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Zhenrong to *Ruixiang*: The Medieval Chinese Reception of the Mahābodhi Buddha Statue

Sun-ah Choi

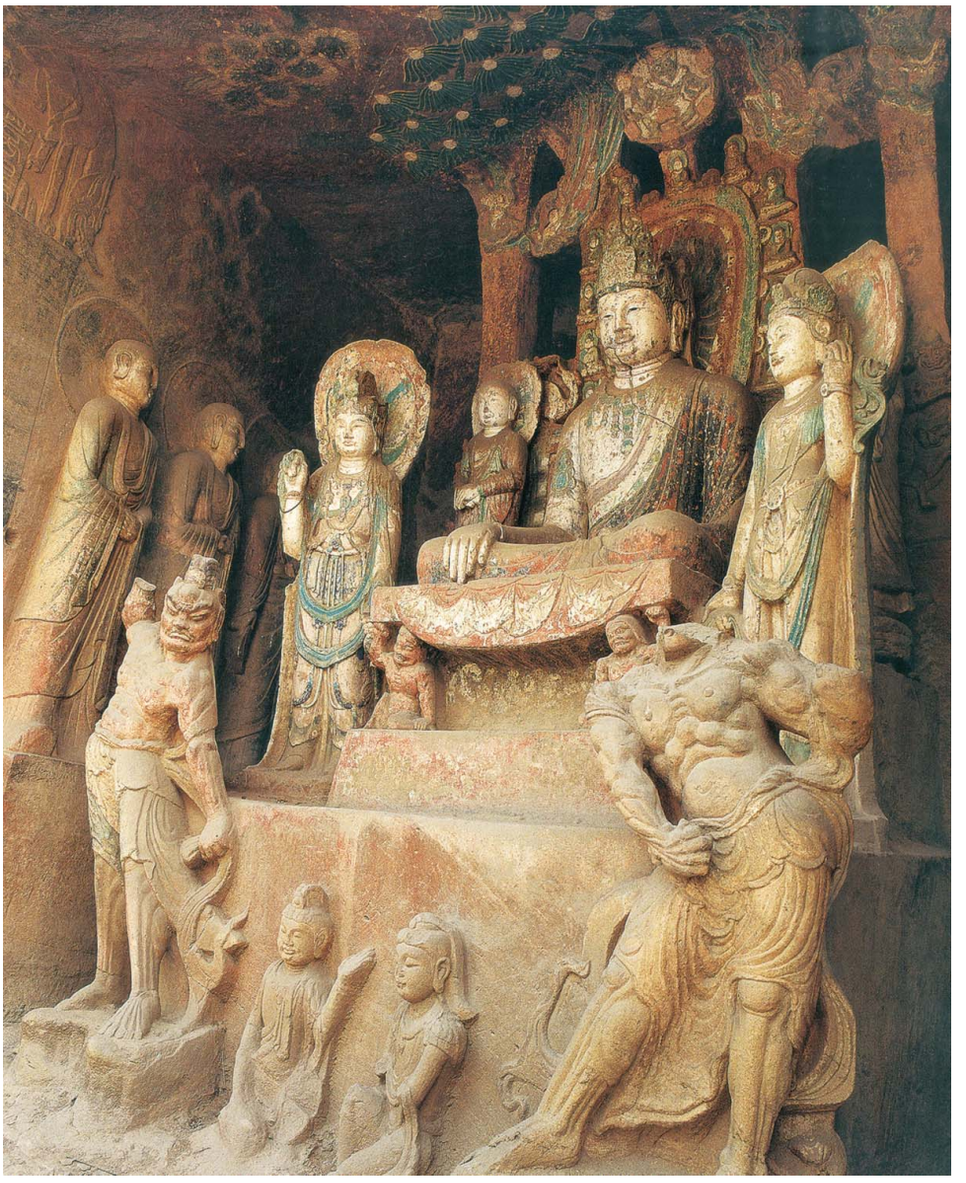
On the eastern bank of the Jialing River, a branch of the Yangtze River that runs through the present-day city of Guangyuan in Sichuan Province, stands a cliff into which a complex of Buddhist cave chapels are carved.[1] Now called Qianfo ya, or Thousand Buddhas Cliff, this complex preserves almost eight hundred niches and caves of various sizes.[2] One of the largest and most elaborately decorated parts of this complex is found in the middle tier of the cliff.[3] At the center of the cave is a large platform on which a seated Buddha presides with his typical attendants, including a pair of disciples, bodhisattvas, and guardians (Fig. 1). This central group is surrounded by other images, such as twelve standing monks of austere appearance and five laymen playing music, all carved in high relief on the three walls of the chamber. Of all these elements, what makes this cave exceptional is the unique form of the central Buddha. Two of its formal features constitute a distinctive iconography that was uncommon in Chinese Buddhist art until the late seventh century: first, the particular hand gesture of the right arm, which is called *bhūmisparśa mudrā*, or "earth-touching gesture," and second, the heavy jewelry, such as the conical crown with highly ornate tiara, the jewel garland with pendant strings of pearls around the neck, and the large, flame-shaped bracelet on the right arm.

To be sure, Buddha images in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* emerged in China earlier than the seventh century (Fig. 2).[4] Yet two aspects distinguish these examples from those of the seventh century. To begin with, the earlier images all appear in narrative scenes that represent one of the important events in the Buddha Śākyamuni's life: the moment when the historical Buddha achieved enlightenment by defeating the attack of Mara and then touched the ground with his right hand to call forth the earth spirit as a witness of this significant event. The Buddha images from the seventh centuries, however, are seen as independent icons that are shorn of such complex narrative elements, albeit sometimes flanked by several attendants. More important, the Buddhas in the earlier narrative scenes do not wear lavish jewelry, whereas later ones are laden with the heavy ornamentation, such as the crown, necklace, and bracelet. Indeed, it was not until the mid-seventh century that Buddha images decorated with such extravagant ornaments began to surface in China. Once introduced, this iconography seems to have circulated rapidly throughout the country during the subsequent two centuries. In addition to the example at the Thousand Buddhas Cliff, a number of Buddha images of this distinctive form have been found at the major centers of Buddhist art of the Tang dynasty (618–907): Xi'an, Luoyang (Fig. 3) Dunhuang, and many other sites in Sichuan Province, such as Pujiang (Fig. 4) and Bazhong. Although there are some variations in the details, the images distributed in many artistic centers of Tang China and dated from the mid-seventh to the eighth centuries all attest to how quickly this iconography grew in popularity in a relatively brief period of time, as well as its extent.

The rapid adoption of this set of very distinctive iconographic features has drawn a great deal of scholarly attention. Individual instances of this form have been subjects for study by art historians since the early twentieth century.[5] The focus has generally been on the iconological identification of this type of Buddha image, as most examples do not have inscriptions that securely inform us of their name. Because of its unusual hand gesture, many scholars initially thought that this type of image represented iconically the Buddha Śākyamuni at the moment of enlightenment.[6] The unusual ornamentation on the image's body, though, has led some scholars to abandon that identification. Since jewelry is generally reserved for bodhisattvas, whereas Buddhas are typically represented in simple monastic attires without jewelry, they have argued that the ornamentation of the body might have a different significance. Accordingly, scholars have searched for a scriptural basis to explain by means of doctrine the formal components of the image. As a result, they have proposed diverse identifications, such as the Mahāvairocana,[7] the Buddha Vairocana,[8] and the Buddha Garbhadhatu.[9]

These speculations have culminated in a recent study suggesting that the name of this type of Buddha image is *puti ruixiang*.[10] It is based on a close reading of the inscription, which is engraved on the wall of the cave at the Thousand Buddhas Cliff.[11] The inscription informs us that the iconography originated in India, specifically, in an image of the Buddha Śākyamuni enshrined at the Mahābodhi Temple in Bodhgayā, India (Fig. 5). Being the place where the Buddha Śākyamuni finally realized ultimate wisdom and achieved enlightenment, Bodhgayā has been regarded as the utmost sacred site in Buddhist culture, similar to Jerusalem for Christianity.[12] During the medieval period, the fame of Bodhgayā as a Buddhist holy land was concretized by the presence of a Buddha statue, whose central role has been vividly described in many Buddhist literatures. We are told, for instance, from the travelogues of Chinese Buddhist monks, such as Xuanzang (602?–664) and Yijing (635–713), that the image at the Mahābodhi Temple served as the must-see object during their travels to the western region, and how frequently it lent itself to endless imitation.[13]

While the latest study has confirmed that the ornamented Buddha images in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* are copies of the Mahābodhi Buddha statue, there remain several issues to be explained. For instance, the Chinese examples, if they are indeed replications of the Buddha statue in Bodhgayā, display traits that are not seen on the statues made in other



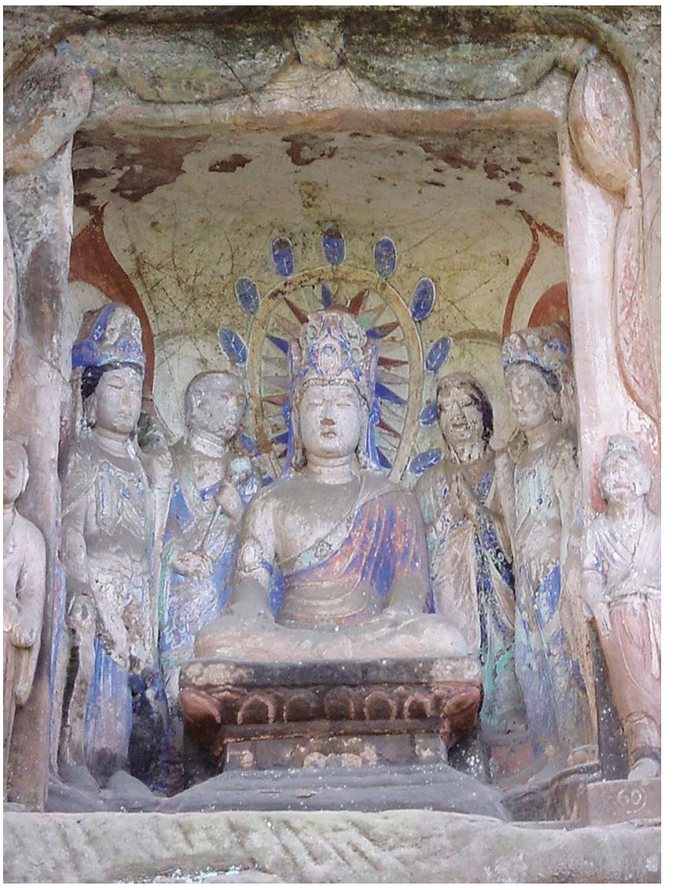
1 *Puti ruixiang* Cave, ca. 710–12, Thousand Buddhas Cliff, Guangyuan, Sichuan Province (artwork in the public domain; photograph from *Zhongguo shiku diaosu quanj*, vol. 8 [Chongqing: Chongqing Press, 2000], pl. 22)

Buddhist realms as imitations of the now-lost original (Figs. 6, 7).[14] They share many elements, including the significant hand gesture, but most of the non-Chinese examples, unlike Chinese ones, are devoid of ornaments, such as necklace and crown. How can we come to terms with this gap among derivatives, when the original has long disappeared?

Equally intriguing is the fact that the Chinese replications are named by inscription as *ruixiang* (瑞像, auspicious image). This term contrasts with how the original icon at the Mahābodhi Temple was identified in the records of some Chinese pilgrims. They called it *zhenrong* (眞容, true visage).[15] *Zhenrong* is often found in Chinese Buddhist literature, referring to the essential and transcendental form of the Buddha that is conceived to be invisible, and thus unrepresentable.[16] What should be noted is that the expression was rarely used to designate a material representation of the divine being until the late seventh century, when the Buddha statue at the Mahābodhi Temple acquired that description. This observation raises the following questions: Why and how did medieval Chinese pilgrims name the foreign image "true visage"? What does such a semiotic shift in the implication of

2 Śākyamuni Subjugating Mara, late 5th century, Cave 10, Yungang Caves (artwork in the public domain; photograph © Cultural Relics Press)

3 Statue of Buddha, late 7th–early 8th century, height 84⅝ in. (215 cm), Southern Leigutai Cave, Longmen Caves, Luoyang, Henan Province (artwork in the public domain; photograph from *Zhongguo shiku diaosu quanj*, vol. 4 [Chongqing: Chongqing Press, 2000], pl. 220)



4 Buddha niche, ca. 689, stone and pigments, Feixian ge Cave, Pujiang, Sichuan Province (artwork in the public domain; photograph by the author)

the term—from an invisible essence to a material representation of the deity—indicate, both doctrinally and culturally? Also, how can we come to terms with the discrepancy in the naming between the original (*zhenrong*) and its derivatives (*ruixiang*)? These questions add layers of complexity to the way we perceive the cultural phenomenon of transmission of a certain iconography from India to China.

These issues lead to the examination of two related historical trajectories surrounding the medieval Chinese reception of the Buddha statue that was enshrined at the Mahābodhi Temple in Bodhgayā, India. First is the context in which the medieval Chinese employed the term *zhenrong* to designate the foreign image. The second is how the Indian Buddha statue was translated in China, particularly within the medieval Chinese tradition of imagining and inventing auspicious images. The juxtaposition of the two terms *zhenrong* and *ruixiang* frames the questions posed above as an investigation of the issues of reception. Under the category of reception, I include two different modes—the verbal description of the image and the act of replication. A close and comparative reading of relevant textual sources sheds light on the context in which some of the medieval Chinese sources refer to the Indian Buddha statue as the "true visage" and the religious and cultural implications that are embedded in such a designation. Under the rubric of replication, the medieval Chinese imitation of the Buddha statue at the Mahābodhi Temple is viewed as the site where we can see another type of reception that was realized, at this time, in a material way.[17] Positioned at the extremes of these two modes of reception, the terms *zhenrong* and *ruixiang*, I would suggest, reveal the contradictions and complexities lying behind the cultural situation of medieval China, where the foreign Buddha statue was received in various ways. Ultimately, this investigation seeks to illuminate the medieval Chinese Buddhist notion of image and image cult—that is, the ways in which the Chinese imagined and claimed the special ontological status of their sacred images.

Zhenrong

The earliest surviving textual source in which the image at the Mahābodhi Temple was called *zhenrong* is Yijing's *Biographies of Eminent Monks Who Went to the Western Regions in Search of the Law during the Great Tang Dynasty* (*Da Tang xiyu qiufa gaoseng zhuan*, hereafter *Biographies*), a collection of the biographies of fifty-six pilgrim monks who traveled to India during the mid- and late seventh century. Completed sometime in the late 680s, this work is a rich reservoir of information on how medieval Chinese pilgrims venerated the Buddha statue at the Mahābodhi Temple.[18] Throughout the volume, Yijing invariably employs the term *zhenrong* in referring to the

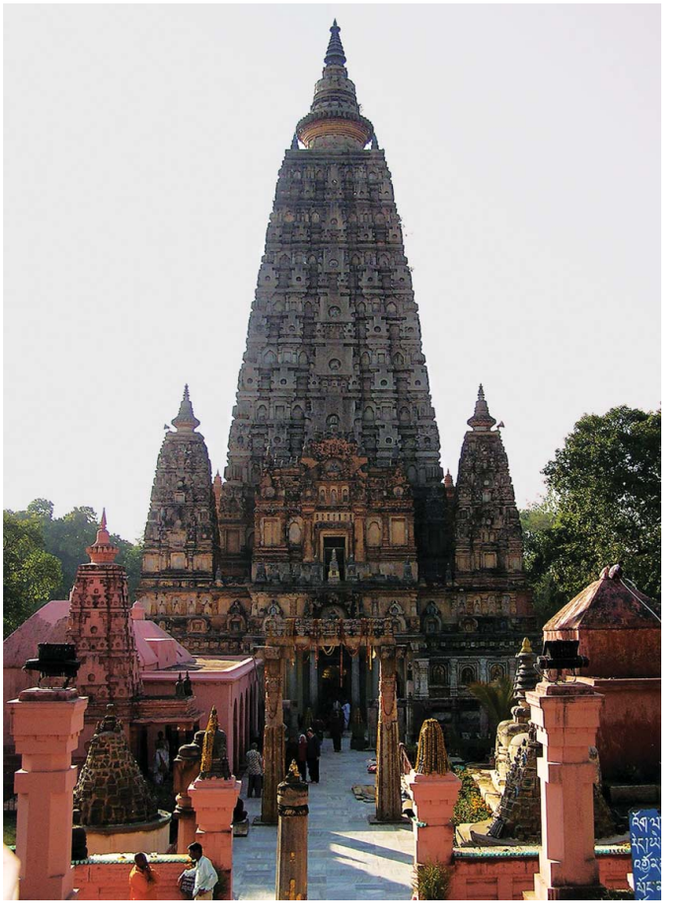
image, as in "the True Visage made by the Bodhisattva Maitreya [*cishi suo zhi zhi zhenrong*]," "the True Visage of the Bodhi Tree [*jueshu zhi zhenrong*]."[19] Furthermore, several textual sources, including *Biographies of Eminent Monks of the Song Dynasty* (*Song gaoseng zhuan*), indicate that Yijing brought a copy of *zhenrong* with him when he returned to China in 695 after his journey to India.[20]

This designation, however, is not found in literary sources before Yijing. For instance, the image was never called such in Xuanzang's *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions* (*Da Tang xiyu ji*, hereafter *Record*), which is the earliest extant textual evidence of the statue. Another author, Wang Xuance, who traveled to India at least four times during the mid-seventh century as an imperial envoy, did not use the expression *zhenrong* in referring to the image. Why and how, then, did Yijing happen to call the image by such a special name?

In tracing the context in which the image was finally designated as the "true visage," a close reading of Xuanzang's work reveals a significant clue. A renowned monk-scholar versed in the teachings of the Yogaçara school and a meticulous translator of the Buddhist canons, Xuanzang is best known for his courageous travel to India, despite the official ban on travel westward.[21] Wandering the homeland of Buddhism for seventeen years, the Chinese monk collected copies of scriptures and studied with Indian teachers. He also visited numerous sites associated with important events of Śākyamuni's life, and he gathered legends and myths that are related to these sites. The topography of the sacred land and the stories entwined with them are diligently recorded in his travelogue, a volume completed in 645 with imperial support.[22]

Among the numerous sites that this medieval Chinese pilgrim visited (Fig. 8), Bodhgayā seemed to have had more importance than any other place. As related in many Buddhist texts, Śākyamuni's earlier efforts to achieve enlightenment at nearby Prāgbōdhi Hill had proven futile. He was persuaded by a mountain god to go southwest to the location of a pipal tree and a diamond throne (that is, Bodhgayā), the place where all the past and future Buddhas reside and obtain true enlightenment.[23] Lauded as the navel of the earth, the location at which all Buddhas attain enlightenment became particularly important to pilgrims, whose goal was to achieve proximity to their ultimate teacher.[24] Accordingly, Xuanzang was not the earliest Chinese pilgrim to visit Bodhgayā. Among those who preceded him was Faxian (334–420) in the early fifth century, who described the site as "the place where all the past Buddhas obtained perfect wisdom and where all future Buddhas must go in order to achieve the same goal."[25] This concept of Bodhgayā is reiterated by Xuanzang in his own writings.[26]

Although both Xuanzang and Faxian recognized the significance of Bodhgayā, there is a stark difference between the two pilgrims' accounts of the site. Faxian simply mentions that people set up stupas and images on the place where the Buddha attained supreme wisdom and that there were three *sangharamas* (monasteries) where priests resided. He does not mention any particular image there. Xuanzang gave a much more detailed and systematic description. He begins with the introduction of the pipal tree under which



5 Mahābodhi Temple, Bodhgayā, India (artwork in the public domain; photograph by the author)

Śākyamuni sat and meditated, explaining why it is called a "Bodhi tree" (that is, the tree of enlightenment) and its then unfavorable state. His narrative moves on to the throne where the Buddha sat at the moment of enlightenment, which is called *vajrasana*, or the diamond seat.

Xuanzang next introduces the Mahābodhi Temple, which stands to the east of the diamond seat. The temple, 160 or 170 feet in height, allegedly was first constructed as a small shrine by King Aśoka. Later it was enlarged into a multistory building by a certain Brahman who commissioned a Buddha image to be enshrined therein. Xuanzang relates a lengthy legend surrounding the creation of the image, which is totally lacking in his predecessors' writings.[27] The story is as follows:

> Having finished the shrine, the Brahman wanted to invite skillful artists to make (1) *a figure of Tathāgata when he first reached enlightenment*. Years and months passed without result, and no one answered the appeal.
>
> At last, there was a Brahman who came and addressed the congregation. "I will thoroughly execute the excellent figure of Tathāgata." His audience asked, "In order to do this, what do you require?" The Brahman answered. "Place in the *vihara* a pile of scented earth and a lighted lamp. Then, when I have gone in, fasten the doors. After six months, you may open them again."

6 Buddha Śākyamuni, Tibet, 11th century, copper alloy with copper overlay and inlays of silver, height 5⅝ in. (14.3 cm). Asia Society, New York, Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd Collection, 1979.89 (artwork in the public domain; photograph by Lynton Gardiner, Asia Society)

> Then, they did as he directed. After four months, the six months not having passed, they were astonished at the strange circumstance and opened the door to see what had happened. In the *vihara*, they found (2) *a beautiful figure of Buddha in a sitting position, with the right foot over the left foot, the left hand resting, and the right hand extending downward. He was in a sitting position facing the east, and as dignified in appearance as when alive. The throne was 4 feet 2 inches in height, and 12 feet 5 inches in width. The figure was 11 feet 5 inches in height. The two knees were 8 feet 8 inches apart, and the breadth of the two shoulders was 6 feet 2 inches.* (3) *All sacred marks [of the Buddha] were perfectly drawn, and the [image's] merciful face looked as if real* [*ruozhen*]. A little spot above the right breast was not yet completely rounded off.
>
> Having seen no man, they were satisfied that this was a miracle. And they were filled with strong emotion and sighed piteously as they diligently sought to discover the secret. Now there was a *sramana* (religious seeker) who was passing the night there. He had an honest and truthful heart. Because he was affected by the event [just related], he had a dream [that night]. In his dream, the *sramana* saw the aforementioned Brahman, who addressed him as follows: "(4) *I am the Bodhisattva Maitreya. Fearing that the mind of no [human] artist could conceive the beauty of the sacred features, I came myself to portray the figure of Buddha.* His right hand hangs down as a token of when he was about to acquire the fruit of a Buddha and the enticing Mara came to fascinate him. Then the earth spirits came to tell him thereof. The first who came forth advanced to help Buddha to resist Mara, to whom Tathāgata said, 'Fear not! By the power of patience he must be subdued!' Mara-raja said, 'Who will bear witness for you?' Tathāgata dropped his hand and pointed to the ground, saying, 'Here is my witness.' At this second, an earth spirit leapt forth to bear witness [to testify]. (5) *Therefore, the present figure is drawn in imitation of the old posture of Buddha.*"
>
> The brethren, having understood this sacred miracle, were all moved with a tender emotion, and (6) *they placed above the breast, where the work was as yet unfinished, a necklace of precious stones and jewels, while they placed on the head a diadem of exceedingly rich, encircling gems.*[28]

This legend tells us that the image was made not by human hands but by divine power (4). The intervention of divine power is necessary, as it is explained, to create the correct form of the transcendental being. It also gives us explicit information about the image's external features—not only the posture, but also the size (2). This detailed report on the physical features of an image is unprecedented: no parallel instance is found elsewhere in Xuanzang's travelogue or in any other medieval Chinese source. The notation of the image's dimensions is a significant point that I will return to.[29] What is more immediately relevant is the fact that the image was not called *zhenrong*. Instead, it was called a "figure of Tathāgata when he first reached enlightenment [*rulai chu cheng foxiang*] (1)." However, we should not dismiss the fact that Xuanzang employed the expression *ruozhen* (as if real) in recounting the legend (3). This expression appears in the response of the laypeople who first witnessed the new statue: "[A]ll sacred marks [of the Buddha] were perfectly drawn, and the [image's] merciful face looked as if real."

The expression *ruozhen* appears frequently in fifth- and sixth-century dedicatory inscriptions, constituting one of the patterns for the medieval Chinese conceptualization of the ontological status of their religious images.[30] This in turn may indicate that the legend recorded by Xuanzang is probably not a word-for-word translation of a Sanskrit version. It is more likely to be an adaptation of an orally circulated story to which an expression like *ruozhen*, which was common in his intellectual and cultural world, could be added.[31] In other words, Chinese travelers to India brought their cultural attitudes with them, which affected not only their outlook but also their mode of expression.[32]

In reading *Record* with this focus, we learn that Xuanzang used the word *zhen* selectively. Among the numerous images chronicled by Xuanzang in his travelogue, there is only one other place where a similar expression appears in relation to images.[33] It is none other than the "shadow image of the Buddha" (*foying*), which he witnessed in a cave at Nagarahāra. After recounting its legend, Xuanzang related the impression of the image: "In old days, there was a shadow of

Buddha to be seen here. With all the characteristic marks [of the Buddha] completed, it was as bright as if [it was] the true visage [*huan ruo zhenrong*]."[34]

Keeping in mind that the shadow image was one of the conventional standards of comparison in praising the likeness of images in medieval China,[35] it may not be a surprise to learn that a seventh-century monk employed the concept of *zhen* in describing it. What should be noted instead is that the special notion reserved for the shadow image is also applied to the image at the Mahābodhi Temple. This may mean that the new icon came to enjoy such a special reception that it was considered equivalent to the utmost "true image" in Buddhist culture. It was probably a shared component of the legend that linked them together. Both were made or left by a supernatural power.

Equally notable is that Xuanzang's successors followed him in this reception. For instance, when the story of the Bodhgayā image was retold by Wang Xuance, an imperial envoy who visited the Mahābodhi Temple in 645, the same expression was used with few variations.[36] In his now-lost travelogue, *Record of Journeys in Central India* (*Zhong tianzhu xingji*), Wang recounts the legend of the image's origin in almost the same manner as Xuanzang.[37] Xuanzang's wording, "[A]ll sacred marks [of the Buddha] were perfectly drawn, and the [image's] merciful face looked as if real," is rephrased as "[T]he decoration of the sacred marks was perfect as if [it was] the true visage [*ruo zhenrong*]."[38]

Such expressions, though, were dramatically transformed in the late seventh-century record. The preposition *ruo* (as if) was removed, and the image suddenly gained the new name of *zhenrong*: "the True Visage made by the Bodhisattva Maiterya"; "the True Visage of the Bodhi Tree," and so on.[39] Another piece of evidence that confirms the uniqueness of the term is that no other image in Yijing's volume, not even the shadow image at Nagarahāra, was called *zhenrong*. The reference as the "true visage" conferred on the image at the Mahābodhi Temple gave it the most prominent position among the sacred images witnessed and revered by medieval Chinese pilgrims in Yijing's *Biographies*.

From the "Representation of" to the "Replacement for" the Absent Real

Given the lack of evidence, it is difficult to know whether referring to the image as the "true visage" was Yijing's invention or reflected a widespread convention in late seventh-century Chinese society.[40] At any rate, it is evident that this transition from *ruozhen* (as if real) to *zhenrong* (true visage) registers a dramatic shift in the reception of the image. When the image was described as *ruozhen*, a distance remained between the image, which was nothing but a material object, and its divine prototype, that is, *zhen* (the real). However, once the image was called *zhenrong*, or the "true visage," the intrinsic distance between the two entities disappeared as they became identified with each other. Interestingly enough, this dramatic shift in the ontological status of the image is also reflected in the biographies of pilgrim monks. The comparison of Xuanzang's biography to those of the pilgrim monks recounted by Yijing enables us to identify two different attitudes toward the image.

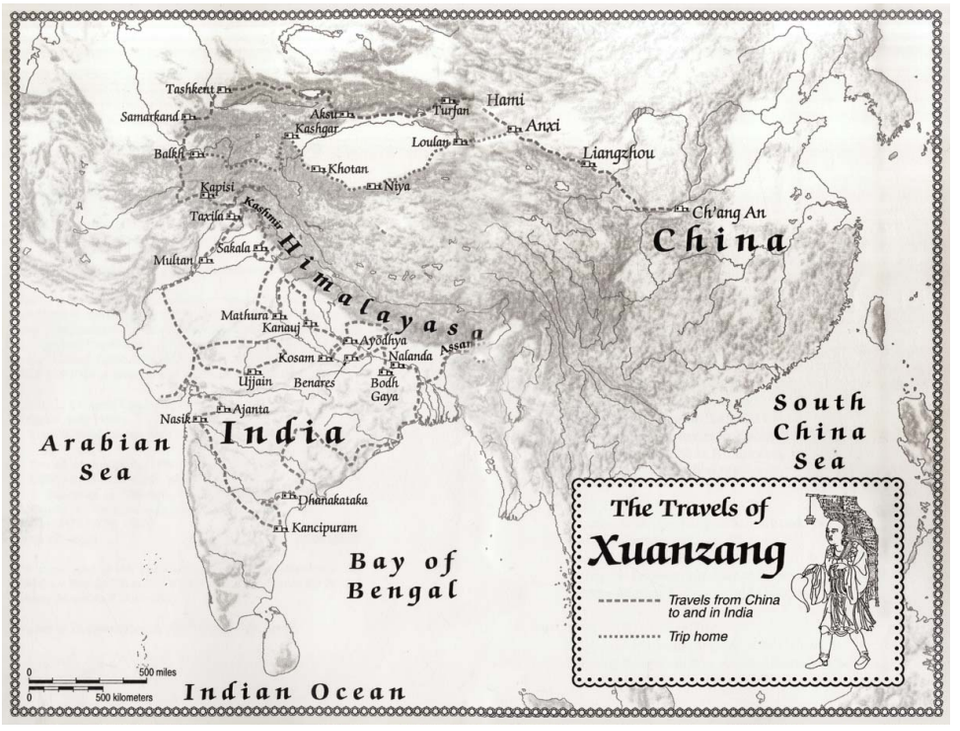
7 Buddha Śākyamuni in the main cella of the Mahābodhi Temple, Bagan, Myanmar, ca. 13th century (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by Kyeongmi Joo)

Xuanzang's attitude toward the image is expressed in his biography, *Biography of the Master of Three Tripitaka at the Great Ci'en Monastery of the Great Tang* (*Da Tang da ci'ensi sanzang fashi zhuan*). Written by his disciple Huili in 668, this text vividly describes Xuanzang's personal experiences and feelings at the sacred sites of the western regions.[41] For instance, we learn how the master felt when he reached Bodhgayā through this passage:

> When the Master of the Law came to worship the Bodhi Tree and the "image of Tathāgata at the moment of his reaching perfect wisdom made [afterward] by the Bodhisattva Maitreya," he gazed on these objects with the most sincere devotion and cast himself with his face to the ground in worship. With much grief and many tears in his self-affliction, he sighed and said: "At the time when the Buddha perfected himself in wisdom, I did not know in what condition I was, in the troublous whirl of birth and death; but now, in the days of the semblance *dharma*, having come to this spot and reflecting on the depth and weight of the body of my evil deeds, I am grieved at heart, and my eyes are filled with tears."[42]

This passage is cited by T. H. Barrett in "Exploratory Observations on Some Weeping Pilgrims."[43] Barrett explains that Xuanzang was reduced to tears because he approached the sacred objects at the holy place with a sense of melancholy about the inevitable loss of the splendor of the past. According to Barrett, this melancholy was profoundly rooted in the intellectual and cultural world of seventh-century China. The mood is deepened by a Buddhist sense of karmic unworthiness and, in particular, the notion of *mofa*, or the end of the *dharma*, which also was widely circulated in medieval Chinese Buddhist society.[44] As is well expressed in his writing, Xuanzang condemned himself for missing the auspicious historical moment of the Buddha's life due to the web of his previous actions and for arriving many centuries later at the site of the Buddha's enlightenment, when its signs were already beginning to decay and disappear.

Throughout Xuanzang's biography, such instances of heightened sentiment are quite rare. Indeed, it shows the



8 Map of Xuanzang's journey to and from India (artwork © Perseus Books Group)

climax of the emotions of the medieval Chinese Buddhist traveling to the homeland of the religion. The arousal of such emotion likely can be attributed to two factors. One is the acute awareness of the meaning of the sacred space at Bodhgayā: the Buddha statue was placed at the *very* site where the historical Buddha Śākyamuni attained ultimate wisdom. The other factor is the form of the image, which depicts the *very* moment of his enlightenment in an iconic mode, as recited in *Legend* (5). Arresting the specific time and placed in the exact space, the image served as an explicit or even biological portrait of the Buddha Śākyamuni.[45] Presenting its viewers with a vision of the past event, the image served for Xuanzang as a sign of absence that made him realize the irreversible diachronic distance between the past and the present.

In contrast, there is little trace of melancholy in Yijing's text. The sadness at loss and separation is somehow transformed into something quite positive. Instead of stirring a sense of absence, the image, now referred to as the "true visage," provides its audience with reassurance and even some hope. Such a shift is well illustrated in the biography of Xuanzhao, who visited India in the mid-seventh century:

> Xuanzhao gradually proceeded south and reached the Mahābodhi temple, where he spent four years. He felt very much disappointed that he could not see the Buddha Śākyamuni. However, he was lucky enough to be able to pay reverence to the sacred vestiges of the presence of the Buddha and to see the True Visage made by the Bodhisattva Maitreya, with absolute sincerity and care. It provoked more veneration. He deeply studied Kośa, Abhidharma, and the Vinayas of the two Schools [Mahāyāna and Hinayāna] and became very much enlightened.[46]

A similar awareness of the image's effect is expressed in the biography of Daijin, who traveled to India in the late seventh century:

> Each time, Daijin said in despair, "I won't be able to see Śākyamuni, the father of Mercy. The idea of Maitreya of Tuṣita Heaven [that is, the future Buddha] inspires my heart. [However,] without seeing the True Visage of the Bodhi Tree and without visiting the sacred traces of the Xiang River, how can I gather together all the emotions arising from the six organs of senses and practice to attain six *paramitas* [perfection] in three *asamkhyeya* [incalculable time]?" Thereupon, in the second year of the *yongheng* era [682], taking a monk's staff, he voyaged to the South Sea with many companions.[47]

Like Xuanzang, both Xuanzhao and Daijin deplored the fact that it was impossible for them to meet the Buddha Śākyamuni during their lifetimes. Nonetheless, the image at the Mahābodhi Temple did not occasion the sadness that had overpowered their predecessor. Instead, it offered these two monks a source of more positive feelings. The image, or the "true visage," was no longer a sign of absence. It had become an identical replacement of the Buddha himself. It was something that could bridge the distance between the past and the present and, furthermore, connect the present to the future. This shift in the reception of the image's status must have been related to the change in how it was designated. No longer a reminder of the absent real, the image was rather a powerful claim of the presence of the real itself.

The result of this subtle yet significant shift in the reception of the image from "as if real" to the "true visage" persisted into the eleventh century. When the Chinese pilgrim Kewen visited Bodhgayā in 1022 and set up a stela to the north of the Bodhi

tree, the word *zhenrong* was used again to designate the image: "Praising the 'True Visage' on the seat of enlightenment."[48] As the eulogy shows, the image was still perceived as *zhen* to those who revered it even in this later period.

Puti Ruixiang

Parallel to the fame of the statue in its own place are the ample textual sources relating the active replication and subsequent transmission of its iconography to China. The best-known events concern Wang Xuance and Yijing. It is recorded that Wang, who visited Bodhgayā in the mid-seventh century, ordered an artisan in his entourage to create a painting of the image. And the painted copy was repeatedly replicated in the capital after he brought it back to China.[49] We are also told that the painting appeared in more than one book, although none of them survives.[50] In 695, several decades after Wang's introduction of the image, Yijing returned to China with a copy of the "true visage" on the diamond seat, along with four hundred volumes of Buddhist sutras and three hundred grains of Buddha's relics. The precious objects that he brought back from the homeland of Buddhism were welcomed benevolently by Empress Wu and enshrined at Foushouji Monastery in accordance with her edict.[51]

Attesting to the sequence of the image's introduction is the emergence and sudden popularity of a new type of Buddha image in medieval China from the mid-seventh century: the Buddha images with the *bhūmisparśa mudrā* (Figs. 1, 3, 4). As indicated earlier, it was only recently that the name and origin of this type of Buddha image obtained confirmation through an inscription. This came about because the Buddha image at the Thousand Buddhas Cliff was not closely investigated until the early 1990s, when a Chinese scholar, Luo Shiping, published an article that dealt exclusively with the cave and the inscription in question.[52] Engraved in the frame of a traditional Chinese stela on the north wall near the entrance of the cave (Fig. 9), the inscription has been severely damaged by the passage of time. Fortunately, parts of the inscription were transcribed by several eighteenth- and nineteenth-century antiquarians and can be found in their epigraphic compilations (Fig. 10).[53] As they show, the inscription begins with the title "Eulogy of the *puti ruixiang* of the Botang Temple [donated by] by Duke Bi, the Governor of Lizhou of the Great Tang." Luo Shiping's meticulous research of this inscription revealed that Duke Bi was Bi Zhonghua, who governed from 710 to 712 the former Lizhou County, in which the cliff is located.[54] And the name of the Buddha image that he commissioned is none other than *puti ruixiang*, as indicated by the inscription.

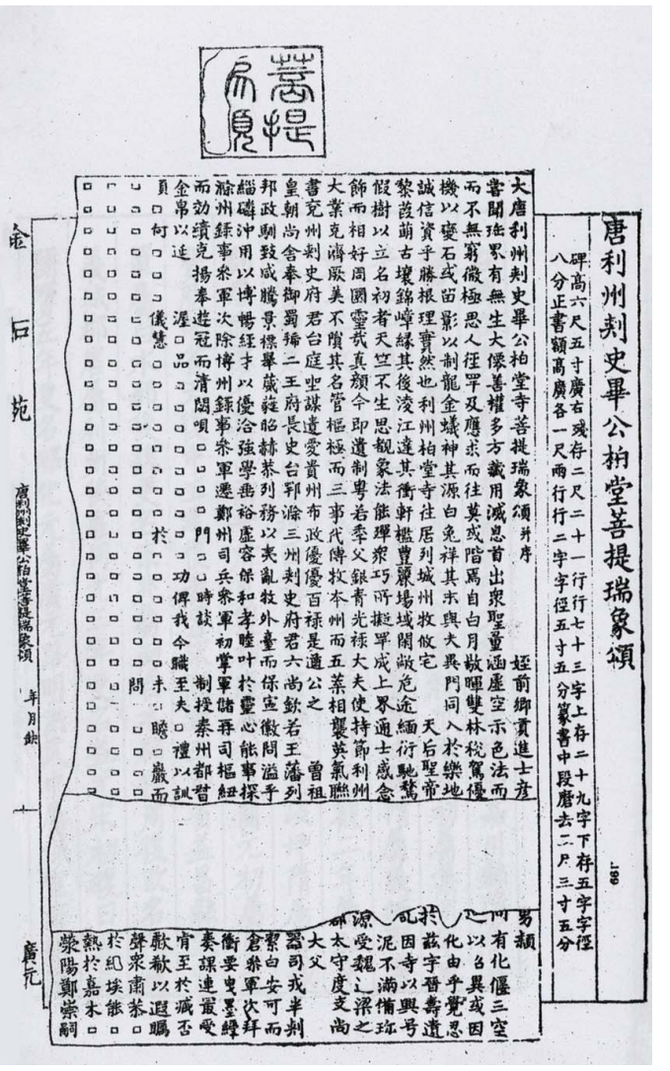
Here, *puti* has several meanings. First, it denotes the ultimate wisdom that the Buddha Śākyamuni achieved through his enlightenment.[55] Depending on the context, *puti* can also be associated with Bodhgayā, or (in Chinese), *puti jiaye*, the place where the historical Buddha achieved enlightenment. It can also relate to the Bodhi tree (*puti shu*), under which the Buddha Śākyamuni sat in meditation before reaching enlightenment. In any case, *puti* always refers to the Buddha's enlightenment in one way or another. Thus, it is linked, at least implicitly, to the Buddha statue that was seen by Xuanzang at Bodhgayā. Such a connection is further supported by a phrase in the inscription that reflects Xuanzang's account of the image: "[Since] there was not enough clay, [people] prepared [and decorated the unfinished parts with] precious jewels."[56] Although it is difficult to know the full context of this phrase because of the damage to the preceding section, what is notable is that it is similar to Xuanzang's account concerning the image at the Mahābodhi Temple, which was also made of clay and decorated with jewelry in order to hide its unfinished part, as in *Legend* (6). Accordingly, Lei Yuhua and Wang Jianping have suggested that this *puti ruixiang* is an imitation of the Buddha statue at the Mahābodhi Temple in India.[57] Their revised view was adopted by Lee Yu-min. She argued convincingly against the various suggestions about the statue's identity in past studies and affirmed that this type of Buddha image was the medieval Chinese replication of the famous Buddha statue in India.[58]

This *puti ruixiang*, if it is indeed the replication of the Buddha statue at Bodhgayā, occupies a special position not only in Chinese Buddhist art but also in relation to the history of the Mahābodhi Temple. Because of the great regard in which it was held, Bodhgayā has lent itself to endless imitation and thus has wielded tremendous influence on the imagery and practices of many other regions. The idea of the holy place had wide currency in the medieval period, as expressed through various types of votive objects found in Bodhgayā. The votive objects were also found in Buddhist regions elsewhere in Southeast Asia, and they were presumably procured by pilgrims at the sacred site and taken home as mementoes.[59] One of the dominant types of such objects is a clay plaque that depicts the Buddha in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* (Fig. 11). This Buddha image is framed by a hint of the Mahābodhi Temple and/or the leaves of the Bodhi tree, but it is its size that attests above all to its importance. Another well-known example is a type of miniature replica of the Mahābodhi Temple (Fig. 12), examples of which served as models for the later reconstruction of the original.[60]

Exemplifying two different modes of conceptualizing the essence of Bodhgayā—one through the Buddha statue and the other through the Mahābodhi Temple—the plaque and miniature replicas must have helped to spread knowledge of the sacred site from its cultic center to other regions. They also served as models for the translation of the Buddhist holy land into other regions. Undoubtedly, the replications of the Mahādbodhi Temple that were recreated in actual size in Myanmar (Fig. 13), Thailand, and Nepal from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries prove that the conceptualization of the essence of Bodhgayā through the Mahābodhi Temple was widespread.[61] Meanwhile, the *puti ruixiang* of medieval China (Fig. 1) exemplifies the stage where the essence of Bodhgayā was conceptualized through its renowned Buddha statue. Dating to the early eighth century, the Chinese example marks the inauguration of one technique of representing the Buddhist holy land that persisted for several centuries in many Buddhist countries of diverse cultural backgrounds.

The significance of *puti ruixiang* within the history of Bodhgayā is also related to the fact that the Indian Buddha statue that is supposed to have inspired the Chinese replication no

9 Inscription (Eulogy of the *puti ruixiang*) on the north wall of the *Puti ruixiang* Cave (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by Sheng-chih Lin)



10 Transcription of the Eulogy of the *puti ruixiang*, 19th century, woodcut, from Liu Xihai, *Jinshi yuan*, Taipei: Yiwen yin shuguan, 1980, 199 (artwork in the public domain)

longer exists. The image at the Mahābodhi Temple apparently survived until the thirteenth century, when it was venerated by the Tibetan monk Dharmasvāmin during his visit to the Mahābodhi Temple in 1234.[62] Its fate after that is unknown. Since the invasion of the Muslims, who virtually extinguished Buddhism in eastern India at the turn of the thirteenth century, the site reportedly remained in a dilapidated condition until 1811, when British explorer Francis Buchanan-Hamilton visited (Fig. 14).[63] He noted that the site was occupied mainly by Hindus, who established their monastery near the Mahābodhi Temple, relocated many Buddhist images into their shrine, and worshipped them as representations of Hindu gods.[64] The current Mahābodhi Temple was restored in the late nineteenth century primarily by British archaeologists, including J. D. Beglar and Alexander Cunningham (Fig. 5).[65] After the restoration, they decided to enshrine a Buddha statue, which they retrieved from the nearby Hindu temple (Fig. 15). The English archaeologists knew that this figure could not be the same image that Xuanzang witnessed in the early seventh century, so they selected the largest of the images surviving in Bodhgayā. Although at five and a half feet high, the current statue is quite imposing, it does not correspond to Xuanzang's record of the image that he saw in the shrine.[66] In addition, its style cannot be dated earlier than the tenth century.[67]

The fame of the Buddha statue at the Mahābodhi Temple was not limited to medieval China. It is renowned throughout the wider Buddhist world. The image was visited by, besides medieval Chinese, numerous pilgrims from Nepal, Tibet, and most of the Buddhist countries of Southeast Asia, where Buddha images in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* became popular as a new iconographic type (Figs. 6, 7).[68] In an interesting phenomenon that Jane Casey Singer has called the "homage to Bodhgayā,"[69] *puti ruixiang* of the early eighth century exemplifies the early attempt to imitate the famous Indian statue outside of its cultic center.

However, a comparative examination of the surviving replications of the now-lost prime object reveals one crucial problem: the Chinese examples differ distinctly from copies that were made in other regions. Unlike the Chinese examples, most of the other imitations of the Bodhgayā image are devoid of the ornamental decorations that were directly carved into the Chinese versions.[70] Materials excavated from the site of the Mahābodhi Temple further reveal the

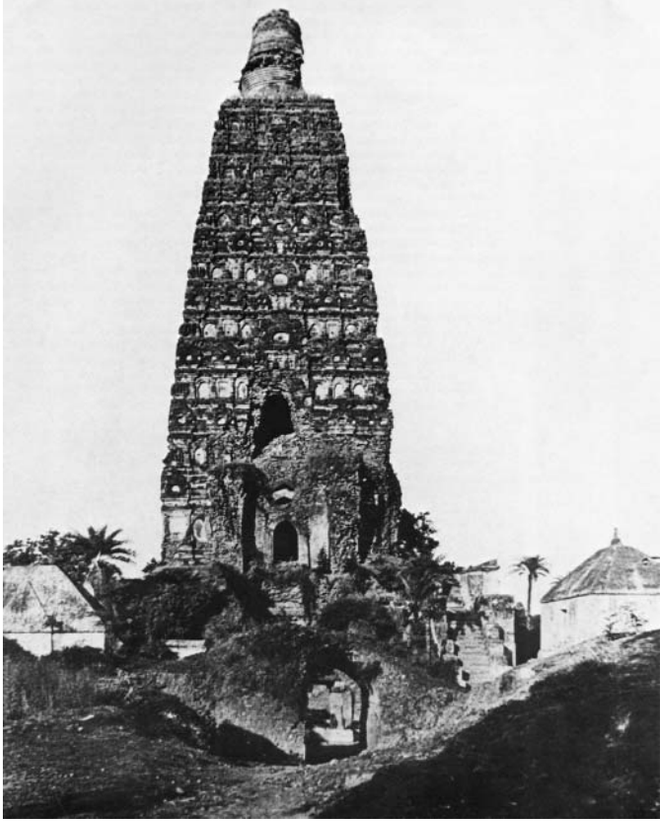
11 Buddha, clay plaque excavated from Nalanda, ca. 10th–11th century? possibly Pala period. The Archaeological Museum, Nalanda, Bihar (artwork in the public domain; photograph © John C. Huntington)

12 Miniature model of the Mahābodhi Temple, 15th century, sandalwood, height 17¾ in. (45 cm). Potala Palace, Lhasa, Tibet (artwork in the public domain; photograph © John C. Huntington, provided by The Huntington Photographic Archive at The Ohio State University)

peculiarity of the Chinese examples. As Janice Leoshko's thorough study of Buddha statues in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* has revealed, no Buddha statue in India contemporary with or predating the Chinese examples has sculpted ornamental decorations (Fig. 16).[71] Moreover, it is notable that although the British archaeologists relied a great deal on Xuanzang's account for the restoration of the Mahābodhi Temple, they were not concerned with the lack of ornamentation of the image that they decided to place on the central altar. In a situation like this, in which the majority of non-Chinese examples point to the peculiarity of the Chinese case, we cannot help but wonder: Why do the Chinese images look different from those produced in other Buddhist countries?

Ironically, Xuanzang's account itself may answer this question. He made it clear that the crown and jewelry were presented to the image by the brethren rather than carved directly onto the sculpture, in *Legend* (6). In other words, the ornaments that Xuanzang mentioned in regard to the Buddha image at the Mahābodhi Temple are separate objects that could be added or removed from the statue. Yet in associating the origin of the Chinese representations with Xuanzang's description, few modern scholars distinguish the difference between these two methods of decoration—the practice of dressing and adorning the figure of Buddha with actual objects, on the one hand, and the carving of adornments on the surface of the image, on the other. If the former is a votive act through which devotees aspire to earn

13 Mahābodhi Temple, Bagan, Myanmar, ca. 13th century (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by Kyeongmi Joo)

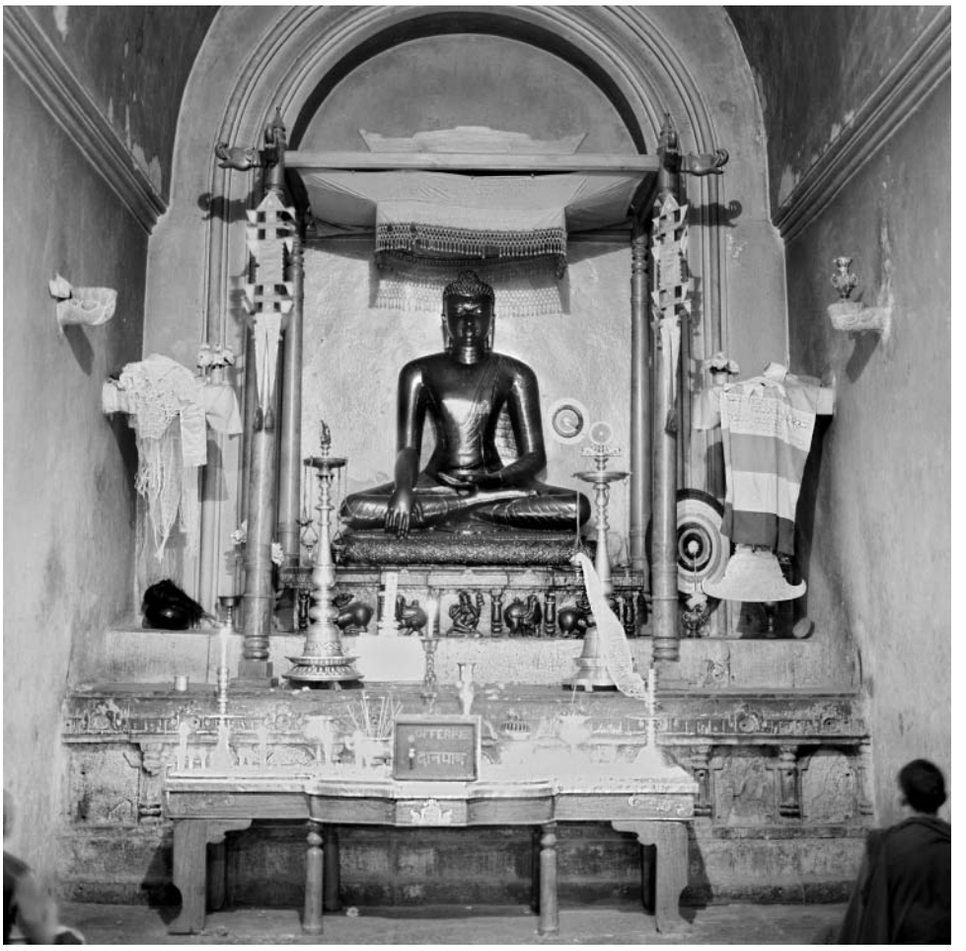


14 Mahābodhi Temple before restoration (artwork in the public domain; photograph from Rajendrala Mitra, *Buddha Gaya: The Great Buddhist Temple, the Hermitage of Sakya Muni* [Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Press, 1878])

merit, the latter affirms such decorations as formal features that constitute the iconography of the image. Once accepted as inherent formal features of the image, the ornaments regularly appeared in reproductions, as in the Chinese examples. Given the difference between these two types of decoration, another question arises with regard to the Chinese examples: Are they misrepresentations or intentional transformations of the original statue?

One of the suggestions offered by modern scholars in regard to this discrepancy is that there was a mistransmission resulting from incomplete oral and visual (painted) descriptions. For instance, Takada Osamu proposed that copiers might have drawn both the image and the jewelry together when they sketched the image on paper, making no distinction between the sculpture and its added decorations (Fig. 17).[72] Surviving literary evidence in fact shows the predominance of painting in the transmission of the iconography from India to China.[73] Perhaps a painted copy, by its two-dimensional nature, could have resulted in uncertainty as to whether the jeweled decorations were attached to the Buddha statue.

Yet several pieces of material evidence, albeit lesser known than *puti ruixiang*, complicate this suggestion. They lead to the conclusion that the silence about any discrepancy between the original and the copies was more likely to be intentional than accidental. Two examples support this argument. The first involves a large number of clay tablets that were excavated near the Dayan pagoda in the precinct of Da Ci'en Monastery in Xi'an.[74] Depicting the Buddha in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* with two standing bodhisattvas on the front (Fig. 18), these clay plaques carry a short inscription on their reverse sides (Fig. 19): "Indian Buddha image [*indu foxiang*] commissioned by the attendant Su and others of the Great Tang." We can find a strong connection between these tablets and the Buddha image in Bodhgayā on the basis of two of their elements. One concerns the visual motifs, such as the Bodhi tree and small stupas that surround the Buddha triad. These motifs are common in votive tablets that were produced in Bodhgayā and widely spread throughout Southeast Asian countries during the medieval period. The other is the term *yindu* in the inscription. Referring to India, this word first came into use with Xuanzang.[75] These two elements reveal that the plaques were made in connection with the Buddha image at the



15 Buddha statue (before it was newly gilt) currently in the main shrine of the Mahābodhi Temple, Bodhgayā, India, ca. 11th century, stone, height 108 in. (274 cm) (artwork in the public domain; photograph © John C. Huntington, provided by The Huntington Photographic Archive at The Ohio State University)

Mahābodhi Temple. What is especially notable is that, unlike the *puti ruixiang*, the Buddha at the center is represented without any jewelry. In relation to this observation, the date of the plaques is significant. Although the tablets are not dated, Hida Romi's careful study of the commissioner reveals that they must have been produced sometime between 650 and 670.[76] Because the presence of these tablets predates the popularity of jeweled Buddha images in China, there is a possibility that medieval Chinese knew the original form of the image, which is devoid of jewelry.

Another lesser-known object, a small gilt-bronze plaque, also supports this suggestion. Its front bears a depiction of a Buddha triad consisting of a seated Buddha in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* and two standing bodhisattvas (Fig. 20).[77] Evidence of a connection to Bodhgayā is found in the motif of the Mahābodhi Temple behind the Buddha and the hint of a Bodhi tree above him. The inscription carved on the bottom reveals that the tablet was commissioned in 682 by the monk Sengbian with one hundred devotees.[78]

These two examples indicate that in medieval China, there was another mode of understanding the form of the Mahābodhi Buddha statue that differed from *puti ruixiang*. Thus, the dominance of the jeweled Buddha was less likely due to medieval Chinese ignorance of the form of the original than to intentional alteration. Many questions arise from this conclusion. Why did medieval Chinese in general prefer the jeweled type of Buddha image in *bhūmisparśa mudrā*? How could two different forms of copy exist at the same

16 Statue of Buddha from Bodhgayā, India, ca. 7th century, sandstone, height 27½ in. (74 cm). Narada Museum, Nawada District, Bihar (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by J. Rhi)

17 Banner of famous images from Cave 17, Mogao Caves, Dunhuang, Gansu Province, ca. 8th century, ink and colors on silk, 78¾ × 42½ in. (200 × 107.9 cm). National Museum of India, New Delhi, Ch. XXII.0023 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the National Museum of India)

time? This intriguing situation complicates our understanding of the medieval notion of the copy.

Rethinking the Notion of the Copy

John Ma, in his study of Roman honorific statues, has demonstrated that it was more important in ancient or medieval replication to show the capacity to instantiate certain formulas than to produce mechanically identical copies.[79] This made it possible, he noted, for the prototype to be received in different ways in different cultural circumstances. This statement is well applied to the practice of replicating the Buddha image at the Mahābodhi Temple. While the vast body of materials related to the replication and translation of Bodhgayā dispersed in diverse regions and produced at disparate periods deserves a systematic study, two particular Buddha statues indicate that there have been many ways to receive and replicate the original in different cultural circumstances, and that *puti ruixiang* represents one of them. Dating to slightly later than the Chinese instance, the two images do not actually have any textual support to confirm their direct relation to Bodhgayā. Furthermore, the architectural frames of the statues do not reveal any attempt to imitate the Mahābodhi Temple. However, they have been linked by modern scholars to the Buddha image at the Mahābodhi Temple by virtue of their distinctive formal features.

The first statue is located in a renowned Buddhist monument that stands on a steep slope of Mount T'oham in Kyŏngju, South Korea (Fig. 21). This monument is called Sŏkkul-am, or Stone Cave Grotto. Despite the name, it is not a cave that has been dug into a mountain but a walled and domed stone structure whose top is covered with earth to make it resemble a grotto. Consisting of a rectangular

18 Buddha images, ink rubbing of a clay plaque (front) from Dayan Pagoda, Xi'an, Shaanxi Province (artwork in the public domain; photograph from Huang Jun, *Zunguzhai taofo liuzhen*, vol. 2 [Beijing: Zunguzhai, 1973], 31)

19 Back of Fig. 18 (artwork in the public domain)

antechamber, a short corridor, and a circular main chamber, it accommodates twenty-nine relief figures, all individually carved on the stone panel set into the walls and arranged in a strict hierarchical order (Fig. 22).[80] The Buddha statue with which I am concerned is surrounded by these divine figures in relief and seated on a high, lotus-shaped pedestal, displaying with his right hand the *bhūmisparśa mudrā* (Fig. 23).[81]

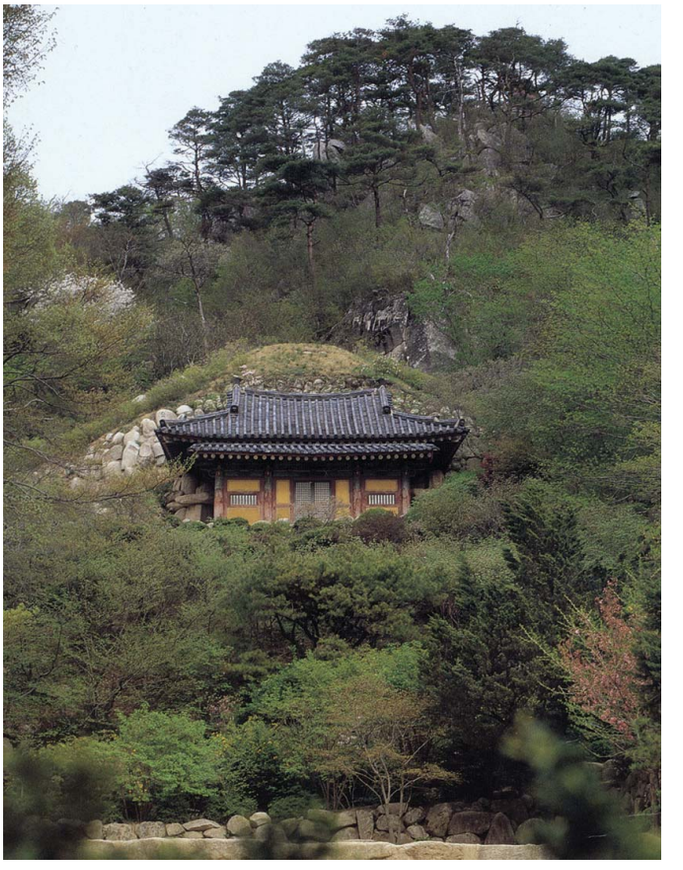
We know from one textual source that the monument was built under the patronage of Kim Taesŏng, who was the prime minister of the Unified Silla in the reign of King Kyŏngdŏk (r. 742–64).[82] We have little additional information about this microcosmic representation of the Buddhist pantheon. Among the available scholarly studies,[83] the most relevant to our purpose is an interesting observation made by U-bang Kang. While engaged in research on the mathematical relations among the various parts of this monument, Kang realized the significance of the image's size. Once he converted the measurements of the Buddha statue at the Sŏkkul-am into Tang-foot measurement, which is approximately 11¾ inches (29.7 centimeters), it turns out that they are almost identical with those of the Buddha image at the Mahābodhi Temple, as mentioned in Xuanzang's account.[84] The two images closely match in their heights, widths between the knees, and widths of the shoulders, although the sizes of the pedestals differ significantly.[85]

Kang's excitement at this intriguing discovery is revealed in the beginning of his article: "When I first discovered that the iconography, size, and orientation of the main Buddha of Sŏkkul-am are the same as those of the image of Śākyamuni at Mahābodhi Temple in Bodhgayā, India, the site where Śākyamuni attained enlightenment, I could not sleep."[86] His excitement provides an interesting contrast to the dismay felt by one of the British archaeologists who participated in the excavation and restoration of the Mahābodhi Temple. Cunningham, for instance, admitted that the Buddha statue that he decided to enshrine at the Mahābodhi Temple differs in size from the image that Xuanzang observed.[87] What makes this parallel even more significant is the possibility that the measurements of the original image might have held as much interest for medieval audiences as they do for modern scholars.

If the similarity in size is the chief reason for relating the Korean example to the Mahābodhi Buddha statue, what links the following image with the lost original is another distinctive formal feature. The next image is a Buddha statue found at Borobudur in Central Java, Indonesia, a gigantic Buddhist monument dated to about 800 (Fig. 24). Roughly speaking, Borobudur is composed of five stories of square terraces, three stories of circular platforms, and a bell-shaped structure that stands on the central pinnacle of the monument (Fig. 25). The main wall of each square terrace serves as a balustrade of the gallery with 1,460 narrative relief panels. Every facade is simultaneously crowned by a large number of niches that shelter seated Buddha figures, 432 in all. The seated Buddhas on the main walls of the first four square terraces are divided into four groups, according to hand gestures and locations: those on the east side display the *bhūmisparśa mudrā*, which symbolizes the moment of enlightenment; the statues along the south side display the *vara mudrā*, a symbol of charity; the statues on the west side display the *dhyāna mudrā*, the sign of meditation; and the statues on the north side display the *abhaya mudrā*, which expresses the elimination of fear. In contrast to the iconographic differences among the Buddhas on the first four main walls, the Buddhas on the fifth level display the *vitarka mudrā*. They are contrasted again with those in *dharmacakra mudrā* that are contained in the small perforated stupas on the three circular platforms higher up and arranged concentrically around the bell-shaped structure at the top.[88]

The Buddha statue in question was reported to have been found inside the central stupa, which is enclosed again by the bell-shaped structure (Fig. 26). Since it was discovered in

20 Buddha images, ca. 682, gilt-bronze plaque, height 4⅜ in. (11 cm). Private collection, Japan (artwork in the public domain; photograph from Ōmura Seigai, *Shina bijutsushi: chōsohen*, vol. 2 [Tokyo: Bussho Kankokai zujobu, 1915–20], fig. 818)

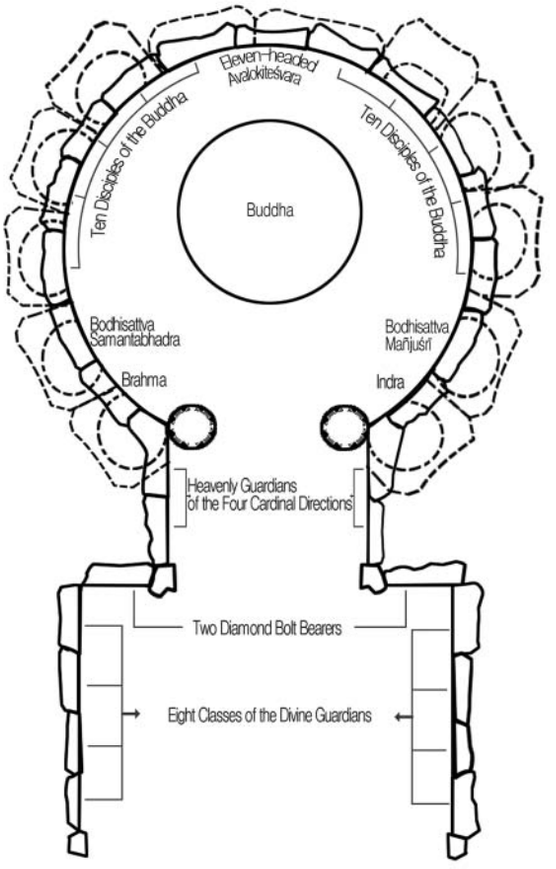


21 Exterior of Sŏkkul-am, mid-8th century, Kyŏngju, South Korea (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by Taeho Lee)

the early nineteenth century, its unusual quality has led some scholars to cast doubt on its authenticity.[89] Unlike the statues displayed on the facade of the terrace, this one has a crude quality: in addition to a few damaged parts, the hair and the garment are left roughhewn, and the hands and the toes of the right foot are not shaped. Other scholars, however, are not convinced that the statue is inauthentic. The latter group considers it unlikely that the image was inserted into the enclosed structure at some point in time after the monument had been constructed.[90] An intriguing explanation for the unusual quality of this image has been put forth by some researchers. Alfred Foucher, for instance, has proposed that the crude quality might have been intentional, as the statue was made in conscious imitation of the figure at Bodhgayā, which, according to legend, was unfinished.[91] To Foucher and others who share his views, the special location of this image—on the pinnacle of the monument and hidden inside the bell-shaped structure—gives it the most important setting within the complex system that determines the symbolic meaning of the monument.

Whether or not the two Buddha statues introduced so far are conscious replications of the image at the Mahābodhi Temple, this brief review of the scholarship illuminates the unique feature of our medieval Chinese example. The way in which *puti ruixiang* establishes its connection with the original is not through its size or any unusual quality.[92] Instead, it is through an emphasis on the formal decorations that were apparent on the original. Given the various special attributes of the original, the majority of medieval Chinese Buddhists focused on the fact that the famous Buddha statue in India was decorated with lavish jewelry, even though such decoration was not part of the iconography. Their interest in this external feature of the original is clearly manifested in the inscription at the Thousand Buddhas Cliff. As I indicated earlier, the phrase that has a parallel in Xuanzang's account is none other than the section that describes the jeweled ornamentation of the original statue.

The various types of reception of the original image require us to reconsider our notion of the copy. In dealing with the practice of the copy, we, as modern scholars, should be as interested in the context in which the replications were produced as in reconstructing the form of a lost original or the route of transmission. In the Chinese case, we fortunately have some clues as to the cultural milieu that must have shaped the circumstances for the particular type of reception. The most important clue comes from the term reserved

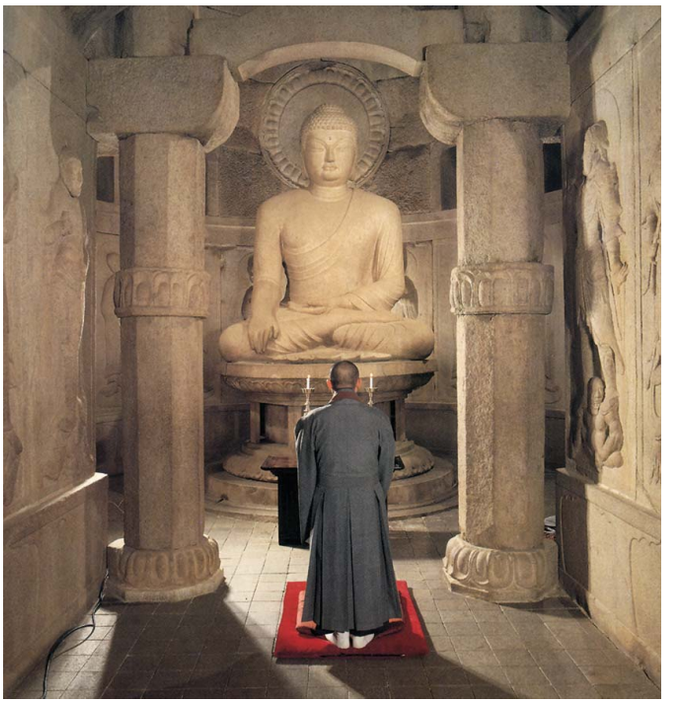


22 Plan of Sŏkkul-am (drawing by Mi Jeong Kang and the author)

for the Chinese replication: *ruixiang*, or "auspicious image."[93] As will soon be shown, the medieval Chinese tradition of imagining and inventing auspicious images shaped a distinctive cultural setting that permitted the idiosyncratic form of the Chinese replications.

Longing for a Foreign Image

In general, *ruixiang* in the medieval Chinese Buddhist context is loosely defined as a Buddhist icon that has a special legend describing its unusual origins.[94] Such objects typically are believed to have been created through divine intervention or commissioned by famous figures in the history of Buddhism. Some of the *ruixiang* icons are also thought to possess extraordinary powers, such as an ability to move around on their own or manifest auspicious signs (for example, emitting light or shedding tears). As the projections of human wishes and fears onto the famous icons, these supernatural phenomena were often interpreted by medieval Chinese Buddhists as the portents of, or responses to, political situations. Indeed, modern scholarship has also understood the medieval Chinese tradition of worshipping auspicious images as a medium of political messages, a process deeply rooted in the traditional Chinese notion of *xiangrui* (auspicious signs) or *tianming* (mandate of heaven).[95] Preserved in diverse literary genres such as scriptures, biographies, and pilgrims' travelogues, stories of auspicious images can serve as a fruitful site where we can obtain a glimpse of how medieval Chinese imagined and claimed the ontology of their religious icons.



23 Statue of Buddha inside the main cella, Sŏkkul-am, Kyŏngju, South Korea, ca. 8th century, granite, height 11 ft. 1¾ in. (3.4 m) (artwork in the public domain; photograph by Jang-heon Ahn)

Among the various angles that we can pursue in the study of *ruixiang*, the most immediately relevant entails their formal characteristics. The establishment of a fixed rule that governs the whole tradition of auspicious imagery is clearly beyond our scope here. Nonetheless, a brief review of formal characteristics that are shared by several representative auspicious images will aid our grasp of the appearance of *puti ruixiang*. Two of the best-known auspicious images favored by the medieval Chinese offer rich textual and visual evidence. Looking at them through the eyes of a modern viewer reveals that there was room for imagination that allowed some degree of formal adaptation and transformation in the medieval Chinese tradition of fabricating auspicious images.

One of these, the so-called King Aśoka Image, is a Buddha statue created, according to legend, by King Aśoka of ancient India (304 BCE–232 BCE), who was renowned as an enthusiastic patron of Buddhism. In particular, he is remembered for his distribution of 84,000 relic stupas of the Buddha Śākyamuni throughout his empire. King Aśoka was even more appealing to medieval Chinese Buddhists, who believed that Buddha images produced by King Aśoka were miraculously found in China at least from the third century CE.[96] Attesting to this belief is the fact that Buddha statues that purported to be the King Aśoka Image have been excavated in China (Fig. 27).[97] Despite differences in size, they display common elements, the most important being the face of a foreigner with large protruding eyes and a characteristic mustache. The garment also follows the so-called western mode, which contrasts sharply with the Sinicized mode that was dominant in contemporary Buddha images created in China.[98] On the basis of these distinctive formal characteristics, it has been claimed that the King Aśoka Images came from India, as the legend states.

24 Statue of Buddha, Borobudur, Central Java, Indonesia, ca. 800, stone, height 59 in. (150 cm). Karmawibhangga Museum (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by Bokyung Kim)

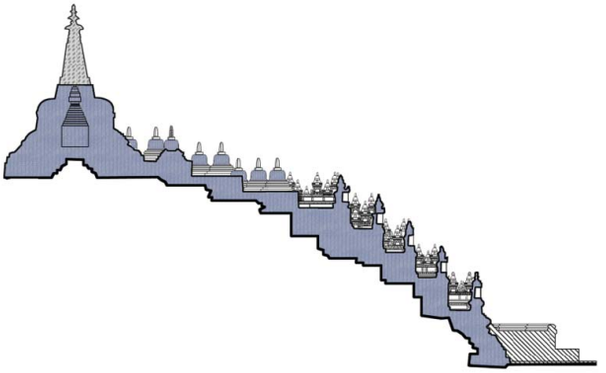
Consequently, some art historians have attempted to trace the stylistic origin of this type of Buddha figure back to the surviving Indian Buddhist sculptures. For instance, some of them, pointing to their facial features and thick drapery, have proposed that the style originated with the third- or fourth-century Buddha statues produced in Gandhāra.[99] Alternatively, others, noting the distinctive drapery folds, think that its origin can be traced back to the fifth-century images produced in Mathura.[100]

Nonetheless, the efforts to locate a prototype of the King Aśoka Images in Indian Buddhist sculptures have not turned up a satisfactory model that shares all of the formal features. This may not be surprising, insofar as the myth of the King Aśoka Image itself is likely to be a medieval Chinese invention, as Koichi Shinohara has suggested.[101] Although King Aśoka is renowned as a fervent patron of Buddhism, there is no evidence that he ever commissioned a Buddha image; in fact, images of the Buddha did not emerge until much later.[102] If the legend itself is the product of the medieval Chinese imagination, searching for the formal origin of the King Aśoka Images in surviving Indian Buddhist art does not make much sense. Rather, it would be more meaningful to consider the latitude in form admitted by the medieval Chinese in their invention of the auspicious images. Considered

25 Borobudur, Central Java, Indonesia, ca. 800, stone, 404 × 404 × 138 ft. (123 × 123 × 42 m) (artwork in the public domain; photograph from John N. Miksic, *Borobudur: Golden Tales of the Buddhas* [Singapore: Periplus Editions, 1996], 40)

from this point of view, the King Aśoka Images can be understood as intriguing combinations of various stylistic traits of Indian Buddhist art that are associated with different schools and periods, from Kushan Gandhāra to Gupta Mathura.

The contradiction between the legend and the form is evident as well in the case of the King Udāyana Image. Allegedly the "first Buddha image," this was really a product of later Buddhists' imagination and a projection of their wish to legitimate the practice of image worship. According to the legend, the image was commissioned by King Udāyana of India (fifth century BCE), who lived at the same time as the Buddha and missed the Buddha Śākyamuni during his temporal stay in the Tuṣita Heaven. The story goes that the king ordered a likeness of the Buddha to be carved out of sandalwood, and that he subsequently venerated the statue as if it were the Buddha.[103] This story is obviously not historical, since it is unlikely that a representation of the Buddha was made earlier than the first century CE. Yet, said to have been produced during the lifetime of the Buddha Śākyamuni, the image has been regarded in Buddhist tradition as not only the first "material representation" but also a "faithful" portrayal of the Buddha. Equally intriguing, if ironic, is the fact that at least three different forms of Buddha image associated with widely disparate contexts in time and place are believed to represent the King Udāyana Image. One is the famous image now enshrined at Seiryō ji (Monastery of Clear and Cool) in Kyoto, Japan. It was modeled after an original believed to have been brought to China by the famous Kashmir monk Kumārajiva from Central Asia about the fourth century CE (Fig. 28).[104] The image depicts a standing Buddha with a robe covering the whole body, and the repeated folds of the robe have often been described as archaic by modern scholars. Another type of Buddha image, however, displays distinctively different formal features (Fig. 29).[105] Carved in great numbers onto the walls of the Longmen and Gongxian Caves during the late seventh century, the figures, seated with their two legs pendant, are clad in a thin layer of monastic robes that vividly reveal the contours of the body. Stylistically, this type of King Udāyana Image is similar to the sixth-century Gupta-Sarnath objects of India.



26 Diagram of Borobudur, side view (artwork in the public domain; drawing by Mi Jeong Kang)

Like the King Aśoka Images, these two types of the King Udāyana Image possess formal traits that are stylistically idiosyncratic and that contrast with the major trends in contemporary Chinese Buddhist sculptures. Their origins have also been investigated by many modern scholars, who have suggested several Indian examples that might have served as their model.[106] In this conventional search for formal similarities, the more urgent questions of why and how two such different types of King Udāyana Image could exist are rarely asked.

A less-known relief panel from Gandhāra that illustrates the moment when King Udāyana presents to the Buddha his portrait sculpture adds another layer of complexity to this formal multiplicity. The small statue held by King Udāyana in the panel is like a mirror image of the larger Buddha depicted in the center, which retains the typical formal features of Gandhāran sculpture from about the third century CE (Fig. 30).[107] Interestingly, the multiplicity of forms of the King Udāyana image, which seems problematic to this modern viewer, was questioned once by a medieval viewer. Daoxuan, a mid-seventh-century Chinese Buddhist historian, raised the issue of the authenticity of the two different types of King Udāyana Images that coexisted in China during his time.[108]

Although the legend of the King Udāyana Image emphasizes the formal likeness of the image to the Buddha, the three different types of King Udāyana Images, through their inconsistency in form, illustrate the great formal latitude displayed in the auspicious images revered by medieval Chinese Buddhists. By "latitude," I do not mean looseness in the belief system or carelessness in the image-making process. Instead, I use the term to convey room for imagination that allowed some degree of formal adaptation and transformation in the medieval Chinese tradition of auspicious images.[109] Such latitude could have made possible the addition of jeweled decorations in the case of *puti ruixiang*. As long as medieval Chinese accepted the Buddha statue at the Mahābodhi Temple as an auspicious image when they translated it into their own cultural setting, what mattered to them was not really the precise form of the original. Rather, it was the unusual material aspects of the foreign image that they considered most important. Furthermore, since the jewelry was introduced as part of the legend that further increased the fantasy of the prototype, incorporating it as a

27 King Aśoka Image, ca. 551, sandstone with gilding and pigment, height 18⅞ in. (48 cm). Chengdu City Institute of Archaeology (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by Lei Yuhua)

formal feature must have been natural to the medieval Chinese. In this sense, *puti ruixiang* can be understood as the outcome of the reimagining of the Indian model by medieval Chinese, rather than a transparent copy of the original. What underlies the creation of this new auspicious image was the romantic idea of a foreign statue, which was deeply embedded in their own tradition of making auspicious images.

Finally, I would ask the following: What is the ontological status of *puti ruixiang*? Could it function as the "true visage," as did its model? Or did it serve a different role in being conceived as an auspicious image? These questions deserve further consideration, especially when we are reminded of the conceptual ambiguity inherent in the "representations" of the auspicious image.[110] Despite its supernatural quality,

28 Statue of Buddha, ca. 985, sandalwood, height 62⅞ in. (160 cm). Seiryo ji, Kyoto, Japan (artwork in the public domain; photograph by permission of Seiryo ji and the Nara National Museum)

29 Statue of Buddha, late 7th century, stone, height 44 in. (112 cm), niche of the King Udāyana Image, Longmen Caves, Luoyang, Henan Province (artwork in the public domain; photograph © Cultural Relics Press)

each auspicious image itself defines its identity as a *xiang*, that is, an image/representation. And as long as it is identified as such, the *puti ruixiang* seemed never to blur its role as a material object. Instead of substituting for its model—the Buddha statue at the Mahābodhi Temple and/or the *zhenrong*, the ultimate model with which the famous Indian Buddha statue was conflated at some point—the *puti ruixiang* appears to have been clearly defined as a material object, thereby revealing the medieval Chinese passion for *possession* of special icons.[111] It is this gap between *ruixiang* and *zhenrong* that lies at the heart of the two different modes of the medieval Chinese reception of the Buddha statue at the Mahābodhi Temple.[112]

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30 First Buddha Image of King Udāyana, excavated from Sahri Bahlol, 3rd–4th century, height 12 in. (30.5 cm). Peshawar Museum (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by J. Rhi)

Notes

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1. Located just over six miles (ten kilometers) to the north of the center of Guangyuan, this cliff is 1,273 feet (388 meters) long and 275½ feet (84 meters) high. For a brief introduction to the history of the cliff and the significance of this location, see Lei Yuhua and Wang Jianping, *Guangyuan shiku* [Guangyuan Caves] (Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 2002), 1–9.
2. According to an inscription dated 1854 and carved at the site, there were originally 17,000 images on this cliff. At least one-third of the sculptures in the southern section of the cliff were destroyed in 1935 when the Shanxi-Sichuan road was built. Currently, small chambers and niches of various sizes, 848 in total, occupy the entire surface of the cliff. This cliff was visited by many travelers in the medieval period, and from the inscriptions that they left on the wall of the cliff, we know that this cliff has been called Qianfo ya since the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368). During the Tang (618–907) and the Song (960–1279) periods, it was called the Botang Temple. Ibid., 23.
3. The cave (Cave 366) measures 11 ft. 8 in. (3.55 m) wide, 10 ft. 10 in. (3.3 m) deep, and 10 ft. 8 in. (3.25 m) high. The entrance is from the west. For a detailed configuration of the cave, see ibid., 39–44.
4. For instance, we can find earlier depictions of the Buddha with the same hand gesture in the stone relief in Cave 10 of the Yungang Caves and the mural in Cave 428 of the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang, dated to the late fifth and sixth centuries, respectively. For a detailed description of these narrative scenes, see Yungang shiku wenwu baoguan suo, ed., *Zhongguo shiku Yungang shiku* [Yungang Caves], 2 vols. (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe; Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1991), vol. 2, 248; Dunhuang wenwu yanjiu suo, ed., *Zhongguo shiku Dunhuang Mogao ku* [Mogao Caves of Dunhuang], 5 vols. (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe; Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1982), vol. 1, 251–52. For the origin of the Buddha image in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* in India, see Janice Leoshko, "The Iconography of Buddhist Sculptures of the Pāla and Sena Periods from Bodhgayā" (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 1987), 56–70.
5. For a comprehensive introduction to this body of materials, see Chuan-ying Yen, "The Sculpture from the Tower of Seven Jewels: The Style, Patronage, and Iconography of the Monument" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1986), 84–97; Hida Romi, "Tōdai ni okeru Buddagaya Kongōza shin'yōzō no ryūkō ni tsuite" [On the image of the true visage on a diamond seat of Bodh Gaya during the Tang dynasty], in *Ronsō Bukkyō bijutsushi* [History of Buddhist art] (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1986), 157–86; Kim Lena, "Indo pulsang ŭi chungguk chŏllae ko" [Transmission of the Indian Buddha image to China]," in *Han'guk pulgyo misulsa ron* [History of Korean Buddhist art], ed. Hwang Suyŏng (Seoul: Minjoksa, 1987), 73–110), reprinted in Lena, *Han'guk kodae pulgyo chokaksa yŏn'gu* [Study of ancient Korean Buddhist sculptures] (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1989), 270–90; Lei Yuhua and Wang Jianping, "Shilun Sichuan de puti ruixiang" [Discussions on the "Auspicious images of the Bodhi tree" in Sichuan Province], *Sichuan wenwu*, no. 1 (2004): 85–91; and Lee Yu-min, "Shilun Tangdai xiangmo chengdao shi zhuangshi fo" [Preliminary discussion of the ornamented Buddha of the T'ang dynasty: Representing the defeat of Mara], *National Palace Museum Research Quarterly* 23, no. 3 (2006): 39–90. The earliest of these images was found in the Guanyin Peak of Guilin in Guangxi Province and dates to 679. For more information about this image, see Yamana Shinsei, "Keirin no chōro gan'nen mei magai butsu ni tsuite" [On the Buddha image carved onto the cliff dated to the *diaolu* era in Guilin]," *Bukkyō Geijutsu* 198 (1991): 85–108.
6. Arthur Waley, *A Catalogue of Paintings Recovered from Tun-huang by Sir Aurel Stein* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1931), 268–69; Takada Osamu, "Hōkan butsu no zō ni tsuite" [On the crowned Buddha images], *Bukkyō Geijutsu* 21, no. 4 (1954): 42–58; and Ono Katsutoshi, "Hōkan butsu shiron" [Discussion on the crowned Buddha], *Ryūkoku daigakku ronshu* 389–90 (1969): 279–99.
7. The Buddha's identification as Mahāvirocana has been proposed by a number of Chinese scholars, such as Xing Jun, Ding Mingyi, Li Wensheng, Wen Yucheng, and Chang Qing. For more on this group of scholars, see Lee Yu-min, "Shilun Tangdai xiangmo chengdao shi zhuangshi fo," 41. Although usually depicted with a different hand gesture, Mahāvirocana is described in scriptures as being adorned lavishly with jewels and wearing a crown that distinguishes him from other Buddhas.
8. Chuan-ying Yen, "The Sculpture from the Tower of Seven Jewels," 84–92, and Kim Lena proposed that the image type is a representation of Vairocana, since the *Avataṃsaka sūtra* indicates that an apparition of a precious crown hovers above his head at the moment of his preaching. Kim Lena, "Chungguk ŭi hangma chokji'in pulchwasang" [Buddha images in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* in China], in *Han'guk kodae pulgyo chogaksa yŏn'gu*, 326–32.
9. Lu Jianfu and Luo Zhao suggest that it might depict the Garbhadhatu Buddha, whose form as described in the *Tuoluoni ji jing* [Collective Sutra of Dharanis] is lavishly ornamented with jewelry and a seven-jeweled crown. For more information about this scholarship, see Lee Yu-min, "Shilun Tangdai xiangmo chengdao shi zhuangshi fo," 41–42.
10. Lei Yuhua and Wang Jianping, "Shilun Sichuan de puti ruixiang," 85–91.
11. Detailed information on the inscription will be introduced later.
12. For a comprehensive study on Bodhgayā, see Janice Leoshko, ed., *Bodhgaya: The Site of Enlightenment* (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1988).
13. Xuanzang with Bianji, *Da Tang xiyu ji* [The great Tang dynasty record of the western regions], in *Taishō shinshū Daizōkyō* [The Buddhist canon, comp. Taishō era, 1912–26], ed. Takakutsu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, 100 vols. (Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924–32), *T.* no. 2087, vol. 51. Hereafter, Buddhist texts in the Taishō canon are indicated by text number (*T.* no.), followed by the volume, page, and register (a, b, or c). Yijing, *Da Tang xiyu qiufa gaoseung zhuan* [Biographies of eminent monks who went to the western regions in search of the law during the great Tang dynasty], in *T.* no. 2066, vol. 51.
14. The image at the Mahābodhi Temple seems to have survived until the thirteenth century, but its fate afterward is unknown. For a brief sketch of the life of the image at the Mahābodhi Temple, see Janice Leoshko, "The Vajrasana Buddha," in Leoshko, *Bodhgaya: The Site of Enlightenment*, 29–44.
15. Yijing, *Biographies*, in *T.* no. 2066, vol. 51: 1c, 10a, and so on.
16. For instance, the term appears in the following contexts: "*Zhenrong* fades away fast"; "*Zhenrong* departed from its appearance." For more instances, see Hou Xudong, *Wu, liu shiji beifang minzhong fojiao xinyang* [Common people's Buddhist beliefs in northern China during the fifth and sixth centuries examined through dedicatory inscriptions] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1998), 230–40. For an analysis of various patterns, see Sun-ah Choi, "Quest for the True Visage: Sacred Images in Medieval Chinese Buddhist Art and the Concept of *Zhen*" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2012), 29–60.
17. I am influenced by Jennifer Trimble and Jaś Elsner in regard to this view that the practice of replication has a complex relation to visual artworks in contemporary circulation and their contemporary reception. Trimble and Elsner, "Introduction: 'If You Need an Actual Statue . . .,'" *Art History* 29, no. 2 (2006): 208.
18. Yijing, *Biographies*, in *T.* no. 2066, vol. 51. Yijing left for India in 671 via the so-called southern sea route. He traveled through more than thirty countries before returning to China in 695. On his way back to China, he spent four years in Srivijaya (Sumatra). While there, he sent back to China a complete manuscript of *Nanhai jigui nei fazhuan* [A record of the Buddhist religion as practiced in India and the Malay Archipelago] (in *T.* no. 2125, vol. 54) and the *Biographies*. For further information on Yijing and his works, see Latika Lahiri, trans. and ed., *Chinese Monks in India: Biography of Eminent Monks Who Went to the Western World in Search of the Law during the Great T'ang Dynasty, A.D. 1–600, by I Ching* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1986), xv–xxvii.
19. Yijing, *Biographies*, in *T.* no. 2066, vol. 51: 1c, 10a, and so on.
20. Zanning, *Song gaoseng zhuan* [Biographies of eminent monks of the Song dynasty], in *T.* no. 2061, vol. 50: 710 b.
21. For more information about Xuanzang and his travelogue, see Nancy Elizabeth Boulton, "Early Chinese Buddhist Travel Records as a Literary Genre" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1982), 80–128; and Dorothy C. Wong, "The Making of a Saint: Images of Xuanzang in East Asia," *Early Medieval China* 8 (2002): 43–98.
22. For an English translation, see Samuel Beal, trans., *Si-yu-ki, Buddhist Records of the Western World by Hiuen Tsiang*, 2 vols. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1884; reprint, Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corp., 1969). See also Li Rongxi, trans., *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions* (Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1996).
23. Leoshko, introduction to *Bodhgaya: The Site of Enlightenment*, 2.
24. For more on the meaning of Bodhgayā, see Malcolm D. Eckel, *To See the Buddha: A Philosopher's Quest for the Meaning of Emptiness* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 51–64.

25. Faxian, *Gaoseng Faxian zhuan* [Biography of the eminent monk Faxian], in *T.* no. 2085, vol. 51: 863b. Faxian's journey lasted almost sixteen years, from 399 to 414. His travelogue has been translated into English several times. For Faxian and the different English translations, see Boulton, "Early Chinese Buddhist Travel Records," 44–79. For an English translation of this part, see James Legge, trans., *A Record of Buddhist Kingdoms: Being an Account by the Chinese Monk Fa-Hien of His Travels in India and Ceylon (A.D. 394–414) in Search of the Buddhist Books of Discipline* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1886; reprint, New York: Paragon Book Reprint and Dover Publications, 1965), 96.

26. Xuanzang, *Da Tang xiyu ji*, in *T.* no. 2087, vol. 51: 915a–b. See also Beal, trans., *Si-yu-ki*, vol. 2, 114–15; and Li Rongxi, trans., *The Great Tang Dynasty Record*, 243–44.

27. In regard to the record on the image in Bodhgayā, there is one exceptional case. In his biography, the fifth-century Chinese monk Zhimeng is reported to have worshipped an "image of [an act of] defeating the evil spirits [*xiang mo xiang*]" in Bodhgayā. Huijiao, *Gaoseng zhuan* [Biographies of eminent monks], in *T.* no. 2059, vol. 50: 343b. However, it is not certain if this image is the same one witnessed by Xuanzang.

28. Xuanzang, *Da Tang xiyu ji*, in *T.* no. 2087, vol. 51: 916a–b, translation adapted from Beal, *Si-yu-ki*, vol. 2, 119–21; and Li Rongxi, *The Great Tang Dynasty Record*, 247–49, emphasis and numbering mine; referred to hereafter as *Legend*.

29. As Robert L. Brown shows, size is one of several aspects to which Xuanzang paid attention in his description of images. Brown, "Expected Miracles: The Unsurprisingly Miraculous Nature of Buddhist Images and Relics," in *Images, Miracles, and Authority in Asian Religious Traditions*, ed. Richard H. Davis (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1998), 24. However, his notations are generally limited to records of height and rarely extend to measurements of other parts, such as the width of the shoulders and the knees.

30. For instance, a votive inscription of a Buddha statue dated 566 includes the following phrases: "Reverently made a stone statue of the Buddha Śākyamuni. Lavishly decorated, and carved extravagantly. The beauty was equal to a golden quality. The beauty of the appearance is similar to that of the true visage." For more information and an interpretation of this pattern, see Choi, "Quest for the True Visage," 44–45.

31. The only other surviving example in which the legend of the image is recounted is the biography of the Tibetan monk Dharmasvāmin, who traveled to India in the early thirteenth century and visited the Mahābodhi Temple in 1234. Although it shares a similar narrative, the legend in the Tibetan text does not contain as detailed a description of the image's formal features or such a patterned expression in describing the impression of the image. For an English translation of the relevant part of his biography, see George Roerich, trans., *Biography of Dharmasvāmin (Chag lo tsa-ba Chos-rje-dpal): A Tibetan Monk Pilgrim* (Patna: K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1959), 67–70.

32. T. H. Barrett, "Exploratory Observations on Some Weeping Pilgrims," in *The Buddhist Forum*, vol. 1, *Seminar Papers 1987–1988*, ed. Tadeusz Skorupski (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1990), 99–110.

33. For the list of Buddhist images in *Record*, I consulted Juhyung Rhi, ed., *Tong'asia kupŏpsŭng kwa Indo ŭi pulgyo yuchŏk* [Buddhist pilgrim monks of East Asia and sacred sites in India] (Seoul: Sahoe pyŏngnon, 2009), 502–30. For Xuanzang's pattern of describing images, see Brown, "Expected Miracles," 24–27.

34. Xuanzang, *Da Tang xiyu ji*, in *T.* no. 2087, vol. 51: 879a. See also Beal, *Si-yu-ki*, vol. 1, 93; and Li Rongxi, *The Great Tang Dynasty Record*, 67.

35. For more on the "shadow image," see Alexander C. Soper, *Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art in China* (Ascona: Artibus Asiae, 1959), 265–68; and Choi, "Quest for the True Visage," 67–69.

36. Wang Xuance traveled to India at least four times during the mid-seventh century as an imperial envoy under Emperors Taizong and Gaozong. For more information about Wang Xuance and his travel to India, see Amy McNair, *Donors of Longmen: Faith, Politics, and Patronage in Medieval Chinese Buddhist Sculpture* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 94–96.

37. Although it does not survive today, a portion of his writing—in particular, the account of the Mahābodhi image—is preserved in *Fayuan zhulin* [The Pearl grove of the Dharma Garden], the encyclopedia of Buddhism compiled sometime before 668 by Daoshi. In the chapter entitled *gantong*, or "spiritual resonance," the author introduces the holy places in India based on the travelogues of prominent contemporary figures, such as Xuanzang and Wang Xuance. Wang Xuance, in Daoshi, comp., *Fayuan zhulin*, in *T.* no. 2122, vol. 55: 502c–503a.

38. Ibid., in *T.* no. 2122, vol. 55: 503a. In naming the image, Wang, however, used expressions that made reference to the location where the image was seated, such as the "Image of the Mahā [Great] Bodhi Tree" and the "Holy Image on the Diamond Seat," rather than directly referring to it as *zhenrong*.

39. Yijing, *Biographies*, in *T.* no. 2066, vol. 51: 1c, 10a, and so on.

40. With regard to this matter, T. H. Barrett's suggestion that Yijing shared the same ambition as Empress Wu (624–705) of reshaping China as a Buddhist land is quite appealing. Barrett, "Did I-ching Go to India? Problems in Using I-ching as a Source for South Asian Buddhism," *Buddhist Studies Review* 15, no. 2 (1998): 150. Indeed, Empress Wu welcomed Yijing when, after his twenty-five-year journey to India, he returned to China in 695 with a replica of the True Visage on the Diamond Seat, along with other sacred materials. However, further evidence is lacking. For more on Empress Wu's ambition and the atmosphere of the Chinese Buddhist world of the late seventh and early eighth centuries, see Tansen Sen, *Buddhism, Diplomacy, and Trade: The Realignment of Sino-Indian Relations, 600–1400* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003); and Jinhua Chen, *Philosopher, Practitioner, Politician: The Many Lives of Fazang (643–712)* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

41. Huili, *Da Tang da ci'ensi sanzang fashi zhuan*, in *T.* no. 2053, vol. 50. It should be noted that the personal aspect of this travel is totally omitted in *Record*, which more closely resembles an official report of the geography and the demography of the western land.

42. Ibid., *T.* no. 2053, vol. 50: 236b, translation adapted from Samuel Beal, *The Life of Hiuen-Tsiang* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1911), 105.

43. Barrett, "Exploratory Observations on Some Weeping Pilgrims," 107.

44. We can gain insight into how Xuanzang perceived the time period he belonged to from the word "*xiangji*," which I translate here as the "days of the semblance *dharma*." For a discussion of this term (or *xiangfa*) in relation to the idea of *mofa*, see Jan Nattier, *Once upon a Future Time: Studies in a Buddhist Prophecy of Decline* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1991).

45. This idea is borrowed from Kenneth Gross, *Dream of the Moving Statue* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1992), 15.

46. Yijing, *Biographies*, in *T.* no. 2066, vol. 51: 1c. The translation is adapted from Lahiri, trans., *Chinese Monks in India*, 8–9, with revisions. Although the exact dates of Xuanzhao's life are not known, according to Yijing's record, he went to India during the *zhenguan* era (627–49) and returned to China during the *linde* era (664–65). After his return in the *linde* era, he was asked to go to India again, and he finally died there.

47. Yijing, *Biographies*, in *T.* no. 2066, vol. 51: 10a. The translation is adapted from Lahiri, *Chinese Monks in India*, 102. The exact dates of Daijin's birth and death are also unknown. According to Yijing's recount, Daijin left for India in 682 and decided to return to China in 692.

48. This stela was found during the excavation of Bodhgayā by British archaeologists. For more on the stela, see Samuel Beal, "Two Chinese-Buddhist Inscriptions Found at Buddha Gaya," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 13 (1881): 552–72.

49. Daoshi, *Fayuan zhulin*, in *T.* no. 2122, vol. 55: 502c–503a. Paul Pelliot suggested that this event occurred on Wang's third trip to Bodhgayā during the period of 657 to 661. Pelliot, "Notes sur quelques articles de Six dynasties et des T'ang," *T'oung Pao*, 2nd ser., 22 (1923): 280. In addition, Wang Xuance supervised the creation of an image in Jing'ai Monastery in Luoyang based on the sketch that he brought from India. Zhang Yanyuan (815–879), *Lidai minghua ji* [Record of the famous paintings of the successive dynasties] (Beijing: Jinghua chubanshe, 2000), vol. 5.

50. Daoshi, *Fayuan zhulin*, in *T.* no. 2122, vol. 55: 503a. Initially, ten volumes about this image with illustrations were created. Literary evidence further indicates that Wang compiled at least two different works, both of which must have included this painted copy. The first one, entitled *Zhong tianzhu guo tu* [Illustration of India], comprised ten volumes of travelogue and three volumes of illustrations and was completed in 658. See Zhang Yanyuan, *Lidai minghua ji*, vol. 3, sec. 5. The second work is titled *Xiguo ji* [Record of the western country] and was compiled in 666. It consists of sixty volumes of text and forty volumes of illustrations. In regard to this second work, see *T.* no. 2122, vol. 55: 703c, 1024a.

51. Zanning, *Biographies of Eminent Monks of the Song Dynasty*, in *T.* no. 2061, vol. 50: 710b.

52. Luo Shiping, "Qianfo ya Lizhou Bigong ji zaoxiang niandai kao" [Examination of Duke Bi of Lizhou of the Thousand Buddhas Cliff and the date of the images], *Wenwu*, no. 6 (1990): 34–36; and idem, "Guangyuan Qianfo ya Puti ruixiang kao" [An examination of the *puti ruixiang* in the Thousand Buddhas Cliff, Guangyuan], *National Palace Museum Research Quarterly* 9, no. 2 (1991): 117–38.

53. These include Liu Xihai (d. 1853)'s *Jinshi yuan* and Lu Zengxiang (1816–1882)'s *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*.

54. Luo Shiping, "Qianfo ya Lizhou Bigong ji zaoxiang niandai kao." This identification was suggested by Lu Zengxiang in the nineteenth century.

His suggestion was corroborated by Luo's meticulous examination of Bi Zhonghua's family tree and the list of the minor officials, whose names are carved on the south wall of the cave.

55. It is a Chinese transliteration of the Sanskrit word *bodhi*. For more on this word, see Tetsuji Morohashi, *Dai kanwa jiten* [Dictionary of Chinese], 13 vols. (Tokyo: Daishukan shoten, 1955–60), vol. 9, 707.

56. . . .泥 不滿備珍飾. . .

57. Lei Yuhua and Wang Jianping, "Shilun Sichuan de puti ruixiang"; and idem, "Zailun Sichuan de puti ruixiang" [Further discussion on the *puti ruixiang* in Sichuan Province], *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan*, no. 6 (2005): 142–61.

58. Lee Yu-min, "Shilun Tangdai xiangmo chengdao shi zhuangshi fo," 39–90.

59. Simon Lawson, "Votive Objects from Bodhgaya," in Leoshko, *Bodhgaya: The Site of Enlightenment*, 61–72.

60. Benjamin Rowland, "A Miniature Replica of the Mahābodhi Temple," *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art* 6 (1938): 73–83; and John Guy, "The Mahābodhi Temple: Pilgrim Souvenirs of Buddhist India," *Burlington Magazine* 133, no. 1059 (June 1991): 356–67.

61. There are four important Southeast Asian re-creations of the Mahābodhi Temple. The earliest was built at Bagan in the first half of the thirteenth century. Three were built in the fifteenth century—one in Myanmar and two in Thailand. Alexander B. Griswold, "The Holy Land Transported," in *Paranavitana Felicitation Volume on Art & Architecture and Oriental Studies*, ed. N. A. Jayawickrama (Colombo, Sri Lanka: M. D. Gunasena, 1965), 173–222; and Robert L. Brown, "Bodhgaya and South-east Asia," in Leoshko, *Bodhgaya: The Site of Enlightenment*, 101–24. The one in Nepal dates to the sixteenth century. Mary Shepherd Slusser, "Bodhgaya and Nepal," in ibid., 125–42.

62. Roerich, *Biography of Dharmasvāmin*, 67.

63. For more about the history of the Mahābodhi Temple, see Geri H. Malandra, "The Mahabodhi Temple," in Leoshko, *Bodhgaya: The Site of Enlightenment*, 21–45.

64. Francis Buchanan-Hamilton, *An Account of the Districts of Bihar and Patna in 1811–12*, ed. John F. W. James, 2 vols. (Patna: Bihar and Orissa Research Society, 1936), 89–162. For more about the Hindu occupation of the site, see Jacob Kinnard, "When Is the Buddha Not the Buddha? The Hindu/Buddhist Battle over Bodhgayā and Its Buddha Image," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 114, no. 2 (1998): 226–38; and Alan Trevithick, *The Revival of Buddhist Pilgrimage at Bodh Gaya (1811–1949): Anagarika Dhamapala and the Mahābodhi Temple* (Delhi: Motilal Barnasidass, 2006).

65. Alexander Cunningham, *Mahābodhi, or The Great Buddhist Temple under the Bodhi Tree at Buddha-Gaya* (London: W. H. Allen, 1982). Concerning British explorations of the site, see Janice Leoshko, *Sacred Traces: British Explorations of Buddhism in South Asia* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2003).

66. According to Xuanzang, the height of the image was 11 ft. 5 in. in Tang-foot measurement (approximately 3.4 m).

67. This statue was a replacement for a crude statue that had been set on the main altar of the temple by the Burmese several decades before. W. S. Desari, "History of the Burmese Mission to India," *Journal of the Burma Research Society* 26 (1936): 20–45. For more information on the current statue, see Susan Huntington, *The "Pāla-Sena" Schools of Sculpture* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1984), 99–100; and Leoshko, "The Iconography of Buddhist Sculptures of the Pāla and Sena Periods from Bodhgayā," 124–29.

68. This international phenomenon is discussed in Leoshko, *Bodhgaya: The Site of Enlightenment*, in which independent articles are devoted to the influence of Bodhgayā in Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, Nepal, and Tibet. However, as Leoshko notes in the introduction, 8, the influence in East Asia is not addressed, in spite of the fact that the records of the Chinese pilgrims document the special significance that Bodhgayā had for East Asian traditions.

69. Jane Casey Singer, "Tibetan Homage to Bodh Gaya," *Orientations* 32, no. 10 (2004): 44–51.

70. There are several exceptions in Nepal and Tibet in which some of the Buddha images in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* are depicted with jewelry and crowns. Dated to the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries, they were, however, created much later than the Chinese examples. Jane Casey Singer, "Bodhgaya and Tibet," in Leoshko, *Bodhgaya: The Site of Enlightenment*, 153–55; and Slusser, "Bodhgaya and Tibet," 136.

71. Leoshko suggests that Buddha images *in bhūmisparśa mudrā* seem to have originated somewhere other than Bodhgayā at an earlier time, but that Bodhgayā became the center of this iconography in eastern India. For a detailed examination of statues of this type that were excavated or retrieved from Bodhgayā and dated earlier than the seventh century, see Leoshko, "The Iconography of Buddhist Sculptures of the Pāla and Sena Periods from Bodhgayā," 76–103. Her discussion of the crowned/jeweled Buddha statues produced in Bodhgayā in the following section is also worth considering. She demonstrates conclusively that it was not until the eleventh century that this special type was produced in eastern India (196–227). These Indian examples, particularly those that were excavated in Bodhgayā, have received a great deal of scholarly attention. Paul Mus, for instance, relates what he calls the "crowned Buddha" to the Indian interpretations of Śākyamuni's enlightenment as a coronation into Buddhahood on the transcendent, *sambhogakāya* level. Mus, "Le Buddha paré: Son origine indienne, Śākyamuni dans le Mahayanisme moyen," *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* 28 (1928): 153–278. Ananda Coomaraswamy described this iconographic development as part of the emancipation of the Buddha principle from its historical setting. Coomaraswamy, *Elements of Buddhist Iconography* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1935), 46.

72. Takada, "Hōkan butsu no zō ni tsuite," 50–52. The image (Fig. 17) that I suggest here to give us an idea of what the painted copy of the statue looked like (also used by Takada for the same purpose in his article) is part of a silk painting found in Dunhuang, currently in the collection of the National Museum of India in New Delhi (former Stein Collection). The original painting was divided in two and preserved separately in the British Museum (Asia OA 1919, 1–1, 0.51) and the National Museum of India in New Delhi (Ch. XX11.0023). For more information about the painting, see Waley, *A Catalogue of Paintings Recovered from Tun-huang*, 268–69; Ono, "Hōkan butsu shiron," 279–99; Alexander C. Soper, "Representations of Famous Images at Tun-huang," *Artibus Asiae* 27 (1964–65): 349–64; and Roderick Whitfield, "Ruixiang at Dunhuang," in *Function and Meaning in Buddhist Art*, ed. K. R. van Kooij and H. van der Veere (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1995), 149–56. The subject matter of this painting has been studied extensively, and it is now thought that it is an iconographic grouping of the Buddha images famous in India, Central Asia, and China, but the further meaning and function of the painting itself have yet to be studied.

73. For instance, Yijing's copy was counted by the word *pu*, a word that is usually, but not always, used for painting. The word *qu* is normally used for counting the numbers of three-dimensional statues.

74. For a brief review of the background of these images, see Chen Zhen, "Tangdai nifo xiang" [Clay Buddha images of the Tang dynasty], *Wenwu*, no. 8 (1959): 49–51. A more systematic analysis of the materials is found in Hida Romi, "Tō So jōji shozō no Indo butsuzō senbutsu ni tsuite" [On the clay Buddha image inscribed as "Indian Buddha Image" commissioned by *changshi* (attendant) Su of the Tang dynasty], *Bijutsushi kenkyū* 22 (1985): 1–18.

75. The earliest surviving literary source where we find the term *yindu* used as the designation for India is *Da Tang xiyu ji*. Hida, "Tō So jōji shozō no Indo butsuzō senbutsu ni tsuite," 12–13.

76. Ibid., 12.

77. The only literary source introducing this image is Ōmura Seigai, *Shina bijutsushi: Chōsohen* [Chinese art: Sculptures] (Tokyo: Bussho kankokai, 1915–20), fig. 818. This plaque has been investigated by Hida, "Tōdai ni okeru Buddagaya Kongōza shin'yōzō no ryūkō ni tsuite," 177–78; and Kim, "Chungguk üi hangma chokji'in pulchwasang," 301–2.

78. Ōmura, *Shina bijutsushi: Chōsohen*, 89.

79. John Ma, "The Two Cultures: Connoisseurship and Civic Honours," *Art History* 29, no. 2 (2006): 325–38; rephrased by Trimble and Elsner, "Introduction: 'If You Need an Actual Statue . . . ,'" 206.

80. There is a strict hierarchical order in the composition of the relief figures. On the walls of the antechamber are eight classes of the divine guardians and two diamond bolt bearers, while heavenly guardians of the four cardinal directions are carved on the walls of the corridor. Deities of higher status are rendered in the main chamber: Brahma and Indra, the bodhisattvas Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra, ten disciples of the Buddha, and the eleven-headed Avalokiteśvara. Above these relief panels are ten semicircular niches. Each contains a seated figure of various bodhisattvas and the old man Vimalakirti.

81. For a detailed description of this monument, see Sŏng-mi Yi, "Problems Concerning the Sŏkkul-am Cave Temple in Kyŏngju," *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 1 (1988): 30–35.

82. *Samguk yusa* 5: "Taesŏng hyo ise pumo Sinmunwangdae," in Han'guk Chŏngsin Munhwa Yŏn'guwŏn [Academy of Korean Studies], ed., *Yŏkchu Samguk yusa* [Annotation and translation of the *Samguk yusa*] (Seoul: Ihoe Munhwasa, 2003–4), 376–82. For an English translation of this section, see Richard D. McBride II, *Domesticating the Dharma: Buddhist Cults and the Hwaŏm Synthesis in Silla Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 121–22.

83. Various issues, including original motivations of the construction, identity of the individual who was responsible for its planning and execution, iconographic program and doctrinal basis, and mathematical principles that govern the overall proportions of the architecture and sculpture, have been enthusiastically explored over the past several decades. For a

brief summary and review of Korean scholarship concerning the issues of this monument, see Yi, "Problems Concerning the Sŏkkul-am Cave Temple in Kyŏngju," 35–43; and Park Chanhŭng, "Sŏkkul-am e taehan yŏnkusa kŏmt'o" [a review of the studies on Sŏkkul-am], in "A New Research for Sokkuram," special issue, *Silla Munhwajae haksul palp'yohoe nonmunjip* 21 (2000): 199–234.

84. The link between the main Buddha statue of Sŏkkul-am and the image at the Mahābodhi Temple based on their shared iconography had been suggested by Kim, "Indo pulsang ŭi chungguk chŏllae ko." What makes Kang's approach distinctive is his focus on the size of the image in relation to its suggested model. Originally published in 1984 in Korean, Kang's article is now available in English. U-bang Kang, *Korean Buddhist Sculpture: Art and Truth*, trans. Cho Yoonjung (Chicago: Art Media Resources; Seoul: Youlhwadang Publisher, 2005), 97–124.

85. The height of the Sŏkkul-am Buddha is 3.45 m, the width between knees is 2.61 m, and the width between the shoulders is 2.01 m. Converted into Tang-foot measurement, these dimensions are 11 ft. 5⅜ in., 8 ft. 8 in., and 6 ft. 6 in., respectively. For this conversion, see Kang, *Korean Buddhist Sculpture*, 123.

86. Ibid., 97. Buddha statues at both Sŏkkul-am and the Mahābodhi Temple are facing east.

87. Cunningham, *Mahābodhi*, 54.

88. There are many studies on Borobudur, but for a comprehensive description of the monument, see A. J. Bernet Kempers, *Ageless Borobudur* (Wassenaar, the Netherlands: Servire, 1976). For a recent study, see Julie Grifford, *Buddhist Practice and Visual Culture: The Visual Rhetoric of Borobudur* (London: Routledge, 2011).

89. For instance, N. J. Krom argued that the statue was placed there later in the nineteenth century. Krom, cited in J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, "The Dhyani-Buddhas of Barabudur," *Bijdragen tot de taal-, land-, en volkenkunde* 121 (1965): 398; and Brown, "Bodhgaya and South-east Asia," 56.

90. For this proposal, I consulted van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, "The Dhyani-Buddhas of Barabudur," 398; and Brown, "Bodhgaya and South-east Asia," 118–19.

91. Alfred Foucher, "Le Buddha inachevé de Boro-Budur," *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* 3 (1903): 78–80. For more on this group of scholars, including J. L. Moens and A. J. Bernet Kempers, see van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, "The Dhyani-Buddhas of Barabudur," 398–99; and Brown, "Bodhgaya and South-east Asia,"118–19. Brown has defined this phenomenon as "conceptual influence." With regard to the notion of the "unfinished image," see also Joanna Williams, "Unfinished Images," *India International Centre Quarterly* 13, no. 1 (March 1986): 91–104.

92. Among surviving Chinese examples, none is known to be of the same size as the Buddha statue at the Mahābodhi Temple or as the Buddha statue at Sŏkkul-am (11½ ft., or 3.45 m). The *puti ruixiang* at Thousand Buddhas Cliff, for instance, is 54 in. (137 cm) in height, and the Buddha statue in the middle cave of Leigutai at Longmen Caves is 84⅝ in. (215 cm) in height.

93. In addition to the example at the Thousand Buddhas Cliff, a Buddha statue in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* with jewelry decoration and carved onto the cliff of the Feixian ge Cave in Pujiang has an inscription that refers to the image as *ruixiang*. As this dates to 689, it is the earliest known example that has such a designation. For more discussion about the Buddhist sculptures in Pujiang, see Angela F. Howard, "Buddhist Sculpture of Pujiang, Sichuan: A Mirror of the Direct Link between Southwest China and India in High Tang," *Archives of Asian Art* 42 (1998): 49–61; and Henrik H. Sørensen, "The Buddhist Sculptures at Feixian Pavilion in Pujiang, Sichuan," *Artibus Asiae* 58, nos. 1–2 (1998): 33–67. We also know that the same type of image was regarded as a *ruixiang* from the wall paintings of Mogao Caves in Dunhuang. For instance, mid-Tang caves, such as Cave 237, show the same iconography that had been suggested by Zhang Xiaogang as a representation of *puti ruixiang*. Zhang Xiaogang, "Zaitan dunhuang mojiatuo guo fangguang ruixiang yu puti ruixiang" [Reexamination of the Pratima of Radiance image of Maghada and famous image of Bodhi in Dunhuang Caves], *Dunhuang yanjiu*, no. 1 (2009): 21–25.

94. On the definition of *ruixiang*, see Whitfield, "Ruixiang at Dunhuang," 149; Wu Hung, "Rethinking Liu Sahe: The Creation of a Buddhist Saint and the Invention of a 'Miraculous' Image," *Orientations* 29, no. 6 (November 1996): 32–43; and Ning Qiang, *Art, Religion & Politics in Medieval China: The Dunhuang Cave of the Zhai Family* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004), 82.

95. To select a few, Whitfield, "Ruixiang at Dunhuang," 149; Ning Qiang, "Diplomatic Icons: Social and Political Meanings of Khotanese Images in Dunhuang Cave 220," *Oriental Art* 44, no. 4 (1998): 2–15; Koichi Shinohara, "Changing Roles of Miraculous Images in Medieval Chinese Buddhism: A Study of the Miracle Image Section in Daoxuan's 'Collected Records,'" in Davis, *Images, Miracles, and Authority in Asian Religious Traditions*, 143–88; and idem, "Dynastic Politics and Miraculous Images: The Example of Zhuli of the Changlesi Temple in Yangzhou," in ibid., 189–206.

96. For more about King Aśoka and legends related to him, see John S. Strong, *The Legend of King Aśoka: A Study and Translation of the Aśokāvadāna* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983); and Koichi Shinohara, "Gao Li's Discovery of a Miraculous Image: The Evolution of Ashoka Image Stories in Medieval China," in *The Flowering of a Foreign Faith: New Studies in Chinese Buddhist Art*, ed. Janet Baker (New Delhi: Marg Publications, 1998), 20–27.

97. Liu Zhiyuan and Liu Yanbi, *Chengdu Wanfosi shike yishu* [Arts of the stone sculpture excavated from Wanfo Monastery in Chengdu] (Beijing: Zhongguo gudian yishu chubanshe, 1958); Yuan Shuguang, "Sichuan sheng bowuguan cang Wanfosi shike zaoxiang zhengli jianbao" [Brief report on the stone sculptures found in the Wanfo Monastery and currently preserved in Sichuan Provincial Museum], *Wenwu*, no. 10 (2001): 19–38.

98. For information concerning drapery, see Alexander B. Griswold, "Prolegomena to Study of the Buddha's Dress in Chinese Sculpture," *Artibus Asiae* 26, no. 2 (1963): 117–19; and Alexander C. Soper, "South Chinese Influence of the Buddhist Art of the Six Dynasties Period," *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* 32 (1960): 92–94.

99. Wang Jianping and Lei Yuhua, "Ayuwang xiang de chubu kaocha" [Preliminary approaches to the King Aśoka images], *Xinan minzu daxue xuebao*, no. 9 (2007): 65–69. Meanwhile, Marilyn Rhie has suggested a more diverse source of origins, including Kushan Mathura, Central Asia, and China, arguing that the 551 King Aśoka Image is a faithful copy of a fourth-century image. See Rhie, *Early Buddhist Art of China and Central Asia: Handbook of Oriental Studies*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1999–2002), vol. 2, 159–68.

100. Soper, "South Chinese Influence," 92–94; and Kim Lena, "Hwangnyongsa ŭi changnyuk chonsang kwa silla ŭi ayugwangsang kye pulsang" [The sixteen-foot Buddha of Hwangnyong Monastery and Aśoka image-type Buddha statues of Silla dynasty], in *Han'guk kodae pulgyo chokaksa yŏn'gu*, 72–73, originally published in *Chindan hakpo* 46–47, no. 6 (1979): 195–215.

101. Koichi Shinohara, "Gao Li's Discovery of a Miraculous Image," 22.

102. For more about the aniconic period of Buddhist art and the beginning of image making for worship in India, see Benjamin Rowland, "A Note on the Invention of the Buddha Image," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 11, nos. 1–2 (1948): 181–86; Susan Huntington, "Early Buddhist Art and the Theory of Aniconism," *Art Journal* 49, no. 4 (Winter 1990): 401–8; Vidya Dehejia, "Aniconism and the Multivalence of Emblems," *Ars Orientalis* 21 (1992): 45–66; and Susan Huntington, "Aniconism and the Multivalence of Emblems: Another Look," *Ars Orientalis* 22 (1992): 111–56.

103. For more about the legend, see Martha L. Carter, *The Mystery of the Udanaya Buddha* (Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1990). For a comparative interpretation of various versions of the legend, see Choi, "Quest for the True Visage," 61–72.

104. Gregory Henderson and Leon Hurvitz, "The Buddha of Seiryōji: New Finds and New Theory," *Artibus Asiae* 19, no. 1 (1956): 5–55; Carter, *The Mystery of the Udayana Buddha*; and Donald F. McCallum, "The Saidaiji Lineage of the Seiryōji Shaka Tradition," *Archives of Asian Art* 49 (1996): 51–67.

105. Hida Romi, "ShoTō jidai ni okeru Udennōzō: Genjō no Shakazō shōrai to csono juyō no itsō" [The Udayāna Buddha image in the early Tang: One aspect of the acceptance of Xuanzang's Śākyamuni image], *Bijutsusi* 120 (1985): 81–94; Li Wensheng, "Wo guo shiku zhongde Youtianwang zaoxiang" [The King Udayana images in cave chapels in China], *Zhongyuan wenwu*, no. 4 (1985): 102–6; and McNair, *Donors of Longmen*, 99–104.

106. Henderson and Hurvitz, "The Buddha of Seiryōji"; Soper, "South Chinese Influence"; Carter, *The Mystery of the Udayana Buddha*; Hida, "ShoTō jidai ni okeru Udennōzō"; and so on.

107. For more about this relief, see Rowland, "A Note on the Invention of the Buddha Image," 183–84.

108. Daoxuan, *Daoxuan lushi gantong lu* [The record of Master Daoxuan's spiritual response], in *T.* no. 2107, vol. 52: 213a. For more on this issue, see Soper, *Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art*, 265.

109. This aspect has rarely been discussed in previous studies of *ruixiang*. The lack of interest in such an aspect of auspicious imagery is mainly due to the methodology of conventional art history. Most art historians have approached *ruixiang* with a strong expectation that there is a specific prototype somewhere in India or another place that is suggested in the legend. They have also assumed that surviving materials are the faithful replication of an uncertain original. Conditioned by the methodical examination of influences, the study of *ruixiang* in medieval Chinese visual culture pays insufficient attention to the fact that the images were created with the help of imagination, in which more than one kind of process was at work.

110. As Wu Hung, "Rethinking Liu Sahe," 38–39, correctly points out, a miraculous image entails a contradiction, especially when it is represented as an independent icon in frontal view in a certain ritual space like a cave chapel. Its central location and ritual function identify it as the Buddha, to whom worshippers paid their utmost respect. Yet it is also unmistakable that this statue deliberately imitated an existing image.

111. As suggested by Henry A. Millon, in his preface to "Retaining the Original: Multiple Originals, Copies, and Reproductions," special issue of *Studies in the History of Art* 20 (1989): 6, we can think of two aspects of originality in the practice of copying. First, copies of recognized works of art are made, in some sense, to *possess* the original or replicate its iconic or cultural meaning. Second, copies are intended to be *multiple originals* that equally enable possession of the original while replicating and disseminating its image. In the dual aspects of originality, the nature of the *puti ruixiang* is closer to the former.

112. One of the important issues that have not been discussed here is a possible difference in the nature of the ornamented Buddha images made in regions other than Sichuan Province. Unlike the images in Sichuan Province, those created in Luoyang, for instance, are located in different types of settings. For a new interpretation of the statue, see Michelle Wang, "Changing Conceptions of 'Mandala' in Tang China: Ritual and the Role of Images," *Material Religion* 9, no. 2 (June 2013): 186–217.