

is at clear and significant variance with at least one earlier record of the same source. One would like to think that researchers into the history of such an influential text might one day pay some attention to this detail.

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SAM VAN SCHAİK and IMRE GALAMBOS:

Manuscripts and Travellers: The Sino-Tibetan Documents of a Tenth-Century Buddhist Pilgrim.

(Studies in Manuscript Cultures, Volume 2.) viii, 247 pp. Berlin:

De Gruyter, 2012. ISBN 978 3 11 022564 8.

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In the past couple of decades the study of the portion of the Dunhuang manuscripts held in UK, where they arrived over a century ago during the high noon of British Imperial adventure, has advanced beyond the domain of the lone scholar working in isolation to a respectable degree of collective research activity. But as far as I can recall it is only now, with the volume under review, that a study of a single manuscript as a material object, calling on a wide range of codicological and palaeographic skills – besides an obvious requisite familiarity with the historical and religious background – has been published on the basis of the London holdings. One can only hope that many more such studies will follow, given that the authors demonstrate in exemplary fashion both how arduous and how rewarding such tightly focused research can be.

The volume opens with a nine-page introduction, which precedes a much fuller Part 1 giving the necessary background, before the object itself, catalogued as IOL Tib J 754, appears for the first time on p. 77, and in diagrammatic form on the following page. The diagram shows that in fact it consists of three separate elements, two of them bearing both Chinese and Tibetan writing, brought together by one individual who may well have been the author of two of these parts – including the part solely in Chinese. The background section, Part 1, ranges therefore over several essential preparatory areas: a general look at the Dunhuang manuscripts as such; an account of pilgrimage to the West in the tenth century; and a survey of the Tibetan element in the area, especially following the collapse of Tibetan imperial power there in the mid-ninth century. Once the structure of this complex manuscript has been described, four studies are devoted to the separate elements it contains: a description in Chinese of a local monastery; a Chinese popular scripture on filial piety; some Tibetan Tantric texts; and letters of passage associated with a journey westwards. The subsequent four-page “Conclusion” is followed, however, not simply by a couple of maps, a bibliography and an index, but also by thirty-one pages of plates reproducing for the reader every sheet of the compound document discussed with such comprehensiveness in the earlier pages of this monograph.

On every topic touched upon the authors write with considerable expert knowledge, so that their book is, for example, an invaluable repository of current interpretations of the formation of the Dunhuang corpus. One does not have to agree with every word of this: the view cited on p. 25 that the multiple copies of the *Diamond Sutra* found in the manuscript hoard were primarily *ex voto* objects, “receipts” for merit-giving transactions, must surely need to be nuanced by the recent revelation that the famous Dunhuang printed copy of this text, despite its

ex voto origins, was – far from being simply filed and ignored – carefully repaired at some point in its century-plus life before entering the archive. Yet the number of plainly inaccurate statements appears very low indeed: the only one that this reviewer found unequivocally bothersome was the apparent assertion that the *Jinglü yixiang* (p. 115, n. 7) is a translated text. It is in fact a very useful early encyclopaedia of quotations from a wide range of Buddhist scriptures, some of which have disappeared or been altered since its compilation. One might perhaps also have appreciated the information that the *Erjiao lun* (p. 94), while not available in English, has a well-annotated French translation by Catherine Despeux included in her *Bouddhisme et lettrés dans la Chine médiévale* (Louvain: Peeters, 2002), 145–227. Both these examples, however, concern no more than other texts touched upon in passing.

Yet the most intriguing feature of this work is the way in which it sometimes involves other manuscripts of equal complexity that in effect demand similar treatment before the information they yield can be usefully adduced as evidence in reconstructing the world of IOL Tib J 754. I have in mind the fascinating S. 529, rather briefly described on pp. 57–8, which I have not seen in its original form, but only as printed – albeit by the best of editors – in a recent selection of transcribed Stein documents published in China. One aspect of its contents I have commented on in a recent tentative publication *From Religious Ideology to Political Expediency in Early Printing: An Aspect of Buddhist-Daoist Rivalry* (London: Minnow Press, 2012), pp. 82–3. But it would also seem a primary document for the study of travel and pilgrimage in the tenth century, since the author (or one of the authors) describes *inter alia* a bootless trip to Canton to try to get to India, which may suggest that – like the object under study in this monograph – S. 529 is also a relic of a later attempt in the author's life to reach this goal by land. Such a loose end is more than welcome: good scholarship is surely not the cut-and-dried product we are supposed to be serving up for assessment, but rather ideally provokes as many questions as it answers. Excellent scholarship, for that matter, also demonstrates how to go about solving further problems through close attention to detail. In these two respects the work under review succeeds triumphantly. One looks forward to more of the same, whether from the authors concerned, or from others inspired to emulate their work.

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LO JUNG-PANG (ed. BRUCE A. ELLEMAN):

China as a Sea Power, 1127–1368. A Preliminary Survey of the Maritime Expansion and Naval Exploits of the Chinese People during the Southern Song and Yuan Periods.

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Historians interested in China's maritime past are familiar with Lo Jung-pang's articles on the naval activities of the Song to Ming periods. These studies were published in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. It was also during this period that Lo supplied