For copyright reasons, the frontispiece and all other illustrations in this volume have been blacked out. We are in the process of applying for permission to reproduce these illustrations electronically. Once permission is gained, the illustrations will be made available. We apologize for the inconvenience.

On “Art in the Dark” and Meditation in Central Asian Buddhist Caves

Angela F. Howard

In his article “Art in the Dark: The Ritual Context of Buddhist Caves in Western China,” Robert Sharf downplays, if not outright denies, the role of meditation among the monastic communities of the Kucha Kingdom in Central Asia, present day Xinjiang 新疆, and in the cave temples of Dunhuang 敦煌, China. Sharf builds his argument more on China’s evidence than on Kucha’s, but he does refer to the latter as well. Eric M. Greene, in his article “Death in a Cave: Meditation, Deathbed Ritual, and Skeletal Imagery at Tape Shotor,” also focuses on aspects of Central Asian meditation and *mutatis mutandis* suffers from some of the same shortcomings as Sharf’s paper.[1] In this article, I present first my comments about Sharf’s work and close with comments on Greene’s. These two scholars of religion enter the art historical field motivated by the intention of reaching more thorough conclusions in studying Buddhism and related topics. They are responding to an ongoing trend, which advocates a multidisciplinary approach based on archaeology, doctrinal sources, and epigraphy, as well as architecture and art history. The central argument of Sharf’s article is to object to the notion of meditation as a pervasive force in the Kucha rock monasteries—meaning Kizil, with which he has some familiarity—and in the rock monasteries of northwestern China, meaning Dunhuang, with which he is more conversant. He qualifies his opinion by stating that meditation was not practiced in decorated central pillar caves as Stanley Abe, among other scholars, wrote as

[1] Sharf 2013; Greene 2013.

The Eastern Buddhist 46/2: 19–39
©2017 The Eastern Buddhist Society

far back as 1990 referring to Dunhuang Cave 254.[2] Sharf is, however, silent about any other location used for such practice. His conviction is based on the fact that the darkness of central pillar caves precluded using their décor as a meditation aid. No other consideration, but the absence of light, it seems, is used to buttress this assertion. Moreover, Sharf prefers to think that central pillar caves, whether in Kucha or Dunhuang, were memorial or funerary caves. In this article, I discuss primarily the Central Asian Kucha evidence and I leave to other scholars the task to accept or reject Sharf's conclusions on the function of central pillar caves in China proper.

The aforementioned multidisciplinary approach is most commendable and, as an art historian, I have also used it in co-authoring *Archaeological and Visual Sources of Meditation in the Ancient Kingdom of Kuča*, a recent publication with the archaeologist Giuseppe Vignato.[3] My criticism of Sharf's position is based not on his multidisciplinary approach, but rather on Vignato's and my research, and the conclusions we jointly reached after lengthy, in-field investigations of the several sites which formed the Kucha Kingdom since the early centuries of the Common Era to 650. The sites in question are Kizil, Kizil Kargha, Simsim, Mazabaha, Tograk-eken, Wenbashi, Taitai'er, and Kumtura. Our study offers a reconstruction of Kucha rock monasteries, the function of their differently built caves, and specifically the meaning of central pillar caves' décor. We also concluded that each site was not simply the sum of caves carved in the cliff, but that caves of different layout formed groups. These groups, in turn, were part of districts. Since Kucha's evidence is not monolithic, to rely solely on Kizil's, as Sharf does, leads to oversimplifications and errors. Being aware of the diversities present in the sites, we concluded that each one might have been developed as a response to different needs of the monastic communities which inhabited and used the caves. When the rock temples of Kucha are studied against this complex background, the dissimilarity with the rock temples of China is self-evident.

Since meditation is the center piece of this article, I offer below specific information about the varied layouts and locations of meditation caves. I underscore that over one hundred caves used for practicing meditation are still recognizable. We may also infer that more were available since those hewn in the cliff were the most exposed to erosion. The existence of so many meditation caves led us to conclude that meditation was indeed a determining factor in the life of Kucha's monastic communities, a conclusion further supported by the meditation manuals found in situ, to which I shall return.

[2] Abe 1990.

[3] Howard and Vignato 2014.

Sharf's investigation rests on a misleading premise: under the heading "western China," he uses evidence from the site of Kizil alone and uses it as representative of the entire Central Asian Kingdom of Kucha, and then he lumps it together with data from Dunhuang, Gansu 甘肃 Province, in addition to Yungang 雲崗 and Longmen 龍門, located in the central plains. This choice implies that all these geographic locations form a compatible body, share commonalities regardless of the diverse layouts of the sites, diverse interpretations of Buddhist doctrine, diverse décor styles, diverse monastic populations and, not least, a diverse chronology. What is valid for Kucha's sites is not necessarily applicable to Dunhuang and even less applicable to the caves of Yungang and Longmen. Grouping all these different geographic areas—the Tarim basin region, northwestern China, the central plains—results in morphing the profound distinctions in the construction and function of the Buddhist caves in these areas. Moreover, using the terminology "western China" implies alignment with the present political situation whereby mainland China, on account of its territorial expansion into Central Asia, claims also possession of distinct and diverse cultures of the past.

To start with, Sharf draws attention to the adoption, formerly, of several approaches to the study of Buddhist caves, such as their aesthetic and style, the role of patronage, and the relationship between textual sources and images. Lately, however, the "ritual function" of the cave has gained favor, meaning that scholars have erroneously derived the purpose of the caves from their "form," by which term Sharf means their layout and decor. His goal is to disprove that "the sites were intended to serve monastic communities."[4] He ignores that other contributing factors—textual and archeological evidence—have been put forth by scholars, myself included, in support of a specific function.

Following his statement that art historians erroneously derive function from the layout and décor of caves, Sharf lists several types of caves. Building on his premise that the term "western China" is inclusive of the Central Asian northern Silk Route and of China's northwestern region, he ties together the evidence of Kizil and Dunhuang. Referring to cave types, he uses the nomenclature which stems from Chinese cave sites, notwithstanding the caves' structural differences and the absence, in China proper, of the types of caves which are, instead, present in Kucha. I do not question his knowledge of the Chinese sites, but since his familiarity with Kucha seems limited to Kizil, as none of the other sites is mentioned, his definition of Kucha's caves is not always precise. In Kucha, moreover, we do not find all the cave

[4] Sharf 2013, p. 40.

types he lists. When they are present, their function and layout are not exactly the same as their Chinese counterparts, as is the case of Monumental Image Caves and Central Pillar Caves discussed below. I present Sharf's classification of different cave types, with additional information on Kucha's caves:

1. Colossal, or Monumental, Image Cave (*daxiang ku* 大像窟) for which no precise definition nor a Kucha example are supplied, but reference is made to Yungang, Longmen, and Bamiyan. In Kucha, this cave type is characterized by a colossal standing Buddha which could be circumambulated. Twenty-eight such caves are still extant in different sites, but no sculpture has survived. Kizil Cave 47 is one of the earliest, datable perhaps to the start of the fifth century. The only element the four sites have in common is the colossal size of the sculpture. Otherwise, Kucha monumental image caves differ from the others in terms of structure, doctrinal meaning, and possibly chronology. The monumental Yungang Imperial Five caves are dated to 460–470, while the imperial Longmen Fengxian 奉先 Temple is dated to 675. The colossal Buddhas of Bamiyan are ascribed to ca. 600, a date still debated.[5]
2. Buddha Image Cave (*foxiang ku* 佛像窟) and Holy Image Cave (*zunxiang ku* 尊像窟), inclusive of the sub-types Buddha-altar Cave (*fotan ku* 佛壇窟), Buddha Hall (*fotang* 佛堂; *fodian* 佛殿), and Lecture Hall (*jiangtang* 講堂), all of them broadly characterized by the presence of a main Buddha image. With the exception of the lecture hall type, the other types are not a Kucha feature. A Kucha lecture hall, often carved next to a central pillar cave, discussed next, differs from Sharf's description in that as a rule it has no Buddha image, but is characterized by a banquette running all along the perimeter of the cave indicating the cave's possible function as a place in which monks gathered.
3. Central Pillar Cave (*zhongxin zhu ku* 中心柱窟) is "distinguished by a large unexcavated central core or pillar, often square in shape, that is understood to constitute or represent a stupa or pagoda."[6] Sharf considers the term "central pillar" a misnomer since the central structure is not a real pillar. Art historians are well aware of the non-existence of a real pillar, but the term has been generally accepted in the absence of a

[5] The chronology of Kucha is still a debated issue. Based on Carbon 14 dating, Chinese and Western scholars have come to different conclusions on the Kizil caves. See Yaldiz 2010; Kuwayama 1987.

[6] Sharf 2013, p. 40.

more appropriate designation. Nobody, however, disputes that the rite of circumambulation took place around the so-called pillar. Central pillar caves are ubiquitous in Kucha, but are modestly represented in Dunhuang where they disappeared by the end of the sixth century. Sharf gives two examples of Kizil central pillar caves: Cave 100 showing the façade of the pillar and a detail of Cave 38 to illustrate the corridor. The pillar façade, or main wall, of Cave 110 belongs to a later period, because it evolved into a more elaborate architecture with additional niches to the pillar and more ornate arched entrances to the corridor. Thus, the choice of Cave 110 and Cave 38 is problematic in that the two caves are from distinctly different periods. It is better to use Cave 38 to illustrate a type of central pillar cave. Sharf's description of Kucha central pillar caves is inaccurate: "They consist of a rectangular hall, often with a barrel-vault ceiling, that has a painted or sculpted image and altar setting at the back."[7] What he calls an altar setting at the back corresponds, instead, to the facade of the pillar opposite to the cave entrance. In archaeology it is called "main wall"; the niche scooped in this location carried a sculpture of a seated Buddha shown in deep meditation. This Buddha sculpture represents the visit of Indra to Buddha as described in the *Dīgha Nikāya*, or *Long Discourses*, to which I shall return shortly. The aureole of the Buddha sculpture was painted on the rear of the niche. Thus, no painted image of Buddha existed in the façade of the central pillar. Depending on chronology and site, the corridor running all around the so-called pillar ranged from modest to ample dimensions and the size of the rear section similarly spanned these extremes. Sharf, however, is not precise and gives the impression that this rear section of the central pillar caves is always "cramped," meaning of modest proportions. But the example from Kizil Cave Xin 1 he refers to has a back corridor that is indeed on a grand scale.

4. Meditation Caves (*chan ku* 禪窟, *luohan ku* 羅漢窟) are erroneously defined as "small squarish caves that are believed to have been used as residences or meditation cells for the monks . . . . Just about any small unpainted squarish cave fulfills the function of meditation."[8] Applied to Kucha, the statements are erroneous in regard to the description of a monk's residence cave, the description of a meditation cell, and in stating that a monk's residence doubled as a meditation cell. Of course,

[7] Sharf 2013, p. 43.
[8] Ibid.

> who can dispute that a monk, if he so wished, could meditate in his living space? In Kucha, however, we have instead two distinct categories of caves: caves for residence and caves for meditation. A monk's residence is a cave reached through a side corridor, whose interior was equipped with a fire place, a banquette to rest on and a window.

While investigating Kucha sites, Vignato and I came across several different types of meditation cells in the sites. With the exception of Simsim, meditation cells are available in every other location. Their ubiquitous presence justifies our belief that meditation played an important role within Kucha's monasteries. How can one otherwise explain their prominence? The plan and location of Kucha meditation cells are also diverse. Their plan is never square nor "squarish" as Sharf writes; they are shaped with a base just large enough to accommodate a seated person, with the side walls curving to meet an arched soffit. Most of them are single and small sized, 0.8 to 1 m deep, 1 to 1.2 m wide, and 1.2 to 1.5 m high; they barely contained a seated person as in the painting from Kizil Cave 171 (fig. 1), one among several available examples. There are, to be sure, also exceptions to this size represented by individual caves of larger dimensions, which could have been used for a prolonged stay. Individual cells, of both small and large dimensions, were often found in the vicinity of a group of caves consisting of a monk's residence, a central pillar, and a square cave. But there are also rows of cells hewn in the cliff, isolated from groups of residence and ritual caves, and used simultaneously by several monks, the most striking example found in Tograk-eken (fig. 2). We called this type "collective meditation caves." Besides the presence of cells scooped in the cliff looking outward to the surroundings, others were hidden in the interior of a mountain and lined up in tunneled corridors, as in Subashi Western Temple (fig. 3) or in a very atypical setting such as in Mazabaha, where a large courtyard gave access to a long corridor used for meditation and to an adjacent monk's residence (fig. 4). Last and most important, with the exception of Subashi where a few meditation caves have a painting of a monk meditating near a tree, the overwhelming majority of meditation caves are not decorated. The sheer variety of so many types of meditation caves can be used as evidence of how diffused meditation was in Kucha. Similar circumstances do not exist in Dunhuang, which does not mean that monks did not meditate in Dunhuang.

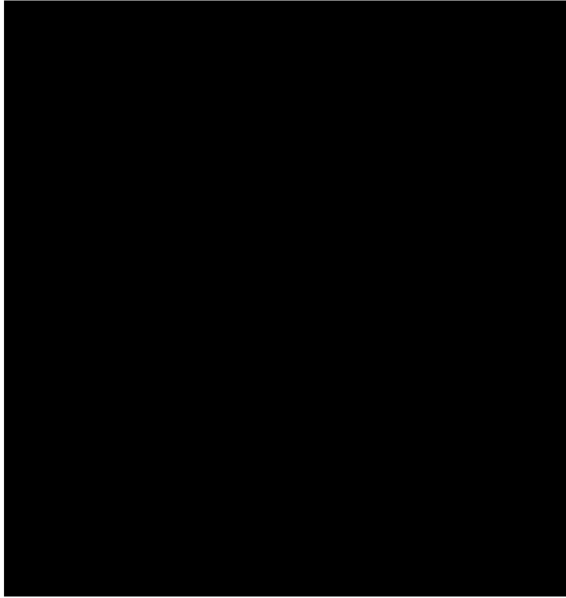

Figure 1. Kizil, Cave 171. Ceiling detail showing an ascetic meditating in a cell whose shape and size correspond to those of Kucha's meditation cells.

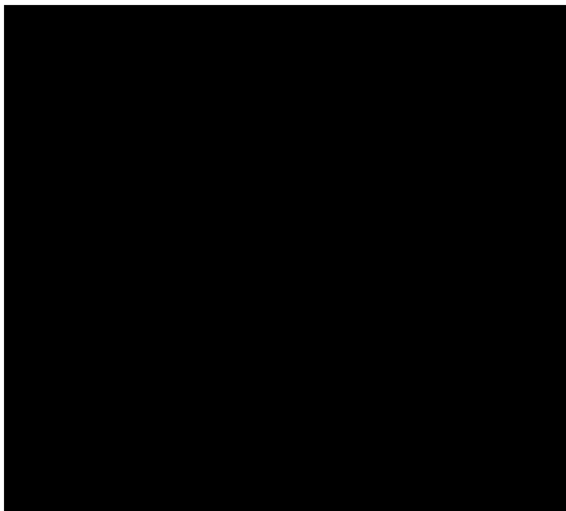

Figure 2. Tograk-eken. Remains of four rows of meditation cells carved in the cliff.

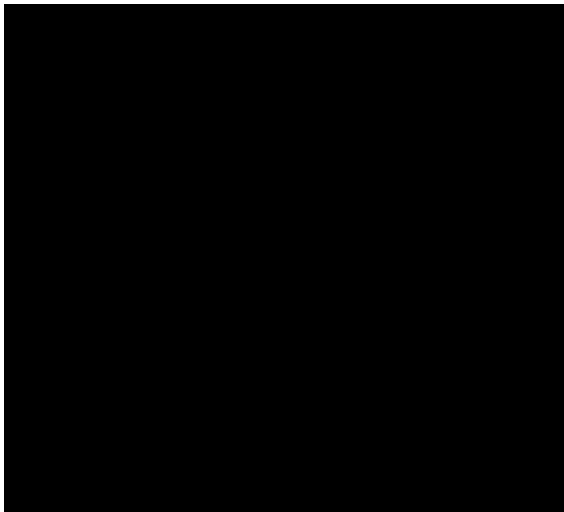

Figure 3. Subashi Western Temple, Cave 1. *Above*, photograph of entrance to the cells; *below*, plan of meditation cells carved in rectified cliff façade and interior cells set in an inverted "U" plan.

Figure 4. Mazabaha, Caves 2 and 3. *Above*, photograph of entrance to the cells; *below*, plan showing ante-chamber and interior corridor-like caves.

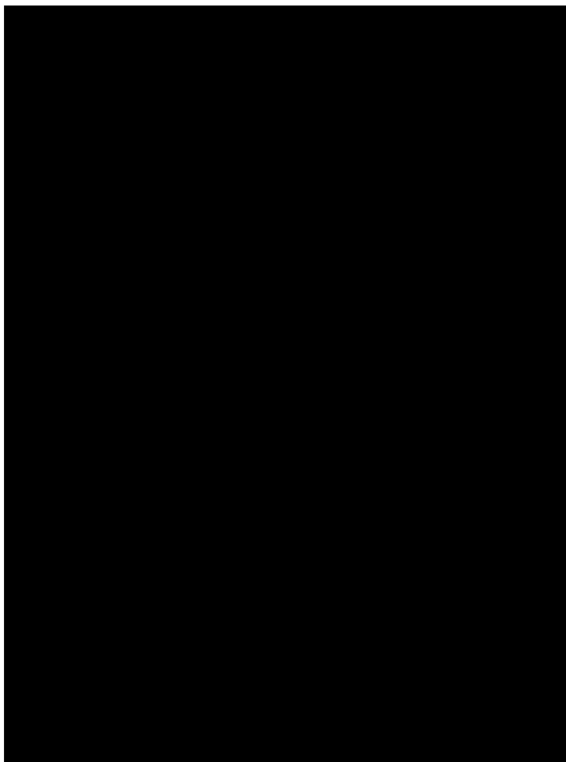

Figure 5. Kizil, Cave 110. Ceiling detail of monk meditating on a skull.

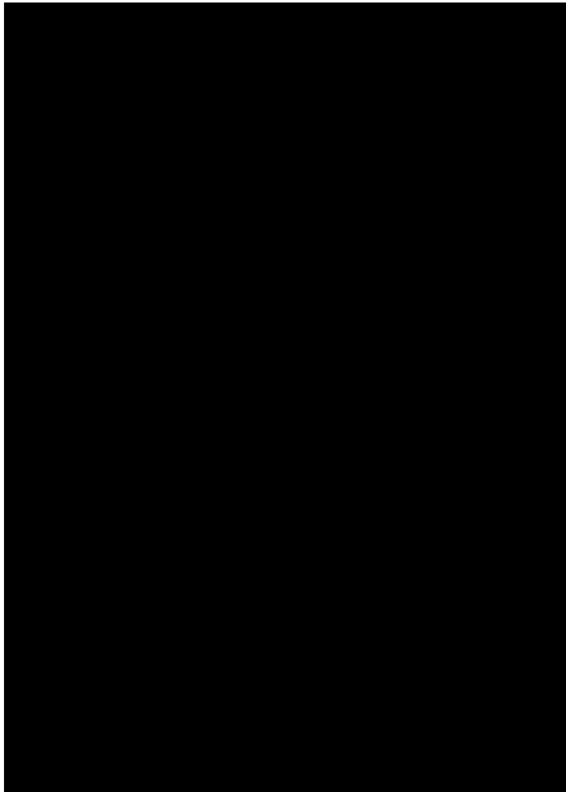

Figure 6. Kizil, Cave 205. King Tottika with his wife Svayamprabhā, accompanied by two monks. From Grünwedel 1920 (plate XLVIII).

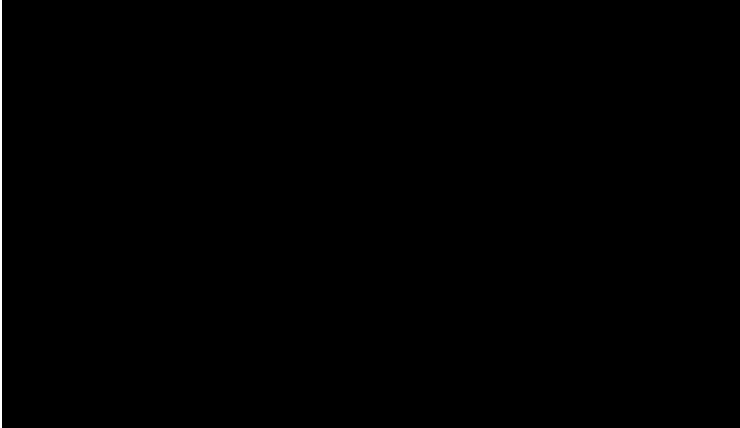

Figure 7. Kizil, Cave 171. Buddha in nirvana. From von Le Coq and Waldschmidt 1922–33, vol. 6.

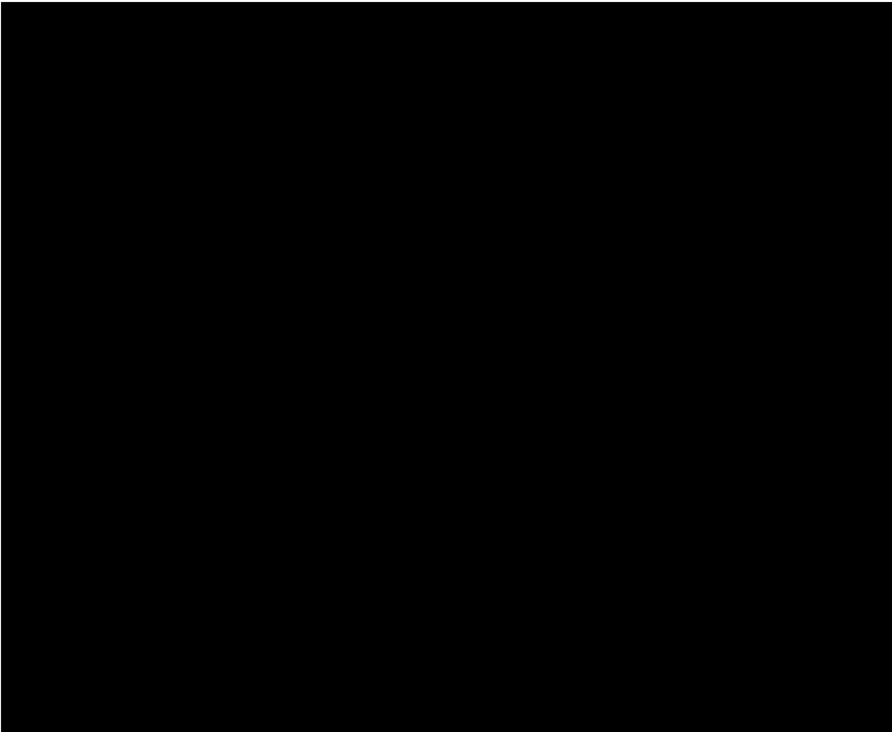

Figure 8. Kizil, Cave 38. Detail of Buddha in nirvana with Subhadra painted in the back of the corridor.

Since the monks of Kucha practiced meditation in the cells I have described, Sharf's statement that some scholars, myself included, believe that monks used the décor of central pillar caves as meditation aids is misleading. In his words, "The most curious of these presuppositions is the notion that the countless painted or sculpted icons and scripture tableaux found in the caves were intended to support visualization practices."[9] In my 2007 article quoted by Sharf, I unequivocally denied that monks concentrated their gazes on the cave's paintings or sculpture, which adorned especially central pillar caves. I stated that the paintings in Kucha central pillar caves, are but records of visions and of extraordinary powers derivative from engaging in meditation and concluded that, "this possibility runs counter to the generally held opinion that cave paintings were acting as meditation aids."[10] I similarly denied that the representation of skeletons devoured by beasts and birds of prey, or the depiction of a monk or an ascetic meditating on a skull, acted as meditation aids (fig. 5). I considered them allusions to or records of meditative states.

Sharf ascribes to the Chinese scholar Liu Huida the notion—formulated in the 1960s—that during the Northern Wei 魏 Dynasty (386–534) Chinese monks meditated in caves. Liu's study was not published until the 1970s, but it was Su Bai who popularized this hypothesis in the 1990s using Dunhuang Cave 285 as a showcase. Sharf reminds the reader that Abe's publication on Dunhuang central pillar Cave 254 as a locus of meditation, previously mentioned, was inspired by the Chinese scholarship. Liu Huida's writings have not influenced, however, Vignato's and my conclusions on the role and extent of meditation in Kucha. Our conclusions, instead, stem from a direct investigation of Kucha's sites which led to the reconstruction of the cave types. The constant presence of meditation cells among them led us to conclude that practicing meditation had a special resonance within Kucha rock monasteries. In turn, such a conclusion became the starting point for our study of central pillar caves' décor introduced next.

I summarize our interpretation of how the entire decorative program of central pillar caves displays the effects of meditation: upon entering the cave, in the façade of the central pillar, the first image one saw (presently no sculpture is extant) was that of Śākyamuni shown seated in meditation in a grotto on Mount Vediya where he was visited by Indra. The story of this visit ("Indraśailaguha") is narrated in the Pali *Dīgha Nikāya*, or *Long Discourses*.[11]

[9] Sharf 2013, p. 44.

[10] Howard 2007, p. 80.

[11] Walshe 1995.

In Kucha central pillar caves, the salient feature of this visit is Buddha seated in deep meditation, or fire *samādhi*, in a grotto, not the forty-two theoretical questions put forth by Indra. Thus, the reference to what meditation can accomplish becomes the starting point of a sequence of representations each one rooted in meditation. The strip in the center of the vaulted ceiling illustrates the first of two miracles Buddha performed in Śrāvastī to confound the non-believers who had claimed superiority over his supernatural power. Thus, having sunk into deep meditation, or *samādhi*, Śākyamuni hovered in the air emitting fire and jets of water. This miracle is told in the *Divyāvadāna* (Divine Exploits).[12] The ceiling strip is framed on each side of the barrel-vaulted surface by *Jātaka* stories, a reminder that a concentrated mind is enabled to witness previous births. The side wall scenes of Buddha preaching remind the viewer that the conversions, which followed the preaching, occurred because of the miracles derivative from supernatural power rooted in meditation. Finally, the process of meditation might have been a factor in the *parinirvana*, represented in the back of the pillar, as Buddha successively entered higher and higher stages of meditative calm.[13]

The importance of meditation among the monastic communities of Kucha finds additional support in the discovery of meditation texts, foremost the *Yogalehrbuch* (Yoga Manual), a fragmented manuscript written on the bark of birch trees, which the third German expedition of 1905–1907 brought back to Berlin from Kizil. In 1964, Dieter Schlingloff published his reconstruction and translation of the fragments, sparking great interest in the role meditation played in Central Asia.[14] The manual is very important on several counts: It was a local Kucha text; it is considered a work of the Sarvāstivādin school, the most influential in Kucha; it reveals the existence in Kucha of a local practice of meditation; and finally, the pervasive visual references to monks and ascetics meditating, which are found especially on the ceilings of Kucha caves, quite likely reflect practicing meditation in the monasteries.

The last part of Sharf's article entertains an interesting and provocative possibility which might apply to Chinese Buddhist sites, but is questionable in regard to Kucha. Having doubted the importance of meditation among the monastic communities of Kucha and Dunhuang, Sharf writes, "I would suggest that we approach Mogao, Kizil and other larger sites in Xinjiang

[12] Rhi 1991.
[13] Howard and Vignato 2014, pp. 110–12.
[14] Schlingloff 2006; Sander 1991.

and Gansu as we do Yungang and Longmen; rather than regard the grottoes *as intended for monastic practice such as meditation*, we would do better to treat them as mortuary shrines donated by well-heeled patrons to produce merit for their deceased parents and ancestors.”[15] I draw attention to the italicized portion because Sharf still builds his argument on the notion I never supported, that Kizil central pillar caves were used to meditate in. He substitutes the function of meditation with that of mortuary dedication thereby transforming a central pillar cave into a funerary monument. Sharf’s judgement may apply to the Northern Wei paired caves in Yungang (460–470), the central Binyang 賓陽 Cave in Longmen (523), and to the Tang temple Fengxiansi 奉先寺 in Longmen (completed in 675). Based on historic circumstances, if not always on written records, those chapels, built in memory of members of the imperial family, were the result of imperial patronage.[16] But can we accept Sharf’s argument to be applicable also to the Kucha evidence in spite of how differently organized were Central Asian rock monasteries from those of China proper? Assuming a continuity, Sharf is comparing very dissimilar sites.

In support of his statement, Sharf writes that the absence of soot and oil deposits further proves that the caves served a mortuary function. “That many of the caves functioned more as mortuary monuments than as monastic residences solves a number of puzzles. It would explain, for example, the lack of soot and oil deposits in the caves, deposits that would presumably be present had the caves been used with any regularity.”[17] He adds that since caves were private memorial chapels one hardly went inside, their art did not see light nor encounter gazes, thus the suggestive title of his article. The assertion that Kucha caves had no soot residues is not correct. In Kizil, specifically in the area of Gunei, the inner gully, ceiling and walls of the square Cave 117 are covered with three layers of oily and sticky soot which hide the painting; the décor of Cave 114, a central pillar caves in the same location, is also covered by soot.[18] These are by no means isolated examples. Votive lamps were indeed used in the caves as shown in a painting from Kizil Kargha, Central Pillar Cave 14, on the inner wall of the right corridor. One of the two Tocharian nobles, the one to the left, lights the way with a lamp.

[15] Sharf 2013, p. 49. Emphasis added.
[16] Soper 1966.
[17] Sharf 2013, p. 49.
[18] Vignato 2016.

I do not exclude that Kucha central pillar caves were donated by wealthy donors, as were the caves of those aforementioned sites in China, but I have difficulty in accepting that the funerary status of central pillars caves in Kucha embody continuity with indigenous Chinese tomb culture. In support of such continuity, Sharf refers to the second-century CE Mahao 麻浩 tomb, in Sichuan 四川, in which a Buddha image was carved on the lintel above the opening which led to the inner burial chamber. Sharf fails to mention, however, that this carved image of Buddha was placed there instead of the Queen Mother of the West, with whom he was interchangeable in the mind of the locals. As a proto-Buddhist representation, the Mahao Buddha belongs to the earliest phase of Buddhism on Chinese soil, when it was neither practiced according to scriptures nor supported by a monastic body.[19] In the effort to apply the same way of thinking to Kizil, Sharf uses the presence of the *parinirvana* representation—sometimes painted, other times carved in stone—in central pillar caves, placed as a rule along the rear wall behind the pillar. For him, such a presence imparts to the cave the character of a Buddha mausoleum, thereby proving Central Asian alignment with Chinese funerary tradition. Sharf ignores the fact that the *parinirvana*, far from being an isolated painting, is part of the aforementioned, specific decorative program deployed throughout central pillar caves. As I mentioned above, *parinirvana* is the culmination of a meditation process. Furthermore, it is not a symbol a death, but means freedom from the endless cycle of reincarnation.

Sharf acknowledges that initially Xinjiang and Dunhuang caves may have developed from the intention of engaging in asceticism, out of the desire to benefit from secluded spots to practice meditation, but with time the sites in Central Asia and in China became loci of funerary caves donated by patrons, who set up the shrines in memory of their deceased family members. In Kucha, as in China proper, asserts Sharf, monks became keepers, *tout court*, in response to pecuniary rewards of donors (a statement he reinforces by pointing out the avidity of present day clerics in Japan). To further strengthen his interpretation of caves as mortuary shrines, Sharf emphasizes the presence of donors in Dunhuang caves, not just the sponsor, but several members of the family, including the deceased. Indeed, in the caves of Kucha, donors—a procession of Tocharian royals together with monks leading and lighting the way with a lamp—are also represented in central pillar caves, lined up along the inner walls of the corridor or on each side of the entrance to the cave. Their presence has generally been

[19] Wu 1986.

explained as an acknowledgement of their generous patronage in setting up the caves to gain merit or as liberal patrons of the monastics. The Kucha King Tottika with his wife Svayamprabhā, who probably lived in the sixth century, are shown accompanied by two monks in Kizil Cave 205 (fig. 6).[20] The names of the royal couple were inscribed above their heads. The queen was shown standing by her husband, both engaged in conversation with one of the monks, with the king carrying a lamp in his right hand, and in his left hand holding a short dagger. The royals are wearing halos, perhaps indicating their superior status. The paintings were brought to Berlin during the third Turfan expedition (1905–1907) and were unfortunately lost in World War II. Their presence has never been interpreted as conferring to the cave the character of a memorial shrine.

The comments I have made are based on the direct experience of Kucha sites I have had through the years. It has led me to conclude that the sites were set up to meet the needs of a thriving and very active community of monks who stressed the importance of meditation. I also believe that Kucha Buddhism developed autonomously, and not as an extension of Chinese Buddhism, at least until Kucha's defeat by the Chinese in 649, which led to the establishment of the Anxi 安溪 Protectorate and Kucha falling under Tang administration. My reaction to Sharf's contribution is far from being a "romantic" defense of studies that believe in the importance of meditation in Central Asia, as he suggests in the following rather sarcastic statement: "The notion of ritual function, at least as it has been applied to date, may not be the panacea some would like it to be. All too often it rests on romantic views concerning the nature of Buddhist monastic culture and religious practice. To engage in a bit of caricature, in talking about ritual function scholars tend to conjure up images of meditating monastics earnestly engaged in the quest of liberation."[21] I do understand, however, why Sharf's viewpoint could not be otherwise: his denying the creative role of meditation within Central Asian monasticism, most specifically Kucha, is coherent with his well-known deconstruction theory of meditation.[22]

[20] The cave number is given according to the Chinese numbering system. Originally, the royal pair were painted in the Māyāhöle, zweite Anlage (second location), Cave 10. See Grünwedel 1920, plate XLVIII. Lore Sander lists the presence of Tocharian nobles in several Kizil caves and discusses their function in Sander 2015. I thank the author for graciously allowing me to use her work before it was published.

[21] Sharf 2013, p. 39.

[22] Sharf 1995.

Paintings of skeletons, skulls, and corpses found in the caves of three Central Asian Buddhist sites are the subject of Greene's investigation. The author builds his argument specifically and foremost on a cave located in the foundations of an unnamed monastery in Tape Shotor, part of the Hadda complex, eastern Afghanistan, presumably active from the second to the seventh century. He begins his investigation by expressing skepticism about the conclusion of scholars that meditation was practiced in some caves along the Silk Roads and within China. He aligns himself with Sharf's opinion by quoting the latter: "there is often surprisingly little evidence that what scholars have identified as 'meditation caves' were actually used for meditation practice."[23] Yet, while doubting that the skeletal imagery found in Kucha and Toyuq refers to such practice, he concludes that the Tape Shotor's same motif was instrumental in a deathbed ritual, which involves meditation. In recognizing the role of meditation in this particular cave, Greene in fact admits the role of meditation at least in the Tape Shotor cave. In this respect, he differs from Sharf. But echoes of Sharf's thinking and methodology still resonate in Greene's discussion. Both target several of the same scholarly articles and both criticize the supposed mistake of those who have researched the same topic—meditation in Central Asian Buddhist sites—and have, in Sharf's and Greene's opinion, made the error of using the cave décor to deduce its function. Both scholars do not ascribe importance to the existence in Kucha of the numerous cells which were used to meditate in, although they cannot claim to have spent considerable time exploring the cave sites of Kucha.

Greene labels "emic" the methodology I applied in the study of meditation in the Kucha monasteries. I interpret his criticism to mean that in my research I relied more on the "internal" evidence, such as the presence of the numerous meditation cells and the painted references of monks and ascetics shown in the act of meditating, at the expense of "external" textual sources. As I already mentioned, Vignato and I, in our latest contribution to the subject of Kucha caves and meditation, *Archaeological and Visual Sources of Meditation in the Ancient Kingdom of Kuča*, have used doctrinal evidence, especially Sarvāstivādin literature, in exploring the origin of Central Asian meditation, because this school is acknowledged to have prevailed in Kucha. Greene, like Sharf, points to my 2007 article in *Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology* as an example of wrong interpretation of the imagery. He writes that, "Some scholars have suggested that these

[23] Greene 2013, p. 266.

paintings of skeletons and bones indicate a special emphasis on meditation practice among the local monastic community of Kucha."[24] While Greene is quite correct in such a statement, it is important to distinguish between cause and symptoms of meditation as I have tried to do. I reiterate that in the article, I indicated that such subjects were not meditation aids, but icons referring to the practice of meditation, and their presence did not make the cave a place used to meditate in, since one meditated in bare cells of the type I already described. Greene, instead, deems the imagery of skulls and skeletons to be purely generic, as explained below.

Greene relies on textual evidence to support his argument that a particular décor does not indicate the function of a cave, in this case that skulls, skeletons, and corpses found in Buddhist monasteries are but generic depictions with no further specific bearing on the function of caves. He quotes a passage from the *Mūlasarvāstivāda vinaya*, a compendium of rules regulating the monastic community, which states that in a monastery, paintings of corpses belong to toilets, while skeletons and skulls are to be painted in monastic cells. Greene provocatively concludes: "That monastic cells would share a painting theme with the toilets should give pause to anyone attempting to infer the intended ritual function of a given space solely from the imagery that adorns its walls."[25] He also refers to a passage from the *Mahāsāṃghika vinaya*, in which Buddha, answering the question of which kind of paintings were permitted in a monastery, said that all kinds were allowed with the exception of men and women coupling. But the permitted images included "monks, grape vines, sea monsters . . . and corpses."[26] Accepting the generic nature of such motifs, Greene refers as follows to their presence in Kizil: "Most of the items in the above list of painting subjects are found in the landscape frescoes on the vaulted ceilings of the same early caves from Kizil where we find images of monks meditating on skulls."[27] This statement is to some extent oversimplified as the author does not supply in which type of cave these motifs are found and ignores the fact that they are part of a larger composition which carries a specific message. These motifs are not just generic embellishments. Based on the two quoted passages from the *vinayas*, Greene, however, concludes that, "If such imagery was part of a generic repertoire of painting subjects suitable for Buddhist monasteries . . . then it seems difficult to argue that any particular

[24] Greene 2013, p. 271.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid., p. 270.
[27] Ibid.

example was necessarily used in a specific manner, that a space adorned with such imagery served a particular ritual function, or even that the local community had a special devotion to meditation practice."[28] Greene, on the other hand, contradicts himself when he reconstructs the hypothetical ritual function of the Tape Shotor cave, introduced shortly, because he uses exactly the visual evidence displayed—a prominent skeleton and monks in meditation—to unravel the cave's function.

The Tape Shotor Cave, the center piece of Greene's inquiry, was carved into the conglomerate rock foundations of the monastery and was located beneath several surface rooms of the same. The monastery presumably belonged to the Sarvāstivādin School; it was active from the second to the seventh century, while the cave in question may have belonged to the fourth to the fifth century on the basis of epigraphy, according to Tarzi. None of this evidence exists any longer.[29] The décor of this rather large cave—10 m deep, 3 m wide, 2 m high—consisted of a standing skeleton framed on each side by a monk seated on a grass mat, each one under a tree, and with flames issuing from his shoulders. The two monks are identified by inscription as Maudgalyāyana and Śāriputra. This group was painted on the cave's rear wall, opposite to the entrance.

Additional monks, represented in the same way, were depicted on the two side walls bringing the total number to ten—the ten disciples of Buddha. Greene's goal is to unravel the cave's function, which he will conclude was ritual, and the meaning of its iconography. To investigate how this cave was used, Greene relies on numerous doctrinal sources, the majority belonging to the Sarvāstivādin School particularly influential in Gandhara and Kucha. The reader thus learns that the depiction of a monk staring at, or being in the proximity of, bones and skeletons meant that the sitter aimed at ridding themself of carnal desires, hence the appellation "meditating on bodily impurity (*aśubha-bhāvanā*)."[30] The author goes to great lengths to describe the mechanism of this practice and its different applications. Out of his very detailed list of how one engaged in *aśubha-bhāvanā* meditation, I mention only two: one went to a charnel ground to view decayed bodies and fixed this sight in his or her memory; upon returning to the monastery, the picture stored in the mind was used as a focus for meditation. This practice may have evolved as paintings and sculptures of skeletons replaced the direct contact.

[28] Greene 2013, p. 271.

[29] The Tape Shotor monastery and the cave under study were explored by the scholar Zemaryalaï Tarzi on whose unpublished record Greene relies.

[30] Greene 2013, p. 268.

Having explained how one meditated on bones, skulls, and skeletons, Greene draws the reader's attention to the similarity with the décor of Kizil caves, a comparison he already stated when discussing the generic nature of painted décors in monasteries. I would be more cautious, because one cannot indiscriminately compare the overall composition of the skeleton and monks in Tape Shotor with the aforementioned scene of a monk meditating on a scene of destruction painted in a lunette of Kizil square Cave 116 or the scene of a single monk looking at a skull extrapolated from the ceiling of Kizil central pillar Cave 110 (fig. 5), to mention a few examples. Greene is comparing motifs which are similar only because they allude to the act of meditating on skulls and bones, but in reality are embedded in very different settings.

In fact, I have pointed out some of the differences between Kucha and Tape Shotor. The Tape Shotor cave is not hewn in the cliff, but excavated in the foundations of the monastery. (I cannot be more specific, since I rely on Greene's information which, in turn, relies on Tarzi.) The Tape Shotor cave type and measurements bear no similarity with the Kizil caves in which the cited examples are found. Stylistically, the depiction of monks in Tape Shotor and Kizil have nothing in common. Finally, the two monks flanking the rigidly erect skeleton are identified as Maudgalyāyana and Śāriputra, in contrast with the anonymity of their numerous Kizil lone confrères. Moreover, a possible connection between Tape Shotor's and Kizil's iconography would depend on the chronology of the two sites. The date of the Tape Shotor cave is ascribed to the fourth to fifth century, while its paintings of skeletons and monks are assigned to the fifth to seventh century based on their inscriptions; Kizil's chronology, as mentioned earlier, is still a debated issue. Depending on the site and type of cave, Kucha paintings are differently and tentatively dated; in regard to Kizil the time period ranges from the fourth century, if not earlier, to the fifth to sixth century. Notwithstanding these discrepancies, at the very beginning of his article, Greene cites a number of scholars who appear to accept the possibility that the Tape Shotor's iconography might have been a prototype for Kizil skull and skeleton paintings and further east for those of Toyuq, in the Turfan area, considered shortly. The sentence in question reads: "The most impressive example of this painting theme, and one often mentioned as a prototype for the images of monks meditating on skeletons and corpses from Kizil and Toyuq, was discovered in a cave at the Tape Shotor Monastery."[31] To avoid misunderstanding,

[31] Greene 2013, p. 266.

instead of "prototype" one could use the adjective "somewhat similar" when speaking of a possible link between some motifs present in Gandhara and sites on the northern Silk Road. To sum up, of course it is not always possible to have a direct experience of the sites one is studying; we rely on the work of other scholars, as in Greene's case on the data supplied by the eminent archaeologist Tarzi. However, art historians are generally aware that in comparing evidence, one should respect, or at least be cognizant of, inherent differences—in this case, plan of the cave, placement of the motif in the cave, and possibly chronology of the several works under consideration.

Greene's trajectory from Gandhara to Kucha to Toyuq, a site in the periphery of Turfan, reminds one of the geographic span adopted by Sharf, a stretch which runs the risk of overgeneralization. Greene's discussion of Toyuq is cursory and limited to the use of three illustrations of monks meditating on corpses from Caves 20 and 42. All three illustrations display a monk seated by a corpse, as if meditating on it. This is a one-sided comparison since it omits the presence, especially in Toyuq Cave 42, of monks under jeweled trees or fixing their minds on a lotus. By excluding the latter references to meditation, Greene overlooks the doctrinal developments present in Toyuq, but absent in Tape Shotor and Kizil (read Kucha). Since the 1990s, Toyuq has come under the close scrutiny of several scholars, foremost among them the pioneer contributions by Miyaji Akira and the very relevant, recent ones by Yamabe Nobuyoshi.[32] To be fair, Greene is familiar with some of these important writings. It is, therefore, puzzling that he chose to focus only on the theme of meditating on corpses and skeletons. In his most recent articles on the subject, Yamabe expands on earlier statements and brings new evidence on the meditation scenes of Toyuq Caves 20 and 42. Yamabe's reconstruction of the rear wall of Cave 20, and of the left wall of Cave 42, leaves no doubt that in addition to representations of monks meditating on bodily impurity (*aśubha-bhāvanā*), there are motifs derived from the *Guan wuliangshoufo jing* 觀無量壽佛經 (hereafter, *Amitāyur Visualization Sutra*; T no. 365, 12) and from additional Central Asian visualization texts. The implication is that the Toyuq paintings combine Sarvāstivādin notions of meditating on bodily impurity, which are pre-Mahayana, with Mahayana methods of visualization. Yamabe labels these two phases: Śrāvaka (hearer or disciple) and Bodhisattva paths, respectively. The "continuity," as Yamabe calls the process, or the coming together of the two phases, indicates

[32] See Miyaji 1995a, 1995b, 1996; Yamabe 1999, 2009, 2014. I gratefully acknowledge Professor Yamabe's help in pointing out and providing these contributions.

that in Toyuq the demarcation line between pre-Mahayana and Mahayana teachings was blurred, a trend which seems absent in Kucha, at least until ca. 650, when Kucha fell under the Chinese Tang administration. This "continuity" may also be absent in Tape Shotor.

But how should we understand the iconography and ritual of the Tape Shotor cave? Greene indicates that the text *Zhong tianzhu sheweiguo zhihuan si tujing* 中天竺舍衛國祇洹寺圖經 (Map of the Jetavana Monastery) compiled by the seventh-century Chinese monk Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667) was the possible source of inspiration. This text no doubt postdates the Sarvāstivādin literature quoted. The author justifies the leap forward inherent in the chosen source by the possibility that the content of this text may reflect Indian and Central Asian notions of a ritual based on meditation brought back to China by the famous seventh-century monk-pilgrim Xuanzang 玄奘 (602–664). Thus, a link to Central Asian practices would be maintained. In Daoxuan's ideal reconstruction of a monastery, the "Cloister of Impermanence" was a place where monks (nuns?) were taken when their death was imminent. In a death-bed rite, their mind would then be fixed on themes of destruction, a skeleton in this case, to facilitate a positive rebirth. The Tape Shotor cave could have been such a place where a dying person would be brought. To strengthen the role meditation plays in this ritual, Greene points to the special bodily attributes of the ten monks witnessing the event: the flames that project from their shoulders, a symbol of fire *samādhi*, or deep mental concentration. This bodily characteristic had an early beginning in India in the pre-Gandhara Barhut and Bodhgaya reliefs; it is present in Gandharan art; and it is prominently and profusely displayed in the décor of Kucha caves.[33] Indeed the use of this attribute emphasizes the depth of concentration of the practitioner and is very often associated in Kucha with important moments in the life of Śākyamuni, as Greene points out. It is present in the depiction of Mara's temptation, in which, prior to reaching Enlightenment, the Buddha's body emanates flames to indicate that he is sinking into progressively deeper meditative trances. In several *parinirvana* scenes, painted in the rear area of central pillar caves, the reclining Buddha emanates flames, a mark that he was experiencing higher and higher stages of mind concentration (fig. 7). In Kizil Cave 38, the nirvana scene includes, in addition to Mahākāśyapa, the itinerant hermit Subhadra of the Tridanda sect, seen from the back as he sits very close to the Buddha's head (fig. 8). Subhadra was the last convert, who literally self-combusted into nirvana while gripped in

[33] Howard and Vignato 2014, pp. 123–25.

fire *samādhi*.[34] The inclusion of Subhadra in the nirvana scene is derivative from an established Gandharan tradition. Undoubtedly, the emanation of fire often accompanied by the ejection of water is a recognized symbol of a state of meditation. Nevertheless, I am wondering why in the Tape Shotor cave all the monks eject flames from their shoulders? What is their role in this pre-death ritual? Is their presence essential in transforming the cave into a locus of meditation, thus demonstrating that the painting reveals the cave's function? Greene's answer is that it sends the message to those present in the ritual that death's meaning goes beyond the body's destruction by implying that through fire *samādhi* one attains nirvana. What is certain is the striking diversity among the three locations (Tape Shotor, Kucha, and Toyuq) in depicting meditating states. In Kucha, there was absolutely no meditation aid as one sat in an undecorated cell.

In conclusion, Sharf's article considers the role of meditation in the Central Asian Buddhist site of Kizil and extends his investigation to Dunhuang, to which he pays most of his attention. Greene, instead, remains geographically in Central Asia studying three sites: Tape Shotor in depth, and Kizil and Toyuq as accessories. Both Sharf and Greene play down the importance of meditation in the caves. Sharf does so in particular when concluding that various caves such as those at Kizil were probably mortuary shrines. Greene's position is slightly less exclusive in that he regards the deathbed ritual in the lone Tape Shotor cave as a kind of meditation. His misleading claim that other scholars and I argue that all decorated caves were used for meditation has been refuted above and also elsewhere. Throughout his inquiry Sharf downplays meditation, but Greene softens his position that meditation was not an important presence in Central Asia by recognizing, in his conclusions, that the deathbed ritual in the lone Tape Shotor cave is indeed a place where a special type of meditation took place. He labels the imagery of the Tape Shotor cave "a pre-death ritual" in which meditation had a prominent role as the dying person concentrated his or her mind on the painting of a skeleton. In his conclusions, Greene indicates three specific uses for the above-mentioned cave paintings: they are surrogates for cadavers in the formal practice of the *aśubha-bhāvanā*; they are paintings appropriate for the adornment of Buddhist monasteries in general and monastic cells in particular; and they are used in a pre-death ritual practice. His judgement is in harmony with the way he has presented and analyzed

[34] *Da banniepan jing* 大般涅磐經, translated by Faxian 法顯 (ca. 337–422), T no. 7, 1: 204b17–b26.

the evidence. On the other hand, at least in the Tape Shotor pre-death ritual, the painting of the skeleton and of the ten monks shown in *samādhi* indicate that a painted motif invests a cave with a specific role. In other words, the painted subject matter defines the function of the caves, the very mechanism Greene and Sharf found fault with when supposedly applied by other scholars. Is this a reversal of positions? Moreover, by recognizing the Tape Shotor scene as the reflection of a meditation ritual, Greene indirectly acknowledges the presence of meditation within the three Central Asian Buddhist communities, be it Tape Shotor, or Kucha and Toyuq. As if wishing to soften this concession, he reminds the reader that his conclusions are tentative, and furthermore, that meditation is not limited to a place specifically set up for it. To quote his words, there is not “the same level of specificity as, for example, ‘monastic kitchen’ or ‘toilets.’”[35] In my opinion, we can safely assume that in Central Asia we are seeing the enactment of different expressions of meditation. The Tape Shotor iconography, for example, possibly refers to a death-bed ritual centering on meditation and aimed at the dying person reaching a positive rebirth. There is general consensus that Toyuq Caves 20 and 42 were used for meditation and carried painted references to it—for example, the skeleton used in the *aśubha-bhāvanā* mental concentration and the themes derivative from Mahayana types of visualization, especially the *Amitāyur Visualization Sutra*. In Kucha, painted allusions to monks and ascetics meditating on skeletons and skulls are references to the widespread practice of meditation in the monasteries, but are not meditation aids. Kucha monks and nuns meditated in the unadorned cells—of which over one hundred remain—that I have described.

ABBREVIATIONS

T *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經. 85 vols. Ed. Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and Watanabe Kaikyoku 渡辺海旭. Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō Kankōkai. 1924–32.

REFERENCES

Abe, Stanley K. 1990. “Art and Practice in a Fifth-century Chinese Buddhist Cave Temple.” *Ars Orientalis* 20, pp. 1–31.

Greene, Eric M. 2013. “Death in a Cave: Meditation, Deathbed Ritual, and Skeletal Imagery at Tape Shotor.” *Artibus Asiae* 73, no. 2, pp. 265–94.

[35] Greene 2013, p. 292.

Grünwedel, Albert. 1920. *Alt-Kutscha: archäologische und religionsgeschichtliche Forschungen an Tempera-Gemälden aus buddhistischen Höhlen der ersten acht Jahrhunderte nach Christi Geburt*. Berlin: Otto Elsner Verlagsgesellschaft M.B.H.

Howard, Angela F. 2007. "Miracles and Visions among the Monastic Communities of Kucha, Xinjiang." *Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology* 2, pp. 77–87.

Howard, Angela F., and Giuseppe Vignato. 2014. *Archaeological and Visual Sources of Meditation in the Ancient Kingdom of Kuča*. Leiden: Brill.

Kurita, Isao. 2003. *Gandhāran Art*. 2 vols. Tokyo: Nigensha Publishing Company Ltd.

Kuwayama, Shoshin. 1987. "Literary Evidence for Dating the Colossi of Bamiyan." In *Orientalia Iosephi Tucci Memoriae Dicata*, vol. 2, ed. Gherardo Gnoli and Lionello Lanciotti. Serie Orientale Roma 56. Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente.

Miyaji Akira. 1995a. "Turufan, Toyoku sekkutsu no zenkankutsu hekiga ni tsuite: Jōdozu, Jōdo kansōzu, fujō kansōzu (jō)." トゥルファン・トヨク石窟の禅観窟壁画について：浄土図・浄土観想図・不浄観想図（上）(On the Wall Paintings in "Changuan-ku" Cave of Tuyuk Cave Temple at Turfan: *Jōdo-zu, Jōdokansō-zu,* and *Fujōkansō-zu*, Three Paintings Concerning Amitābha's Pure Land Faith, part 1). *Bukkyō geijutsu* 佛教藝術 221, pp. 15–41.

———. 1995b. "Turufan, Toyoku sekkutsu no zenkankutsu hekiga ni tsuite: Jōdozu, Jōdo kansōzu, fujō kansōzu (chū)." トゥルファン・トヨク石窟の禅観窟壁画について：浄土図・浄土観想図・不浄観想図（中）(On the Wall Paintings in "Changuan-ku" Cave of Tuyuk Cave Temple at Turfan: *Jōdo-zu*, *Jōdokansō-zu*, and *Fujōkansō-zu*, Three Paintings Concerning Amitābha's Pure Land Faith, part 2). *Bukkyō geijutsu* 223, pp. 15–36.

———. 1996. "Turufan, Toyoku sekkutsu no zenkankutsu hekiga ni tsuite: Jōdozu, Jōdo kansōzu, fujō kansōzu (ge)." トゥルファン・トヨク石窟の禅観窟壁画について：浄土図・浄土観想図・不浄観想図（下）(On the Wall Paintings in "Changuan-ku" Cave of Tuyuk Cave Temple at Turfan: *Jōdo-zu, Jōdokansō-zu*, and *Fujōkansō-zu*, Three Paintings Concerning Amitābha's Pure Land Faith, part. 3). *Bukkyō geijutsu* 226, pp. 38–83.

Rhi, Juh-yung. 1991. *Gandharan Images of the "Śrāvastī miracle": An Iconographic Reassessment*. PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley.

Sander, Lore. 1991. "The Earliest Manuscripts from Central Asia and the Sarvastivada Mission." In *Corolla Iranica: Papers in Honour of Prof. Dr. David Neil MacKenzie*, ed. Ronald Eric Emmerick and Dieter Weber. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Publisher.

———. 2015. "Tocharian Donors in Kizil Caves and Monk's Poetry: Some Reflections on Donors, Donations and Ceremonies." In *Tocharian Texts in Context: International Conference on Tocharian Manuscripts and Silk Road Culture, Vienna, 2013*. Bremen: Hempen Press.

Schlingloff, Dieter. 2006. *Ein buddhistisches Yogalehrbuch: Unveränderter Nachdruck der Ausgabe von 1964 unter Beigabe aller seither bekannt gewordenen Fragmente*, ed. Jens-Uwe Hartmann and Hermann-Josef Röllicke. Düsseldorf: EKŌ-Haus der Japanischen Kultur.

Sharf, Robert H. 1995. "Buddhist Modernism and the Rhetoric of Meditative Experience." *Numen* 42, no. 3, pp. 28–83.

———. 2013. "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.

Soper, Alexander C. 1966. "Imperial Cave Chapels of the Northern Wei Dynasties: Donors, Beneficiaries, Dates." *Artibus Asiae* 28, no. 4, pp. 241–70.

von Le Coq, Albert, and Ernst Waldschmidt. 1922–33. *Die Buddhistische Spätantike in Mittelasien*. 7 vols. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer.

Vignato, Giuseppe. 2016. “Qizil: an Interpretation of District Six: Caves 109–121 in Gunei.” *Annali di Ca' Foscari, Serie Orientale* 52, pp. 145–72.

Walshe, Maurice. 1995. *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*. Reprint. Boston: Wisdom Publications. First published 1987.

Wu Hung. 1986. “Buddhist Elements in Early Chinese Art (2nd and 3rd Centuries AD).” *Artibus Asiae* 47, nos. 3–4, pp. 263–347.

Yaldiz, Marianne. 2010. “Evaluation of the Chronology of the Murals in Kizil, Kucha Oasis.” In *From Turfan to Ajanta: Festschrift for Dieter Schlingloff on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*, vol. 2, ed. Franco Eli and Monika Zin. Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute.

Yamabe, Nobuyoshi. 1999. “An Examination of the Mural Paintings of Toyoq Cave 20 in Conjunction with the Origin of the Amitayus Visualization Sutra.” *Orientations* 4, pp. 38–44.

———. 2009. “The Paths of Śrāvakas and Bodhisattvas in Meditative Practices.” *Acta Asiatica* 96, pp. 47–75.

———. 2014. “Toyuq Cave 20, Paintings and Inscriptions.” In *Epigraphic Evidence in the Pre-modern Buddhist World: Proceedings of the Eponymous Conference Held in Vienna, 14–15 Oct. 2011*, Heft 85, ed. Kurt Tropper. Vienna: Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische Studien, Universität Wien.

Xinjiang Qiuci Yanjiusuo 新疆龟兹研究所, ed. 2000. *Kezier shiku neirong zonglu* 克孜尔石窟内容总录 (Comprehensive Record of Contents of Qizil Grottoes). Urumqi: Xinjiang Meishu Sheyin Chubanshe.