THE WHEEL OF GREAT COMPASSION:
A STUDY OF DUNHUANG
MANUSCRIPT P.3538

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ABSTRACT

Of the thousands of Buddhist manuscripts discovered at Dunhuang, there are many examples of non-official sūtras and dhāraṇī collections more difficult to identify than those with titles identical to canonical sūtras. Manuscript collection catalogs are the first sources consulted when one undertakes research involving manuscripts and in order to be a truly valuable resource, they need to reflect current scholarship. This thesis studies the Dunhuang manuscript, Pelliot chinois 3538, from different perspectives, examining its ritual, iconography, and textual variances. It compares its iconographical program to manuscript sūtras and canonical scriptures, uncovering new information regarding the content of multiple manuscripts. From this research it is apparent that P.3538 is an Avalokiteśvara dhāraṇī ritual that is iconographically informed from a variety of canonical texts: sūtras in the Nīlakaṇṭha/Qianshou cluster, the Mahāpratisarā dhāraṇī sūtra and its corresponding amulet culture, and sūtras connected with the bodhisattva’s narrative history. In examining other manuscripts from Cave 17, we have found that it is a member of a Dunhuang manuscript cluster and is visually represented in an ink on paper altar diagram, Stein no. Ch.00189, from the British Museum. Integrating these findings would enrich descriptive catalogs for future research.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The Tathāgata, the Arahant, the Fully Enlightened One, the just and righteous king of the Dhamma, who thus provides lawful protection, shelter, and safety in regard to action by body, speech, and mind, is the one who turns the incomparable wheel of the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma only. And that Wheel of the Dhamma cannot be turned back by any ascetic or brahmin, by any deva or Māra or Brahmā or by anyone in the world.¹

In historical Indian culture, the wheel (Skt. cakra/P. cakka) was a symbol that drew on the ideal of the wheel-turning king (zhuanlun wang 轉輪王, Skt. cakravartin/P. cakkavattin), a righteous king who held the wheel treasure (Skt. cakraratna) as his symbol of authority.² The golden wheel treasure (jinlunbao 金輪寶) is the first of the seven treasures of the wheel-turning king.³ According to the Dīga Nikāya, the wheel treasure—a thousand-spoked wheel “complete with rim, hub, and all accessories,”—would only appear if a worldly king lived in strict accordance with the Dhamma, thereby turning himself into a wheel-turning king, and presented himself at the top of his palace on a certain day after washing his head.⁴ Wherever the wheel treasure rolled and stopped,

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² ibid.; Bodhi, In the Buddha's Words, 433 note 1.
³ Muller, “Digital Dictionary of Buddhism”, s.v. “金輪”. The golden wheel and the golden wheel treasure referred to different things (one as the top wheel in the foundation of the world and the other as one of the seven treasures). However, since both evoke the cakravartin, the two are not readily distinguishable as symbols in most contexts.
⁴ Bodhi, In the Buddha’s Words, 138-140. Translated from the Dīga-Nikāya 26: Cakkavatti-Sīhanāda Sutta; III 59-63.
that land fell under the wheel-turning king’s rule.\(^5\) It was a symbol of both spiritual and worldly sovereignty, mastery over both the internal and external domains.

As a metaphor, the wheel often relates to motion, whether it is the turning of endless cycles of existence (Skt. *bhavacakra*) or the dissemination of the Buddha’s teachings (Skt. *darmacakra*), but it can also serve as an object metaphor. As with the treasure wheel of the *cakravartin* mentioned above, it has a hub, spokes, and rim that when combined, represent a diagram of a sphere or domain. As a world sphere, the wheel’s hub was the central axis of the world, Mount Sumeru.\(^6\) The spokes were the four continents filled with worldly beings, and the rim was its boundaries. The wheel can also denote a political sphere, where the hub is the center of authority—the seat of the king—and its spokes and rim are the domain and borders of a kingdom. In this sense, the wheel as a symbol is a disk or circle, the concept behind the Sanskrit term ‘*maṇḍala*’.

The *maṇḍala* as a ritual device used in religious practice is a three dimensional diagram, the microcosm of a macrocosmic whole.\(^7\) This depicted whole could be the universe itself or a sacred realm, the center of which symbolizes the “ultimate truth,” whether it is Mahāvairocana Buddha or the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara.\(^8\) *Maṇḍalas* also function as a gateway for the practitioner to enter into the sacred and for the sacred to

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5 Bodhi, *In the Buddha’s Words*, 138-141. Translated from the *Dīga-Nikāya* 26: Cakkavatti-Sīhanāda Sutta; III 59-63.

6 The *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* describes the nine mountains, including Mount Meru, resting on a gold wheel, which then rests on the water and wind wheels. Pruden, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, 451-53.


8 *ibid.*
emanate outward.\textsuperscript{9} However, for an “iconic cosmo-religious” diagram to be considered a \textit{maṇḍala}, it must fulfill certain criteria.\textsuperscript{10} It needs a ritual context that not only describes the preparation of the \textit{maṇḍala}, but includes offerings and other elements necessary for the ritual’s performance.\textsuperscript{11}

A \textit{maṇḍala} was also synonymous with an altar as a place where other types of rituals are performed in addition to rituals of the \textit{maṇḍala} itself. In Chinese, the term ‘\textit{maṇḍala}’ (mantuoluo 慢陀羅 and its variants) was often used in place of ‘altar’ (\textit{tan} 坛).\textsuperscript{12} When distinctions between types of altars are made within a text, then multiple altars are sometimes utilized during the same ritual session, such as in an \textit{abhiṣeka} initiation where a separate water altar (\textit{shui tan} 水壇) is used for sprinkling water, the ‘washing of the head’ of the \textit{cakravartin}. These secondary altars were also prescribed for more practical goals than communion, initiation, or meditative practice. Yet even if the goal of a ritual is to attain wealth or cure illness, it is performed within a bordered area where the practitioner is outside of the mundane realm and within a protected place of power.\textsuperscript{13}

I would like to extend the wheel metaphor further still as a pattern of relation expressing interconnectivity around central axis point. If we center our focus on a specific topic, object, or person, we can better perceive details of the relationships that

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{9} ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{10} Orzech and Sørensen, “Mudrā, Mantra, Mandala,” 82.
\item \textsuperscript{11} ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{12} Orzech and Sørensen, “Mudrā, Mantra, Mandala,” 81.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Shinohara, \textit{Spells, Images, and Maṇḍalas}, 45-6.
\end{itemize}
connects it with others. This is an approach that starts at the bottom with the individual, and works its way outwards and upwards until a larger form is revealed. If we apply this model to Buddhist textual inquiry, we assume that a text manifests the symbols and tropes of a culture. If we designate any given text as our center, we can find others that connect to it.¹⁴ This metaphor can then act as a method of inquiry to establish a contextual basis for the central text and reveal relational proximities not previously considered.

This paper is modelled on such a method of outward exploration. Its center hub is a manuscript from Dunhuang—an important Buddhist center in the medieval period—located on the former Silk Road in northern Gansu province in China. The manuscript, numbered Pelliot chinois 3538 from the Pelliot collection of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, shares a relationship with four other Dunhuang manuscripts, as well as artwork in the form of paper illustrations, diagrams, and silk paintings, all discovered in Cave 17 at Dunhuang.¹⁵ As a ritual involving the use of a maṇḍala, mudrās, and dhāraṇī, it shares a relationship with other Buddhist ritual texts and practices that have similar structural elements. As a parallel of a section of a canonical scripture, it also has connections to other canonical works through its veneration and iconography of and deities associated with the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Guanshiyin pusa 觀世音菩薩).¹⁶

¹⁴ In the case of real world examples, relations are not as neatly organized as the ideal implies, but the metaphor still serves as a useful conceptual model for this project.

¹⁵ I refer to this manuscript throughout this paper as P.3538.

¹⁶ Although there is a difference in the appearance of this bodhisattva’s names in Chinese texts (Guanshiyin, Guanzizai, etc.) and their corresponding translations (Avalokitasvara, Avalokiteśvara, etc.), I have chosen Avalokiteśvara as a translation for Guanshiyin for three reasons: 1) it is the most easily recognizable of the various Indic
In Chapter 2, I will begin a relational exploration with an examination the center, P.3538, and provide an annotated translation. In the notes, I provide comparative details between it and two other of types of texts: manuscripts and canonical sūtras. Since the first page of P.3538 is damaged, I provide supplied text from another manuscript, numbered S.2498 from the British Museum’s Stein Collection that contains a close parallel to the ritual. I correspondingly provide information on the textual differences between these manuscripts. I also offer a comparison between its canonical counterpart, T.1058, and to a lesser degree a second canonical scripture with two versions, T.1057, Chinese translations from the same Sanskrit source as T.1058.17

In Chapter 3, I continue an examination of P.3538 and reach out to its canonical counterpart. I provide a codicological description of P.3538’s material and structural form, and contextualize this information based on current Dunhuang manuscript studies. I also include a brief overview of T.1058 and note the general differences between the ritual as it appears in the Pelliot manuscript and in the Taishō text.

versions of this bodhisattva’s name, 2) Guanshiyin has a changing history in east Asia, specifically China, that extends much later than the time period when the texts being considered are dated, and 3) Kumārajīva’s Lotus Sūtra translation and the canonical texts included in this paper use Guanshiyin, so there is little reason to differentiate them. For a discussion on the current scholarship dealing with Avalokiteśvara’s name, see Yū, Kuan-yin, 35-48.

17 Dhāraṇī sūtra of the Bodhisattva with a Thousand Hands and a Thousand Eyes Who Perceives the World’s Sounds (Qianshou qianyan guanshiyin pusa lao tuoluoni shen jing 千手千眼觀世音菩薩姥陀羅尼身經), T.1058. Dhāraṇī incantation sūtra of the bodhisattva with a thousand eyes and a thousand arms who perceives the world’s sounds (Qianyan qianbi guanshiyin pusa tupluoni shenzhou jing 千眼千臂觀世音菩薩陀羅尼神呪經), T.1057. Many of the dhāraṇī sūtras in the thousand-hand Avalokiteśvara cluster have similar titles, and using abbreviations would make discourse about them rather confusing. I use the Taishō Shinsō Daizōkyō 大正新修大藏經 numbers to refer to most canonical scriptures (unless the scripture titles are short or the title abbreviations are unique) throughout this paper for brevity and accuracy.
In Chapter 4, I focus on the ritual aspect of P.3538 and explore its relationships with other Buddhist ritual practices from the medieval period. I address claims that categorize this ritual according to its structure, and critique the classification scheme. While a taxonomy based on an analysis of ritual elements is invaluable for understanding ritual structural developments, it ignores another important feature of ritual practice itself, the use of symbols and icons. In the case of P.3538, I choose an approach to ritual analysis that relies on its use of symbols and images in order to find links between the manuscript and the iconography present in other texts, based on distributional patterns.

In Chapter 5, I follow the connections between P.3538’s canonical counterpart, T.1058, and the cluster of texts associated with it that share a focus on the thousand-armed, thousand-eyed manifestation of Avalokiteśvara (Skt. Sāhasrabrujasāhanetrāvalokiteśvara). I explain the close affinity that T.1057 and T.1058 have with each other, and introduce three manuscript sources that contain both P.3538’s ritual and T.1057. These additional manuscripts illuminate some of the unusual variations that P.3538 has when compared to T.1058, such as the inclusion of the bodhisattva’s attributes of a thousand eyes and arms (instead of a thousand hands and eyes) and great compassion. In the process of unraveling the sources of the variations, I discovered that another canonical scripture, T.1060, bears a close connection with P.3538 and T.1057.\footnote{Dhāraṇī Sūtra of the Bodhisattva with a Thousand Hands and a Thousand Eyes Who Perceives the World’s Sounds and [Feels] Vast, Complete, Unhindered Great Compassion (Qianshou qiyan yuanshi yin pu sa guan yang da yuan man wai da bei xin tu ou lo ni jing 千手千眼觀世音菩薩廣大圓滿無礙大悲心陀羅尼經), T.1060.}

In Chapter 6, I utilize the formed contextual foundation to begin an analysis of P.3538’s mandala iconography. I discuss the ambiguity of the term ‘mudrā’ and its Chinese translation (yin 印) and propose a theory for how it is used in P.3538, T.1057,
and T.1060 to denote ritual device, icon, hand gesture, and symbol. Additionally, I introduce another canonical sūtra, the Mahāpratisarā dhāraṇī sūtra, which shares a similar pattern of symbols. Through the use of a maṇḍala diagram also found at Dunhuang, I explain that this canonical source shares a visual structure of the maṇḍala ritual in P.3538. Based on the parallels between the diagram and texts and the written corrections on the diagram, I conclude that it is therefore a drawing of that maṇḍala. In detailing some of the deities and their associations with Avalokiteśvara outside of a ritual structure, I conclude that P.3538 may have been part of a tradition distinct from the larger Buddhist ritual practices that include more varieties and groupings of deities than is seen in P.3538’s maṇḍala. Finally, I treat the tropes and themes of the maṇḍala itself and discuss their possible meanings within both a historical and religious framework.

Finally, in Chapter 7 I return to P.3538 as a manuscript, and overview the other manuscripts in the cluster I have identified that contain P.3538’s ritual. The entries for these manuscripts in the main manuscript catalogs do not recognize this ritual as a parallel to that in T.1058. I establish a set of criteria for evaluating a general comparison of the relevant sections of the sources, and disclose my theory on their relational proximity. From these manuscripts, we are able to see a pattern of development we can utilize to imagine a creation narrative for Dunhuang’s own version of T.1058.
CHAPTER 2

TRANSLATION OF P.3538

Since P.3538 has no titles, I have included the title from the relevant section of S.2498 because the two bear a close similarity in structure and content. Editorial insertions and line numbers are accompanied by square brackets. Text supplied from S.2498(2) is denoted with curled brackets.


[P.3538.01] The Western\textsuperscript{19} Greatly Compassionate, Thousand-armed, Thousand-eyed [One] Sūtra {says: to create a maṇḍala [according to] the method, place it} within a temple, in the mountains, {[near] a flowing spring, or in a forested} retreat, this type of secluded abode.\textsuperscript{20} [Dig] an area {one hasta deep and eight hasta square, removing all protuberances [of]} tree, underbrush growth, and roots, as well as foul {earth, grass, brick, brick,}

\textsuperscript{19} The character, ‘fan/bo 蓮’, does not appear in the Taishō edition sūtra corresponding to this maṇḍala practice. This section of the text in the canonical sūtra, T.1058, is found under the subtitle, “Maṇḍala [construction] method for painting the [Bodhisattva] with a Thousand Hands and Eyes Who Perceives the World's Sounds” (Qianshou qianyan Guanshiyin pusa hua tan fa 千手千眼觀世音菩薩畫壇法). CBETA/T.20.1058.99b28. I have translated this as 'western' because it most likely refers to Dunhuang as part of Central Asia during or after Tibetan rule (786-848).

\textsuperscript{20} T.1058, T.1057a, and T.1057b all mention a secluded place in the mountains. T.1058 adds 'or a peaceful spring in the woods' (huo jiu quan lin bian 或湫泉林邊). CBETA/T.20.1058.100a04; CBETA/T.20.1057a.86b12-13; CBETA/T.20.1057b.92c16-17. In T.1058, contextually 'jiu 湫' means peaceful not a marsh. \textit{ibid.}; Hanyu Dacidian. s. v. “湫”. T.2498(2) states this phrase less ambiguously: 'or a flowing spring or in a forested location' (huo yu liuquan huo yu linjian 或於流泉或於林間).
After that, take good, clean earth and fill in [the mandala area] making it level. Dung, clean, yellow soil, and fragrant water are mixed into mud. Smear {the ground on the eight hasta [area], partitioning the inside, and create five sections of the mandala} altar.

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21 Zhou 肘 is the Chinese equivalent for the Sanskrit measurement hasta—roughly eighteen inches from elbow to tip of forefinger. Monier-Williams Sanskrit Dictionary, Corrected ed. s. v. “hasta”. T.1057 instructs to prepare a ten hasta area. CBETA/T.20.1057a.86b08. The following lines that discuss the proper way to prepare the ground for a mandala appear fairly often in other ritual texts, such as T.1080, translated by Bodhiruci during the same period as T.1058. It states that a mandala is to be created in an eight hasta square and a thirty-two petalled lotus blossom is to be painted for Wish-Fulfilling Avalokiteśvara. CBETA/T.20.1080.193b16-b26. Additionally, there are a number of similarities between the versions of T.1057 and the manuscripts in the ground preparation instructions; therefore it is relevant to compare the introduction with this section the T.1057.

22 'Lian 柝' also appears in S.2498(2) and does not refer to a specific type of tree, but rather more generally to tree, vegetation, and stumps (lian zhai zhu kang 柝檡株杭). T.1058 and T.1057a both use a different phrase for 'impure ground' (e tu 惡土) and T.1057b gives the vague term 'impure things' (e wu 惡物) after listing rock, small stones, and pottery. CBETA/T.20.1058.100a05; CBETA/T.20.1057a.86b13-14; CBETA/T.20.1057b.92c17-18.

23 T.1058 adds that after removing the impure items from the soil, one should fill the depression with pure earth. CBETA/T.20.1058.100a05.

24 S.2498(2) uses ‘yi 以’ when it mentions to use dung, but in P.3538 there are two characters missing, which indicates this line is not phrased exactly the same. T.1058 also states that cow dung, fragrant water, and yellow soil should be mixed and smeared on the mandala into four courtyards with a fifth courtyard in the center. CBETA/T.20.1058.100a06-07. The manuscript, S.2498(2), uses ‘mantuluoc 曼荼羅’ instead of ‘tan 坛’ for the mandala, but P.3538 probably uses both (only ‘luo 羅’ is visible). This would mean that S.2498(2) adds to this line, ‘and in the method one desires, one chi and two cun in height' (ruo yu ruyi fa gao yichi ercun 若於如意法高一尺二寸), about 12 inches. This passage does not seem to be present in P.3538, based on how the two manuscripts' text line up. T.1058 only reads 'according to the method (ruo fa 如法), smear [and] divide [the area] into four courtyards', with no mention of measurements. CBETA/T.20.1058.100a06. T.1057a and T.1057b give similar measurements in greater
Initially, the central section [measures] by length and width three hasta. After the first section is complete, in the center put an area measuring by length and width two hasta. Then, in the center [P.3538.10] paint a bejeweled wheel endowed with one hundred and eight spokes. On the wheel's center, paint an opened lotus flower blossom endowed with thirty-two petals, [totalling] one hasta [in dimension]. Then paint brilliant radiance surrounding the four sides of the wheel. On each individual flower petal paint one wish-fulfilling jewel. Above the four directional jewels, also paint brilliant radiance. On the central lotus flower with thirty-two petals, place one white sandalwood image of the principal deity, [P.3538.15] the Greatly Compassionate Bodhisattva Perceiver of Sounds.

detail but do not mention 'the method' at all. CBETA/T.20.1057a.86b15-16; CBETA/T.20.1057b.92c18-20.

25 T.1058 version adds that it is a seven-jewel lotus flower. CBETA/T.20.1058.0100a09-10.

26 Ruyi baozhu 如意寶珠 (Skt. cintāmani).

27 The painted jewels on each flower petal is also in S.2498(2), but differs from T.1058, which does not direct one to paint jewels on each petal. Instead, it describes painting four lotus flowers on each of the four corners of the courtyard on the outside of the central wheel. On top of these directional lotus flowers are four jewels surrounded by flames. It also indicates the central flower with thirty-two petals holds a great, white lotus flower on a pedestal (da lianhua 大蓮華臺, Skt. puṇḍarīka) CBETA/T.20.1058.100a10-13.

28 Guanyin 觀音. T.1058 states the name as 'Guanshiyin pusa 觀世音菩薩', but does not include 'dabei 大悲'. CBETA/T.20.1058.100a13-14.
Then, in the second section [measuring] one *hasta* paint a blossoming lotus flower on each of the interior four corners. On each flower, paint a Sumeru throne three levels [high]. On the northeast corner throne, paint the celestial being of Great Sovereignty. On the southeast corner throne paint the celestial being of Great Benevolent Power. On the southwest corner throne, paint [P.3538.20] the King of the Great Brahmā Heaven. On the northwest corner throne, paint Śakra. On each of the four sides paint a great lotus flower garland that each has sixteen [flowers].

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29 T.1058 instructs to divide this area into eight subsections and paint a lotus flower and pedestal on each of the corner partitions. CBETA/T.20.1058.100a14-16.

30 T.1058 adds that they are bejeweled Sumeru thrones. CBETA/T.20.1058.100a16.

31 S.2498(2) has identical names for all four deities. Da zizai tianshen 大自在天王神 could be translated as the Deity of Great Freedom, meaning Maheśvara or Śiva. T.1058 has only a slight variation, Da zizai tianwang 大自在天王. T.1058 also mentions these four are deities seated. T.20.1058.100a16-20. T.1057a and T.1057b instructions are for building a less complex *maṇḍala* with no central lotus flower. The *maṇḍala* described in both versions of T.1057 has four gates in the cardinal directions with a heavenly king stationed at each. CBETA/T.20.1057a.86b17-24; CBETA/T.20.1057b.92c21-24.

32 Da weide tianshen 大威德天神 (Skt. Mahātejas). Deity of Great Authority or Awe-inspiring Power, this title has connotations of power from authority and evil-eradicating virtue. Mahātejas was a king of the garuḍas mentioned in the first chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra* (Miaofa hua jing 妙法華經 CBETA/T9.262.9.2b03). T.1058 lists Naluoyan tianwang 那羅延天王 instead of the above entry. Naluoyan tianwang (Skt. Nārāyaṇa) is a later form of Viṣṇu. CBETA/T.20.1058.100a18.

33 Da fantian wang 大梵天王.

34 Tian dishi 天帝釋, Śakra devānām indra, King of the Gods.

35 S.2498(2) states to paint at each of the four sides a great bejeweled lotus flower garland, endowed with sixteen [flowers]. T.1058, in contrast, states to paint sixteen bejeweled flower garlands on the four sides. CBETA/T.20.1058.100a19-20.
Then, the third section [measures] by length and width two hasta. The foundation is composed of unmixed blue and gold-colored intersecting cord. Next, the fourth section squared [measures] one hasta. The four sides are divided into twenty-eight parts. In each of the partitions, paint one blossoming lotus flower. On each of these flowers, one after another [P.3538.25] paint: vajra mallet [seal], trident seal, axe seal, sword seal, double-edged sword seal, conch seal, wish-fulfilling jewel seal, precious staff

While this text reads 'loosened net' (jie luo 解絡), T.1058 reads 'intersecting rope' (sheng jiao dao 繩交道). CBETA/T.20.1058.100a21. S.2498(2) reads 'loosened rope' (jie sheng dao 解繩道).


P.3538 is missing 'yin 印', to denote this entry as separate from the next in the sequence. However, T.1058 and S.2498(2) both state 'jingangchu yin 金剛杵印' (CBETA/T.20.1058.100a24).

Sangu ji yin 三鈷戟印. This entry is identical to S.2498(2), but T.1058 has a slight variation, 'sanjicha yin 三戟叉印'.

Yuefu yin 鉞斧印 (Skt. kṣurapraḥ or kuṭhārikā). This is an axe with a circular blade. This entry is also found in S.2498(2) and T.1058, as are the next two entries in the list.

Dao yin 刀印.

Jian yin 劍印.


Ruyizhu yin 如意珠印 (Skt. cintāmaṇi). S.2498(2), P.3538, and T.1058 all have identical entries. T.1058 lists additional seals not found in P.3538 or S.2498(2): short
seal,\textsuperscript{45} vināyaka seal,\textsuperscript{46} kūṇḍī seal,\textsuperscript{47} wheel treasure seal,\textsuperscript{48} hand seal,\textsuperscript{49} and foot seal.\textsuperscript{50}

Above each of the various seals, paint bright flames.\textsuperscript{51}

Now, in the fourth section in the south gate, paint Suyāma.\textsuperscript{52} In the western gate paint Varuṇa.\textsuperscript{53} In the northern gate, paint Kubera.\textsuperscript{54} [P.3538.30] In the eastern gate, paint sword seal (\textit{futu yin} 伏突印); lasso seal (\textit{juan suo yin} 謐索印); cudgel seal (\textit{bang yin} 棒印); mallet seal (\textit{chui yin} 槌印); parasol seal (\textit{sangai yin} 傘蓋印, Skt. \textit{chattram}).


\textsuperscript{45} Baobang yin 寶棒印. A precious staff is a staff topped with a skull. This entry is identical to S.2498(2).

\textsuperscript{46} Pinayejia yin 毘那也迦印 is a transcription of the Sanskrit term, ‘vināyaka’. This seal does appear slightly further down the list in T.1058, but adds the character ‘bang 棒’ to make the vināyaka cudgel seal. CBETA/T.20.1058.100a26-27. Vināyaka refers to the deity Gaṇeśa, the remover of obstacles, or as a term for either Gaṇeśa or a type of elephant-headed demon that creates obstacles in one's practice.

\textsuperscript{47} Junqī yin 軍器印 (Skt. kūṇḍī or kūṇḍīkā) is a water pot or vase. This seal and the last three entries from S.2498(2) and P.3538 do not appear in T.1058. Additionally, T.1058 has a more seals not seen in either manuscript: 1) King Yāma's staff seal (Yanluowang bang yin 閻羅王棒印). This probably indicates a staff with a skull on each end. 2) Lance seal (\textit{shuo yin} 槊印). CBETA/T.20.1058.100a27. This latter seal could be a replacement for the next listed seal in P.3538 and S.2498(2), the \textit{Lunbao yin} 輪寳印 and \textit{Lun yin} 輪印 respectively.

\textsuperscript{48} Lunbao yin 輪寳印. This parallels T.1058's wheel seal (\textit{lun yin} 輪印).

\textsuperscript{49} Shou yin 手印. In T.1058 this is not actually a seal. The sentence reads 'all types of various seals' (ji zhongzhong shouyin 及種種手印). CBETA/T.20.1058.0100a27.

\textsuperscript{50} Jiao yin 腳印. This seal is also missing from T.1058.

\textsuperscript{51} Both P.3538 and S.2498(2) use ‘燋’ instead of \textit{huoyan}‘火焰’ found in T.1058. This is most likely a scribal error that shared with three other Dunhuang manuscripts. CBETA/T.20.1058.100a28. See the discussion about this character in Chapter 7.
Kumāra.\textsuperscript{55} In each of the four corners, paint the four Heavenly Kings according to their respective positions together with their spirit attendants.\textsuperscript{56}

The outermost courtyard is the fifth section [and] measures one hasta square. Within the four sides paint various fruit bearing trees, flowering trees, and jewel trees.\textsuperscript{57} Then, on each of the four corners paint a bejeweled Mount Sumeru. On the four gates, paint water of the four great seas. Additionally, the maṇḍala's interior and exterior ground is to be made blue.

[P.3538.35] In each of the inside and outside layers [of the maṇḍala] in the southwest corner, open a door for the incantation master to enter and exit. Then, on the maṇḍala center attach an image of the Thousand-eyed Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World's Sounds that resembles the statue and faces east. The image is in front of the thirty-two petaled lotus flower. Above the flower, place one copy of the \textit{Sūtra of the}\n
\textsuperscript{52} Xuyanmo tianwang 須炎摩天王, King of Yāma Heaven. S.2498(2) has an identical name, but T.1058 reads King Yāma (Yanmo wang 焰摩王). CBETA/T.20.1058.100a28.

\textsuperscript{53} Shui shen 水神. S.2498(2) also includes Shui shen 水神, while T.1058 lists Shui tianshen 水天神. CBETA/T.20.1058.100a29.

\textsuperscript{54} Jupiluo shen 俱毗囉神, God of Wealth, King of the Yakṣas, and son of Viśrāva. S.2498(2) has Jupiluo shen 俱毗羅神, and T.1058 reads Jufeiluo tianshen 俱废羅天神, but Ming 明, Yuan 元, and Song 宋 edition sources in the Taishō have ‘luo 羅’ instead of ‘luo 羅’. CBETA/T.1058.100a29-b01.

\textsuperscript{55} Tian tongnan 天童男, heavenly youth. S.2498(2) states Tian tongzi 天童子, while T.1058 states Jumoluo tianshen 俱摩羅天神. In Sanskrit, Kumāra is means youth.

\textsuperscript{56} T.1058 instructs that the deity's faces should look angry. CBETA/T.20.1058.100b02.

\textsuperscript{57} T.1058 adds that the outer edge of the maṇḍala should be bordered with vajra mallet seals lined up with each other end to end. CBETA/T.20.1058.100b07-08.
Greatly Compassionate [One] with a Thousand Hands and Eyes. Afterwards, place sandalwood scented water [in] sixteen vessels. Supply a variety of food and drink and the three types of white food. Every day, [P.3538.40] [supply] various types of fruit to completely fill twenty-five dishes. [Supply] perfumed water in a one-liter water bowl, [and have] a variety of multi-colored fruit tree flowers adorn the twenty-five [dishes]. Paint twenty-five bodhisattva banners and multicolored banners and suspend them in a row. The necessary vessels, bowls, and utensils are composed of gold, silver, and copper. Those that are not authentic [gold, silver, or copper] are permitted according to the method. Inside and [P.3538.45] outside of the four sides, set up a banner parasol, banner flowers, precious parasol. Rice flowers, white mustard seed, [and] all sorts of fruits. 

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58 T.1058 does not mention 'great compassion' in the name of the sūtra. CBETA/T.20.1058.0100b09.

59 T.1058 lists only six bowls. CBETA/T.20.1058.100b11-12.

60 The three white foods seem to have some variations depending on the source consulted. Copp lists them as cream, rice porridge, and rice. Copp, the Body Incantatory, 92. Sūtra T.1057a mentions milk, yogurt, and honey (rulao sumi乳酪酥蜜). CBETA/T.20.1057a.86b2-28.

61 Shuiping 水瓶 (Skt. kundika or kundaka). T.1058 lists twenty-five perfumed water containers that should be decorated with flowers and twenty flower garlands. CBETA/T.20.1058.100b13-14. T.1058 and S.2498(2) both mention fresh decorations and to light twenty-eight lamps. Sūtra T.1058 states to take different types of incense (paste incense, powdered incense, etc.) and display them [as an offering] on a small plate (tuxiang moxiang ji zhuxiang deng gong bu shidie 塗香末香及諸香等共布十疋). CBETA/T.20.1058.100b14. These two instructions are missing from P.3538.

62 P.3538 is ambiguous as to how many banners should be painted and hung. S.2498(2) states that the two types of banners numbering twenty-five should be arranged in a circle (Pusa fan ji cuocaifan deng weirao xuan ershiwu xing 菩薩幡及錯綵幡等圍繞懸二十五行). T.1058 states the two types of banners, bodhisattva spirit banner and five-colored silk banner (Pusashen fan wusezeng fan 菩薩神幡五色絹幡), should total twenty-five in number. CBETA/T.20.1058.100b15-16.
various flowers are scattered on the *mandala* platform. As with the previously mentioned food and drink, [also] leave fragrant flowers [and] incense daily [and supply] fresh offerings.

Each time the incantation master enters and exits the altar, he washes three times using incense rubbed on the body, [and] dons new clean clothes. He consumes three types of white food, burns [P.3538.50] agarwood [incense], sandalwood incense, and so forth. Three times a day, [the incantation master] goes before the *mandala* in front of the Thousand-eyed, Thousand-armed, and Greatly Compassionate [One] image and enters the third courtyard interior. Within himself arise the Greatly Compassionate Bodhisattva's three types of great vows. Day and night outside the western gate of the

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63 *Chuangsan* 領傘 (banner parasol); *Fanhua* 布華 (banner flowers). See *Hanyu Dacidian*, s. v. “幡花”. *Baogai* 寶蓋 (precious parasol). T.1058 states to hang banner flowers but does not mention a banner parasol or precious parasol. The precious parasol is a term most likely used for a hanging temple banner covering *(baofan baogai 寶幡寶蓋)*, where ‘*baofan 寶幡*’ is a temple banner *(baofan 寶幡 or chuangfan baofan 幌幡寶蓋)*. See *Hanyu Dacidian*, s. v. “寶幡”. *Daohua* 稻花 (rice flower). T.1058 reads rice crop flower ’*daogu hua 稻穀花*’. CBETA/T.20.1058.100b19.

64 *Chenshui* 沉水 (alternately, *Chenshui xiang* 沉水香, or *chen xiang* 沉香) is the agarwood tree (*Aquilaria agallocha*). T.1058 lists five types of incense including sandalwood and agarwood. CBETA/T.20.1058.100b22. S.2498(2) only lists agarwood and sandalwood incense.

65 T.1058 does not mention 'great compassion' when referring to the image. Instead, it simply describes the image as 'thousand-handed, thousand-eyed'. CBETA/T.20.1058.100b23-24.
maṇḍala, he kneels on one knee.\textsuperscript{66} [The incantation master] daily recites the Laō dhāraṇī one thousand and eight times.

[He] does not pause in reciting the sūtra for twenty-one days and neither does he become fatigued [nor] distracted.\textsuperscript{67} Furthermore, [P.3538.55] six times a day [he] passes through the gate in the southwest corner of the maṇḍala and moves to the western gate of the third courtyard. Standing in front, he makes the first mudrā, second [mudrā], up to twelve. [He] initiates the 'Inviting the Buddha's samādhi mudrā' and so on, and recites the Great Body Mantra.\textsuperscript{68} The rest is detailed in the sūtra.\textsuperscript{69}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{66} Hugui 跪, A foreigner's kneeling [position]. This means for one to kneel on one knee. T.1058 instructs one to sit cross-legged in the Lotus position (jie jia fu zuo 結加趺坐). CBETA/T.20.1058.100b25.
\item \textsuperscript{67} S.2498(2)'s entry also states not to disrupt sūtra [recitation] for twenty-one days (wu ling duanjue jing ershiyi ri 勿令斷絕經二十一日). T.1058 describes the instructions slightly differently. It reads, “Every day do not be lax in whole-hearted concentration for thirty-seven days” (richang bu que yu sanqi ri jinyi gong yang 日常不闕於三七日盡意供養), but makes no mention of sūtra recitation, only to chanting the Laō dhāraṇī one thousand and eight times in the previous line. CBETA/T.20.1058.100b26-27.
\item \textsuperscript{68} Chanding yin 禪定印, a meditation mudrā widely practiced today. This mudrā and the reference to twelve total mudrās refer to an earlier section in T.1057 and T.1058 that list twelve mudrās and their respective mantras, used for various ritual purposes. This last mudrā is the twelfth, named the 'Twelfth mudrā of the Bodhisattva with a Thousand Hands and a Thousand Eyes Who Perceives the World's Sounds' (Qianshou qianyan guanshiyin pusa qingfo sanmei yin dishier 千手千眼觀世音菩薩請佛三昧印第十二).CBETA/T20.1058.99b24.
\item \textsuperscript{69} S.2498(2) contains this line in its entirety with some extra lines of text after it not found in T.1058. For this additional content, see Li, Dunhuang mi jiao, 91. This line that references the sūtra for more information is not paralleled in T.1058.
\end{itemize}
CHAPTER 3

DESCRIPTION OF P.3538

In this section I will present codicological information about manuscript P.3538 and briefly sketch its general contents in relation to the canonical sūtra, T.1058, to which it is attributed. The differences between the two texts, P.3538 and T.1058, are described in the annotations to the translation in Chapter 2. In the course of the discussing the characteristics of P.3538’s physical attributes as a Chinese Buddhist manuscript, I will draw on generalizations that apply mainly to other Chinese manuscripts, even though other languages are present within the Dunhuang manuscript corpus. While some of the information I provide about manuscripts applies to texts outside of this religious genre, I will center this discussion on Buddhist related Dunhuang manuscripts.

Physical Description

There is a large variation in the format and layout of manuscripts found at Dunhuang. These differences can sometimes help to determine the date, place of origin, and use of the manuscript. Standard manuscripts are those created throughout most of Dunhuang’s existence as an active population center on the Silk Road, from the 5th to the 11th centuries. They consist of pieces of paper, sometimes glued together and rolled up into a scroll, called a juan 卷. The size, quality, and type of paper, margin and column measurements, line length in character units, and the use of titles, colophons, and seals were fairly regular in the scrolls originating from Central China found in Dunhuang. During the Tang Dynasty 唐朝 (618-907), these often originated in the capital, Chang’an. These often include colophons and other information regarding their date and origin and thus provide a baseline for the other manuscripts. This is especially true for those
containing Buddhist scriptures that were created in Central China that also show regularized calligraphic styles popular in their time.\textsuperscript{70}

However, not all Buddhist manuscripts are standardized copies of Buddhist sūtras. Collections of dhāraṇīs, textual excerpts, transformation texts, and sūtra lectures were found together with relatively standardized court sponsored copies of sūtras. These non-standard Buddhist manuscripts tend to deviate from the uniformity seen in official sūtra manuscripts. Paper quality, for example, can often times be coarse, indicating it was locally made. Coarse paper was especially common during the Tibetan period of Dunhuang (786-848) when paper from China became a limited commodity. Margins, column rulings, and the normally uniform amount of characters per line often diverge from official sutra copies during this period. The size of the calligraphy can vary significantly, e.g. in manuscripts with the text written in a very small script to save paper.\textsuperscript{71}

P.3538 is definitely not a standard sūtra copy. P.3538 is composed of three pages of laid paper of .10mm thickness of a yellowish-brown color that is glued together into a single juan. The paper has lines 5cm apart, which is a characteristic of the manufacturing process. Laid paper was used in the Six Dynasties, Sui, and Tang periods and consists of hemp or rag fibers that were strained and dried on a mesh, resulting in faint lines appearing on the page.\textsuperscript{72} The .10mm paper thickness is in the midrange between the

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{70} Rong, \textit{Eighteen Lectures}, 483-89.
\textsuperscript{71} Rong, \textit{Eighteen Lectures}, 491.
\textsuperscript{72} Rong, \textit{Eighteen Lectures}, 485.
\end{flushright}
coarser .13mm paper seen from manuscripts dated to the Tibetan period and paper of a better quality .8-.9mm in thickness, manufactured in Central China.\textsuperscript{73} The shape of the paper is uneven, indicating the possibility it was trimmed down to the current size, and there are notches on the top and bottom of the first two pages. The yellow color of paper stems from treating it with an insecticide called huangbo 黃檗, a common practice throughout China.\textsuperscript{74}

Overview of P.3538’s Contents

P.3538 contains directions for painting a \textit{maṇḍala} on prepared ground and for performing a ritual involving the use of \textit{mudrās} and incantations. It describes ritual tools and adornments, such as decorated banners and flowers, to be hung in the area and for various ritual offerings to be presented in front of a wooden image of Avalokiteśvara placed in the center of the sacred space. It gives step-by-step instructions that guide the incantation master (\textit{zhoushi} 呪師) through purification and the performance of a ritual extending over twenty-one days. During this ritual, bodhisattva vows of great compassion arise within the practitioner. From the way in which the ritual is described, the goal could be for the practitioner to make these vows in front of the image, though whether it is for an initiation or to identify with the bodhisattva and internalize his quality of great compassion is not immediately certain. No explicit statement indicating the reason or

\textsuperscript{73} The physical description of this manuscript derives from Bibliothèque nationale, \textit{Catalogue des manuscrits, Volume IV}, 25; Rong, \textit{Eighteen Lectures}, 484; For information about dating manuscripts, see International Dunhuang Project, “Chronological Classification of Dunhuang Manuscripts.”

\textsuperscript{74} Rong, \textit{Eighteen Lectures}, 213, 485.
goal for performing the ritual is found in the manuscript, and a closer examination of the type of ritual is necessary to discern its purpose.

General Comparison with T.1058

P.3538 is identified in the Pelliot catalog as a section of the canonical sūtra, the Dhāraṇī sūtra of the Bodhisattva with a Thousand Hands and a Thousand Eyes Who Perceives the World’s Sounds. A comparison between the manuscript and the section of the canonical sūtra on maṇḍala creation shows that that they both follow an identical structure. For the passage in question, there is little material found in one that is also not present in the other, and I indicate the minutiae in the translation and elsewhere in this project. However, T.1058 is more refined in a number of ways. The instructions on maṇḍala creation are worded less ambiguously with much less room for misinterpretation. When referring to one of the five areas of the maṇḍala, T.1058 uses the term ‘yuan 院’ for courtyard in a technical sense, whereas P.3538 only uses it twice, as a synonym for ‘fen 分’, meaning section or part. Certain images have added descriptive details in T.1058, for example, providing the exact number of trees in the fifth courtyard or adding an outer border of vajra mallets.

P.3538 is close enough to the canonical dhāraṇī sūtra to be unmistakably identified as such. Taken alone, the differences in content could be dismissed if we regard P.3538 as a collection of notes meant for personal implementation in practice. Yet, certain textual anomalies in P.3538 and other manuscripts allow for alternate theories of

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75 Qianshou qianyan guanshiyin pusa lao tuoluoni shen jing 千手千眼觀世音菩薩姥陀羅尼身經, T.1058. I will refer to this sūtra throughout this paper as T.1058 unless I specifically discuss its title.
transmission apart from those found in the canonical sūtra, which is based on the
Tripiṭaka Koreana edition and probably went through an editing process during its
existence and eventual inclusion into the canon, as is seen by the higher level of
refinement compared to the Dunhuang witnesses.⁷⁶

P.3538 contains both a maṇḍala and a ritual that is used with the maṇḍala. This
ritual can be described in a variety of ways, some of which are based on its contents, such
as a dhāraṇī ritual, or imply a function or goal, such as a homa or abhiṣeka rite. While
abhiṣeka is often equated with initiation into esoteric practice, abhiṣeka in its wider sense
was used in other types of ritual, such as purification. In the next section I will examine
some contemporary categories of ritual and assess the potential for P.3538’s inclusion
within them.

⁷⁶ Paul Copp states two phases of redaction, the first during the medieval period and
a second modern redaction during the formation of the Taishō. Copp, the Body
Incantatory, 193-94.
P.3538 contains prescriptions for constructing a maṇḍala and performing a certain ritual, the categorization of which could fall within the scope of esoteric abhiṣeka initiations and homa ceremonies found elsewhere in Buddhist esoteric scriptures. However, since P.3538 is independent of a surrounding sūtra to inform the ritual’s function, we are open to reinterpreting the purpose of this practice by different methodological approaches. Some scholars have focused on dissecting and evaluating ritual forms to organize them in various categorization schema and theorize on the development of complex esoteric Buddhist practice, and in so doing have progressed our understanding of transmission and cultural exchange in this area. Yet, this approach can yield taxonomies that are too vague and encompass too wide a range of rituals. The choices for categorization sometimes assume specific goals not explicit within a text, or anachronistically imply a context or function that is not directly indicated. This creates a problem of over-generalizing individual rituals and subsuming them into a larger group when similarities in structure do not always warrant grouping specific rituals together.

Maria D. Reis-Habito categorizes this ritual as a homa ritual while Koichi Shinohara implies it is a form of abhiṣeka initiation that is based on the Dhāraṇī collection sūtra (T.901). I will discuss each of these claims in turn.

E.g. pure or mixed, early or mature. These categories are part of a narrative of ritual evolution from simplistic to complex. While I do not necessarily subscribe to this narrative, I do acknowledge the obvious difference between early dhāraṇī rituals and the later rituals brought to Japan by Kūkai and in certain texts translated in the Tang dynasty. I refer to esoteric Buddhism as that which is clearly part of a tradition(s) of initiation into secret knowledge, transferred through a religious lineage, as clearly seen in by the latter form of highly ritualized Buddhism, and not to rituals simply involving dhāraṇīs or maṇdalas. See Orzech, Payne, and Sørensen, “Introduction: Esoteric Buddhism and the Tantras in East Asia: Some Methodological Considerations,” 4.
Ritual themes and symbols are not a prominent factor in assessing ritual forms, but from the perspective of the practitioner, the symbols define the boundaries of the ritual and initiate the appropriate mental environment and correspondence. In this regard, the symbols define the ritual as much, if not more, than its elements. Each instance of ritual present in a text can give information about itself in a semiotic language through means other than its form.

I will discuss the possible classifications of P.3538’s maṇḍala practice in terms of its structure and compare it to certain scholastic paradigms of esoteric Buddhist ritual. I will argue that P.3538 is a dhāraṇī ritual, and not a homa or esoteric abhiṣeka initiation, although I leave the possibility open for other types of abhiṣeka rites. However, the category of dhāraṇī rituals, while allowing for a variety of goals and minimizing contextual assumptions, lacks a structure to support a closer investigation of ritual symbolism and the sources that inform it. I will advocate a method of dhāraṇī ritual analysis through the use, pattern, and distribution of icons, symbols, and ritual devices to establish relationships between texts that inform a dhāraṇī ritual’s theme and symbolism, yielding different information about ritual development that a structural analysis provides.

Homa

P.3538’s ritual from other textual sources has been described as a homa ritual or an abhiṣeka rite.79 These two practices are sometimes conflated because homa rituals can often be found accompanying abhiṣeka. Abhiṣeka and homa both originate in India, but the homa ritual in Vedic culture is centered on the use and symbolism of fire consuming

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and transporting offerings to the gods, while the abhiṣeka is an initiation rite that is connected to coronation and purification rituals among others.\(^{80}\)

According to Richard K. Payne and Charles D. Orzech, “Homa is a votive offering made in an act of exchange with a deity, and it is clearly visible by the use of fire”.\(^{81}\) In this view, the function of a homa ritual is to provide offerings in exchange for a deity’s blessings. The act of burning is central in this ritual and white mustard seeds and other combustible material, but also liquids such as milk are also thrown into the fire. At times, the homa is part of the ritual purification of a space. Michel Strickmann observed a connection between the hearth in homa rituals and the use of an incense burner in the sūtra, Spirit Spells of the Eleven-Faced Avalokiteśvara, since incense is usually part of the homa fires.\(^{82}\) This sūtra instructs the practitioner to burn ritually prepared sandalwood pieces in a fire in front of an icon of the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara while reciting a mantra to summon the bodhisattva into the image.\(^{83}\) The Dhāraṇī collection sūtra also has a sizable portion of its entries devoted to Avalokiteśvara.\(^{84}\) These include burning

\(^{80}\) Davidson, “Abhiṣeka,” 71-5.

\(^{81}\) Payne and Orzech, “Homa,” 134.

\(^{82}\) Shiyimian Guanshiyin shenzhenjing 十一面觀世音神呪經, T.1070. This is Strickmann’s translation of the title. He dates this sūtra to the 6th century. Strickmann, “Homa in East Asia,” 433.


\(^{84}\) Dhāraṇī collection of the Buddha’s discourse (Foshuo tuoluoni ji jing 佛說陀羅尼集經), T.901. According to Strickmann, thus sūtra was translated circa 650. Strickmann, “Homa in East Asia,” 433.
various ritual combustibles in amounts that correspond to symbolically significant numbers, such as 108.\textsuperscript{85}

Payne and Orzech see a structure in homa rituals appearing in circa the mid-eighth century during the Tang Dynasty in China, when three pivotal figures were active in the establishment of the esoteric tradition, Mijiao 密教: Śubhakarasimha (Shanwuwei 善無畏, 637-735), Vajrabodhi (Jingangzhi 金刚智, 671-741), and his disciple Amoghavajra (Bukong 不空, 705-774). Payne and Orzech’s paradigm incorporates five components, four of which I will mention here: “purification, construction, encounter, and identification”.\textsuperscript{86} They are expanded in meaning as: purification via ritualized cleansing of the practitioner, the construction of sacred space, encountering the deities evoked, and identifying oneself with the deity through acts of the body, speech, and mind in the form of “mudrā, mantra, and samādhi.”\textsuperscript{87}

While this analysis is an accurate description for rituals present in the texts and practices associated with these central figures and their lineages, which include much more complex ritual elements than that of P.3538, elements appear even in the relatively short P.3538’s maṇḍala practice. Maria Reis-Habito also notes that this specific maṇḍala ritual, present in another manuscript, S.2498(2), is a form of homa.\textsuperscript{88} P.3538 calls for the incantation master to rub incense on his body and don clean clothes before entering the

\textsuperscript{85} ibid.

\textsuperscript{86} Payne and Orzech, “Homa,” 135.

\textsuperscript{87} ibid.

\textsuperscript{88} Reis-Habito, Die Dhāraṇī des Großen Erbarmens, 131.
sacred space. It instructs him to create a manḍala, to perform specific mudrās (not
detailed in the manuscript itself) that invite the Buddha, call spirits, and other ritual
functions, and to “identify” oneself with the central deity, the Greatly Compassionate
Avalokiteśvara, through recitation of dhāraṇīs and inwardly experiencing the arising of
the Bodhisattva’s vows. Although not in Payne and Orzech’s systemization as its own
category, the homa ritual as a form of pūjā also holds true for P.3538 when one considers
the various offerings to be presented daily to the central figure of the manḍala. The types
of offerings found in later homa rituals of “flowers, powered incense, for burning, lamps,
edible offerings, and an invocation to the chief deity” are mostly present in the
manuscript’s instructions.89 P.3538 directs one to display daily fresh fruit, flowers, and
incense in gold, silver, and copper or bronze instruments.90

However, the burning of incense is not a prominent step in the ritual in the same
way that reciting a dhāraṇī for each piece of wood consumed in the fire would. If we
were to assume any ritual involving pūjā and the burning of incense is a homa ritual, then
we would blur the differences with other practices, such as repentance (chanhui 懺悔, Skt.
ksama) rites.91 While a ritual that features offerings is a definite aspect of pūjā, exchange
may not be prime purpose or function. Pūjā and the calling of deities into sacred space

89 Strickmann, “Homa in East Asia,” 446.
90 P.3538.38–49.
91 Keyworth, “The Esotericization of Chinese Buddhist Practices,” 517. The steps of
P.3538’s ritual also coincide with those of repentance rituals, but I am hesitant to
entertain the inclusion of the manḍala’s ritual within this category because the most well-
known repentance rituals were created at a later time period. As a category, dhāraṇī
rituals include earlier forms of repentance involving the recitation of dharanis. See Reis-
Habito, Die Dhāraṇī des Großen Erbarmens for an exploration into Huayan repentance
rituals and the Qianshou jing 千手經 (T.1060).
can also be viewed as a way to empower the ritual or to “tap into” the power of certain beings for greater ritual efficacy by utilizing the symbolism of the deity as much as the deity itself, as a being that intervenes and bestows blessings. In this sense, rituals considered to be homa encompass an expanse much greater than the homa rituals the category was created to include, which are based on the use of fire symbolism for specific exchange purposes. “Homa” rituals that lack the homa fire could have a different ritual dynamic and theme and have much less in common with actual homa rituals than would be implied by its categorization.

The length of time and effort necessary to complete the P.3538 ritual and the inclusion of three varieties of bodhisattva vows indicates that it was not a ritual that was practiced casually or frequently (it could only be undertaken completely once a month) and requires from the practitioner great deal of personal perseverance and observation of ritual offerings. This level of ritual commitment could indicate it was intended for monastics or perhaps aristocrats—those who had the free time necessary to devote to this practice. With these ideas in mind, it is possible that it was intended as a type of initiation rite where an individual only need perform it once or at most, fairly infrequently.

Abhiṣeka

Initiations within esoteric Buddhism take the form of abhiṣeka rites, the most recognizable of these is in the Shingon tradition of Japan where a novice throws a flower onto a maṇḍala, thereby becoming initiated into the mysteries the deity on whom the flower lands and is sprinkled (consecrated) with water. Abhiṣeka rites are initiations into the “esoteric community” and involve the passing from one source of tradition onto the
next as part of the continuance of a lineage. The source from which the tradition passes could be a teacher, a buddha, or a text. Early esoteric abhiṣeka rites have a number of details in common with the practice described in P.3538. Ronald M. Davidson recounts some of the characterizations of early abhiṣeka through the elements involved:

The master (ācārya) first consecrated a piece of ground; spread out a mandala between one and four yards on a side; covered it with dry cow dung; placed posts, ritual daggars (kīla), and pots in the corners; and divided it into a number of “altars” (vedi, yuan 院) or other mandala sections for the respective buddhas. Incense offerings were made, and candidates were sprinkled with a special vase (kalaśa) blessed for the purpose, after which a homa was employed to invoke the Buddha, and related ceremonies were conducted, perhaps for as long as a week.

This generalization of an early form of an abhiṣeka maṇḍala is roughly the size of the eight hasta maṇḍala in P.3538. Similarly in P.3538, cow dung was to be applied to the sacred space and then divided into five courtyards (yuan 院) and the ritual performance is extended over the course of a number of days.

Koichi Shinohara sees the canonical version of the maṇḍala practice ritual present in T.1058 as stemming from a certain early form of abhiṣeka initiation, which he calls the “All Gathering Maṇḍala Initiation Ceremony” featured in Atikūṭa’s Dhāraṇī collection

Davidson, “Abhiṣeka,” 71. According to Davidson, the early abhiṣeka prior to its use in extending a lineage had other metaphorical implications and uses. Even so, an initiation into an esoteric lineage is what the term presently denotes according to modern practice, stemming from the 9th century onward. If we use it to refer to earlier rituals that employ other kingship metaphors as an ‘abhiṣeka rite’, it is an equivocation that needlessly muddles the discussion, even it is an accurate use of the Sanskrit term. Abhiṣekas as non-initiation rites need to be expressed differently to distinguish them from initiations.

ibid.

Davidson, “Abhiṣeka,” 75.
The All Gathering Maṇḍala Ceremony is notable for being the earliest account of an abhiṣeka ritual where certain practices that characterize esoteric initiations, such initiation rites featuring a maṇḍala populated with a large assembly of deities, are first mentioned. Shinohara maintains that the Dhāraṇī collection sūtra is not a translation as much as a restructuring of some already present material, such as a version of the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara ritual already mentioned, into one scriptural body with the All Gathering Maṇḍala Ceremony as its focus.

While his interpretation of the Dhāraṇī collection sūtra provides new insights into ritual development within Buddhism, I disagree with Shinohara’s assessment that the maṇḍala ritual in T.1058 is a “reworked” ritual from T.1057, an earlier translation by Zhitong 智通 (7th century), to incorporate principles of an All Gathering Maṇḍala Ceremony. His argument is based on a passage that “functionally equates” the All Gathering Maṇḍala Ceremony with the eight hasta maṇḍala ritual by stating that if one has undergone the former, then one need not perform the latter. Acknowledgement of the All Gathering Maṇḍala Ceremony as a functional equivalent does not entail that the T.1058 maṇḍala was partially derived from it; it merely indicates that the All Gathering Maṇḍala Ceremony was known at the time. Shinohara has noted that a similar but more ambiguous passage is also present in T.1057a (and b), and found tantalizing evidence that

95 Shinohara, Spells, Images, and Maṇḍalas, xvi.
96 Shinohara, Spells, Images, and Maṇḍalas, 31.
97 Shinohara, Spells, Images, and Maṇḍalas, 268 note 194.
Atikūṭa and Zhitong may have known (and even worked with) each other.\textsuperscript{99} Reference to the All Gathering Maṇḍala Ceremony could have been added to these sūtras to incorporate it into a different ritual context, perhaps in an attempt to systematize divergent forms of practice as Shinohara asserts Atikūṭa had done in the Dhāraṇī collection sūtra.\textsuperscript{100}

There are a few crucial differences in the design of the ritual space of P.3538 when compared to abhiṣeka initiation rites, such as the as the All Gathering Maṇḍala Ceremony or homa rituals. The deities in P.3538 are figures associated with kingship and the heavenly realms of Mount Sumeru. They are not the deity groupings mentioned in Atikūṭa’s collection employed elsewhere in more well-known esoteric maṇḍalas. Although coronation is an underlying theme in the origins of abhiṣeka, coronation and kingship tropes can also be found outside of the context of abhiṣeka initiations. In contrast to the All-Gathering Maṇḍala Ceremony, in P.3538 there is no mention of a separate area for fire offerings or of a descriptive instruction in the ritual process for the use of fire.\textsuperscript{101} The rite of abhiṣeka itself—the pouring or sprinkling of water over the

\textsuperscript{99} Shinohara, Spells, Images, and Maṇḍalas, 30. Shinohara refers to a note in a scripture, the Qianzhuang tuoluoni guanshiyin pusa zhou 千轉陀羅尼觀世音菩薩咒, T.1035, where Atikūṭa translated and transcribed a spell, but the details of its utilization where translated by Zhitong. \textit{ibid.}

\textsuperscript{100} Shinohara, Spells, Images, and Maṇḍalas, 242 note 46. Shinohara states the All Gathering Maṇḍala Ceremony is referred to in T.901 by a few different names. The one that occurs in T.1058 and T.1057 with some variation is duhui san mandala jingang da daochang 都會三曼拏攞金剛大道場. CBETA/T.20.1057a.87a20-22; CBETA/T.20.1058.101a19-21.

\textsuperscript{101} P.3538.35-47. The text does not specify burning the incense when it is mentioned as an offering.
candidate’s or incantation master’s head—tends to be mentioned in the Dhāraṇī collection sūtra as occurring in a separate area, often times at a smaller altar, sometimes called a water manḍala, outside the western gate or in a separate area in the central sacred space. While no additional water altar is mentioned in P.3538, there is a second water altar described in both T.1058 and T.1057; However, T.1057’s altar is to be used for satisfying one’s present-day concerns about worldly affairs and not as a place for consecration.

P.3538 lacks any mention of a transmission of knowledge or lineage, of consecration or the act sprinkling of water, or an indication that an initiation rite into a community has occurred. Although the ceremonial act of making three vows is an important component in esoteric abhiṣeka initiation rites, vows alone do not necessarily indicate abhiṣeka. Abhiṣeka vows were based on the “three modes of action” (sanye 三業) of a buddha or bodhisattva in samādhi. P.3538 refers to the three kinds of great vows of the Greatly Compassionate Bodhisattva, but there is no explicit use of terms that would identify these as the three secrets (sanmi 三密) of esoteric traditions. Given the context of the manḍala and the vows as its culmination, it is more likely that the three vows refer to sanye than sanmi.

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102 Shinohara, Spells, Images, and Maṇḍalas, 45-6.
103 CBETA/T20.1057a.86c17-18.
104 Orzech and Sørensen “Mudrā, Mantra, Mandala,” 83.
105 ibid.
The procedure of P.3538 therefore does not precisely fit the *homa* or *abhiṣeka* paradigms, which found their form in Buddhist esoteric tradition after the mid 8th century. P.3538’s goals are not explicitly stated; we cannot categorize the ritual from them. As I have shown, the classifications of rituals by their structures or forms group rituals with different purposes and symbolism. Based on these taxonomies, a comparison between P.3538 and examples such as All Gathering *Maṇḍala* Ceremony or the *Spirit Spell of the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara*, the differences in defining ritual elements are noticeable when we look at their defining characteristics of consecration as initiation or fire as a symbol for exchange. The intentions or goals of the P.3538 ritual with these category examples do not align. The All Gathering *Maṇḍala* Ceremony represents an early example of one alternate ritual style, perhaps more elaborate than P.3538.

Dhāraṇī Ritual

Shinohara’s research on ritual forms recognizes that the development of rituals into those associated with esoteric lineages is not a linear evolution and he is sensitive to the fact that multiple forms of ritual practices existed concurrently, especially during the Tang Dynasty. However, the problem whether to identify P.3538 as an *abhiṣeka* or *homa* ritual can be resolved when we see it as example of a *dhāraṇī* ritual. We often find a *dhāraṇī* as a component of an *abhiṣeka* and *homa* ritual, however, rituals that not only contain *dhāraṇīs*, but focus on them without initiation or the use of a hearth fire are more accurately labeled as *dhāraṇī* rituals than *homa* or *abhiṣeka*. *Dhāraṇī* rituals, such as the *Spirit Spell of the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara* mentioned above, is an example of a *dhāraṇī* ritual that is also a *homa* ritual. Avalokiteśvara has a long association with *dhāraṇīs* and *dhāraṇī* rituals, and T.1058 is considered a *dhāraṇī sūtra*. As Shinohara has
noted, Avalokiteśvara dhāraṇī rituals appear in early dhāraṇī collections, for example the Dhāraṇī miscellany.\(^{106}\)

Paul Copp has argued that dhāraṇī sūtras should be considered apart from other types of rituals because dhāraṇī rituals did not evolve into a more complex form of ritual found in esoteric traditions from the 8\(^{th}\) century on. He states that paradigms of evolution do not account for both types of practice existing simultaneously, especially during the Tang Dynasty.\(^{107}\) Dhāraṇī rituals have their own form, which include instructions for preparing ritual ground and creating maṇḍalas, the placement of “ritual implements, including bottles of water, butter lamps, flowers and other objects, in a prescribed manner”—elements that are also present in abhiṣeka and homa rituals.\(^{108}\) This description fits with the content of P.3538, and allows the manuscript to inform us of its function instead of imposing our conceptualizations of ritual on it because the dhāraṇī ritual category does not have an implied function. Since the category of dhāraṇī rituals is general enough to include a great variety of ritual forms, P.3538 can be studied outside of the structure employed by Shinohara, Payne, and others that utilize certain steps or elements present in the performance of the ritual. Additionally, this category avoids inadvertently attributing functions, such as initiation, to a ritual that does not explicitly detail one.


\(^{107}\) Copp, *the Body Incantatory*, 199.

\(^{108}\) Copp, *the Body Incantatory*, 91.
Copp has researched dhāraṇīs during the Sui-Tang Dynasty and found that dhāraṇī rituals extend beyond textual occurrences into material culture by the creation of dhāraṇī as amulets that one writes down and wears. The pratisarā amulets link rituals as specific actions with enduring objects that continually bestow benefits on the wearer and as symbol-bearing images in the minds of those who view it.\(^{109}\) By shifting our perspective of dhāraṇīs as being bound within the auditory realm as a ritual element to also being present in the visual realm as icons, we can explore P.3538 through its use of visual symbolism as sources of spiritual potency. In this way, dhāraṇī rituals are not bound to the recitation of dhāraṇīs but rather to their inclusion as a type of ritual device.

This approach prioritizes the details of a ritual’s symbolism where previously explored taxonomies of ritual structure do not. The structural ritual categories are such that deities, mudrās, visual symbols in images, and maṇḍala details can be easily exchanged for others, with little exception.\(^{110}\) In neglecting the minutiae of individual rituals in favor of an all-encompassing taxonomy, we overlook the connections a given ritual and text have with others, especially those outside of the genre. Copp thus redirects our attention from structure to symbols as transmitters of ritual and spiritual efficacy. By continuing this path of examination through icons, we can find other sources with similar icon distribution that we can use to create new theories of ritual development based on

\(^{109}\) Pratisarā amulets are those based on the Mahāpratisarā dhāraṇī sūtra, the Chinese translations of which are T.1153 and T.1154. See Copp, The Body Incatatory, 61.

\(^{110}\) Shinohara does theorize on the exchange of deities in his theory of ritual development, but my point is that within these groupings, certain deities have certain meanings attributed to them which contribute to the overall meaning of the maṇḍala or ritual where they are found. In this respect, structural ritual schemas contain the same ritual even if one deity type was exchanged for another. While this is a useful tool for understanding the development of ritual structure, its findings cannot be evidence for the development of all aspects of ritual. See Shinohara, Spells, Images, and Maṇḍalas, 40.
these connections. By examining the possible meanings inherent in the iconography of P.3538’s *mandala* practice, we are in a better position to conjecture about how they were interpreted by those who practiced it, and what sort of transformative experience this ritual may have provided. Understanding the relationship of this ritual within a larger scriptural body is integral to that process.
CHAPTER 5

DHĀRAṆĪS AND TEXTS

As a manuscript, P.3538 has no content other than its maṇḍala practice. It lacks disclosure of the dhāraṇī, the mantra, and an explanation for the twelve mudrās it calls on to perform. These key pieces of information would be necessary in order to perform the ritual, and are therefore necessary content for understanding it. If we wish to establish a foundational context for sources that might supply these elements and contribute to the meaning of its symbols, then we must look outside of P.3538. In this section, I will discuss dhāraṇīs and their symbolic functions as they are associated with bodhisattvas and buddhas. I will overview the organization of dhāraṇī sūtras specific to the Thousand-handed Avalokiteśvara from the Taishō edition of the Chinese canon, and describe some of their general characteristics. In discussing this group of texts, which I label the Nilakantha/Qianshou cluster, I will give further details about the relationship between Zhitong’s and Bodhiruci’s sūtras (T.1057 and T.1058, respectively) and illuminate two issues regarding these sūtras and the cited source of ritual in P.3538: 1) the problem of the thousand arms and eyes, and 2) the mysterious source of great compassion. The first of these issues stems from the use of phrasing in P.3538 when referring to Avalokiteśvara’s form in a cited source for the ritual, which differs from the words used in T.1058. P.3538 employs ‘thousand-eyed, thousand-armed’ (qianyan qianbi 千眼千臂), whereas T.1058 uses ‘thousand-handed, thousand-eyed’ (qianshou qianyan 千手千眼). The second issue is P.3538’s inclusion of the epithet ‘great compassion’ (dabei 大悲) which is also not present in T.1058. These two questions can be largely resolved by examining other Dunhuang manuscripts that contain similar versions of P.3538’s
mandala ritual. The adjoining sutras present in these alternate manuscript sources provide the contextual basis we need to begin our study of the mandala’s symbolism.

The Dhāraṇī and Dhāraṇī Sūtras

Avalokiteśvara is often found in texts which contain dhāraṇīs, from the Lotus Sūtra111 and Heart Sūtra,112 to the wide variety of dhāraṇī sūtras dedicated to the various forms of Avalokiteśvara.113 However, dhāraṇīs are often associated with bodhisattvas more generally as the preeminent disseminators of the dharma.114 As Copp has shown, dhāraṇīs in medieval exegetical literature are defined through their relationship with bodhisattvas as the actions that bodhisattvas perform or as inseparable qualities unique to

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111 Lotus of the Wonderful Dharma Sūtra (Miaofa lianhua jing 妙法蓮華經, Skt. Saddharmapundarīka sūtra), T.262. I cite the translation by Kumārajīva dated to the beginning of the 5th century because it was a widely popular and influential version in China and East Asia. Avalokiteśvara’s chapter in this version is the twenty-fifth, with an abbreviated title generally translated as, “the Universal Gate Chapter” (Pumen pin 普門品, Skt. Samantamukhaparivarta). See CBETA/T.9.262.56c02. The term usually translated as ‘gate’ often denotes entering into a type of practice, similarly to the Sanskrit term ‘avatāra’, as it is used in the title of a different work, Bodhicaryāvatāra. The twenty-sixth chapter in the Lotus Sūtra is the “Dhāraṇī Chapter” (Tuoluoni pin 陀羅尼品). This is the abbreviated form; See CBETA/T.9.262.58b08 for the full chapter title.

112 Skt. Prajñāpāramitāahrdaya. The Taishō has several sūtras listed as translations of this text, numbered T.249 to T.256. Demiéville, Durt, and Seidel, Répertoire du Canon bouddhique, 349. Like the Lotus Sūtra, this was also an influential scripture in East Asian Buddhism that also gives Avalokiteśvara prominent role within its narrative.

113 Thousand-handed, thousand-eyed (qianshou qianyan 千手千眼. In Sanskrit, the Thousand-armed, Thousand-eyed: Sāhasrabhujasāhasranetrā, Eleven-faced (Shiyimian 十一面, Skt. Ekadaśamukha), Lasso-wielding (Bukong Juansuo 不空羂索, Skt. Amoghapāśa), etc.

beings of advanced spiritual accomplishment. While dhāraṇīs often appear as a spell or type of magical incantation in dhāraṇī sūtras, their power is grounded in a Buddhist conceptual framework of meditative attainment.

Copp has argued that ‘dhāraṇī’ is in fact a rather nuanced term that has a range of meanings centered on the concept of “grasping” or “holding,” be it a certain meditative state, the teachings of the Buddha in meaning and letter, or the means by which one attains the patience of a bodhisattva. This range of meanings encompasses memorization, understanding, and embodying the teachings. He also notes that dhāraṇīs were associated with the true nature of reality because of the function they performed: they are a device used in practice to understand a fundamental Buddhist truth about the ephemeral nature of all dharmas. In this sense, dhāraṇīs are a teaching that one employs to reach a state of samādhi where the teaching is fully realized. Once one has reached this state, one ‘holds’ a teaching because the practice and its realization become one and the same. In this way, the dhāraṇī acts as a conveyance for the power of the bodhisattva’s penetrating wisdom from his state of samādhi.

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116 See Copp, the Body Incantatory, 1-28. Copp treats various definitions of dhāraṇī from different exegetical traditions, which I will not recapitulate here. See also Copp, “Notes on the Term ‘Dharani’.”


118 Copp, the Body Incantatory, 17.

119 Copp, the Body Incantatory, 13-28. Copp provides a range of meanings that associates dhāraṇī with the greater Buddhist path of liberation.
Many dhāraṇī sūtras share common characteristics with each other in their structural elements. These elements are: praise (or evidence in the form of anecdotes) that describes the efficacy of the dhāraṇī, the inclusion of the dhāraṇī itself, a narrative story describing the dhāraṇī’s origins, and various methods and goals outlining the uses of the dhāraṇī, often in ritual. In the narrative story, the dhāraṇī is often revealed by a bodhisattva or a buddha, which gives a sense of authenticity to the teaching and emphasizes the dhāraṇī’s power as a tool for practice. In speaking the dhāraṇī, one identifies with buddhas and bodhisattvas mentioned in the narrative by employing a practice underlying their qualities and spiritual potency. The narrative also contributes to the religious identities of the bodhisattvas as beings with certain characteristics pertaining to their forms or epithets.\(^\text{120}\)

The symbolism of Avalokiteśvara’s thousand hands and eyes is often believed to derive from narrative tradition expounding on the great compassion of the bodhisattva for all living beings. In the Lotus Sūtra, Avalokiteśvara is said to be named ‘Perceiver of the World’s Sounds’ (Guanshiyin 觀世音) on account of being able to hear all those who call out his name and respond, due to the depth of his compassion.\(^\text{121}\) However, in these early sūtras no particular form is ascribed to him, though he is said to assume multiple forms according to circumstance. His thousand-handed form emerges around the 6\(^{\text{th}}\) century shortly after that of the lasso-wielding form.\(^\text{122}\) Among the Chinese sūtras devoted to

\(^{120}\) Copp, the Body Incantatory, 18.

\(^{121}\) CBETA/T.9.262.56c03-15.

\(^{122}\) Yū, Kuan-yin, 50.
Avalokiteśvara’s thousand-handed form contained in volume 20 of the Taishō, the translation attributed to Bhagavaddharma (Jiafandamo 伽梵達摩, c. 7th century) is the earliest association of the title ‘Great Compassionate One’ (Dabei 大悲 Skt. Mahākaruṇika) with the thousand-hand form.123

The story contained in Bhagavaddharma’s translation, numbered T.1060, recounts the origin of the dhāraṇī for which the sūtra is named. Chün-fang Yū has given a translation of this narrative. In it, Avalokiteśvara reveals the dhāraṇī to Bodhisattva Dhāraṇī King on Mt. Potalaka:

When I practiced under a buddha by the name of Ch’ien-kuang-wang Ching-chu Ju-lai (Thousand-light King Tathāgata of Tranquil Abode) innumerable kalpas ago, the buddha took pity on me and all sentient beings. Touching my forehead with his golden hand, the buddha instructed me to keep this dhāraṇī and work in the future for the benefit of beings living in evil times. I was at that time a bodhisattva of the first stage, but as soon as I heard the dhāraṇī, I advanced right away to the eighth stage of the bodhisattva path. Filled with joy and exaltation, I vowed, “If I am capable of benefiting and comforting all sentient beings in the future, let me be endowed with a thousand hands and a thousand eyes right away.” As soon as I made the vow, this happened. So from that epoch long ago, I have kept the dhāraṇī. As a result, I have always been born where there is a buddha. Moreover, I have never undergone birth from a womb, but am always transformed from a lotus.124

123 Reis-Habito bases this on the titles of the sūtra cluster and the date of T.1060’s translation. Reis-Habito, Die Dhāraṇī des Groẞen Erbarmens, 95-150.
124 Yū, Kuan-yin, 59.
Avalokiteśvara then states that anyone who wants to keep the dhāraṇī to make ten vows and to call out his and the Buddha Amitābha’s names. In doing so, many benefits to the reciter will come to pass.\footnote{Yü, Kuan-yin, 60-1.}

Nīlakaṇṭha/Qianshou Cluster

T.1058 and T.1060 are two of a group of sūtras on Avalokitesvara’s thousand-hand, thousand-eyed form. According to Chün-fang Yü, there are thirteen texts dated from the mid to late 6th century during the Northern Zhou \textit{北周} onward that are devoted to the thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara.\footnote{Yü, Kuan-yin, 50.} Maria D. Reis-Habito provides a list of eleven sūtras with their attributed translators and approximate dates. These are in ascending \textit{Taishō} number order: T.1056, T.1057, T.1058, T.1060, T.1061, T.1062, T.1064, T.1065, T.1066, T.1067, and T.1068.\footnote{Reis-Habito, \textit{Die Dhāraṇī des Groẞen Erbarmens}, 139 note 13. In her list, she does not specify a or b versions of T.1057 and T.1062.}

Many of the dhāraṇī sūtras that appear in this list are reported to have come from Sanskrit source(s) called \textit{Nīlakaṇṭha(ka)}, or the Blue-throated [One]. Within the \textit{Nīlakaṇṭha(ka)} selection are two different sets of scriptures: the \textit{Nīlakaṇṭha(ka)[sūtra]} (T.1057a, T.1057b, T.1058, T.1060, T.1061, T.1063) and \textit{Nīlakaṇṭhadhāraṇī} (T.1111 and T.1113b). Of the first set, \textit{Nīlakaṇṭha(ka)[sūtra]}, T.1061 and T.1063 are included based on reconstructed Sanskrit titles from Tibetan sources.\footnote{Demiéville, Durt, and Seidel, \textit{Répertoire du Canon bouddhique}, 348; Ōtani, Ōtani \textit{Daigaku Toshokan}, 129. T.1061 and T.1063 are treated as a pair. See Kanjur no. 378 (Nanjo. no. 320) for T.1061.} However, the \textit{Taishō} positions
both sets of śūtras together under a wider grouping, adding T.1056, T.1062a, T.1062b, T.1064, T.1113a, and T.1112, probably because there is a great deal of overlap among the collection.\textsuperscript{129} Except for T.1063 and T.1111-T.1113b, all the śūtras mention a variation of Avalokiteśvara’s thousand-handed form in their title. The former śūtra, T.1063, is titled after Avalokiteśvara’s great compassion, while the latter śūtras, numbered T.1111-1113b, are the only works in the Nīlakaṇṭha/Qianshou cluster that contain the attribute ‘blue-throated’ or ‘blue-necked’ (qingjing 青頸, Skt. Nīlakaṇṭha) in their titles.\textsuperscript{130} These two are also considered as a separate group centered on Avalokiteśvara’s blue-necked form.\textsuperscript{131} Of these, T.1111 and T.1113a have manuscript fragments in the Stein Collection containing Sogdian transcribed Sanskrit and T.1061 is also witnessed in Sogdian manuscripts.\textsuperscript{132}

T.1058 and both versions of T.1057 are considered together because they share an affinity with each other in their structure and content, but the most striking difference between the two is the insertion of a more elaborate maṇḍala creation ritual in T.1058 not

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\textsuperscript{129} Demiéville, Durt, and Seidel, *Répertoire du Canon bouddhique*, 95. See entry number T.1061. Reis-Habitó has also noted the content overlaps between śūtras in this collection.

\textsuperscript{130} ‘Kaṇṭha’ as a Sanskrit term primarily refers to the throat and in the compound Nīlakaṇṭha, Princeton Buddhist Dictionary translates the term as ‘blue-throated’. See Pali-English Dictionary. s. v. “kaṇṭha”; Princeton Buddhist Dictionary. s. v. “Qianshou Jing.” However, jīng 頸 has a primary meaning of neck instead of throat.

\textsuperscript{131} Giebel, “Taishō Volumes 18-21,” 33.

\textsuperscript{132} The *Bongo butten no kenkyu* references an article on these fragments written by Louis de Vallée Poussein, entitled “Fragment final de la Nilakanthadharaṇi en brahmi et en transcription sogdienne.” Tsukamoto, Matsunaga, and Isoda, *Bongo butten no kenkyu*, 130. Another mention of this article is in Ōtani, Ōtani Daigaku Toshokan, 129.
found in T.1057. T.1058 is ascribed to the translator Bodhiruci (d.727), while Zhitong (c. 7th century) is cited for both versions of T.1057. T.1058 is listed in the Kaiyuan Shijiao lu, which mentions it as being translated in 709 in the Western Chongfu Monastery. 133 Zhisheng 智昇 also states that T.1058 is another translation of the same Sanskrit source text as T.1057.

Of the two versions of T.1057, only b is listed in the Tripitaka Koreana Descriptive Catalog from its citation in another work by Zhisheng 智昇. 134 T.1057a has an introduction with a narrative retelling how the sūtra came to China and the circumstances of the two translations, but little variation within the sūtra text itself. Both versions of T.1057 are entitled, “Dhāraṇī incantation sūtra of the Bodhisattva with a Thousand Eyes and a Thousand Arms Who Perceives the World’s Sounds.” 135

The ‘Eye and Arm’ Problem

Questions arise when we view P.3538 in light of the Nīlakaṇṭha/Qianshou cluster. If the maṇḍala ritual correlates with T.1058, then why does the manuscript cite a different source for its ritual? This source title contains epithets not found in T.1058, but

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133 This was an important Buddhist catalog of for Chinese canon, composed in 730 by Zhisheng 智昇 and utilized by the Tang Dynasty as a record of the official canon. T. 2154. The entry is as follows: 《開元釋教錄》卷 9：「千手千眼觀世音菩薩陀羅尼身經一卷 (第二出與唐智通譯二卷者同本景龍三年夏於西崇福寺譯弟子般若丘次多助宣梵本) 如意輪陀羅尼經一卷(第四出與實叉難陀等出者同本此法稍具景龍三年夏於西崇福寺譯弟子般若丘次多助宣梵本)」. CBETA/T.55.2154.569.b24-27.

134 Entry 292: “During Years of Chen Kuan 貞觀, T’ang Dynasty 唐 (627-649) in Luoyang 洛陽 (Xu gujin yijing tuji t’u-chi 續古今譯經圖紀, T.2152-368a:6)” by Zhisheng 智昇. Lancaster, the Korean Buddhist Canon, 108.

135 Qianyan qianbi guanshiyin pusa tuoluoni shenzhen jing 千眼千臂觀世音菩薩陀羅尼神呪經.
are contained in other sūtras in the cluster. What is this ritual’s relationship with these other scriptures and how do these texts relate to the P.3538 ritual? If we observe only the canonical version of the ritual we would not be aware of historical examples that seem to run contrary to the official canonical histories, such as T.1058 being only a translation of T.1057’s original source. We also would not realize that ‘great compassion’ figures into sūtras that do not specifically attribute the quality to Avalokiteśvara. In discovering the answers of the type of questions posed above, we begin to reveal a transmission narrative that has been marginalized through the canonical editorial process but present in Dunhuang manuscript sources.

Out of the Nīlakaṇṭha/Qianshou cluster, only T.1057 names Avalokiteśvara’s form as having a thousand eyes and a thousand arms (qianyan qianbi 千眼千臂), and not a thousand hands and a thousand eyes (qianshou qianyan 千手千眼). This is significant because the first line of text in P.3538 cites a source of the ritual as coming from the Western Greatly Compassionate Thousand-eyed, Thousand-armed [One] sūtra.136 Herein lies the problem: T.1058’s title can be shortened to the Thousand-handed, Thousand-eyed [One] sūtra, but not ‘thousand-armed’ (qianbi 千臂). 137 It would be more likely that the source cited in P.3538 refers to T.1057 or some other sūtra, except for the direct

136  P.3538.01: fān dà bēi qiānshòu qiānbi jīng 蕃大悲千眼千臂經.

137  Qianbi only occurs three times in the canonical sūtra: twice referring to the fifth mudrā out of the twelve preceding the maṇḍala ritual, and once later in the text regarding the specific iconography of the Avalokiteśvara image and how to paint it on cloth. CBETA/T.20.1058.99a04; 101b17; 101c05. Manuscript P.3538 mentions performing twelve mudrās, but only gives a shortened name to the twelfth mudrā in the sūtra and does not describe it. Neither the name of the fifth mudrā nor the details of the Avalokiteśvara image are mentioned in P.3538. P.3538.56-57.
relationship with the *maṇḍala* creation method in T.1058. Moreover, there is a second problem regarding P.3538’s name, and that is the inclusion of the title, ‘great compassion’ (*dabei 大悲*), in the manuscript’s *sūtra* source citation and in the name given to the wooden image of Avalokiteśvara placed in center of the *maṇḍala* not present in T.1058’s *maṇḍala* creation ritual.

The Source of Great Compassion

*Dabei* does not occur as a specific epithet of Avalokiteśvara in T.1057 or T.1058. In the *Nīlakaṇṭha/Qianshou* cluster, the earliest mention of *dabei* in a *sūtra* title is T.1060, *Dhāraṇī Sūtra of the Bodhisattva with a Thousand Hands and a Thousand Eyes Who Perceives the World’s Sounds and [Feels] Vast, Complete, Unhindered Great Compassion*, translated by Bhagavaddharma around 650.\(^{138}\) His dates are unclear, but Bhagavaddharma is named one of the translators of the *Thousand-handed [One] Sūtra* (*Qianshou Jing 千手經*) in five Dunhuang area manuscripts, of which the oldest is P.2291 dated to 739.\(^{139}\) Other manuscripts show that a monk named Bhagavaddharma resided in Khotan during the Tang Dynasty. In Khotan, worship of the thousand-handed, thousand-eyed Avalokiteśvara and esoteric Buddhist practices were well established during Bhagavaddharma’s time in the 7th century.\(^{140}\) Reis-Habito concluded that

\(^{138}\) *Qianshou qianyan guanshiyin pusa guangda yuanman wuai dabeixin tuoluoni jing 千手千眼觀世音菩薩廣大圓滿無礙大悲心陀羅尼經*. An abbreviated form of this title is also used: *Thousand-handed [One] Sūtra* (*Qianshou jing 千手經*).

\(^{139}\) Reis-Habito, *Die Dhāraṇī des Großen Erbarmens*, 123.

\(^{140}\) Reis-Habito, *Die Dhāraṇī des Großen Erbarmens*, 124, 126.
Bhagavaddhārma most likely completed his translation in Khotan.\textsuperscript{141} Bhagavaddhārma’s presence within close cultural proximity of Dunhuang and his translation present in witnesses from the area lends credence to the possibility that P.3538 gained a local “flavor” to Avalokitēśvara sūtras and images if, before the time of the manuscript’s origin, the thousand-handed Avalokitēśvara cult had widely embraced the idea of the dabei epithet, as Reis-Habito theorizes.\textsuperscript{142} However probable this may be, the solution it affords us lacks any direct evidence, and it does not resolve the ‘thousand-armed’ problem mentioned above.

Yet we can find P.3538’s maṇḍala method in other manuscripts that also contain T.1060 and T.1057. One of these manuscripts is S.1210 of the Stein Collection, which contains full sūtras of both T.1060 and T.1057a. As Reis-Habito has noted, this manuscript is part of a small cluster that contain both T.1060 and T.1057, demonstrating that the connection between these two sūtras is not arbitrary.\textsuperscript{143} In this manuscript in particular, there is some confusion between the sūtras’ beginning and end titles. Out of the three sections of manuscript, the first contains T.1060. The front title is “Dhāraṇī Sūtra of the Bodhisattva with a Thousand Hands and a Thousand Eyes Who Perceives the World’s Sounds and [Feels] Vast, Complete, Unhindered Great Compassion, (First

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\textsuperscript{142} Reis-Habito theorizes that the dabei cult took root after Bhagavaddhārma’s translation in 650. Yū, \textit{Kuan-yan}, 70.

\textsuperscript{143} Reis-Habito, \textit{Die Dhāraṇī des Groẞen Erbarmens}, 121-32.
The second section contains the full sūtra of T.1057a, but the front title is, “Dhāraṇī incantation sūtra of the Bodhisattva with a Thousand Hands and a Thousand Eyes Who Perceives the World’s Sounds (End [Juan]),” and the end title is “Dhāraṇī sūtra of the Bodhisattva with a Thousand Eyes and a Thousand Arms Who Perceives the World’s Sounds (End Juan).” The hands and eyes from the first section’s title were carried over to the beginning title of the second section, and the end title from the first section has only a slight variation from the beginning title of the second section. Reis-Habito’s research has connected this manuscript to others where these two sūtras are a unified scripture, and the attributes ‘great compassion’ and ‘thousand arms’ are therefore also united. P.3538’s ritual also appears in another slightly later manuscript from the Pelliot Collection, P.3920. This manuscript also contains sections of T.1057a and T.1060 among others, although this

144 “Qianshou qianyan guanshiyin pusa guangda yuanman wuai bei xin tuoluoni jing (shang) 千手千眼觀世音菩薩廣大圓滿無礙大悲心陀羅尼經上.” Fang, Yingguo guojia, 8-9.

145 “Qianshou qianyan tuoluoni shenzhou jing (juan shang) 千手千眼陀羅尼神咒經卷上.” Fang, Yingguo guojia, 8-9.

146 Qianshou qianyen guanshiyin pusa tuoluoni shenzhou jing (xia) 千手千眼觀世音菩薩陀羅尼神咒經卷下.” Fang, Yingguo guojia, 8-9.

147 “Qianyan qianbi guanshiyin pusa tuoluoni jing (juan xia) 千眼千臂觀世音菩薩陀羅尼經卷下.” Fang, Yingguo guojia, 8-9; Giles, Descriptive Catalogue, 105. See also Reis-Habito, Die Dhāraṇī des Groẞen Erbarmens, 122-24.

148 Reis-Habito, Die Dhāraṇī des Groẞen Erbarmens, 123. In her research she cites S.231 and S.1210 with both T.1057 and T.1060 sūtras, in addition to S.2566, which contains T.1060 with a partial dhāraṇī from T.1057. P.3920 also has both T.1057 and T.1060 but with extensive variations, some of which I discuss later in this paper.
manuscript has other notable features regarding the *maṇḍala* ritual and T.1057a that I will discuss later in this project.\(^{149}\)

The problems that arise from the unusual appearance of ‘great compassion’ (*dabei*) in a ritual contained in a *sūtra* where it does not appear, and the ‘thousand eyes, thousand-arms’ (*qianyan qianbī*) in P.3538 can be resolved if we see the *maṇḍala* practice in P.3538 as a part of this greater scriptural work. In finding a possible solution to the peculiarity of P.3538’s inclusion of Avalokiteśvara’s great compassion and thousand arms, we have established that P.3538’s undescribed references to *mudrās* and *dhāraṇīs* not explicitly defined can be linked to those in T.1057 as resource for implementation. However, the close connection of T.1057 with T.1060 justifies our use in evaluating T.1060 as a possible source for P.3538’s symbols because the two *sūtras* have attested connections in manuscripts, such as S.1210. Finally, the last line in P.3538 that informs the reader that additional information can be found in the *sūtra* most likely references sources such as S.1210, in which T.1057a and T.1060 are found and were perhaps considered one *sūtra*.\(^{150}\)

With manuscripts such as S.1210, we have found a contextual basis for P.3538. We have also opened the possibility of viewing P.3538’s adjoining *sūtras* from other manuscripts as sources that inform the iconography from the *maṇḍala* ritual. Manuscript S.1210 demonstrates that the titles of the two *sūtras* are not as rigid as their status as canonical scriptures suggests. Both P.3920 and S.1210 give evidence that the *maṇḍala* ritual was used outside of its *sūtra*, T.1058, and included within a unified scripture


\(^{150}\) P.3538.58.
containing both T.1060 and T.1057a, where the epithets ‘great compassion’, ‘thousand-eyes, thousand-arms’ and ‘thousand-hands, thousand-eyes’ are found. These manuscripts provide a basis for interpreting P.3538’s content within a context where it was interpreted by those who utilized it.
CHAPTER 6
ICONOGRAPHY

Now that we have established a contextual basis for the meanings and use of P.3538’s symbols, we can move forward to examining the symbols themselves. The symbols of P.3538 take various forms: mudrās, images, icons, deities, tropes, and themes. I use the term ‘symbol’ very broadly as something (an image, body movement, verbal utterance, etc.) that represents a concept other than itself. It is not always clear what a symbol in a ritual is meant to represent, but it often has a function that it performs, which contributes to the ritual’s success (such as mantras or mudrās, whose function or origins are not always disclosed in a text). I use the term ‘ritual device’ to denote a symbol that performs a definite ritual function that does not directly represent a deity or attribute of a deity. I use the term ‘icon’ in a more specific sense as a religious visual symbol (or hand gesture connected to a visual image, as in the case of T.1060) that directly represents a specific deity (devas, buddhas, bodhisattvas, etc.) or the qualities of a specific deity. I do not consider symbols that are not associated with a specific deity icons as I have defined it here because a symbol could represent any number of beings or concepts unless it is set in a context where a specific meaning or use of a symbol is otherwise determined. ‘Symbol’ is a purposefully general term that does not carry a meaning of employment as a ritual device or as directly representing a deity.

The first type of symbol from these texts I will discuss is ‘mudrā’. T.1060 and T.1057 present two different concepts of ‘mudrā’. This illustrates a known ambiguity in the term especially noticeable in Chinese translations of Buddhist sūtras where the term ‘seal’ (yin 印) is used. In the first part of this section I will discuss the problem of
interpreting ‘yin’ as a mudrā in P.3538, and overview some of the broader implications of these terms as a performed ritual action, a quality or aspect of a bodhisattva, and as an image that transmits efficacy in dhāraṇī amulets. In the process, I will draw on another scriptural source, the Mahāpratisarā dhāraṇī sūtra, which bears a striking affinity to the maṇḍala image in P.3538. I will argue that the Mahāpratisarā dhāraṇī sūtra’s Chinese translations and corresponding amulet culture share a parallel layout and related theme to P.3538’s maṇḍala and that its visual symbols contribute to the problem of ambiguity in the term ‘yin’ and have a slightly different meaning than P.3538’s use of ‘yin’. With the aid of a maṇḍala diagram of P.3538’s ritual from Dunhuang, I will provide evidence that the depicted ‘yin’ function both as icons that represent a bodhisattva’s qualities and as images from dhāraṇī amulet culture that empower a design. Additionally, I will give a description of the maṇḍala’s deities and some of their textual history, many of which intertwine with that of the bodhisattva. In the final part of this chapter, I give an account of the maṇḍala’s theme and visual representation as a wheel-turning king (Skt. cakravartin) situated within the heavenly realm on Mount Sumeru.

The Ambiguous Mudrā/Yin 印

The term ‘mudrā’ is recognized as having a wide range of meaning in Buddhist writings.151 Jan Gonda’s essay has been cited as a starting point in untangling the meanings of this term in tantric literature.152 David B. Gray summarizes four possible meanings of mudrā, two of which I will describe here: “1) seal, stamp, or mark, and

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hence ‘symbol’, [and] 2) a symbolic hand gesture." Gray relates the second sense of the term—the most common meaning denoted in tantric literature—back to Sanskrit drama and Indic dance techniques conveying rasa as a hastamudrā, or “hand gesture.” In its translation into Chinese, ‘yin 印’ most closely signifies the two definitions above. The first definition, however, can be separated into both the stamp as an object that creates an impression and the impression itself as a symbol.

In denoting a seal or stamp (both the mark and the object), ‘yin’ is an abbreviated form for ‘yinzhang 印相’. This concept pervades Chinese culture and was used to mark identity, “convey authority, and give verification or approval” in secular contexts and utilized in religious and ritual purposes in Daoism and Buddhism. A stamp is an object held in one of Avalokiteśvara’s thousand hands mentioned in a description for painting his image on cloth in T.1058. In T.1060, stamp seal (yin shou 印手) is the name of a hand gesture that one performs to gain “great eloquence.” This mudrā was illustrated in another sūtra, numbered T.1064, entitled the Heart dhāraṇī of the Greatly Compassionate Bodhisattva with a Thousand Hands and a Thousand Eyes Who Perceives the World’s Sounds, as a hand gesticulating while bearing a stamp with a

\[153\] Gray, “Imprints of the ‘Great Seal’,” 426. The last two definitions of seals not mentioned deal mainly with tantric developments not found in these texts, such as ‘yin’ denoting a buddha or bodhisattva’s consort.

\[154\] ibid.


\[156\] CBETA/T.20.1058.101b06.

\[157\] CBETA/T20.1060.111b01-02.
svastika. In T.1060’s yin shou, the term for mudrā is denoted as ‘shou 手’. This is an abbreviation of hand seal (shouyin 手印), which is equivalent to the Sanskrit hastamudrā, or hand gesture. However, in T.1057, we find a number of hand gestures, called ‘yin 印’, in the mandala instructions with definite ritual functions not directly connected the stamp icon.

There is a difference between use of mudrās as hand gestures in T.1057 and T.1060 I wish to emphasize. T.1057’s hand gestures serve a definite ritual function, such as the one mentioned by name in P.3538 “Inviting the Buddha’s samādhi,” that induces a meditative state. These mudrās serve as a ritual device that contributes to the ritual’s efficacy. Yet T.1060’s hand gestures are grouped with more practical concerns, and immediately follow a list of the uses for a dhāraṇī, from curing illness to protecting oneself from malicious entities. T.1060’s mudrās confer similar benefits to that of reciting or hearing the dhāraṇī, from favorable rebirths to warding oneself from harm. Descriptions of finger positions are not included with T.1060’s mudrās; instead they are mostly named after objects found in iconography depicting the bodhisattva. While T.1057’s mudrās are limited to ritual devices that use a stamp metaphor to imprint the power of the hand gesture into the ritual’s success, T.1060’s mudrās are a combination of ritual devices and icons that convey the power of a bodhisattva directly.

158 Yū, Kuan-yin, 64; Qianshou qianyan guanshiyin pusa dabei xintuoluoni 千手千眼觀世音菩薩大悲心陀羅尼. CBETA/T20.1064.118b20.
159 CBETA/T20.1057a.86b04.
Both hand-held icons and dhāraṇīs represent attributes of bodhisattvas, and each of these can be found together with mudrās. Chun-fang Yü interprets the icon depictions in T.1058’s image creation as unquestionably attributes of the bodhisattva. Copp envisions dhāraṇīs also as adornments of a bodhisattva based his analysis of exegetical literature and the practice of adorning oneself with pratisarā amulets. However, unlike dhāraṇīs, T.1060’s mudrās literally adorn the images of the bodhisattva and symbolize specific aspects or qualities of his spiritual attainments. Although mudrās in ritual are more than mere hand gestures, T.1060’s mudrās blur the border between the mudrā definitions by adding additional nuances to the symbol definition; they are simultaneously a hand gesture, iconic image, and source of efficacious power derived from the bodhisattva as a “method of request.”

The object names of T.1060’s mudrās are not unique to the sūtra; the attributes or functions they depict to can be found in similar Avalokiteśvara dhāraṇī sūtras and in images and scriptures prior to 650 when T.1060 was translated. Reis-Habito connects the twenty-first mudrā in T.1057 that calls forth eight groups of devas, nagas, and spirits and the twenty-eight divisions that will appear to the conch mudrā in T.1060 used to call forth an unspecific number heavenly devas and spirits. References to the conch also

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161 Yü, Kuan-yin, 67.
162 Copp, the Body Incantatory, 85.
164 CBETA/T20.1060.111a26-27. The mudrā in T.1057a is entitled “the Twenty-first mudrā of the bodhisattva to call devas, nagas, and eight divisions of supernatural beings” (Pusa huzhao tian long bahu guishen yin di ershiyi 菩薩呼召天龍八部鬼神印第二十一). CBETA/T20.1057a.89a11-25.
appear in the *Lotus Sūtra* as the ‘conch of the dharma’, alluding to the Buddha’s ability to widely disseminate teachings in the same way a conch shell, when blown, can be heard over great distances. The conch’s symbolism is relatively stable across mediums and was incorporated into a more specialized ritualistic symbol that emphasizes the bodhisattva’s authority over these benevolent beings, which one can harness by performing the appropriate action.

Images of the thousand-handed form of Avalokiteśvara are not found in Dunhuang earlier than the 8th century, but many of the hand-held objects depicted in his images are the same as those mentioned in T.1058 and used as names in T.1060’s mudrās, thereby displaying some continuity in icons from the 7th century on. Illustrations of Avalokiteśvara’s hand and object mudrās have also been found in Dunhuang. The ink on paper drawing, “Mudrās of the Thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara,” from the Stein Collection dating from 8th-9th centuries is one such item. Most of these objects coincide with the names of T.1060’s mudrās and with the description of the icons to be painted in the image of Avalokiteśvara in T.1058. However, the hand gestures in this illustration deviate from those illustrated in T.1064. In general, Dunhuang Avalokiteśvara depictions place more emphasis on held objects than the mudrās qua hand gestures that

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165 *Foxue da cidian* s. v. “法螺”; the reference to blowing the conch of the dharma occurs in four places in the *Lotus Sūtra*. The first mention is: CBETA/T.9.262.3c13.

166 Copp mentions Dunhuang Cave 148 was dated to 776 and contains three different manifestation images of the bodhisattva: *Cintāmanicakra, Amoghapāśa*, and *Sāhasrabhujasāhasranetrā*. Copp, “Notes on the Term ‘Dharani’,” 132.

hold them. Shinohara theorizes about a process of standardization of iconography in image depictions used in dhāraṇī worship rituals. Paul Copp and Michelle Wang both note the continuity in the use of icons depicted in different manifestations of Avalokiteśvara at Dunhuang. The consistency of icons present both in Dunhuang and in scriptural descriptions indicates objects had a certain meaning integral to the figures with whom they are associated. However, the specific hand gestures that hold these objects vary widely from both Dunhuang and scriptural sources, indicating that they lacked the consistent association with certain deities that would distinguish them as icons. P.3538’s painted maṇḍala seals have parallels to the names of T.1060’s mudrās as items associated with the bodhisattva. In the chart below, I have included a list of the parallels between the manuscript P.3538 and T.1060’s mudrās and the benefits for performing them. While some of the mudrā counterparts in T.1060 and P.3538 are obvious, such as the conch, a few others are open to interpretation, such as the non-retrogression gold wheel mudrā.

While in P.3538, the precious seal (baoyin shou 寶印手) appears as hand seal (shou yin 手印) I do not believe the two were equated. T.1058 has a different phrasing, “…and various hand seals,” which is a curiously ambiguous statement. It could

168 ibid.
169 Shinohara, Spells, Images, and Maṇḍalas, 53.
170 Copp, the Body Incantatory, 132.
171 P.3538.27; CBETA/T.20.1060.111b01-02.
172 CBETA/T.20.1058.100a27.
indicate that the former list of seals is an open set and those mentioned are examples of what types of seals should be included. This reading could explain the differences in the seals present in P.3538 when compared to T.1058. However, the statement could also be read as distinguishing the former list of seals that bear the names of objects from actual hand seals, i.e. mudrās.\textsuperscript{173}

It is clear that the mudrās from T.1060 parallel the many of the seals listed in P.3538, but this is not evidence enough to translate P.3538’s yin as mudrā. If they were hand gestures, would they be depicted in the maṇḍala as hand gestures or would they be drawn as objects? This difference could indicate how they were historically understood, either as an icon that represents the bodhisattva or as part of the ritual framework for the maṇḍala. Fortunately, this question will be answered when we examine the diagram, Ch.00189, and see the connection between this maṇḍala and the symbols present in the pratisarā ritual and amulets.

\textsuperscript{173} ibid.
Table 1. *P.3538 Seals and T.1060 Mudrās.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>P.3538 Seals</strong></th>
<th><strong>T.1060 Mudrās</strong></th>
<th><strong>T.1060 Mudrā Benefits</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vajra mallet-trident seal (jingang chu san hui yin 金剛杵三鈷印)</td>
<td>vajra mallet mudrā (jingangchu shou 金剛杵手)</td>
<td>to vanquish all enemies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>axe seal (yuefu yin 鉞斧印)</td>
<td>axe mudrā (fuyue shou 斧鍾手)</td>
<td>at all times and places one is without [government] oppression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>double-edged sword seal (jian yin 劍印)</td>
<td>the precious double-edged sword mudrā (baojian shou 寶劍手)</td>
<td>to vanquish all goblins, ghosts, and spirits (wangliangguishen 魍魎鬼神)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wish-fulfilling jewel seal (ruyizhu yin 如意珠印)</td>
<td>wish-fulfilling jewel mudrā (ruyi zhu shou 如意珠手, Skt. cintāmaṇi)</td>
<td>for wealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>water pot or vase seal (junqi 軍器印, Skt. kuṇḍī or kuṇḍikā)</td>
<td>water pot or vase mudrā (kunqi shou 軍遲手, Skt. kuṇḍī or kuṇḍikā)</td>
<td>to be reborn in the Brahmā Heaven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>precious staff (bao bang yin 寶棒印)</td>
<td>skull [topped] staff mudrā (髑髏杖手, Skt. khaṭvāṅga)</td>
<td>to command all ghosts and spirits (guishen 鬼神)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conch seal (luo pi yin 賊捫印)</td>
<td>precious conch mudrā (baoluoshou 寶螺手)</td>
<td>to call the heavenly benevolent devas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wheel treasure seal (lunbao yin 輪寶印)</td>
<td>non-retrogression gold wheel mudrā (butui jinclun shou 不退金輪手)</td>
<td>used by one that wishes for his enlightened mind (putixin 菩提心, Skt. bodhicitta) not to recede during his current lifetime up to his buddha lifetime</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Sources:* The information contained in this chart is drawn from: Yū, *Kuan-yin*, 64-5; CBETA/T.20.1060.111a05-011b11; P.3538.
Amulets as Maṇḍalas

There is one last text I wish to include in the discussion that has a similar distribution of symbolic images as P.3538 and is also found in the manuscript, numbered P.3920 from the Pelliot Collection. P.3920 contains P.3538’s ritual, T.1060, and sections of T.1057a among a long list of other dhāraṇī sūtras, among them the Scripture of the Dhāraṇī Spirit-Spell of Great Sovereignty, Preached by the Buddha, Whereby One Immediately Attains What is Sought, numbered T.1154 and translated by Baosiwei 寶思惟 in 693.174 T.1154 is a collection of dhāraṇī rituals that advocates not only the reciting of a dhāraṇī but of writing it and physically wearing it on one’s person to receive blessings and protective properties, similar to the benefits of reciting the dhāraṇī listed in T.1060.175 Paul Copp’s examination of T.1154 reveals parallels with P.3538’s maṇḍala visible in the ritual prescribed for creating pratisarā amulets.

Great Brahmā then said to the World Honored-One, “If one wants to copy out this spirit incantation, what is the rite?” The Buddha told Great Brahmā, “One should secure an altar. At the four corners of the altar set out bottles filled with fragrant water. Within the altar draw two lotuses, or three or four or five. Around the four sides of the altar make an awn of lotus blossoms. Make a single large open lotus flower, and suspend from its stalk a band of silk. Further, make an eight-petaled lotus flower. Upon each petal make one three forked ji halberd. Suspend from it a band of silk. Make another eight-petaled lotus flower. Within the center of that flower make a vajra-club, with another club upon each of the petals. Suspend from it a band of silk. Further, make another eight-petaled lotus flower. Upon each of its petals make a yue hatchet. Further, make another eight-

174 Copp’s sūtra title translation. Copp, the Body Incantatory, 64. Foshui suiqijide dazizai tuoluoni shenzhou jing 佛說隨求即得大自在陀羅尼神呪經 (Skt. Mahāpratisarā dhāraṇī sūtra), T.1154.

175 Copp, the Body Incantatory, 63, 67.
petaled lotus flower. Upon each of its petals make a knife; from its stalk also suspend a band of silk. Further, draw a sword. Upon the point of the sword make a lotus flower; within its center draw a conch shell. Further, make another lotus flower and within its center draw a lasso. Further, make another lotus blossom and within its center draw a burning pearl.\textsuperscript{176}

Of these images, the only two that are not mentioned in P.3538 are the lasso and the burning pearl.\textsuperscript{177} Yet as an image, the burning pearl could easily be interpreted as a wish-fulfilling jewel, which is often depicted as a jewel surrounded in flames, a prominent theme throughout the P.3538 \textit{maṇḍala}. The symbol’s order is largely the same as that of P.3538’s seals. Some of P.3538’s seals are not found in T.1154, but all of these symbols from T.1154 are associated with Avalokiteśvara’s iconography.

T.1154’s ritual instructions are also similar to those of P.3538. The text instructs one to “burn incense and scatter flowers, make offerings of food, drink, and fruit of various kinds,” and for the practitioner to bathe, don new clothes, eat three kinds of white food: cream, white porridge, and rice.\textsuperscript{178} While the manuscript instructs one to smear incense on the body and don clean clothes, the intent to purify the body prior to the ritual is present in both accounts. P.3538 also instructs the incantation master to eat three kinds of white food, but does not give an account of what they are. T.1154 is similar in part to both the seals and the ritual elements contained in P.3538.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{176} I have listed how these images appear in the canon for ease of reference: three-forked \textit{ji} halberd or trident (\textit{sanchaji} 三叉戟), vajra-mallet (\textit{jingangchu} 金剛杵), \textit{yue} hatchet or axe (\textit{yuefu} 越斧 or \textit{yuefu} 鉞斧), knife or sword (\textit{dao} 刀), sword (\textit{jian} 劍), conch (\textit{luo} 螺), lasso (\textit{juansuo} 羂索), burning pearl (\textit{huoyan zhu} 火焰珠). Copp, \textit{the Body Incantatory}, 91; CBETA/T.20.1154.641c11-24.
  \item \textsuperscript{177} T.1058 mentions the lasso as both a seal in the \textit{maṇḍala} and as an icon from the Avalokiteśvara. CBETA/T.20.1058.100a25; 101b08.
  \item \textsuperscript{178} Copp, \textit{the Body Incantatory}, 91-2; CBETA/T.20.1154.641c24-27.
\end{itemize}
T.1154’s images are not described as seals or mudrās; they are only mentioned as objects to be drawn. A second version of this sūtra translated by Amoghavajra, T.1153, does mention drawing various seals, but it does not refer to the mentioned objects specifically as seals. While bejeweled Sumeru Mountains in the four corners of the amulet are prescribed in T.1154, the four Heavenly Kings replace these in T.1153. Both the bejeweled Sumerus and the four Heavenly Kings sit in the corners of the two outermost courtyards of the P.3538 maṇḍala. This could indicate the a few possibilities: 1) that the ritual draws on multiple translations of this sūtra, 2) the attributed dates of one of these translations is wrong, or 3) the canonical version of the ritual was included into T.1058 at a later time. However, Copp sees the difference between these two versions of the Mahāpratisarā dhāraṇī sūtra and the corresponding material evidence not as an initial scriptural change but rather a change first implemented in actual practice and later included into the second translation. This could also be true for P.3538’s use of the term ‘yin’ to denote objects drawn on a maṇḍala and its incorporation of both the bejeweled Mount Sumerus and the four Heavenly Kings.

Surviving pratisarā amulets from the medieval period depict the objects as symbols in a border surrounding a central figure. This central deity is often one of a handful prescribed in the instructions for specific amulet sheets. Drawing from previous

179 Copp, the Body Incantatory, 98.
180 Copp, the Body Incantatory, 97.
181 Copp, the Body Incantatory, 98.
182 Copp, the Body Incantatory, 95-102.
research, Copp speculates that the borders of the pratisarā amulets where these objects are depicted coincide with preparation phase of a ritual, which includes drawing out the maṇḍala, and the general layout of the altar.\footnote{183} The symbol border in at least some pratisarā amulets parallels the description of P.3538’s courtyard where the twenty-eight partitions and the seals are depicted. The main difference in the layout of the maṇḍala is that there is an additional border surrounding the seal courtyard containing flowering trees, waters of the four oceans, and a jeweled Sumeru Mountain on each corner.

The Maṇḍala Diagram

Additional similarities between the sūtras mentioned thus far and the maṇḍala practice described in P.3538 will become more apparent when we examine the maṇḍala diagram, numbered Ch.00189 from the Stein Collection, dated to the 9\textsuperscript{th} to 10\textsuperscript{th} centuries.\footnote{184} While scholars have speculated over the form and function of the diagram, on close inspection it is positively identifiable as a representation of P.3538’s maṇḍala ritual.\footnote{185} This diagram gives us an opportunity to see how the scriptural account of the maṇḍala and was conceived of as a visual image. The depiction of the seals in the diagram provides insight into the confusing relationship between icons, images, and mudrās as adornments and empowering symbols we have seen thus far. Below, I will explain the sections of this maṇḍala diagram and relate them to P.3538 and other relevant texts.

\footnote{183} Copp, the Body Incantatory, 96.

\footnote{184} Zwalf, Buddhism: Art and Faith, 222.

\footnote{185} Copp, the Body Incantatory, 99; Fraser, Performing the Visual, 153; Zwalf, Buddhism: Art and Faith, 222.
The outermost section of Ch.00189 has eight prominent areas of illustration and a top border that is not carried through to the full extent on the other three sides. On each of the sides, there is tiered area depicting water located under each of the gates of the next courtyard. These four pools are presumably the water of the four great seas mentioned in the manuscript. In three out of the four of these water pools, there are illustrations of deities, but the comments written on the sheet note that they are incorrectly placed.\textsuperscript{186} These comments are consistent with P.3538’s \textit{maṇḍala} which places this group of deities in the following courtyard. In each of the diagram’s four corners is a three-tiered Mount Sumeru. As already mentioned, this coincides with instructions to draw an amulet in T.1154 and the \textit{maṇḍala} instructions in P.3538, if we consider the “four jeweled mountains” as comparable to four bejeweled Sumeru mountains.\textsuperscript{187}

Various types of trees border the top margin of the diagram, but on the other three sides, the trees are sporadically depicted between bejeweled flower garlands. While the trees are consistent with the various types of flowering and jewel trees mentioned in P.3538, the flower garlands are not included in this courtyard in the manuscript. They could have been added to adorn Mount Sumeru with jewels; however, they have dark lines drawn through them, perhaps indicating they are also incorrectly placed. On the bottom left side, the furthest left notation states, “open an entry for the incantation master

\textsuperscript{186} Fraser, \textit{Performing the Visual}, 153-54.

\textsuperscript{187} Copp, \textit{the Body Incantatory}, 97.
to enter in this corner” (ci jiao kai zhoushi churu 此角開咒師出入). The southwest corner is exactly where P.3538 details the entrance to maṇḍala should be located.

Moving inward, the next courtyard is divided into twenty-eight sections. Most of these sections contain an object-image surrounded in spiraling flames, resting in the center of a lotus flower. One of the twenty-eight lotus flowers is centered under each of the four gates on the four sides of the courtyard. Within the gates to the north and south a pair of hand gestures is drawn, and in the east and west there are two pairs of feet. Beneath the four gates and above the water pools from the last courtyard is a deity positioned adjacent to one of the twenty-eight lotus flowers. Further comments near each of the gates point out the problems with the depicted layout, indicating that the mudrās (shouyin 手印) should be moved over and the deities should centered under the gates. Corresponding marks on a depicted seal next to the gate specifies it is not correctly placed and should be moved. Other notations in the corners of this courtyard state that the images should be moved to make room for the Heavenly Kings to be placed on each corner, but they are not illustrated. These notes correspond to the ambiguity present in P.3538’s manuscript when compared to the T.1058 instructions on creating the maṇḍala.

Taking these comments into consideration, this border should appear to have thirty-six spaces total if room is made for these eight deities.

Twenty-eight is a significant number in the Nīlakanṭha/Qianshou cluster. We find twenty-eight partitions in both P.3538 and in the maṇḍala diagram. In Indic lore, twenty-

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188 Marcus Bingenheimer, personal communication, March 26, 2015.
189 Fraser, Performing the Visual, 153.
eight was the number of divisions of yakṣas that are commanded by Pañcika, a deity that later merged with Vaiśravana, the Heavenly King of the Northern Direction.\textsuperscript{190} Besides the mudrā that summons the twenty-eight divisions in T.1057 already mentioned, Reis-Habito also found reference to twenty-eight protector spirits in T.1068.\textsuperscript{191} In T.1060, Avalokiteśvara states that he will command twenty-eight divisions of great supernatural beings (da xianzhong 大仙眾) led by the Peacock King (Kongque wang 孔雀王, Skt. Mayūrarāja) to protect the one who correctly recites the dhāraṇī.\textsuperscript{192} These beings are regarded as the same group of supernatural beings listed in the eight divisions, which includes nagas, devas, rākṣasas, yakṣas, and so forth. An ink and color silk painting found at Dunhuang dating to the 9\textsuperscript{th} century demonstrates the association of the Peacock King and the Thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara, who performs many of the object holding mudrās found in T.1060.\textsuperscript{193} Reis-Habito claims that the number of twenty-eight divisions of beings in itself was not significant and was used to indicate a large amount, in the context of this maṇḍala. The number twenty-eight, however, is significant because it connotes these twenty-eight (or many) divisions mentioned in both T.1060 and T.1057 to varying degrees as protectors of the dharma and the dhāraṇī practitioner and as associations with Avalokiteśvara’s power to summon and command them.

\textsuperscript{190} Vaiśravana is also the title of Kubera, and both of these deities are included in the maṇḍala. Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism. s. v. “Kubera”; Frédéric, Buddhism, 244-45.

\textsuperscript{191} Reis-habito, Die Dhāraṇī des Großen Erbarmens, 229.

\textsuperscript{192} “我遣金色孔雀王, 二十八部大仙眾, 常當擁護受持者.” CBETA/T.20.1060.108.b19-20. The expression ‘kongque wang 孔雀王’ is also used for the Maurya kings of India, and could point to Aśoka as the protector of the dharma, or it could also be connected to the Jātaka tale of the Golden Peacock who spoke incantations of protection against snakes. Waddell, “The ‘Dhāraṇī’ Cult in Buddhism,” 166.

\textsuperscript{193} Zwalf, Buddhism: Art and Faith, 221. This item is numbered OA 1919.1-1.035.
Of the depicted seals that are readily discernible in this section, some are the same as the seals mentioned in P.3538. Others are not mentioned in the manuscript but are found in T.1060 as the icons the mudrās are named after. There are also some images that are difficult to identify with certainty, either because of the depictions themselves are not clear or because there are notations written over them. Of the seals listed in P.3538, we can find a sword, trident, conch, vajra mallet, wish-fulfilling jewel, axe, skull-topped staff, bejeweled wheel, vināyaka, two gesticulating hand depictions, and two pairs of feet in the diagram. Of the images on the diagram not found in P.3538 but in T.1060, there is a bow, an arrow, a dharma wheel composed of two crossed vajras, and two three-pronged vajras, oriented horizontally and vertically. There is also ribbon-like ornamentation that curls up on each side of the icon, beginning near the lotus base (but not incorporated into the hands and feet seals). This is reminiscent of the instructions in T.1154 to paint lotus flowers with silk tied to the stem. There are no descriptions of a decoration of this variety found in T.1058 or P.3538.

P.3538 instructs the creator of the maṇḍala to surround twenty-eight seals with flames, but the terminology employed is different than that describing the flaming auras of the wish-fulfilling jewels found elsewhere in the maṇḍala. This diagram seems to mirror this difference. The flaming auras surrounding the seals are more reminiscent of the aureoles accompanying bodhisattvas or deities than the flames of the wish-fulfilling

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194 Copp, *the Body Incantatory*, 98-9. Copp has also noted the similarity between T.1154 and the diagram.

195 *Guang yan* 光黯 (brilliant splendor) is to be painted surrounding the four sides of the wheel and on the directional jewels. P.3538.12-13. *Guang huoyan* 光火焰 (bright flames) are to surround the seals. P.3538.28. See Chapter 7 for further discussion.
jewels; they are wider, more densely shaped, and appear less like ordinary fire. All of the
seals have an aura except for the two vināyaka figures, the two hastamudrās, and the two
pairs of feet.196

In the seal list of P.3538, the hand seal is followed by the foot seal. While a hand
seal can be an icon, the foot is not an icon depicted as a hand-held object nor is it an
iconic image usually associated with Avalokiteśvara. Considered together, these seals do
not seem to bear similarities with the previous list as items that are icons (with the
exception of the vināyaka seal, which is also not an icon depicted with
Avalokiteśvara).197 This grouping of unrelated seals together with seals as icons indicates
a distinction between icon seals and symbolic seals.

The absence of aureoles as symbols of spiritual potency on last three types of
seals mentioned is evidence that the icon seals—the images of objects that are also icons
of the bodhisattva—are meant to depict the adornments of bodhisattvas and by proxy, a
bodhisattva, a buddha, or deity, while the non-iconic seals do not.198 This demonstrates

196 Admittedly, one of the vināyaka figures has another animal face instead of an
elephant when compared with the elephant-headed figure, yet both have similar poses. I
will refer to them both as vināyaka for the sake of the discussion.

197 The vināyaka does have an association with Avalokiteśvara as the consort of the
Buddhist Gaṇeśa. Cave 285 in Dunhuang contains a picture of Gaṇeśa from Northern
Wei to Tang Dynasty. Lancaster, “Gaṇeśa in China,” 277. The vināyaka were considered
a real nuisance during the medieval period and there are multiple sources in the Chinese
canon on dealing with them. According to Lewis Lancaster, in another scripture
attributed to Zhitong, there is a spell to banish the vināyaka. Lancaster, “Gaṇeśa in China,”
279; 觀自在菩薩隨心呪經, T.1103. The preface of T.1057a also contains mention
vināyakas as demons that hinder virtuous practice (真諦律師。聞此僧由來。云有大力

198 Frédéric, Buddhism, 60-1.
that there was a perceived difference in meaning between seals *qua* icons and the seals *qua* images *qua* ritual devices. This difference grounds the second interpretation of T.1058 given earlier: that the list of seals in the ritual was distinguished from ‘various hand seals’ (*shouyin* 手印).

This interpretation coincides with the examples of mudrās from the two sūtras, T.1057 and T.1060. The mudrās in T.1057 function as ritual devices and are used as symbols that empower a ritual. T.1060’s actual hand gestures were not disclosed within the sūtra and images of them found elsewhere display more variety than the icons they hold. T.1060’s mudrās perform some of the same ritual functions as those of T.1057, but are placed next to a list of the benefits of reciting the dhāraṇī and also provide benefits similar to dhāraṇīs. T.1060’s mudrās are also named after icons of Avalokiteśvara, which represent certain attributes or adornments of the bodhisattva, and by proxy the bodhisattva himself. Hence T.1060’s mudrās are both icons and ritual devices. To phrase it in another way, T.1057’s mudrās are hand gestures that function as symbols of empowerment, while T.1060’s mudrās are hand gestures that function as iconic images and symbols of empowerment because they directly connect to the bodhisattva in the same way that dhāraṇīs do. T.1057’s mudrās do not explicitly represent a bodhisattva in the same way an icon or dhāraṇī does by creating a direct connection through consistant artistic depictions or a narrative origin story. As a ritual device, T.1057’s mudrās certainly represent something above the hand gesture itself, but where the power they convey derives from is not overtly disclosed. Rather it is part of the framework of the ritual that, together with the other ritual elements, creates a desired effect. These symbols
as ritual devices have a certain degree of generality and flexibility in possibilities for interpretation.

However, the images depicted with lotuses in the ritual for creating amulets in T.1154 present a problem regarding images as icons and images as ritual devices. T.1154 is not as closely associated with Avalokiteśvara as previous two dhāraṇī sūtras are. Avalokiteśvara is only mentioned once as a deity that one can include within the center of an amulet. The difference between the borders of T.1154 and P.3538 is that in T.1154 the images, even though they are icons, surround the border of any of a group of possible deities, depending on the person for whom the amulet was created. This corroborates Copp’s assessment that the border symbols of pratisarā amulets depict ritual preparation. These images function as mudrās in the sense of ritual devices and accompany the written dhāraṇī in the same way that mudrās accompany the ritual recitation of them.

The maṇḍala ritual of P.3538 is structured similar to the ritual and amulets of T.1154. The diagram’s border images and manuscript’s seals draw on the connection between icon and mudrā solidified in T.1060, and lock it within the context of Avalokiteśvara’s thousand-handed manifestation. The images of T.1154 become icons wreathed in flaming aureoles, and new images of empowerment are included, as is seen from the vināyaka, hastamudrās, and pairs of feet seals. Yet, these images are not the

199 Copp, the Body Incantatory, 92. Both Avalokiteśvara and Indra are mentioned to be depicted together.

200 Copp, the Body Incantatory, 94-5.
only content shared between T.1154 and P.3538’s *maṇḍala* ritual. Many of the deities surrounding the center of the *maṇḍala* are also mentioned in T.1154.

**Deities**

One of the two sets of four deities described in P.3538 belonging to the courtyard depicting the seals is the four Heavenly Kings (*Si tianwang* 四天王, Skt. *Caturmahārājā* also referred to as *Lokapālā*). The four Heavenly Kings can be found in early Buddhism as guardians to Indra’s heaven and rulers of each of the four directional continents from their home on Mount Sumeru.²⁰¹ P.3538 instructs that they are to be placed with their attendants, but the attendants are not mentioned or depicted in the diagram at all while the Heavenly Kings are only present via inscribed notes on the corners where they should be placed.

The other set of deities from P.3538 from this courtyard are Xuyanmo tianwang 須炎摩天王 in the south, Shui shen, 水神 in the west, Jupiluo shen 俱毗囉神 in the north, and Tian tongnan 天童男 in the east. Xuyanmo tianwang is Suyāma, King of the Suyāma Heaven, one of the realms of desire (Skt. *kāmadhātu*).²⁰² He is also a ruler of the underworld and one of the ten kings of hell.²⁰³ In T.1154, he appears as a ruler of Hell in a story demonstrating the benefits of a monk receives who dies and goes to Hell wearing a *dhāraṇī* amulet.²⁰⁴ In the southern gate on the diagram, there is a deity holding a trident

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²⁰¹ Frédéric, *Buddhism*, 241-42.
²⁰² *Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, s. v. “Yama”.
²⁰³ Frédéric, *Buddhism*, 255.
²⁰⁴ Copp, *the Body Incantatory*, 73.
and wearing an elaborate costume, possibly armor, but none of the commonly known depictions of Yāma match this image.\textsuperscript{205}

In the west, Shui shen, 水神 is the name used in Chinese to refer to Varuṇa, a Vedic deity later associated with bodies of water. He is depicted in Japan and esoteric maṇḍalas as seated on a naga or turtle.\textsuperscript{206} However, in the diagram the western deity is seated on two fish tails and holds a staff or spear.

In the northern gate is Jupiluo shen 俱毗羅神, i.e. the deity Kubera or Kuvera. Known as the god of wealth and king of the yakṣas, he is also the son of Viśravaṇa, making his epithet Vaiśravaṇa, son of Viśravaṇa.\textsuperscript{207} Kubera is placed in the north in the direction with which he is associated. The figure in the north is almost identical to the southern figure, which might indicate that the iconography of these deities was not a primary concern in this diagram but their presence as a symbol was. Kubera is the only deity from the maṇḍala not named in T.1154; however the name in P.3538, Jupiluo shen 俱毗羅神, is a specific phonetic rendering that does not occur in the Taishō.\textsuperscript{208}

\textsuperscript{205} See Sawa, Butsuzō zuten, 143 for a corresponding image.

\textsuperscript{206} Frédéric, Buddhism, 363.

\textsuperscript{207} Frédéric, Buddhism, 243-45.

\textsuperscript{208} Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism lists him as Jufeiluo 俱吠囉, king of the yakṣas, while Jupiluo 俱毗羅 could be Kumbhīra, the name of a yakṣa mentioned in the Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary. Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism, s. v. “Kubera”; Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary. s. v. “Kumbhīra.” T.1058’s Jufeiluo tian 俱吠囉天 only occurs in two other texts in the Taishō, T.952 and T.1092.
The last deity of this set from the eastern side of the maṇḍala is Tian tongnan 天童男, literally translated as ‘heavenly youth’. This name most likely refers to a Buddhist form of Skanda, the son of Śiva. Skanda is known in Japan as Kumāra-ten, and can be found in a Tiantai Garbhadhātū maṇḍala from Japan dated to the Kamakura period. Kumāra is also mentioned as a deity to be depicted in the center of an amulet sheet from T.1154. However, there is another deity that also shares a similar name, Vajrakumāra (Jingang tongzi 金剛童子). This deity is a wrathful form of Amitabhā and can be found in Japanese Buddhist artwork or more locally, on a Dunhuang amulet, numbered EO 1182, fiercely brandishing weapons. Vajrakumāra could be who the text refers to if ‘tongzi 童子’, the parallel name found in S.2498(2), was a shortened form of ‘jingang tongzi 金剛童子’, Vajra youth. However, the diagram makes it clear that in the east there is a youthful robed figure with his hands clasped together in prayer that bears some resemblance to a pose Skanda takes, and not that of a wrathful deity.

Moving towards the center, the next courtyard is filled with intersecting lines forming a diagonal hashing pattern. In it, there is a note that says, “golden loosened rope” (jin sheng xie dao 金繩解道). This is a closely phrased parallel to how the maṇḍala

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209 Ten Grotenhuis, Japanse Mandalas, 92. In T.1058, he is called Jumoluo tianshen 俱摩羅天神, a phonetic rendering of Kumāra, which means ‘youth’ in Sanskrit. See Frédéric, Buddhism, 266-67.


211 Frédéric, Buddhism, 216; Copp, the Body Incantatory, 117.

212 Frédéric, Buddhism, 266.

213 Zwalf, Buddhism: Art and Faith, 222.
ritual in S.2498(2) describes this section.²¹⁴ The concept here is that the lines are to resemble a loosened cord or net, which is most easily understood in the same phrase from T.1058, “sheng jiao dao 纏交道.”²¹⁵

In the next courtyard of the maṇḍala there are four lotus flowers with a final set of four deities, one placed on each of the four corners on a three-tiered Sumeru throne. Out of the four images of deities, only the deity on the northeast throne is easily identifiable as Maheśvara.²¹⁶ He is bare-chested and has six arms—the two lowest hold a staff across his lap. Behind him on both sides there appears to an outline of an elephant head. The other three deities are depicted in a rather non-descript way wearing robes, the folds of which are generously detailed. Each of these deities are crowned with simple head aureoles, circular in shape, although only the top line of the circle is visible on Maheśvara’s head. Two of the deities on the left (western) side hold up a hand in what appears to be the “threatening gesture” (qike yin 祈克印, Skt. tarjanīmudrā), indicating they are guardian deities.²¹⁷

Besides the Deva of Great Freedom (Da zizai tianshen 大自在天神, Skt. Maheśvara) in the northeast already mentioned, P.3538 indicates the southwest deity is the King of the Great Brahmā Heaven, Da fantian wang 大梵天王. In the northwest

²¹⁴ S.2498(2), Line 14: “jin jie sheng dao 金解繩道” (The ‘dao 道’ is used as a classifier in this phrase).

²¹⁵ CBETA/T.20.1058.100a21.

²¹⁶ Sawa, Butsuzō zuten, 152. The image’s face, featuring a a furrowed brow, third eye, and crescent shaped crown especially resembles common depictions of Maheśvara.

²¹⁷ Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism. s. v. “tarjanīmudrā”.
corner is Tian dishi 天帝釋, an abbreviated transcription of Šakra-devanam-indra, the Buddhist Indra.\textsuperscript{218} In the southeast corner is Da Weide tianshen 大威德天神, Deva of Great Authority or Majesty.

Out of the four deities of this inner group, the first three listed above appear in the *Lotus Sūtra* and *Śūraṅgama Sūtra* as *upāya* forms (Ch. *Fangbian* 方便) of Avalokiteśvara, and are also mentioned in T.1154 as deities in the *dhāraṇī* transmission narrative.\textsuperscript{219} These deities and many other heavenly beings also appear in the narrative in T.1060. The last deity, Weide tianshen, is replaced in T.1058 by Naluoyan tianwang 那羅延天王, a transcription of Nārāyaṇa.\textsuperscript{220} Nārāyaṇa, a later form of Viṣṇu, is often depicted seated on a garuḍa and is a king of first of the Dhyāna Heavens.\textsuperscript{221} In T.1154, Viṣṇu’s name is phonetically rendered in the narrative that mentions the other three deities.\textsuperscript{222} P.3538’s deity, Deva of Great Authority (Daweide tianshen 大威德天神, Skt. Mahātejas) also appears in the *Lotus Sūtra* in the first chapter as part of the assembly gathered around the Buddha as a garuḍa king alongside three other garuḍa kings.\textsuperscript{223} There is some evidence from Dunhuang that supports Mahātejas in the silk painting of the thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara already mentioned. Besides the Peacock King accompanying the

\textsuperscript{218} Frédéric, *Buddhism*, 261.


\textsuperscript{220} CBETA/T.20.1058.100a18.

\textsuperscript{221} Sawa, *Butsuzō zuten*, 153; *Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*. s. v. “Nārāyaṇa”.

\textsuperscript{222} CBETA/T.20.1154.637c08-09.

\textsuperscript{223} CBETA/T.9.262.2b02-03.
bodhisattva, two of the four Heavenly Kings and “the Golden-winged Bird King, riding a phoenix” also appear.\textsuperscript{224} However, in the textual accounts it is unclear if Mahātejas actually refers to Viṣṇu as Nārāyaṇa and the two figures have merged. ‘Daweide’ as a term appears in T.1154 as an adjective describing the power of the dhāraṇī.\textsuperscript{225} 

Shinohara has noted that this group of heavenly deities along with the four Heavenly Kings also appears in fascicle 11 of T.901, Atīkūṭa’s Dhāraṇī collection sūtra, in a narrative that explains how they become guardian deities.\textsuperscript{226} These four deities are variously considered protectors of the dharma and are all Kings of heavenly realms (or of heavenly beings).\textsuperscript{227} While T.1058 only mentions these deities should look furious—an additional indication that they are guardians—P.3538 does not mention any specific details on the deities’ appearances, which may be why the images on the maṇḍala diagram do not resemble common iconography.

In the diagram on each of the sides of the square border are four depictions that alternate between a lotus with a centered jewel wreathed in flames and a flower garland encircling a single blossom. P.3538 describes painting one bejeweled flower garland of sixteen blossoms on each side in between four three-tiered mount Sumeru seats and deities. This difference between P.3538 and the diagram is the first significant divergence from the scriptural account. The comments next to the four deities in this courtyard say


\textsuperscript{225} CBETA/T.20.1154.637c12-13.

\textsuperscript{226} Shinohara, \textit{Spells, Images, and Maṇḍalas}, 40.

\textsuperscript{227} One enumeration is from Kūkai’s twenty-eight protectors of the dharma and servants of Avalokiteśvara. Frédéric, \textit{Buddhism}, 166-71.
they are upside down and that their heads should face the center; the same is true for the lotus and jewel seals on the four sides.\textsuperscript{228}

The final interior section of the diagram is split into two areas. In the outer section there is a 108-spoked wheel adorned with jewels on the spokes and rim. The jewels on the four corners of the wheel are surrounded by curling flames. There are characters near the outer edge of the wheel to indicate the orientation of the diagram. Within the center of the wheel is a lotus flower with a clearly visible lotus seed pod as the focal point of the maṇḍala. Radiating outward are thirty-two petals with small circles on each, presumably P.3538’s wish-fulfilling jewel adornments.\textsuperscript{229} P.3538’s instructions to paint this area are largely the same; P.3538 adds that brilliant radiance should be painted on the four corners in addition to those surrounding the four wish-fulfilling jewels in the maṇḍala diagram. P.3538 also mentions that the center of the lotus is where the sandalwood image and banner of Avalokiteśvara is to be placed, but there is no indication of this in the diagram.

It is apparent that this diagram is much closer to the Dunhuang manuscript ritual than the canonical version in T.1058. This sūtra prescribes placing gates in the courtyard containing the inner group of deities, for golden flower ornaments to be painted in the loosed cord section, and for the borders of the maṇḍala to be decorated with vajra mallets lined up next to each other. The trees in the outermost courtyard should be much more numerous than is represented (even if “108” does not specify an exact number), and there is a remark to that effect on the southern border. Also, T.1058’s gate for the incantation

\textsuperscript{228} “The top of the lotuses and jewels on the four sides must face the center” ($Qi$ simian lianhua ji baozhu bing dingtou xin 其四面蓮花及寶珠並頂頭心).

\textsuperscript{229} P.3538.13.
master is south of the west gate, whereas the notations on the diagram indicate the gate is at the corner or slightly to the east of it on the southern side instead of the western side.\footnote{CBETA/T.20.1058.100b08-09.}

**Imagery**

If one takes into account the narrative cited earlier from T.1060 that describes Avalokiteśvara being born from a lotus and the general significance of lotuses as a symbol of purity, it is hardly a surprise that a manḍala centered on Avalokiteśvara includes them. However, it is significant that the number of petals in the central flower is thirty-two. While a lotus flower with eight petals is frequently encountered in manḍalas and dhāraṇī sūtras, the number thirty-two points towards the thirty-two characteristics of a Buddha or more likely the thirty-two forms of Avalokiteśvara found in the Šūraṃgama Sūtra.\footnote{Da foding rulai miyin xiuzheng liaoyi zhupusa wanxing shoulengyan jing 大佛頂如來密因修證了義諸菩薩萬行首楞嚴經. CBETA/T.20.945.128b28-129a23; Yü, Kuan-yin, 46.} The upāya forms in the Lotus and Šūraṃgama Sūtra are more or less the same, and in them we find the King of the Brahmā Heaven, Indra, Maheśvara, and the four Heavenly Kings.\footnote{Yü, Kuan-yin, 47. See CBETA/T.9.262.57a27-b01.} The Šūraṃgama Sūtra also distinctly relates these upāya forms with Avalokiteśvara’s thousand-arm and eye (and other body parts) form, portraying him as a mudrā wielder and mantra holder.\footnote{Yü, Kuan-yin, 47-8.}

T.1080, entitled Dhāraṇī sūtra of the wheel of wish-fulfillment, another sūtra attributed to Bodhiruci that is also found in P.3920, includes a visualization manḍala that
resembles the interior area of P.3538’s ritual.\textsuperscript{234} The \textit{maṇḍala} in T.1080 has a central lotus blossom with thirty-two petals where Wish-fulfilling Jewel Wheel Avalokiteśvara is seated.\textsuperscript{235} It is interesting that a wheel adorned with wish-fulfilling jewels is in the center of one \textit{maṇḍala} and the Wish-fulfilling Wheel bodhisattva is in the other. This may be due to the inherent meaning of the jeweled wheel itself symbolizing the golden wheel treasure of the \textit{cakravartin} or it could be a glimpse in the development of an emerging bodhisattva form from a historically previous one. This \textit{sūtra} is also attributed to the same time, place of translation, and translator as T.1058.\textsuperscript{236} Many of the same heavenly deities named in P.3538’s ritual also appear in this scripture, including Yāma and the four Heavenly Kings. However, the icons of the deities are described in detail here instead of the mere mention of their names and places on the \textit{maṇḍala} in P.3538.\textsuperscript{237}

The presence of heavenly deities in \textit{dhāraṇī} rituals centered on Avalokiteśvara and their presence in the \textit{Lotus Sūtra} lineage of scriptures seems to indicate that these \textit{sūtras} may have been understood as part of their own tradition inside the greater \textit{dhāraṇī} ritual complex independent of texts that prominently feature \textit{vajra} deities, buddhas, and other bodhisattvas. Of course, there are \textit{sūtras}, such as the previously mentioned \textit{Dhāraṇī collection sūtra}, that include both types of deities. However, it is clear that \textit{dhāraṇī} rituals with this specific grouping of deities were associated with Avalokiteśvara on their own apart from ritual or esoteric texts. This fact could indicate that rituals, such as P.3538,

\textsuperscript{234} \textit{Ruyilun tuoluoni jing 如意輪陀羅尼經}, T.1080.

\textsuperscript{235} CBETA/T.20.1080.193b24-26.

\textsuperscript{236} CBETA/T.55.2154.569b24-27.

\textsuperscript{237} Shinohara, \textit{Spells, Images, and Manḍalas}, 114.
were not only a part of a separate dhāraṇī ritual practice, but may have also been a tradition within the greater ritual tradition that existed prior to and concurrent with other burgeoning forms of Buddhist ritual that more frequently include other deity, Buddha, and bodhisattva groupings. Additional research in this area could bring more evidence to light regarding the relative distinction of Avalokiteśvara worship with the worship of Buddhist deities as a whole, and give us an idea of how much overlap there was between the Avalokiteśvara cults (of great compassion and the thousand arms) with others, such as that of Mahāvairocana or the greater tantric movement.

In the last section of this chapter I will examine the imagery of the maṇḍala as a whole. There are three major aspects to the imagery, but their relationships are not perfectly clear and they are not entirely distinct from each other. The first is the trope of the wheel-turning king and its connotations of kingship. This blends in with the second aspect as a visual representation of a heavenly realm. The third aspect is the recurrent symbolism of protection and guardianship.

Although I have only mentioned it in passing thus far, the central wheel of the maṇḍala is rooted in the symbolism of the jeweled wheel of the cakravartin, the wheel-turning king. The image of the jeweled wheel occurs in two places in P.3538: in the center, and as one of the seals mentioned. These two symbols are visible in both places in the maṇḍala diagram. The golden wheel mudrā of T.1060 could also be based on the icon of the golden treasure wheel, an expanded name for the jeweled wheel of the wheel-turning king, one of his seven treasures.238 The golden jewel wheel or golden wheel

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238 Muller, “Digitial Dictionary of Buddhism,” s. v. “金輪”.

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treasure is mentioned in one version of the myth residing on Mount Sumeru, where the
universal wheel-turning king dwells.\textsuperscript{239} We can find other references to the wheel of the
cakravartin king in sūtras that have a connection to P.3538. In T.1154, translated in 693,
Avalokiteśvara is only mentioned once, and is to be depicted in the center of an amulet
made for a cakravartin king.\textsuperscript{240} T.1057, translated in 649, and T.1058, translated in 709,
both mention wheel-turning kings appearing out of Avalokitesvara’s arms in a past life
as a the Buddha Vipaśyin, where he appeared in a demon-vanquishing form.\textsuperscript{241} T.1080,
which also depicts a lotus with thirty-two petals as a seat for the Wish-fulfilling Jewel
Wheel Avalokiteśvara, was attributed to Bodhiruci who translated it in 709 at the same
time as T.1058, just four years after the end of the Empress Wu Zeitan’s reign.

The cakravartin ideal was especially noticeable and politicized in the Tang
dynasty during the time of the Empress Wu Zeitan (684-705), who gave herself the title,
“Cakravartin of the Golden Wheel” soon after a sūtra was translated by Baosiwei (the
same translator attributed to T.1154) that contains a narrative associating the title with
worldly dominion and a prophecy of a cakravartin’s appearance in the world.\textsuperscript{242} A small
group of people who translated texts with cakravartin themes and Avalokiteśvara
dhāraṇī sūtras were thus contemporaneous during the Tang dynasty, and in many cases

\textsuperscript{239} ibid.
\textsuperscript{240} Copp, the Body Incantatory, 92.
\textsuperscript{241} Yi jiang zuoxiangfu mo shen 亦現作降伏魔身. CBETA/T.20.1057a.87b20. The
reference is also found in CBETA/T.20.1057b.94a09 and CBETA/T.20.1058.101c06.
\textsuperscript{242} Orzech, “Esoteric Buddhism Under the Tang,” 270; Reis-Habito, Die Dhāraṇī des
Großen Erbarmens, 49-50.
worked side by side in the capital or in state funded translation centers. The prevalence of deities depicting rulership from Mount Sumeru and the Sumeru icons in the corners of the *maṇḍala* reinforce the idea of an imperial ruler overseeing the regional kingdoms in his domain. While we cannot ignore the political element at play in the symbolism present in translations, the trope itself may also have been reemerging in Buddhist culture and consequently harnessed for political gain, as seen by the mention of *cakravartin* in Zhitong’s translation, which dates prior to the Empress Wu Zeitan’s interregnum. The trope of sovereignty can also be applied inward, as it appears in this paper’s introductory quote. As an inward domain, the wheel symbolizes the *dharma*. The wheel-turning king is he who rules himself and tends to his “sphere,” *i.e.* his intentions, behavior, and outward relations, in accordance with it. The unstoppable nature of the wheel expresses the truth and efficacy of the path to liberation.

The second aspect of the *maṇḍala’s* imagery is the visual depiction of a heavenly or paradise realm. Of the three aspects, the heavenly realm motif is perhaps the most crucial to the ritual itself because it defines the ritual’s context for the practitioner’s transformative experience. This aspect is connected to texts that feature visualization, including T.1057, which also mentions visualizing the deities and witnessing a vision of Avalokiteśvara.

In the *maṇḍala*, the four Mount Sumerus frame the realm within Buddhist mythology, and anchor it to the central axis of the world, directly connected to the upper realms of the gods. The flowering and jewel trees surrounding the borders also symbolize

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a heavenly realm; descriptions of paradise realms often include jeweled and flowering trees. The outer two groups of deities represent the lower realms of desire, the guardians that protect the entranceway into the higher planes, and are tied to more mundane symbols, such as water, and wealth.244 Passing through the gates, we enter into the interior of the heavenly realm itself, depicted by the blue ground with golden intersecting cord.

A similar pattern to the intersecting cord depicted in the maṇḍala can be found in the Pure Land scripture, The Buddha’s Discourse of the Visualization of the Buddha of Infinite Life Sūtra, numbered T.365, if we take into account that P.3538 states the ground of the maṇḍala is to be made blue and that the section is to be painted in “unmixed blue and gold-colored intersecting cord.”245 This trope is among the visualization practices found in the Visualization of the Buddha of Infinite Life Sūtra where the pure land is visualized. The blue ground of the maṇḍala coincides with the fourth visualization of “lapis lazuli ground crisscrossed with gold ropes or cords”.246 In the Lotus Sūtra, the Buddha tells Ānanda that he will be reborn in a future life as a Buddha, and in his lands, the ground will be lapis lazuli.247

The imagery of the paradise realms and the Pure Land sūtras has certain visual elements in common. In her studies of Japanese mandaras, Elizabeth ten Grotenhuis

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244 Ten Grotenhuis, Japanese Mandalas, 3.

245 Foshui guan wuliangshou fo jing 佛說觀無量壽佛經, T.365; P.3538.34-35; P.3538.22.


247 CBETA/T.9.262.29e10.
notes that the *maṇḍalas* employed in the Pure Land sects often contain royal symbolism, such as palace settings.\(^{248}\) Ronald D. Davidson found that the Tarim basin area practiced visualization *abhiṣeka* rites that sometimes alluded to kingship but were used for other purposes, such as purification.\(^{249}\) Visualization as a practice, in P.3538 and in other sources, is connected to images of heavenly or paradise realms, kingship tropes, and Avalokiteśvara, who is both a bodhisattva attending Amitabhā and an autonomous *dharma* wheel-turning being.

While no specific directions on how the *maṇḍala* image is to be utilized (other than entered) appears in the *maṇḍala* method, T.1057a does include a passage instructing one to concentrate on the all the incantation beings (*zhoushen* 呪神) appearing before one’s eyes and Avalokiteśvara will manifest in the form of Ānanda.\(^{250}\) Shinohara notes that this type of language, possibly a form of visualization, was implemented in *dhāraṇī* rituals accompanying *mudrās*, and cites this language appearing in the *Mouli sūtra*, possibly from the 6\(^{th}\) century.\(^{251}\) With the bodhisattva taking the focal point within the *maṇḍala* as the symbol of “absolute truth,” it is much easier to see the ritual necessity for the *dhāraṇī* recitation and great vows of the greatly compassionate bodhisattva mentioned in P.3538 as a practice to gain the spiritual insight attributed to the bodhisattva.

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249 Davidson, “*Abhiṣeka*,” 74.

250 CBETA/T20.1057a.86c08-11.

by entering into his domain and striving acquire his qualities through practices prescribed by him.  

The last aspect of the maṇḍala’s imagery I will discuss is the theme of protection and guardianship. While the depictions of deities who are guardians of the dharma and of the heavenly realms are not uncommon in a maṇḍala, generally speaking, their inclusion in this maṇḍala and the maṇḍala’s association with dhāraṇī amulets in particular warrants further inquiry. Protection from both spiritual and physical harm is often mentioned in the list of the dhāraṇī’s powers in the dhāraṇī sūtras, such as T.1060 and T.1154, and in the latter case wearing the dhāraṇī would bring protection from harm.  

Avalokiteśvara is also known for bestowing protection on people who call out his name. The Lotus Sūtra lists circumstances in which the bodhisattva will appear and protect the sincere from the terrible circumstances that might befall him. The theme of protection is not completely specific to the maṇḍala ritual as a protected enclosure as we normally understand it, but has additional implications because the ritual is linked to both dhāraṇīs and dhāraṇī amulets with protective power and focuses on Avalokiteśvara, who is widely considered a savior.

In exploring the aspects of the maṇḍala’s imagery, we have contextualized them within a larger scriptural framework outside of isolated ritual and maṇḍala studies. We have linked broad observations of themes in rituals and maṇḍalas with the beliefs and narratives surrounding this specific central deity of the maṇḍala. In making these connections apparent, we gain a richer appreciation of how the practitioner may have

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252 Ten Grotenhuis, Japanese Mandalas, 2.

253 Copp, the Body Incantatory, 61.
understood P.3538’s symbolism, and what transformative experience the maṇḍala may have granted him. We also have a basis for understanding what the practitioner’s needs might have been to give him the desire to perform such a ritual.

In summary, the image and deity parallels with T.1154, a text that is part of amulet culture in Dunhuang and beyond, allows us to reconsider the boundaries of how maṇḍala rituals and dhāraṇī amulets as visual practices relate to each other. Copp has found similarities to the amulet sheets described in T.1154 to other dhāraṇī amulets, which is evidence that the symbols of the amulet creation ritual and amulet design from T.1154 were put into practice in the medieval period. These symbols, not attached to mudrās, were placed on amulets as an outer border similarly to those in the maṇḍala diagram, but sometimes without auras indicating any specific potency. Amulet border symbols, like the hands, feet, and vināyaka seals are not mudrās in the sense of an icon such as in T.1060. Rather they functioned as the visual equivalent of a mudrā as ritual devices to accompany a visual depiction of a dhāraṇī. The icons wreathed in flames in P.3538 take the place of the written dhāraṇī as signifying the attributes of a spiritual being and convey the same potency as a dhāraṇī or the mudrā practices in T.1060.

Many of the deities featured in the canonical sūtras T.1060, T.1154, The Lotus Sūtra, the Śūraṃgama Sūtra, and T.1080, are directly associated with Avalokiteśvara. These texts also lack a significant presence of vajra deities and share specific symbols and icons. This indicates that texts such as P.3538 are examples of what could be a tradition of Avalokiteśvara worship that existed during the 7th–8th centuries in China and continued on later in Dunhuang. In this tradition, Avalokiteśvara was not treated as one of a pantheon to be initiated into, but as the focal point for the tradition itself. The deities
that share *maṇḍala* space with Avalokiteśvara are not placed together only according to a certain ritual function; they participate in an extended ritual and narrative history together.

The three themes in the *maṇḍala* ritual are associated directly with Avalokiteśvara’s narrative history and with texts directly associated with P.3538. The *cakravartin* trope signifies Avalokiteśvara is the source of knowledge and the embodiment of the Buddhist teachings and the wheel is the efficacious power of the Buddhist path to lead one to liberation. The heavenly realm and protective deities relate both to Avalokiteśvara as a savior and previous Buddha, but also to other narratives present in the medieval period designating these deities as guardians and of marking the *maṇḍala* itself as protected space.
The existence of P.3538 demonstrates that descriptions of the ritual circulated independently of T.1058. This gives us a framework to reconstruct the process of incorporation of the maṇḍala into T.1057 and its subsequent transformation into T.1058. It also gives us a reason for analyzing the ritual apart from its immediate canonical context. The Tripiṭaka Koreana is the base text for the Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist Canon and while the Taishō references variants from other editions, the Tripiṭaka Koreana represents just one line of textual transmission for a given sūtra. Dunhuang manuscripts provide testimony to other lines of transmission that can give us insight into an incorporation process which may have paralleled T.1058’s origins.

The maṇḍala method of P.3538 is present in four other Dunhuang manuscripts from the Pelliot and Stein Collections, all dating to approximately the same period, between the 9th and 11th centuries. Details and anomalous features present in some of the manuscripts reveal genealogical links between them, indicating they probably shared the same core textual source. In this section I will describe these features, note other particular variations in the ritual, and briefly describe the manuscripts themselves. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to provide an in depth comparative analysis of all the Dunhuang occurrences of the P.3538 ritual or to plunge into the details of each of these manuscripts individually, I will try to approximate the relational distance between them. Instead of describing each noticeable parallel, I have included a chart after the overview.

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of the manuscripts to make the relationships between these texts much clearer than they would be from a description.

Fan/bo 蕃

Besides the list of painted seals in the mandala and the inclusion of the directions to light twenty-eight lamps that is absent from P.3538, there are three anomalous features I have found that I use to judge the strength of the connection between manuscripts. The first of these intriguing parallels is the use of the character ‘fan/bo 蕃’ in referencing a textual source for the maṇḍala. This sentence usually occurs in the first line of the manuscript section. The character could be an abbreviation for Tibet, (tubo/tufan 吐蕃), from the time that Tibet’s power stretched into the western regions of China, during the 7th to 9th centuries. However, could also be a substitute for ‘foreign’ (fan 番). ‘Fan’ appears in the title of the canonical sūtra numbered T.1063, the Western great compassion incantation (Fan Dabei shenzhou 番大悲神咒), another dhāraṇī sūtra connected to Avalokiteśvara.\textsuperscript{255} The Foxue da cidian reads this character as “western regions” (xiyu 西域), and not necessarily Tibet (tufan 吐蕃).\textsuperscript{256} This could indicate any of the regions around Dunhuang, from the western regions of China to west of Yumen Pass, depending on the time period. Dunhuang, during the Guiyijun period, was treated in Chinese official histories written in the Five Dynasties and Song period as both foreign

\textsuperscript{255} While this is indicated as a reconstructed title, the historical usage for the character is sound.

\textsuperscript{256} Foxue da cidian, Reprint ed. s. v. “番大悲神咒”.

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Since *dhāraṇī* sūtras centering on the thousand-handed Avalokiteśvara were first translated and later circulated in the western regions from the Tang to the Guiyijun period, it is probable that this character referred to *maṇḍala* creation methods of Central Asia, either as local version from Dunhuang specifically, or as part of the textual lineage of scriptures stemming more broadly from Central Asia as compared to Northern India.

The Flaming Character ‘熒’

The second parallel found in these manuscripts involves the use of an unusual character variant in a specific position within the text. T.1058 instructs for one to paint bright flames (*huo yan* 火焰) in three areas of the *maṇḍala*: 1) around the outside of the central wheel, 2) on the wish-fulfilling jewels in the center of lotus flowers in the four corners outside the central wheel, and 3) around each of the seals painted on the lotus flowers in the twenty-eight sections. This term is realized in the same passages in P.3538 in two different ways. When referring to the central wheel and wish-fulfilling jewels, P.3538 uses the term ‘brilliant radiance’ (*guang yan* 光艷). When referring to the auras surrounding the seals in the twenty-eight partitions, it uses the term ‘bright flames’,

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257 Rong states two Five Dynasties official histories (*Jiu Wudaishi* and *Xin Wudaishi*) group Dunhuang with Tibet and one Song period history (*Songshi*) refers to it as foreign. Rong, *Eighteen Lectures*, 7.

258 Sichuan and Central Asia are the two places where the Thousand-hand cult was most prevalent and where one can find many depictions of the bodhisattva in that form. As I have already noted, Reis-Habito suggests that T.1060 was translated in Khotan in Central Asia and the thousand-arm cult of Avalokiteśvara also had a presence there prior to the 7th century.

259 CBETA/T.20.1058.100a10-12; CBETA/T.20.1058.100a28.
(guang huoyan 光火焰) but expresses this with a unique character, ‘xian 焰’.\footnote{‘焰’ is pronounced ‘xian’ according to the Kanxi cidian, and was used to denote a type of fish. T.1058 does not use ‘guang 光’.
} In the manuscripts this character is actually a scribal error combining the two characters ‘火焰’ (written vertically) into one ‘焰’, which was retained when it was copied into other manuscripts: P.2498(2), P.3538, S.1210(3), and P.3920. The appearance of ‘焰’ points to a stemmatic relationship between these four manuscripts. The manuscript, S.2716, does not have this character or T.1058’s ‘火焰’.

‘The Rest is in the Sūtra’

The third peculiar parallel found in some of the manuscripts is a line near or at the end of the text that instructs one to look for further details in the sūtra. The exact wording varies, but the intention is not found in T.1058 itself, for obvious reasons. In P.3538, for example, the last sentence reads, “The rest is detailed in the sūtra” (Yu zhe guang shui zai ben jing zhong 餘者廣説在本經中).\footnote{P.3538.58.} This sentence signifies the awareness of the scribe that this maṇḍala creation method belonged to a larger text that included details that were left out, such as the dhāraṇī and the twelve mudrās—information that would be necessary to perform the ritual according to the instructions. With the three anomalies introduced, I will now give a brief description of the four other manuscripts in the cluster that all share the same maṇḍala ritual.
Other Dunhuang Manuscripts

S.2498

The first manuscript I will discuss is S.2498. It is entitled, “Fu talismans of the Bodhisattva Who Perceives the World’s Sounds” (Guanshiyin pusa fuyin 觀世音菩薩符印) cataloged in two sections.262 The Descriptive Catalogue of the Chinese Manuscripts from Tunhuang in the British Museum by Lionel Giles dates this manuscript to the 8th century; however, Hirai Yūkei dated this manuscript to 850-1000 C.E. based on paper and the calligraphy.263 The first section contains drawings (fu talismans) and an altar diagram in addition to a collection of dhāraṇī connected to Avalokiteśvara, of both canonical and apocryphal material.264 The second section of the manuscript is entitled, “Another practice text [on the] method [to create] a maṇḍala of the Greatly Compassionate [One]”.265 The end title is “Altar method (one juan)” and there are some additional dhāraṇī writings contained in three columns after it.266 This is the manuscript I chose to supply the reconstructed text for the damaged area in the first folio of P.3538 included in the translation. S.2498(2) has been briefly compared to the T.1058 maṇḍala in the Dunhuang mi jiao wen xian lun gao by Li Xiaorong, who identifies both S.2498 and S.2716 with T.1058, although in Giles’ Descriptive Catalogue neither of these

262 Giles, Descriptive Catalogue, 206.
264 Giles, Descriptive Catalogue, 206.
265 “Dabei tanfa bei xingben 大悲壇法別行本”.
266 “Tanfa yijuan 壇法一卷”.
manuscripts are matched with T.1058’s maṇḍala ritual section. S.2498(2) is a fairly close parallel to P.3538, but it contains additional material not found in P.3538. The first line of text from S.2498(2) includes the first line of P.3538 with the addition of the title already mentioned.

S.2716

The next manuscript I will examine is S.2716, a short manuscript dated in Giles’ Descriptive Catalogue to the 10th century and entitled Method [of creating] the maṇḍala of the Greatly Compassionate [One]. This manuscript is also not identified in the Descriptive Catalogue with T.1058, although as already mentioned, Li has properly identified it. Like P.3538, it also only contains this one work and is therefore a short manuscript, measuring 30 x 43cm. It has three vertical lines of text on the verso. Unfortunately, this manuscript is not available as a high quality digital file and the available facsimile is difficult to read. However, it does bear some resemblance to the merging of introductory lines from T.1057 with the beginning of the maṇḍala practice ritual similar to that of P.3920, which I will explain below in more detail.

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267 Li, Dunhuang mi jiao, 91.


269 Dabei mantuluo fa 大悲慢荼羅法.

270 Giles, Descriptive Catalogue, 214.

271 Huang, Dunhuang bao zang, 465.
S.1210

The next manuscript, S.1210, has already been mentioned regarding the titles of the other two sūtras contained within it. This manuscript has three sections: the first is T.1060, the second is T.1057a, and the third is the now familiar maṇḍala creation method. This manuscript’s maṇḍala ritual is also not identified with T.1058 in catalogs. There is no front title for the third section and the back title is written in the opposite direction, the “Incantation dhāraṇī of the Bodhisattva with a Thousand Hands and a Thousand Eyes Who Perceives the World’s Sounds”. Although it does not include ‘great compassion’ in its rather extended end title, the attribute is found in the source reference. Additionally, the attributes of ‘thousand hands and eyes’ and the wording for ‘incantation’ (shenzhou 神呪) are the same as the end title of T.1060 in the first section of this manuscript. This is evidence that this ritual was not only considered a part of T.1057a, but also as part of T.1060 and the T.1060-T.1057a grouping.

P.3920

The last Dunhuang manuscript I will mention is P.3920 from the Pelliot collection, dating to 900-1000, and formatted in the pothi style. This manuscript has been included

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273 Neither the Descriptive Catalogue nor the Yingguo guojia tushuguancang dunhuang yishu has identified the third section of the manuscript as a parallel to T.1058.

274 Qianshou qianyan guanshiyin pusa tuoluoni shenzhou jing 千手千眼觀世音菩薩陀羅尼神呪經. As already mentioned, the previous section, T.1057a, has an end title reads, “Qianyan qianbi guanshiyin tuoluoni jing (juan xia)千眼千臂觀世音菩薩陀羅尼經卷下.” Fang, Yingguo guojia 8-9.

275 Fang, Yingguo guojia, 8-9.
in a number of studies, and has even had the term “chain scriptures” coined after it. It contains a number of sūtras and dhāraṇīs (twelve sections by the Pelliot catalog’s breakdown), but only the first, third and fourth sections are of particular interest in this project. The first section begins with the preface to T.1057a (line 83b-c), followed by the complete sūtra of T.1060 with some variations, and ends the section with a continuation of T.1057a, where we find the maṇḍala creation method. The third section is the complete sūtra of T.1154, but it is without the final dhāraṇī. The fourth section contains part of T.1080, the visualization ritual of Wish-fulfilling Wheel Avalokiteśvara previously mentioned, which bears a resemblance to the center courtyards of P.3538’s maṇḍala practice.

In the third part of the first section (section ‘c’ in the catalog), the main textual body begins with a small introduction from T.1057a starting with, “Everybody who practices any of the maṇḍala methods should carefully consult the texts from India.” There are two interesting items of note in the above quote. The first is the striking similarity of it to the first lines in the relevant sections of the other manuscripts. The order of the two sentences has been reversed, ‘shi 時’ denoting time, has been replaced with ‘zhe 者’ to link the two sentences together in a clause, and ‘Indian texts’ (fanben 梵本) has been replaced in S.2498(2) and S.1210(3) with the specific name of a text. The connection is more obvious in S.2498(2) the first line begins with, “jinan han fan Dabei

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276 “Lianxie jing 連寫經.” Schmid, Dunhuang and Central Asia, 368.


“qianyan qianbi jing yun” which uses ‘hanfan 漢蕃’ instead of ‘Chinese’ and ‘Indian’ in addition to the sūtra name. An equivalent passage is not found in T.1058. The ritual instructions after the disclosure of the maṇḍala practice are a fusion between the S.2498(2) and T.1057a. The ritual performance instructions eventually become more predominantly T.1057a with variations, possibly from another unidentified source. While it is outside the scope of this study to address this particular manuscript in more detail, I want to add that it is the only one among the five manuscripts discussed in this paper that actually mentions visualizing or seeing the incantation deities, of a vision of Avalokiteśvara who is said to appear as Ānanda, and a water altar, all of which are derived from the text in T.1057a, and are here included the maṇḍala practice. In this manuscript, the maṇḍala ritual, found alone in P.3538, is seamlessly inserted into the altar creation section of T.1057a and provides a great deal of additional information that T.1058 contains in the canonical version of the ritual.

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279 CBETA/T.20.1057a.86b13. The text parallels T.1057a for three lines until line b13 of the Taishō edition, where it closely parallels S.2498(2). From the second line, 6th character on S.2498(2); P.3920 p. 52 verso, line 3, character 7. The sentence from T.1057a reads, “but the instructions about this Chinese land [say] in a temple.” ‘且論此漢地’ and ‘於寺中’, etc. is added; see the previous sentence in both the manuscript and T.1057a for supplied words. CBETA/T.20.1057a.86b12.

280 P.3920, p. 55, lines 2-4; CBETA/T.20.1057a.86c08-11.
## Table 2. Manuscript Ritual Seals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seals/Handseals</th>
<th>T.1058</th>
<th>P.3538</th>
<th>S.2498(2)</th>
<th>S.2716</th>
<th>S.1210(3)</th>
<th>P.3920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Vajra mallet</em></td>
<td>Vajra mallet-trident</td>
<td>Vajra mallet-halberd</td>
<td>Vajra mallet-trident</td>
<td>Vajra mallet-trident</td>
<td>Vajra mallet-trident</td>
<td>Vajra mallet-trident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>金剛杵印</td>
<td>金剛杵三鈷戟印</td>
<td>金剛杵印</td>
<td>金剛杵印</td>
<td>金剛杵印</td>
<td>金剛杵印</td>
<td>金剛杵印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trident 三戟叉印</td>
<td>三戟叉印</td>
<td>三戟叉印</td>
<td>三戟叉印</td>
<td>三戟叉印</td>
<td>三戟叉印</td>
<td>三戟叉印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Axe 鎮斧印</td>
<td>鎮斧印</td>
<td>鎮斧印</td>
<td>鎮斧印</td>
<td>鎮斧印</td>
<td>鎮斧印</td>
<td>鎮斧印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sword 刀印</td>
<td>刀印</td>
<td>刀印</td>
<td>刀印</td>
<td>刀印</td>
<td>刀印</td>
<td>刀印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double-edged sword 劍印</td>
<td>劍印</td>
<td>劍印</td>
<td>劍印</td>
<td>劍印</td>
<td>劍印</td>
<td>劍印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conch 螺印</td>
<td>Conch 螺柄印</td>
<td>螺印</td>
<td>螺印</td>
<td>螺印</td>
<td>螺印</td>
<td>螺印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabre 伏突印</td>
<td>菰索印</td>
<td>菰索印</td>
<td>菰索印</td>
<td>菰索印</td>
<td>菰索印</td>
<td>菰索印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lasso 質索印</td>
<td>質索印</td>
<td>質索印</td>
<td>質索印</td>
<td>質索印</td>
<td>質索印</td>
<td>質索印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cudgel 棒印</td>
<td>棒印</td>
<td>棒印</td>
<td>棒印</td>
<td>棒印</td>
<td>棒印</td>
<td>棒印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mallet 椲印</td>
<td>椲印</td>
<td>椲印</td>
<td>椲印</td>
<td>椲印</td>
<td>椲印</td>
<td>椲印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parasol 傘蓋印</td>
<td>傘蓋印</td>
<td>傘蓋印</td>
<td>傘蓋印</td>
<td>傘蓋印</td>
<td>傘蓋印</td>
<td>傘蓋印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Wish-fulfilling jewel</em></td>
<td>如意珠印</td>
<td>如意珠印</td>
<td>如意珠印</td>
<td>如意珠印</td>
<td>如意珠印</td>
<td>如意珠印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Yāma's staff</td>
<td>Precious staff</td>
<td>寶棒印</td>
<td>寶棒印</td>
<td>寶棒印</td>
<td>寶棒印</td>
<td>寶棒印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>閻羅王棒印</td>
<td>寶棒印</td>
<td>寶棒印</td>
<td>寶棒印</td>
<td>寶棒印</td>
<td>寶棒印</td>
<td>寶棒印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vināyaka cudgel</td>
<td>Vināyaka</td>
<td>毗那耶迦印</td>
<td>毗那耶迦印</td>
<td>毗那耶迦印</td>
<td>毗那耶迦印</td>
<td>毗那耶迦印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>毘那夜迦棒印</td>
<td>毘那夜迦印</td>
<td>毘那夜迦印</td>
<td>毘那夜迦印</td>
<td>毘那夜迦印</td>
<td>毘那夜迦印</td>
<td>毘那夜迦印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lance 粤印</td>
<td>粤印</td>
<td>粤印</td>
<td>粤印</td>
<td>粤印</td>
<td>粤印</td>
<td>粤印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheel 輪印</td>
<td>Wheel treasure</td>
<td>輪寶印</td>
<td>輪寶印</td>
<td>輪寶印</td>
<td>輪寶印</td>
<td>輪寶印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“and various hand seals”</td>
<td>Hand</td>
<td>手印</td>
<td>手印</td>
<td>手印</td>
<td>手印</td>
<td>手印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>及種種手印</td>
<td>手印</td>
<td>手印</td>
<td>手印</td>
<td>手印</td>
<td>手印</td>
<td>手印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Foot seal</td>
<td>Foot</td>
<td>腳印</td>
<td>腳印</td>
<td>腳印</td>
<td>腳印</td>
<td>腳印</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(bao…yin?)</td>
<td>寶...印</td>
<td>寶...印</td>
<td>寶...印</td>
<td>寶...印</td>
<td>寶...印</td>
<td>寶...印</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3. Manuscript Textual Markers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>T.1058</th>
<th>P.3538</th>
<th>S.2498(2)</th>
<th>S.2716</th>
<th>S.1210(3)</th>
<th>P.3920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No fan/bo</td>
<td>Fan dabei qianyan qianbi jing 蕃大悲千眼千臂經…</td>
<td>Jinan han fan dabei qianyan qianbi jing yun 謹案漢蕃大悲千眼千臂經云…</td>
<td>No fan/bo 蕃. Title: Dabei mantuluo fa 大悲慢荼羅法.</td>
<td>Fan dabei qianyan qianbi jing yun 蕃大悲千眼千臂經云…</td>
<td>No fan/bo 蕃. Inserted within T.1057a text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huoyan</td>
<td>蕃</td>
<td>蕃</td>
<td>No. Only 'guang 光' is used</td>
<td>蕃</td>
<td>蕃</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reference to another text</td>
<td>Yu zhe guangshui zai ben jing zhong 餘者廣說在本經中</td>
<td>Yu zhe ben zhong guangshui 餘者本中廣說</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
<td>Yu zhe ben zhong guangshui 餘者本中廣說</td>
<td>No reference to another text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light 28 lamps</td>
<td>No lamps mentioned</td>
<td>Light 28 lamps</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
<td>‘Light 28 lamps’ is written inline.</td>
<td>Light 28 lamps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the criteria of the seals, three textual anomalies, and various other markers, such as the inclusion of ‘great compassion’, P.2498(2) and S.1210(3) most closely resemble each other. The main differences are that S.1210(3) lacks the wheel seal and has a shorter first line referencing the source sūtra. The next closest to these two manuscripts is P.3538, but it lacks the twenty-eight lamp offering and has slight variations to the wheel and conch seals. Since S.1210(3) includes the lamp offering as an added comment, the precise relationship between these three is not entirely clear, although based on S.1210(3)’s lack of a wheel seal S.2498(2) is a better candidate. P.3920 is the next closest in relation based on the seals and textual anomalies, but it has a great deal of creative reworking of the ritual into T.1057a’s text. It is possible that P.3920’s mandala ritual was derived from S.2498(2) because it contains the wheel seal and the twenty-eight lamps. The last manuscript, S.2716, appears to also be nested in the
same section of text from T.1057a as P.3920, but there could be some deviation from the smooth transition from T.1057a text to where the maṇḍala ritual begins. More research on this last manuscript is needed to give a definitive relation.

In studying these various maṇḍala ritual witnesses, we have found some intriguing connections between them. The reference to the ritual source, specifically the use of ‘fan/bo’, is lost as the ritual becomes more rooted in T.1057a text and is replaced with references to the ground selection method of India and China. While this preliminary study is not enough to date the manuscripts more specifically, to create an order of appearance, or establish firm evidence for designating manuscripts as sources and copies, it provides a textual context for P.3538 and thus a framework in which to construct a sequence for the inclusion of the maṇḍala ritual into T.1057. A more detailed analysis of the content of these manuscripts may cement the genealogical connections I have thus theorized.
CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

We have now come full circle in our exploration of P.3538’s textual and symbolical relationships. In placing P.3538 as our central focus and starting point of inquiry, we have found multiple circles of sources that inform its structure and content. In the process, we have discovered new relationships with canonical texts, manuscripts, a maṇḍala diagram, and dhāraṇī amulets. Through an examination of the use of P.3538’s iconography rather than its ritual format, we narrowed down a context with which to interpret both P.3538’s maṇḍala and that of the diagram, Ch.00189, and found that it draws on themes of kingship and heavenly realms of Mount Sumeru grounded in Avalokiteśvara’s textual history across various genres of Buddhist scripture.

We now know that P.3538 is part of a cluster of Dunhuang manuscripts along with S.1210(3), S2498(2), S.2716, and P.3920, based on the inclusion of a maṇḍala ritual paralleled with some variation in T.1058. Four of the five manuscripts also contain stemmatic evidence informing us that they are part of an extended manuscript family. With the exception of P.3538, the manuscript descriptions in the main descriptive catalogs do not identify the relevant sections of these manuscripts with T.1058. This information should be included in catalogs and studies in order to update these sources and add to their scholastic value.

While P.3538 has been correctly identified with T.1058 in the Catalogue des manuscrits chinois de Touen-Houang, P.3920 has not. P.3920’s entry (specifically section 1c) does reflect a correct attribution of T.1057, but instead of considering the ritual a significant variation from the sūtra text, this entry should qualify the variation of...
T.1057 as containing a section from T.1058. Although the *Dunhuang mi jiao wen xian lun gao* does overview Dunhuang manuscripts in the esoteric genre and includes a discussion P.3920, this text also does not note the similarity of P.3920 (section 1c) to that of S.2498(2) and S.2716 in its transcription and comparison of S.2498(2). Sources such as the *Dunhuang mi jiao wen xian lun gao* have provided new information not found in descriptive catalogs of the Stein manuscripts, but future projects of this nature could also include information detailing this manuscript cluster and adding these findings to what is already known about it. The *Descriptive Catalogue of the Chinese Manuscripts from Tunhuang in the British Museum* has not identified any of the three Stein manuscripts with T.1058. This catalog or any corresponding updates to it should include mention of its canonical parallel in T.1058 and the other members of the cluster. S.2716’s description in the catalog could also indicate a relationship to T.1057, although how extensive the two texts have merged has not yet been studied. The entry for S.1210(3) in the *Yingguo guojia tushuguancang dunhuang yishu* also lacks an identification with T.1058 and information that connects it with the other manuscripts in the cluster, especially S.2498(2) where the similarity is especially close.

The *maṇḍala* diagram numbered Ch.00189 has also not been previously identified with T.1058 (or more accurately, with any of the manuscripts from this Dunhuang manuscript cluster). Since it is beyond a reasonable doubt that the diagram is a representation of a *maṇḍala* focused on the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, we can now interpret the iconographical symbolism based on that of the *Nilakanṭha/Qianshou* cluster, specifically T.1060 and T.1057. By knowing what the *maṇḍala* diagram is meant to depict based on a textual description, we can now see that it is not a compete
representation of the ritual. The banner parasols, banners and flower decorations, statue, ritual implements, and offerings are not illustrated or mentioned in the notes. The comments do not correct the details illustrations of the deity representations themselves, but rather how they are oriented within the diagram. This leads us to question why the illustrations of the deities do not conform to common iconographical depictions and the details are not as specific to each as we might expect compared with other larger scale painted maṇḍalas found elsewhere. Does this difference indicate its use as an amulet, blueprint, or as an example of concept art, and what is the relationship between the artist and the commentator? With a new understanding gained from identifying this item, we can focus on interpreting its purpose and function from a more informed position than was previously available. While theories about amulets reflecting rituals have been explored by Paul Copp and others, the textual identification of Ch.00189 allows us to ponder new theories of rituals reflecting amulet layouts and the general interaction between ritual culture and amulet culture through the use of maṇḍalas.

Seeing the P.3538’s ritual through its iconographical program instead of its ritual model has allowed us find a relation between amulet culture and maṇḍala ritual culture and find new relationships between canonical texts not previously considered. Without this approach, the trope of the cakravartin and heavenly realm would not be seen as symbolizing something beyond what is normally found in maṇḍalas or esoteric ritual. We also would not know the specific textual background that informs these symbols or see the interaction between maṇḍalas, amulets, and the ideals that Avalokiteśvara represents. In exploring texts through the patterns of iconography we gain a better understanding of how these texts inform each other through the use of symbols and in the narratives that
surround the bodhisattva. We have also found that Pure Land scriptures inform the *maṇḍala*, and by doing so we are able to see an interaction between different genres of texts we may not have been able to otherwise if we had viewed it through its use of ritual.

By seeing the different manifestations of the *maṇḍala* practice in four other Dunhuang manuscripts, we have learned something of its process of development as an independent ritual text, an addendum to a scripture, and as a replacement and additional ritual imbedded in T.1057. The foundation of a relational network between these five manuscripts, based on significant textual variations, can be solidified and expanded in the future. We now have reason, in the form of an alternate transformation narrative, to look back at T.1058 with new eyes, and to imagine it as something other than a complete *sūtra* from its inception into the Chinese language in 709, when it was recorded to have been translated.
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Foshui guan wuliangshou fo jing 佛說觀無量壽佛經. T.365.

Foshui suiqiujide dazizai tuoluoni shenzhou jing 佛說隨求即得大自在陀羅尼神呪經. T.1154.

Foshui tuoluoni ji jing 佛說陀羅尼集經. T.901.

Miaofa lianhua jing 妙法蓮華經. T.262.

Mouli mantuoluo zhenjing 牟梨曼陀羅呪經. T.1007.

Qianshou qianyan guanshiyin pusa dabeixin tuoluoni 千手千眼觀世音菩薩大悲心陀羅尼. T.1064.

Qianshou qianyan guanshiyin pusa guangda yuanman wuai dabeixin tuoluoni jing 千手千眼觀世音菩薩廣大圓滿無礙大悲心陀羅尼經. T.1060.

Qianshou qianyan guanshiyin pusa lao tuoluoni shen jing 千手千眼觀世音菩薩姥陀羅尼身經. T.1058.

Qianyan qianbi guanshiyin pusa tuoluoni shenzhen jing 千眼千臂觀世音菩薩陀羅尼神呪經. T.1057.

Qianzhuan tuoluoni guanshiyin pusa zhou 千轉陀羅尼觀世音菩薩咒. T.1035.


Pubian gusngming qingjing zhisheng ruyi baoyin xin wunengsheng damingwang dasuiqiu tuoluoni jing 普遍光明清浄熾盛如意寶印心無能勝大明王大隨求陀羅尼經. T.1153.

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APPENDIX A

TRANSCRIPTION of P.3538

This is the transcription created for the translation of P.3538 featured in Chapter 2. Text supplied from S.2498(2) is indicated with square brackets. The arrangement of text per line has been retained from the original manuscript with the exception of inline notations which have been incorporated into the text. For a comparison, images of the original manuscript can be found Appendix B.

[大悲壇法別行本]

P.3538.01: 蕪大悲千眼千臂經 [云凡作曼荼羅法者依其]

P.3538.02: 寺內或依山中或依 [流泉或於林]

P.3538.03: 蔬如是淨處。深 [一肘已來縱廣八肘地。並須生起]

P.3538.04: 梟却樹根及汙穢 [土草墳石瓦礫骨]

P.3538.05: 石等並締之 [須除去。然後取好浄土填]

P.3538.06: 治平政。□□瞿 [摩夷浄黃土]

281 For a more detailed digital representation of P.3538’s text, see “Altar Method,” http://altarmethod.com/. The transcription was created by Zhang Boyang 張伯雍 and Adrian Tiethof-Aronson. Project Direction and design by Marcus Bingenheimer 马德伟. Abbreviations are resolved. Unicode Extension A-D characters and Non-Unicode characters (attested or not) are replaced with their common form 通用字. Legible damaged text is unmarked. Unclear characters are unmarked. Illegible damaged text is marked by one □ (vertical rectangle) per missing character (est.). Extra spaces, inline notations, deletions and corrections are unmarked. “Altar Method,” http://altarmethod.com/.
香水和泥塗 [地。八肘內當分作五分曼荼]

羅壇。最初中心一分縱廣三肘。已來成

其一分依中心縱廣 [二肘。方作中] 心當

畫寶輪具足一 [百八幅。依] 輪中心畫

寶蓮花開敷具足 [三十二] 葉大小一肘。

又依輪四遶畫光艷。每花葉上各畫

如意寶珠。四方珠上並畫光艷。又於

三十二葉蓮花中心置一白檀造成本尊

大悲觀音菩薩像。又第二分縱廣

一肘四角內先畫開敷蓮花各一。於

花上各畫須弥坐各三層。依東北

角坐上畫大自在天神。東南角坐

上畫大威德天神。西南角坐上畫大

梵天王。西北角坐畫天帝釋身。四方面各

第三分縱廣

又第三分縱廣

又第三分縱廣

二肘作之。地純作青色金色解絡。又第
P.3538.23: 四分縱廣一肘作之。四面分作二十八分。每

P.3538.24: 分內各畫敷蓮花一朵。於此花上次第

P.3538.25: 畫：金剛杵三鉤戟印，鉤斧印，刀印，劍印，

P.3538.26: 蠟燭印，如意珠印，寶棒印，毗那也迦

P.3538.27: 印，軍器印，輪寶印，手印，腳印，而上諸印各

P.3538.28: 作光火焰畫之。即此第四分。南門內畫須

P.3538.29: 炎摩天王。西門內畫水神。北門內畫俱毗

P.3538.30: 曬神。東門內畫天童男。又於四角內各

P.3538.31: 畫四天王依位次第。並諸侍從鬼神。又於最外

P.3538.32: 院第五分。縱廣一肘。內四面畫菓樹，花樹，

P.3538.33: 寶樹，種種具足。又於四角各畫寶須弥

P.3538.34: 山。四門畫四大海水。壇内外分地並作青

P.3538.35: 色。仍於内外層仿西南隅各開咒師出入一

P.3538.36: 門。又於壇心懸千眼觀世音菩薩像一軀。

P.3538.37: 面取東方。像前三十二葉蓮花。花上置

P.3538.38: 千手眼大悲經一部。然後用栴檀香水
器一十六。牧種種飲食，三種白食，及日別

諸菓子等。滿置廿五器。香水一升水

瓶，諸綵雜色花葉樹等嚴飾廿五

口。畫菩薩幡廿五口。及錯綵幡等懸廿五

行。所要瓶椀，器物並用金，銀及銅作

之。無真實者假作亦得如是依法。内

外四面排合又更張施幢傘，幡華，

寶蓋，稻花，白芥子，種種雜花散於

壇上。如上飲食，香花日別香鮮新

造供養。呪師出入壇時，三時洗淨用

香塗身。着新淨衣。食三種白食。焚

沉水，栴檀等香。日別三時於千眼千臂

大悲像前入壇第三院內自發大悲菩薩

三種大誓願。晝夜在壇外西門跏跪

座。日別誦姥陁羅尼一千八遍。勿令間斷。

經二十一日勿生勞倦散乱之意。又更日別
P.3538.55: 六時從壇西南隅門入。至檀第三院西門。

P.3538.56: 立前所授第一印第二乃至第十二。啟請

P.3538.57: 佛禪定印等誦大身真言。餘者廣

P.3538.58: 說在本經中
APPENDIX B

P.3538 IMAGES

Bibliothèque nationale de France, département des Manuscrits, Pelliot chinois 3538: Folio 1.
Bibliothèque nationale de France, département des Manuscrits, Pelliot chinois 3538: Folio 2.
Bibliothèque nationale de France, département des Manuscrits, Pelliot chinois 3538: Folio 3.
APPENDIX C
MAṆḌALA DIAGRAM (CH.00189)

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