows, a bunch of grapes, and an unclear attribute.¹⁹

¹⁸ Seichi Mizuno and Toshio Nagahiro, *Yün-kang. The Buddhist Cave-temples of the Fifth Century A.D. in North China. Detailed Report of the Archaeological Survey Carried Out by the Mission of the Tōhō Bunka Kenkyūsho 1938–45*, 18 vols (Kyoto: Jimbunkagaku Kenkyūsho Kyoto University), 1951–55, V, pls. 8, 11, 16–19. The authors wrongly identify the deity as Viṣṇu (Mizuno and Nagahiro, *Yün-kang*, V, 98); same interpretation in Alexander Coburn Soper, *Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art in China (Artibus Asiae, Supplementum, 19)* (Ascona: Artibus Asiae Publishers, 1959), 238.

¹⁹ Mizuno and Nagahiro, *Yün-kang*, V, pls. 10, 12–15.

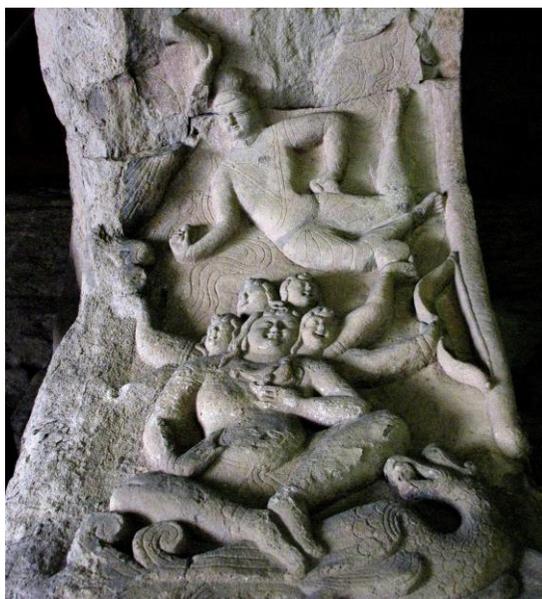


Figure 2. Relief on the left doorjamb of Yungang Cave 8. Photo Ben Yeuda, courtesy Rivi Ben-Yehuda.

At Yungang, Skanda and Maheśvara also appear in a relief above the entrance to Cave 10 (last quarter of the 5th century; fig. 3). Both deities are shown without their respective *vāhana*; the image of Skanda almost completely matches the one in Cave 8 (five heads; sun and moon; bow and arrows; unclear attribute in the right hand, in front of the chest, but apparently not a cock), while Maheśvara is three-headed, four-armed, holding sun and moon and an unclear attribute in the right hand, also in front of the chest. They are portrayed at both ends of a mountainous landscape in which worshippers and wild animals are represented.

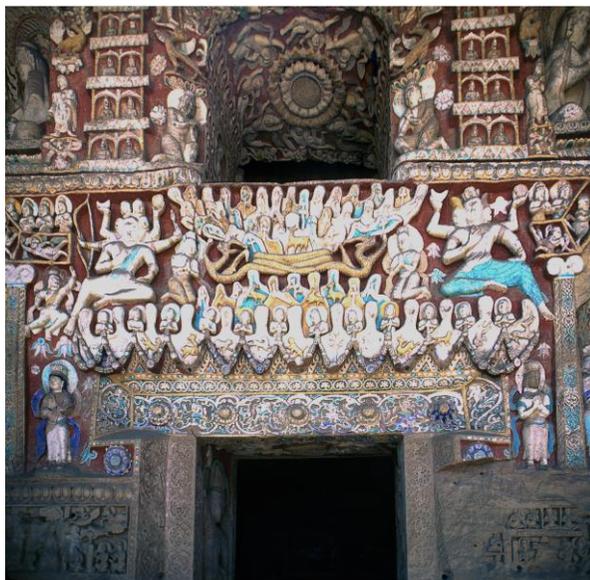


Figure 3. Relief above the entrance to Yungang Cave 10. Courtesy Huntington Archive and Huntington Digital Collection.

The prototype of the Yungang Cave 8 Skanda is the Gupta image of the god sitting on the peacock. The presence of the cock in his hand, however, may betray a Gandharan mediation, if we consider that this attribute is a constant feature of the Gandharan Skanda in the Kushan epoch. We have very few examples of Skanda-on-a-peacock holding a cock, and all of them are supposed to be post-Kushan Gandharan works.²⁰

Apart from the Yaudheya coinage (see above), the multiple heads of the Yungang Skanda are also rarely seen in the South Asia depictions of the god, especially when he rides his *vāhana*,²¹ before the medieval peri-

²⁰ A relief in the British Museum, probably of post-Kushan date (Zwalf, *A Catalogue of the Gandhāra Sculpture*, cat. no. 103), and a relief in the State Museum of Lucknow (Nilakanth Purushottam Joshi, *Catalogue of the Brahmanical Sculptures in the State Museum, Lucknow (Part I)*, Lucknow: The Archana Printing Press, 1972, 110).

²¹ See, for instance, a twelfth-century sculpture from Andhra Pradesh portraying a six-headed Skanda on a peacock, now in the Art Institute of Chicago: Pratapaditya Pal, “Sculptures from South India in The Art Institute of Chicago,” *Art Institute of Chicago*

od. On the contrary, the association of the six heads and the peacock matches the description of Skanda, as a member of a group of Hindu deities (including Maheśvara, Mahākāla, Vārāhī, and others) in later Buddhist texts, such as the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*.²² As to the bow and arrows, they are attributes assigned to Skanda (along with a spear) in the *Agni Purāṇa* and in the *Matsya Purāṇa*.²³

3. Skanda in Dunhuang

The next piece of evidence to be considered is offered by the paintings of Mogao Cave (Chin. Mogao ku 莫高窟) 285 at Dunhuang, dated by inscriptions to 538/539 (fig. 4).²⁴ On the western wall, to the right of the main niche housing a Buddha seated in the European fashion, there is a triad composed by a three-faced and six-armed Maheśvara, ithyphallic and mounting his bull, and, below him, Skanda and Gaṇeśa, in three quarter view towards the niche. Skanda, seated on a peacock, wears a loincloth (Skt. *dhotī*) and a scarf; his hair is arranged in three tufts on top and on the sides of his head. He has four arms; in his upper left hand he holds a trident (Skt. *triśūla*), in the upper right a blue lotus; in his lower left hand, on the lap, a roundish white attribute (a cock?), in the lower right a bunch of grapes, towards which the peacock leans its beak. A parallel for this detail is offered by the Gupta relief in the Bharat Kala Bhavan mentioned above (fig. 1), in which Skanda feeds his peacock

Museum Studies 22.1 (1996): 31, figs. 11, 12. I thank Chiara Policardi for drawing my attention to this artwork.

²² Benoytosh Bhattacharya, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography, Mainly Based on the Sādhnamālā and Cognate Tāntric Texts of Rituals* (Calcutta: K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1958), 363–366. Mukherjee speculates upon a possible syncretism between Skanda and Mañjuśrī (of which we have evidence in the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*) in the Yungang relief (Mukherjee, “The Development of the Iconography of Kārttikeya”, 253–254). On this topic, see also Seyfort Rugg, *The Symbiosis of Buddhism with Brahmanism/Hinduism*, 35–36 (“Kārttikeya-Mañjuśrī in the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*”).

²³ Mukherjee, “The Development of the Iconography of Kārttikeya,” 251.

²⁴ Paul Pelliot, *Les grottes de Touen-houang. Peintures et sculptures bouddhiques des époques des Wei, des T'ang et des Song* (Paris: Geuthner, 1920–1924), vol. 3, pl. CCLXV; Dunhuang wenwu yanjiusuo 敦煌文物研究所 ed., *Dunhuang Mogaoku 敦煌莫高窟* [Mogao Caves at Dunhuang], I (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1982), pls. 114, 118–119.

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with fruit held in his right hand.²⁵ To the left of the niche, there is another group of Hindu deities headed by Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa.



Figure 4. The gods Maheśvara, Skanda and Gaṇeśa. Dunhuang Mogao Cave 285, western wall. After Pelliot, *Les grottes de Touen-houang*, 3, pl. CCLXV.

The association of Skanda with his father Maheśvara in the same Buddhist iconographic frame is not a Central Asian invention. We have iconographic evidence from Gandhāra, which, furthermore, indicates one of the possible ways in which the presence of Brahmanical deities makes sense in a Buddhist artistic and ritual environment. A fragment of a much larger relief, now in the Peshawar Museum, shows a bodhisattva in meditation (Skt. *dhyānāsana*) and six figures emanating from him, all

²⁵ Mann, *The Rise of Mahāseṇa*, 203. The king Kumaragupta I feeds a peacock on coins of his “peacock series” bearing on the reverse the image of Skanda on a peacock (Mann, *The Rise of Mahāseṇa*, 219–220).

different from one another, standing on lotus flowers (fig. 5). The group is inspired by an iconographic formula well documented in Gandharan miracle scenes or representations of Pure Lands, with a central meditating or preaching Buddha surrounded by smaller buddhas or bodhisattvas radiating from him.²⁶ In this case, however, a central bodhisattva radiates Hindu deities, and what is particularly relevant for us is that one of the few unambiguously identifiable gods is Skanda (the central figure on the left), shown in his typical martial Kushan iconography, i.e. cuirassed and holding a spear. On the opposite side, on the same level, we see Maheśvara, ithyphallic and holding the *triśūla*. Two more examples of the same subject, in which Skanda and Maheśvara are shown according to the same symmetric scheme, were added by Anna Maria Quagliotti: a fragment of relief in the Chandigarh Museum²⁷ and a whole relief in a private collection, showing the same detail on the upper right corner,²⁸ thus suggesting the original location of the other two fragments in the slabs they belonged to.

²⁶ On this subject, see now Paul Harrison and Christian Luczanits, “New Light on (and from) the Muhammad Nari Stele,” in *Special International Symposium on Pure Land Buddhism, 4th August 2011, Otani University* (Kyoto: Ryukoku University Research Center for Buddhist Cultures in Asia, 2012), 69–127.

²⁷ Anna Maria Quagliotti, “Il Buddha che insegna la Legge: una stele raffigurante una ‘Terra Pura’,” in *Studi in onore di Umberto Scerrato per il suo settantacinquesimo compleanno*, ed. Maria Vittoria Fontana and Bruno Genito, 2 vols (Naples: Istituto Italiano per l’Africa e l’Oriente, 2003), II, 641–643, 650, pls. CV, CVIII.

²⁸ Quagliotti, “Il Buddha che insegna la Legge,” pl. CV.



Figure 5. Meditating Bodhisattva emanating Brahmanical deities, fragment of Gandharan relief. Peshawar Museum. After Taddei, “Non-Buddhist Deities,” fig. 1, courtesy Peshawar Museum.

With regard to the fragment in the Peshawar Museum, Maurizio Taddei proposed to interpret the subject in light of the ideas expounded in several Buddhist sources, among them the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra* and the *Kāraṇḍavyūha*, according to which a bodhisattva can take many different forms (mainly those of popular Brahmanical deities) depending on the spiritual level and the personal beliefs of the sentient beings to be

converted to the doctrine.²⁹ I wonder whether this explanation may suit the Yungang and Dunhuang representations described above. At Yungang, considering the spot where their images were carved (the door-jambes of the entrance to the cave), Skanda and Maheśvara rather appear as divine door-guardians (Skt. *dvārapāla*); in the composition of the western wall of Dunhuang Mogao Cave 285, on the other hand, Skanda features in a large composition including a number of Indian divinities (Maheśvara, Gaṇeśa, Viṣṇu, Śakra, Sūrya, and Candra), which recalls the enumerations, found in Buddhist texts such as the *Mahāsamaya* or the *Mahāmāyūrī*, of Brahmanical deities who approach the Buddha and take refuge in him.³⁰

4. The Dandān-öiliq Evidence

We can now consider the evidence from the Khotan oasis. Three excavation campaigns carried out at Dandān-öiliq (Khotan) by two distinct archaeological missions³¹ led to the discovery of remarkable mural paint-

²⁹ Maurizio Taddei, “Non-Buddhist Deities in Gandharan Art,” in *Investigating Indian Art. Proceedings of a Symposium on the Development of Early Buddhist and Hindu Iconography, held at the Museum of Indian Art, Berlin, May 1986*, ed. Marianne Yaldiz and Wibke Lobo (Berlin: Museum für Indische Kunst, 1987), 274–278. See also, on this topic, Seyfort Rugg, *The Symbiosis of Buddhism with Brahmanism/Hinduism*, 31–34 (“Docetism in Mahāyāna Sūtras”).

³⁰ Seyfort Rugg, *The Symbiosis of Buddhism with Brahmanism/Hinduism*, 19–29, in particular 20.

³¹ a) A Sino-Swiss team led by Christoph Baumer, which carried out a three day-exploration at the site in 1998, including the excavation of the temple D13: Christoph Baumer, “Dandan Oilik revisited: new findings a century later,” *Oriental Art* 49.2 (1999): 2–14; Christoph Baumer, *Southern Silk Road: In the Footsteps of Sir Aurel Stein and Sven Hedin* (Bangkok: White Orchid Books, 2000); Christoph Baumer, “Sogdian or Indian Iconography and Religious Influences in Dandan-Uiliq: the Murals of Buddhist Temple D 13,” in *The Art of Central Asia and the Indian Subcontinent*, ed. Anupa Pande (New Delhi: Aryan Book International, 2009), 170–184.

b) A Sino-Japanese team, which carried out diggings in 2002 and 2004, bringing to light the temples CD4 and CD10: Yuzhong Zhang, Tao Qu, and Guorui Liu, “A Newly Discovered Buddhist Temple and Wall Paintings at Dandan-Uiliq in Xinjiang,” *Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology* 3 (2008): 157–170; Zhongguo Xinjiang wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 中国新疆考古研究所, and Riben Fojiao daxue Niya yizhi xueshu yanjiu jigou 日本佛教大学尼雅遗址学术研究机构 ed., *Dandan wulike yizhi. Zhong-Ri gongtong kaochayanjiu baogao* 丹丹乌里克遗址. 中日共同考察研究报告. *Dandan Oilik Site. Report of the Sino-Japanese Joint Expedition* (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2009).

ings, which shed fresh light on the presence of deities of ultimate Hindu origin in Buddhist Central Asia, with Skanda first and foremost. I have already dealt with these paintings in two articles; in the first,³² I proposed an alternative description of the divine figures depicted in the murals of the temple D13 published by Christoph Baumer, rectifying several misunderstandings in the reading given by the author; in the second,³³ I expanded the scope of iconographic comparisons and suggested an explanation of the general meaning of the subjects. I refer the reader to the latter for a complete description of the paintings, which will be given here in a compendious form.

In the temple named D13, murals were partially preserved on the western and northern wall of its central shrine (figs 6 and 7); on each of the two walls (which most probably presented an uninterrupted sequence of divine figures), three deities and a small portion of a fourth figure are still visible. On the western wall (fig. 6), a three-headed and four-armed Skanda, sitting on his peacock, is the first deity from the left; he holds a bow and three arrows in the upper right and left hands, respectively, a cock in his lower left in front of his chest, and a bunch of grapes in his lower right hand.

³² Ciro Lo Muzio, “Culti brahmanici a Khotan: note sulle pitture del tempio D13 a Dandan Oiliq,” *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* (n.s.) 79.1–4 (2007): 185–201.

³³ Ciro Lo Muzio, “Skanda and the Mothers in Khotanese Buddhist Painting,” in *Interaction in the Himalayas and Central Asia: Processes of Transfer, Translation and Transformation in Art, Archaeology, Religion and Polity*, ed. Eva Allinger, Frantz Grenet, Christian Jahoda, et al. (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2017), 71–89.



Figure 6. Painting on the western wall of temple D13. Dandān-öliq. Author's drawing after Baumer, *Southern Silk Road*, fig. 70.

The image reproduces the same general iconographic type found in Yungang Cave 8 (fig. 2) and Dunhuang Mogao Cave 285 (fig. 3), that is Skanda shown as a youth riding a peacock. With the Yungang specimen, he shares the bow and arrows as well as the cock; with the Dunhuang specimen, the bunch of grapes (although in Dandān-öliq Skanda does not appear to be feeding his *vāhana*). In spite of the different number of heads (six at Yungang, one at Dunhuang, three at Dandān-öliq) and some mismatch in the remaining attributes, the iconographic resemblance is remarkable, especially if we keep in mind the presumed chronological gap among Dandān-öliq and the other two sites (three to four centuries, according to the chronology commonly accepted for the Dandān-öliq mural painting as a whole, i.e. 7th to early 8th century).³⁴

Even a cursory description of the other figures preserved in the D13 murals will help understand the peculiar iconographic and ritual context in which Skanda is embedded here. The goddess to the right of Skanda, with a swaddled child in her lap and a naked child sitting on her left leg, can be identified as Hārītī, the small-pox bearer and children-devourer *yakṣiṇī* (a semi-divine female spirit), who, after being converted to the

³⁴ Joanna Williams, "The Iconography of Khotanese Painting," *East and West* 23.1–2 (1973): 109–112.

Buddha's doctrine, became a protectress of children; she was a much revered deity in Gandharan Buddhism and was usually accompanied by more than one child.³⁵ With the name Hārīva, Hārītī was worshipped in Khotan as well; she is portrayed in a well-known fragment of mural from Farhad Beg Yailaki (6th century) with four children clinging to her.³⁶

The third figure is a four-armed boar-headed goddess wearing a winged crown, large round earrings, a necklace, and bracelets, holding the sun and moon symbols, a lotus in her lower right hand, and an undiscernible attribute in the lower left. This deity seems to be inspired by the Hindu goddess Vārāhī (fig. 8), the female personification Viṣṇu's boar incarnation, Varāha, often appearing among the Saptamātrkās (or Aṣṭamātrkās), the Seven (or Eight) Mothers.³⁷

On the northern wall (fig. 7), the first figure on the left is Maheśvara, three-headed, ithyphallic, holding the sun and moon discs in his upper hands, a fruit in his lower left, his lower right resting on the knee; below, we see his mount, the bull Nandī. Images of Maheśvara were already recorded in Khotan, especially at Dandān-ōiliq; the specimen which appears closer to our image is the one depicted on a wooden panel from temple DVII.6, now in the British Museum.³⁸

³⁵ On her legend and iconographic evidence in Gandhāra, see Alfred Foucher, *L'art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhāra*. 3 vols (Paris-Hanoi: E. Leroux, 1905–51), 130–142; A. D.H. Bivar, "Hārītī and the Chronology of the Kuṣāṇas," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 33.1 (1970): 10–21; Zwalf, *A Catalogue of the Gandhāra Sculpture*, I, 44, 116; II, pl. 92.

³⁶ Mario Bussagli, *Central Asian Painting* (Geneva: Skira, 1979), 54, 58; Williams, "The Iconography of Khotanese Painting," 138–139.

³⁷ On the iconography of Vārāhī in Indian art, see Thomas Eugene Donaldson, "Orissan Images of Vārāhī, Oddiyāna Mārīcī, and Related Sow-Faced Goddesses," *Artibus Asiae* 55.1–2 (1995): 155–182; on the Saptamātrkās: Shivaji K. Panikkar, *Saptamātrkā Worship and Sculptures: An Iconological Interpretation of Conflicts and Resolutions in the Storied Brāhmanical Icons* (New Delhi: D. K. Printworld, 2000).

³⁸ Marc Aurel Stein, *Ancient Khotan. Detailed Report of Archaeological Explorations in Chinese Turkestan*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), I, 278–279, II, pl. LX; Williams, "The Iconography of Khotanese Painting," 142, fig. 51; Whitfield, Roderick, *The Art of Central Asia. The Stein Collection in the British Museum*, 3. *Textiles, Sculpture and Other Arts* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1985), 316, pl. 70. On Maheśvara in the Khotan oasis, see Williams, "The Iconography of Khotanese Painting," 142–145.



Figure 7. Painting on the northern wall of temple D13. Dandan Oiliq. Author's drawing after Baumer, "Dandan Oilik Revisited," fig. 24.



Figure 8. Vārāhī. Relief from Malagaon (Sirohi, Rajasthan), 8th–9th c. Ajmer, Rajasthan Museum. Courtesy American Institute of Indian Studies.

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Maheśvara is flanked by a female figure with a swaddled child in her lap, followed by a three-headed, four-armed ithyphallic god wearing a *dhotī*, a necklace, two threads across his chest, with spiders clinging on them, and snakes coiling around his arms. His central face is fearsome, and the three circles on the nimbus probably indicate human skulls. His attributes are sun and moon, and a trident held horizontally, with the prongs towards the right. It seems that we deal with a local version of Mahākāla, one of Maheśvara's emissaries, portrayed here more or less as he is described in Buddhist sources. Our image can be compared with a sculpture from Fattegarh (Kashmir), which—according to Phyllis Granoff—depicts a three-headed ‘Buddhist’ Maheśvara and, on the reverse, a gruesome Mahākāla, who has much in common with the Dandān-ōiliq deity: round open eyes, a human skull on the forehead, necklace and *yajñopavīta* made of knotted snakes, a trident held horizontally;³⁹ his proximity to Maheśvara, in our painting, is also remarkable.

³⁹ Phyllis Granoff, “Maheśvara/Mahākāla: A Unique Buddhist Image from Kaśmīr,” *Artibus Asiae* 41.1 (1979): 64–82, fig. 1–3.



Figure 9. Two deities, eastern corridor of temple CD4. Dandān-öliq. Author's drawing after Matsumoto, ed., *Treasures of the Silk Road*, fig. 32.

Part of a similar group of deities (including Skanda), arranged in an L-shaped sequence framing larger images of seated and standing buddhas, is preserved in the fragments of painting unearthed in 2002 by a Sino-Japanese archaeological mission in the Dandān-öliq temple named CD4.⁴⁰ On top of the vertical row (fig. 9), we see a female animal-headed figure with an elongated attribute in her right hand. If the long, curved muzzle is to be interpreted as an elephant trunk, as I think, we may identify this deity as a Central Asian Vināyakī, Gaṇeśa's female personifica-

⁴⁰ Zhang, Qu and Liu, "A Newly Discovered Buddhist Temple," 158, fig. 5, color plate 5.

tion, also known as Gaṇeśvarī, Gajānanā, and other epithets.⁴¹ Vināyakī is a late addition of the Saptamāṭṛkā sets (8th to 9th centuries), but she is more at home among the 64 Yoginīs. The attribute she holds in her right hand could therefore be a radish (Skt. *mūlakakanda*), which is held by Gaṇeśa in his Khotanese representations⁴² as well as in the painting in Dunhuang Mogao Cave 285 (fig. 4). The animal seated below her can hardly be identified as a rat, Gaṇeśa's *vāhana*, but it curiously recalls the *vāhana* on which the Vināyakī portrayed in the temple of the 64 *yoginīs* at Hirapur (Orissa) stands, in which some scholars see a donkey⁴³ (fig. 10). In the Dandān-öliq mural, however, what seem to be the remains of a small rat leaning to the figure's left knee are preserved.⁴⁴

Below the elephant-headed goddess are a female figure with a swaddled child in her lap followed by a figure too poorly preserved to be described.

⁴¹ Prithvi Kumar Agrawala, *Goddess Vināyakī. The Female Gaṇeśa* (Varanasi: Prithivi Prakashan, 1978).

⁴² Williams, "The Iconography of Khotanese Painting," 145–147, figs. 39, 54–56; Whitfield, *The Art of Central Asia*, 309, 311, nos. 53.2, 57.

⁴³ Cf., for instance, Thomas Eugene Donaldson, *Tantric and Śākta Art in Orissa*, II (New Delhi: D.K. Printworld, 2002), 667. I am grateful to Chiara Policardi for pointing out this evidence to me.

⁴⁴ This detail escaped my attention in my former descriptions of this mural (Lo Muzio, "Culti brahmanici a Khotan," and Lo Muzio, "Skanda and the Mothers").



Figure 10. Vināyakī. Relief in the Temple of the 64 *yoginīs*. Hirapur, Orissa. Courtesy Nilesh Korgaokar.

In the horizontal row is a goat- or ram-headed four-armed female figure, with sun and moon and an unclear object in her right hand (fig. 11), possibly a female counterpart of Naigameśa, a demon linked with children's health; she is followed by a frowning Skanda, sitting on a peacock, three-headed, four-armed, holding sun and moon, and a cockerel in his right hand; black dashes are scattered on his skin. The last figure is a frowning female deity with drooping breasts who lifts an emaciated naked child, apparently ill or dead, holding him by the wrists and ankles.



Figure 11. Three deities, eastern corridor of temple CD4. Dandān-öliq. Author's drawing after Matsumoto, ed., *Treasures of the Silk Road*, fig. 32.

This overview ends with the mural painting found in the Dandān-öliq temple CD10, excavated in 2004 by the Sino-Japanese expedition, showing a sequence of figures seated in three-quarter view to the left (fig. 12).⁴⁵ A three-headed and four-armed Skanda, riding his peacock, holding the sun and moon emblems in his upper hands and a cock in the lower left, appears on the right of a row of seven female deities. The latter are portrayed in the same attire, although in different colours, in *añjalimudrā* (except the seventh from the right, with a swaddled child in her lap); the lack of sharp iconographic differences makes these figures almost interchangeable among themselves. On the left of the goddesses

⁴⁵ *Dandan wulike yizhi*, pl. 9. I thank Erika Forte for providing me with a picture of this mural.

is a cuirassed male holding a spear (Vaiśravaṇa?); further left, traces of a female (?) figure are still visible, whereas the head of a female donor holding a lotus flower is preserved in the register below (beneath the cuirassed personage).

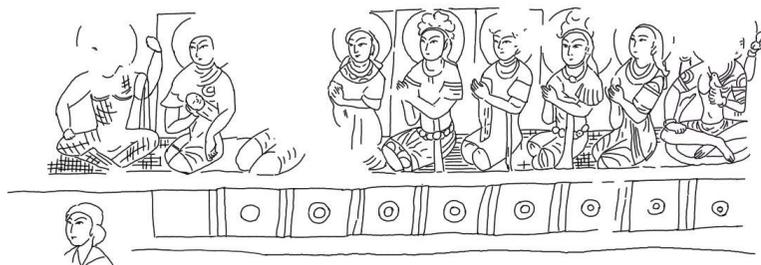


Figure 12. A row of female and male deities from temple CD10. Dandān-öiliq. Author's drawing after *Dandan wulike yizhi*, pl. 9.

It seems clear that the recurrent representation of Skanda along with female deities, either animal-headed or holding a child in their laps, links all the Dandān-öiliq paintings I have been describing so far to the cult addressed to ‘seizers, graspers’ (Skt. *grahas*) or ‘children graspers’ (Skt. *bālagrahas*), documented in the epics (mainly in the *Mahābhārata*) and in medical literature. Before being promoted to the rank of fierce warrior and, then, of *senāpati*—a crucial redefinition which took place in the *Mahābhārata* (*Āraṇyakaparvan* and *Śalyaparvan* sections), but not in medical texts—Skanda was worshipped as a major spirit deity procuring illness or death to children; he was believed to lead flocks of malign, mostly female demoniac beings named *grahāṇī*, *mātr* or *mātrkā*.⁴⁶ Both in the *Mahābhārata* and in Ayurvedic sources their description is usually sketchy, and the many different lists of *grahas* recorded in the sources

⁴⁶ The topic is thoroughly treated by Richard D. Mann (Mann, *The Rise of Mahāsena*, 49–77), to whom I also refer the reader for a full account of written sources. See also Dominik Wujastyk, “Miscarriages of Justice: Demonic Vengeance in Classical Indian medicine,” in *Religion, Health and Suffering*, ed. John R. Hinnells and Roy Porter (London: Routledge, 2011), 256–275.

are at variance among themselves as to the number of these spirits, their names, and respective appearance (when noted). Yet it is not difficult to see a reflection of the belief in such demons in a number of reliefs from Kushan Mathurā (2nd to 3rd centuries), in which Skanda, in his martial attire, appears along with ‘mothers’, some of whom animal-headed (fig. 13). The architectural and cultic contexts which these reliefs belonged to are unknown, but I would not rule out the possibility that they originate from some Buddhist sacred area. Terracotta figurines depicting animal-headed mothers with a child in their laps have been found in Kushan and Gupta layers in several early Buddhist monasteries in Northern India (Rājghāt, Kumrahār, Jetavana);⁴⁷ to these, we can add the similar specimens from Mathurā, although from unrecorded archaeological contexts.⁴⁸



Figure 13. Relief showing the god Skanda beside a group of ‘mothers.’ Mathurā. Mathurā Government Museum. Courtesy American Institute of Indian Studies.

⁴⁷ Gethin Rees and Fumitaka Yoneda, “Celibate Monks and Foetus-Stealing Gods: Buddhism and Pregnancy at the Jetavana Monastery, Shravasti, India,” *World Archaeology* 45.2 (2013): 255–265.

⁴⁸ Panikkar, *Saptamātṛkā Worship and Sculptures*, 31–53, pls. 9–13, 15.

As I mentioned, Skanda and the *grahas* are very well-known in ancient medical texts, such as the *Suśrutasaṃhitā*, which covers a long time span, from the Maurya to the Gupta epoch and the *Kāśyapaśaṃhitā* (7th century).⁴⁹ These sources seem to be unaware of or unaffected by the reinterpretation of Skanda occurred in the *Mahābhārata*: in the Ayurvedic literature, Skanda remains a demon afflicting children.

That traditional medicine was part of the cultural heritage of Buddhism since the earliest phase of its history is a well-established fact.⁵⁰ Buddhist monasteries were important seats of medical education, and Buddhist proselytism was a major factor in the spread of Indian medicine towards Central Asia, the Far East, and Southeast Asia. Medical texts from the Ayurvedic tradition were translated from Pāli and Sanskrit into Chinese, Tibetan, as well as Khotanese; in this language, in particular, two incomplete medical texts are preserved, the *Siddhasāra* by Ravigupta (c. 650), translated from the Sanskrit and the Tibetan, and the so-called *Jīvakapustaka*, otherwise undocumented.⁵¹ Such texts, however, need not be intended as a direct source for the Dandān-ōliq paintings. In other words, it was not by the initiative of Central Asian monks or artists that malevolent spirits drawn from Brahmanical medical sources were ‘pasted into’ a Buddhist context, as we know that the *grahas* had already been metabolized in the Buddhist ritual through the *dhāraṇīs*, or mystic spells aimed at protecting from demons, diseases, beasts, hostile planets, and other dangers. We have an outstanding piece of iconographic evidence of this practice in the three extant folios of a *Mahāsāhasrapramardanī* manuscript from Dunhuang, recovered by Aurel Stein in Dunhuang, now kept in the British Museum.⁵² The original manuscript (9th century) was composed of eight or nine folios. The *Mahāsāhasrapramardanī* is one of the *dhāraṇīs* which were grouped in

⁴⁹ Mann, *The Rise of Mahāsena*, 31.

⁵⁰ Kenneth G. Zysk, *Asceticism and Healing in Ancient India. Medicine in the Buddhist Monastery* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2000), 38–39.

⁵¹ Mauro Maggi, “Khotanese Literature,” in *The Literature of Pre-Islamic Iran (A History of Persian Literature, XVII)*, ed. Ronald E. Emmerick, and Maria Macuch (London: I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2009), 413–415.

⁵² Whitfield, *The Art of Central Asia*, pl. 75. For a thorough philological analysis of the Khotanese text, see Mauro Maggi, “A Chinese-Khotanese Excerpt from the *Mahāsāhasrapramardanī*,” in *La Persia e l’Asia Centrale da Alessandro al X secolo* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1996), 123–137.

the so-called *Pañcarakṣa*, a pentad of spells, around the 12th century; the single *dhāraṇīs*, however, are dated much earlier than that.⁵³ Each leaf of the Dunhuang manuscript presents the depiction of a female, animal-headed demon on both sides, along with one or more children, accompanied by a Chinese text with an abridged Khotanese translation, providing the Khotanese and Sanskrit names of the figures and the respective disease they cause. One of the figures, an owl-headed demon here named Mukhamaṇḍikā (Khot. Mukhamaṇḍā), lifts a naked child, holding him by the wrists and ankles, just like one of the ‘mothers’ represented in Dandān-öliq temple CD4 (fig. 11).⁵⁴

5. Conclusion

The significance of the Dandān-öliq paintings for the issue I have been dealing with does not need to be emphasized further. In the context of the debate on Buddhism versus Brahmanism, summarised in my preliminary remarks, the iconographic theme we have met in several Khotanese paintings—Skanda as a leader of *grahas* or ‘mothers’—is an archaic one (unattested in Indian iconography after the Kushan epoch) and, as such, is probably intended as part of a common cultural heritage shared by Brahmanism and Buddhism (i.e. Seyfort Rugg’s ‘substratum’). The way in which these beliefs were embedded into Buddhist ritual practice was, as we have seen, the *dharaṇī*. As to when this happened, the Chinese translation of the *Mahāmāyūrī*, one of the *dharaṇīs* which were later collected into the *Pañcarakṣa*, is dated to 317.⁵⁵ I wonder whether this may serve as a chronological indication for other *dharaṇīs* as well (like the *Mahāsāhasrapramardanī*).

⁵³Gerd J.R. Mevissen, “Transmission of Iconographic Traditions: Pañcarakṣa Heading North,” in *South Asian Archaeology 1989: Papers from the Tenth International Conference of South Asian Archaeologists in Western Europe, Musée national des Arts asiatiques-Guimet, Paris, France, 3–7 July 1989*, ed. Catherine Jarrige, with the assistance of J. P. Gerry, and R. H. Meadow (Madison Wisconsin: Prehistory Press, 1992), 415.

⁵⁴For a female figure in a similar attitude in a painting from Khadalik (Khotan), see Marc Aurel Stein, *Serindia. Detailed Report of Explorations in Central Asia and Westernmost China*, 5 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921), pl. XI; Williams, “The Iconography of Khotanese Painting,” 139–140, fig. 45.

⁵⁵Mevissen, “Transmission of Iconographic Traditions”, 415.

Single elements of the Khotanese painted compositions, however, patently betray later borrowings (or updatings). Apart from the very image of Skanda recorded in Dandān-öliq as well as in all Central Asian and Chinese depictions, drawn from the Brahmanical iconographic *lexicon* of the Gupta period, some of the female characters of the Dandān-öliq paintings—in particular, Vārāhī and Vināyakī (if I have correctly identified them)—are more at home among the Saptamātrkās (or even the *yoginīs*) than in a row of *grahas*. For this very reason, they are to be considered later additions, as the Saptamātrkās are a conceptual and iconographic Brahmanical ‘invention’ which can be dated, broadly speaking, to the early to mid-Gupta epoch, i.e. the 4th to 5th centuries (the *yoginīs* are an even later phenomenon). It is particularly meaningful, in this regard, that in the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (8th century?⁵⁶) we find a long and updated list of ‘mothers’, including goddesses that we are accustomed to seeing in Saptamātrkā sets, such as Brahmānī, Māheśvarī or Vārāhī, as well as ancient *grahānīs*, such as Mukhamaṇḍitikā (wrongly transcribed as Sukhamaṇḍitikā), Śakunī, or Pūtanā.⁵⁷

My final remark on the intriguing iconographic and religious ‘stratigraphy’ testified in the Khotanese murals I have been dealing with concerns the inclusion, in Dandān-öliq D13, of Maheśvara and (what I think could be) Mahākāla (fig. 7). With the advent of the Saptamātrkās, and with the cleansing of his demoniac traits, Skanda gradually abdicates his role of leader of the ‘mothers’ to Śiva (Maheśvara); this transition took place during the 6th century.⁵⁸ As a leader of Saptamātrkā groups, Śiva is often accompanied by Mahākāla.⁵⁹

Future findings in Central Asia, in Gandhāra as well as in the Indian motherland, will surely improve our understanding of the dialogue between Buddhism and Brahmanism. For the moment being, it seems clear that against the background of a common cultural heritage (whose actual relevance should be cautiously evaluated case by case), Buddhists constantly kept an eye on the Brahmanical religious system, literature, arts,

⁵⁶ Anthony K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1970), 525.

⁵⁷ *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* I.21. I thank Dominic Goodall for providing me this reference.

⁵⁸ Mann, *The Rise of Mahāsena*, 211.

⁵⁹ Panikkar, *Saptamātrkā Worship and Sculptures*, 116, 120, 148, 175.

and to the changes occurring within them through the centuries. There is no other way, in my opinion, to explain the fascinating stratification of borrowings we have discerned in the Central Asian iconographic repertoire of Skanda.

Abbreviations

Dandan wulike yizhi. Zhongguo Xinjiang wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 中国新疆文物考古研究所 and Riben Fojiao daxue Niya yizhi xueshu yanjiu jigou 日本佛教大学尼雅遗址学术研究机构, eds., *Dandan wulike yizhi — Zhong-Ri gongtong kaochayanjiu baogao* 丹丹乌里克遗址. 中日共同考察研究报告. *Dandan Oilik Site. Report of the Sino-Japanese Joint Expedition.* Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2009.

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