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The Evolution of the Symbolism of the Paradise of the Buddha of Infinite Life and its Western Origins.¹

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Illustrations of the paradise of the Buddha of Infinite Light are a remarkable amalgam of heterogeneous symbols that define a paradisiacal place of eternal life. The images of growth and renewal employed to convey the nature of that immortal state are emblems of regeneration and light which defy the terminality of death, its darkness, and its degenerative state. Such visions are nowhere more prolifically portrayed than in the murals of the numerous caves at Dunhuang. There the Chinese artists have taken the elements of light, water, aquatic growth, architecture, and jewels as well as spiritual beings to create a picture of paradise.

To accomplish this vision, Chinese artists drew on a number of sources. Since the Han, pleasure gardens were conceived as Taoist fairylands, but the topography of their precipitous peaks, weird rocks, eerie fungal growths, and strange creatures is not the direct source for the paradise of Amitabha. Naturally much of the symbolic imagery derives from India, the place where Buddhism originated. Some have even found allusions to heaven in a few depictions of lush jungle scenes,² but not only are these wild exuberant portrayals of nature unlike the natural setting of the Amitabha's paradise, the concept of a heavenly garden is its antithesis. For in primal Buddhism, heaven is a stage of incarnation, subject to karma, and is therefore not eternal. In contrast to the landscape imagery of India and China, the natural surroundings of the paradise of the west are tame: a flat peaceful plane with symmetrically placed jeweled trees, deep lotus-filled pools of water, and matching architectural towers made of jeweled substances. This image of eternal life expressed as nature tamed by the divine law of perfection has a very ancient tradition in Persia.

1. This paper was delivered in a shortened form at the conference on Buddhist Paradise held at Harvard University in October, 1995.

2. Heaven is suggested in two panels carved on the pillars of the gateway at the ancient Buddhist Stupa I at Sanchi: The two scenes show couples in lush jungle-like settings. See A. Foucher and J. Marshall, *The Monuments of Sanchi*, 3 vols. (Calcutta, 1940) vol. I: 226, pl. 34b2.

This paper will show the Near Eastern origins of this type of setting and its religious connotations as well as the many similarities in topography, architecture, symbolism, and ideology held in common with the Buddhist Western Land of Bliss. Secondly the means by which these ideas entered and were adapted in China will be shown by using archaeological evidence found as early as the Six Dynasties Period along the route of the silk road.

GARDEN IMAGERY IN PERSIAN TRADITION

In ancient Mesopotamia the elements of the garden, water, and trees symbolically represent a place where there is neither death nor sickness. This special garden in which there is no human disease is described in the *Epic of Gilgamesh* from the twenty-seventh century B.C.E. The garden is situated at the confluence of two rivers:

There was the garden of the gods: all around him stood bushes bearing gems. Seeing it he went down at once, for there was fruit of carnelian with the vine hanging from it, beautiful to look at; lapis lazuli leaves hung thick with fruit, sweet to see, for thorns and thistles there were hematite and rare stones, agate, and pearls from out of the sea.³

Here the water and trees rich with fruit as well as the light-producing gems are eminent elements. The images have a symbolic value: In addition to the connotation of fecundity, the water in the garden typically represented the four rivers of life, and the tree was the universal axis with its terminus in the heavens.⁴ The brilliant light, luminous gems, and precious materials establish the luxuriousness of the setting; and, more importantly, they affirm the absence of darkness, reflecting the supreme importance of light in ancient Near Eastern thought.

The tradition of the paradisiacal garden had a long and complex development in this region, but during the Parthian and Sassanian periods it became influential in India and had a great impact on Buddhism. The Sassanians, and to a lesser degree the Parthians, were followers of Zoroaster, a religion begun in the sixth century B.C.E. In this system of beliefs the garden represented the rewards of eternal life. Light and water were the two essential elements in the paradisiacal garden and religious ritual.

3 . *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, intro. by N.K. Sandars (Middlesex, England: Penguin Classics, 1972): 100.

4 . Elizabeth Moynihan, *Paradise as a Garden* (NY: George Braziller, 1979): 8ff.

Followers of Zoroaster believed that the forces of good and evil, symbolized by light and darkness, battled throughout time until the final victory of light. Zoroastrianism, maintained the supremacy of light, and the eventual victory of light over darkness—good over evil. After death the soul is judged: The good are rewarded in heaven, the evil must suffer the torments of hell. At the end of the world another such evaluation takes place and the punishment in hell must be endured for a period of time, after which all will be admitted to paradise for a life of eternal joy, because god is the ultimate goodness, and his triumph is complete. In this eternal land, life continues as on earth, with the exception of eating food, for it represents the cycle of life and death. Otherwise the pleasures of earth are extended for eternity.⁵ Most important is the aspect of its topography: All hills, dales, and mountains as well as pits and depressions are leveled so that the earth is perfectly flat; otherwise the physical world remains the same. Furthermore, in keeping with the tenets of the religion, this paradise is described as a place of "Endless Lights."⁶

DIVINE LIGHT

Though Zoroastrian rituals and scriptures were sparsely documented until after the Muslim conquest of Persia,⁷ several important Zoroastrian practices can be reconstructed from archaeological remains, coins, and later texts. Zoroastrian worship concentrates on fire, a concrete representation of light: A sacred fire burned on the top of mountains, as at the Achaemenid sanctuary at Pasargadae, where it was situated near a stream.⁸ At this early time the fire, liable to contamination from impurities in the breath of man, was worshipped in the open air and attended only by priests, who maintained the fuel supply. There were no architectural structures nor iconic images.⁹

5. R. C. Zaehner, *The Teachings of the Magi* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1956): chapters IX and X.

6. In the hymn, *Yast XXXII*. See J. Darmesteter, *Venavesta*, in *Sacred Books of the East*, ed. F. Muller (Oxford 1880) vol. XXXI, part II: 317.

7. Darmesteter, Part III: xxxi, believes that the *Avesta* was compiled under the Sassanian king Shapur II, see p. XXXVIII. See also Carol Bier, "Piety and Power in Early Sassanian Art," in *Official Cult and Popular Religion in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Eiko Matsushima (Heidelberg, 1993): 176.

8. Andre Godard, *The Art of Iran*, trans. by Michael Heron, ed. Michael Rogers (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1962): 142.

9. Mary Boyce, "On the Zoroastrian Temple Cult of Fire," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 95 (1975): 454-463. Also *Ritual and Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East*, ed. J. Quaegebur (Leuven:[Uitgeverij] Peters en Departement Orientaliester, 1933).

During the reign of Artaxerxes II (404-358 B.C.E.) several important changes took place in Zoroastrian worship. First the cult of the fire temple was established:¹⁰ A second fire, placed on an altar situated in a small temple, was accessible to the laity. There are no extant temples from the period of Artaxerxes II, but some Achaemenian period ruins, like those at Susa or at Arinberd, suggest the presence of a fire temple, though questions have been raised about the dating of the sites and their original construction.¹¹ Although there are many difficulties in identifying what once existed and by whom they were built,¹² it seems clear that these fire temples were small square rooms with the fire altar at the center and a screened doorway. Representations of fire temples often appear on the obverse of Achaemenid coins and show a fire temple with the king, in one case Darius is walking towards one—a tall tower-like building. (FIGURE 1) Identification of the structure is confirmed by a depiction of Ahura Mazda, the god of light, as a winged disk above it.¹³

DIVINE WATER

Artaxerxes II was also responsible for promoting worship of Anahita, goddess of the cosmic waters. Many see the goddess in her primary form as the assimilation of many earlier female deities from the more ancient Persian tradition—the two fertility goddesses Nana and Ardoxsho—as well as classical ones—armed Artemis, Aphrodite with her erotes, and Ceres with her cornucopia.¹⁴ By erecting statues of Anahita in the temples of large cities, Artaxerxes ended the long aniconic tradition. He also appealed to her in inscriptions.¹⁵

10 . Mary Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism*, vol. II (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1982): 220.

11 . Boyce 1982: 227.

12 . *Ibid.*, like those at Susa with a brief inscription attributed to this king.

13 . George Hill, "Coinage of Ancient Persia," in *A Survey of Persian Art*, ed. Arthur Pope (London: Oxford University Press, 1930) vol. I: Darius coin, pl. 125, is in the British Museum. The obverse of coins of Darius I and another of Autophradates I (ca. third century B.C.E.) shows a similar format but the fire altar is on the right, and a bird is perched on top of it. The Autophradates I silver tetradrachm is in the Bibliothèque Nationale; and the Darius I silver tetradrachm is in the British Museum.

For the ritual involved in carrying the sacred fire to the altars, the priests were armed; see Boyce, 1982: 224; deities are also shown as armed in the Zoroastrian religion.

14 . John Rosenfield, *Dynastic Art of the Kushans* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967): 75.

15 . J. M. Unvala, "Some Achaemenid Inscriptions," in Pope, 1930, vol. I: 344. The inscription found on the base of a column from Susa also evokes the deities Ahura Mazda and Mithra:

I rebuilt this apadana. May Ahura Mazda, Anahita, and Mithra protect it against evil. May they neither demolish nor ruin what I have constructed.

Zoroastrian scriptures like the *Avestan Aban Yast* (songs of Praise of the Waters) describe Anahita as tall, bright, and beautiful:

Strong and bright, tall and beautiful of form, who sends down by day and night a flow of motherly waters as large as the whole of the waters that run along the earth, and who runs powerfully.¹⁶

Ardvi Sura Anahita, who stands carried forth in the shape of a maid, fair of body, most strong, tall-formed, high-girded, pure, nobly born of a glorious race, wearing her . . . mantle fully embroidered with gold;

Even holding the baresma in her hand, according to the rules, she wears square golden earrings on her ears bored, and a golden necklace around her beautiful neck, she, the nobly born Ardvi Sura Anahita; and she girded her waist tightly, so that her breasts may be well-shaped, that they may be tightly pressed.

Upon her head Ardvi Sura Anahita bound a golden crown. . . . a well-made crown, with a hundred stars, with eight rays,. . . with fillets streaming down.

She is clothed in garments of beaver, Ardvi Sura Anahita; with the skin of thirty beavers. . . that are the finest kind of beaver; for the skin of the beaver that lives in water is the finest-coloured of all skins, and when worked at the right time it shines to the eye with full sheen of silver and gold.¹⁷

It has been suggested that this description was based on a cult image.¹⁸

In the *Aban Yast* her home is also portrayed:

In each channel there stands a palace, well founded, shining with a hundred windows, with a thousand columns, well-built, with ten thousand balconies.

In each of those palaces there lies a well-laid, well-scented bed, covered with pillows, and Ardvi Sura Anahita, O Zarathustra!! runs down there from a thousand times the height of man, and she is possessed of as much glory as the whole of the waters that run along the earth, and she runs powerfully.¹⁹

Her waters were the conduit to heaven:

As the sea Vouru-kasha is the gathering place of the waters, rise up, go up the aerial way, and go down to earth; go down on the earth and go up the aerial way. . . Up! rise up, ye stars that have in you the seed of waters.²⁰

This beginning of an iconic tradition was noted in records from classical antiquity. Rosenfield, 1967: 87 has cited Berossos of the third century B.C.E. (preserved by Clement of Alexandria) who observed that for the first time images were used in the worship of gods in Persia; see also Boyce, 1982: 217.

16 . *Aban Yast* IV: 14, Darmesterer, Part II: 57.

17 . *Aban Yast* XXX: 127, Darmesterer, Part II: 83.

18 . Darmesterer, Part II: 53 cites M. Halevy.

19 . *Aban Yast* XXIII: 101, Darmesterer, Part II: 77.

20 . *Fargard* XXXI:III c: 12, Darmesterer, Part III: 227.

Moreover, in these hymns, the water is the source of rebirth—children will be born from them. In particular from Lake Frazdanava, in Seitan, the first of the three sons of Zarathustra will be born.²¹

There are few extant Achaemenid images of Anahita. One bronze naked figure now in Berlin has been identified as Anahita though there are no distinguishing attributes to identify her beyond her nakedness.²² A carved gem shows a more complete figure of Anahita: Shown in profile seated on a low dais, Anahita is crowned and in each hand holds her attributes, a dove and the lotus. Stanley Casson has suggested that this image was a replica of an actual statue from a fire temple that did not survive.²³ Evidence of her worship in some Achaemenid period sanctuaries is indicated by the presence of twin temples, one with a fire altar, the other with an icon of Anahita. Boyce suggested that one such configuration may have been found at Fratadara, in the city of Persepolis,²⁴ and Godard proposed that such twin fire altars, were found Susa.²⁵ This dual ritual worship also figures in Zoroastrian literature, as in the *Yasha* XVII:

. . . Ahura Mazda's fire will bless him, contented, not offended, and in (its) satisfaction (saying thus). . . This is the blessing of the Fire for him who brings it wood (well) dried, sought out for flaming, purified with the earnest blessing of the sacred ritual truth. We strive after the flowing on of the good waters, and their ebb as well, and the sounding of their waves, desiring their propitiation; I desire to approach them with my praise.²⁶

GARDENS

As for garden imagery, it is implicit in the natural setting. Even the most ancient aniconic fire worship took place on a mountain top with a nearby stream. This tradition continued with the creation of the fire temple which was later placed in an elaborate garden setting. It may be natural that none of the archeological reports describing Achaemenid fire temples mentions the natural setting and none but Moynihan addressed its importance. Of course there was little chance of a garden surviving, but it is clear that the situation of the temple within the natural surroundings was of supreme importance. Only the formal elaborate gardens created by Sassanians in the third century in conjunction with the fire temples are still identifiable.

21 . *Aban Yast* XXXX: 110, Darmesterer, Part II: 79.

22 . F. Sarre, "Parthian art," in Pope, 1930, vol. I: 408, pl. 134d.

23 . Stanley Casson "Achaemenid Sculpture" in Pope, 1930, vol. I: 363.

24 . Boyce, 1982: 227

25 . Godard, 1962: 147. The temple was attributed to Artaxerxes.

26 . Fargard XXXI: III c: 12, Darmesterer, Part III: 227

THE KUSHANS AND PERSIAN INFLUENCES

The influence of Zoroastrianism on Buddhism is evident in the art of northern India and Central Asia during the Kushan era (second to fourth century). Zoroastrianism was most important in Bactria, the birthplace of its founder, as well as in Sogdia and Chorasmia. The Kushans were followers of the Persian religion prior to the conversion of King Kanishka (ca. second century) to Buddhism. Like their predecessors, Kushan kings appear on their coins in Persian style dress with flames emitting from their shoulders worshipping at the fire altar. The obverse often bears the image of Zoroastrian deities.²⁷ Their fire temples were built on fortified hills like the one at the site of Surk Khotal,²⁸ there is also a fire temple at Sirkap in Taxila.²⁹ A fire temple with a centrally placed statue of Ardoksho was found in room eight at the site of Begram, Afghanistan. Resembling the image of Anahita on Achaemenid coins, the goddess is seated on a throne with a high chignon, but Ardoksho holds a cornucopia.³⁰ Pearled roundel stucco decor, a favorite Sassanian motif, also appears at Begram.³¹

Being a dominant religion in the area of Gandhara and Chinese Turkistan, Zoroastrian worship naturally influenced Buddhism. Several scholars have analyzed the numerous themes adapted from the Persian religion. Its impact is clearly seen when the remains from Gandhara are contrasted with the more southerly, so-called native tradition centered in Mathura. Distinctions abound not only in artistic style and media but also in iconography.³² A few salient examples include the emergence of the Buddha of the Future, the use of the cave temple, and the importance of light symbolism as it affected the representation of the Buddha and certain scenes of his life.

27. Rosenfield, 1967: 74, pl. 3. Deities of other religions are also found like the Buddha, Silenus, and others.

28. *Ibid.*: 154. The sanctuary was on top of a steep hill.

29. Ugo Monneret de Villard, "The Iranian Temple of Taxila," in Pope, 1930, vol. I: p. 445 ff question whether a temple from Taxila is really a fire temple because of its decorative theme of the exploits of Porus and Alexander.

30. See R. Ghirshman, *Recherches Archeologiques et Historiques sur les Kouchans* (Paris: L'Institut Francais d'Archeologie Oriental, 1946): pl. XVII.

31. *Ibid.* roundel pl. XIX #2, inv. no. BG 537, and p. 37.

32. A.C. Soper, "Aspects of Light Symbolism in Gandharan Sculpture," *Artibus Asiae*, in three parts vol. XII (1949): 252-283, 314-330, and vol. XXII (1950): 63-82. Soper has pointed out the importance of borrowing from the Zoroastrian tradition for the image of the Buddha with flames emitting from the shoulders in the region of Afghanistan, as well as the theme of the visit of Indra, the miracle of the shadow, and the taming of the Naga, to mention the themes that received the greatest analysis.

With the evolution of Mahayanist art during the Kushan era, the debt to the Zoroastrian tradition increased, as a new iconography expressing Mahayanist tenets tentatively evolved. For example, the depiction of the Buddha issuing water and flames from his shoulders and feet, as it frequently appears at Begram, in Afghanistan, has long been identified with the Miracle of Sravasti. (FIGURE 2) But this representation differs from the way in which the miracle is shown in the native Buddhist tradition, where it has great antiquity. In Indian art, it was rendered by the phenomena of the instantaneous growth of a full mango tree from a pit.³³ It seems likely that the representation of the so-called Sravasti miracles by means of the emission of fire and water (the miracle of Pairs) had its origins in the Zoroastrian simultaneous worship of these elements. Indeed, the contemporaneous emission of fire and water was a marvel at a famous Zoroastrian temple: Its lake was fed by seven streams which never emptied nor overflowed and the earth around the temple emitted natural gas; these elements were manipulated to perform the twin miracles of fire and water.³⁴ Whereas the new icon of the Buddha performing the Miracle of Pairs entered the Mahayanist repertory, the earlier image of the growth of the mango tree was ignored.

The important influence of the solar cults on the development of the Buddhist deity Amitabha has been well established by scholars such as Soper, Rosenfield, and Mallman.³⁵ But the role of Zoroastrian ideology in the formation of the paradise of Amitabha has not yet been considered. Rosenfield has pointed out that the Buddhist seated cross-ankled figure in a palatial setting with auditors found at Shotorak, Afghanistan, is a prototype for the image of the paradise of Maitreya.³⁶ (FIGURE 3) The composition is in fact greatly similar to the painting of a Zoroastrian god in a setting of a trabeated arched balcony on the ceiling of a grotto of a Sassanian tomb, Dokhtar-i-Noshirwan, near the Buddhist caves of Bamiyan, in Afghanistan. ³⁷ (FIGURE 4) There the winged disc of Ahura Mazda appears above the centrally seated image flanked by two animals

33 . A. Foucher, *L'art Gréco-bouddhique du Gandhara* (Paris, 1905-1918).

34 . Godard, 1962: 152. The priests were able to manipulate the natural gas that came forth from the ground for fire miracles under the Sassanids.

35 . Rosenfield, 1967: 190ff. discussed the influence of the solar cult and its role in the creation of a new Mahayanist iconography, as did A.C. Soper, *Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art in China* (Ascona: Artibus Asiae: 1959): 147ff. See also De Mallman, *Introduction a l'etude d'Avalokitesvara* (Paris, 1948): 85-95 who notes the importance of Zurvan in the image of an eternal all-powerful god of infinite light.

36 . Rosenfield, 1967: 235.

37 . Godard, *Les Antiquites Bouddhique de Bamiyan* (Paris, 1928): 68 ff, fig 25, 26.

rendered in profile. The trabeated arch housing deities is also seen in Bamiyan's Buddhist caves. This also is clearly the model for the representation of Maitreya in Heaven in the caves at Qizil, in Xinjiang (FIGURE 5) and its counterparts at Dunhuang.³⁸ Though examples from the native tradition show deities in architectural settings, these storied balconies with ogee-shaped arcades, as seen in the early Buddhist monuments of Bharhut and Sanchi, lack both the hierarchical emphasis on the central deities and the symmetrical arrangement of the new iconography.³⁹

SASSANIANS AND THE ICONOGRAPHY OF PARADISE

The paradisiacal garden was further developed by the Sassanians (220-635). Although their predecessors, the Parthians, also worshipped fire temples (whose remains can be found in Kuh-i-khwaja at Shur and in Syria) they espoused several religions.⁴⁰ Parthian fire temples were square cellas with a vaulted passageway; the one at Hatra, built adjacent to the palace, even has a relief of the sun god over the door.⁴¹ The Sassanians who conquered the western Iranian plateau and annexed the Kushan realm of Gandhara comprising northern India and Afghanistan,⁴² revitalized the Zoroastrian religion and the worship of fire and water. Their numerous monuments glorified both their secular power and the religion. Much scholarship has been directed to the 30 rock-cut bas-relief portraits of Sassanian kings, for example, the one in which Ardashir receives his investiture from the Zoroastrian god Ahura Mazda portrayed at the site of Naqshi-i-Rustam.⁴³ In these

38 . As in the early period Cave 38, see *Chugoku Sekkutsu Kizuru*, 3 vols. (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1983) vol. I: pl. 83 ff. For Dunhuang, see *Chugoku Sekkutsu Tonko* 5 vols. (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1982) vol. I: Cave 435, pl. 69; Cave 248, pl. 84.
39 . For Bharhut see Harle, *The Art and Architecture of the Indian Subcontinent* (NY: Pelican History of Art series, Penguin, 1986) fig. 29, p. 47 and Foucher and Marshall, 1905, vol. I: pl. 34 respectively. Of course the role of Persian art in the formation of the early period of Buddhist art—in stone-cutting as well as this iconographical format as the architecture of heaven must be considered.

39 . Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin, *Symbols and Values in Zoroastrianism* (Harper and Row, edition under Asoka, probably should be considered in this iconographical format as the architecture of heaven.

40 . Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin, *Symbols and Values in Zoroastrianism* (Harper and Row, NY 1966): 20. Weakened by Hellenistic influences in the aftermath of the invasion of Alexander the Great 323 B.C.E. and the hybrid culture of the Parthians, Zoroastrianism had lost much of its influence. But Western sources record Parthian fire worship, for example both Strabo and Pausanias describe it; see Boyce, *Textual Sources for the Study of Zoroastrianism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984): 63.

41 . F. Sarre, "Parthian Art," Pope 1930, vol. I: 437 ff.

42 . Scholars like Rosenfield have questioned to what extent and when the Sassanians came to take control of Gandhara, see p. 116 ff. The evidence of coins and an inscription of Shapur I at Naqshi-i-Rustam which records the accomplishments of the ruler are cited.

43 . F. Sarre and E. Herzfeld, *Iranische Felsreliefs* (Berlin, 1910): 67-71; both the god and the kings are identified by inscription, see C. Hermann, "Arts of the Sassanians," *Arts of Persia*, ed. R. W. Ferrier (Yale University Press: New Haven, 1989): 66.

investiture scenes and in portraits of the king's victory over the defeated,⁴⁴ it is evident that Sassanian military victory is viewed as a metaphor of the triumph of good over evil. The identification of the rulers with the gods is conveyed in the use of light symbolism: Emblems of the sun and moon adorn their crowns and rays of light emit from their shoulders; and pearls adorn their clothing and diadems. The importance of the fire altar is observable on their coinage where Sassanian kings like Ardashir and his successors are shown standing before the fire altar making an offering.⁴⁵ It is said that fire worship in this context takes on a new symbolism: Duchesne-Guillemin has pointed out that the ritual flame was symbolic of the god's presence and at the same time attracted the divine,⁴⁶ while Boyce proposed that for them fire represented victory.⁴⁷

The names of seven great Sassanian fire temples are recorded but their sites are the subject of some dispute.⁴⁸ In extant structures the coupling of the worship of fire and water in a garden setting is evident. Temples built to Anahita, like the one Ardashir I (226-240) had built at his capital in Istakhr, had a great garden with a pool of water naturally fed by springs. Under Ardashir there was a new grandeur in the conception and scale of the structures.⁴⁹ Some maintain that the subterranean temple built by Shapur (241-72) at Bishapur was dedicated to Anahita: Encircling the chamber was a narrow vaulted aisle and a complicated systems of channels that allowed for water to be transported from the river.⁵⁰ A fire temple was placed at the center of an enormous rectangular platform surrounded by gardens at Firdawsi, to the east was a pool of water.⁵¹ The most impressive Sassanian temple was dedicated to Anahita at Takht-i-Suleiman in Azerbaijan by Shapur II (310-79): A large lake dominates the site, a flat topped hill. (FIGURES 6, 7) The fire temple is ruined, the site having been destroyed by Heraclius in the early seventh century, but its architectural plan has been reconstructed: The square building was covered by a dome supported on four arches and had a vaulted

44 . Ibid. The defeat of the Roman emperor Valerian by Shapur, Ardashir's successor, is carved at the same site, Naqsh-i-Rustam.

45 . Bier, 1993: 182, and Pope, "Arts of the Sassanians," 1930, vol. I pl. 251c.

46 . Duchesne-Guillemin, 1966: 65.

47 . Boyce, 1982: 223

48 . Oscar Reuther, "Sasanian Art," in Pope, 1930, vol. I: 550.

49 . It was probably the site of several stages of building, one has been identified with Ardashir, another with the later Sassanian King Khusrau I (531-79) see Hermann: 1989: 73 the scale of the space and the domed ceiling are two characteristics of his style.

50 . Georgina Hermann, *The Sassanian rock Reliefs at Bishapur* (Dietrich Reimer Verlag: Berlin, 1980). For fire the temple, see C. Hermann, 1989: 67.

51 . Godard, 1962: 203.

corridor.⁵² Paradisiacal imagery associated with Anahita is also found at the rock cut grottoes at Taq-i-Bustan (the arch of the garden, ca. sixth century). There are two platforms, one at the top of the peak and one a third up its incline.⁵³ Occupying the front of the vast architectural structure is a garden with a pool of water fed by springs. (FIGURE 8) The grand and geometric character of the architecture, with its columned facades and sculpted interior, extensive garden, and great pool of water creates a vision of paradise. The natural elements are submitted to a symmetrical and geometric layout whose compositional lines are established by the water channels around which plants and trees are placed in regularly-shaped plots. This rigid arrangement of the natural elements seeks to reflect divine perfection; Arab gardens later accomplish this in the same way.

As is evident in the prevalence and grandeur of the temples, Anahita's importance grew under the Sassanians. She comes to join and later replaces Ahura Mazda in the investiture scenes: Anahita is shown standing in the rock-cut bas-relief scene of the investiture of Narse (293-302) at Naqsh-e Rostam wearing a tall crown into which her ringlets seem to have been piled, a long gown, and a cape (which Ackerman identified as being made of 30 beaver skins),⁵⁴ holding a wreath in her left hand. A stucco capital from Taq-i-Bustan, though in relatively poor condition, shows Anahita haloed, wearing a long gown, and holding the wreath.⁵⁵ But Anahita is most often seen on gold and silver wine cups like the one in the Hermitage Museum (FIGURE 9), vases, and plates holding her attributes—a jar that is filled with the cosmic waters, the lotus flower, and dove.⁵⁶ Her image is also carved on seals, three of which are in the British Museum. (FIGURE 10) On one she stands beneath an arch, which is thought to represent a fire temple, and holds one of a number of her attributes.⁵⁷

52 . Reuther, 1930: 551. For a brief discussion of the iconography at Takht-E Solaiman see Jalaladdin Iman-Jomeh, "In Search of a Mithraeum at Takht-E Solaiman," *Etudes Mithriaques: Acta Iranica*, (E.J. Brill: Leiden, 1978): 256-259.

53 . Godard, 1962: 217.

54 . Ackerman, "Persian Silk," in Pope, 1930, vol. I: 771.

55 . Jurais Baltrusaitis, "Sasanian Stucco Sculpture," in Pope, 1930, vol. IV: 601, pl. 153a.

56 . See Prudence Harper, *The Royal Hunter: Art of the Sasanian Empire* (NY: Asia Society, 1978): 60-61, cat. no. 18, ascribed to the sixth to seventh century in the Metropolitan Museum of Art inv. no. 67.1.

57 . Harper, 1978: 145-146, cat. no. 69. David Bivar, *Catalogue of Western Asiatic Seals in the British Museum, Stamp Seals II: The Sassanian Dynasty* (London: British Museum, 1969) vol. I: 25, identified the figure as Anahita. Christopher Brunner, *Catalogue of Stamp Seals in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (NY: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1978) identifies the arch as a temple.

In his iconographical study of the *Paradisus Terrestris* theme the Swedish scholar Lars Ringborn found that one type of bronze salver, like the one in the Hermitage Museum, was a rendering of the paradise garden. The engraved design comprises an outer circle of peripheral arches that mark the walls of the garden, its inner circular registers are filled with images of flora and fauna.⁵⁸ (FIGURE 11) Similar in theme is the silver plate in the Staatliche Museum, Berlin which shows a garden setting with a temple at center. Depicted on another plate from the Hermitage Museum are music-making and dancing.⁵⁹ The imagery of the garden as paradise, without anthropomorphic representation of the goddess, has also been adopted for the design of carpets; the most famous one was in the throne hall of Khusrau I (531-579).⁶⁰ The formal organization of the garden motifs is symmetrical in plan: Landscape elements are placed around a central grid of water channels, recalling the strict organization found at extant Sassanian sites.

PERSIAN INFLUENCE IN CENTRAL ASIA

Zoroastrian influences were also felt farther east; evidence of its presence is plentiful at the caves of Qizil. The organization of the interior space of the chapels, with their aisles and icons nearer the middle of the room, barrel vaults, and domes supported by squinches are similar. As for iconographical emblems, there is a clear correspondence between Sassanian prototypes and the Bodhisattvas' crowns and drapery style of fluttering scarves. Moreover, the Buddha is shown with flames emitting from the shoulders. This is frequently seen on the central zone of the barrel vault, as in Cave 8 and 38 (FIGURE 12, 12A). So too the rayed halo of Sassanian kings and divinities is used for the Buddha in Cave 69.⁶¹ (FIGURE 13) For the depiction of the sun and moon there is an orb surrounded by an outer ring of pearls that strongly resembles the Sassanian pearled roundel (FIGURE 12) which is also seen at Qizil.⁶² In addition, the artists of Qizil adopted the lumpish

58 . Lars I. Ringborn, *Paradisus Terrestris* (Helsinki, 1955): 435-446, for English translation and drawing of the bronze salver, see Moynihan, 1979: 33.

59 . Ackerman, in Pope 1930, vol. IV: fig. 252. For another example see Harper, 1978: 60-61, cat. no. 18; Martha Carter who wrote the catalogue entry, questions the identification of these representations of naked dancing girls holding attributes offering that they may be Anahita or some other symbolic representation.

60 . The rug of Khusrau I was 84 feet square and worked with jewels, silver and gold, see Moynihan, 1979: 33.

61 . *Chugoku Sekkutsu Kiziru*, vol. I: 15 ff. Dating of the caves by Japanese scholars who worked in tandem with the Qizil Research Institute and Chinese archaeologists like Su Bai have come to the conclusion that there were three periods of construction, the first comprising Cave 38, is ascribed to the period 310+/- 380, which is considerably earlier than the Western dating of the caves. See 163 ff. For Cave 69 see vol. II: pl. 3.

62 . At Qizil the Zoroastrian pearled roundel with ducks holding a string of beads in their mouth is found, see Herbert Hartel, *Along the Silk Routes: Central Asian Art from West Berlin State Museums* (Berlin, 1982): 82, pl. 19; A. von Le Coq,

triangles that represent mountain forms in the landscape settings of hunt scenes on Sassanian vessels such as the vase in the National Collection, Teheran, and used it for scenery in the small-scale scenes painted in a lozenge pattern on the ceilings.⁶³ Lastly, as noted above, the Maitreya grouping, clearly indebted to Sassanian prototypes, is here rendered quite close to the Bamiyan tomb painting. As for water imagery there are two intriguing icons at Qizil. One, from Cave 14, shows a Buddha standing in water. And in Cave 69 the vivid blue area on the central wall above the seated Buddha is scattered with small lotus forms, painted in green, each of which once supported small stucco icon of the Buddha.⁶⁴ Could this be an early representation of the paradise of Amitabha?

Several Sassanian ossuaries decorated with "divine architecture" have been found in the region, in particular in Soghdia and Samarkand. These reliquaries held the bones of the deceased after "sky burial," as described in the Zoroastrian texts.⁶⁵ Several of these were discovered in Russia: In one example a pearled arcade houses figures of winged heads or guardian spirits holding garlands.⁶⁶ The composition is remarkably like the Miran temple unearthed by Stein.⁶⁷ It also resembles the rectangular reliquary unearthed by Girshman at Bichapur: Each face has a depiction of a god; two of the deities are female, and one has been identified as Anahita.⁶⁸ The gods are shown in hieratic style, some flanked by symmetrical elements; in the case of Anahita it is paired fish.

There is ample evidence of the proliferation of Manichaenism, a religion with great similarities to Zoroastrianism in Chinese Turkistan. The Manicheans, an unorthodox religious movement that developed under the Sassanians, were persecuted after their leader's execution in 272-75. The district of Tocharistan in

Die Buddhistische Spantantike Mittelasiens, 7 vols. (Berlin: Verlag Deitrich Reimer Ernst Vohsen, 1928) vol. VII: 27. 1928) found this in 1922, 026 IV: 25; it is from the "largest cave"; inv. MK III 8419.

63 . Harper 1978: cat no. 3, a fourth-century silver-gilt plate with figure hunting lions has this kind of treatment of the mountains under the feet of the lion; it is in the Iran Bastan in Teheran and measures 6 cm. high and 28.5 cm. in diameter; the vase which has similar themes, cat. no. 22, is in the National Collection, Teheran and measures 17.5 cm high and is from the seventh century. For Qizil see *Chugoku Sekkutsu Kiziru* vol. I: pl. 20ff.

64 . *Chugoku Sekkutsu*: 210, pl. 40, the authors see this a representation of the Buddha "of infinite numbers" showing himself as multiple Buddhas.

65 . *Zend Avesta*, Darmesteter, Part I: 745.

66 . Alex Streckof, "Iran and Pre-Islamic Art of West Turkestan," Pope, 1930, vol. I: 441-459, pl. 145d.

67 . A. Stein, *Ruins of Desert Cathay* (NY: Dover Press reprint, 1987): vol. 456 ff, pl. IVff.

68 . R. Ghirshman, "Etudes Iranienne II: Un Ossuaire en Pierre Sculptee," *Artibus Asia*, vol. XXI (1948): 292-310.

Khorastan in the area of Balkh was their eastern center. At Karakhoja (the ancient Khotcho) near Turpan, Le Coq found a necropolis with many domed tombs and a city of temples attesting to the Persian influence.⁶⁹ In the substrata of a modern building, the remains of the mural showed a Manichaean priest surrounded by monks and nuns dressed in their characteristic monastic white robes (ruin K).⁷⁰ A number of Manichaean texts were also found in Khocho and have been ascribed to the eighth to ninth centuries, one hymn book has both Soghdian and Persian texts, several others are illustrated.⁷¹ Stein's excavations in Yarkhoto also uncovered the remains of Manichaean shrines.⁷² Thus there is ample evidence that the Persian religion continued to be practiced in Central Asia for centuries.

In summary Sassanian influence spread from Persia to Afghanistan and Northern India east through Central Asia reaching Turfan and Kucha. Sassanian material provides many parallels between the Zoroastrian and Buddhist concepts. First is the very important image of the garden as the setting for eternal life. These gardens, by virtue of their extraordinary physical characteristics, are paradises. They are dominated by a brilliant light, the abundance of water, vegetative fecundity, and adornments made of precious materials—gems, gold, and silver. It is important to note that both garden terrain's are flat, without mountains or valleys. The landscape elements as well as architectural forms are arranged in symmetrical patterns, echoing the geometric perfection of the divine. As divinities Amitabha and Anahita share important water symbolism. Both are associated with the heavenly waters and its symbol the lotus. Beings are born in their paradisiacal lakes, and the ewer filled with the cosmic waters is a common attribute for both Anahita and the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, the major attendant of Amitabha. Lastly rituals surrounding the worship of Anahita were accompanied by dancing and music which are prominent features in the Chinese depictions of the Western paradise.

69 . Albert von Le Coq, *Buried Treasures of Chinese Turkistan* (reprint, Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1985): pl. 8. Nestorian Christian remains were also found.

70 . Le Coq, 1985: pl. 9, sees this as a representation of Manes.

71 . Hartel, 1982: 175, pl. 112; and 176-181, pl. 114-119. Also Le Coq, 1985: 30 ff.

72 . A. Farrer and R. Whitfield, *Caves of the Thousand Buddhas: Chinese Art from the Silk Route* (NY: George Braziller, Inc., 1990): 144.

PERSIAN EVIDENCE IN CHINA

Records of Persians living in Gaochang, Turfan, date as early as the Six Dynasties period; Laurence Sickman referred to a population of Persians in the capital of Luoyang in the Northern Wei era.⁷³ Moreover, a number of Persian objects found in Chinese tombs of this era provide evidence of the presence of Sassanian art and culture in China at this time. The earliest of these is a glass bowl with Sassanian design unearthed in a Chin dynasty tomb. Although the fourth-century glass was already broken, its Sassanian origin is affirmed as well as the sea route that was used to bring it to Hubei.⁷⁴ Images of Persian deities adorn a number of the gold and silver plates or ewers that have been recently discovered. For example a Northern Wei tomb in Jing-yuan, Gansu yielded a most unusual gilt silver plate: At the center is a seated deity, in the surrounding area are a zone of figures shown as busts and an intricate grape vine and fruit pattern (FIGURES 14, 14A).⁷⁵ The Chinese scholar Chu Shi-bin analyzed the piece, making comparisons with many types of Persian vessels with similar themes, though no close counterpart was known to him.⁷⁶ But there are similar Sassanian plates—such as a bronze one in the Hermitage Museum and a silver one in the Staatliche Museum in Berlin—that share shape, composition, and iconography. Here too the peripheral arcades mark the outer walls of the garden, its inner circles contain images of flora and fauna.⁷⁷ A second gilt silver Persian plate found in a Northern Wei tomb in Datong, Shanxi, in 1981 only portrays the central deity and an eight-lobed Persian-style wine cup was found in the southern area in the same city in 1970. Both are on exhibit in the Historical Museum in Beijing.

Centrally placed deities inscribed within pearled roundels are perhaps the most popular Sassanian theme. A number of silk fragments with designs of Western deities that were found in Chinese tombs dating to the period of the Six Dynasties to Tang have been studied by Zhao Feng. Citing historical records from the local history of Gaochang, Turfan (543) as well as the *Sui shu* (sixth century), Zhao established that the Chinese knew of and revered Persian brocades.⁷⁸ In his analysis of the deities depicted on the excavated silks from Astana,

73. L. Sickman and A. Soper, *Art and Architecture in China* (NY: Penguin Books, 1987): 479, note 7.

74. Wang Zhongshu, "Shilun Echeng Wulidun Xijinmu chutu de Basisanshan zhao boliwan wei Wu shi you hailu chuanru," *Kaogu* 1995.1: 81ff.

75. Chu Shibin, Gansusheng Bowuguan, "Gansu Jingyuan Xinchu Dongluoma Liuyinpan Luekao," *Wenwu* 1990.5: 19.

76. Ibid.

77. Ringborn, 1958: 435-446. For the bronze salver see drawing in Moynihan, 1979: 33.

78. Zhao Feng "Weitang zhijin zhong de yiyu shendi," *Kaogu* 1995.2: 179-183, specifically discussed the various Zoroastrian Ahura Mazda and Mithra and Helios.

Turfan, Doulanreshui in Qinghai, and the Imperial Repository, the Shosoin, in Japan, Zhao found a consistent format of a pearled roundel with a central deity flanked by smaller attendants (usually guardians). Three of these examples excavated in China show the sun god in his quadriga, the horses drawn in profile. It is important to note that the examples from Turfan and Doulanreshui show the deity simultaneously in his four-horse chariot and enthroned. (FIGURES 15, 15A) This is clearly an icon in transition, where the mobility of the mount is compromised by the static design of the tall throne. The numerous attendants and supernatural creatures flanking the central god enhance his grandeur. In this format the image of the deity comes close to the composition identified as the paradise of Maitreya in Gandhara, though here identification with the sun god is quite clear. The pearled roundel inscribed with Western deities also appears as an important design painted on the coffin found in a Northern Wei tomb in Guyuan, Ningxia, as well as on the stone coffin lid of Li Ho (dated 582) found in a tomb in San Yuan county, Shensi.⁷⁹ By the time of the Sui dynasty the pearled roundel appears at Dunhuang as a textile design on the blanket of an elephant in a ceiling painting in Cave 397, on the garments of a Bodhisattva in Cave 420, and as a wall design in Cave 277.⁸⁰ (FIGURE 16) Pearls, as a symbolic, decorative motif in the architectural decor, are pervasive in the Sui Caves and some from the early Tang era.⁸¹

Persian influence is increasingly apparent in the art produced under the Northern Qi. Laurence Sickman has discussed the use of decorative themes such as the pearled roundel, pearled border rinceau pattern, and decorative vegetal emblems at Xiangtangxian and compared them to carvings at Taq-i-Bustan.⁸² Themes of wine parties with Persians dressed in their native style and drinking from rhytons are familiar in Northern Qi

79 . P. Karetzky and A. Soper, "A Northern Wei Painted Coffin," *Artibus Asiae*, vol. LI (1991) no. 1/2: 5-29, see fig 14, and *Wenwu* 1984.6: 46-56. For Li Ho see *Wenwu*, 1966.1: and P.E. Karetzky, "The Engraved Designs on the Late Sixth Century Sarcophagus of Li Ho," *Artibus Asiae*, vol. XLVII (1986) no. 2: 81-106.

80 . For the blanket of the elephant of Cave 397 see *Chugoku Sekkutsu Tonko* 1982, vol. II: pl. 151; for the garments of a Bodhisattva, see Cave 420, pl. 62-63.

81 . As an architectural decorative motif on the murals see *Chugoku Sekkutsu Tonko* 1982, vol. II: for Cave 277, pl. 120; Cave 397, pl. 154-5; Cave 244, pl. 172; Cave 394, pl. 154-5; Cave 390. pl. 163-4; and in the early Tang era Cave 389, pl. 183; Cave 388, pl. 187; Cave 204, vol. III: pl. 1.

82 . Sickman, 1987: 118ff. Sickman attributed the flow of ideas from the Sassanian kingdom as the result of relations with the Turks, who, having conquered parts of Central Asia and Mongolia, served as intermediaries between the Sassanian court and China during the Northern Qi and Northern Zhou period, as well as the close relations with Qizil and Quca which were strongly Iranian.

funeral art.⁸³ Persian artifacts have recently been found in Northern Zhou tombs, such as the one of Li Xian dated 569 in Guyuan, in the autonomous region of Ningxia. (FIGURES 17, 17A) Though the gilt silver ewer is by far the most extraordinary object, other Persian treasures were also found, including a glass cup and golden ring that are now on display in the Provincial Museum in Guyuan.⁸⁴ The Persian ewer, a frequent attribute of Anahita, is characteristic of a type that becomes familiar in the Far East—a long-neck, tall foot and swollen belly. Here pearls, rendered as a circlet of bosses, are prominent on the neck and feet. In his study of the object, Wu Zhen made reference to the Sassanian prototypes and their influence in China.⁸⁵ Although on this example six classical figures are arranged in three pairs of male and female couples, other examples, like two ewers in the Shosoin, show Anahita. (FIGURES 18, 19) She appears holding a jug of water encompassed by an oval comprised of tendrils and lotus that is flanked by two attendant musicians on one, and stands alone in the other.⁸⁶ On one Persian wine cup in the Shosoin collection and another in the Tenri Museum, Anahita appears twice (at either end of the cup); on the latter she is naked, with a pearled roundel as a halo, bedecked with crown and jewelry—necklace, bracelets, anklets—and holding a small covered jar and pail of water.⁸⁷

Though the presence of Sassanians in China has been recognized, the role of the Sassanian *paradizo* in the creation of the image of the Land of the West has not been observed. It was under the patronage of the Northern Qi that one of the earliest images of the Western paradise appears in the caves at Xiangtangshan, where noted earlier Sassanian imagery abounds. The Buddha of Infinite Light is seated at the center of his entourage under a jeweled canopy; trees flank the group, and a lotus pond occupies the foreground. (FIGURE 20) The hierarchical arrangement of the central deity with flanking attendants in a royal setting of jeweled canopies is much like the Maitreya figures of Gandhara, Ahura Mazda in the murals of Bamiyan, and the sun god on Sassanian silks. The connotation of paradise is more specifically conveyed through the garden

83 . Sickman, 1987: 120. For the Persian-type rhyton found in Asia see Martha L. Carter, "An Indo-Iranian Silver Rhyton in the Cleveland Museum," *Artibus Asiae*, vol. XLI, (1979) no. 4: 309-325 the object under discussion has a Sassanian inscription and is attributed to the fifth to sixth centuries.

84 . Ningxia Huizuzizhi Bowuguan, "Ningxia Guyuan Bei Zhou Li Xianmu Fajue jianbao," *Wenwu* 1985.11: 1-20. The tomb had extensive murals and ceramic *mingqi* as well.

85 . Wu Zhen, "Bei Zhou Li Xianmu Chudi liujin yinhu kao," *Wenwu* 1987.5: 66-76.

86 . Ryoichi Hayashi, *The Silk Road and the Shoso-in, Heibonsha Survey of Japanese Art*, vol. 6 (NY: Weatherhill Inc., 1975): fig 138, p. 125.

87 . Hayashi, 1975: fig. 96 gilt silver, 28.2 cm., ascribed to the sixth century in the Tenri Museum, Nara Prefecture.

imagery and the celestial lake. The immediate source of this theme are the paradiso plates and gilt silver ewers that recall, in abbreviated fashion, the Sassanian gardens with their vast architectural monuments, bodies of limpid water, and Zoroastrian fire temples with icons of the gods. Finally, there is also evidence that Zoroastrian services were performed at fire temples in the capitals of the Northern Qi and Northern Zhou.⁸⁸

It just may be that the Chinese artist, searching for an image of Paradise—a new concept of eternal life—took the foreign images as the basis for the creation of a unique vision of the land of the infinite light. Thus, in the end the description of the paradise of Amitabha is quite similar to the Zoroastrian concept:

This world Sukhavati, Ananda, which is the world system of Lord Amitabha, is rich and prosperous, comfortable, fertile, delightful and crowded with many Gods and men. And in this world system, Ananda, there are no hells, no animals, no ghosts, no Asuras, and none of the inauspicious places of rebirth. And in this our world no jewels make their appearance like those which exist in the world system Sukhavati.⁸⁹

The Chinese artist, taking the Zoroastrian paradisiacal garden with its central deity in a palatial setting as the basis, added many indigenous flourishes. By the Tang era, in scenes of Amitabha's paradise like those at Dunhuang, the Sassanian temple becomes a vast architectural complex with long halls and jeweled pavilions. The sacred lake has tiled bridges connecting the multiple pavilions and jeweled platforms. Music is performed by a multi-sectional orchestra, but the dancers remain Central Asian. Appearing at the center of the foreground, they are a clear reminder of the foreign origins of the concept of Paradise. Thus although Chinese images of royal grandeur have overlaid the image, the ancient Western origins of paradise and its garden metaphor can still be clearly discerned.

88 . Sickman, 1987: 120.

89 . *Sukhavativyuha*, *Sacred Books of the East*, ed. Muller (London 1880): 33.

FIGURE 1 Achaemenid coin of Darius, British Museum.



1

FIGURE 2 Stele of the Miracle at Sravasti, from Begram, in Afghanistan.



2

FIGURE 3 Stele Maitreya in Heaven, from Shotorak, Afghanistan (inv. no. 157).

FIGURE 4 Drawing of a mural in a Sassanian tomb at Dokhtar-i-Noshirwan, near the Buddhist caves of Bamiyan, in Afghanistan. (from Godard, 1928: fig 25.)

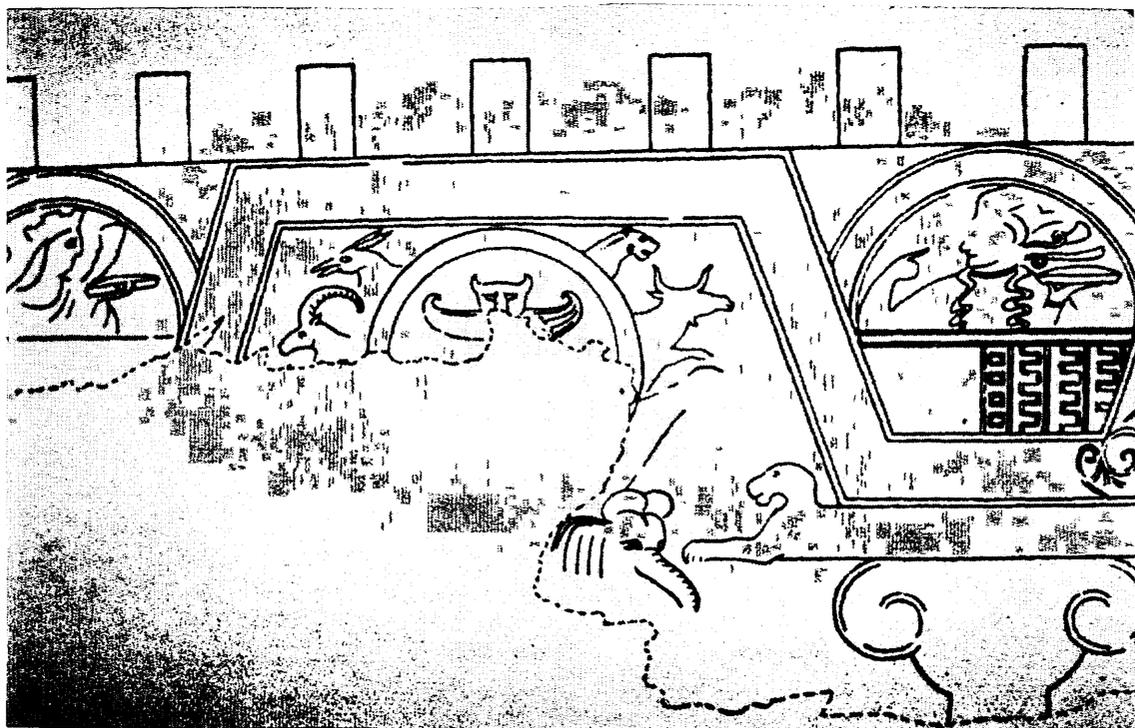
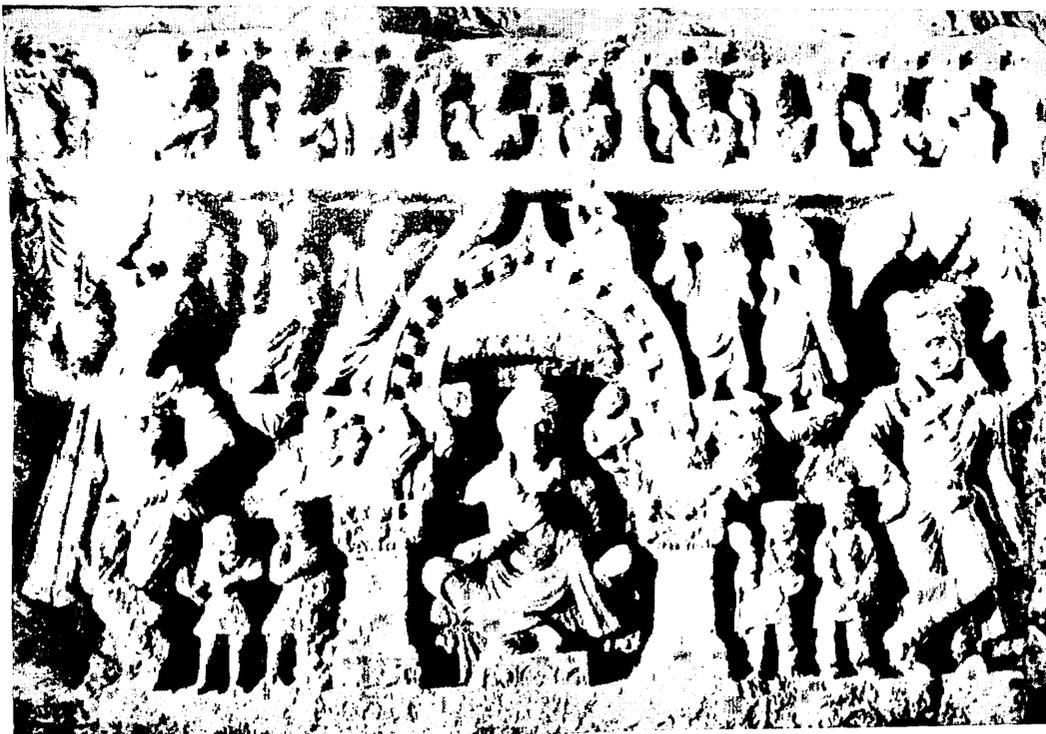
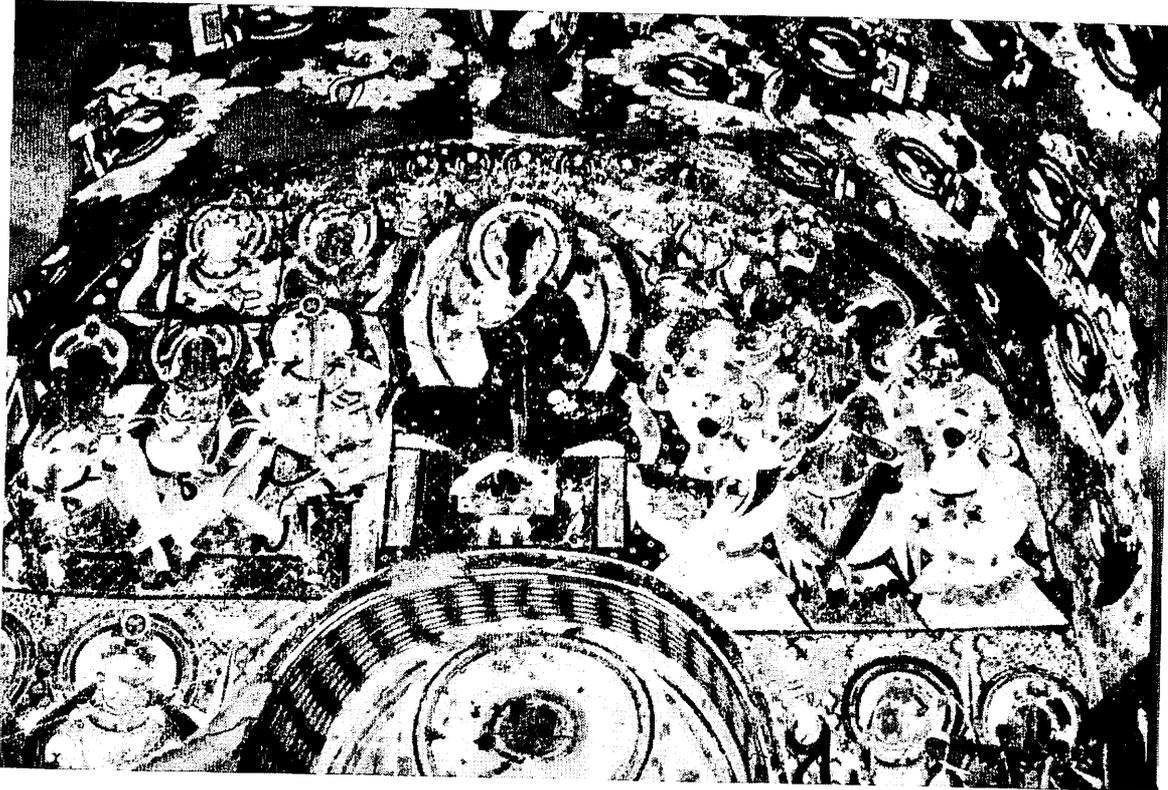


FIGURE 5 Maitreya in Heaven, Cave 38 at Qizil, in Xinjiang.

FIGURE 6 Sassanian temple of Anahita at Takht-i-Suleiman in Azerbaijan by Shapur II (310-79) (University of Chicago photo).



5

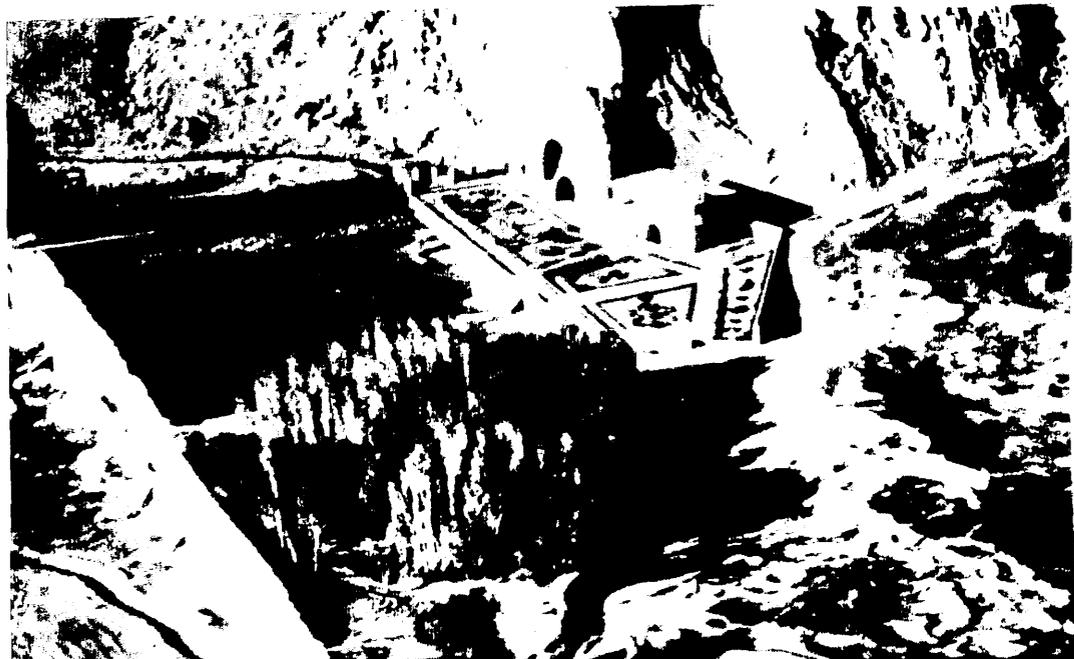


6

FIGURE 7 Sassanian temple of Anahita at Takht-i-Suleiman in Azerbaijan by Shapur II (310-79). (Photo Ferrier, 1989: 66.)



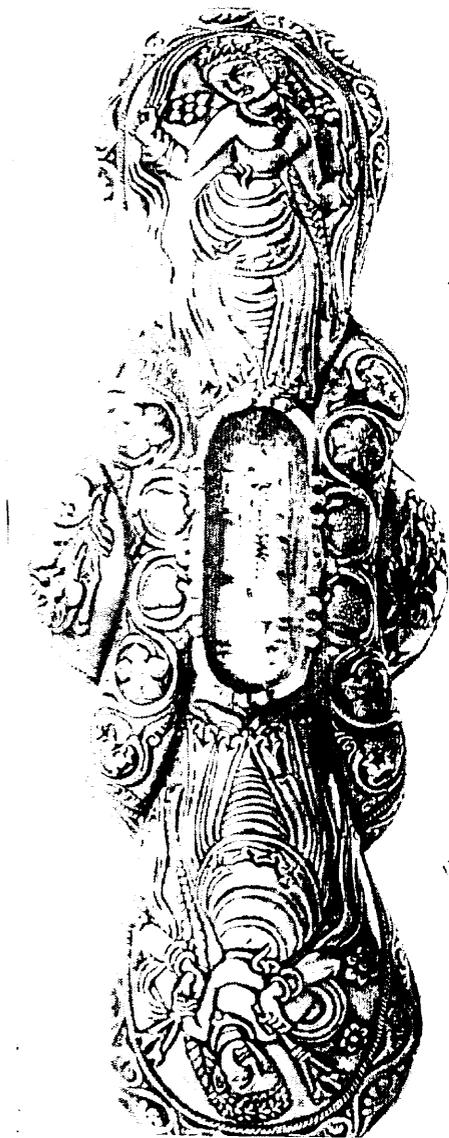
FIGURE 8 Sassanian rock-cut grottoes at Taq-i-Bustan.



8

FIGURE 9 Sassanian silver wine cup, Hermitage Museum (SPA IV: 221).

FIGURE 10 Sassanian seal, British Museum inv. no. 120216 (1.7 cm.)



9



10

FIGURE 11 Drawing of bronze salver, Hermitage Museum (from Moynihan, 1979: 33).

FIGURE 12, 12 A. Ceiling painting Cave 38, Qizil Caves, Xinjiang.



11



12A



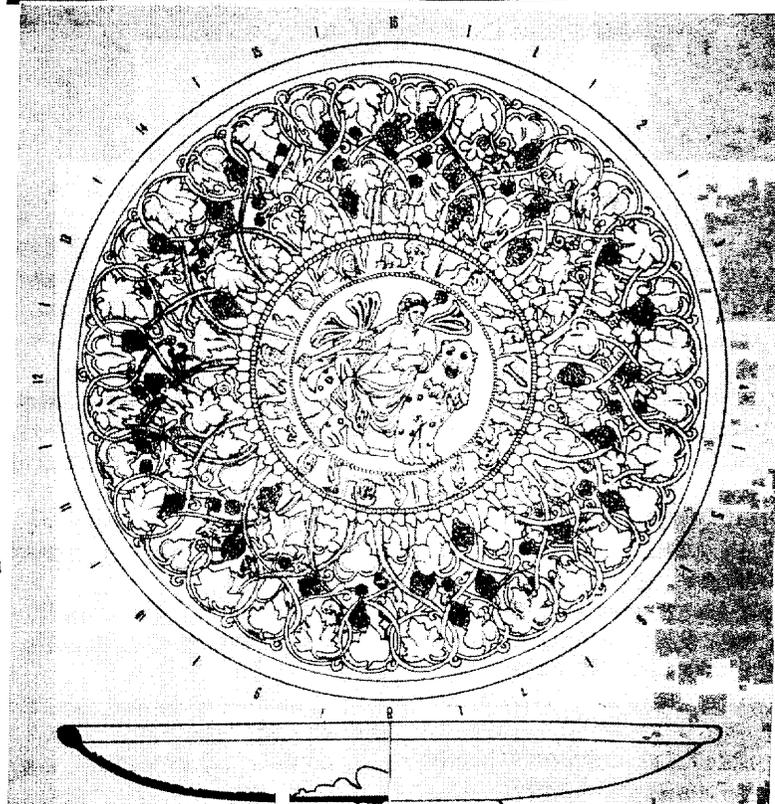
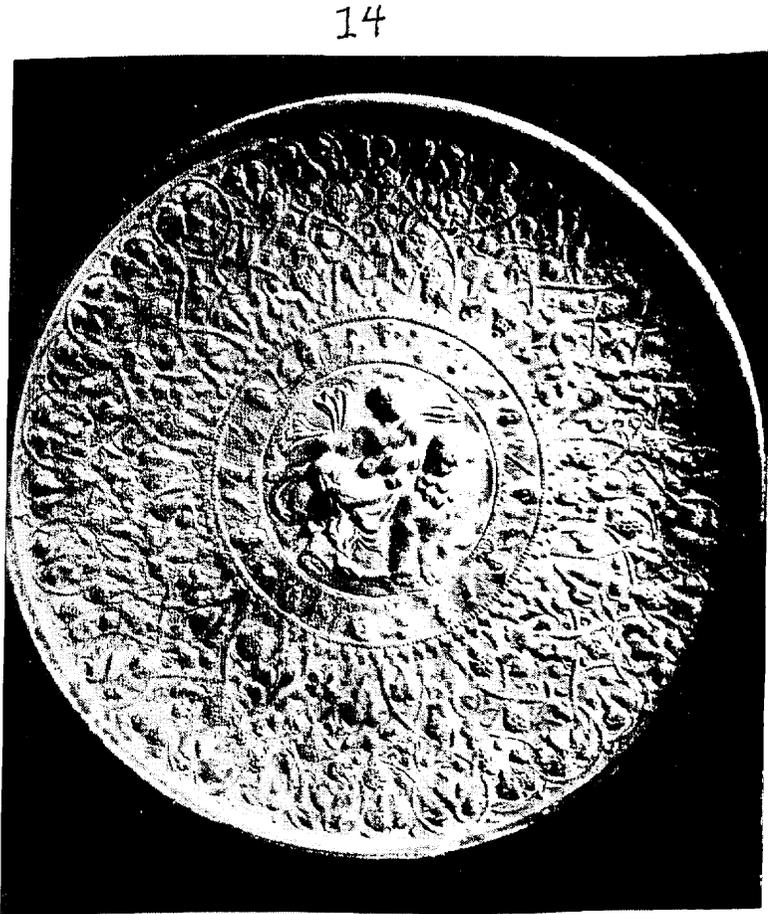
12

FIGURE 13 Mural Cave 69, Qizil Caves, Xinjiang.

FIGURE 14, 14A Gilt silver plate from a Northern Wei tomb in Jing-yuan, Gansu.



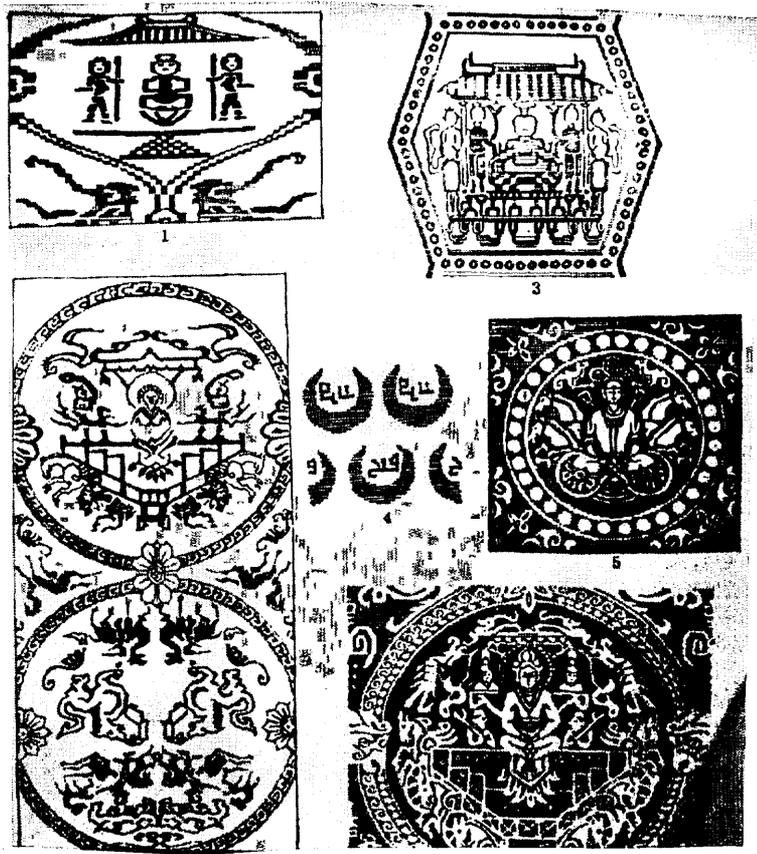
13



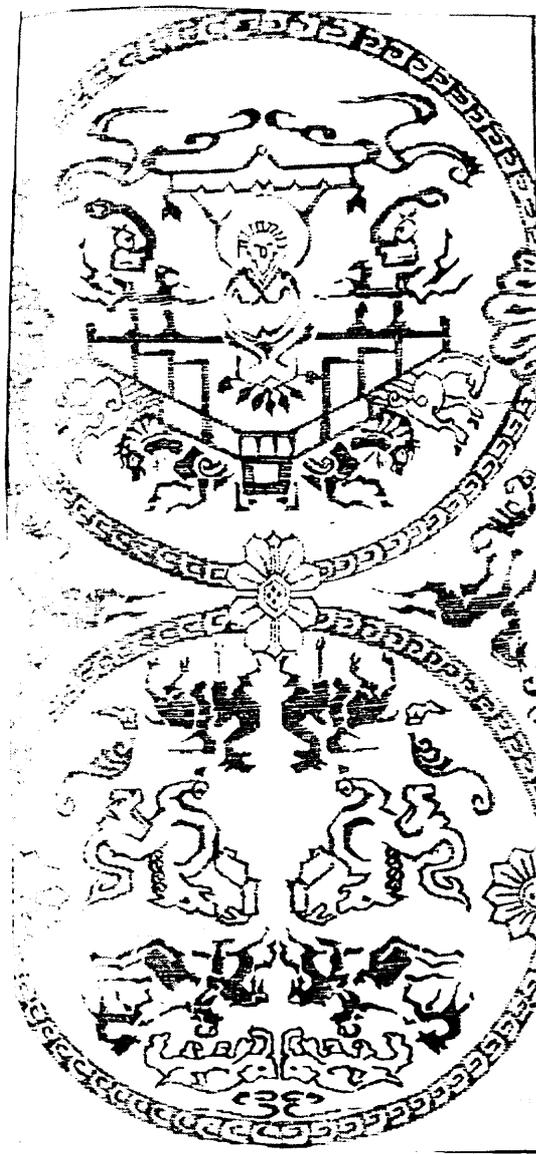
14A

FIGURE 15, 15 A Silk fragments found at Turfan and Doulanreshui (from *Kaogu* 1995.2).

FIGURE 16 Mural Cave 402 Dunhuang, Gansu.



15



15A



16

FIGURE 17, 17A Ewer from tomb of Li Xian dated 569, Guyuan, Ningxia. (*Wenwu* 1985.11)

FIGURE 18 Ewer from Shosoin, Imperial Repository, Tokyo (detail).

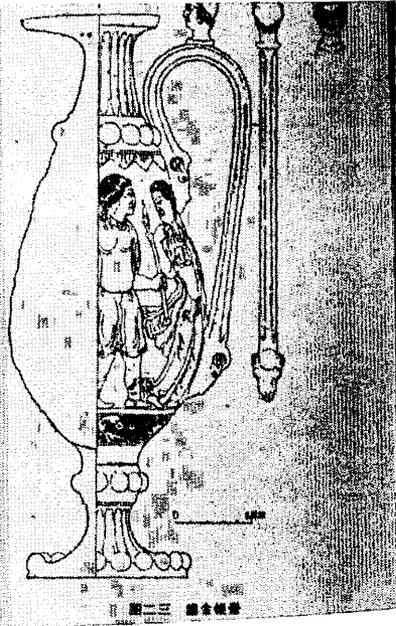
1件(标本2006)。口微内敛,深小平底,素面。高8.4,口径16,底径5厘米(图四三)。

另有圆饼状物22枚,边缘侧面有一孔,有的穿通,有的未穿通,大的直径3.5,厚1厘米,小的直径1.5,厚0.5厘米(图四二)。

金、银器:10件。

鎏金银壶1件(标本1)。长颈,鸭嘴流,上腹细长,下腹圆鼓,单把,高圈足。壶把两端铸两个兽头与壶身相接,把上面向壶口铸一深目高鼻戴帽的胡人头像。颈腹相接处焊一周13个突起的圆珠,形成一周联珠纹饰,可见焊接痕。壶腹与高圈足相接处也焊一周11个突起的圆珠,形成一周联珠纹饰。足座下部饰一周由20个突起的圆珠组成的联珠纹饰。壶通高37.5,颈高6,长9,最大腹径12.8,足座高8厘米(彩色图;图二三)。

壶身腹部錾一周突起的人物图像,共六人,为男女相对的三组。从壶把左侧第一组为:左侧男子发束带,身着短袖



17



18



17A

FIGURE 19 Ewer from Shosoin, Imperial Repository, Tokyo (detail).

FIGURE 20 Relief Paradise Scene, Xiangtangshan, Henan (Now in the Freer Gallery, Smithsonian Museum, Washington DC)



19



20

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