

VISUAL FORMS OF THE KUAN-WU-LIANG-SHOU-FO CHING
IN FAR EASTERN ART AS AIDS TO RELEASE

By



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ABSTRACT

This study examines in detail thirty of the extant paintings illustrating the Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching ("The Sūtra of Visualizing the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life"). As a result of the detailed analysis of these paintings dating from the early T'ang Dynasty to the late Sung Dynasty, three categories of paintings emerge: 1) those which appear to stress meditation, 2) those which stress meditation but also have faith references, 3) those which stress faith primarily and place little emphasis on meditation. This study is the first of its kind in English concerning the Chinese cave paintings and banners of Tun-huang. It is also the first to examine such a large sample of the extant work illustrating the sūtra, be they the Chinese originals or the Japanese renditions, as to religious significance. Since only one version of this text is extant, purely textual criticism yields but limited findings. An examination of the paintings, other rich sources of information about the text, supplements the limited findings of textual criticism. The result of this examination is a far more comprehensive understanding of the Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching's teachings, especially in regard to the means to release, teachings gleaned both from the text and its visual

forms. The paintings, at various times stress meditation, faith or a combination of both, as the means to release. This artistic evidence strongly suggests shifts in emphasis in the means to release expounded within the Pure Land Buddhist tradition during the time period this study spans.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my family: first, to the memory of my father, John Walter Noreyko, whose love of learning was my prime inspiration; secondly, to my mother, Margaret Noreyko, who took over the mothering of my family so that I could pursue my studies; thirdly, to Bob for the understanding, encouragement, and endless typing he provided throughout my much protracted university career; fourthly, to Cal for his assistance in the mathematical conversions needed for the appendix; and lastly, to Tristanne, who made working on Literary Chinese almost fun and who took such a keen interest in the paintings discussed within this work.

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ABBREVIATIONS

B, L	Banner, London
B.M.	British Museum
B, ND	Banner, New Delhi
B, P	Banner, Paris
<u>KWLSFC</u>	<u>Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching</u>
Mat.	Matsumoto
Pel.	Pelliot
<u>SBE</u>	<u>Sacred Books of the East Series</u>
T-h	Tun-huang Cave Painting
THI	Tun-huang Institute

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INTRODUCTION

Tun-huang was a far outpost of the Chinese frontier in the Tarim basin; its first Buddhist caves go back to 366 A.D. Within these caves art was preserved undiscovered from approximately 1035 to 1900. Aurél Stein and Paul Pelliot early in this century in lengthy Central Asian expeditions recovered many items from the Tun-huang site now housed in the British Museum, London, the Museum of Central Asian Antiquities, Delhi, and the Musée Guimet, Paris. These discoveries were to have an inestimable catalytic effect on the study of Chinese art and religion.

Among the discoveries at Tun-huang were many cave paintings which illustrated the Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching, a sūtra in praise of Amitāyus, the "Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life", and his Paradise, Sukhāvati. Also among the finds removed by the Stein and Pelliot expeditions was a group of painted banners on silk which also illustrated the Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching. These wall paintings and banners had many similar characteristics. For example, all featured Paradise scenes and all had meditation scenes. Yet among this group of paintings produced over a period of many hundreds of years, there were different inclusions and omissions. Since art can concretize doctrine, making it

accessible and understandable at a popular level, it seems that the elements added or omitted might well tell us something about changes in the Buddhist religion. Since the text deals primarily with meditations and the paintings which illustrated these meditations, two questions emerge: 1) What religious changes are indicated by the changes observed in the paintings? 2) What do these paintings tell us regarding meditation, release, and Amitāyus' Paradise as outlined in the text? As far as the present area of research is concerned, very little attention has been directed toward these particular Chinese wall paintings and banners and their religious implications. In English almost no work has been done. A fair amount of research has been accomplished on the Japanese paintings representing this aspect of the worship of Amitāyus, but much investigation is still required of the Chinese wall paintings and banners believed to be the original sources of the Japanese material. Thus an investigation of the religious significance of the paintings is long overdue.

The material available for study on the topic includes first the Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching under the Sanskrit title of Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra, contained in Volume XLIX of the Sacred Books of the East Series, translated by Takakusu and edited by F. Max Müller. Secondly, painted examples available for study include the following:

- 1) those cave paintings from the Tun-huang site itself (to be abbreviated as T-h.).
- 2) those painted banners removed from the site by the famous Stein and Pelliot expeditions; these fall into three subcategories:
 - a) those presently housed in the Department of Oriental Antiquities, British Museum, London, England (to be abbreviated as B, L)
 - b) those housed in the Central Asia Antiquities Museum, New Delhi, India (to be abbreviated as B, ND)
 - c) those housed in the Musée Guimet, Paris, France (to be abbreviated as B, P).
- 3) those renditions of the theme done by Chinese artists working in Japan or those Japanese renditions after Chinese models (to be abbreviated as J/C).

Since the paintings, though produced at different points in time and in different geographical areas, represent a reasonably steady, uninterrupted flow of artistic activity, the approach this thesis will take in their detailed examination will not be a chronological or geographical one but rather a typological one. Initially, in Chapter I, the Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching itself will be examined in terms of its origin, classification, and meditational content, for the study of the paintings would only be half a study unless firmly grounded in textual context. Chapter II will provide a general background for the detailed study of the paintings by examining the main elements of a typical

Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching painting.

Chapter III will analyze the paintings carefully and divide them into basic types, each reflective of doctrinal stages. Photographs of paintings from all three painted sources will serve as "Plates" to illustrate these types.

CHAPTER I

The Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching ("The Sūtra of Visualizing the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life")¹

is a popular sūtra, revered by both Chinese and Japanese Buddhists to this day. Its popularity resides in its guaranteeing the devotee a vision of the Buddha Amitāyus² and his Paradise Sukhāvātī.³ The devotee is offered a structured approach to meditation which will help him enjoy to the fullest that vision. This sūtra represents a significant development in lay devotion as it provides a method of meditation which does not presuppose the preparation and training of complex monastic practices. If the

¹ English translation of the title is taken from Bhikku Assaji, trans., Bilingual Buddhist Series I: Sūtras and Scriptures (Taipei: Buddhist Culture Service, 1962), pp. 155-192. Hereafter the sūtra will be abbreviated by its initials KWLSFC.

² J. Leroy Davidson, The Lotus Sutra in Chinese Art (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), p. 64, n. 10. Amitāyus indicates derivation from the KWLSFC rather than from the Larger or Smaller Sukhāvātī Sūtras where the alternate Amitābha is used. Considering that not all authors make this distinction, unless there is exact reference to Amitāyus, the compound Amitāyus-Amitābha will be employed to facilitate matters (as per notion in Alexander Soper, Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art in China (Ascona, Switzerland: Artibus Asiae Publishers, 1957), p. 143.

³ Though other buddhas had their own particular Paradises, at times referred to (in secondary sources) by

devotee is properly disposed, he will attain his vision of Amitāyus in this life. The KWLSFC acts as a manual which illustrates to the faithful, step by step, how to achieve this proper disposition through meditation. It is not surprising that such a document would be attractive at the popular level, and as a result be whole-heartedly embraced. The love and reverence the Buddhists have for the sūtra is clearly evidenced in its many renderings in visual form in Far Eastern Art. Though this thesis will deal with these visual forms at great length in later chapters, it would seem both wise and helpful to discuss to some extent the origin and background and classification of the text itself together with its meditational content before we concentrate on the art related to it.

Unfortunately, none of this will be an easy task, as considerable speculation surrounds the date, language, and location of this text's writing. Additionally, the sūtra is difficult to classify since it has affinities with several groups of sūtras which present similar themes or advocate similar methods.

the term Pure Land, whenever the terms Paradise, Western Paradise, or Pure Land appear in reference to that of Amitāyus-Amitābha, they should be understood as Sukhāvātī.

The Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching is perhaps better known by its Sanskrit name, the Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra.⁴ Even so, the Chinese title seems more appropriate for the following reasons: 1) there are extant no Sanskrit or Tibetan versions of the text; 2) Sanskrit versions of the related "kuan" sūtras are also missing; 3) the Chinese term kuan brings out the essential notion of visualization, the key term in the KWLSFC's meditational method.⁵ Though it is far from conclusive that the work is a Chinese original (indeed it is more likely to be a Central Asian composition, written at the end of the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century A.D.),⁶ for the reasons outlined above the

⁴F. Max Müller, ed., The Larger Sukhāvātīvyuha, The Smaller Sukhāvātīvyuha, and Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra ("Sacred Books of the East", Vol. XLIX; London: Oxford University Press, 1894). (The KWLSFC appears under this name in the aforementioned volume.) In subsequent references, this volume will be abbreviated as SBE.

⁵J. F. Pas, "Shan Tao's Interpretation of the Meditative Vision of Buddha Amitāyus", History of Religion, XIV, no. 2 (November, 1974), 101-102. Kuan gives the idea of looking at something intently; in the KWLSFC it refers specifically to the inspection stage of the visualization-meditation method. In future entries this will be abbreviated as "Shan Tao's Interpretation . . .".

⁶J. F. Pas, "The Kuan-wu-liang-shou Fo-ching: Its Origin and Literary Criticism", Buddhist Thought and Asian Civilization (1977), 214, n. 12. In this note Pas refers to recent Japanese scholarship in the area and claims Nakamura and Kasugai favour the Central Asian hypothesis. In future entries this will be abbreviated as "Origin and Literary Criticism . . .".

Chinese form will be used, unless we are quoting from an author who uses the Sanskrit title.

Just when and where this sūtra first appeared is a matter of considerable speculation; however, scholars agree on the following points. It is generally felt that the KWLSFC was one of a group of sūtras translated into Chinese during the first half of the fifth century. Tradition holds the translator to be one Kālayaśas of the Western Regions.⁷ He is well documented in at least one biography and the tradition which attributes the translation to him is a very ancient one. It is believed the text was translated between 424-442 A.D. Though it is alleged that the work had two other translators (Dharmamitra, 356-442 A.D. and an unknown translator), clear proof is available for neither.⁸ Hence we are left with only one translation, that of Kālayaśas.

⁷Prabodh Chandra Bagchi, (Le) Canon bouddhique en Chine (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1927), I, 391. According to Bagchi's work Kālayaśas arrived in China from the Western Regions in 424 A.D. Sometime later, under Emperor Wen's order, he went into a monastery and translated 2 works, one of which was the KWLSFC. Soper, op. cit., p. 144. Soper feels the phrase Western Regions could have suggested at that time Chinese or Russian Turkestan or even Afghanistan, that is, some way-station along the overland route between Northeast India and China.

⁸G. Ono, ed., Encyclopedia of Buddhist Works (Tokyo, 1968-69), reprint, p. 198c.

Now let us try to classify the text. To begin with, it should not be thought that the Buddha Amitāyus and his Western Paradise were new notions introduced in the KWLSFC. The belief in Sukhāvātī and its Buddha Amitāyus had already enjoyed such popularity. This is attested to, for example, by the number of translations of the basic sūtra which expounded these beliefs. Bibliographies suggest that between five and eight existed, of which four survive:

- 1) that by Lokarakṣa (latter half of second century A.D.),
- 2) that by Chih-ch'ien (second quarter of third century),
- 3) that by Saṃghavarman, 4) that by Kumārajīva (circa 400).⁹

Soper holds that the first three not only resemble one another but are most similar to The Larger Sukhāvātī Sūtra. Kumārajīva's brief version corresponds to The Smaller Sukhāvātī Sūtra of the same series.¹⁰ These sūtras describe at great length the beauties and delights of Sukhāvātī, its palaces, jewel trees, lotus ponds. All these point to rebirth in the Western Land as being something highly desirable. It seems most appropriate that the KWLSFC be placed within this group of sūtras because of its Paradise

⁹Soper, op. cit., p. 141.

¹⁰Ibid.

elements. It certainly features the same Lord and glorifies the same rewards Sukhāvātī has to offer. It is obvious that the KWLSFC belongs to this group of Sukhāvātī Paradise sūtras as far as subject matters is concerned. It further stresses, however, a full "in his life" vision of Amitāyus as well as the paradise reward. Because of this the sūtra fits into yet another group.

With its stress on obtaining the vision of Amitāyus and his Sukhāvātī Paradise in this life, the KWLSFC is akin to a few earlier texts which contribute to the evolution of this idea. Soper feels that the most elementary stage of this notion is represented in the commentary to the Mahāprajñapāramitā-sūtra ascribed to Nāgārjuna and translated by Kumārajīva as the Ta Chih-tu Lun (402-405). This text teaches that if one becomes a bodhisattva, one can reach a state of ecstasy so profound that it gives one the ability to see all the Buddhas of the "Ten Quarters", hear them preach and fully understand them.¹¹

Another text that promises a reward in this life is one translated by Lokarakṣa entitled Po-chou San-mei Ching. This sūtra promises the sight of all that exists in the "Ten Quarters" as a reward. The faithful worshipper of Amitābha will be granted a vision of this Buddha and his

¹¹ Ibid., p. 143.

land if he but meditates on it whole-heartedly for one week.¹²

The KWLSFC represents an advanced stage of "in this world" thinking. We have seen that although rebirth in Paradise is a strong theme in it, there is also great stress on being able to enter a samādhi whereby the heavenly vision is attained in this life by means of scaling the ladder of visualization-meditations.¹³ It is interesting that both these themes are developed within the text. The dual treatment is thought to illustrate the lateness of the work because of its attempts to reconcile two diverse aspects within the Amitāyus-Amitābha cult.¹⁴

The classification of this sūtra as belonging to a group of texts promising reward in this life still is not the most appropriate one. Perhaps yet another classification should be attempted. It would seem that this sūtra best belongs to a group known as the "kuan" sūtras.¹⁵ We group

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Pas, op. cit., "Shan Tao's Interpretation . . .", p. 99.

¹⁴ Soper, op. cit., p. 143.

¹⁵ Pas, op. cit., "Origin and Literary Criticism . . .", pp. 200-202. The extant "kuan" sūtras are six in number, the KWLSFC being one of them. Here are the other five and pertinent information relating to their dates and trans-

it among these for two main reasons: 1) origin, 2) content. As far as origin is concerned, all these sūtras are believed to have been written between the years 300-400 A.D., and most probably in Kashmir. Pas feels that Kashmir is the likely place because all the translators of the group had Kashmiri connections. For example, Dharmamitra was born there, Dharmamitra, a meditation specialist who loved to travel first went to Koutcha, crossed the desert to Tun-huang and eventually travelled to Szechwan to teach meditation.¹⁶ Another of the translators was taught by Buddhasena, a dhyāna master from Kashmir. Even Kālayaśas with meditation as his speciality could easily have been related to the area. Though his tie with Kashmir is not explicitly stated,

lators:

1) Kuan Hsü-k'ung-tsang P'u-sa ching, T. 409, Vol. 13 Sūtra on Visualizing the Bodhisattva Akāśagarbha, translated by Dharmamitra between 424-442 A.D.

2) Fo-shou Kuan Fo San-mei Hai Ching, T. 643, Vol. 15 Sūtra on the Sea of Mystic Ecstasy Attained by Visualizing the Buddha, translated by Buddhahadra between 398-421 A.D.

3) Fo-shuo Kuan Mi-lo P'u-sa Shang-sheng Tu-shi-t'ien Ching, T. 452, Vol. 14 Sūtra of Meditation on Maitreya Bodhisattva's Rebirth on High in the Tusita Heaven, translated in 455 by exiled Northern Liang Prince of An-yang.

4) Fo shuo Kuan P'u-hsien P'u-sa Hsing-Fa Ching, T. 277, Vol. 9 Sūtra on the Practice of Visualizing the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, translated by Dharmamitra between 424-442 A.D.

5) Fo shuo Kuan Yao-wang Yao-shang Erh P'u-sa Ching, T. 1161, Vol. 20 Sūtra Spoken by the Buddha on Visualizing the Two Bodhisattvas Bhaisajjarāja and Bhaisajyasamudgata, translated by Kālayaśas between 424-442 A.D.

¹⁶ Bagchi, op. cit., p. 388.

he did specialize in meditation. The KWLSFC, which is believed to have been translated by him is extremely strong in meditational content. Like Dharmamitra who was born in Kashmir, to whom another translation of the KWLSFC is attributed (though as we have seen, there is no record of this) he also ended up teaching dhyana or meditation in Szechwan. Even if not related to Kashmir directly, he was obviously subject to Kashmiri influence.¹⁷ All these translators' works seem to have been translated during the first half of the fifth century.¹⁸ Since Kashmir is in fact the gateway to Central Asia, our "Central Asian Origin" theory is still intact.

As far as method is concerned, all advocate a method of kuan, a special meditational technique. Moreover the kuan method advocated in these texts is basically the same. The first step involves preparation for meditation. This preparation consists of acquiring a degree of revulsion for this world and longing only for the Pure Land.¹⁹ Later

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 391-392.

¹⁸ Pas, op. cit., "Origin and Literary Criticism . . .", p. 203.

¹⁹ Here the general sense of Pure Land is being employed. It can mean any of several of the Buddhist Paradises advocated in the "kuan" sūtras.

commentaries were to see this stage as the acquisition of both ritual and moral purity.²⁰

After this preparation stage, one moves to the stage of concentration (chuan).²¹ Here concentration means the fixing of one's mind on a single point or object. A favorite object on which to concentrate was the sun, and this in fact appears as the first meditation in KWLSFC. Correct posture is included here, although often the texts do not elaborate on this, assuming 1) knowledge of basic meditation posture; 2) that postural instruction was given orally. Aids to concentration are perfect stillness and facing the direction of the Buddhaland in question (for example, the devotee of Amitāyus would face westward).

Following proper concentration comes the visualization (hsiang) stage. Visualization may be thought of as that power to form a clear and exact mental image of an object that is not present before the eyes.²² Naturally this is not necessarily an easy task. Initially, of course,

²⁰Pas, op. cit., "Shan Tao's Interpretation . . .", p. 106.

²¹Ibid., passim. (The terms chuan, hsiang, kuan, chien are taken from Pas' reconstruction of the stages.)

²²Ibid., p. 101.

it is not only helpful but most times necessary to have a concrete object in front of the meditator at this stage. Many texts advocate the placing of a Buddha image before the devotee, a fact that as we shall indicate below presupposes the acceptance of a cult of images.²³ As one becomes more advanced in this visualization, the object need no longer be physically present. Even without its presence one would still be able to concentrate on it mentally.

Inspection (kuan) follows, which is an examining at a very intense level. With the mind firmly fixed on the mental image, one inspects it seeing all its possible details. The "kuan" texts are full of this detailed, probing inspection, for example, the KWLSFC's fifth meditation where one is to see water divided into fourteen streams, each stream having the color of seven jewels.²⁴

After all the various elements of the mental image have been examined one by one, this detailed examination leads to perception (chien). This perception is a mental projection of the image before the meditator just as if it

²³Soper, op. cit., p. 144.

²⁴SBE., Vol. XLIX, p. 174.

were actually present.²⁵ The devotee will continue to have this clear perception before him at all times whether his eyes are opened or closed. This perception no longer involves stimuli at the sensory level. This perception is now on a completely mental plane.

In short, the method describes a visualization that is not merely a looking, but a true seeing. The Taoists had spoken to tso-wang. Yen Hui' in conversation with Confucius had seen it as forgetting humanity and righteousness, ceremonies and music. He virtually forgot everything and became detached from both his body and mind in becoming one with the great and universal Tao. This type of meditation implied a "sitting and forgetting", a general "emptying".²⁶ From what we have seen, the kuan technique seems nothing like this. It resulted from concentrating, visualizing, and inspecting until a true perception resulted which left reason behind and replaced it with ecstasy.²⁷

²⁵Pas, op. cit., "Shan Tao's Interpretation . . .", p. 103.

²⁶Wing-Tsit Chan, A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy (Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 201.

²⁷Soper, op. cit., p. 144.

In the sense that a perception which expanded one's field of vision was the final product, the kuan technique's end result is not that different from that achieved by the Taoists' practice of tso-wang.

Among the "kuan" sūtras, the KWLSFC is the most elaborate and methodical in teaching of the meditative technique.²⁸ The technique is presented in the following manner. In the sūtras the historical buddha, Śākyamuni, teaches a means of spiritual escape to Queen Vaidehī.²⁹ He presents a series of sixteen meditations which, if followed precisely, will release her from all fetters of life as well as give her a vision of Amitāyus and all the beauties of Paradise. It is both curious and relevant to our discussion that Queen Vaidehī be the recipient of Śākyamuni's formula for release through visualization. Her virtuous husband, King Bimbisāra, has been imprisoned by their evil son Ajātaśatru. Vaidehī visits her husband,

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 144-145.

²⁹ The legends surrounding Queen Vaidehī and her devout husband King Bimbisāra who was imprisoned by their evil son Ajātaśatru date from ancient Hināyana Buddhist tradition. Indeed, there is mention of the characters in a very old Pali text, the Sāmaññaphala Sūta dating circa 250 B.C. (G. MacQueen, Seminar for Religion 712, McMaster University, October, 1978.)

the king, after having anointed her body with honey and ghee mixed with corn flour. She also wears garlands in which grape juice is concealed. These provide the king with the sustenance he has been denied. Vaidehī is subsequently imprisoned for being an accomplice to Bimbisāra and thwarting Ajātaśatru's authority.³⁰ For an ancient Indian legend to be transported to China is not in itself a curious thing. After all, the advent of Buddhism brought many Indian elements to Chinese literature and art, and it is not surprising that such an old and well-loved legend would be one of those imports. What is curious is the choice of a lay person, a woman, with no background in complex meditational practices to be the recipient of the Buddha's message. This observation is of tremendous importance to our study of the text and its visual renderings. Renditions of the Paradieses and their particular Buddhas were popular subjects in Far Eastern Buddhist Art. But Paradise Scenes with side panels depicting the meditations of Queen Vaidheī can be recognized as interpretations of the KWLSFC. These side panels were very closely linked with the sūtra's meditative prescriptions, and were at the same time closely linked visually with the central panel depicting Amitāyus' Paradise. Could

³⁰ Jōji Okasaki, Pure Land Buddhist Painting (New York: Kondansha International Limited and Shibundo, 1977), p. 46.

the reader of the sūtra or the viewer of the painting help but be excited, stimulated, and hence encouraged to be like Vaidehī, another ordinary person, and take her route to release?

As we have alluded to on several occasions, that route was one of meditations, sixteen in number. That the text in its original form expounded sixteen is rather unlikely as the sūtra shows fairly strong evidence of interpolation. That the original meditations and their order of appearance were in fact those we read in the sūtra today is another interesting question. In our detailed analysis of paintings in Chapter Three we will perhaps come up with evidence that will shed light on these questions. For now, however, let us look at the meditations themselves and see what problems this part of the text sets forth.

The text as it now stands presents us with the following sixteen meditations:

- 1) Sun
- 2) Water
- 3) Land
- 4) Trees of the Buddha Country
- 5) Water of Eight Good Qualities
- 6) General Features of the Land
- 7) Flowery Throne
- 8) Perception of Images
- 9) Amitāyus as Forms and Bodies of Buddha
- 10) Avalokiteśvara
- 11) Mahāsthāmaprāpta
- 12) Complete Meditation on the Buddha Country

- 13) Joint Perception of Amitāyus and Bodhisattvas
- 14) Meditation on Superior Class of Beings
- 15) Meditation on Middle Class of Beings
- 16) Meditation on Inferior Class of Beings.³¹

One's first reaction is to question whether the last three meditations are interpolations, for they are conspicuously different from the preceding subject. In nature the three grades of rebirth are not suitable as visualizations, for they involve abstract moral contions.³² Pas, in his study of the text's origins, is alert to this incongruity but goes one step further, criticizing the last three meditations on literary grounds. He finds that numbers fourteen through sixteen are not in the form of answers to questions as is the case throughout all the other meditations in the sūtra. Furthermore, he finds that the Chinese vocabulary creates a strong case for different authorship.³³

We are now left with thirteen meditations, an unusual number for Buddhist literature which favors the numbers four, eight, ten.³⁴ Pas feels that the number is

³¹ SBE., Vol. XLIX, pp. 169-199, passim.

³² Pas, op. cit., "Origin and Literary Criticism . . .", p. 206.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Edward Conze, Buddhist Meditation (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1956), pp. 174-176. (Examples listed by Conze follow:

not altogether impossible considering the thirteen degrees of ksānti.³⁵ Whether this is the case or not, he feels, as I do, that other meditations should be considered as possibly not appearing in the original. Meditation number three, "the Perception of Land", comes to mind. Pas terms it "patchwork", claiming that no new object of meditation is offered here. It seems to have been inserted to manipulate the number of meditations in order to suit the interpolater's needs and purposes.³⁶

Now the number is reduced to twelve, but let us not stop here. Meditations ten and eleven are quite long and extremely elaborate in their description and praise of the two Bodhisattvas Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta. The comments are so laudatory that one wonders for a moment exactly of whom this sūtra is in praise particularly when one contrasts this high commendation of the two bodhisattvas

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- 4 -- 4 Applications of Mindfulness, 4 Forms of Life, 4 Paths, 4 Fruits of the 4 Paths, 4 Noble Truths.
 8 -- 8 Kinds of Knowledge, 8 Fold Path, 8 Worldly Conditions, 8 Great Hells
 10-- 10 Directions, 10 Devices, 10 Recollections, 10 Repulsive Things.)

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 206-207. I have looked into this and found that their number varies but is never thirteen. A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms compiled by W. E. Soothill and L. Hodous indicates groups of 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 14 ksānti (patience or endurance which can be in both mundane and spiritual things) but never thirteen.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 208.

with the paucity of praises to Amitāyus in the meditation reserved exclusively for him. This is approximately the same length as the bodhisattva material, yet Amitāyus is supposed to be the main object of devotion according to the very title of the sūtra itself. Are numbers ten and eleven later additions? Were these bodhisattvas not mentioned in the original form of the sūtra? The answer in both cases would seem to be "no". In the Amitāyus-Amitābha cult the two accompanying bodhisattvas had been present at least since the second century A.D.,³⁷ that is, before the writing of this sūtra. One is therefore safe in presuming that material on the two attendants was in the original sūtra even if it was in a different form.

What seems likely is that at one time the bodhisattvas may have been treated more modestly and may have been the joint subject of one meditation. Possibly later Avalokiteśvara enjoyed such tremendous popularity that he equaled (and eventually surpassed) Amitāyus in popularity. Is it possible that his rise in popularity is responsible for his seeming appearance as an object of supreme worship in this text, so much so that he has been given a separate meditation?³⁸

³⁷ Soper, op. cit., p. 150. They appear in Lokarakṣa's translation; recall p. 4.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 153.

How then are we to account for Mahāsthāmaprāpta's separate meditation? Certainly it was not for reasons of immense popularity as in the proposed argument concerning Avalokiteśvara. But since, as we have seen previously, the two had been treated for some time in union with Amitāyus-Amitābha, there was no reason to exclude him at this point. Furthermore, separate and equally long treatment of this bodhisattva could counter-balance the stress placed on the rising Avalokiteśvara, leaving Amitāyus supreme. To be sure this is highly speculative, however. If we hold the two separate meditations on the bodhisattvas to have been originally one, we could be left with eleven original meditations.

Pas, however, also criticizes meditation number thirteen. He finds its terminology unusual. He points out that the usual stereotyped formula, "Such is the perception of the . . ." is absent.³⁹ Additionally, set between the twelve meditations (they could be considered two sets of six Meditations) and the last three on the degree of rebirth, number thirteen not only breaks the symmetry of the sūtra but also floats somewhere in limbo. Belonging crucially to neither what comes before or after, it appears to be no

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Pas, op. cit., "Origin and Literary Criticism . . .", pp. 207-208.

more than filler, rounding out the number of meditations. So now, if we agree with the Pas hypothesis, we are left with ten meditations, that is, two parallel sets of five each. They are as follows:

External Splendours	Internal Splendours
1) The Setting Sun	6) The Throne
2) The Land of Amitāyus	7) The Images of Amitāyus and <u>Bodhisattvas</u>
3) The Trees	8) The <u>True Body</u>
4) The Lakes	9) The Two <u>Bodhisattvas</u>
5) General View	10) General View

As we may observe, numbers one and six serve as introductions. Two and seven both deal with the superficial realities of the land and Amitāyus and the bodhisattvas. Three, four, eight and nine deal with the true realities. Both five and ten recapitulate and thus conclude the parallel series.⁴⁰

In summary, the Julian Pas study is an admirable, persuasive, and highly suggestive one. Wholehearted agreement on its scheme, however, will be reserved until the visual material has been examined in detail.

Since only the Chinese "translation" of the text survives, we cannot hope to compare its meditations, their number, and their occurrence against another version. To

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 208.

stop on this account, however, would be a big mistake, for a study of the paintings on the KWLSFC, presumably mirroring the text, will decidedly shed more light on the meditations problem. We will use these other sources in subsequent chapters.

For now, let us draw our chapter to a close by making the following assertions:

- 1) that we are more than likely examining a Central Asian text of the fourth-fifth century, translated into Chinese in the first half of the fifth century;
- 2) that although it has affinities with many text groups, it has most in common with the "kuan" sūtras because of the meditational method advocated;
- 3) that since the meditations of Queen Vaidehī make the KWLSFC and its visual renderings unique among the other examples of Paradise sūtras and their related art, these meditations must obviously be the focus which preoccupies us;
- 4) that through textual criticism we saw that it was quite likely that the original meditations had been altered in number, order, and content.

In spite of the exciting nature of these textual problems, we must leave their discussion in abeyance until Chapter III when examination of artistic evidence will test Pas' findings. For now, let us begin to familiarize ourselves with the types of KWLSFC painted sources at our disposal.

CHAPTER II

In Chapter I we dealt with the origin, classification and meditational content of the Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching. We noted its focus on meditation and consequently the importance of the inclusion of the Queen Vaidehī meditations in the text. Though we have ascertained much about the text and its focus we have nonetheless examined only one of the primary sources available to us. What remains are the paintings on and related to the KWLSFC theme.

This chapter will provide general background concerning these painted sources by first discussing and illustrating the main elements that make up a typical KWLSFC composition under the headings a) main personages, b) courts of central panel, c) Ajātaśatru panel and d) meditation panel. Secondly, it will point out the unique nature and use of KWLSFC compositions. Through this background discussion, it is hoped that the text and its method of release will be understood better, for these paintings, after all, aid in the actualization of that which is set forth as doctrine within the text itself.

The painted sources available to us fall into three categories, as we have seen in the introduction: a) the cave paintings from Tun-huang, b) the painted banners removed from this site by the Stein and Pelliot expeditions and c) the renditions on the theme executed in Japan by Chinese artists or after Chinese models. By and large the paintings represent the period of time between the early T'ang Dynasty and the late Sung Dynasty, though one cave painting, quite important to our study, Cave 277 (13T-h) is thought to be a T'ang reworking of an original Wei cave. This might push our dating further back. Dating is forever a problem with these works, not only because of the frequent redecoration of the caves where overlays were mixed with original fragments, but also because of the frequent, if not always faithful, repetition of set motifs established a hundred or hundreds of years earlier. Since this study is a typological one rather than a chronological one, suffice it to say that in our survey, the earliest work (13T-h), is fixed at the first half of the seventh century and those of the latest date are fixed at the third quarter of the thirteenth century (4,5,6,J/C). The time span that they represent will be the period against which our discussion will be set.

Along with geographical and chronological range, these works have a quality range as well. They may be the

work of competent artists or may be the product of barely trained craftsmen. (Contrast Plates 1 and 2.)⁴¹ They range too in their complexity. This will be touched on in the section on the typical central panel where numbers of the celestial gathering and architectural developments will be noted. For now a comparison of Plates 3 and 4⁴² should suffice.

At the outset of our general discussion a brief look at the main personages of the central panel is imperative. Amitāyus, Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta figure prominently not only in this panel and subsidiary panels of KWLSFC art but also as divine personages crucial to Vaidehī's release in the text itself. We will discuss first, Amitāyus (Wu-liang-shou in Chinese), the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life, who enjoyed much popularity among the Chinese. We see him referred to by this name somewhere after 320. The biography of the monk Chu Fa-k'uang (327-402) as contained in the Kao Seng Chuan, tells of his being instrumental in the raising of a Buddha Hall to house

⁴¹ Basil Gray and J. B. Vincent, Buddhist Cave Paintings at Tun-huang (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), Pl. 46a and B.M.#PDOR-845 respectively.

⁴² Eiichi Matsumoto, A Study of the Paintings of Tun-huang (Tokyo: Tohōbunka Gakuin, 1937), Pls. 10 and 9 respectively.

an image of the Buddha Amitāyus. The record calls the Buddha by the name Wu-liang-shou. It is thought that this is the first reference to the Buddha of the Western Paradise by this name.⁴³

Also, as early as the period surrounding the collapse of the Western Chin Dynasty (circa 320 A.D.) Amitāyus had been associated with death-bed visions. The story of a northern priest, Seng-hsien, is significant here. During a fatal illness he longed for Amitāyus' Paradise of the West. Reportedly, Amitāyus descended to greet him. After telling of the divine visit, Seng-hsien died.⁴⁴ What is so intriguing about this tale is that the incident pre-dates the spread of the Amitāyus cult by three quarters of a century (taking Hui-yüan's "Society of 402" as the "founding" of the Pure Land School in China). Also, the story includes information directly related to our study of both the KWLSFC text and its painted versions. It is a) that Seng-hsien was renowned for his meditation, during which he would remain in a trance and not even need to take food; b) that he quietly died sitting in meditation after having reported

⁴³Soper, op. cit., p. 18 citing the Kao Seng Chuan V.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 165 citing Daizokyo, L, p. 395b from the Kao Seng Chuan, XI.

the descent of the Buddha Amitāyus. This very early connection of meditation with release and the descent of Amitāyus will be crucial when we examine the paintings. It could help us to ascertain more of the KWLSFC's teaching regarding release, for as we shall see there are periods when meditational aspects are stressed more than Amitāyus' intervention and vice versa within the tradition.

The Amitāyus movement continued to be popularized under the first Pure Land patriarch, T'an luan (476-542). To him all Buddhist teaching could be divided into two paths, the "Hard Path" and the "Easy Path", preaching release through self-effort and faith in the power of Amitāyus respectively.⁴⁵ These teachings will be well mirrored in the KWLSFC text and paintings.

The second Pure Land patriarch, Tao-ch'o (562-645) continued to foster Amitāyus worship. He renamed the "Hard and Easy Paths" the "Sage's Path" and the "Pure Land Path" respectively. He saw both Paths as equal in value yet stressed that there were times (his age) when corruption made the "Hard Path" impractical and when recitation of the Buddha's name, the practice most frequently referred to as nembutsu, was the only practical way to release.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Okazaki, op. cit., p. 16.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

The third and greatest patriarch, the one whose influence on Japanese Pure Land Buddhism was so great, was Shan-tao (613-681). He wrote a commentary on the KWLSFC, the Fo Shuo Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching Shu, and outlined five major activities that would lead to a rebirth in the Pure Land. They were 1) invoking Amitāyus' name, 2) chanting sūtras, 3) meditating upon Amitāyus, 4) worshipping images, and 5) praising the Buddha. He as well as Tao-ch'o stressed the "Easy Path" with emphasis on the recitation of the Buddha's name; he did, however, encourage all the other practices as well.⁴⁷ As we shall see, Shan-tao's influence figures prominently in several of the paintings we will examine.

Shao-k'ang who died in 805 was the fifth and last Pure Land patriarch in China. Soon after this the school of Pure Land ceased to exist as a separate entity in China, yet much of its teachings, especially salvation through faith in Amitāyus, was so attractive that the other Buddhist schools incorporated it.

Did this movement of Amitāyus worship always include his main accompanying bodhisattvas, Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta, or did they come into prominence in the KWLSFC? We have seen earlier that from the time of

⁴⁷ Ibid.

Kālayaśas' translation of the KWLSFC between 424-442, the two attendant bodhisattvas Avalokiteśvara (Kuan-shih-yin) and Mahāsthāmaprāpta (Ta-shih-chih) have been present in the text. In all the paintings available for study, these attendants appear in the central panel of KWLSFC art themes and very frequently in the side meditation panels as well.⁴⁸ Avalokiteśvara is no stranger to Buddhist iconography. He enjoys a long history as a Buddha attendant. In fact he appears in Kusan art, at Mathurā, in a triad with Buddha and Vajrapāni. In KWLSFC art renditions we generally find him enthroned at the left side of Amitāyus, the Indian and Chinese place of honour. His intimacy with Amitāyus and his importance in the Amitāyus-Amitābha tradition cannot be overemphasized. Texts roughly contemporaneous to the KWLSFC go so far as seeing him as the "son" of Amitāyus-Amitābha. For example, 1) The Kārunapundarīka Sūtra (translated into Chinese around 420 A.D.) sees him as Amitāyus' son in a previous lay incarnation, 2) The Sukhāvātī-vyuha Sūtra (translated around 400 A.D.) calls him "the glorious Buddha son".⁴⁹

⁴⁸ A glance at Chapter III's "Frequency Distribution Chart" will show that Avalokiteśvara appears twenty-eight times and Mahāsthāmaprāpta appears twenty times in a sample of thirty.

⁴⁹ Soper, op. cit., p. 157.

His importance in the tradition is such that in at least one case he completely absorbs his cohort. In later verses added to Kumārajīva's translation prior to the Sui Dynasty, when the translation was being copied for a third version, Avalokiteśvara is described as "at one time standing to the right, at another to the left".⁵⁰ He became so important in fact that we see him eventually eclipse Amitāyus and have ascribed to him his own Paradise on Mount Potalaka despite his bodhisattva status. In the fifth chapter of the Kao Seng Chuan we hear of Hui-ch'ien who fell ill in a temple. The story dates in the early 400's. Sensing himself to be near death, he prayed to Avalokiteśvara and not Amitāyus for rebirth in Sukhāvātī (An-yang). Avalokiteśvara was seen by a nearby nun. He told her that he had personally come to welcome Hui-ch'ien to Paradise.⁵¹ Though it is nothing new for Avalokiteśvara to be connected with death-bed apparitions it is indeed curious that union with Amitāyus-Amitābha was not mentioned or yearned for by Hui-ch'ien but rather the presence of Avalokiteśvara! His intimacy with Amitāyus and this position of importance are well illustrated in the KWLSFC text where Avalokiteśvara is extolled as the tenth

⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 155-156 citing Daizokyo, IX, no. 263, pp. 128 cff.

⁵¹ Ibid.

object of meditation. He is of such significance here that it is stated the mere mention of his name will grant the hearer immeasurable happiness. Avalokiteśvara's prominence is also apparent in the regularity with which he is represented as an object of meditation. In the side panels of certain cave paintings, Cave 71 (3T-h) for example, he is treated more carefully and more individualistically than Mahāsthāmaprāpta or even Amitāyus.

As for Mahāsthāmaprāpta, he appears much less important than Avalokiteśvara if we go by how well he is documented. Still, he has enjoyed the role of chief attendant to Amitāyus along with co-attendant, Avalokiteśvara as early as in the Lokarakṣa translation of the second half of the second century. (See Chapter I.) In Chih-ch'ien's translation it is stated that he will ultimately succeed Avalokiteśvara who will succeed Amitāyus as "Lord of the Western Paradise" when both of them have successfully entered Nirvana.⁵² Also in Chih-ch'ien's work, it is said that "those who fall into terror of the officials" will be saved if they entrust themselves to these two bodhisattvas.⁵³ Certainly in Chih-ch'ien's work, Mahāsthāmaprāpta is held

⁵² Daizokyo, XII, p. 290a.

⁵³ Ibid., pp. 309a, 308b.

in as high an esteem as Avalokiteśvara. This esteem is continued in the KWLSFC text as we now know it. In that text, Mahāsthāmaprāpta is equal to Avalokiteśvara in emphasis, as is seen in his detailed description in Meditation 11. The text is quick to tell us that the two have bodies that are the same at all points. They are only differentiated by their head attributes.

This brings us to an interesting point about the bodhisattvas. It is only with the KWLSFC that the two are first described in detail. Prior texts had simply placed emphasis on the immensity of their aureoles.⁵⁴ It is fascinating to note in the KWLSFC descriptions how fantasy and precision are mixed; for example, in describing Avalokiteśvara's halo it is said that the round halo at the nape of his neck which is in diameter a hundred thousand yojanas contains five hundred magically-created buddhas.⁵⁵ It is no small wonder that the artistic rendering of mixtures of such fantastic and precise elements would be difficult and in many cases impossible. All the same, the KWLSFC did give concrete and specific descriptions of the attendants' attributes. Avalokiteśvara is described as having a crown fashioned of gems in which a magically-

⁵⁴Ch'ing Kuan-shih-yin P'u-sa Hsiao-fu Tu Hai T'o-li-ni Cou Ching is such an example. Daizokyo, XX, no. 1043 p. 34b, c.

⁵⁵SBE., Vol. XLIX, pp. 181-182.

created Buddha stands.⁵⁶ Mahāsthāmaprāpta's crown is made up of jeweled lotuses of which each lotus has daises in which are manifested the visions of the Paradises of all the Buddhas of the Ten Quarters.⁵⁷ Thus we see that the Amitāyus triad holds a position of importance not only within the context of the KWLSFC but also within the larger context of the Buddhist tradition.

Just as one carefully examines a literary source in its entirety to ascertain which sections are most vital to its theme, so too let us carefully begin to examine a typical KWLSFC painted composition. A classification put forth by Okazaki is useful to us at this point. Even though her discussion concerns this type of panel in general, it describes quite accurately the spatial division and thematic content of the central panel of KWLSFC paintings, the first portion of the painting to be examined here. Her six-fold classification follows:

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 182.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 185.

- 1) the court of empty space
- 2) the court of multi-storied buildings
- 3) the court of various deities
- 4) the court of the jeweled earth
- 5) the court of the jeweled pond
- 6) the court of dance and music⁵⁸

Examine Plate 5⁵⁹ to observe this typical division. The first court may include clouds, floating flags or banners or suspended musical instruments. (Plate 6)⁶⁰ Occasionally deities fly through the air or descend on clouds. On Plate 5 note that this court (section a) is rather small and is almost absorbed the second court. In spite of this one can distinguish two sets of cloud coils, a typical Chinese motif and a favorite one of this court. The second court invariably boasts platforms, verandahs and pavillions. Architecture plays a very important role in this section of the paintings. The arrangement of the buildings echoes the layout of monasteries and palaces of the T'ang period.⁶¹ The example in question shows two-storied open pavillions

⁵⁸Okazaki, op. cit., p. 40.

⁵⁹B.M. #PDOR-2750; this plate is divided into the six court classifications and all court references in this section unless otherwise stated pertain to the discussion of this plate.

⁶⁰B.M. #064009.

⁶¹Okazaki, op. cit., p. 37, and A. Buling, "Buddhist Temples in the Tang Period II", Oriental Art, I, no. 3 (Autumn 1955), *passim*.

which overlap one another bridging the composition.

(section b) The third court, the court of various deities, always has a central Buddha flanked by his two main bodhisattva attendants. It is well to note that the number of subsidiary figures tends to increase and the style of their grouping becomes less rigid, the later the work.⁶²

(Plates 7 and 8)⁶³ In the third court of our example (section c) the central Buddha is Amitāyus, the main figure of the KWLSFC. Unfortunately he is quite destroyed. In spite of his defaced condition, he stands out as unique and of prime importance in several ways other than his central position. First, he is placed higher up on the banner and appears larger. Secondly, he is treated with more ornamentation and detail than his attendants. Thirdly, his red and blue robe contrasts with the green and orange of those of his attendants and he is surrounded from knee to the back of his neck by a triple nimbus more ornate than

⁶²Works from the late seventh century and in particular after the eighth century showed an increase in the number of attendants and a relaxed positioning of them. Prior to this they had been fewer in number and arranged in a semi-circle. Buling, op. cit., p. 118.

⁶³Matsumoto, op. cit., Pls. 6a, 4a.

that of his major attendants. His hair is a dramatic blue as opposed to the black of the others. His head is surrounded by a multi-striped halo. His right hand seems to be in the vitarka mudrā. He is accompanied by his chief bodhisattvas, Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta. Though, as we will see later, Paradise illustrations in general can be most similar and the deities difficult to identify, their hand gestures or specific individual attributes aid in their identification. Certain triad groupings characterize specific sūtras. For our purposes, in KWLSFC we can expect to see the Amitāyus, Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta combination. In this example the two major attendants sit European fashion on either side of Amitāyus and hold lotuses in transparent bowls in their hands nearest the central deity. Their other hands are in the vitarka mudrā. The attendants are double haloed and are as well surrounded by a nimbus of colour swirls. In this case their identifying attributes are not obvious; they wear similar robes and jewellery and are similarly coiffed. As well as the Amitāyus triad, ten minor bodhisattvas smaller in scale are positioned on the same balcony, five to the right and five to the left.

The fourth court, that of the jewelled earth, shows the glorious jewel trees characteristic of all "Pure Land" Paradises. In the example, section d, jewel trees appear both behind and before the grouping of deities, both to

the right and left with yet another central grouping. A bead motif suggests the nets of pearls generally associated with these trees. The fifth and sixth courts are reversed in the illustration. Minor aberrations of this nature are not uncommon in these works. The fifth court, that of the jewelled pond, presents sacred lakes, ponds, or tanks covered with various colours of lotus flowers and lotuses at various stages of development. Often devotees who have gained Paradise are being re-born from these lotuses. At the very base of the illustration in the middle foreground we find the lake. (section f). In it sits a raft or platform upon which are placed two confronting parrots and two confronting peacocks, emblems of fidelity and dignity respectively.⁶⁴ On steps leading from the pond are infants, one kneeling and one sitting. The inclusion of animals, as well as the inclusion of infants, symbolic of new souls reborn in Paradise can tell much about the stress of a painting, as we shall see below. The court of dance and music, the last court of the classifi-

⁶⁴C. A. S. Williams, Outlines of Chinese Symbolism and Art Motives (Rutland, Vermont & Tokyo, Japan: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1974), pp. 315-318.

cation, usually features celestial musicians playing a variety of musical instruments (Plate 9).⁶⁵ Dancers are generally included as well. The dancing figures become larger and more prominent the later the painting. Donors also are included frequently in this court when they do not occupy a separate frieze. Again, as we shall discuss below, their presence can tell us much about the use of the painting, particularly when they are accompanied by inscriptions. In our example, this court has six musicians, playing assorted instruments including clappers, flute, harp, shēng,⁶⁶ and lute. It also includes what Waley describes as a donor being played to by the musicians⁶⁷ but it is possible that this figure with garments aswirl and arms outstretched is more likely a dancer. This brings to a close our discussion of a typical central panel of a KWLSFC painting.

Now a brief discussion of the side panel which illustrates scenes from the Ajātaśatra legend is in order.

⁶⁵B.M. #64070:

⁶⁶A shēng is a type of reed organ.

⁶⁷Arthur Waley, Catalogue of Paintings Recovered from Tun-huang by Sir Aurel Stein (London, 1931), p. 107.

Illustrations of this legend occur in the majority of paintings on the KWLSFC theme. Our sample of thirty paintings offers twenty-five which feature them.

The Ajātaśatru legend is an old and very popular Buddhist legend. Indeed reference to it is made in the Sāmaññaphala Sutta, one of the most ancient sūtras of the Pali Canon.

We are not surprised at the legend's inclusion in the KWLSFC and subsequently in its paintings for two reasons. Firstly, when Buddhism entered China from India through Central Asia it brought with it its favourite legends and used them freely in both its literature and its art. For example the Jātakas were adopted and figure in a number of Central Asian paintings. Secondly, Queen Vaidehī, the mother of the misguided Ajātaśatru, was well documented in the legend, as well as being the perfect vehicle for teaching the path to release outlined in this text. As a lay person and a woman she could dramatically demonstrate that the release offered was available to all, even the unpractised and unlearned. The text teaches thus:

(Buddha to Vaidehī) "Thou art but an ordinary person; the quality of thy mind is feeble and inferior".⁶⁸

". . . people such as I (Vaidehī) can now see that land. . . ." ⁶⁹

⁶⁸ SBE., Vol. XLIX, p. 169.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

To be sure, there are variations in the scenes presented in the Ajātaśatru panel of the paintings. There are, however, favourite ones generally included. These are the historical Buddha appearing over Mount Grdhrakuta, his divine dwelling place, and the Buddha descending upon a cloud coil. If these two are not included, usually in their place, Ajātaśatru is shown in his previous incarnation as a rishi, then the rishi turned white hare, the hare being chased by Bimbisāra's emissary.⁷⁰ (Plate 10 (a&b))⁷¹ The

⁷⁰The Japanese priest, Ryōchū (1199-1287) in his work Kwangyō Jobungō Dentsūki gives two versions of the "white hare" story. The first is quoted from the Chao-ming P'u-sa Ching (a lost apocryphal sūtra). King Bimbisāra and Queen Vaidehī are childless. They are told that if a certain nearby hermit's life can pass into the Queen's body she will have a son. The hermit's food supplies are cut off. For protection and disguise, the hermit changes himself into a white rabbit. He is apprehended by King Bimbisāra, who nails the hare's feet and nails shut its nose and mouth. Obviously it cannot survive, and its soul passes into the Queen's womb and Ajātaśatru is born. In the Pieh Chi version (this simply means "another record") the king attempts to slay the hermit outright, but the hermit still manages to change into the white hare, which falls into a well and dies of starvation (Waley, op. cit., pp. 60-61). It is curious that despite the versions and the non-Buddhist element of violence to living creatures the story of the king's slaying of a hermit to obtain a son for himself and his wife is canonical. It is found in Chapter 4 of the Vinaya of the Dharmaguptas, in Chapter 20, 34 of the Mahaprinirvana Sutra and Chapter 18, 31 of the Southern Mahaparinirvana Sutra (ibid., p. 61 citing Takakusu, Vol. 37, p. 245).

⁷¹B.M. #064009 (portion).

presence or absence of these scenes will prove important to our study. Remaining scenes are sure to include Buddha appearing to Bimbisāra and Vaidehī, and/or Pūrṇa and Maṅḍalyāyana, famous disciples of the Buddha, preaching to them, (see Plate previously cited (c)), Ajātaśatru pursuing his mother with a sword; a variety of general scenes relating to Bimbisāra's imprisonment; Vaidehī's visits to him and her subsequent imprisonment.

The six segments of the Ajātaśatru legend pictured in our main example are as follows (refer back to Plate 5). In the first, Buddha appears over Mount Grdhrakuta. The second has Buddha seated on a cloud coil. He is pictured in the third under a tree appearing to Bimbisāra and Vaidehī while two half-figures (ministers) look on. In the fourth scene Ajātaśatru pursues Vaidehī with a sword. In the fifth segment Vaidehī is shown visiting Bimbisāra in prison while two ministers stand by. Finally, the sixth has Ajātaśatru visiting Bimbisāra in prison.

The inclusion of these legendary scenes achieves a dual purpose as far as we are concerned. The Ajātaśatru material in the text acts as an introduction and provides background to the meditations of Queen Vaidehī. It fulfills much the same role in the paintings. Also as we will see in the paintings, the inclusion or omission of certain scenes (the "white rabbit" scenes) will hint at the date and teaching of a particular stage in the development of

KWLSFC thought, even though the legend does not originate with the KWLSFC itself, but rather with ancient Hinayana tradition.

The third and most important element of a KWLSFC art rendition is a meditations panel. This panel, which generally is a vertical side panel to the central Paradise panel, contains illustrations of the meditations of Queen Vaidehī. The number, order and content of the meditations may vary and even at times depart from the KWLSFC text (see Appendix), but certain features are constant. The sixteen meditations, as outlined in the present form of the sūtra, have been described in Chapter I, pages 19-20. All scenes show Vaidehī, usually in Chinese secular dress, prostrate upon a mat before the object of meditation. She and the object of meditation alternate from left to right (Plate 11).⁷² Depending upon level of artistic excellence she, the objects of meditation and the backgrounds may be rendered very schematically or with careful detail. (Compare Plates 12, 13.)⁷³

⁷²B.M. PDOR 5774 fragment.

⁷³Matsumoto, op. cit., Pls. 36, 19b.

Let us look to the main example we have been using for a typical assortment of meditations. It shows a group of thirteen. In them Queen Vaidehī meditates upon

- 1) The Sun, 2) The Moon, 3) The Pavement of Paradise,
- 4) same, 5) The Lake of Eight Virtues, 6) The Palace,
- 7) The Trees, 8) An Altar, 9) A Jewel-Throne,
- 10) Avalokiteśvara, 11) Mahāsthāmaprāpta, 12) The Buddha Image, 13) The True Body of Buddha.

In Chapter I we saw that it was these meditations that singled out the KWLSFC text. We saw that despite the KWLSFC's affinities to Paradise sūtras, it seemed more accurately categorized as a "kuan" sūtra due to its probable origin and its stress on meditation.

The paintings are not without strong Paradise affinities as well. Both the purely Paradise paintings and KWLSFC art renditions were thought to have come into existence as records of meditative visions which subsequently became aids to later devotees seeking such visions. The story of the Chikō Mandala illustrates this raison d'être very well.

Chikō (709-770/780), one of the earliest exponents of Pure Land teaching in Japan, had such a vision. Unlike his friend Raikō, Chikō could not achieve an inner visualization of the limitless beauties and qualities of the Western

Paradise and its Buddha, Amida.⁷⁴ After Raikō's death, Chikō beheld his good friend in a dream, amid the magnificence of the Pure Land. He despaired of ever being able to gain it himself due to the paucity of his good deeds and his inability at inner visualization. Raikō guided Chikō to Amida. Amida revealed to Chikō a miniature Paradise in his right hand. Chikō upon waking immediately had an artist interpret this vision. He devotedly contemplated this painting for the rest of his life and eventually realized birth in the Pure Land. (Plate 14)⁷⁵ The mandala and copies of it were later used by others to the same ends.

As well as sharing a common raison d'être, artistically the KWLSFC and other Paradise paintings share a common theme which was expressed in common artistic formulae. Recall the six-court classification. Thematically speaking, it would be well to note here that though our concern lies essentially with the Buddha Amitāyus and his "Western Paradise", many other such Paradises existed. The most famous of these were related to the other main quarters

⁷⁴In Japanese Pure Land texts Amitāyus-Amitābha is generally referred to as Amida.

⁷⁵Okazaki, op. cit., p. 38 and plate 21.

of the world offering their own Buddhas and their own ideal heavenly conditions. The paradise of Bhaishajyaguru was in the east, that of Śākyamuni in the south, and that of Maitreya in the north.⁷⁶ Regardless of the Paradise, simple devotees sometimes found these doctrines attractive enough but often found them to be too highly complex and their descriptions too difficult to perceive. They needed help in attempting to understand these Paradise notions. Help came in the form of diagrams and paintings which acted as "visual transformations of doctrinal themes".⁷⁷ Paradise paintings and the KWLSFC illustrations were such transformations but as we will see, the KWLSFC was much more than a simple transformation.

By now one may wonder if art renditions of KWLSFC themes are substantially different from other Paradise renderings and if in fact they are worth singling out for separate study. This doubt should not be entertained for a moment, for the KWLSFC is most unique in its form, and as such is important to Chinese Buddhist art and textual study. The art renditions like the sūtra are raised above the purely Paradise level by their inclusion of Queen

⁷⁶ O. Siren, Chinese Painting: Leading Masters and Principles (New York: Hacker Art Books, Inc., 1973), I, 93.

⁷⁷ Okazaki, op. cit., p. 29.

Vaidehī's meditations. Through her meditations, the devotee sees actualized, step by step, that which he/she must do to gain release. All Vaidehī's stages of meditation are clearly described visually for maximum lay involvement.

In other Paradise paintings, the Paradise in question occupies either the whole composition or appears as the central panel of a composition with side scenes. Even when side panels are included they tend to describe scenes from the life or legend of the main Buddha. If devotees are included, they are shown in their earthly perils and/or when they have attained their heavenly reward. We are not made aware of how this feat was accomplished. These paintings are largely a visual description of an end result. True, one who is adept or experienced in meditation can become actively involved with a regular Paradise scene by reproducing that Paradise in his/her own mind. It is to be remembered, however, that a gradual buildup from the simple to the complex in meditation has always been the practice urged in the Buddhist tradition. Buddhaghosa urged forty stages in his Visuddhimagga or Path of Purity. It would be an exceptional meditator indeed who straightaway could internalize an entire Paradise. One need only look at the complicated scenes reproduced as "Plates" within this work to see how difficult this internalization could be!

In the KWLSFC and its art renditions, concern lies primarily with the presentation of the method of obtaining release to the ordinary person. As we saw earlier, Vaidehī is the perfect person with whom such an ordinary person can identify, and that identification is made possible through the devotee, like Vaidehī, progressing through the sixteen meditations. The KWLSFC overtly confirms this textually,

I now proceed to fully expound them for thee (Vaidehī) in many parables and thereby afford all ordinary persons of the future who wish to cultivate these pure actions an opportunity of being born in the Land of Highest Happiness (Sukhāvātī) in the western quarter.⁷⁸

The use of the art renditions would be crucial here in helping the devotee identify with Vaidehī and thus place himself/herself on the path to release through meditation. Should lack of understanding of the sūtra be a problem, the painting as well as being a meditational aid would form visually a compact summary of the main tenets of the text. It in a sense becomes a visual "mini-sūtra" accessible to and understandable by all. In this way the KWLSFC and its painted forms though admittedly related to Paradise sūtras and art, go beyond the Paradise material. The KWLSFC

⁷⁸SBE., Vol. XLIX, p. 167.

tradition expands meditation beyond the purely Paradisaical by not merely visually transforming a doctrinal theme but by 1) supplying an identification figure with whom the devotee can empathize and by 2) providing a gradual plan by which the simplest devotee armed with nothing but self-effort and these aids can gain release.

We have just examined the main elements of KWLSFC paintings. Having gone over these essential elements, we hope that it will be seen how all these diverse clues can be used as "research sources" to further textual understanding.

It was noted that the triad particular to that sūtra and its visual forms was made up of the Buddha Amitāyus and his two main attendant bodhisattvas, Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta. It was seen that all three enjoyed places of prominence in the Buddhist tradition and not only in this Pure Land sūtra. All three, even outside the sūtra in question, were connected with saving help and approachability to devotees. We saw also that tradition held both Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta to be eventual successors of Amitāyus, the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life. These last two facts are important to consider in the light of the KWLSFC text and its art. First, the fact that the triad had prior association

with assistance to devotees made them infinitely approachable, an ideal notion for inclusion in a text and subsequent art renditions which offer a Paradise reward available to all. Secondly, the fact that Amitāyus' length of life was thought to be immeasurable makes his reign over Sukhāvātī a very protracted one. Added to that, if it is hinted textually that he will be succeeded by Avalokiteśvara and then Mahāsthāmaprāpta will in turn succeed Avalokiteśvara (recall reference to Chih-ch'ien's translation) as lords of Sukhāvātī, this Paradise comes across as very enduring indeed. To enjoy rebirth in such an enduring Paradise would be no mere transient reward. The endurance of the Paradise reward increases its desirability. Thus the triad seem well suited to play "starring roles" in a sūtra and its art which were highly enjoyed at a popular level.

It was also pointed out that all panels of a typical KWLSFC art work could provide information that might aid textual understanding. The central panel incorporated the descriptions of Sukhāvātī from the text. Its "court of deities" housed the triad which could immediately help in categorizing the work as a possible KWLSFC representation. We learned that other courts could provide valuable clues in identifying and understanding the text as well, for example, descending deities in the "court of empty space", Parādisaical features specific to

Sukhāvātī in the "court of the jeweled earth", donors with inscriptions in or around the "court of dance and music", souls being reborn from lotuses, occasionally bearing inscriptions, in the "court of the pond". All these could point toward interpreting a painting as a KWLSFC theme.

The Ajātaśatru material was seen as providing background which set the stage for Vaidehī's meditation in the sūtra. It was also seen there as a link with older Buddhist tradition. So too the Ajātaśūtra panels in the paintings. As well, however, the inclusion or omission of "white hare" material reflected doctrinal changes within the Pure Land tradition as the "white hare" scenes are most generally featured in the paintings that have a clear meditation stress and are not to be found in those paintings that have a strong faith emphasis.

Though all parts of the paintings could be useful in helping to identify and understand the KWLSFC, it was the panel relating to Vaidehī's meditations that singled a painting out as a KWLSFC rendition. It was also believed that in this panel Vaidehī personified the ordinary devotee and hence the sūtra, particularly through its art forms, was directed towards devotion at a popular level. Also it was thought that the meditations panel acted as the strongest single source of information about the text. For this reason it was determined that a detailed analysis of

these meditations as to number, content, inclusions, and omissions would yield valuable information about the text and its concept of release. This is what we hope to accomplish in Chapter III through the "Frequency Distribution Chart" and detailed analysis.

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION CHART

	1T	2T	3T	4T	5T	7T	9T	10T	11T	12T	13T	14T	1B	2B	3B	4B	1B	7B	1B	12B	13B	14B	1B	2B	3B	1	3	4	5	6				
	-h	-h	-h	-h	-h	L	L	L	L	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	P	P	P	J/C	J/C	J/C	J/C	J/C											
1) Sun	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	28		
2) Water	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	27		
3) Land	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	27		
4) Trees of the Buddha Country	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	28		
5) Water of 8 Good Qualities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	29		
6) General Features of the Land	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	28		
7) Flowery Throne					✓			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	17		
8) Perception of Images		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	23	
9) True Body of Buddha	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	29	
10) Avalokiteśvara		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	28	
11) Mahāsthāmaprāpta		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	20	
12) The Buddha Country	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	20	
13) Perception of Buddha & Bodhisattvas	✓	✓			✓			✓				✓											✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10	
14) Superior Class of Beings		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓									✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	18	
15) Middle Class of Beings		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓									✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	15
16) Inferior Class of Beings		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓											✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	11

Meditations in Paintings but not explicitly in text

Altar															✓																		1	
Blue Lotus													✓													✓								2
Bodhisattva (additional)		✓							✓																									2
Buddha and Bodhisattva (additional)		✓							✓																									3
Ice (distinct from water as ice)					✓																		✓	✓	✓									4
Jewels	✓												✓				✓						✓											4
Lotus (generic)																																		
Moon	✓		✓		✓		✓					✓											✓											7
Monk			✓				✓																											2
Music																			✓															1
Platform of Blocks				✓			✓					✓																						3
Purple Lotus																																		
Treasure Stand/Tower	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓					✓	✓			✓	✓											12
Unclear or Effaced				✓	✓	✓			✓				✓							✓	✓		✓											10
TOTAL MEDITATIONS	11	18	16	12	16	16	16	16	18	11	9	16	15	10	13	7	10	11	12	15	11	14	16	11	9	16	16	16	16	16	16	409		

* Severely damaged works and those with five meditations or less have been omitted from this sample as it was thought that they would distort the findings; they have, however, been included in the Appendix for reference.

#'s 1, 2, 3 refer to Categories of Chapter III.

CHAPTER III

As we have seen, in the absence of other extant versions of the Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching it seems only fitting to examine the visual renderings of this sūtra, for they are storehouses of valuable information. Since, as we have also seen, the meditations of Queen Vaidhēī are the most unique and important feature of the sūtra, we will of necessity stress these meditations in our discussion of the paintings where we will find them of the utmost importance as well. We will also bring in features of the other panels of the paintings when they bear strongly on the significance of the meditations.

As a result of careful examination and cataloguing of the paintings, it has been determined that they are best divided into three classifications:

- 1) those paintings in which there is no reference to soul grade material, that is, meditations 14, 15, 16 as we know them in the present form of the KWLSFC;
- 2) those paintings in which, although there is no explicit reference to these soul grades as we know them, there is an implicit reference to them in the form of such rebirth motifs as

lotuses, haloed beings and so on;

- 3) those paintings in which there is explicit reference to, indeed major stress placed upon the soul grades as we see them in the present text.

This chapter, making use of the three-fold classification, will show that artistic findings in many ways corroborate the results of textual criticism as put forth in Chapter I, namely that it is more than likely that the "Central Asian" original of the KWLSFC was not as we know the text in its present form, but rather included only approximately ten meditations.

It is to be recalled that Pas suspected meditations 14, 15, 16 dealing with the grades of rebirth to be late interpolations. A glance at our frequency chart in fact hints at such a conclusion. In addition, Pas suspected meditation 13 on the basis of its phrasing. Again our frequency chart corroborates this. Finally Pas also suggested that meditation 10 and 11 were once one. This still remains unsupported due to the regularity with which both are portrayed within the artistic tradition. Pas' notion that "Meditation Upon the Land", the third meditation, was not one of the original meditations is totally unsubstantiated by artistic evidence.

It seems that artistic evidence supports Pas' interpolation theory regarding the last three meditations, the grades of rebirth. Just as they seem suspect on the grounds of literary style and their relation to the whole of the sūtra, so too they appear suspect in the paintings. Our frequency chart illustrates that they appear explicitly only six times in a sample of thirty (13T-h; 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 J/C). (This will be expanded as we discuss classification 3.) When one considers the frequent and regular appearance of meditations 1-6 and 9-10 as in the present text and contrasts this to the sparse appearance of 14, 15, 16 one cannot help but surmise that they were not part of the original content. Thus artistic evidence combined with the findings of textual criticism strongly suggests that an alternate version of the KWLSFC existed which made no reference to the soul grades of rebirth,

A slight digression would seem in order here to help substantiate the notion of a KWLSFC version with between ten to twelve meditations. As we recall, meditation thirteen, "Joint Perception of the Buddha and His Bodhisattvas", was suspect on the grounds of the use of unusual terminology. It is represented the least frequently in the paintings surveyed, suggesting that the meditation was unstressed or not present in the text that inspired the paintings.

That meditation ten and eleven, "Meditation Upon Avalokiteśvara" and "Meditation Upon Mahāsthāmaprāpta", were originally one was another suggestion in the literary criticism of the text. Artistic findings show that Avalokiteśvara appears much more frequently than does Mahāsthāmaprāpta. Our statistics might not be totally reliable here, as when only one bodhisattva was included in the meditation, it was interpreted as Avalokiteśvara. In the very minute meditation scenes available for inspection, the distinguishing attributes of the individual bodhisattvas are either too small to distinguish or are not rendered. Perhaps the single bodhisattva implies meditation upon the bodhisattvas generally. At any rate, considering the many instances where two distinct ones appear, we have to leave the notion of the two-in-one meditation unsupported for now.

Totally unsupported must remain Pas' notion that "Meditation Upon the Land", the third meditation, does not belong to the sūtra's original content. It was held suspect on the grounds that it is patchy in style and introduces no new notion into the sūtra. All this is true, and coupled with its extreme brevity -- it is by far the shortest of all sixteen -- it does seem even more like an addition. Artistically, however, it is faithfully rendered in over

three-quarters of the painted versions examined. Thus the suspicion that it is not basic to the sūtra is brought into question by its obvious importance in the paintings.

Our frequency chart of material related to the grades of rebirth, together with evidence from textual criticism, thus provides strong indications that the KWLSFC was primarily a practical meditation sūtra to which were grafted later ideas describing the nature of release.

Thus far, we have looked at the frequency of appearance or absence of individual meditations. If we look at the total number of meditations rather than the frequency of individual ones, we again come up with significant results. The number which is the most frequent total number of meditations is eleven. This seems to support the textual critic's speculation about a form of the extant text having existed without the last three meditations on grades of rebirth and without other material which is suspect. So it would seem possible on the grounds of both textual and artistic evidence that an alternate form of the KWLSFC did exist composed of between ten and twelve meditations. It is unfortunate that dates cannot help us too much in this regard. The banners in the British Museum, London (3B, L, 4B, L, and those in the Central Asian Antiquities Museum, Delhi (1, 7, 11, 13B, ND), can be situated roughly between 864 and 983. The example

from the Musée Guimet, Paris (3B, P), has been placed by Pelliot between the ninth and tenth centuries. The Tun-huang cave example (12T-h) Pelliot has relegated to the end of the eighth century. These works are all from Category I and contain no soul grade material. As we will see in our subsequent classification, Category II, examples with implicit reference to soul grades existed concurrently with or before the above dated works, so we are frustrated in attempting to prove that the non-soul grade material represented an earlier form of the text. It is well to note though that many of our cited examples are from among the Tun-huang banners whose dating is always problematic due to the fact that they contain stylistic motifs of two centuries prior to their execution. If their dating cannot support their basis on an earlier form of the text, can they at least be thought of as copies of art works which did indeed illustrate such a text? The question must remain unanswered.

Let us examine a few examples of the first category to illustrate our findings. A Paradise of Amitāyus-Amitābha (13B, ND) is such a work, from the Central Asian Antiquities Museum, Delhi, and dating between 864 and 983. (Plate 15)⁷⁹

⁷⁹Matsumoto, op. cit., Pl. 12.

It features only eleven meditations. It begins as is most customary, with Queen Vaidehī meditating upon the setting sun. In the second meditation, Queen Vaidehī meditates upon water in the form of ice. The third meditation has Vaidehī meditating upon the vegetation of Paradise, the fourth upon the Lake of the Eight Virtues, and the fifth on the sacred pavement of Paradise. In the sixth meditation, Vaidehī meditates upon the treasure stand, while in the seventh her meditation is upon the general features of Sukhāvātī. In the eighth meditation the Palaces of Paradise are featured; while the ninth shows meditation upon a monk, possibly Maudgalyāyana or Ānanda, both of whom played an important role in the KWLSFC. The tenth meditation is more than likely intended to be upon Avalokiteśvara, while the eleventh, though almost effaced, is distinguishable as being upon Buddha Amitāyus.

This example of our first classification illustrates well the possibility of the existence of an alternate version of the KWLSFC. Looking over the objects of meditation, we notice that six have been omitted namely those on the soul grades (14, 15, 16), General View (6 or 12), Mahāsthāmaprāpta (11), Images (8)⁸⁰ and one has been added "monk" (#9 of the painting). The omission must reflect the fact that those meditations were either unknown or unstressed.

⁸⁰These numbers refer to the scheme in the present form of the KWLSFC text.

Among the missing material were the soul grade meditations. Since the work itself is intact, the omission is clearly not an instance of the painting's being faded or defaced. The omission is clearly purposeful. Elsewhere in the painting, beyond the meditation panel we find evidence that substantiates the notion of the underplay of the grades of rebirth. In the central panel very little visual space is devoted to the lake from which so many of these souls are reborn. Added to this, the lake boasts no infant souls rising from it nor does it feature lotuses, common rebirth motifs. One can add to this the evidence supplied by the panel which depicts scenes from the Ajātaśatru legend. Our present example includes a scene depicting Ajātaśatru's previous incarnation as a white rabbit. (Recall discussion of this aspect of the legend in Chapter II).

Waley has advanced that the paintings that make explicit reference to the soul grades never contain the "white rabbit content" of the Ajātaśatru legend.⁸¹ Of the sample of thirty representative works studied, this holds true in twenty-seven cases which seems highly significant. Suffice it to say that the presence of the "white rabbit scene" from the Ajātaśatru panel reinforces our suspicion

⁸¹Waley holds this content to illustrate a doctrine of "contradictory causation", which was incompatible with the doctrine of faith in Amitāyus' saving intervention exemplified by the presence of the soul grades (Waley, op. cit., p. xxi). This will be more fully discussed later in this chapter in

that this painting does not make reference to meditations 14, 15, 16 of the KWLSFC text.

Another example where the stress on the soul grades is notably absent from Queen Vaidehī's meditation is "Illustration du Kouan King" (3B, P) housed in the Musée Guimet, Paris, and dated by Pelliot as being between the ninth and tenth century. (Plate 16 a, b)⁸² The meditations proceed as follows (top row). The first meditation is upon the Palace of Sukhāvati, the second upon the jewel or treasure stand of Paradise. The third meditation is upon the vegetation of Paradise, while the fourth is upon a rectangular enclosed space. Such a motif likely suggests meditation upon water as ice. The fifth meditation (second row, to our left) is upon a blue lotus, while the sixth is upon a personage seated in meditation. Both the seventh and eighth feature a bodhisattva upon a lotus throne, while the ninth portrays Vaidehī's meditation before a standing golden Buddha. Though not expressly stated, it can be quite certain that the last three meditations exemplify the Amitāyus triad.

the discussion of 2B, L, a painting of the second category.

⁸²Matsumoto, op. cit., Pl. 16.

In examining these nine meditations it is clear that they do not seem to emphasize the degrees of rebirth. Though the blue lotus and infant soul motifs appear in the work, they are standard motifs of the Sukhāvati Paradise and do not necessarily imply soul grades. Additionally, all those meditations (14, 15, 16) relating to soul grades are absent and the "white rabbit" scene is present. Its presence here conforms to the general observation noted above that the "white rabbit" scene does not appear in those paintings that stress the soul grades.

A wall painting from Cave 249, Tun-huang (12T-h), of a late eighth century date, has only eleven meditations made up of the usual objects of meditation with not the slightest reference to the soul grades. (Plate 17)⁸³ 3B, L, from the banners of the British Museum dating between 864 and 983 (recall main example of Chapter II, Pl. 5), a work totally intact, features only thirteen meditations. Meditations 14, 15, 16 have been left out either because a stress on soul grades was not pronounced or did not exist in the text it illustrated. 1B, ND (Plate 18)⁸⁴ with its ten meditations, 7B, ND with its eleven, and 11B, ND with its possible twelve demonstrate that painted renditions of the

⁸³Matsumoto, op. cit., Pl. 5B.

⁸⁴Ibid., Pl. 10.

KWLSFC exist that do not illustrate the soul grades, a most important portion of the text as we now know it. For further details on the examples cited, see Plates and Appendix.

One third of the examples available for study are of the same type as the above. They do not illustrate the meditations on the soul grades and contain between ten to twelve meditations. The first question that arises is what the absence of these meditations implies about the religious content of the alternative text on which we have assumed them to be based. Would the means of release set forth in such an alternate version of the text have differed from that put forth in the KWLSFC as it now stands, with its last three soul grade meditations stressing the death-bed intervention of Amitāyus? This being so, would the use of the art form of the sūtra also differ?

In Chapter I we learned that the major emphasis of the KWLSFC was that the devotee could obtain release through meditation. After the preparatory stage of a) acquiring a revulsion for the world and a longing for Paradise, a concentration stage, b), followed, when one would fix one's mind on a single object, and following that the visualization stage, c), empowered the devotee to form an exact mental image of an object even if it were not present. A stage d), of inspection followed that with an examination at a

very intense level. A stage of perception, e), on a completely mental plane finally resulted. Without the need of stimuli at the sensory level, the image was before the meditator just as if it were actually present. In all of this one cannot ignore the great stress on self-effort and perseverance as one gradually progressed through stages of simple to complex meditation. This and only this emphasis on release through meditation is stressed in the group of paintings now under discussion. One can see that the use of these paintings as visual aids might have been vital as the meditator moved from the simple to complex stages.

Initially, a pondering of the beauties and rewards of Sukhāvati as portrayed in the painting might certainly in time cause one to value its world over one's present one. After this initial preparation, KWLSFC art could have continued to aid the devotee in his quest of release. Though undoubtedly the natural or accomplished meditator might attain release merely through meditation upon the central Paradise scene alone (indeed, paintings of purely Paradise material have been used thus), the average devotee would have had to progress from the simple to the complex. As noted above such a gradual progression had long been the case in the Buddhist tradition. Buddhaghosa's famous Visuddhimagga, The Path of Purity, stressed this same gradual progression, giving forty exercises for the develop-

ment of concentration. After the painting had helped to establish this longing for Sukhāvati, then, it could again have been most useful to the average devotee at the concentration stage. The devotee could have turned to the illustrations of the meditations of Queen Vaidehī within the painting. Fixing one's mind on a single simple object was more easily accomplished by use of the KWLSFC's usual first meditation, that upon the sun. (Meditation upon the sun was also a practice stressed by Buddhaghosa and was among the first ten exercises he prescribed.) The progression of meditations suggested to Vaidehī by Śākyamuni could be employed by the devotee, for they were carefully developed in order of difficulty. Additionally, Vaidehī's example would have spurred the devotee onward. At the visualization stage, especially when the meditator was still a novice, great use could have been made of the concrete image. The panel depicting Vaidehī's meditations would have been crucial here. If the meditator were to form an exact mental image of the object, so exact that the image would remain even if the object were absent, certainly a period where the concrete was in use would not be improbable. The meditator would have examined the sun, water, jewelled earth, vegetation of Paradise, and so on as depicted in the painting. After long and repeated examination, the visualization of the object even in its absence

would have been achieved. After this stage, concrete objects need not have been physically present. This does not minimize the use of the painting as a visual aid. The initial stages would have been of the utmost importance; without them, progression up the ladder would never have been set in motion.

Now let us summarize this section on the first category of paintings:

1) There is a group of paintings which illustrate the KWLSFC without reference to soul grades (meditations 14, 15, 16).

2) These paintings illustrate an average of eleven meditations; they agree in most cases in number and content with the illustrations of the meditations textual criticism has held to be the original content of the sūtra.

This reinforces the notion that the text in its present form might well have undergone changes, and may contain interpolations.

3) These paintings illustrate a stage of the text in which the primary emphasis is on meditation involving stages which progress from simple to complex.

- 4) These paintings are of great importance as visual aids, for the sūtra in this "early" form offers a release accomplished only through self-effort and perseverance by means of meditation.

The notion of intervention of Amitāyus suggested as an alternate form or perhaps the only form of release in the longer present text is totally absent from these paintings. It would follow that it was absent from the text they illustrated as well. In the latter the devotee would have been alone in his quest except for the painting which he would have used to start him on his way. The vicarious sharing of his setbacks and progress with Queen Vaidehī, another lay person who finally reached her goal, would have also aided the devotee.

Next we come to the second category of paintings, those in which references to soul grade material are implicit. These references may be found either in the meditations themselves or in the accompanying panels of the painting. This group featuring implicit references is the largest of the three suggested categories. It is represented by fourteen examples from the sample of thirty.

A few words must be said of how this group emerged. To be as accurate as possible in creating the other two categories, that is in classifying the material which did

not contain soul grade reference or which did contain strong and explicit soul grade reference, the examples were quite scrupulously judged. Naturally "border-line" cases appeared where perhaps only one grade was suggested, or a painting contained a suggestive inscription, or a work might have contained meditations with many general rebirth motifs, for example, lotuses, haloed beings and so on. It was as a result of the scrupulous classification of categories one and three that the second category came into existence with such a large representation. It is felt, however, that despite its emergence through an elimination process from categories one and two, it is a valid and important classification in its own right. For our purposes we will refer to it as the "transitional" category.

As well as being the largest of the three categories, this transitional one is also the most diversified. It contains variations in the number of meditations, having totals as low as ten (example 2B, L) and as high as eighteen (examples 2T-h, 11T-h). This is particularly interesting since the present text boasts only sixteen.

This category also contains the three aforementioned exceptions, that is, the material with reference to grades of rebirth along with material pertaining to Ajātaśatru's "white rabbit" incarnation (examples 1B, L; 14B, ND; 1B, P).

Classification Two contains material related to Shan-tao's commentary,⁸⁵ the Fo Shuo Kuan-wu-laing-shou-fo Ching Shu as well, material we seldom see without its being in conjunction with the three soul scenes that illustrate the grades explicitly (2B, L) is such an example. Despite the presence of such diversity, there is unity within this category:

- 1) However implicit, a reference to the rebirth grades is present in all the works.
- 2) In all the paintings the main stress seems to remain upon meditation, so much so that in two instances the objects of meditation have been increased to eighteen.
- 3) The paintings of this category do not appear to have changed in use as compared to those of category one. They are still vital aids in the visualization-meditation process. That such examples come from both the cave paintings and the banners tells us that these aids most likely were widely in use for both public and private devotion of a practical nature. The inclusion of diverse additional meditations is

⁸⁵Shan-tao's approximate dates are 613-681 A.D.

most likely not the result of any lack of understanding of the text so much as a product of a misinterpretation of artistic motifs.

This misunderstanding resulted from the copying and re-copying of motifs to the point where a generalized form emerged which could easily be misunderstood (example 5T-h, 2T-h, 9T-h, 11T-h, IB, L). (See Appendix and related Plates.)

- 4) It follows that the devotee who would use these paintings as meditational aids still is in control of his own release through meditation upon the objects featured in the paintings.

The paintings are still being used as aids in the same way as those of category one. New trends (or perhaps the further development of old ones) cannot be denied, however, when implicit soul grade references have been introduced. We can perhaps best observe these as we look at examples from the transitional category of paintings.

A Paradise of Amitāyus-Amitāy (2B, L), among the banners dated between 864 and 983, presently in the Department of Oriental Antiquities of the British Museum, London, is an interesting example with which to start. (Plate 19)⁹⁶ It features most of the diverse elements

⁸⁶BM #PDOR-5773.

mentioned earlier, even though an initial look at its meditations is disappointing. It features only the meditations upon 1) Sun, 2) Water, 3) Palace, 4) Lotus Throne, 5) Amitāyus, 6) Buddha Standing for All Buddhas, 7) Avalokiteśvara, 8) Pavement of Paradise, 9) Vegetation, 10) Sacred Tank. For all purposes it would seem to be a perfect inclusion for the first category rather than the second since none of these meditations point to grades of rebirth. A characteristic of the first meditation is well worth noting. Although this meditation takes on its usual form, displaying the sun being meditated upon by a prostrate Queen Vaidehī, one cannot help but note the layering of three clouds over the sun. (Plate 19a)⁸⁷ These clouds are unmistakably a reference to the obstructions which often face the meditator as he prepares for visualization-meditation. These obstructions are mentioned nowhere in the KWLSFC text but are a prominent feature of Shan-tao's commentary upon the text, the Fo Shuo Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching Shu. This painting then clearly indicates a knowledge of Shan-tao's commentary and suggests that the commentary was not restricted to the intellectually and philosophically minded but also was known and used (at least in part) at

⁸⁷ Ibid.

a popular devotional level. Perhaps then this painting illustrates the commentary on the KWLSFC and not the text itself? As we shall see, this is not necessarily so.

Though examining the meditation panel is generally the most helpful to us, here is an example where other panels can be instrumental in helping us to solve a dilemma. A fragment from the "court of the pond" shows a naked child-soul being born. An accompanying inscription reads 中品上 [生] "Middle Rank Upper Birth".⁸⁸ This is an obvious reference to the three grades of rebirth, the subject of the last three meditations. The phrasing recalls Pas' comments that meditations 14, 15, 16 reflect a very different language usage, one that is typically Chinese.⁸⁹ He uses this to reinforce his case for these soul grade references being later interpolations. Without a doubt this painting and its inscription reflect a knowledge of the text or the ideas set forth in the text in its present form. But the fact that there is no explicit way in which the three grades are represented pictorially cannot be ignored, though their absence may be due to the fragmented nature of

⁸⁸Waley, op. cit., p. 70.

⁸⁹Pas, op. cit., "Origin and Literary Criticism . . .", p. 210.

the work. Fragmentation cannot be used as too strong an argument here, however, for in the examples where the grades of rebirth are explicitly rendered they are generally placed at the bottom of the work. The base of this work is generally intact, yet does not contain such scenes. If reference to the other grades was to be included it would be within the central panel of the work such as in the child-soul example mentioned above. Suffice it to say that though reference to one grade of rebirth is made, the theme is not presented forcefully in the work.

Once again let us turn briefly to the discussion of "white rabbit" material. As we have previously discussed, paintings where "white rabbit scenes" appear along with rebirth grade material are exceptional. The painting presently under discussion is one of these exceptions. It seems that though this "white rabbit" content of the Ajātaśatru legend enjoys a long tradition in Buddhism (see Chapter II), with Shan-tao it ceased to be a mere propagation of a popular legend and became illustrative of the esoteric doctrine of "contradictory causation",⁹⁰ that is, showing that evil can ultimately lead to good.

⁹⁰Waley, op. cit., p. xxi.

. . . thus if Bimbisāra had not slain the rishi, the rishi would not have been reborn as Ajātaśatru; and if the rishi had not been born as Ajātaśatru, Ajātaśatru would not have imprisoned his father (Bimbisāra), and if he had not imprisoned his father, his mother could not have visited him in prison . . . and so on, leading finally to the point in which Ajātaśatru's crime in imprisoning his mother leads her to call upon Buddha, and hence to her reception of the famous sixteen Visions. Thus Bimbisāra's wickedness in slaying the rishi ultimately produced a contradictory (i.e. a good) effect.⁹¹

These scenes disappeared when the sixteen visions or meditations were downplayed and Amitāyus' intervention to the dying beings played up (to be discussed next in category three). Could it be that such an esoteric doctrine as "contradictory causation" had no place in the highly esoteric teaching of release offered to all through faith in and devotion to Amitāyus? Could it have been that the notion of "contradictory causation" better fitted in with the self-help notion of the meditation stress where one relied on one's own efforts doing the best one could rather than being aided from without? These of course are possibilities but the question must remain unanswered for the moment as to why the "white rabbit" vignettes vanished in the later works with the strong faith stress.

To summarize, this painting is akin to those of the first category in the numbers of meditations and their content. It illustrates too the "white rabbit" legend.

⁹¹ Ibid.

It still appears to stress release through these meditations with the responsibility resting on the devotee. It does depart from the group, however, through its reference to one of the grades of rebirth and points toward a partial knowledge of the themes of both the KWLSFC as we know it and Shan-tao's commentary upon it rather than upon the proposed "alternate" version of the text.

Next let us briefly examine Cave 172 at Tun-huang, with its eighth century wall painting (3T-h) (Plate 20).⁹² It features meditations upon 1) Sun, 2) Lotus Pond, 3) Tank, 4) Moon, 5) Vegetation, 6) General View, 7) Pavement, 8) Bodhisattva, 9) Monk, 10) Bodhisattva, 11) Avalokiteśvara, 12) Tower or Palace of Paradise, 13) Red Lotus, 14) Haloed Figure, 15) Other Haloed Figure, 16) Lotus. This work appears to place a rather strong emphasis on the rebirth theme in general. To begin with, all sixteen meditations have been included. It is difficult to tell, however, just which motifs of the sixteen meditations are illustrative of the three degrees of rebirth. Numbers two, twelve and sixteen all feature lotus motifs, often indications of rebirth in Paradise. Eight, nine, ten, fourteen and fifteen representing various bodhisattvas or haloed beings could also

⁹²Matsumoto, op. cit., Pl. 19a; Gray, op. cit., Pl. 64b.

stand for rebirth. Of this last assortment, it is unclear if the rendition of monk or bodhisattva is intended as a rebirth symbol. One can be reasonably sure that none of these represent Avalokiteśvara as he is specifically treated in meditation eleven. It is safe to assume that at least one of the unidentified personages is Mahāsthāmaprāpta, as he very frequently appears as an object of meditation since he is Amitāyus' other major attendant. This leaves four personages who could be symbolic of rebirth grades or rebirth themes in general for as we shall see in our last category, bodhisattvas, haloed beings, and monks were all visual symbols used at various times to illustrate degrees of rebirth. It may be quite possible on the other hand that meditations number fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen illustrate the rebirth grades in keeping with their order within the present version of the text since haloed beings and lotuses are also common rebirth symbols. Suffice it to say that though the three meditations referring to the degrees of rebirth may not be explicitly illustrated or perhaps not even conspicuously grouped together, there can be no doubt that they are implied considering the many possible references to them mentioned above. Despite this one cannot help but see this painting as also reinforcing the notion that the path to release comes through meditation and self-effort since no explicit visual content implies outside intervention.

The continued stress on the importance of the meditations is shown dramatically by the two cave paintings, Cave 66 (2T-h), eighth century, and Cave 197 (11T-h) (Plate 21),⁹³ roughly 700 A.D. which extend the number of meditations to eighteen. Both have a marked stress on the degrees of rebirth by their inclusion of such motifs as many additional buddhas and bodhisattvas or a bodhisattva emerging from a lotus. What ranks them as particularly noteworthy is their inclusion of descending deity motifs, for example in 2T-h, meditations 6, 12, 17, 18, and in 11T-h, meditations 9, 13, feature this motif. This is a motif we will see faithfully repeated in the works of category three as part of the explicit rebirth grade illustrations.

In a discussion of implicit reference to soul grade material, the Shōkai Mandala cannot help but come to mind, as it pushes this notion into another sphere of development. (Plate 22)⁹⁴ One of the three mandalas of extreme importance in Japanese Pure Land Buddhism, it is thought to have been painted by Shōkai himself after having received this vision from the bodhisattva Kannon (Avalokiteśvara) in 996 A.D.

⁹³ Gray, op. cit., Pl. 47.

⁹⁴ Okazaki, op. cit., Pl. 35.

After he had painted the general Paradise scene of the mandala according to his vision, lotus thrones miraculously appeared. He then painted these sixteen lotus thrones as a border to the mandala; three along the top and bottom horizontally, five on each side vertically. They are rendered alternately in gold and silver and bear within them verses; the verses identify them as representations of Vaidehī's "Sixteen Contemplations" including the last three, the references to the rebirth of beings of superior, middle, and inferior rank.

Though the Shōkai Mandala has been included briefly here for discussion and also in the appendix, it has not been included in our typical sample of thirty. Though this mandala is obviously associated with the Kammuryōju-kyō,⁹⁵ it is unique and varies greatly from the accepted form of paintings of the KWLSFC tradition. For this reason it has not been considered statistically, though its very uniqueness makes it worth mentioning in passing in this section dealing with implicit soul grade references.

To recapitulate, category two of the paintings truly may be termed a transitional category. While its paintings have in all cases elements of category one, they also stand apart due to certain features: 1) The notion of soul

⁹⁵ This is the Japanese phrasing for the Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching.

grades is obviously present, even if at times it appears loosely so. 2) Shan-tao's commentary is known; this second fact reinforces the notion that knowledge of soul grades is present, since the soul grade doctrine is certainly one of Shan-tao's foci. 3) The developed and set iconography one associates with the pictorial rendering of the soul grades still appears unknown. If the rich and detailed, precise description of the soul grades and their sub-categories, the degrees of rebirth, were iconographically established, why would artists have rendered them merely suggestively by lotuses, haloed beings, or bodhisattvas? On the basis of the present study it seems that at the beginning of the eighth century, the period from which most of these painted examples date, these notions of soul grades were a part of the written KWLSFC for Shan-tao referred to them (recall his seventh century dates). Nevertheless it would seem that these doctrinal developments were not yet generally known or fully understood on a popular level. As a result of this they found themselves expressed, but only implicitly, in the artistic renditions of the KWLSFC at the time surrounding this date.

Now let us examine the third category, which features paintings in which there is explicit reference to the grades of rebirth set forth in the KWLSFC as Queen Vaidehī's last three meditations. This classification contains the fewest

representative examples, having a possible six from the sample of thirty (four definite and two possible). Of the four definite examples, one example is a Tun-huang wall painting, Cave 277 (13T-h) of the seventh century. The remaining five belong to Japanese material; they include three versions of the Taima Mandala (1, 3, 4 J/C) definitely category three material and two versions of Sixteen Contemplations of the Kammuryōju-kyō (5, 6 J/C) possible inclusions. All are of approximately a thirteenth century date.

Let us briefly outline some general characteristics of this category.

- 1) All illustrations (both the Tun-huang and Japanese examples) show a careful reading of the text and/or a commentary upon the text in their rendering of the rebirth grades; that is, except in "Sixteen Contemplations" material. They illustrate elements outlined in the text, such as
 - a) the "Welcoming party", which descends to greet the dying soul, decreasing in the number of personages the lower the rebirth grade; b) Amitāyus sending forth rays of light to shine over the dying person's body; c) other visiting deities extending their hands in welcome to the dying being (Plates 24-29).
- 2) All the Japanese examples have portrayed visually all sixteen meditations of the KWLSFC.

3) Though meditations other than soul grades appear, they seem secondary to the last three. a) In 1, 3, 4 J/C the three grades of rebirth are focussed on to such an extent that they have been subdivided into nine degrees of rebirth, that is, a highest, middle and lowest degree for each of the superior, middle and inferior grades or classes. b) In 5, 6 J/C the three grades have not been subdivided but have been rendered larger and presented much more importantly than the other meditations.

4) Another characteristic of these works is the abandoning of the portrayal of the "white hare" incarnation of Ajātaśatru. It would seem that once again paintings bearing these specific characteristics could tell us something of the nature of release as outlined in the text(s) they illustrate. This in turn should tell us how and if the use of those paintings contributed to that release.

What do these paintings tell us of the notion of release? In the four definite examples, rebirth grade scenes focus on the descent of the Amitāyus Triad. Whether the dying person has led an exemplary life, a moderately good life or the life of a hardened sinner, the compassionate Amitāyus comes to escort him to the Pure Land. Whatever has happened to the gradual path in which a devotee must practise successively more complex meditations in order to gain

release? It would appear that these paintings document a text wherein faith in Amitāyus and/or the repetition of the nembutsu, "Adoration to Buddha Amitāyus"⁹⁶ is what brings the dying soul to release as much as, or instead of, the carefully climbed ladder of visualization-meditation. We did not see in the first and second categories of paintings this notion of intervention of an "other". The teaching that the paintings of category three seem to mirror is that the self-reliance associated with Vaidehī's progressive meditations has been replaced by or coupled with faith and confidence in an "other". It seems that even though the other meditations are included, the paintings are no longer as vital as practical aids to the meditator. After all, what use are practical aids to meditation when regardless of one's spiritual state, final help is always available in the form of the benevolent Amitāyus?

Perhaps examining a few works will help us better to understand the third category and its implications concerning release. Cave 277 (13T-h) presents us with a seventh century painting which despite its early date provides us with scenes clearly illustrative of the grades of rebirth. Cave 277 is one of those caves which dates back

⁹⁶SBE., Vol. XLIX, p. 198.

as early as the Wei Period, yet has undergone repainting and decoration several times over the centuries. Despite this reworking, seven of the basic meditations can be made out (Plate 23).⁹⁷ They are meditations upon 1) Water, 2) a bodhisattva, 3) The Sacred Tank, 4) The Lotus Throne, 5) Another bodhisattva, 6) The Buddha, 7) The Perception of Images.

The grades of rebirth scenes, bordered with a donor's frieze, are also preserved (Plate 24).⁹⁸ Some general features, typical of all three grade scenes are that 1) All scenes are set within an open pavilion where a dying person is attended by personages. 2) All feature a descending coil made up of clouds of flowers in which divine beings appear. (We will note this many times in the grade scenes we will examine.) Horizontally from right to left the scenes are as follows. The first scene, illustrative of the rebirth of a being of superior class, contains all the aforementioned elements. To our left many personages appear in the descending coil. At least four can be made out. To our right a traditionally robed Buddha with a small halo appears on a cloud coil. The

⁹⁷Matsumoto, op. cit., Pl. 21a.

⁹⁸Photo courtesy of the McMaster University Library, Hamilton, Ontario.

next scene, which represents rebirth of beings of middle class, is as before except that only two beings may be distinguished in the descending cloud of flowers. The third scene representing the rebirth of beings of inferior class has only one descending personage on the flower cloud. A figure unlike the usual Buddha figure of scenes one and two is on the cloud coil to the left; it is possibly Ksitigarbha.

As we have seen, these rebirth grade scenes are quite detailed and form a prominent part of this work. Though they do not show the three degrees within each grade as does the Taima Mandala, they do echo elements of the text and the Shan-tao commentary. For example, the higher his grade of rebirth, the more welcoming deities are portrayed appearing to the dying person.⁹⁹ Also as in the text, we see the dying person leaping up with joy at the sight of the welcoming party. Included as well are the rays of light which the text says shine over the dying person.¹⁰⁰ Also, as in the text, groups of deities descend to meet the soul. The painting, however, departs from the text in the members that it includes in the welcoming party. In the middle grade Amitāyus is pictured appearing with bhiksus and attendants

⁹⁹SBE., Vol. XLIX, pp. 189-199.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 189.

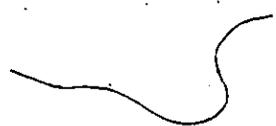
rather than the Triad and numberless created Buddhas. The man of the inferior grade of rebirth is shown as having been sent a created Buddha rather than Amitāyus.¹⁰¹ The present painting departs from the text slightly in possibly having Kṣitigarbha, popularly associated with the dead in both China and Japan, in the scene representing the lowest grade of rebirth.

This work is characteristic of the group in its strong allegiance to the text and explicit rendering of the rebirth grades. The importance of these grades is stressed by their prominent placement and detailed visual description. It clearly must have illustrated a text in which these grades were central, a text in which these grades were discussed sufficiently to have motivated iconographic representation, a text in which the notion of belief in Amitāyus' saving grace was decidedly present.

The original Taima Mandala, of Taima-dera (1 J/C), thought to have been imported from China, is another such example. The legend which concerns its divine origins is quite fascinating, but need not detain us now.¹⁰² It is thought to have been produced, however, at the time of the

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 195.

¹⁰² For an account of this legend, consult Okazaki, op. cit., pp. 42-45.



legendary events alluded to in the story of its origin and that would be in the second half of the eighth century. Major repairs and re-backing were done during the thirteenth century, however. Many copies of it were produced during and following the Kamakura period. The copy we will examine is 3 J/C.

All sixteen meditations are pictured in it. The first thirteen (Plate 25)¹⁰³ presented vertically on the viewers' right are the meditations upon 1) The Sun, 2) The Water and then Ice, 3) The Sacred Earth, 4) The Trees of Paradise, 5) The Lakes of Paradise, 6) The General View of Sukhāvātī, 7) the Jewelled Lotus Throne, 8) The Amitāyus Trinity, 9) The True Body, 10) Avalokiteśvara, 11) Mahāsthāmaprāpta, 12) One's Own Rebirth in the Pure Land, and finally 13) The "Small" Body of Amitāyus if the "Great" or True Body cannot be focussed upon. Note that the Taima Mandala is one of the works in which the last three meditations, the soul grades, are carefully recorded as the nine degrees of rebirth in a separate, lower, horizontal panel (Plates 26-29).¹⁰⁴ We will discuss the visual rendering of these nine degrees at some length as their presence within the work tells us much about what paintings

¹⁰³Ibid., PIs. 26, 27.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., PIs. 28-29.

of this category and, it would follow, the text upon which they were based teach about release. The degrees should also tell us of the use that was made of these paintings on the path to release.

The first of the nine scenes represents the rebirth of a superior grade of being, highest degree (Plate 26a).¹⁰⁵ It faithfully follows the text and commentary, having the dying man visited by an entire celestial retinue made up of Amitāyus, Avalokiteśvara, Mahāsthāmaprāpta, numberless created Buddhas, bhiksus, gods, and so on. Amitāyus sends forth rays of light that shine over the dying man's body. The visiting deities extend their hands in welcome. The second scene represents the rebirth of a superior grade of being of middle degree (Plate 26b).¹⁰⁶ Fewer deities come to greet him. The same light rays shine upon the dying man, who stretches his folded hands out and praises all the Buddhas. The third scene represents the rebirth of a superior grade of being, lowest degree (Plate 27a).¹⁰⁷ Here the Amitāyus retinue is smaller still. The attendants offer the dying man a golden lotus flower while Amitāyus miraculously creates hundreds of Buddhas to meet him.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

With the next scene begins the discussion of rebirth of a middle grade of being of highest degree (Plate 27b).¹⁰⁸ Here Amitāyus appears with five attendants flashing forth his golden rays upon the eve of the death of such a person. At this time Amitāyus preaches the "Law of suffering, non-existence, impermanence, and non-self".¹⁰⁹ The text states that the devotee kneels down, stretches out folded hands and pays homage to the Buddha. He is portrayed just this way in the art example.¹¹⁰ Presumably the celestial grouping over his household stands for the sounds and voices he will hear glorifying the Four Truths. The middle grade, middle degree devotee (who is not shown) also will see Amitāyus and his retinue on the eve of his death (Plate 28a).¹¹⁰ The middle grade, inferior degree does not show the devotee either (Plate 28b).¹¹¹ Amitāyus and a haloed being are shown on a cloud coil above the house of the devotee. This departs from the text as there is no mention of a vision of Amitāyus, only mention of meeting with a learned teacher, and later, seven days after death, with Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta. It is interesting to note at this point that the haloed beings are garbed like monks and do not

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ SBE., Vol. XLIX, p. 193.

¹¹⁰ Okazaki, op. cit., Pls. 28-29.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

resemble the bodhisattvas of the first three degrees of the superior grade at all in dress and ornamentation. Do these beings perhaps stand for the learned teacher(s) the dying person is to meet?

Now come the scenes related to the rebirth of beings of inferior grade. Those of highest degree of this inferior grade are said to meet a good and learned teacher when they are dying (Plate 28c).¹¹² To this person a created Amitāyus, Avalokiteśvara, and Mahāsthāmaprāpta will be sent. The two triad groupings pictured most likely represent the real and the created triad. Those of inferior grade, middle degree are represented next (Plate 29a).¹¹³ These the text states are to be surrounded by hell fire at the time of death when a good and learned teacher out of compassion will preach to them. The scene in the mandala does not seem to relate too specifically to the text here, unless perhaps the scene represents a later moment when the reception of the teaching will cause the fires of hell to be turned into a pure and cool wind (a wind chime is seen blowing gently upon a tree); the triad grouping here pictured could be the created Buddhas and bodhisattvas

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

sent to receive that person. The last scene represents beings of inferior grade lowest degree (Plate 29b).¹¹⁴

We feel certain that the dying man pictured here has uttered the formula "Adoration to Buddha Amitāyus" ten times, for we have appearing before him the "golden lotus-flower like the disc of the sun",¹¹⁵ a consequence of that uttering according to the text, which insures birth in Amitāyus' Paradise to those who but say Amitāyus' name. This scene is highly demonstrative of the notion of grace freely given and the intervention of an "other", the characteristic message of these paintings of Category III. With this scene the material on the grades and degrees of rebirth ends, thus bringing to conclusion the sixteen meditations.

We can see in this work a close adherence to the text(s) it illustrates. Just what text it illustrates has been a matter of controversy. It has been claimed that the Taima Mandala does not in fact represent the KWLSFC but Shan-tao's commentary upon it. Waley claims that this was recognized in Japan but not until 858, nearly one hundred years after the original painting was executed,

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ SBE., Vol. XLIX, p. 198.

when Shan-tao's text was first imported from China. The three clouds, symbols of the three sorts of spiritual obstruction,¹¹⁶ clearly expressed in the mandala, would not have been understood by those who had knowledge only of the text, as this notion was introduced by Shan-tao (recall discussion of 2B, L). Waley holds that it was the priest Shunso (A.D. 1255-1335) in the Honen Shopin Gyojo Gwazu who first noted this.¹¹⁷ Since of course the commentary is based upon the text, it seems a bit artificial to say that the Taima Mandala is based on the commentary. Rather it would seem more fair to state that this art example reveals a knowledge of both the text and its commentary.

Despite its literary basis, the focus and use of the mandala seem clear enough. Since the Taima Mandala features the sixteen meditations, the route of meditation is obviously advanced. On the other hand, it seems also to focus upon the grades of rebirth. In the prominent and central illustration of these grades, the intervening presence of Amitāyus cannot be ignored. Regardless of merit, all can be assisted by Amitāyus. This is well documented

¹¹⁶For commentary, see Takakusu, Vol. XXXVII, p. 263. (Recall the inclusion of clouds in Stein, XXXVII (2B,L) which also revealed knowledge of the commentary.)

¹¹⁷Waley, op. cit., p. xxii.

by visual reference to his concern for beings even of lowest degree, inferior class, or grade. It is quite clear in the work that man is not alone in his quest for release. It seems evident that despite the inclusion of material that would suggest the path of meditation, this path is not compulsory. With or without meditation, it would appear that the devotee will be helped by Amitāyus.

As for the use of this mandala, it need not be employed actively as a visual aid for meditation, although it could be if the viewer so wished. Rather it would seem that it would be more widely in use as a visual, concrete reminder of Amitāyus' compassion which would serve to increase the devotee's faith in that Buddha.

Another interesting example of a type which explicitly portrays the grades of rebirth is The Sixteen Contemplations of the Kammuryōju-kyō (5 J/C) (Plate 30).¹¹⁸ It also dates from the thirteenth century and is presently housed in the Amida-dera in Nara. It is worth singling out for it is quite unique in form and content, rendering only the sixteen meditations, independent of any other panels. It is a bit of a puzzle to classify, for despite its explicit rendering of the soul grades, in many ways it stands apart from the other examples of this third category. Perhaps the

¹¹⁸Okazaki, op. cit., Pl. 32.

reader can judge for himself just where it belongs as we examine it.

This hanging scroll features the first meditation, the meditation upon the sun, at the very top centre of the work. The remaining meditations are distributed vertically as follows: two through seven to the viewer's right; eight through thirteen to the viewer's left. The meditations flow from top to bottom and are of the same content and sequence as the first thirteen meditations of the Taima Mandala.

For the last three meditations, the degrees of rebirth most important to our discussion, we must look to the central portion of the painting. Here we find the soul grades represented from bottom to top. We would do well to notice that they are rendered much larger than the other meditations; their focal positioning cannot be ignored. The illustration of these grades of rebirth seems to have taken over the area usually reserved for the illustration of the Sukhāvati Paradise in KWLSFC renditions. We shall return to this point later. For now, let us examine these rebirth grade scenes. For the fourteenth contemplation, a figure kneels on a lotus before Amitāyus who is pictured in an open pavillion surrounded by attendants. The figure is a bodhisattva and represents the rebirth of a being of superior grade. For the fifteenth contemplation, much the

same scene is pictured except that the kneeling figure is a monk who represents rebirth of a being of middle grade. The sixteenth contemplation, also much the same, shows a human being kneeling before the divine group. He is thought to represent the rebirth of a being of inferior grade.

This painting certainly follows the text in its inclusion and description of the first thirteen meditations. It also includes the rebirth grades although decidedly it does not take its iconographical clues from their description within the text, nor does it bother to break the grades down into degrees. This painting also introduces a new visual format for the grades, that is a bodhisattva to represent a soul of superior grade of rebirth and so on. Perhaps then it is based on a commentary. Basis upon Shan-tao's seems unlikely when one considers the marked difference in the interpretation of the degrees of rebirth within this scroll. The absence of the nine degrees and the inclusion of bodhisattva, monk, and human being as rebirth grade symbols are marked deviations from the Shan-tao commentary. It is interesting to recall here that we have seen these representations come up frequently, though not systematically before in our second category of paintings as implicit references to the rebirth grades. Perhaps the basis for this painting is yet another source?

Though there are many opinions on the topic, it is believed that this iconographic type is based upon a commentary on the Kammuryōju-kyō by the Chinese monk, Yuan-chao ~~T~~-chi (1048-1116).¹¹⁹ What we said in reference to the Taima Mandala still holds true here. Despite the fact that it may be based upon a commentary, it still ultimately relates back to the KWLSFC itself. Though strong basis upon the KWLSFC text, which is one of the main characteristics of this group of paintings, is lacking, it still seems undisputably a member of the group on other counts. It has included all sixteen meditations and has emphasized the grades of rebirth. There is no mistaking their importance: they loom out at the viewer from their central position. I would like to advance however that this painting illustrates a text where the emphasis is still upon the visualization-meditation process. Carefully examine the setting of the rebirth grade scenes. They do not have an earthly realm as their setting nor is there any evidence of heavenly descent. Rather the figures who represent superior, middle and inferior grades appear in a heavenly setting prostrate before Amitāyus.¹²⁰ True they have reached Amitāyus and the enjoyment of Sukhāvātī, each

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 53.

¹²⁰ Even their placement is suggestive; they have

being in his own measure, but the painting does not depict Amitāyus' aid in this achievement. The beings reborn in Paradise appear there not through the intervention of Amitāyus but through their own efforts at the various stages of meditation, the "Hard Path" depicted in the side panels. So it would appear that although soul grade reference is reasonably explicit, the two paintings depicting the "Sixteen Contemplations" do not fit too neatly within this third category. The problem is that they actually defy classification and would seem best placed somewhere between categories two and three with their apparent stress on meditation yet explicit rendering of soul grades. With their stress on meditation, it would follow that this type of hanging scroll too would enjoy much use as a practical visual aid in meditation; its artistic form would suggest that it was probably used on an individual or private basis.

From what we have seen of the examples, it appears that 1) the third category features paintings with explicit rebirth grade references. 2) These paintings reveal a knowledge of the KWLSFC text as we know it and also of possibly two commentaries upon the text, one by Shan-tao and the other by Yuan-chao Ta-chi. 3) Despite the paintings'

taken over the central Paradise panel area normally found in the typical KWLSFC example. This helps to strengthen the notion of absence of Amitāyus' intervention.

inclusion of the other objects of meditation associated with the visualization-meditation process, this does not appear to be the path to release which the majority of these paintings advocate. Except for the two renditions on the "Sixteen Contemplations" theme, the other works overtly and clearly portray release as vouchsafed both the deserving and undeserving devotee alike through the loving intervention of Amitāyus; they advocate an "Easy Path". Yet the meditations we have associated with the visualization method have been faithfully included along with the soul grade meditations which explicitly speak of Amitāyus' intervention. Why is this so? Does it suggest that the devotee has the route of self-effort and meditation open to him if he wishes to use it or is able to do so? Without denying the use of meditation through concentrated self-effort, it still seems strongly apparent that in the last analysis it is faith in Amitāyus and/or the recitation of his name that brings release, that is, an "Easy Path". This clear teaching via the paintings must certainly be reflective of the teaching of the KWLSFC text as we know it with soul grade material. It would follow that the paintings of the third category would not serve as visual aids in the same manner as those of the first two categories. In the first two categories it was surmised that the paintings might have been actively used as concrete visual forms which aided the ordinary person as

he or she began to meditate. In this category, with the exception of the "Sixteen Contemplations" material, the paintings would seem to have served more as records of visions. These records, especially those parts that stress Amitāyus' saving descent, would have served to strengthen the faith of the devotee, but would have been nowhere near as actively employed in a step by step meditational process as those paintings of category one and two.

Let us briefly recapitulate the findings of the third chapter. Artistic evidence, as summarized in the frequency chart, leads us to believe that the paintings illustrating the KWLSFC can be divided into three basic groups 1) those paintings with no reference to the rebirth grades, 2) those with only implicit reference to the rebirth grades, and 3) those with explicit reference to the rebirth grades. We find that each of these categories of paintings by virtue of its content speaks of release in a different manner. This leads us to assume that they illustrate different trends in the KWLSFC textual development. It follows that the paintings too must have functioned differently as aids to release.

Category one, those paintings with no reference to rebirth grades represents one third of the sample (10 out of 30), and depicts a mode of release scholars believe most typified in the KWLSFC, that mode of visualization-meditation,

accomplished through self-effort, akin to the so-called "Hard Path". With no allusion to external aid in the form of divine intervention in their content, they leave us with the notion that the devotee is on his own, achieving release through meditation. We have observed all along how vital the use of visual images are for the devotee in his initial meditation stages. It followed that the paintings within this category might have been used actively by the devotee as an integral and necessary part of his meditation as he progressed gradually.

Category two, those paintings in which reference to the grades of rebirth is implicit, comprises almost half of the sample (14 out of 30). These paintings seem still to stress the importance of meditation as the path to release. They do not offer any visual reference to an alternate route to release, i.e. there are no overt illustrations of Amitāyus descending to intervene. Still, the knowledge of such a doctrine cannot be denied as these paintings in their implicit references (through motifs suggestive of rebirth, associative inscriptions and so on) show that a doctrine concerning rebirth grades was in fact "in the air". Either the systematization of rebirth grade doctrine had not yet taken place or, if it had, it had not yet permeated the popular milieu from which these paintings emerged. Thus this second group of paintings still leaves us with the

notion that meditation was the main route to release. This group does not seem to be based upon another text but rather upon the same text, the "alternate version" of the KWLSFC which formed the basis for category one paintings. Its inclusion of auxiliary content, however, points to developments within the Pure Land Buddhist tradition which would offer an "Easy Path" of release through the recitation of Buddha's name and faith in Amitāyus' intervention. This is fully seen in the paintings of category three and the teaching they mirror.

The third category of paintings, those with explicit soul grade reference, is represented by six paintings from the sample of thirty. They teach an "Easy Path" to release with the prime accent on faith in the Buddha Amitāyus. They do not negate the path of self-effort through meditation, however, as is indicated by their continued focus upon and portrayal of meditations other than soul grades. That is to say, in spite of their stress on release by means of an "Easy Path", they and obviously the text they illustrate do not deprecate the "Hard Path" or any auxiliary practices used in attempting union with Amitāyus-Amitābha. The prime use of the paintings of this third category would have been as images employed to strengthen the faith of the devotee rather than as aids the devotee would actively use to

gradually develop in meditation. Their textual sources would have been the KWLSFC as we know it today, together with its Chinese commentaries.

CONCLUSION

At the outset of this work, it was thought that since only one version of the Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching existed, an examination of its visual forms would be highly profitable, as they are another valuable source concerning this aspect of Pure Land teaching. It was thought that if variations existed in the paintings examined it possibly would indicate religious changes in regard to release within the KWLSFC tradition. It was also thought that a thorough study of these paintings would help the student of Pure Land Buddhism better to understand the text and the means to release presented within it. These assumptions were valid, for a detailed study of the KWLSFC paintings provided valuable conclusions. The major conclusions provided were as follows:

- 1) that the paintings which fell into a three-fold classification were aids to release and that their value as aids in meditation decreased proportionately as their visual stress on the external intervention of Amitāyus increased, thus indicating shifts in emphasis from meditation to faith as the prime means to release within the tradition;
- 2) that artistic evidence strongly corroborated the findings of textual criticism, especially

in relation to meditations 14, 15, and 16, the soul grade material, as not having been present in all forms of the text; this also indicated the aforementioned shift in emphasis.

A minor conclusion and certainly an interesting observation that was noted was that the text seemed to have been directed to, and had its biggest impact upon and use by, lay personages at a popular devotional level. The exact way in which lay persons used the text and the paintings illustrating it is still in the realm of speculation. Let us elaborate upon these conclusions.

As for conclusion number one, with its three-fold classification, the first category of paintings, those which had no visual reference to soul grade material, appeared to offer a release accomplished through self-effort and meditation. The second category, paintings with no explicit references to soul grade material, yet containing implicit references, seemed still to show meditation as the route to release, yet hinted at the use of auxiliary routes. The third category, with its explicit and detailed rendering of soul grade scenes, put meditation as the means to release into the background and brought forth faith in the intervention of Amitāyus and the power of the recitation of the nembutsu as the prime means to release.

Not only the implied means to release differed in these three categories of paintings, but also the use of the paintings. Their textual bases differed as well. In these paintings of category I, there was no doubt that we saw illustrated a text wherein the prime stress was on meditation and self-effort providing a "Hard Path" to release. These paintings had to be most valuable as visual aids, particularly in the initial stages of meditation. Their textual source had to be a form of the KWLSFC other than its present form -- a text free of meditations numbers 14, 15, 16 which are strongly indicative of the stress on faith and the "Easy Path". We have chosen to call this the "alternate" version.

The paintings of category two, though still strong in their visual stress on meditation as a means to release, betrayed in their implicit references to soul grades the idea of possibly achieving release through faith in Amitāyus' saving powers. These aids still would have been used in meditation as in category I in proceeding from concrete observation to internalization of the meditations, but in view of their references to soul grades, albeit implicit, they showed some knowledge of a doctrine concerning rebirth grades, even if not in a fully systematized form. Thus they hinted that meditation, the "Hard Path" of self-effort to release could be supplemented by the "Easy Path" of faith.

It would seem likely that the paintings of this category would as a result decline slightly in use as purely meditational aids and rise in use as devotional pictures. Their textual source was still what we have been calling throughout the work the "alternate" form of the text, the same that was the basis for category I paintings but with possible influence from the embryonic stages of soul grade thought and development and possibly exposure to commentaries upon the text.

The paintings of category three illustrated a teaching concerning release far apart from that advanced visually in the paintings of the other two categories. Meditation as a means to release seemed to have been quite unstressed in these works. Instead they extolled the benevolence of Amitāyus and his saving intervention to all souls; that is, they provided an "Easy Path" where self-effort seemed almost unnecessary. It would seem that these paintings might have been used to strengthen the faith of the devotee rather than as meditational aids which the devotee would use in the step-by-step meditational stages though this of course is speculative. The textual bases of this group of paintings would have been the KWLSFC in its present form together with its Chinese commentaries.

It would be simple to say that meditation was the route originally stressed in the KWLSFC and that later,

with the emergence, knowledge, and wide use of an expanded text and commentary upon the text, the notion of salvation though faith in Amitāyus replaced the meditation route. Unfortunately, though the paintings suggest this in their arrangement by subject matter, we are powerless to prove this chronologically.

Let us now discuss our second conclusion. It was discovered that artistic findings concerning the three classifications of the paintings and the frequency of the appearance or absence of certain meditation material within the paintings strongly supported the results of the Pas study on the criticism of the text. Artistic evidence (see Frequency Chart) combined with the findings of textual criticism pointed to the existence of a form of the KWLSFC which included only approximately ten meditations. Both studies found that meditations 14, 15, 16, were likely additions. Meditation 13, suspected by Pas on the grounds of unusual terminology, was the meditation which appeared the least frequently in the paintings, hence was also suspected artistically. The Pas notion that meditations ten and eleven, "Meditations Upon Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāptā", were originally one was not contradicted but was not fully supported by artistic evidence either. Only the Pas notion that the third meditation, "Meditation Upon the Land", was not integral to the text must remain wholly unsubstantiated

by artistic evidence. This meditation is faithfully rendered artistically, hence was of obvious importance in the paintings.

Crucial to our findings here was that textual criticism also held the last three meditations on soul grade material to be suspect. Though the example of Cave 277 proved that the soul grades notion was present in Chinese thought as early as the seventh century, both textual criticism and the artistic evidence viewed above suggested a possible version of the text to have existed free from these soul grade references (what the writer has chosen to call the "alternate" version). Though by 700 meditations 14, 15, 16 (the soul grade material Pas considers to be Chinese interpolations) were most likely included in the present form of the text as proved by Cave 277, the great percentage of artistic evidence (half the examples studied) forces one to conclude that since there were so many paintings without soul grade references and only one illustrating the soul grades, it was the "alternate" version that made the greatest impact upon the people. That it was the "alternate" version rather than the version of the text we now know that was widely known and used is well grounded both in literary and artistic evidence, but as to its being the original, this must remain in the realm of speculation.

Our minor conclusion concerned the direction toward and impact upon lay personages of the KWLSFC text and its painted forms. Throughout this work we have stressed the importance of the Queen Vaidehī meditation material as that which singled out a painting as being illustrative of the KWLSFC. It was noted that Vaidehī personified the lay devotee. The sūtra was directed toward Vaidehī, a lay person and inexperienced meditator, who became the vehicle for both learning and later teaching the route to release via meditation. This direction helped create an empathy in people who saw Vaidehī as one not unlike themselves on a quest towards release and rebirth in the Amitāyus Paradise. The faithful featuring of Vaidehī's step-by-step quest within the paintings reinforced the bond between Vaidehī and devotee put forth in the text.

The frequency with which these paintings appeared at Tun-huang both as cave paintings and as painted banners attested to the sūtra's popularity among lay people. Inscriptions leave us with definite proof of the attachment the laity had to this sūtra of Amitāyus.¹²¹ These lay people

¹²¹ Male Donor's Cartouche: 亡父安國信一心供養
 "The late father An Kuo-hsin makes offering with whole heart."

Female Donor's Cartouche: 婆任氏一心供養
 "The mother . . . (originally) a member of the Jen family makes offering with whole heart." (These inscriptions both in Chinese and English are cited from the Waley catalogue, pp. 301-302.)

who greatly revered the sūtra were largely responsible for financing the execution of the paintings that represented it. It would seem that people would select for dedication that with which they were personally involved, much in the manner that present-day donors would support a cause or charity for which they had a personal affinity. These lay donors could have paid for the dedication of any paradise picture. Even if pure faith and devotion to Amitāyus is used as an argument for the painting's dedication, why did they not choose to dedicate a simple Amitāyus paradise scene? Why did they select for illustration the KWLSFC with its strong meditation stress? Consider too the fact that so many of the artistic examples studied were banners, an art form normally associated with private devotion. Would individuals consciously single out for dedication paintings displaying a step-by-step meditation process designed to help devotees gain release in this manner and not use them to practise meditation? I think not. That four-fifths of the paintings illustrate the meditation route to release and that a great many of these paintings were sponsored by lay people strongly suggests that the route to release preferred at the popular level at the time of our study was meditation.

It is a pity that concrete evidence is as yet lacking in the form of pictorial portrayal of lay people in meditational posture or in written works that allude to lay people meditating. Until such time as this evidence is found, our findings concerning lay people practising regular, organized meditation in a purposeful manner remains hypothetical.

To be sure, both meditation and faith means were employed by the people in their quest for release. We have seen in our sample of paintings that even those with strong faith stress had meditation content (Category III) and those with strong meditation content had implicit faith references (Category II). We also have seen that even the great Pure Land Patriarchs never stressed one path to release to the exclusion of other means. But on the strong artistic evidence (Category I) and the results of textual criticism we have examined, it appears that during the period our study embraces the route to release via meditation was the much stronger stress.

APPENDIX OF CHINESE TERMS AND TITLES

- chien 見
- chuan 專
- Fo-shuo Kuan Fo San-mei Hai Ching 佛說觀佛三昧經
- Fo-shuo Kuan Mi-lo P'u-sa Shang-sheng Tu-shi-t'ien Ching 佛說觀彌勒菩薩上生兜率天經
- Fo shuo Kuan P'u-hsien P'u-sa Hsing-Fa Ching 佛說觀普賢菩薩行法經
- Fo Shuo Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching Shu 佛說觀無量壽佛經疏
- Fo shuo Kuan Yao-wang Yao-shang Erh P'u-sa Ching 佛說觀藥王藥上二菩薩經
- hsiang 想
- Kao Seng Chuan 高僧傳
- kuan 觀
- Kuan Hsu-k'ung-tsang P'u-sa ching 觀虛空藏菩薩經
- Kuan-shih-yin 觀世音
- Kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo Ching 觀無量壽佛經
- Ta Chih-tu Lun 大智度論
- tso-wang 坐忘

APPENDIX

I.D. #'s per thesis	Source Numbers	Dimensions Medium & Date (when available)	Hare & Grades References*	Number of Meditations	Meditations Order	Important Features	Reference
1 T-h	Cave 39 Pelliot #14		-- ✓ but not 3	11(1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Sun 2) Moon in Water 3) Water 4) Pavement 5) Tank 6) Vegetation 7) Treasure Stand 8) Palace 9) Buddha 10) Lotus (rebirth) 11) Jewel 	<p>very populated</p> <p>much use of decorative borders</p>	<p>reproduced in Mat. Pl. 5a</p>
2 T-h	Cave 66 P. 31	8th century	-- ✓	18(1) 6/6/6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Sun (rot downward) 2) Water 3) Jewelled Earth 4) Vegetation 5) Sacred Lake 6) Descending Deities 7) Palaces or General View 8) 2 Triads 9) Bodhisattva 10) Amītyus 11) Bodhisattva 12) Descending Deities 13) Bodhisattva 14) The Buddha Country 15) 2 Bodhisattvas (Aval. & Maha.)? 16) General View of Deities & Palace 17) Descending Deities 18) Similar Grouping 	<p>a rare of example of more than 16 meditations (see also Cave 197)</p>	<p>reproduced in Mat. Pls. 8a & 8b</p>

*Hare represents inclusion of white hare scene in representations of Ajātasatru legend.
Grade refers to inclusion of meditations 14, 15, 16, with direct reference to grades of rebirth.

APPENDIX

I.D. #'s per thesis	Source Numbers	Dimensions Medium & Date (when available)	Hare & Grades References		Number of Meditations	Meditations Order	Important Features	Reference
3 T-h	Cave 71 THI 172 Pelliot #33	early 8th century	--	✓ more than 3 refer-ences but scattered	16	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Sun 2) Lotus Pond 3) Tank 4) Moon in Water 5) Vegetation 6) General View 7) Pavement 8) Bodhisattva 9) Monk 10) Bodhisattva 11) Avalokitesvara 12) Tower or Palace 13) Red Lotus 14) Haloed Figure 15) Haloed Figure 16) Lotus 	<p>outstanding landscape elements</p> <p>stlm central panel</p>	<p>reproduced in Pel. Pl. 70</p> <p>Nat. Pls. 19a, 20a</p> <p>Gray Pls. 46a, 46b, 64b</p>
4 T-h	Cave 72 P. 34	eight century	--	--	12(1) in 2 sets of 6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Sun 2) Reflections in Water 3) Platform of B'jocks 4) Vegetation 5) Lake of 8 Virtues 6) Palace (top left) 7) Buddha 8) Object missing 9) Bodhisattva 10) General View 11) 2 Haloed Beings in Chinese Dress 12) Miniature Buddha? (unclear) 	<p>Court of Various Deities dominates painting.</p> <p>architecture is very Chinese</p> <p>faces are decidedly non-Indian</p>	<p>reproduced in Nat. Pl. 6b</p>

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I.D. #'s per thesis	Source Numbers	Dimensions Medium & Date (when available)	Hare & Grades References		Number of Meditations	Meditations Order	Important Features	Reference
5 T-h	Cave 76 P. 44		--	/ implicit reference	16 8r/8l the 8 meditations to the viewers left are not all intact	Sun r) Water Water as Ice Land Vegetation Treasure Towers Buddha Unclear/Palace (?) Moon Bodhisattva Tank General View (?) Bodhisattva Buddha rep. all Buddhas (?)	no inclusion of "Ajātasatru Legend" panel unique in the inclusion of several standing attendants considerable departure from usual architectural conventions of central panel	reproduced in Mat. Pl. 7b
6 T-h	Cave 84 P. 51e		--	--	only 4 (r) may be distinguished	Vegetation Bodhisattva Triad Pavement (?)	sensitive and delicate rendering of central Buddha made prominent by throne which stands out due to use of exaggerated perspective	reproduced in Mat. Pl. 4b
7 T-h	Cave 94 P. 53b		--	/	16 (r)	1) Sun 2) Pavement 3) Tank 4) Lake of 8 Virtues 5) Vegetation 6) Palace of Paradise 7) Lotus Throne 8) Triad 9) Bodhisattva 10) Buddha rep. all Buddhas 11) Bodhisattva 12) Lotus 13) Avalokitesvara 14) Buddha Country 15) Lotus 16) unclear	clean schematic drawing strong lotus theme (attendants major and minor all sit or stand on lotus thrones or bases)	reproduced in Mat. Pl. 36

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T.O. #'s per thesis	Source Numbers	Dimensions Medium & Date (when available)	Hare & Grades References	Number of Meditations	Meditations Order	Important Features	Reference
8 T-h	Cave 99 Pl. 54					most likely has 16 meditations but information or clear reproduction is lacking which makes study difficult	
9 T-h	Cave 104 P. 51		-- /	16 (r)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Sun 2) Water 3) Platform 4) Moon in Water 5) Pavement 6) Vegetation 7) Treasure Stand 8) Palaces 9) Tank 10) Monk 11) Bodhisattva 12) Bodhisattva 13) Standing Buddha 14) Monk 15) Throne (?) 16) Lotus 	<p>European posture of major attendants</p> <p>densely populated</p> <p>large lotus lake</p>	reproduced in Mat. Pl. 4a
10 T-h	Cave 123 P. 70	eighth century	-- / implied	16 (r)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Sun 2) Water 3) Pavement 4) General View 5) Vegetation 6) Sacred Tank 7) Amitayus on Throne 8) Treasure Stand 9) Palaces 10) Jewel Throne 11) Monk 12) Towers 13) Buddha 14) Buddha rep. all Buddhas 15) Bodhisattva 16) <u>Bodhisattva</u> 	<p>Bezeklikian features e.g.</p> <p>standing attendants</p> <p>standing on lotuses</p> <p>heavy chain jewellery</p>	reproduced in Mat. Pl. 19b

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I.D. #'s per thesis	Source Numbers	Dimensions Medium & Date (when available)	Hare & Grades References		Number of Meditations	Meditations Order	Important Features	Reference
11 T-h	Cave 197 THI 66 P. 114	Circa 700 A.D.	--	/	looks like a possible 18	1) Sun 2) Vegetation 3) Water 4) Sakyanuni attended by Ananda and Mahāmaudgalyāyana 5) Buddha 6) Bodhisattva emerging from lotus 7) <u>Bodhisattvas</u> 8) <u>General View</u> 9) <u>Descending Buddha and</u> <u>Bodhisattvas</u> 10) Tanks 11) <u>General View</u> 12) Palaces 13) <u>Descending Triad</u> 14) <u>Another Bodhisattva</u> 15) <u>Another Bodhisattva</u> 16) <u>Buddha or Bodhisattva</u> 17) Almost Obliterated 18)	double set of medi- tations on left rare example of more than 16 meditations much use of jewel and flaming jewel motif	reproduced in Mat. Pl. 7a Gray Pl. 47
12 T-h	Cave 249 P. 120G	end of 8th century	--	--	11(1)	1) Sun 2) Water 3) Lake of 8 Virtues 4) Vegetation 5) Lotus Throne 6) Floor 7) <u>Bodhisattva</u> 8) Buddha 9) <u>Bodhisattva</u> 10) <u>General View</u> 11) Images	meditations panel much less stark than usual full use of landscape elements as background extremely populated terraces abound	reproduced in Mat. Pl. 5b

APPENDIX

I.D. #'s per thesis	Source Numbers	Dimensions Medium & Date (when available)	Rare & Grades References		Number of Meditations	Meditations Order	Important Features	Reference
13 T-h	Cave 277 P. 130	7th century early T'ang addition to original Wei painting	--	✓	9	1-r (t-b) Lotus Tank Amitayus Vegetation Images Avalokiteśvara Throne (not necessarily in order) and 3 "descent" Scenes	has character and charm of genre scroll sympathetic drawing of ox	reproduced in Mat. Pls. 21a, 21b Gray Pl. 37b reference Gray P. 54
14 T-h	Cave 303 P. 139A		--	✓	16(1)	1) Sun 2) Water 3) Pavement 4) Moon in Water 5) Treasure Stand 6) Vegetation 7) Palace 8) Jewels 9) Lotus Lake 10) Monk 11) Bodhisattva 12) Bodhisattva 13) Buddha (standing) 14) a Buddha 15) Triad 16) Lotus	design and pattern abound textile influence is apparent principal divinities are very large and seem to dwarf minor ones	reproduced in Mat. Pl. 6a
1 B,L	XXXV* (Waley)	5'10" x 3'10" 1.74 x 1.20m unmounted silk painting	✓	✓	15	1) Sun 2) Water with moon reflected in it 3) Amitayus 4) Avalokiteśvara 5) Buddha (rep. all Buddhas?) 6) Lotus Throne 7) destroyed 8) Blue Lotus 9) (General View?) 10) Pavement of Paradise 11) Eight Tanks 12) Platform of Blocks 13) Precious Tree 14) Palace (General View?)	broken, washed out and effaced but much use of metallic blue great variation from the text in order of meditations	reference Waley P. 59-62

APPENDIX

I.D. #'s per thesis	Source Numbers	Dimensions Medium & Date (when available)	Hare & Grades References		Number of Meditations	Meditations Order	Important Features	Reference
2 B,L	XXXVII (Waley) *some of its fragments can be found under *CCXVIII (Waley) as well	2'1" x 2'7" .645 x .80m whole mount 1'7" x 1'6" .49 x .454m whole mount 6" x 5" .15 x .13m fragments	/	--	10	1) Sun 2) Water 3) Palace 4) Lotus Throne 5) Amitayus 6) Buddha (for all Buddhas) 7) Avalokitesvara 8) Pavement of Paradise 9) Vegetation 10) Sacred Tank RE-CLASSIFIED 1) Sun 2) Water 3) Pavement 4) Vegetation 5) Sacred Tank 6) destroyed 7) Lotus Throne 8) Amitayus 9) Buddha (standing for all Buddhas) 10) Avalokitesvara	remarkable colours especially red and blue interesting inscriptions inclusion of "Wicked Man" material 3 clouds symbolism	portions reproduced in <u>Thousand Buddhas</u> Pl. XXX reference Waley P. 70-73
3 B,L	LXX (Waley)	5'5" x 3'11" 1.65 x 1.19m	--	--	13	1) Sun 2) Moon 3) Pavement of Paradise 4) same 5) Lake of 8 Virtues 6) Palace 7) Trees 8) An Altar (unique) 9) Jewel-Throne 10) Avalokitesvara 11) Mahasthamaprapta 12) Buddha Image 13) True Body of Buddha	though without borders, in generally good condition	reference Waley P. 107-108

APPENDIX

I.O. #'s per thesis	Source Numbers	Dimensions Medium & Date (when available)	Rare & Grades References	Number of Meditations	Meditations Order	Important Features	Reference
4 B.L	CCXXII (Waley)	was originally approximately 6'8" x 6'6" 2.03 x 1.98m (size ascertained by silk border preserved)	✓	7 (7)	1) Sun 2) Buddha 3) Water 4) Sacred Tank 5) Pavement of Paradise 6) Palace 7) General View	extremely fragmented	reference Waley P. 190
1 B,ND	Ch. 0051 CCXCXV	3'3" x 3'8" .99 x 1.12m silk painting	--	10	1) Jewels 2) Water as Ice 3) Lotus Lake 4) Palace 5) Ground of Paradise 6) Lotus Throne Jewel 7) Buddha Image 8) True Body of Buddha 9) Avalokitesvara 10) Mahāsthāmaprāpta	"Indian" robes and ornaments	reproduced in Mat. Pl. 10 reference Waley P. 218-219
2 B,ND	Ch. 00104 CCCXVIII	2'0" x 3'10" .61 x 1.17m and assorted fragments silk painting	implied --	5 fragmented and not in order	1) Lake 2) Amitāyus or another Buddha 3) Treasure Tower 4) the Buddha 5) Tank	Indian red very compressed from top to bottom	reproduced in Mat. Pl. 14 reference Waley P. 225
3 B,ND	Ch. 00457	remains of a large silk painting	--	about 8		very fragmented and damaged	reference Serindia P. 1001-1002
4-6B, ND	Ch. 000473 a-b-c		fragments				

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I.D. #'s per thesis	Source Numbers	Dimensions Medium & Date (when available)	Ware & Grades References	Number of Meditations	Meditations Order	Important Features	Reference
7 B,ND	Ch. v.001 CDXXVII	5'2" x 4'0" 1.57 x 1.22m large painting	✓ --	11	1) Sun and Water 2) Ground 3) Mansion or Palace 4) Music (drum and pipe) 5) Treasure Tower 6) Treasure Tree 7) Lake 8) Avalokiteśvara 9) Mahāsthāmaprāpta 10) Image of Buddha 11) True Body of Buddha	music meditation strong Indian red thick coarse outlines	reference Waley P. 259-260
8 B,ND	Ch. XXXIIII.003						
9 B,ND	Ch. XLVII.001	5'3" x 5'6" 1.6 x 1.68m	-- ✓	implied		labelled souls denoting levels of rebirth thin colour ink outline predominates highlights white on faces	reproduced in <u>Thousand Buddhas</u> PT. XI reference Serindia P. 1049 Waley P. 287-288
10 B,ND	Ch. LII.003						
11 B,ND	Ch. LIII.003 DI	4' x 5' 1.22 x 1.52m painting on linen and silk	-- --	12	1) Sun and Water 2) Water as Ice 3) Ground 4) Trees 5) Treasure Stand 6) Lotus Throne 7) Lake of 8 Virtues 8) Rebirth in Paradise 9) Avalokiteśvara 10) Mahāsthāmaprāpta 11) Amitayus 12) Obliterated	Sassanian-type design "on fine linen" with silk damask border donors at bottom left	reference Waley P. 290

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I.D. #'s per thesis	Source Numbers	Dimensions Medium & Date (when available)	Ware & Grades References	Number of Meditations	Meditations Order	Important Features	Reference
12 B,ND	Ch. LV.0033	6'2" x 6'5" 1.88 x 1.96m silk painting	-- ✓	15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Sun 2) Moon 3) Lake 4) Water as Ice 5) Ground of Sukhāvati 6) Mansions or Palaces 7) Flowery Throne 8) Jewel Tree 9) Amitāyus (standing) 10) Avalokiteśvara 11) Mañāsthāmaprāpta 12) Amitāyus (seated) 13) Rebirth (woman) 14) Rebirth (infant with halo rises from lotus) 15) destroyed 	much use of Indian red on robes, woodwork of palace, terrace	reproduced in Mat. Pl. 9 reference Serindia P. 1071
13 B,ND	Ch. IV.0047 DXXVIII	5'6" x 3'11" 1.676 x 1.194m on silk of coarser texture paint thickly applied	✓ --	lower end severe breakage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Sun 2) Water 3) Lotus in Tank 4) Lake 5) Ground 6) Treasure Stand 7) Vegetation 8) Palace 9) a Monk 10) Bodhisattva 11) Amitāyus 	interesting inscriptions offering for protection	reproduced in J. of Ind. Art Oct. 1912 Vol. XV New Series No. 120 Pl. iv and Mat. Pl. 12 reference Serindia P. 1073

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I.D. #'s per thesis	Source Numbers	Dimensions Medium & Date (when available)	Hare & Grades References	Number of Meditations	Meditations Order	Important Features	Reference
14 B,ND	Ch. LVI.0018 DXXXVII	5' x 3'10" 1.524 x 1.168m painting on silk	✓ ✓	14	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Sun 2) Water 3) Ice 4) Lake 5) Ground 6) Treasure Stand 7) Rebirth (Vaidehī's soul from lotus) 8) Trees 9) Palace 10) Bodhisattva 11) Buddha 12) same 13) Rebirth 14) same (damaged) 	<p>European posture of <u>Bodhisattvas</u></p> <p>Mahāsthāmaprāpta holding Vajra</p> <p>Avalokiteśvara holding Vajra-topped bell</p> <p>rare instance of both grades and "white hare" references</p>	<p>reproduced in Mat. Pl. 13</p> <p>reference Serindia P. 1077</p> <p>Haley P. 306-307</p>
15 B,ND	Ch. LVI.0034		✓ --			<p>attendants rendered as Vajrapani and Mānjuśrī(?)</p>	<p>reference Serindia P. 1080-1081</p>
1 B,P	Pel. Vol. XIV #19 EO.1128	6'1" x 4'6" 1.85 x 1.31m painting on silk mid-second half of 9th century	✓ ✓	16	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Sun 2) Amitāyus at sunset 3) Buddha 4) Tank and Purple Lotus 5) Tank 6) Tank and Reflection 7) Ice 8) Palace 9) Jewel Throne(?) 10) Vegetation 11) Avalokiteśvara on a blue lotus throne 12) A Buddha 13) Seated Buddha 14) Vaidehī and Servant Meditate 15) True Body of Buddha 16) Purple Lotus 	<p>rare instance of both grades and "white hare" references</p>	<p>reproduced in Pel. Vol. XV Pls. 14-15</p> <p>reference Pel. Vol. IV P. 33-37</p>

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I.D. #'s per thesis	Source Numbers	Dimensions Medium & Date (when available)	Ivory & Grades References		Number of Meditations	Meditations Order	Important Features	Reference
2 B,P	Pel. Vol. XIV #20 HG. 17669	3'11" x 2'11" 1.20 x .90m painting on silk end of 8th- beginning of 9th century	✓	--	11 rem. missing	1) Sun 2) Water 3) Ice 4) Floor of Paradise 5) Precious 6) Trees 7) Sacred Pavilion 8) Lake of 8 Virtues 9) Lotus Throne 10) Being, Halo 11) Bodhisattva 12) missing	cannot be interpreted too accurately due to extremely damaged state	reproduced in Pel. Vol. XV Pl. 16 Mat. Pl. 15 reference Pel. Vol. IV P. 38-40
3 B,P	Pel. Vol. XIV #21 HG. 17673	4'10" x 2'9" 1.47 x .83m without border 9th-10th century	✓	-- both Buddha and rabbit scenes	3 (bottom)	1) Precious Palace 2) Jewels of Paradise 3) Vegetation 4) Ice and Sacred Pavement or Water 5) Blue Lotus 6) Being in Meditation 7) Bodhisattva 8) Bodhisattva 9) Buddha	fresh and vibrant colours "monks panel is unique and interesting bottom placement of scenes is unusual	reproduced in Vol. XV Pl. 17 Mat. Pl. 16 reference Pel. Vol. XIV P. 41-44
1 J/C	"Taima Mandala" 	12'11" x 13'0" 3.95 x 3.97m 8th century	--	✓	16 (r) + bottom subdivided into 9	1) Sun 2) Water; Water as Ice 3) Earth 4) Trees 5) Lake 6) General View (with towers, deities playing music) 7) Lotus Throne 8) Images of Triad 9) Amitayus (Amida) 10) Avalokitesvara (Kannon) 11) Mahasthamaprapta (Seishi) 12) Various Aspects of Pure Land 13) Great and Small Bodies of Amitayus (Amida) 14) Birth of Upper Degree 15) Birth of Middle Degree	probably originally woven by "fingernail method" but much decayed by Kamakura period in 13th century repaired, backed on boards surviving fragments pasted onto large silk painting (onto Kempō mandala?) <u>Other Kamakura Versions</u> Komyō-ji, Kamakura Jōren-ji, Akita Chion-in, Kyoto and collection of Tokyo	reference Okazaki P. 42-46

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I.D. #'s per thesis	Source Numbers	Dimensions Medium & Date (when available)	Ware & Grades References	Number of Meditations	Meditations Order	Important Features	Reference
2 J/C	"Kempō Mandala"	14'9" square 1.5m square -1217 (fifth year of Kempō era)	-- ✓	as above	as above	now in the Zenrin-ji in Kyoto	reference Okazaki P. 46
3 J/C	"Taima Mandala"	during of after Kamakura period	-- ✓	as above	as above	on a reduced scale from the original in Nara National Museum	reproduced in Okazaki PIs. 22, 24-29 reference Okazaki P. 46-53
4 J/C	"Taima Mandara"	6'1" x 5'3" 1.85 x 1.59m painting on silk with gold Kamakura period	-- ✓	same as above	as above	in full colour with gold on silk gold applied in kirikane technique (cut-gold) housed in Far Eastern Dept. of Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto	reproduced in Royal Ontario Museum catalogue Pl. 104 reference The Far Eastern Collection (Royal Ontario Museum) catalogue P. 87.
5 J/C	"The Sixteen Contemplations of the Kammuryōju-kyō"	4'3" x 2'0" 1.28 x .61m colours on silk Kamakura period	-- ✓	as above	as above (except rebirth grades are not divided into degrees) also grades are represented as follows: superior = bodhisattva middle = monk/arhat inferior = human being	has a theme 16 meditations without complete central Paradise Scene and legendary material	reproduced in Okazaki Pl. 32 reference Okazaki P. 53, 60

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I.O. #'s per thesis	Source Numbers	Dimensions Medium & Date (when available)	Hare & Grades References		Number of Meditations	Meditations Order	Important Features	Reference
6 J/C	"The Sixteen Contemplations of the Kannuryōju-kyō"	6'10" x 3'5" 2.08 x 1.05m colours on silk mid Kamakura period	--	✓	as above	as above	belongs to Kyoto, Chōkō-ji	reproduced in Okazaki Pl. 34 reference Okazaki P. 53
7 J/C	"Seated Buddha"	colours on silk Yuan dynasty or Yuan copy, at end of Kamakura	--	--	legendary material and meditations not featured	-----	Vaidēhī's presence and the revelation of Sukhāvati mark it as representative of the KMLSFC	reproduced in Okazaki Pl. 33 reference Okazaki P. 60
8 J/C	"Shōkai Mandala"	5'4" x 4'5" 1.62 x 1.33m colours on silk late Heian or early Kamakura period	--		legendary material absent; meditations not rendered pictorially	16 meditations present as 16 individual lotuses arranged in outer courts bearing verses which identify them as the contemplations therefore a development of the KMLSFC theme	other versions that exist in Chōhō-ji, Osaka Shōkō-ji, Kyoto Jōkaku-ji in Miyagi Prefecture Jōdo-ji, Nara	reproduced in Okazaki Pis. 35-39 reference Okazaki P. 60-64

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ILLUSTRATIONS



Plate 1
Cave 71, Detail.



Plate 2
Banner, Stein LXX, Detail.



Plate 3
Cave 72.

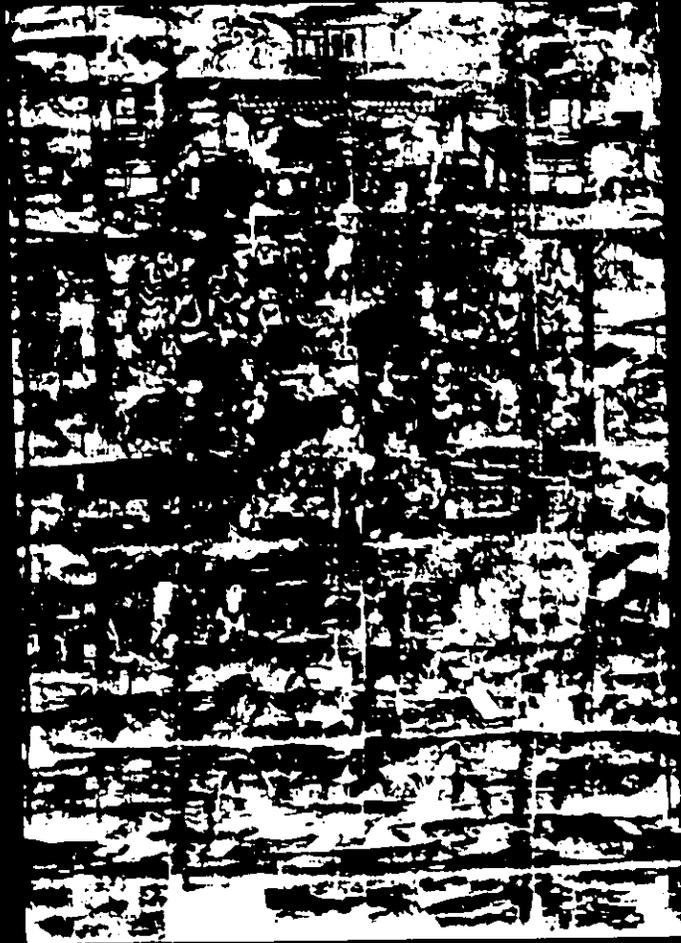


Plate 4
Banner, New Delhi.

Courts

1

2

3

4

6

5

Plate 5
Banner, Stein LXX.

Plate 6
Banner, Stein XXXVII, Detail.

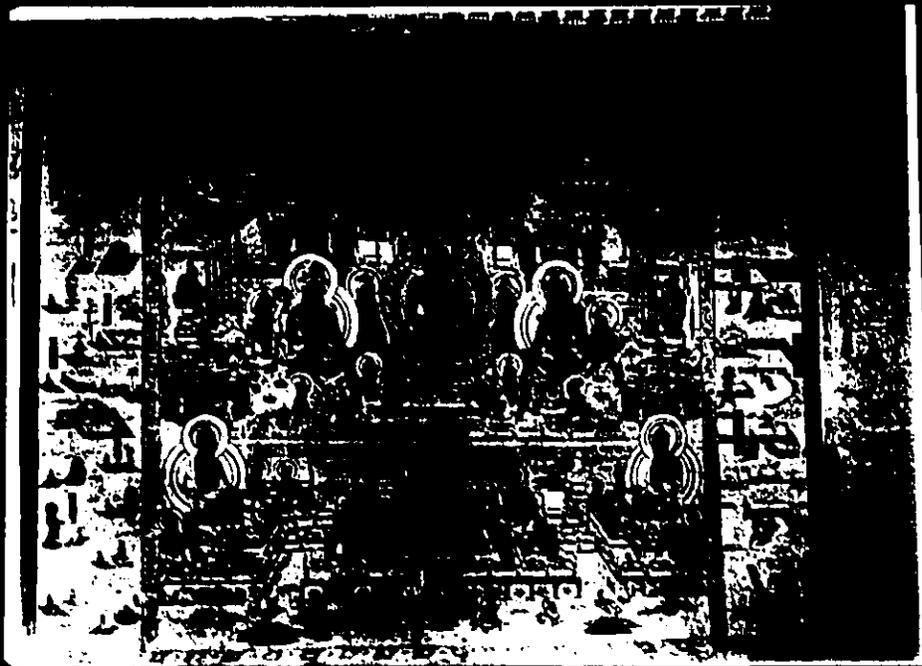


Plate 7
Cave 303.

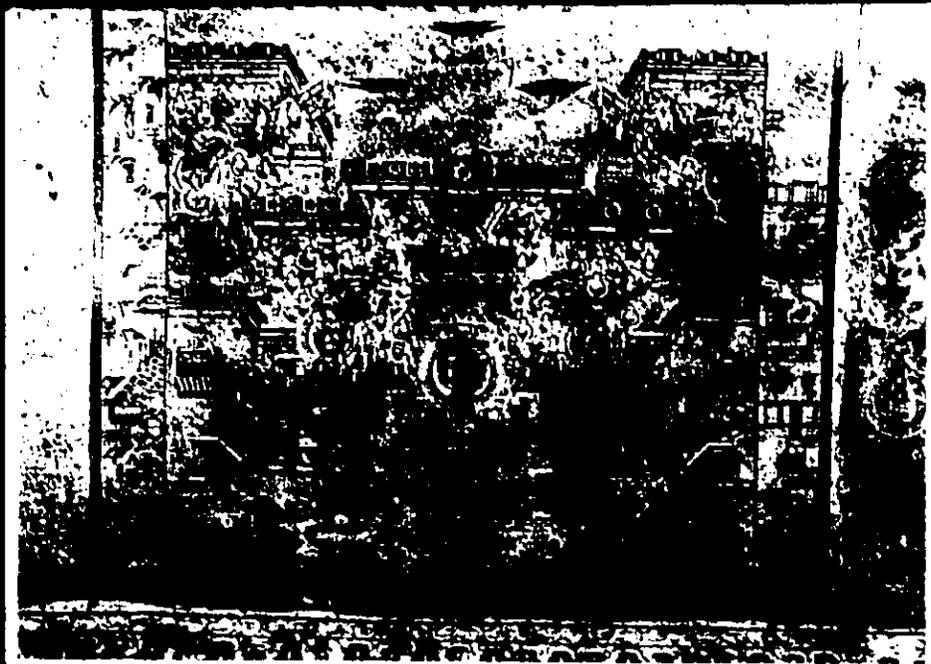


Plate 8
Cave 104.



Plate 9
Banner, Stein XXXVII, Detail.



a

b

c



Plate 10a-c
Banner, Stein XXXVII, Detail.



Plate 11
Banner, Stein XXXVII, Detail.



Plate 12
Cave 94.

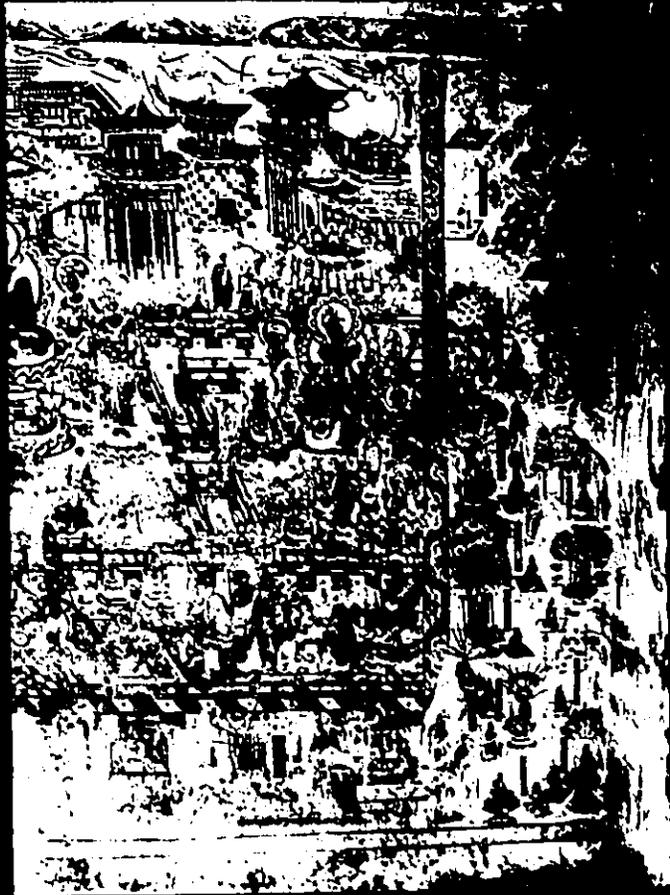


Plate 13
Cave 123.



Plate 14
Chikō Mandala.

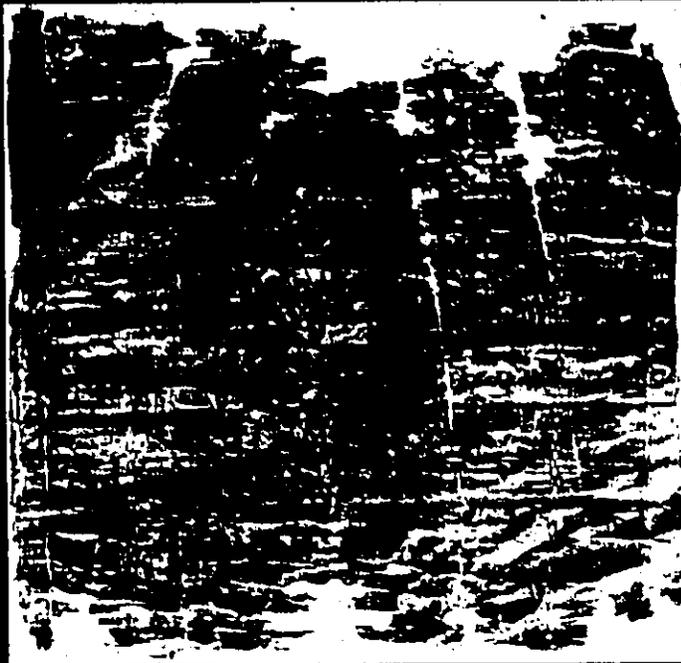


Plate 15
Banner, New Delhi.

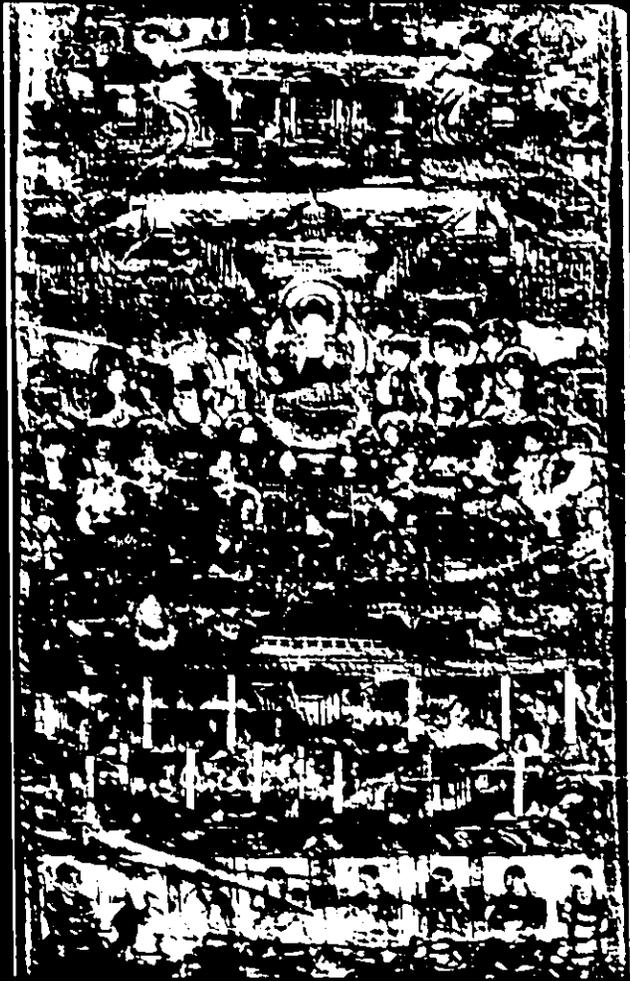


Plate 16a
Banner, Paris.



Plate 16b.
Detail of above.

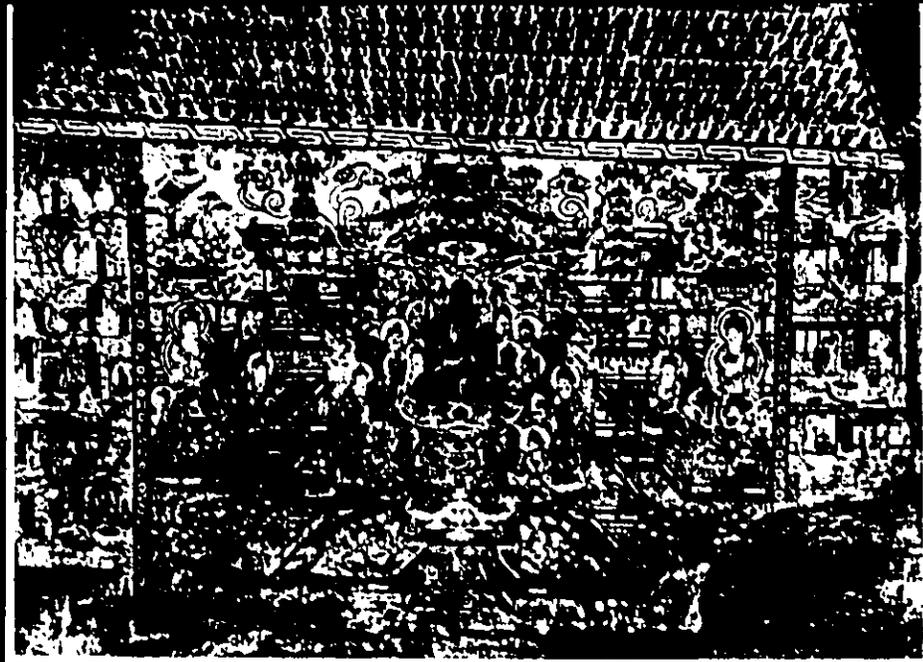


Plate 17
Cave 249.



Plate 18
Banner, New Delhi.

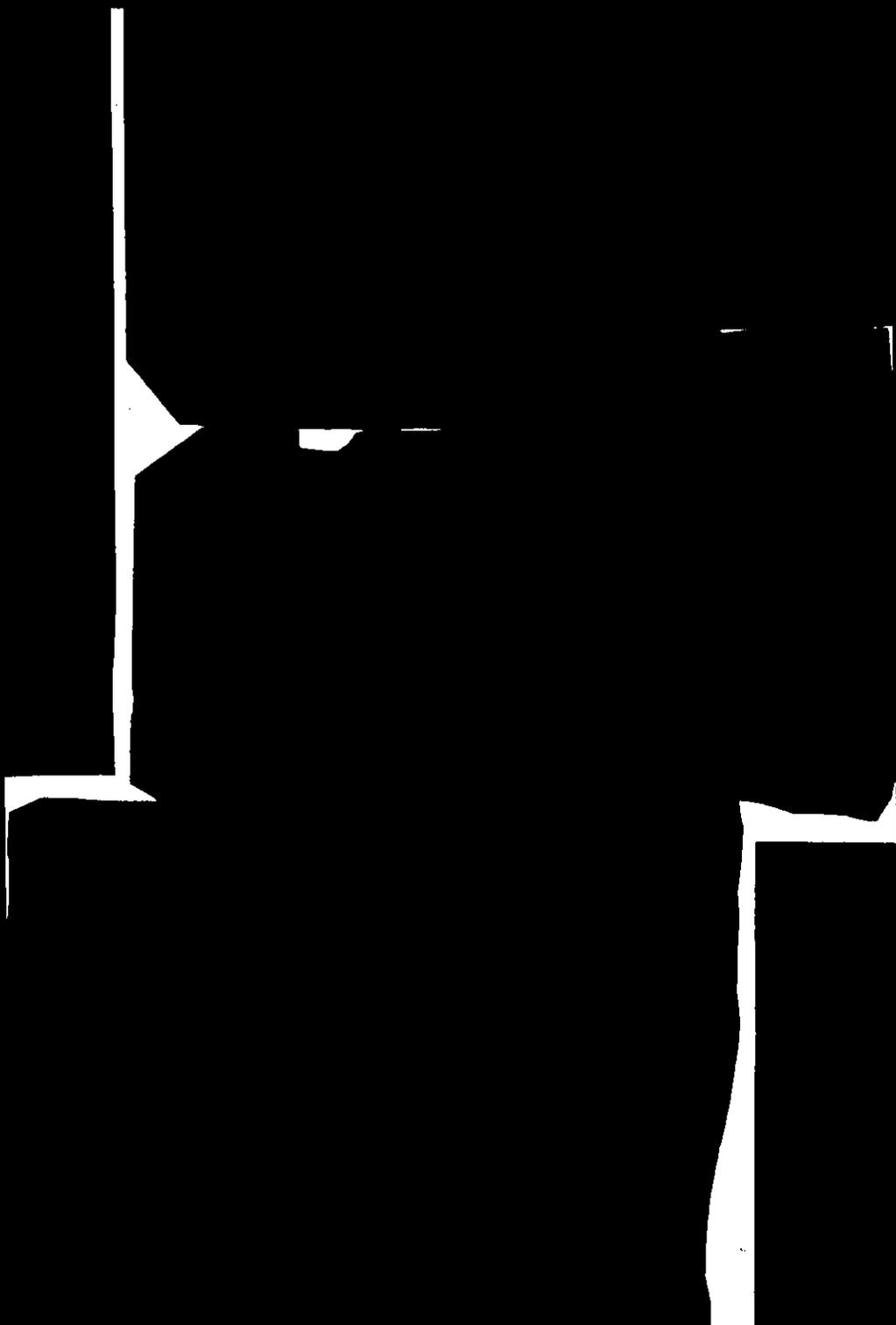


Plate 19
Banner, Stein XXXVII, Detail.



Plate 20a
Cave 71.



Plate 20b
Detail of above.



Plate 21
Cave 66.

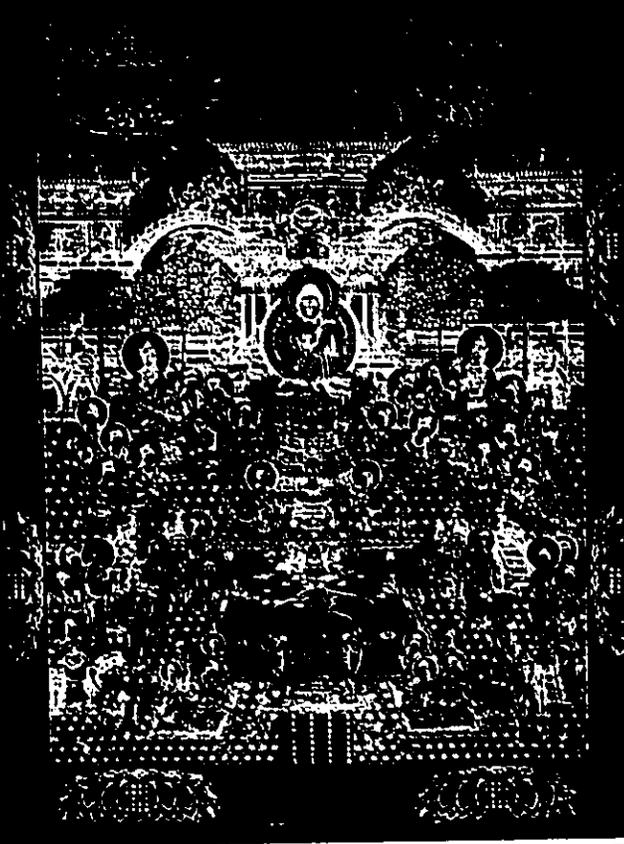


Plate 22
Shōkai Mandala.



Plate 23
Cave 277, Detail of Meditations



Plate 24
Cave 277, Detail of Rebirth Grades.

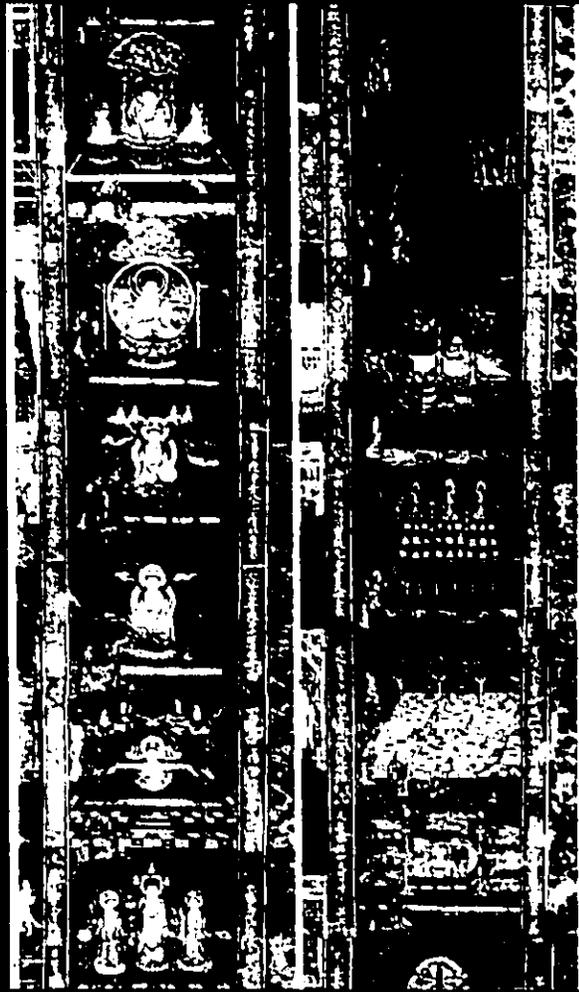


Plate 25
Taima Mandala, (13 of 16 Contemplations)

b

a

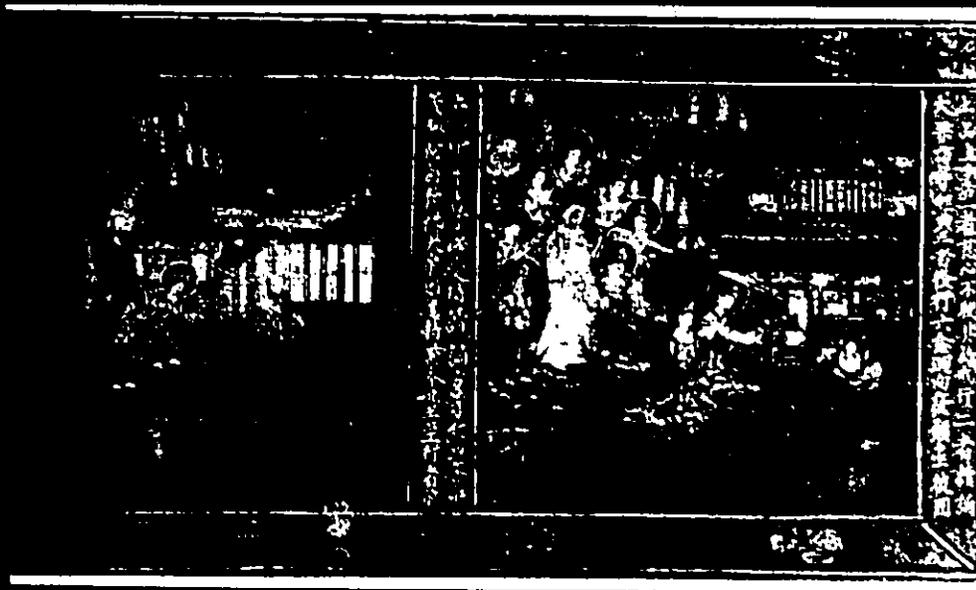


Plate 26a
Superior Grade, Highest Degree
Taima Mandala, Detail.

Plate 26b
Superior Grade, Middle Degree
Taima Mandala, Detail.

b

a



Plate 27a
Superior Grade, Lowest Degree
Taima Mandala, Detail.

Plate 27b
Middle Grade, Highest Degree
Taima Mandala, Detail.

c

b

a

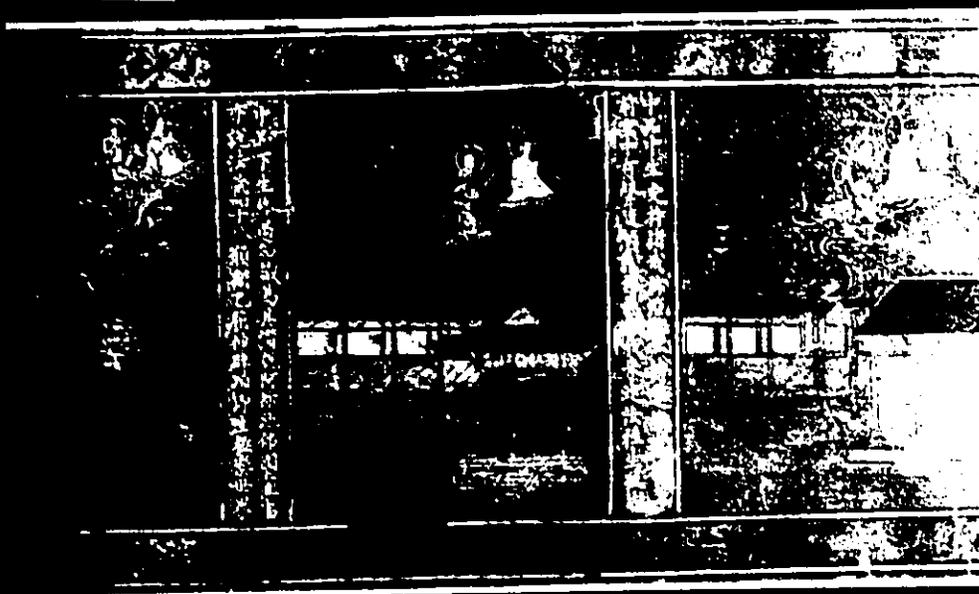


Plate 28a
Middle Grade, Middle Degree
Taima Mandala, Detail.

Plate 28b
Middle Grade, Lowest Degree
Taima Mandala, Detail.

Plate 28c
Inferior Grade, Highest Degree
Taima Mandala, Detail.

b

a



Plate 29a
Inferior Grade, Middle Degree
Taima Mandala, Detail.

Plate 29b
Inferior Grade, Lowest Degree
Taima Mandala, Detail.



Plate 30
The Sixteen Contemplations
of the Kammuryōju-kyō.