



UKABS 2018 Annual Conference



Buddhism and Material Culture

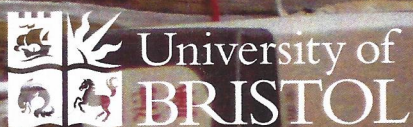
THURSDAY, JUNE 21 AND FRIDAY, JUNE 22

9:00 AM - 6:00 PM

CENTRE FOR BUDDHIST STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION AND THEOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL



UKABS

UK Association for Buddhist Studies

UKABS

The United Kingdom Association for Buddhist Studies aims to act as a focus for Buddhist Studies in the UK, and is open to academics, post-graduates, and unaffiliated Buddhist scholars or interested Buddhist practitioners. Currently, the scholarly study of Buddhism in the UK is carried out by lone individuals or fairly small groups of people in any one location. Moreover, scholars may be located in a range of departments: Anthropology, Asian Studies, Comparative Religion, Law, Oriental Studies, Philosophy, Psychology, Religious Studies, Theology and Religious Studies, etc.

The association's constitution states: 'The object of the Association shall be the academic study of Buddhism through the national and international collaboration of all scholars whose research has a bearing on the subject.'

The association seeks to foster communication between those working in various fields: Buddhism in South, Southeast, Central, and East Asia; historical and contemporary aspects (including developments in 'Western' Buddhism); theoretical, practical, and methodological issues; textual, linguistic, archaeological and art-historical studies.

The UK Association for Buddhist Studies holds an annual conference, either a one-day event at SOAS, London, or a longer themed conference hosted by another UK institution. The two types of conference tend to alternate.

CONFERENCE VENUE

The conference takes place in Lecture Theatre 3.31 (Coutts) in the historic Wills Memorial Building. The entrance is located on Queens Road, next to the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery.

The Wills Memorial Building is located in the University of Bristol Clifton Campus, and can be easily reached on foot from the city centre, and by bus from Temple Meads Station (number 8, 9, and 73).

The two catered lunch breaks will be held in the atrium of the Merchant Venturers Building, next door to the conference venue, while the conference dinner will be at Brown's Restaurant. For the exact addresses of all the venues please refer to the map provided in your conference pack.

THE CENTRE FOR BUDDHIST STUDIES

The Centre for Buddhist Studies at the University of Bristol was created in 1993 within the Department of Theology and Religious Studies as the first Centre for Buddhist Studies in the UK, and serves as a focus for the co-ordination of collaborative study and research in Buddhist Studies within the South-west of England. Because scholars working in the study of Buddhism in the UK are spread very thinly such collaboration and consultation is unfortunately rare. Not only because of its interest and facilities for the study of Buddhism, but also its geographical position, Bristol is well-situated to serve as facilitator and focus for closer consultation and collaboration, and collaborative research between institutions in a field with few active workers is held to be an important direction for the future.

The Centre at present comprises three full-time members of staff all in Theology and Religious Studies: Professor Rupert Gethin (Professor of Buddhist Studies and director of the Centre), Dr Rita Langer (Senior Lecturer in Buddhist Studies), Dr Benedetta Lomi (Lecturer in East Asian Religions), and Dr Susannah Deane (British Academy Postdoctoral Researcher). At undergraduate level the Centre's staff contribute to the undergraduate BA programme in Theology and Religious Studies; at graduate level they offer a taught MA in Religions with a Buddhist Studies Pathway and supervision of research leading to MPhil and MLitt/PhD.

The Centre for Buddhist Studies is also involved in the promotion of a lecture and seminar series on Buddhism, both within the university and also for the general public. We have hosted visiting scholars from Croatia, India, Japan, and USA, as well as Charles Wallace Research Fellows from India. The Centre's MA and PhD programmes in Buddhist studies have attracted students from Canada, China, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, UK, and USA. Graduates in Buddhist studies have progressed to take up academic positions in institutions including Central Florida, Carroll, Tel Aviv, Canterbury (UK), Sydney, Sun Yat-Sen (Taiwan) and Dharma Drum (Taiwan).

PROGRAMME

Thursday, June 21, 2018

9:00-9:15	Registration
9:15-9:30	Welcome
9:30-10:30	UKABS Annual General Meeting
10:30-11:00	Coffee Break

Session I. Displaying Buddhism: From Memory to Objects

11:00-12:00
Dr Caroline Starkey (University of Leeds)
Building British Buddhism: Memory and Materiality

12:00 – 13:00
Dr Louise Tythacott (SOAS)
Museums, Material Culture, and Display in Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries in Ladakh

13:00 -14:30 Lunch Break

Session II. Materials, Makers, and Power Objects

14:30-15:30
Dr James Gentry (Kathmandu University)
Thinking Through Tibetan Buddhist Power Objects: The Relevance of Object-oriented Theories for the Study of Tibetan Buddhist Material Culture

15:30-16:30
Dr Mary Picone (EHESS, Paris)
Contemporary Tombstones in Japan: Debates about Materials, Form and Placements between Manufacturers, Buddhist Priests, Spiritual Diviners and the Bereaved

16:30-17:00 Refreshments

17:00-18:00 Keynote Address

Dr. Fabio Rambelli (UCSB)
The Far Reaches of Buddhist Materiality: Labor, the Non-Hermeneutic, and the Intangibles

19:30 Conference Dinner

Friday, June 22, 2018

Session III. The Materiality of Words and Images

9:00-10:00

Dr Alice Collett (Nalanda University)

The Quest for Nirvāṇa amongst Royal Women according to Ikṣvāku Inscriptions

10:00-10:30

Dessislava Vendova (PhD Candidate, Columbia University)

Stupas, Cave Temples and the Buddha's Body: Re-examination and Re-assessment of the Early Iconographical Program at Early Indian Stupa Sites and Early Rock-cut Cave Temples in India and China

10:30-11:00

Coffee Break

11:00-12:00

Dr Halle O'Neal (University of Edinburgh)

Performing Buddhist Materiality: Word and Image in the Jewelled Pagoda Mandalas

12:00-13:00

Dr Paul Harrison (Stanford University)

Text as Object: Reflections on a Korean Print of Kumārajīva's Chinese Translation of the Vajracchedikā Arranged in the Form of a Pagoda

13:00-14:30

Lunch Break

Session IV. Buddhist Sculptures and Sound Scapes

14:30-15:00

Yang Lei (PhD candidate, EPHE)

Creation and Reconstruction of a Soundscape: The Great Buddhist Bell of the Yongle Era in the Local Literature of Peking, 1600-1900

15:00-16:00

Dr Patricia Eichenbaum Karetzky (Bard College, New York)

The Discovery of Buddhist Sculptures from Yecheng City in Linzhang County Hebei

16:00-16:30

Refreshments

Session V. Matters of Vinaya

16:30-17:00

Susan Roach (PhD candidate, SOAS)

Preoccupied with Possessions: Remedies for Hoarding in the Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya

17:00-18:00

Dr Ann Heirman (Ghent University)

Protecting Oneself against Animals. Vinaya from India to China

Thursday, June 21, 2018

Session I. Displaying Buddhism: From Memory to Objects

Dr Caroline Starkey (University of Leeds)
Building British Buddhism: Memory and Materiality

In this paper, using the theoretical framing of memory and materiality, I investigate the ways which Buddhist communities in England construct their religious heritages through analysis of the buildings and physical material spaces that they inhabit. Drawing on empirical research from the first national survey of Buddhist buildings (Tomalin and Starkey, 2016), I argue that Buddhists in England are engaged in a dual process of heritage building and memory construction by adopting imported decorative styles but at the same time preserving an 'English' aesthetic in a sympathetic adaptation of centres and temples to suit the environment and audience. By focusing on the built environment, I argue that communities are variously constructing a 'new' Buddhist heritage for England but at the same time, they are conserving an English past. I am interesting particularly in the ways in which material space and its production is a vital component in the constitutions of a different forms of British Buddhist identity and aesthetic. Through this, I will show that Buddhist buildings provide a means for the development of collective memories, so vital in the successful transmission of religious traditions to new contexts.

Dr Louise Tythacott (School of Oriental and African Studies)
Museums, material culture, and display in Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in Ladakh

Over the past decades, Ladakh in northwest India has experienced a museum boom with the creation of exhibitionary spaces in many of the key Buddhist monasteries. While small, single-room displays were set up in the 1990s, the first major 'Western' style museum opened at Ladakh's largest monastery, Hemis, in 2007. Monastery museums have been established in Ladakh for a range of reasons - protection, security, education, as well as to make money by attracting the increasing numbers of both domestic and international tourists.

This paper will explore the role, purpose and functions of Buddhist collections in museums in monasteries in Ladakh - especially, relationships between the sacred environments of the temples and the 'secular', Western-style spaces of the museum, where deity figures have been relocated and now function in the realm of education, rather than worship. The paper will discuss how and why Western exhibitionary techniques have been utilised alongside local forms of display, and it will also address monastic museum governance - by examining who decides on the interpretation, conservation and display of the collections, as well as issues arising from the care of material culture in relation to Buddhist systems of belief. Contemporary museum practice in Ladakh will thus be analysed in the context of Tibetan Buddhist culture. The research has been made possible by 3-year AHRC grant (2016-19) exploring Tibetan Monastery Collections in Ladakh and Nepal, and it draws on interviews undertaken in 2017 with Buddhist practitioners and museum caretakers in Chemre, Hemis, Likir, Matho, Phyang, Shey, Stakna and Thikse monasteries, as well as reflections on the experience of curating a new museum at Chemre monastery.

Session II. Materials, Makers, and Power Object

Dr James Gentry (Kathmandu University)
Thinking Through Tibetan Buddhist Power Objects: The Relevance of Object-oriented Theories for the Study of Tibetan Buddhist Material Culture traditions, institutions, communities, and states.

It has long been recognised that Tibetan Buddhist traditions feature a number of specialised objects such as relics, amulets, pills, books, statues, musical instruments, ritual implements, masks, and apparel, among several others, believed to acquire powers of animation and act on persons and their environments in a variety of ways. Such objects of power and agency have also frequently served as generative focal points in the formation of personal charisma and in the creation of Tibetan Buddhist

traditions, institutions, communities, and states. Despite the prominent roles of such objects in the history of Tibetan Buddhism, little attempt has been made among scholars to understand how Tibetan Buddhists have understood their manifold functions and modes of efficacy. Over the past few decades, theorists in the social scientists and humanities have begun to question the boundaries between the human and the non-human, the sentient/animate and insentient/inanimate. This recent shift of attention, driven in part by the intensification of human-technology interfaces and hybridity has prompted theorists to reexamine some of our fundamental assumption about what it means to be conscious, human, and alive. These recent approaches, movements, and "turns," various labeled, "actor-network-theory," "new materialism," the "ontological turn," etc. all have their own specific emphases. Yet they are all alike in criticising the presupposition of human intentionality, action, and perception as the ultimate source and guiding compass for society and culture at large; they call attention instead to the importance of accounting more for the potencies of objects and materials themselves in the formation of human beings and their interactive worlds. This paper explores the relevance of this recent theoretical shift for the study of Tibetan Buddhist objects of power. Expanding upon research conducted for my 2017 book, *Power Objects in Tibetan Buddhism: The Life, Writings, and Legacy of Sogdokpa Lodrö Gyeltsen* (Brill), which examines the role of such objects in the life and milieu of an influential sixteenth- to seventeenth-century Tibetan Buddhist master, I will now consider the broader range of objects presented in *A Treatise on the Paraphernalia and Musical Instruments of the Old School of Secret Mantra* (Gsang rnying rgyan dang rol mo'i bstan bcos). This compilation, published in Lhasa in 1996, presents together for the first time a collection of fourteen writings drawn from tantras, Treasure texts (gter ma), and the compositions of Tibetan masters active from the eleventh to the seventeenth centuries. The authors and revealers of these fourteen texts are counted among some of the most illustrious ritual experts in Tibetan history. Their writings treat objects ranging from ritual musical instruments and paraphernalia typical of large-scale institutional tantric ceremonies to the specialised accoutrements, substances, and apparel of wandering yogis. This paper will present the major themes addressed in this unusual compilation on Tibetan Buddhist material culture, explicate the theories of efficacy explicit or implicit within its treatment of a few key objects, and interrogate how select strains of thinking in recent object-oriented theory might relate with Tibetan understandings of how these objects function.

Dr Mary Picone (EHESS, Paris)

Contemporary Tombstones in Japan: Debates about Materials, Form and Placements between Manufacturers, Buddhist Priests, Spiritual Diviners and the Bereaved

Fairly recent scholarly work on contemporary Buddhist graves in Japan has mainly concerned the various possibilities offered by specific temples to their parishioners or to new clients. Through work in progress I would give a very preliminary idea of debates about the selection and plan of tombs, starting from interviews with gravestone manufacturers (in Kyoto), as one of several groups attempting to obtain greater influence in debates about 'appropriate' or desirable tombs. Several now describe themselves as 'tomb counselors', a change starting to mirror the roles gradually assumed by funeral entrepreneurs during the post-war growth period. Some families or individuals decide independently, but most frequently debates still start from temples' own cemetery or ossuary policies and may include the decisions and reinterpretations of others such as self-proclaimed Buddhist spiritual practitioners or diviners. Cemetery visitors, questions and answers on various sites or forums, or even 'case studies' of apparitions of dissatisfied ancestors all indicate that the shape, type or colour of the stone, orientation and placement of various elements- or other forms of burial-are still of concern for many. Moreover placement is relatively temporary, as more and more graves are being moved, sometimes from the countryside to areas nearer to cities or from one city to another, with greatest unease surrounding the possible displacement of the gravestone into a corner for 'unaffiliated graves'. To complicate this already complex picture Chinese companies have successfully competed with Japanese stone masons so the latter have to claim 'truly Japanese' stone as the only acceptable material. By starting from tombs/ossuaries as manufactured material objects the shifts in the current reorganisation of Japanese temples' primary activity may be studied in a newer perspective.

Dr. Fabio Rambelli (UCSB)

The Far Reaches of Buddhist Materiality: Labor, the Non-Hermeneutic, and the Intangible

For several years now, materiality has become one of the leading approaches to the study of religion in general and Buddhism in particular. This talk will begin by briefly outline the current state of Buddhist materiality studies, with an overview of some important works (mostly from various East Asian traditions). It will then explore three broad themes, all related in various ways to the materiality of Buddhist sacred objects, that still require a systematic examination, namely, labor, makers, and production processes; the "non-hermeneutic" dimension (the signification of objects that are not directly related to textual, exegetical meaning); and the realm of "intangibles" (sensorial domains outside of the visual spectrum, such as sounds/music, taste/food, and smells).

About the keynote:

Fabio Rambelli is Professor and International Shinto Foundation Chair of Shinto Studies, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies, and Department of Religious Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara, USA. Prior to his current position at UCSB, he taught in Europe, the United States, and Japan. His main research interests concern the history of Buddhism and Shinto in Japan, issues of intercultural representation and cultural semiotics. His publication include *Vegetal Buddhas* (2001), *Buddhas and Kami in Japan* (2003, edited with Mark Teeuwen), *Buddhist Materiality* (2007), *Buddhism and Iconoclasm in East Asia: A History* (2012, with Eric Reinders), *Buddhist Anarchism* (2013) and *A Buddhist Theory of Semiotics* (2013). He is currently editing a book on sea and religion in Japan and working on the intellectual history of Shinto.



Friday, June 22, 2018

Session III. The Materiality of Words and Images

Dr Alice Collett (Nalanda University)

The Quest for Nirvāṇa amongst Royal Women according to Ikṣvāku Inscriptions

The Ikṣvākus, often known as the Andhra Ikṣvākus, ruled a region of South India during the third and fourth centuries of the Common Era. The major city of the Ikṣvākus, ancient Vijayapuri, is now submerged under the Nagarjunasagar dam. However, archaeological evidence of the Ikṣvākus remains, and this includes some donor inscriptions made by female laity, many of whom were royal women. One interesting feature of these donor inscriptions is what they tell us about female religiosity amongst the Ikṣvākus. The donor inscriptions both contain the very usual aspiration that the donation made will bring merit to others, but also the rarer ambition that a consequence of making the donations will be the attainment of nirvāṇa by the female donor. As well as this, the inscriptions also reveal to us – as do the documented remains of Vijayapuri – that the royal line the women were part of heavily patronised Brahmanism. In this paper, I will attempt to assess this expressed aspiration to attain nirvāṇa amongst these royal women in this somewhat Brahmanical context. I will begin with a survey of ideas about nirvāṇa both as revealed by early Buddhist manuscripts and Indian epigraphy. This evidence shows two clear and distinct ways in which the concept of nirvāṇa is understood. Situating the aspirations of these women within this broader context of concurrent understanding of the concept, I will consider whether the inscriptions tell us that these women had a more thorough understanding of Buddhism and a more avid commitment to practice, and, if so, why that might have been the case in a context in which some of these women would have been duty-bound to fulfil the obligations of Brahmanical sacrificial ritual.

Dessislava Vendova (PhD Candidate, Columbia University)

Stupas, Cave Temples and the Buddha's Body: Re-examination and Re-assessment of the Early Iconographical Program at Early Indian Stupa Sites and Early Rock-cut Cave Temples in India and China

The story of the Buddha's life is without any doubt the founding keystone at the very center of the formation of Buddhism. It's a story which has had a profound and long-lasting impact and influence for Buddhism and its transmission for centuries, especially during its formative and early development.

Buddhist stupas, cave temples, visual representations of the Buddha's life story and Buddhist images with narrative components have an ubiquitous presence at early Buddhist sites and played an important part for the spread of Buddhism and is a phenomenon that started in India, and spread and developed beyond its lands, with a significant and revolutionary impact on the cultures it reached.

My interdisciplinary and transregional research brings together evidence from the fields of art, archaeology, and narrative texts and breaks new ground in examining hitherto unexplored connections between the stories of the Buddha's lives, his body's textual and visual depictions, and how that connects to and dictates the iconographical program for the construction of early Indian Buddhist sites such as the stupas of Barhut and Sanchi and has had a lasting influence on the later construction of stupas and rock-cut cave temples from India, through Central Asia to China, such as the early Buddhist caves of Kizil, Mogao and the Yungang grottoes. I propose a new interpretative framework to reevaluate these connections suggesting a hypothesis for a common and interconnected iconographical program, a possibly purposeful "intentio operis", that lasted from at least around 3 c BCE to around 6 c CE, and suggest how it all connects to the story of the Buddha and his body. I posit that something far more systematic and specific beyond the aesthetic, artistic and stylistic concerns seems to have informed the production of specific types of Buddhist structures and imagery in India, Central Asia and China, and thus with this new suggested reframing, what we know of the Buddhist relic and image cults may have to be reinterpreted accordingly.

Dr Halle O'Neal (University of Edinburgh)

Performing Buddhist Materiality: Word and Image in the Jewelled Pagoda Mandalas

My project on the Japanese jewelled pagoda mandalas reveals the entangled realms of sacred body, beauty, and salvation engendered through intricate interactions of word and image. This study engages these central but neglected relationships in order to uncover the rich intersections of relics, reliquaries, and notions of body in Buddhist painting. The twelfth- and thirteenth-century mandalas use precisely choreographed characters from sacred scriptures rather than architectural line to compose the central icon of a pagoda. Surrounding this textual image, narrative vignettes pictorialise the content of the scriptures. Important questions about the role of written word in artistic production and what it can disclose about the expansive and visual function of text in medieval Japan are at the heart of the project. This examination of the mandalas, therefore, recovers crucial underlying dynamics of Japanese Buddhist art, including invisibility, performative viewing, and the spectacular visualisations of embodiment. This talk begins with the immediate quandary that the mandalas present: what exactly are these objects? A simple question, but answering it reveals how the mandalas continually overturn conventional forms and blur modern categories: are they transcription projects, mandalas, or paintings, and is the central icon a relic or reliquary, an image or a text? Where the surface refuses distillation into discrete parts, the talk introduces a new method that embraces the visual and conceptual indivisibility in order to disclose the meanings produced by these confluences. Therefore, the project renders the paintings as a web, pulling upon threads that reveal their connectivity and bringing piety and artistic innovation into focus. The second part of the talk delves into the materiality of the objects and the dynamic viewing encouraged by such rich surfaces. It explicitly describes how the textual characters construct the pagoda while observing the order of the scripture, marking the first time the path of the transcription has been mapped in scholarship. A Digital Humanities project complements this discussion by providing a short animation that tracks the rigorous construction of the central pagoda. The cartographical exercise uncovers alternative functions for written word that has jettisoned its exegetical purpose as well as the performative engagement that the paintings require of the viewer. The paper explores how the movements dictated by the surface encourage viewers to experientially constitute the resolution and dissolution of the various instantiations of Buddha body into one. That is, the act of viewing the mandalas is a crucial part of the paintings' somatic visualisation, precisely because viewers must negotiate the opening and closing of space between themselves and the surface, blurring distinctions of text and image but also of relic and reliquary. The project, therefore, expands our thinking about the demands of viewing, recasting the audience as active producers of meaning and offering a novel perspective on disciplinary discussions of word and image that often presuppose an ontological divide between them. In this way, the mandalas present a complex reckoning, a visual treatise on the conceptual potentialities of text and body that illustrates the fluidity with which they interacted in medieval Japan.

Dr Paul Harrison (Stanford University)

Text as Object: Reflections on a Korean Print of Kumārajīva's Chinese Translation of the Vajracchedikā Arranged in the Form of a Pagoda

Arrangements of the texts of sūtras in the form of stūpas or pagodas are a notable feature of East Asian Buddhism, and have a history which stretches back at least a thousand years. With reference to recent work by Dr Halle O'Neal, this paper considers one specific example of these two-dimensional representations of the Dharma in architectural form, a mid-20th-century print of the Jingang jing from the well-known Korean monastery of Haeinsa. The paper will focus especially on the way in which the text is integrated with the physical structure of the pagoda so as to produce an image of a material object which fuses the concrete with the abstract and conveys multiple messages in a rather ingenious way. The possible antecedents of this particular representative of the genre will be considered, along with the uses to which it has been put.

Yang Lei (PhD candidate, EPHE)

Creation and Reconstruction of a Soundscape: The Great Buddhist Bell of the Yongle Era in the Local Literature of Peking, 1600-1900

Cast in the early fifteenth century in Peking, the great Buddhist bell of the Yongle era (1403-1424) is one of the largest extant bells in the world. More than a dozen sutras and more than 140 dhāraṇī ritual formulas, in Chinese and in Sanskrit, are inscribed on this gigantic object, for a total of more than 230,000 characters.

The great Buddhist bell of the Yongle era was first kept in the workshop for printing Chinese Buddhist texts (Hanjing chang). By the Wanli era (1573-1619) of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), as the workshop had fallen to ruin, the great bell was transported to the Wanshou Temple (Wanshou si) west of the city. During the late Ming and early Qing (1644-1912) period, the Yongle bell was no longer used and remained silent in the same temple. Until the Qianlong era (1736-1795), it was moved from the Wanshou Temple to the Juesheng Temple (Juesheng si) north of the capital. From the moment the great bell was installed in the Wanshou Temple, it began to attract the attention of the Peking literati. In their official or private writings, the scholar-officials not only described the great bell as an important ritual object, but also spoken of its remarkable sounds as a special soundscape. Due to the change of dynasty and the move of the great bell, this soundscape changed over the years. The present paper aims at showing how this soundscape was described in the local literature of Peking during the Ming-Qing period. By using local gazetteers, anecdotes, travel notes and poems as primary sources, and the methods of material and cultural history, this paper will analyze the major factors that influenced the creation and the reconstruction of such a soundscape. The paper consists of three parts, each focusing on a chronological stratum in the history of the great Yongle bell (from 1600-1644, from 1644-1743 and from 1743-1900). It shows that at critical moments, the local literati redefined the symbolism and the range of the bell's sounds. In order to interpret such soundscape, they not only referred to the descriptions of bell sounds in the Buddhist canon, but also took into account the religious functions of the Wanshou Temple and the Juesheng Temple in the Ming-Qing Peking. In this process, Emperor Wanli and Emperor Qianlong were two major characters; other local scholar-officials represented this soundscape in their various writings. The sounds of the great Buddhist bell of the Yongle era became therefore an indispensable part of the religious landscape of the Ming-Qing capital.

Dr Patricia Eichenbaum Karetzky (Bard College, New York)

The Discovery of Buddhist Sculptures from Yecheng City in Linzhang County Hebei

Archaeologists in 2012 discovered an extraordinarily large cache of Buddhist sculptures on the northern banks of the Zhanghe River in Yecheng City, 13 kilometres southwest of Linzhang County, in Hebei Province. The Yecheng Archaeological Team and the Hebei Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics jointly excavated the site. The square pit contained 2,895 pieces of white marble statues and thousands of fragments; a few were carved from blue stone. Both the inscriptions found on over a hundred of the statues, along with stylistic characteristics, led to the attribution of the sculptures to the Eastern Wei Dynasty (534-550) and the Northern Qi Dynasty (550-577). Many of these Buddha statues were crafted in the era between 534-577; and a small number of the bluestone pieces were made in the period between 386-557; a few were made in the early Tang Dynasty (618-907). The Cultural Relics Bureau of Linzhang County built a museum to house the finds, one of the largest discoveries of Buddhist sculptures for decades. Only a hundred or so of the better-preserved images are on display there. All the Buddha statues were buried in a distinct location, showing that damage to the icons was organised, systematic and on a large scale, making it probable that they were intentionally desecrated and buried. Among the icons are depictions of Shakyamuni, Amitabha, Maitreya, and Avalokiteśvara that vary in size from 20 cm tall to life size. Many have elaborately carved back screens. Most have traces of their original colour and gold leaf. This cache of sculptures and place them in an iconographical, stylistic and historic context.

This discovery supports Yecheng's status as a centre of Buddhism and culture in the northern part of China during the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi Dynasty eras. This paper will present some of the best preserved and most representative of the cache of sculptures and place them in an iconographical, stylistic and historic context.

Session V. Matters of Vinaya

Susan Roach (PhD candidate, SOAS)

Preoccupied with Possessions: Remedies for Hoarding in the Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya

The extant monastic law codes of the various early Buddhist traditions all probably date to the first half of the first millennium CE. By this time, the saṅgha has at its disposal sophisticated buildings, furnishings and utensils. The Forfeiture sections of the various Vinayas catalogue the preoccupations of the early saṅgha members with their material goods. In both quantity and quality, they often exceed what the Buddha deems suitable for his disciples, and the manner in which they are obtained is frequently reprehensible. For each instance of hoarding and greed, the Buddha makes a ruling to curb the excesses. The issues and the ensuing rules are largely the same in each of the six extant Vinayas. However, we observe some variation in the motivation and results of the monks' and nuns' behaviour in the different traditions. In this paper I explore the way in which one particular code, the Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya, structures its accounts of unskilful attitudes towards material possessions. This code does not simply seek to prohibit and deter; it also promotes its own positive programme of spirituality. It is commonplace in all the traditions for unseemly conduct on the part of the saṅgha to attract overt criticism from 'brahmins and householders'. The compilers of the MSV also demonstrate how a preoccupation with possessions can cause the monastics to neglect their spiritual activities. The MSV Buddha utilises a network of formulaic laudatory lists to suggest remedies for this neglect and other unwanted consequences. The remedial network has at its centre the concept of saṃlekha (Pāli sallekha). A comparison of the MSV with the Pāli Vinaya and other sources indicates that the early canonical texts use this term with several different shades of meaning. In the MSV it appears to designate 'a simplified lifestyle'. The set of ascetic practices known as the dhūṇṭaguṇas features as the second most common component of the lists in the network. The MSV expresses both the problems of rampant materialism and its proposed solutions in repeated formulaic terms. These formulas are not exclusive to the MSV. For example, the 'neglect of spiritual duties' topos and the laudatory list including the dhūṇṭaguṇas also occur in the Pāli Vinaya. However, the MSV makes far greater use of them. In addition, it brings them together into a programme which has no counterpart in the Pāli code. How much weight should we give to the contents of repeated formulaic material? I suggest that the deliberate scheme set out in the MSV's Forfeiture section indicates an intention actively to promote such values as saṃlekha and the dhūṇṭaguṇas. Examination of the MSV's use of narratives (especially in the lengthy 4th Forfeiture offence) provides evidence that the compilers regard moderate asceticism as a viable and praiseworthy modus vivendi.

Dr Ann Heirman (Ghent University)

Protecting Oneself against Animals. Vinaya from India to China

Against the background of the general principle of non-killing, the first part of this paper discusses the relation between monastics and animals as stipulated in the vinayas. While several general questions come to the fore, such as how to treat animals or how to avoid any killing, this paper particularly investigates how one can protect oneself against annoying or dangerous animals, without causing them harm. What to do, for instance, when a snake, a rat, or a mosquito enter a room and potentially annoy the monastics living there? In this situation, the vinayas allow several devices, such as snake tubes, rat cages, mosquito nets, lamp protectors, and so on. These objects give us a small but vivid insight in the material culture known to the compilers and users of vinaya texts.

On the one hand, they reveal what vinaya compilers saw as normatively correct, and on the other hand, they inform us on all kinds of practical instruments used or at least allowed in monastic environments. When monks started to travel from India to other parts of the Asian continent, they took with them much information, including vinaya texts, in both oral and written form. While disciplinary texts were not given top priority by translators in the first few centuries, this quite suddenly changed around the beginning of the fifth century, when there was an overwhelming interest in vinaya translations. Subsequent commentaries, as well as many new manuals written by Chinese monks who strove to improve the structure and discipline of their monasteries, constitute another rich source of information on how daily life was envisaged in Buddhist communities, this time in the new environment of China. Also on how to treat animals many guidelines were stipulated, and questions were again raised on how to protect oneself without causing any harm, also taking into consideration the strong commitment to non-harming expressed in so-called bodhisattva rules. This is the focus of the second part of this paper: how did Medieval Chinese masters interpret the guidelines on the protection against dangerous or annoying animals in the new context of China, and what devices were allowed? Through the present research, we learn how vinaya masters, both in India and in China, strove to avoid harming animals, while protecting the monastic community within the normative framework they saw as suitable to Buddhists. We equally get a detailed picture of objects and perception about objects used as animal control instruments in early India and China.

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