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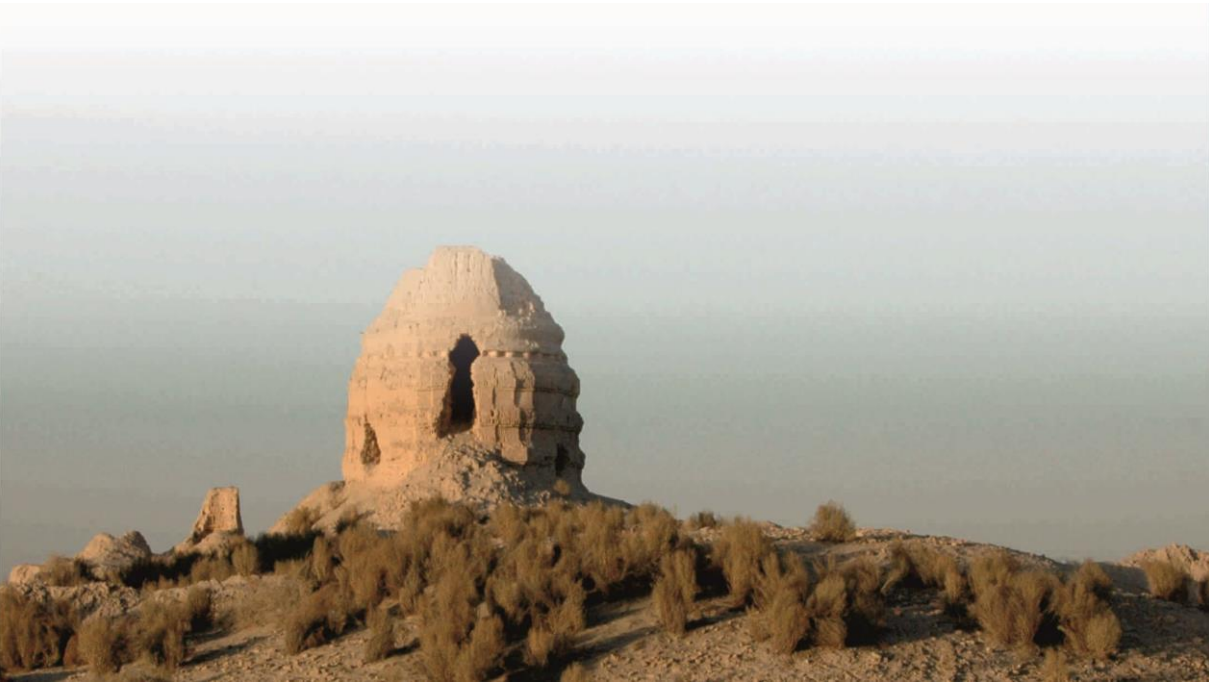
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**THE LIFE AND TIMES OF DAOZHEN—  
A SAṂGHA LEADER AND MONK  
OFFICIAL IN DUNHUANG DURING THE  
10TH CENTURY**

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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF DAOZHEN—A SAMGHA LEADER  
AND MONK OFFICIAL IN DUNHUANG  
DURING THE 10TH CENTURY

HENRIK H. SØRENSEN

*Abstract*

This paper is a study of the life and times of the important local Dunhuang Buddhist monk Daozhen (ca. 915–ca. 987, 道真), the abbot of the Sanjie Temple (三界寺), which was located next to the Mogao Caves (莫高窟). Daozhen is interesting for a variety of reasons, including his involvement with a number of restoration projects involving a cave and the library holdings of his own temple. Moreover, he is undoubtedly one of the best-documented figures in the history of Buddhism in Dunhuang (敦煌).

The activities of important individuals who operated within the religious space of the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang reflect the historical and religious dynamics of the site. Given that Daozhen was an important religious agent, understanding his significance and position within local Buddhism sheds light on how an influential cleric could shape religious life in a sacred space.

1. *Introduction*

A sacred space such as the Mogao Caves at Dunhuang attains such a designation through a range of qualifying parameters, including the development of mythologies, an accentuation of its topographical features, general attractiveness *vis-à-vis* religious practice. Last but not least, because of the presence and involvement of an active religious community, consisting of religious professionals and a supporting lay-community, and/or include the local ruler and important families. Moreover, for a sacred site to attain a lasting position as such, it needs to develop and re-invent itself over time, creating the notion of the space as a permanent, hallowed sanctity. While in most cases, sacred spaces attain their status from those aspects enumerated above, the human dimension, i.e. active involvement by human agents inevitably stands in the centre of the formulation and continuation of any given site. Hence, in the case of Buddhist activity at Dunhuang and its celebrated Mogao Caves during



the late medieval period, the production and continuation of its perceived and defined, its sacred qualities resulted from sustained and enduring activities by the faithful, including both clerics and the laity. In other words, the development of a sacred space such as the Mogao Caves, with its countless shrines and sites for Buddhist practice, maintained its aura of sanctity through a constant process of reproduction and reinvention due to the efforts of locally operating, local agents.

In what follows I look at how local Buddhism in Dunhuang developed through the efforts of one such agent, focusing on the role and activities of the influential and important monk Daozhen, who was a central figure in Buddhism in Dunhuang's during the middle and late 10th century.<sup>1</sup> Daozhen is a person of special interest for a number of reasons. Firstly, there are a relatively large number of documents connected with his name and the time of activity. Secondly, he was a major player in the history of Buddhism at Dunhuang during the 10th century, a period that his relatively long life largely spanned. Thirdly, he was active in amending and restoring Buddhist scriptures for the Sanjie Temple library, where he lived, which was located in front of the Mogao Caves.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A lengthy biographical entry on Daozhen is found in the *Dunhuang sui jin* 敦煌碎金 [Golden Bits from Dunhuang], ed. Tao Qiuying 陶秋英 and Jiang Liangfu 姜亮夫 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 1992), 29–31. However, this otherwise important resource only mentions that he lived on either side of 934 and mainly provides bibliographical data relating to his name. In contrast, there is only a very brief and incomplete entry on him in the *Dunhuang xue da cidian* 敦煌学大辞典 [Comprehensive Dictionary of Dunhuang Studies], ed. Li Xianlin 季羨林 et. al. (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 1998), 365b. Here, I follow the dates for Daozhen in Akagi Takatoshi 赤木崇敏, “Tonkō Sankai sō Dōjin to Kōtan ōke 敦煌三界寺僧道真とコータン王家 [The Khotanese Royal Family and the Monk Daozhen of Sanjie Temple],” *Nairiku Ajia gengo no kenkyū* 内陸アジア言語の研究 [Studies of Inner Asian languages] 30 (2015): 199–222 (esp. 207–209).

<sup>2</sup> For this temple's history, see Wang Xiubo 王秀波, “Tang houqi Wudai Song chu Dunhuang Sanjie si yanjiu 唐后期五代末初敦煌三界寺研究 [A Study of the Sanjie Temple in Dunhuang during the Later Tang, Five Dynasties period and the Early Song]” (PhD diss., Shanghai Normal University, 2014). See also the extended entry in Henrik H. Sørensen, “The Buddhist Temples in Dunhuang: From the Late 8th to the Early 11th Centuries,” *BuddhistRoad Paper* 5.2 (forthcoming 2020). Additional data is found in Zheng Acai 鄭阿財, “Dunhuang fojiao siyuan gongneng zhi kaocha yu yanjiu—yi Dunhuang wenxian yu shiku wei zhongxin 2/2 敦煌佛教寺院功能之考察與研究—以敦煌文獻與石窟為中心 2/2 [An Investigation and Study of the Functioning of Dunhuang's Buddhist Temples: Focusing on the Dunhuang Manuscripts and the Stone Caves, 2/2],” *Yanjiu chengguo baogao* 研究成果報告 [Research Report] (2006): 72–88, modified

Fourthly, he was an erudite Buddhist scholar of standing. I argue in the following that Daozhen was a successful and influential local Buddhist monk and a religious agent whose life and activities helped shape Buddhism in Dunhuang and at the Mogao Caves, where he spent most of his life.

Despite Daozhen's central role in 10th century Buddhism in Dunhuang, he has, for unknown reasons, not quite received the attention that is his due. There are relatively few studies of him, many of them partial, and in most cases, they tend to focus on his role in amending his home temple's scriptures, as recovered from Cave 17.<sup>3</sup> By drawing together the full range of primary sources on his life and on the events in which he participated, this study sheds more light on him and his time. Most importantly, I aim to portray Daozhen in a more three-dimensional manner, so that we may understand him in light of the local history on the one hand, and as a dynamic Buddhist agent on the other.

## 2. *Daozhen's Life and Career*

Daozhen is known foremost as the Buddhist monk who initiated the restoration project of the Sanjie Temple's library holdings, and as such, is seen as someone involved in amending the Buddhist scriptures that

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2007, accessed January 10, 2017. <http://nhuir.nhu.edu.tw/bitstream/987654321/7315/1/95241-1H343002.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> See Stephen F. Teiser, *The Scripture on the Ten Kings and the Making of Purgatory in Medieval Chinese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994), 138–151; Zhu Fengyu 朱鳳玉, “Lun jiang chang huodong zai Dunhuang fojiao siyuan de chuanbo—Yi Mogao ku Sanjie si weili 論講唱活動在敦煌佛教寺院的傳播—以莫高窟三界寺為例 [On the Spread of the Activities of Lecturing and Singing in the Buddhist Temples of Dunhuang: A Case Study of the Sanjie Temple at the Mogao Caves],” *Dunhuang xue* 敦煌學 [Dunhuang Studies] 33 (2017): 33–52 (esp. 45–50); Rong Xinjiang, *Eighteen Lectures on Dunhuang*, translated by Imre Galambos (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2013), 120–124; Rong Xinjiang, “The Nature of the Dunhuang Library Cave and the Reasons for its Sealing,” *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 11 (1999–2000): 247–275; and the somewhat overwrought, yet useful, essay by Lin Shitian 林世田, “Dunhuang wenhua de jiliang: Daozhen bu jing 敦煌文化的脊梁: 道真补经 [A Stalwart of Dunhuang Culture: Daozhen's Repair of (Buddhist) Scriptures],” accessed September 4, 2018. [http://www.nlc.cn/newhxjy/wjsy/yj/gjyj/201104/t20110428\\_42193.htm](http://www.nlc.cn/newhxjy/wjsy/yj/gjyj/201104/t20110428_42193.htm). One of the most important collections of research material on Daozhen is Zheng, “Dunhuang fojiao siyuan gongneng zhi kaocha yu yanjiu, 2/2,” 88–93. Although this impressive report falls short of analysing and discussing Daozhen's life and achievements, it provides most of the relevant primary sources on him in a form that is easy to access.



were deposited in the celebrated Cave 17, not too long after his death.<sup>4</sup> However, Daozhen played a much bigger role in local Buddhism than as a restorer of a temple library, as we shall presently see. In fact, given the extent of his activities, it is clear that, in his own time, he was perhaps as important and significant a figure as the exegete and Buddhist master Hongbian (d. 862, 洪辯).

Daozhen was born into the prestigious, local Zhang clan (張氏)<sup>5</sup> in or around 915 and entered entered monastic life at an early age.<sup>6</sup> Even so, since his name is not mentioned in the comprehensive monastic-census list of 921, the *Dunhuang ge si seng ni mingbu* 敦煌各寺僧尼名簿 [Register of Monks' and Nuns' Names in each of Dunhuang's Temples] (S. 2614), he had likely not yet entered Sanjie Temple as a novice at that time. He was probably not formally ordained until the age of 16 or perhaps 18, which were the common ages for receiving the lower grade of ordination in late medieval China.<sup>7</sup> Although the sources do not mention when Daozhen actually became a monk, he had already left his home around the age of 19 and was cultivating (Chin. *xiu* 修) the chanting of the *Buddhanāmasūtra* in one of its various locally transmitted formats (Beijing 5788).<sup>8</sup> The colophon states: “The *śrāmanera* Daozhen cultivated, [that is, recited] this *sūtra*. He was 19 years of age, and his family name was Zhang.”<sup>9</sup> We have no record of

<sup>4</sup> It is possible that Daozhen's connection with the amendment of the Sanjie Temple's library holdings was what prompted Sarah Fraser to designate him as a 'librarian.' See Sarah Fraser, *Performing the Visual: The Practice of Buddhist Wall Painting in China and Central Asia, 618–960* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 256, no. 9. However, such a view is very limited and neglects the large range of activities and pious works connected with his name.

<sup>5</sup> A discussion of which branch of the local Zhang clan Daozhen belonged to is found in Teiser, *The Scripture on the Ten Kings*, 146–147, no. 26.

<sup>6</sup> One record on Daozhen's early monastic career—a colophon on a manuscript of the *Buddhanāmasūtra*—mentions that he was already engaged in the study of Buddhist scriptures at the age of 19 (Beijing 隸 li 88).

<sup>7</sup> During this time, the normal age of ordination was 18 for a *śrāmanera* and 20 for a full *bhikṣu* ordination. However, this norm was not adhered to universally, and many received ordination as novices much earlier. For more on ordination in Dunhuang during the late medieval period, see Zhanru 湛如, *Dunhuang fojiao liyi zhidu yanjiu* 敦煌佛教律儀制度研究 [A Study the *vinaya* and Its Ritual Regulations in Dunhuang Buddhism] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2003).

<sup>8</sup> Numerous copies of this *sūtra* have been found among the Dunhuang manuscripts, which was apparently transmitted in a variety of recensions and lengths.

<sup>9</sup> Beijing 5788: 沙門道真修此經, 年十九, 俗姓張.

who his teacher was or other information concerning his early training. Given that the *vinaya* Master (Chin. *lüshi* 律師) of the Sanjie Temple, where Daozhen spent his formative years as a Buddhist novice, was a certain Huihai (fl. first half of 10<sup>th</sup> c., 惠海),<sup>10</sup> it is possible that this monk was Daozhen's master or formally ordained him. Daozhen's name resurfaces again around 934–935, in connection with the repair of several sets of scriptures in the temple's library (S. 5663), which signals his gradual but steady rise in the ranks of the local clergy.

An invitation dated 939 by the Buddhist devotee and government official, Military Commander (Chin. *jiedu yaya* 節度押衙) Jia Fengjiu (fl. first half of 10th c., 賈奉玖), to various local monks also includes Daozhen among them. The group of monks in question was invited to convene at Jia's place to participate in a memorial ritual (Chin. *xiaoxiang* 小祥)<sup>11</sup> commemorating the anniversary of his father's death (P. 2836). Although the document does not reveal anything about Daozhen's role in this mortuary ritual, it is likely that only monks and nuns of a certain standing were invited to participate in such events.

Some years later in 948, Daozhen became the abbot of Guanyin Cloister (觀音院), a sub-temple of the Sanjie Temple. His name appears again in the records, this time together with a group of monks from Sanjie Temple, as one of the donors involved in repairing the Southern Great Image of Maitreya (南大像) in Cave 130, located inside the so-called old northern cave (P. 2641). More is said about this restoration project below.

Two years later in 950, Daozhen was officially promoted to the office of Rector of Monks (Chin. *senzhen* 僧政), a relatively recently created title for a high monastic officer similar to a Rector (Chin. *shanzuo* 上坐/上座) (P. 2994, P. 3392, P. 3414). During that same year, he accompanied the Guiyijun ruler Cao Yuanzhong (r. 944–974, 曹元忠) on a tour of the Mogao Caves. On that occasion, they visited the Shengwang Temple (聖王寺), located in front of the section of the cliff where Cave 108 is situated. The cave itself was one of the sanctuaries belonging to or controlled by the Sanjie Temple (DMGT: 51–55). From that point on, Daozhen's star was truly on the rise. A record from 964

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<sup>10</sup> Daozhen and Huihai are mentioned together in a colophon appended to a copy of the *Madhyamakaśāstra* (S. 5663).

<sup>11</sup> For this rite, see FDC, vol. 5, 4755c–4756a.



shows that he was a monk of note by that time and mentions that he acted as Precept Master (Chin. *shoujie shi* 受戒師), Buddhist Rector of Monks (Chin. *shimen sengzheng* 釋門僧正), Lecturer (Chin. *kanglun* 講論), and Great *dharma* Master (Chin. *da fashi* 大法師). Moreover, he became a Monk Bestowed the Purple Robe (Chin. *cizi shamen* 賜紫沙門 (P. 2994 (1)). This elaborate list of titles and honours underlines the fact that from 934, when Daozhen took part in the restoration project of the monastic library of Sanjie Temple as a young monk, to 964 some three decades later, he had risen in the ranks of the local Buddhist clergy and become a man of great importance.

In his capacity as Rector of Monks, Daozhen was also responsible for hosting foreign embassies arriving at the Mogao Caves or passing through the area. In one such case, his name appears in an official letter of thanks addressed to a Khotanese prince on the occasion of a monetary gift he had received for services rendered. The prince was part of several diplomatic exchanges between the Khotanese court and the Guiyijun, then headed by the aforementioned Cao Yuanzhong. In this particular case, Daozhen's letter of thanks is undated, but the event likely took place in or around 964.<sup>12</sup> In that year, a Khotanese diplomatic mission, headed by a prince from Khotan, arrived in Shazhou (P. 3184V<sup>o</sup>). Hence, Daozhen's letter is probably related to this event. The letter contains no direct reference to Buddhism, so Daozhen may have been involved with the Khotanese representatives in his capacity as a monk official and formal religious guide to the Mogao Caves.

The latest dated record in which Daozhen's name appears is an ordination certificate for one of his female lay disciples from 987 (S. 4915). This document reveals that he was still active as a Buddhist preceptor at that time, and that he was in charge of a following of lay adherents. Moreover, the certificate reveals that he served as District Saṃgha Recorder (Chin. *du senglu* 都僧錄), a more elevated position than his previous role as Rector of Monks of Sanjie Temple. The exact date of Daozhen's death is not known, but I surmise that he passed away sometime between 987 and 988.

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<sup>12</sup> Akagi studies the nature of this exchange and a few other cases in Akagi, "Tonkō Sankai sō Dōjin to Kōtan ōke," 199–222.



### 3. Daozhen's Role in the Repair of Caves at Mogao

Daozhen's participation in the maintenance of the votive caves at Mogao is among the many meritorious deeds associated with him. A number of extant records document his involvement. One such source, an inscription inside Cave 108, mentions how Daozhen and seven other associates performed a ritual when Cao Yuanzhong visited the caves. The partly damaged inscription reads:

Accordingly, the raised carriage was accompanied and attended upon by the Rector of Monks Daozhen [...] <sup>13</sup> Daozhen and seven other people subsequently set up a ritual site [(Chin. *daochang* 道場)] below the slope at Shengwang Temple [(聖王寺)] <sup>14</sup> at Sanwei [(三危)] <sup>15</sup> to commemorate this [event]. Recorded on the 8th day of the 5th month in the 15th year of the Tianfu <sup>16</sup> [reign period]. <sup>17</sup>

The Guiyijun ruler decided to make a tour of inspection to the caves in order to assess which were in need of repair, and on this visit, Daozhen, in his capacity as Rector of Monks of Sanjie Temple, accompanied him on what would have been a sort of guided tour. <sup>18</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Seven characters are illegible.

<sup>14</sup> The history of this temple is slightly enigmatic, as its name only occurs in this source. This name, Mt. Sanwei (三危山), refers to a section of the Mogao Caves. See *Dunhuang xue da cidian*, 632a. Other sources establish that there was a temple building in front of Cave 108, where the ritual described in the inscription likely took place. Could that temple be the same Shengwang Temple? See Pan Yushan 潘玉闪 and Ma Shichang 马世长, *Mogao ku kuqian diantang yizhi* 莫高窟窟殿堂遗址 [Ruins of Ante Chambers and Halls of the Mogao Caves] (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1985), 18–22.

<sup>15</sup> This name, Mt. Sanwei (三危山), refers to a section of the Mogao Caves.

<sup>16</sup> Chinese scholars reconstruct the date of this inscription as the “15th year of the Tianfu reign period” (DMGT, 54). However, such a date does not exist officially. Going by the number of years I herefore agree with other Chinese scholars, including Rong Xinjiang, that the date in question refers to 950, which means that the Guiyijun ruler in question would have been Cao Yuanzhong.

<sup>17</sup> DMGT, 54: □因從台駕隨寺□政道舍□道真等七人就三危聖王寺□[安]下霸 [=壩] 道嘉記 維天福十五年五月八日遊攝記之耳。

The text of the inscription is only partly legible, and my translation is, therefore, somewhat tentative.

<sup>18</sup> This event is briefly discussed in Wang Liping 王力平, “Dunhuang Mogao ku hanwen youren tiji shiliao jiazhi tanxi 莫高窟汉文游人题记史料价值探析 [An Analysis of the Historical Value of the Chinese Language Inscriptions by Visitors to the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang],” *Lishi xue* 历史学 [Historical Studies] 1 (2015): 43–59.



The most grandiose and important restoration project Daozhen was involved with was the repair of Cave 130, which featured a large statue of Maitreya Buddha as its main icon.<sup>19</sup> The event is eulogised in the *Zhongxiu Nan daxiang Beigu ku tibi bing xu* 重修南大像北古窟題壁並序 [Wall Inscription of the Repair of the Great Southern Image in the Old Northern Cave with Preface] (P. 2641V<sup>o</sup> (1)), which gives us an insight into the nature of the restoration project. Unfortunately, it is not clear when the project was carried out, but it was most likely towards the end of Daozhen's life. In any case, it is obvious that a substantial number of donations would have been needed in order to complete it.

The text of the eulogy is written in the usual flowery language, which means that one has to go a bit beyond the verbiage itself in order to get at the intended meaning. In any case, this piece commemorates Daozhen and his ten associates' efforts to repair the cave with the great northern image of Maitreya. At that time, the cave had apparently fallen into ruin and was in bad need of repair. The eulogy is full of symbolic Buddhist language and metaphor, including a reference to the celebrated burning house parable from the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* (T. 262.9, 12bc). It states that the repair of the cave was accomplished (occasioning the eulogy) and that new wall-paintings in bright colours were made. It also states that hell scenes, including the Ten Paths (Chin. *shidao* 十道), were among the painted motifs, as well as scenes from the above-mentioned *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra*.

#### 4. Restoring the Buddhist Scriptures in the Library of Sanjie Temple

As stated above, Daozhen's restoration and amendment of scriptures in the Sanjie Temple's library is what propelled him to fame in later accounts of Dunhuang's history. However, this activity was only one of many services he provided for the Buddhist community of Dunhuang. Even so, a study of Daozhen would be incomplete without a discussion of his celebrated restoration project.

In the 6th month of 934, Daozhen began the project of amending and repairing the scriptures in the temple's library. The catalogue survives, *Sanjie si jian yiqie ru zang jing mulu* 三界寺見一切入藏經目錄

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<sup>19</sup> See *Dunhuang xue da cidian*, 56a.

[Catalogue of all the Scriptures Entered into the Library Holdings Evident in the Sanjie Temple] (S. 3624, Dunhuang 345).<sup>20</sup> The central source dealing with this event states:

On the 15th day of the 6th month of the 5th cyclical *jiawu* year of the Changxing reign period [(934)],<sup>21</sup> the disciple of the Sanjie Temple, the monk Daozhen, when realising that the holdings of *sūtras* and *śāstras* in the temple library were incomplete, consequently bowed his head and devotedly issued forth an extensive vow [to amend the scriptural collection]. He humbly [inquired] to all the families to look among the writings [in their possession] for old, damaged scriptures and texts, and to kindly send them to the temple so that they could be used for the overall repair [of the Buddhist scriptures]. Thereby he has assured that they would be transmitted in the world, their light embellishing the abstruse gate for ten thousand generations and a thousand autumns, and forever serve as an offering [...].<sup>22</sup>

This document neatly sets forth the motive behind Daozhen's efforts to restore the library of the Sanjie Temple, which he found to be incomplete, i.e. having missing rolls of scriptural sets or individual manuscripts, at his investigation. This indicates that many sets of scripture had missing rolls; and worn wrappers. This event signals the *de facto* beginning of a lifelong concern for his home temple and, in particular, its collection of Buddhist scriptures.

An incomplete and undated document reveals that Daozhen actively looked for Buddhist scriptures from other local temples to augment and improve the collection of the Sanjie Temple library (S. 6225V<sup>o</sup>). The short colophon reads:

<sup>20</sup> A document fragment bearing Daozhen's name records some of the incomplete or missing scriptures in the Sanjie Temple's library (P. 3884V<sup>o</sup>). This record was probably made at the time he set out on his restoration project and may, therefore, be somehow related to S. 6225.

<sup>21</sup> Actually, the reign period changed in that year, 934, to the 1st year of the Yingshun reign (應順) of the Later Tang Dynasty (後唐), i.e. 934.

<sup>22</sup> Dunhuang 345:

長興五年歲次甲午六月十五日  
弟子三界寺比丘道真乃見當  
寺藏內經論部[帙]不全，遂乃啟類  
虔誠，誓躬引願，謹於諸家函藏  
尋訪古墳經文收入寺[內]，修補瓊尾  
流傳於世，光飾玄門，萬代千  
秋永充供養



Record of miscellaneous scriptures subsequently obtained by the *bhikṣu* Daozhen of Sanjie Temple after searching for them in all places.<sup>23</sup>

This, evidently, records the results of the initial restoration project he began in 934, or possibly a later follow up. Another related document is S. 6191. It bears the same colophon as S. 6225 but chiefly concerns the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*. However, Daozhen's concern for the Sanjie Temple library did not end there.

#### 4. Daozhen's Donation of Items to the Sanjie Temple

A lengthy dedication related to the donations Daozhen made to the Sanjie Temple, including other donations of Buddhist scriptures (S. 5663), is appended to a copy of the *Mulāmadhyamakāśāstra* (T. 1564.30) written on *pothī* leaves.<sup>24</sup> While the event referred to in this colophon took place after Daozhen's initial additions to the Sanjie Temple library, the two events are clearly related. The text reads:

Copying completed on the 15th day of the 7th month in the *jihai* (己亥) year [(939)]. [The text of the *śāstra* has been] recited in its entirety by the senior monk Huihai of Sanjie Temple. On the 15th day of the 1st month in the *yiwei* [(乙未)] year [(935)], a copy of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* had been repaired at the Sanjie Temple in conjunction with a session of recitation in the inner sanctuary [(Chin. *nei daochang* 內道場)] [of the temple]. Conjointly, the *śramaṇa* Daozhen [...] <sup>25</sup> repaired eleven sets of different scriptures and also made a copy of the *Bao'en jing* 報恩經 [Scripture on the Recompensing of Kindness]<sup>26</sup> as well as a copy of the *Buddhanāmasūtra* [(T. 440.14)]. With pious inclination, Daozhen had sixty [*sūtra*] wrappers for the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā* made of dark red, embroidered silk cloth, all complete. He [also] had 50 silver-[embroidered] banners made and bestowed them to the Sanjie Temple, as well as a bronze

<sup>23</sup> S. 6225V°: 三界寺比丘道真, 諸方求覓諸經, 隨得雜經錄記。

<sup>24</sup> The entire text of the dedication is reproduced and translated in Giles, 124b–125a. However, after rereading the translation, I found several points with which I disagree, and therefore, decided to translate the text again. Note that the edited version of the text given in Zheng, “Dunhuang fojiao siyuan gongneng zhi kaocha yu yanjiu, 2/2,” 90, is faulty and unreliable.

<sup>25</sup> One character is illegible.

<sup>26</sup> This probably refers to the *Da fangbian fo baoen jing* 大方便佛報恩經 [Scripture on the Great *upāya* of Buddha Recompensing Kindness] (T. 156.3). This may be an apocryphal scripture.

bell [(Chin. *tongling* 銅鈴)],<sup>27</sup> an incense burner,<sup>28</sup> and an incense bowl (?), which he bestowed upon the Sanjie Temple.

[Again], Daozhen had a painting of the Venerable Liu Sahe [(born ca. 345, 劉薩訶和尚)]<sup>29</sup> made, as well as 27 streamers, a bronze bell, an incense burner, another incense burner, and one flowery carpet [(Chin. *huazhan* 花氈)].<sup>30</sup> The above was donated to the monks [of the Sanjie Temple] as an eternal offering. Daozhen also repaired one set of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā[sūtra]*, 13 sets of other scriptures, 27 streamers, a bronze bell, an incense burner, one incense [...] bowl, one *sūtra* table, one *sūtra* case, one *sūtra* cover, and one flowery carpet. All of the above donations were entered into the scriptural storage [of the Sanjie Temple] as offerings.<sup>31</sup>

This rather substantial offering shows that Daozhen continued his efforts on behalf of his home temple. While the donated scriptures may reflect his concerns for keeping the library holdings up to date, the material

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<sup>27</sup> This probably indicates the kind of bowl-shaped bell common to Chinese Buddhist rituals. It is also possible that it refers to a *ghanṭā*, similar to those used with a *vajra* in Esoteric Buddhist rituals. See FDC, vol. 6, 5692abc.

<sup>28</sup> Stephen Teiser suggests that this is an incense burner fashioned with bells. See Teiser, *The Scripture on the Ten Kings*, 145. Needless to say, I find his reading rather unconvincing.

<sup>29</sup> This is my conjecture. Stephen Teiser thinks that the text refers to a donation of “twenty-seven banners of the priest Liu Sa-ho.” Teiser, *The Scripture on the Ten Kings*, 145. This sounds a bit odd, to be frank. I propose that this refers to a single painting, probably one like the painting fragment of Liu Sahe in the Stein Collection, OA 1919.0101.0.20. Cf. Roderick Whitfield and Anne Farrer, *Caves of the Thousand Buddhas: Chinese Art from the Silk Road* (London: British Museum Publications, 1990), 31, pl. 6. For a classic study of this mythological monk, see Chen Zuolong 陳祚龍, “Liu Sahe yanjiu [A Study of Liu Sahe],” *Huakang foxue xuebao* 華岡佛學學報 [Hua-Kang Buddhist Journal] 3 (1973): 33–56.

<sup>30</sup> The best-preserved example of such a carpet is in the Stein Collection in the National Museum of New Delhi. There are also a number of extant fragments. For one such example, see Whitfield and Farrer, *Caves of the Thousand Buddhas*, 120, pls. 95. We do not know what these carpets were used for, but they may have been for kneeling on or for making prostrations in the temple halls (and caves?).

<sup>31</sup> A translation and dense annotation of the same text is found in Teiser, *The Scripture on the Ten Kings*, 144–154. However, I differ from his rendering on a number of points. S. 5663: 己亥年七月十五日寫畢，三界寺律大德沙門惠海誦集。乙未年正月十五日三界寺修大般若經 兼內道場課念沙門道真，兼條修諸經二十一部，兼寫 報應經 一部，兼寫 大佛名經 一部。

道真發心造大般若[經] 帙六十個 並是鏤排鏤綾俱全 造銀番[幡] 伍拾口 並施入三界寺 銅合[鈎] 香爐[爐] 壹 香櫛壹 施入三界寺 道真造劉薩訶和尚 施入番[幡] 二七口 銅合[鈎] 香爐[爐] 壹 香櫛花瓊壹 已上施入 和尚永為供養



objects, many of them related to Buddhist ritual, attest to his continued concern for the welfare of his temple and his fellow monks.<sup>32</sup>

#### 4. Daozhen and Buddhist Scriptures

Daozhen also appears as a learned Buddhist monk, something which may be gleaned from the many Buddhist scriptures and texts that bear his name. Evidently, he possessed a fairly large personal collection of such material. On the basis of information gleaned from the manuscripts, including a variety of Buddhist scriptures, official documents, and sundry notes, it is clear that the Buddhist *vinaya* was an area of practice that stood in the centre of Daozhen's life. During the latter part of his life, he issued many official precept certificates, mainly to female lay disciples.<sup>33</sup> Many of these certificates survive and were issued over a long period, between 964 and 987. This depicts him as an active proselytising monk among the local population of Shazhou. The earliest of these are three ordination certificates issued 964–965 to Li Han'er (fl. mid-10th c.. 李敦兒) and two female disciples from Daozhen's own Zhang clan (張氏) (S. 532). Daozhen continued to issue such certificates until the very end of his life, all to lay people.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Some of these items are also discussed in Rong Xinjiang, "Khotanese Felt and Sogdian Silver: Foreign Gifts to Buddhist Monasteries in Ninth- and Tenth-Century Dunhuang," *Asia Major* Third Series 17.1 (2004): 15–34. Although the author does not mention Daozhen or his offering directly, many of the items Daozhen offered were the general types of trade goods that were transported along the Silk Road.

<sup>33</sup> For additional information, see the classic study by Chen Zuolong 陳祖龍 *Dunhuang jiance dingxu* 敦煌簡策訂存 [Collated Dunhuang Documents with Preface] (Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu yinshuguan, 1983): 30–42.

<sup>34</sup> See S. 5313 (dated 965), S. 6629, S. 347 (dated 965), S. 4844 (dated 966), S. 330 (dated 982), S. 1183 (dated 984), S. 2448 (dated 884), S. 4115 (dated 985), and S. 4915 (dated 987). For a complete list of the precept certificates authorised by Daozhen, see Akagi, "Tonkō Sankai sō Dōjin to Kōtan ōke," 207–209. See also the data provided by Zheng Acai 鄭阿財, "Dunhuang fojiao siyuan gongneng zhi kaocha yu yanjiu—yi Dunhuang wenxian yu shiku wei zhongxin 2/2 敦煌佛教寺院功能之考察與研究—以敦煌文獻與石窟為中心 2/2 [An Investigation and Study of the Functions of Dunhuang's Buddhist Temples and Monasteries with a Focus on the Dunhuang Documents and Caves 2/2]," *Yanjiu chengguo baogao (wanzheng ban)* 研究成果報告 (完整版) [Report on the Results of Research (full version)] (2006): 88–90. Some of these certificates are studied in Zhanru 湛如, "Dunhuang pusa jieyi yu pusa jie die zhi yanjiu 敦煌菩薩戒儀與菩薩戒牒之研究 [A Study of Bodhisattva Precept Rituals and Bodhisattva Precept Certificates from Dunhuang]," *Dunhuang yanjiu* 敦煌研究 [Dunhuang Research] 2 (1997): 77–88.

Daozhen's interest in and cultivation of the Buddhist precepts is also documented in a collection of verses on the *vinaya*, entitled *Sifen lü lüe she song* 四分律略攝頌 [Abbreviated *gāthās* of the Fourfold *vinaya*]. At the end, there is a note stating that the scripture was “practiced by the monk Daozhen of the Sanjie Temple” (S. 4160).<sup>35</sup>

Daozhen was, evidently, not a monk limited by sectarian concerns, and his interests covered a wide range of Buddhist practices and topics, including Chan Buddhism (禪宗). His interest in this important Chinese Buddhist tradition is borne out by the fact that he owned a copy of the *Quanzhou qianfo xinzu zhu zushi song* 泉州千佛新著諸祖師頌 [Newly Composed Songs of the Patriarchal Masters from the Thousand Buddhas of Quanzhou] (T. 2861.85).<sup>36</sup> The colophon reveals that the text was recorded, in other words, copied, by Daozhen in the Guanyin Cloister in the Sanjie Temple (T. 2861.85, 1322c). Given that this liturgical text reflects recent developments in Chan Buddhist history, it is interesting to see the text copied out in Dunhuang relatively soon after it was composed.<sup>37</sup> Another Chan text that bears Daozhen's name is the much earlier *Dacheng wu fangbian Beizong* 大乘五方便北宗 [The Five Mahāyāna *upāyas* of the Northern School], a work that belongs to the Northern Chan tradition of Shenxiu (605–706, 神秀).<sup>38</sup> This manuscript appears to have been Daozhen's personal possession (P. 2270V<sup>o</sup> (1)). It bears Daozhen's signature and may have been copied out by him personally, possibly as an aid for his own meditative efforts (P. 2836R<sup>o</sup>). A recent study shows that a manuscript fragment consists of quotations from a number of Mahāyāna *sūtras*, including the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, *Vimalakīrti*, *Avataṃsaka* and *Mahāparinirvāṇa*, derives from the Northern Chan text *Wu fangbian men* 五方便門 [The Method of the Five

<sup>35</sup> See Giles, 165a.

<sup>36</sup> See S. 1635. This collection of Chan verses documents that the so-called Southern Chan transmission (南禪傳) from Bodhidharma (fl. early 6th c., Chin. Damo 達摩) to Huineng (638–713, 慧能), followed by both the Niutou (牛頭) and Hongzhou (洪州) Schools, was present in Dunhuang during the 10th century.

<sup>37</sup> Thanks to Tim Barrett for pointing this out.

<sup>38</sup> The extant manuscripts of this text are extensively studied and partly translated in John McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1986), 148–149, 171–196.



Effective Means], which is obviously another name for the above-mentioned text.<sup>39</sup>

A short colophon appended to a copy of the *Aparimitāyurdhāraṇī-sūtra* (佛說无量壽宗要經) (T. 936.19) states that it was “upheld and recited by the monk Daozhen of Sanjie Temple” (S. 3522V<sup>o</sup>). The scripture in question was introduced to Dunhuang during the Tibetan Rule over Dunhuang and was originally translated from Tibetan into Chinese by Facheng (d. 864, 法成, Tib. Chos grub).<sup>40</sup> It is basically a *dhāraṇī sūtra* consisting of 29 different *dhāraṇīs* used in the worship of Amitāyus. However, it is not really a Pure Land scripture, despite its title, since it does not describe Sukhāvātī but only mentions it in passing. It has no ritual instructions nor does it discuss specific offerings. It is primarily concerned with enumerating the kinds of merit that can be accrued from copying, reciting, and disseminating the scripture, elements common to many standard *sūtras*. Although there has been some discussion of its canonical status, it is clearly a scripture of Indian origin (post-Gupta period (ca. mid-4th–late 6th c.)), which is evident when one compares it to the later 988 translation by Dharmadeva (fl. 10th c., 法天) (T. 937.19).

There is also a colophon added to a greatly damaged manuscript fragment that features four different liturgical texts of mixed quality. Again, a short passage added at the end of the text says it was “upheld and recited by the monk Daozhen of the Sanjie Temple.”<sup>41</sup> Given the nature of the fragment, this might be a text that he recited during the early part of his career (P. 2930 (4)).

<sup>39</sup> See Huang Qingping 黃青萍, “Guanyu Bei zong chan de yanjiu: *Wu fangbian men xieben ji qi chan fa* 關於北宗禪的研究—五方便門寫本及其禪法 [Concerning the Study of the Northern Chan School: The *Wu fangbian men* Manuscript Version and Its Method of Meditation],” *Dunhuang xue* 敦煌學 [Dunhuang Studies] 32 (2016): 171–196 (See esp. 176–177).

<sup>40</sup> It is the consensus of most scholars today that Facheng was a Tibetophone Chinese, based on the meticulous research of Ueyama Daishun. Ueyama Daishun 山上大峻, *Tonkō bukkyō no kenkyū* 敦煌佛教の研究 [Studies in the Buddhism of Dunhuang] (Kyoto: Hozokan, 1990), 17–83. In contrast, Rong Xinjiang thinks that he was a Tibetan. See Rong Xinjiang, “The Nature of the Dunhuang Library Cave and the Reasons for Its Sealing,” *Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie* 11 (1999–2000): 268. The number of spells is somewhat odd, and does not correspond to any other meaningful categories known from Buddhist literature

<sup>41</sup> P. 2930 (4): 三界寺比丘道真持念.



Daozhen also studied the *Mulāmadhyamakāśāstra* (T. 1564.30); his name is found on the back of a manuscript of this lengthy work, in the form of a short colophon (P. 3917AR<sup>o</sup>). It reads: “Personally recited by the Vinaya Master, the Great Worthy Monk Daozhen.” This is followed by a note to the effect that the text was “bestowed by Daozhen and entered into the catalogue” (P. 3917AV<sup>o</sup>). The catalogue (Chin. *mulu* 目錄) undoubtedly refers to the library inventory of the Sanjie Temple, which Daozhen himself compiled to record the new and amended scriptures he added to the collection.

Daozhen’s penchant for the *prajñāpāramitā* literature is also evident in a manuscript copy of the *Vajrachedikā* that bears his name and a note stating that it was copied by him (S. 2635). This not only documents not only Daozhen’s interest in the teachings conveyed by this important Mahāyāna scripture, but also the pious practice of making copies of Buddhist texts, among which this particular *sūtra* was one of the most popular.<sup>42</sup> In this regard, it is not a coincidence that there are a large number of *Vajrachedikā* copies among the Dunhuang manuscripts.

Another example of Daozhen’s interest in Buddhist textual material appears in a manuscript of the *Foshuo guanfo sanmei hai jing* 佛說觀佛三昧海經 [Scripture Spoken by the Buddha on the Ocean-like *samādhi* of Contemplating the Buddha] (T. 643.15) features a note at the end by Daozhen, which states, “the scripture of the monk Daozhen from Sanjie Temple does not leave the temple gates.”<sup>43</sup> This evidently means that Daozhen was averse to lending out his scriptures for copying or studying outside the confines of his own temple. An additional notes states “deriving from the Record of the Numinous Caves (Chin. *jiu ci ling ku ji* 就此靈窟記),” the meaning of which is not immediately clear.

Not all of the scriptures Daozhen studied or read were bona fide *sūtras*. Apparently, he was also fond of apocryphal works, although, he may not have seen them as such. In one case, his name appears in a

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<sup>42</sup> For the practice of copying the *Vajrachedikā* in China during the medieval period, see Fang Guangchang 方廣錫, “Dunhuang wenxian zhong de *Jingang jing* ji qi zhuliu 敦煌文獻中的《金剛經》及其注疏 [The *Vajrachedikā*’s Diffusion among the Dunhuang Textual Material],” accessed July 25, 2018. <http://big5.xuefo.net/nr/article31/311-984.html>. See also the more general study, Shih-shan Susan Huang, “Illustrating the Efficacy of the Diamond Sutra in Vernacular Buddhism,” *Gugong xueshu likan* 故宮學術季刊 [National Palace Museum Research Quarterly] 35.4 (2018): 1–86.

<sup>43</sup> P. 2130 (2): 三界寺道真經不出寺門.



manuscript of the apocryphal *Foshuo hu shenming jing* 佛說護身命經 [Scripture on Protecting Ones Lifespan] (T. 2865.85, P. 2340R<sup>o</sup>), a popular scripture in Dunhuang, several copies of which have been found. Another apocryphal scripture in Daozhen's personal library was the important *Yanluo wang shou ji jing* 閻羅王受記經 [Scripture on King Yama Receiving the Records on the Ten Kings] (佛說閻羅王受記經四眾逆修生七齋往生淨土經, ZZ 21.1).<sup>44</sup> A short note at end states: "Received and upheld by the monk Daozhen of the Sanjie Temple" (S. 3147). Daozhen seemingly had a very wide interest in Buddhism. He also had a copy of the *Damulian yuanqi* 大目連緣起 [The Causal Conditions Concerning Mahāmaudgalyāyana] in his private collection, as already mentioned (P. 2193). This is a performative composition based on the story of the *arhat* Mahāmaudgalyāyana, who went into the netherworld to save his mother who was stuck there. This is a text that is closely associated with the celebrated transformative texts (Chin. *bianwen* 變文) for popular presentation so common to the public aspects of Dunhuang's Buddhism.

A more mainstream Buddhist scripture possibly associated with Daozhen is a copy of the *Fo ming jing* 佛名經 [Scripture of Buddha Names] bearing his name (P. 4999).<sup>45</sup> His name also occurs in a brief note at the end of a copy of the *Dacheng bai faming menlun kaizong yi ji* 大乘百法明門論開宗義記 [Record of Explaining the Meaning of the Teaching of the *Mahāyānaśatadharmaparakāśasmukhaśāstra*] (T. 28-10.85), an exposition of an important work by Vasubandhu (fl. 3rd–4th c.). It was translated into Chinese by the important Chinese monk Tankuang (fl. 8th c., 曇曠), who stayed in Dunhuang for a number of

<sup>44</sup> This scripture and its importance in Dunhuang are, of course, the subject of the classic study by Teiser, *The Scripture on the Ten Kings*. Daozhen's interest in this scripture may also be seen against the general backdrop of the Dizang cult's popularity during the late Tang, as reflected in the Dunhuang material. For a study of this, see, e.g., Wang Huimin 王惠民, "Zhong Tang yihou Dunhuang Dizang tuxiang kaocha 中唐以后敦煌地藏图像考察 [Concerning Dizang Iconography in Dunhuang after the Mid-Tang]," *Dunhuang yanjiu* 敦煌研究 [Dunhuang Research] 1 (2007): 24–33. This source refers to Daozhen and the manuscripts of the *Shiwang jing* that bear his name, including S. 3147 and Beijing 8254. See also Zhang Zong 张总, "Yanluo wang shou ji jing zhuibu yankao 阎罗王授记经 缀补研考 [A Partial Study of the *Yanluo wang shou ji jing*]," *Dunhuang Tulufan yanjiu* [Dunhuang and Turfan Studies] 5 (2001): 81–112.

<sup>45</sup> The end of the text reads: "The *Great Buddhas' Names Scripture* in one section was recited by the Buddhist *śramaṇa* from Sanjie Temple (念大仏名經一部,三界寺釋沙門.)"

years during the period of the Tibetan Rule.<sup>46</sup> Daozhen's relationship with this doctrinally complex work is unclear, but since his name is recorded in it, it seems it was also part of his personal collection.

When considered as a whole, these scattered references indicate that Daozhen was a widely read monk, who had a relatively broad interest in Buddhist matters. This rather sizeable list of Buddhist scriptures and treatises reveals something of Daozhen's breadth of learning and interests, and not only depicts him as an erudite scholar-monk, but also informs us of the range of Buddhist topics and types of practices in which he engaged. Even though we cannot take this list as proof of the Buddhist teachings in which he excelled, it does provide a clear idea of where his interests lay. Again, it is evident that Daozhen's vision of Buddhism was broad and inclusive, rather than exclusive. As such, there are no signs of sectarian tendencies, or that he favoured one particular type of Buddhist teaching or doctrine over another. What is, perhaps, most noteworthy in this regard is the curious lack of scriptures and texts related to Esoteric Buddhism, a trend in Chinese (and contemporary Tibetan) Buddhism, which—as we know—was highly present in Dunhuang during the 10th century.

#### 4. *Daozhen's Buddhist Practices*

Daozhen's career as a Buddhist monk spanned most of the 10th century, during which time his activities left an indisputable mark on Buddhism in Dunhuang. While his repair of the Buddhist scriptures for his temple library and his offerings to that temple constitute fundamental aspects of his Buddhist practice, different types of data sheds light on the other religious ceremonies in which he participated.

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<sup>46</sup> See P. 2161. Some of Tankuang's work was produced on behalf of the Tibetan King Tri Songdétse (r. 742–ca. 800, Tib. Khri Srong lde bstan). Tankuang's relation to the Great Debate of Samyé (Tib. bSam yas) is discussed in Carmen Meinert, "The Conjunction of Chinese Chan and Tibetan rDzogs chen Thought: Reflections on the Tibetan Dunhuang Manuscripts IOL Tib J 689–1 and PT 699," in *Contributions to the Cultural History of Early Tibet*, ed. Matthew T. Kapstein and Brandon Dotson (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007), 239–301, especially 248–251. See also Rong, *Eighteen Lectures*, 354.



One important source records that during the important Laba Festival (臘八節)<sup>47</sup> of 951, Daozhen and the members of the Buddhist association under his spiritual authority offered lamps at the Mogao Caves (Dunhuang 322).<sup>48</sup> This document is significant for a number of reasons, not only for identifying Daozhen as the head of a local Buddhist association (which should be expected, given his status), but also for the many details it provides with regard to certain caves and their placement at the site.<sup>49</sup> At the end of the document, there is a lengthy note by Daozhen—probably written in his capacity as the association’s formal leader—stipulating the general rules to which members were obliged to adhere. We learn from the document that the caves where lamps were offered was divided among the association’s leading members, and each of them was responsible for defraying the cost of their respective offering. The association made offerings at several of the caves, including some that were so-called family caves (Chin. *jiaku* 家窟), including the mausoleum of the important local monk Hongbian, also known as Tripiṭaka Master Wu (吳三藏), that is, Cave 17. Thus, this document establishes that offerings were indeed carried out at and in the caves and identifies the caves where this was done.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> A brief historical overview of this festival is found in Rong, *Eighteen Lectures*, 124. For a contextualisation of this festival in relation to Buddhist influence, see Guang Xing, “Buddhist Impact on Chinese Culture,” *Asian Philosophy* 23.4 (Special Issue on Popular Buddhism) (2013): 305–322.

<sup>48</sup> This is briefly discussed in Teiser, *The Scripture on the Ten Kings*, 148–149, n. 35. He describes the event as a ‘pilgrimage,’ which is incorrect, as Daozhen’s association was based at the caves themselves. We know this because the Sanjie Temple—Daozhen’s home—was located next to the Mogao Caves. It is possible that some of the association’s members came from the prefectural seat and had journeyed to the caves, but this is, in any case, not evident in the source under discussion. However, we do know that some of the association’s members were monastics, including some high-ranking ones.

<sup>49</sup> Ma De 马德, “10 shiji zhongqi de Mogao ku yamian gaiguan: Guanyu Laba randeng fenpei kukan mingshu de jige wenti 10 世纪中期的莫高窟崖面概观 — 关于 腊八燃灯分配窟龛名数的几个问题 [An Overview of the Cliff Face of the Mogao Caves during the mid-10th century: Concerning a Number of Questions in Regard to the Laba randeng fenpei kukan mingshu],” *Dunhuang yanjiu* 敦煌研究 [Dunhuang Research] 2 (1988): 6–8.

<sup>50</sup> Robert Sharf argues that no worship took place in the caves themselves, but that is clearly incorrect, just by going with the information provided by Cave 322. Cf. Robert Sharf, “Art in the Dark: The Ritual Context of Buddhist Caves in Western China,” in *Art of Merit: Studies in Buddhist Art and its Conservation*, ed. David Park, Kuenga Wangmo, and Sharon Cather (London: Archetype Publications, Courtauld Institute of Art, 2013), 38–65.

Daozhen also engaged in Buddhist lectures in the form of popularised presentations of Buddhist themes and doctrines. The Dunhuang material refers to the term ‘lecture in the form of oration’ (Chin. *jiangchang* 講唱), which indicates an abbreviated Buddhist text—usually in narrative form—made for singing.<sup>51</sup> Such ritualised singing was commonly used to convey transformative texts to a large audience of lay adherents.<sup>52</sup> This type of sung lecture is related to the practice of formal *sūtra* discourses (Chin. *tanjing* 談經), which is a form of address or abbreviated presentation given at a public lecture on one or more Buddhist scriptures. These performative devices became popular during the Tang Dynasty (618–907, 唐) and were in use well into the Five Dynasties (906–978, 五代) and the early Northern Song (960–1126, 北宋), as is clear from the numerous examples found among the Dunhuang manuscripts.<sup>53</sup> It would appear to have formed part of his private collection of Buddhist books.<sup>54</sup>

Before concluding this essay, it is important to not overlook Daozhen’s immediate spiritual legacy, that is, the disciples to whom he transmitted the Buddhist precepts. There is little data on these people, clerics and laity alike, but the records—scanty as they are—nevertheless offer a glimpse of who they were and how they related to the wider society of Dunhuang during the second half of the 10th century. The bestowal of these precepts usually formed part of a formal ordination certificate bearing Daozhen’s seal and sometimes other official credentials. Many of the certificates were bestowed upon lay people, and

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<sup>51</sup> For a very useful collection of such lecture texts, see *Dunhuang bianwen jiangjing wen yinyuan jixiao* 敦煌邊文講經文因緣輯校 *Collected Collations of the Transformation Texts, Sūtra lecture Texts, and Nidānas from Dunhuang*, 2 vols, ed. Zhou Shaoliang 周紹良, Zhang Yongquan 張涌泉, and Huang Zheng 黃徵 (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1998). For the entire text of Daozhen’s *Damulian yuanqi*, with editorial commentary, see *ibid.* Vol. 2, 903–916.

<sup>52</sup> For a classic study of this genre of Buddhist literature, see Victor H. Mair, *T’ang Transformation Texts: A Study of the Buddhist Contribution to the Rise of Vernacular Fiction and Drama in China* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1989).

<sup>53</sup> FDC, vol. 7, 6158b–6159a.

<sup>54</sup> See Wang Yufei 王于飞, “Zizhi chongbai she jing ru si yu Dunhuang bianwen xie juan de shengcheng 字纸崇拜, 舍经入寺与敦煌变文写卷的生成 [Worship of the Written Word: Domestic Scriptures Entering Temples and the Creation of Manuscript Rolls of Transformative Texts in Dunhuang],” *Zhongguo su wenhua yanjiu* 中国俗文化研究 [Research on Chinese Folk Culture] (*di si ji* 第四辑 [4th Series]) 4 (2007): 168–173.



we find a number who received both the ordinary precepts and the bodhisattva precepts (Chin. *pusa jie* 菩薩戒).<sup>55</sup>

Those who received the complete precepts according to the then-prevailing norms in Dunhuang first received the five precepts (Skt. *pañcaśīla*), then the eight precepts (Skt. *aṣṭāṅgaśīla*)—the so-called Great Precepts of the Thousand Buddhas (Chin. *qianfo dajie* 千佛大戒)<sup>56</sup>—and finally, the bodhisattva precepts.<sup>57</sup> It is interesting that Daozhen had a large number of female disciples, some with prestigious family backgrounds and several of whom became Buddhist nuns.

It is not the place here to engage in a lengthy excursus into the lore of the late medieval ordination certificates found in Dunhuang. One of the certificates he issued provides an additional way of understanding the different roles Daozhen undertook. One such certificate he issued to a female, lay disciple, Huiyi (fl. second half of the 10th c., 惠意) of the Cheng clan (程氏), reads:

Certificate for the bestowal of the eight precepts at the Sanjie Temple of Shazhou in the Sahā world of the southern continent of Jambudvīpa.

The female disciple Huiyi of the Cheng clan has received the precepts.

The certificate obtained by the aforementioned former disciple [is like the] bright moon’s descending light, for a long time, this young person has expressed the desire that she [will be like] the red [lotus] flower rising out of the [muddy] water and awoken to *samsara* without remainder.

Now, the standard device is to ride in the ox cart when wanting to leave the burning house.<sup>58</sup> [However,] when seeking to be enduring and eminent,

<sup>55</sup> Kuo Li-ying studies this material at length and presented it under the title, “The Dunhuang Certificates of Precepts Ordination Revisited.” Unpublished paper (presented at the International Dunhuang Conference in Cambridge, April 17–18, 2019). For a list of the ordination certificates associated with Daozhen and the Sanjie Temple, see the appendix in Teiser, *The Scripture on the Ten Kings*, 245–247.

<sup>56</sup> This is a local version of the complete precepts for monks and nuns. It is unclear to what extent these precepts encompassed the entire set of regulations according to the *vinaya*.

<sup>57</sup> These are the later, extra-canonical precepts, reflecting Mahāyāna beliefs and doctrine as formulated in the *Fanwang jing* 梵網經 [Pseudo-*Brahmajāla* Scripture] (T. 1484.24). For a lengthy elucidation of this singularly important work in the context of Buddhism in Dunhuang, see Zhanru 湛如, *Dunhuang fojiao luyi zhidu yanjiu* 敦煌佛教律儀制度研究 [A Study of Vināya and Ritual Regulations in Dunhuang Buddhism] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2003), 133–148. This study also presents the relevant source materials.

<sup>58</sup> This invokes the celebrated parable of the burning house that appears in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, in which the burning house is a metaphor for *samsāra*, and the ox

determination and strength are necessary in order to leave the dusty world and be seated in the precious flower.<sup>59</sup> [Therefore,] I will now observe these true thoughts, the regulations of the given precept certificate, and, as before, be the one informed of the certificate. Hence the certificate.

Certificate issued on the 14th day of the 5th month in the 2nd year of Yongxi [(985)].

We respectfully invite Amitābha Buddha to act as the venerable leader of the [ordination] platform.

We respectfully invite Śākyamuni Buddha to act as the *karma ācārya*.

We respectfully invite Maitreya Buddha to act as the master bestowing the precepts.

We respectfully invite all the buddhas of the ten directions to act as the masters testifying to the precepts.

We respectfully invite all the great *bodhisattva mahāsattvas* to act as the companions together with whom one studies.

Precept Master bestowing the precepts: The *śramaṇa* Daozhen.<sup>60</sup>

There are a number of points to note in connection with the certificates Daozhen issued. First of all, they are somewhat generic in nature. That is, they tend to follow a more or less identical structural and textual template. This is undoubtedly because such a certificate was an official document, which served as proof of the bearer's religious status. In other words, an ordination certificate, whether issued to a monastic or lay person, carried a special officially recognised value, much like a note of credit. Indeed, these certificates were sometimes used instead of money

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carriage is, a metaphor for the Supreme Vehicle of Mahāyāna, appears in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* (T. 262.9, 12c, 13b, etc.).

<sup>59</sup> This refers to rebirth in Amitābha Buddha's Pure Land.

<sup>60</sup> S. 330 (1):

- (1) 南瞻部洲娑訶世界沙州三界寺授八戒牒
- (2) 受八戒女弟子惠意程氏
- (3) 牒得前件弟子白月垂光 久慕禪而
- (4) 是幼 紅蓮出水悟生死之無餘
- (5) 今則方駕牛車辨緇火宅 欲鋼然而
- (6) 須堅固 塵世出而空寶華吾今睹斯
- (7) 真意 方施戒牒 勿辨知者 故牒
- (8) 永熙二年五月十四日牒
- (9) 奉請阿彌陀佛為壇真和尚
- (10) 奉請釋迦牟尼佛為羯磨可闍梨
- (11) 奉請彌勒尊佛為教授受師
- (12) 奉請十方諸佛為證發戒師
- (13) 奉請諸大菩薩摩訶薩為同學伴侶



and could be bought and sold. However, in contrast to ordination certificates for monks and nuns those issued to lay people did not require formal permission from the secular powers. However, they did sometimes bear the seal of the Saṃgha Overseers (Chin. *sengtong* 僧統) or from a leading monastic official, such as Daozhen, which means that they were recognised by the highest spiritual authorities in Dunhuang.

Another important point is that the certificate reveals that it was not bestowed in a ceremony comparable to the ordinations of monks and nuns. In those ordinations, there were rather strict rules regarding the ceremony's performance, including the participation of spiritual guarantors, who were usually senior and respected members of the Buddhist *saṃgha*. In the certificates Daozhen bestowed upon his lay followers, divine characters, that is, buddhas and bodhisattvas, are invoked as replacements for the otherwise-mandatory human agents. Undoubtedly, this was an acceptable practice for ceremonies involving the Buddhist laity, including the bestowal of the ordinary set of five, eight or ten precepts, as well as the bodhisattva precepts. The invocation of the replacement preceptors and guarantors is generic in nature and follows a textual template, indicating that this was a standard practice, which was not limited to Dunhuang. It should also be noted that the basic precepts of this kind could be and were bestowed several times on the same person, so it was not uncommon for a given disciple to receive the religious precepts repeatedly from his or her Buddhist preceptor. In the case of Huiyi, the surviving documents reveal that she received the precepts on five separate occasions, the first time in 982 and the last time in 985. This shows that the basic set of precepts could be bestowed repeatedly and that official documents were issued each time. The Proctor (Chin. *weina* 維那, Skt. *karmadāna*) is among the replacement figures at the ceremony. In the certificates Daozhen issued, this religious functionary, represented by Śākyamuni Buddha, is commonly referred to as *karma ācārya* (羯磨阿闍梨).<sup>61</sup>

Among Daozhen's nun-disciples were Huihong (fl. second half of 10th c., 惠弘) (S. 330 (6)), Huiyi (fl. second half of 10th c., 惠意),

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<sup>61</sup> *Ācārya* is a special honorific term for an accomplished master in the Esoteric Buddhist tradition. However, it appears that in Dunhuang during the 10th century, the title became somewhat watered down to simply mean a senior Buddhist cleric of some note. Even so, its common usage in Dunhuang denotes some degree of conceptual adaption to formal Esoteric Buddhist norms.



Zhihuihua (fl. second half of 10th c., 智惠花), Qingjingyi (fl. second half of 10th c., 清淨意), an anonymous Buddhist nun (S. 4915), and an anonymous Buddhist nun who received the bodhisattva precepts at a ceremony held in Lingtu Temple (靈圖寺) (S. 3798).

There are records of several of Daozhen's monastic disciples including Cheng Huiji (fl. second half of 10th c., 鄧惠集) (P. 3203), Faqing (fl. second half of 10th c., 法清) (S. 4115), and Huiyuan (fl. second half of 10th c., 惠圓) (S. 4482).

In addition to these clerics, Daozhen had many lay disciples from various clans including the Suo (索), Li 李, Cheng (程), his own Zhang (張), and so forth. Most of these names derive from the extant precept certificates mentioned above. Lay followers whose ordination certificates survive include Li Xinzhu (fl. second half of 10th c., 李信住) (P. 3439), Li Shengzhu (fl. second half of 10th c., 李勝住) (P. 3439 (2)), and Deng Zhu (fl. second half of 10th c., 鄧住) (P. 3206).

#### 4. Conclusion

This essay shows that sacred spaces or sites, such as the Mogao Caves, depend on active human agents, such as Daozhen, for their day to day maintenance. Daozhen was no ordinary monk. He was not only learned and versatile, but also resourceful. He commanded respect and veneration, not least from local authorities. The surviving colophons reveal something of his breadth of learning and Buddhist interests. Although he does not appear to have authored Buddhist treatises of his own. He, his breadth of learning and Buddhist interests were rather impressive. Moreover, there is no evidence that he was a sectarian in any way. The Buddhist writings that bear his name represent a wide array of scriptural typologies, ranging from standard *sūtras* to heavy-duty doctrinal works, and from devotional texts to Chan-related poetry and verses. Since he was a lecturer in Dunhuang's temples, he likely had access to a substantial number of Buddhist works that he made use of, beyond mere recitation.

Daozhen's participation in various restoration projects shows yet another side of his activities, namely that of an engaged Buddhist monk who cared deeply for his religion and for the prosperity of Buddhism. When seen in relation to his degree of success as a local Buddhist leader



and his interaction and close relationship with the laity constituted an important part of his prestige and reputation, which greatly aided his various activities.

Daozhen has surely left his impression on the history of Buddhism in Dunhuang and the Mogao Caves in particular, and one may well speculate what would have been left for posterity in terms of manuscripts and information on them had it not been for him. In this way one could argue that although he did not rise to the very top of the Buddhist hierarchy in Dunhuang, his legacy clearly superceeds most of his peers as well as the majority of the formally more important clerics.

### Abbreviations

Beijing	Collection of Dunhuang Manuscripts preserved in the National Library in Beijing
DMGT	<i>Dunhuang Mogao ku gongyang ren tiji</i> 敦煌莫高窟供养人题记 [Donor Inscriptions from the Mogao Caves at Dunhuang], 5 vols, comp. Dunhuang yanjiuyuan 敦煌研究院. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1986.
Dunhuang FDC	Manuscripts in the Collection of the Dunhuang Academy <i>Foguang da cidian</i> 佛光大辭典 [Great Dictionary of Foguang], 8 vols, ed. Ciyi 慈怡 et. al. Gaoxiong: Foguangshan chubanshe, 1988.
Giles	Giles, Lionel. <i>Descriptive Catalogue of the Chinese Manuscripts from Tunhuang in the British Museum</i> . London: The British Museum, 1957.
P.	Pelliot Collection of Chinese Dunhuang Manuscripts preserved at the Bibliothèque National in Paris
S.	Stein Collection of Chinese Dunhuang Manuscripts preserved at the British Library in London
T.	Takakusu Junjirō 高順次郎 et. al., ed. <i>Taishō shinshū daizōkyō</i> 大正新脩大藏經 [Taishō <i>tripitaka</i> ]. Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924–1935.
ZZ	<i>Dainihōn zōkuzōkyō</i> 大日本續藏經 [Extention to the <i>tripitaka</i> [Compiled] in Japan], 90 vols, ed. Kawamura Kōshō 河村孝照 et. al. Tokyo: Kokusho Kangyōkai, 1980–1988.

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