The Identification of Kizil Paintings II

Monika Zin

Zusammenfassung: Der vorliegende Artikel ist der zweite aus der angekündigten Reihe, die zur Identifizierung der narrativen Malereien in den buddhistischen Klöstern in Kizil beitragen soll. Der vorliegende Aufsatz gibt zuerst die Identifizierung eines rätselhaften Bildes (Fig. 3), das ein Wesen mit zwei Köpfen wiederzugeben scheint, als die Darstellung der Geschichte vom Knaben Sudāya, der im Grab geboren wurde und sich von der Milch seiner verstorbenen Mutter ernährte. Der zweite Teil des Artikels bringt die Identifizierung einer Reihe von Bildern, die einen Mann beim Waschen der Füße des Buddha zeigt; der Mann ist in allen Bildern durch Töpfe charakterisiert. Die in tocharischer Sprache erhaltene Erzählung von dem Töpfer Brhaddyuti bildet die literarische Quelle dieser Malerei.

This paper is the second in a series which discusses the identification of hitherto unrecognized narrative paintings in the Buddhist monasteries in Kizil in Chinese Central Asia. The preceding paper looked at depictions of the stories of Yaṣa and of Mākandika (ZIN 2005).

3. Sudāya

This is the story of a boy whose mother was dead when she gave birth to him in a tomb. The story was first identified in the reliefs of Gandhara by Alfred Foucher (1917: 260-271) and it is known from two versions preserved in Chinese translation, T 5183) and T 683.4) The version found in T 518, “the Sūtra spoken by the Buddha to the king of the country Caṇḍavant”, was translated by Chavannes (1921: 128-135). It may be summarized in the following way: As a result of a plot by the jealous wives of king Tchan-t'o-yue, the king's youngest wife is killed and buried in a tomb. In the tomb she gives birth to a son; half of her body does not decay and the child feeds on milk from one of her breasts. When the boy is three years old the tomb collapses and the boy is able to climb out of

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2) I wish to express my gratitude to my student Mr. Zhan Lü for providing me with Chinese references mentioned in fns. 5-8.
3) T 518 (Tchan t'o yue kouo wang king), ed. Vol. 14, pp. 791c-792b.

Indo-Asiatische Zeitschrift 11 · 2007, pp. 43-52
it. During the day, the child plays with birds and wild animals and at night he returns to the tomb. When the boy is six years old, the Buddha thinks of him and goes to the tomb where the two have a short conversation. During the talk the boy expresses his willingness to follow the Buddha and the Buddha strokes the boy's head. At this moment the boy, whose name is Siu-t'o, loses his hair and a monk's kāśāya appears on his body. Siu-t'o receives the Buddha's teaching and after a mere seven days achieves the sainthood of the arhat. Soon the Buddha sends Siu-t'o to King Tchan-t'o-ye, who is the boy's father. When the young monk stands in front of the king, Tchan-t'o-ye tells him of his great sadness: his kingdom does not have a heir. Siu-t'o tells the king about the Buddha's great wisdom and on hearing this the king, his court and a crowd of followers go to see the Buddha. When the king receives the Buddha's teaching and becomes a lay disciple, the Buddha reveals that Siu-t'o is in fact the king's son born in a tomb from the dead queen.

The version in T 683 (FOUCHER 1917: 280n) is shorter; it tells the story of a queen who died as the result of an illness and of a boy who was born in a tomb. The boy's name here is Siu-t'o-ye and he spends seven years in the tomb. This version does not mention that one part of the queen's body does not decay, nor does it refer to the boy losing his hair after the Buddha strokes it.

It is evident that the story about a boy in a tomb must have been quite well known because there are frequent literary references to the boy's name. Sometimes these include explicit references to his story; in T 1442 Siu-t'o-ye is a naked child looking for some clothes, in T 1861 the Buddha asks if the boy has a home and the boy loses his hair, and T 1821, T 1822 and T 1823 refer to a seven-year-old boy. However, the whole story is not found anywhere else nor, to the best of my knowledge, is it known in Sanskrit, Pali or Tibetan. The name of the boy in Sanskrit would be Sudāya, Sudāyi or Sudāna (Sudhāna).

FOUCHER described three reliefs from Gandhara; one of them is to be found in the present paper as Fig. 1. His other examples (FOUCHER 1917: 260n) were a poorly preserved relief in the Museum of Ethnography in Berlin and a water-colour by Berezovski which was based on a mural painting in Kucha (Fig. 2), seen there during the Russian expedition to Turkestan in the years 1909-10.

Since FOUCHER's time further Gandharan reliefs have been found. DE MARCO in his work on funerary monuments (1987: 199-219) lists and describes 15 reliefs of the dead mother in the tomb,
and he gives illustrations of 13 of them. The reliefs depict a roofed tomb (shown as a little shrine), or portray a stūpa made of regular cubical stones. Both the shrines and the stūpas are depicted with an open entrance from which the dead body of the mother tumbles out. The woman's prominent shoulder bones and ribs make clear that she is dead. She always lies with her head to the front of the picture and her loose, long hair hangs down or is spread over the ground. The boy is shown near his mother holding and sucking one of her breasts, as he is depicted in the picture by Berezovski representing a fragment of the painting from Kucha. Among versions of the story which survive, the visual representations explicitly refer to the developed version in T 518, as they present the corpse of the mother in asymmetric decay with only one breast.

One of the rhomboidal paintings on the barrel vault in Cave 104 in Kizil depicts something rather odd, alongside a wholly conventionally portrayed Buddha (Fig. 3). Inside a white object,
whose bottom is not visible and whose top has the form of a rounded peak, there is a shape which appears to be easily identified as a human body, simply from the selection of colours used to portray it. This is a false impression, however, as more detailed identification is far from easy, since “the body” has two heads. One of the heads is seen in profile in the highest point, the other one is seen en face but upside down in the lowest point. The lower head has long, unbound hair which cascades down and which is depicted as a smooth surface without marking locks or strands.

Thanks to the hair, the awkward shape can be identified as the iconographical element from the story about the boy feeding from the dead mother in the tomb. The shape depicted here is the mother’s corpse with the face seen upside down and Sudāya kneeling on the left side, moving his mouth towards the breast which he holds in his hands. The dead mother and the boy are placed in a round hole in the stūpa. Even the layers of stones from which the stūpa is made are depicted in the painting. Without doubt, the central part of the Kizil painting, represented as the line drawing (Fig. 4a), and the line drawing of the crucial part of one of the reliefs from Gandhara (Fig. 4b)\(^\text{11}\), depict one and the same story.

4. Bṛhaddyuti

Among the rhomboidal scenes on the barrel vault of Cave 80 in Kizil the following scene is presented (Fig. 5): The Buddha is shown sitting on the throne in a ‘European’ manner with his legs together on one side. The Buddha holds his hands in a gesture which suggests that he is talking to or teaching a man who is kneeling on the right-hand side of the picture and who is holding his right hand in a similar gesture. In his left hand the man holds a vessel tilted in such a way that water pours directly onto the Buddha's feet from its spout. The man is dressed conventionally as a lay devotee; he does not wear a crown, so he is not a king; nor does he have a nimbus, so he is not a god. This scene, shown in *The Grotto Art of China*, is sub-titled “Rāhula’s Realization and his washing of the Buddha's feet”. This interpretation is unacceptable: Rāhula was a son of the Buddha, who became a monk in his childhood. The person depicted in the picture is neither a small boy nor an adult monk. Furthermore, there is another iconographical element, with which the artist undoubtedly wanted to characterize the event or the person worshipping the Buddha. On the left-hand side, there is a vaulted chamber cluttered with pots, which is most probably a potter's kiln.

\(^{11}\) Ill.: De Marco 1987: fig. 13.
The same scene can be found three more times in the published paintings from Kizil; in Cave 38 (Fig. 6) the vault with the pots is placed behind the kneeling man and not on the other side of the Buddha. Also here, the man holds a vessel in his left hand while his right hand touches the Buddha. Undoubtedly, the picture in Cave 32 (Fig. 7) once showed exactly the same scene, although today the middle part with the man's head and the vessel is missing. The state of preservation of the barrel vault in Cave 171 (Fig. 8) is even worse but here too it is easy to recognize that the same scene is represented – the only difference is that the pots are depicted standing in isolation, not in a vault.

The same scene was portrayed in Kizil in another place as a large painting, 1.60 m high, placed on the
The scene in Cave 206 repeats the same scheme: The man kneeling at the feet of the Buddha holds a vessel in his left hand, while his right hand touches the feet of the Master sitting on the throne. The pots in the vault are placed behind the man. The large size of the painting allowed the artist to show further details: On the other side of the Buddha, Vajrapāṇi can be recognized, and above him we can see a worshipping god. Two more individuals stand between the man and the pots; GRÜNWEDEL suggested that these were both women but their gender cannot be determined from the drawing itself. The Buddha's feet are placed on a rolled-up piece of fabric. The vessel and the fabric under the feet support GRÜNWEDEL's interpretation, which can be applied to all the paintings in the series (Figs. 5-9), that what is shown here is the washing of the Buddha's feet. In all the scenes, the person washing the Buddha's feet is characterized by pots; furthermore, in most cases these are placed in the vault which may be a kiln. Therefore, the person washing the Buddha's feet is a potter.

The potter appears several times in the literary works that might serve as a basis for the paintings of Kizil. There is, for example, a story about the potter in which he brings his friend Brahmin to the Buddha. In another story the potter is converted when the Buddha demonstrates that he can make...
pottery superior to anything the craftsman is able to produce.\textsuperscript{15} As far as I am aware, however, none of these stories contains the scene with the washing of the Buddha's feet, which seems to be essential in the representations analysed here.

The textual tradition of the \textit{M\={u}lasarv\={a}stiv\={a}davinaya} preserved one more story about the potter. The story preserved in a Tibetan translation\textsuperscript{16} describes the following events: One day in Vaiśālī the Buddha fell ill, so he sent Ānanda to the potter with the request that the potter give him some butter and oil. The potter (here without a name) fulfilled the request eagerly, and when he gave the gifts to the Buddha, expressed a desire to become the Buddha himself in future – Buddha Śākyamuni. The fact that the story includes the wish of the donor to achieve the state of the Buddha (\textit{praṇīdhāna}) in the future, and the prophecy (\textit{vyākaraṇa}) that the potter will be the Buddha Śākyamuni in the future, proves that the story was adapted from an older source since it should not have been included into the story of the life of Buddha Śākyamuni himself. This version is complemented by the motif of \textit{praṇīdhāna} without paying any special attention to its logic.

A parallel to the story about the potter presenting the Buddha with gifts is also found in a Sanskrit version, and here even the potter's name is known. The Sanskrit version is preserved in the \textit{Mahajātakamālā} manuscripts found in Nepal. The potter's name is Brhadduti. The \textit{Brhadduti-kumbhakāravādāna} (\textit{Avadāna} of the potter Brhadduti) in the \textit{Mahajātakamālā}\textsuperscript{17} repeats the story from the \textit{M\={u}lasarv\={a}stiv\={a}davinaya} in metrical form. In the \textit{Mahajātakamālā}, the Buddha, during an illness, sends Ānanda to ask the potter for help and gifts of butter, oil, sugar and water.\textsuperscript{18} The potter comes with his son and wife bringing the gifts; he rubs the body of the Buddha with butter and oil and sprinkles it with sweet water.\textsuperscript{19} Afterwards he expresses the wish that he become the Buddha himself with the name Śākyamuni, while his son becomes Ānanda and his wife Yaśodharā.\textsuperscript{20}

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{15} \textit{M\={u}lasarv\={a}stiv\={a}davinaya}, ed. DUTT, Vol. 3.1, pp. XVII-2, cf. STRONG 1992: 23-37 (with references).
\item \textsuperscript{16} Tib. \textit{M\={u}lasarv\={a}stiv\={a}davinaya}, \textit{Bhaïajyavastu}, ed. Vol. 41, 221.5.2, analys. PANGLUNG 1981: 50.
\item \textsuperscript{17} \textit{Mahajātakamālā} IV, ed. pp. 49-57; trad. LANG 1912: 530-535.
\item \textsuperscript{18} \textit{Mahajātakamālā} IV.86-88, ed. p. 55: \textit{brhaddute vijānīyā bhagavato jagadguro/ yad vātābdhitam glānyam utpanna// vigrahe \'dhunā// tad våta¸åntaye \¸åstuµ sarpistailagu · ambubhiµ// prayojanaµ tad etåni yåcitum aham åvraje/}; trad. LANG 1912: 534: « 'Apprends, ô V\=haddyuti! que le Bienheureux, Guru du monde, souffre en ce moment dans son corps d'une maladie des vents qui l'abat. Pour calmer la maladie du Maître il faut du beurre fondu, de l'huile, du sucre et de l'eau, et voilà ce que je viens te demander ...' »
\item \textsuperscript{19} \textit{Mahajātakamālā} IV.96-97, ed. p. 56: \textit{suprasannam munindram \(t\)am matvā sa kumbhakṛn mudā/ tailena sarpišā \(s\)āstuµ sarvāṅge 'mraksyat svayam// guḍodakena sarvāṅge paryāśīcat samādarāt/ tad guḍāmbu ca pāṇāya pradañña sampramoditaµ//}; trad. LANG 1912: 534: « Le potier comprit que le prince des Munis lui était favorable et joyeusement lui-même lui frotta tout le corps avec le beurre et l'huile. Avec l'eau sucrée il l'aspergea sur tout le corps en lui témoignant le plus profond respect, lui en donna aussi à boire, et son âme était joyeuse. »
\item \textsuperscript{20} \textit{Mahajātakamālā} IV.106-111, ed. pp. 56-57: \textit{evam sa praṇīdhīm kṛtvā samuttāya pramoditaµ/ bhaga-vantām samāśīyāta upāśrayataµ/ tataµ sa bhagavān dharmam samāśīya jagaddhīte/ anyajjanapade gantum pracacāra saśāṅghiḥ// tataµ sa kumbhakāraµ 'pi sadā \(t\)am sugatam samaran/ \(k\)āle dehaµ parīyajitaµ divi gatvā muddācarat// tathā tasyātmano bhāryā smṛtyā \(t\)am sugatam sadā/ \(k\)āle dehaµ parīyajitaµ divi gatvā pramara-tuḥ// evam sa bhagavān ādāu kumbhakārāḥ purāh bhave/ śākyamunīni samabhāryṛca sambhodhipraṇidhīm vyadhāt//}
\end{itemize}
The Sanskrit version of the story about the potter in the *Mahājātakamālā* introduces the motif of rubbing the Buddha's body with butter and sprinkling it with water. The version preserved in the Tocharian language\(^{21}\) is in this respect more developed and it introduces the element of the washing of the Buddha which is depicted in the paintings of Kizil.

In the surviving fragments of Tocharian manuscripts a similar situation is represented: the Buddha is ill and he sends Ånanda to the potter Bṛhadduti. However, the reason for the request is different here: The Buddha wants to have some hot water (possibly for a bath) and sesame oil (possibly for a massage).\(^{22}\) Bṛhadduti is extremely happy and with great pleasure goes with all his family to give his presents to the Buddha.\(^{23}\) When Bṛhadduti arrives, he is enchanted by the view of the Buddha and takes him by the feet asking for permission to touch and bathe him.\(^{24}\) As soon as the Buddha agrees, Bṛhadduti realizes how ridiculous his request is – how can he, whose potter's hands are hard and rough, touch the delicate and golden skin of the Buddha?\(^{25}\) At this moment a miracle happens and the cold, hard hands of Bṛhadduti turn into delicate hands with silk-like skin.\(^{26}\)

\(^{20}\) yo 'sau bṛhaddutir nāma kulālo 'yaṁ munīsvarah/ yo 'sau tadātmajaś cābhūd ānando 'yaṁ mahāmatih/ yā ca 
tasya satī bhāryā såbhūd devī yaśodharā//; trad. LANG 1912: 534-535: « Il fit ce vœu, se releva plein de joie, et, les yeux dirigés vers le Bienheureux, s'installa de côté. Alors le Bienheureux ayant prêché la loi pour le bien du monde s'en fut avec sa communauté dans une autre contrée. De son côté le potier se souvenant toujours du Bienheureux, le temps venu, ayant quitté son corps, gagna le ciel et s'y réjouit. Son fils et sa femme se souvenant toujours du Bienheureux, le temps venu, ayant quitté leur corps, gagnèrent le ciel et s'y réjouirent. C'est ainsi que le Bienheureux, sous la forme d'un potier, rendit jadis hommage à Ākyamuni et pria pour obtenir l'illumination totale. Celui qui était le potier Vṛhadduti, c'est ce prince des Munis; et celui qui était son fils, c'est Ånanda que voici, le grand sage. Celle qui était sa vertueuse épouse, c'est la reine Yaçodharā. »

\(^{21}\) SIEG 1944: 23-30.

\(^{22}\) Ibid. p.25: „Ånanda spricht: „Er ist nämlich folgendermaßen: der Erhabene, der auf die Weise Gekommene [Tathāgata], der Arhat, der alle Dhammas richtig insgesamt Kennende (...) Den buddhaschaftlichen (Körper) des Arhat quält jetzt, wenn er (seines Weges) geht, Erkrankung durch den Wind. Auf Grund dessen verlangt er nach warmem Wasser und Sesamöl ...“.

\(^{23}\) Ibid. pp. 25-26: „Darauf ging Bṛhadduti, der Töpfer, mit Vater, Mutter und Brüdern, mit Weib und Kindern zusammen, nachdem er Parfüm, Blumen, warmes Wasser und Sesamöl (geholt) hatte, wo Ākyamuni, der Buddha, der Göttergott war.“


\(^{25}\) Ibid. p. 27: „(Darauf) spricht mit (lieblicher) Stimme Śākyamuni, der Buddha: „Tue so, mein Sohn, bade du selbst des Buddha Körper‘. (Als nun Bṛhadduti), der Töpfer, von dem Buddha die Erlaubnis bekommen hatte und voll Freude an den Buddha herantrat (?), sah er (seine Hände) ..., die durch die Bearbeitung des Tones rauhen, harten, trockenen, tonigen, kalten und nicht geeignet an den Körper des Buddha zu rühren. Sofort wisch er mit Scheu zurück (...).“

\(^{26}\) Ibid. p. 28: „(Sofort) ging (dem Bṛhadduti) auf die Bezeugung der großen Freude an dem Glänze des Buddha, des Meisters, und auf das Machen großmächtiger ... an [seinen] Händen die Trockenheit und Kälte verloren und wie Seiden(-Gewebe?) weiche, zarte (Hände) kamen ihm zum Vorschein.“
After bathing the Buddha, Bṛhaddutyuti feels that he would like to become the Buddha in the future. He expresses the *pranidhāna* to become the Buddha called Śākyamuni in the future.27)

The paintings in Kizil appear to depict this story. What is undoubtedly shown in them is the story of the potter worshipping the Buddha by washing him. It should not be surprising that it is only the washing of the Buddha's feet that is depicted, not the entire bathing scene, as it would have been unthinkable to depict the Buddha naked. An old Sanskrit version of the story of Bṛhaddutyuti, which most probably did not include *pranidhāna*, has not been preserved, thus it is not known if it included the motif of bathing the Buddha and the miracle of the soft hands, which is nowadays known only from the Tocharian version. However, the fact that the potter's feet washing is depicted only in the paintings in Central Asia and not in any other Buddhist school of art seems to allow for further speculations and an assumption that the artists from Kizil depicted a local Tocharian version. The fact that so many of these pictures exist indicate that the story of Bṛhaddutyuti was very popular. The story of a craftsman with hard hands, who was allowed to worship the Buddha, is an appealing image, with which many visitors of the monasteries in Kizil identified themselves.

**List of paintings under discussion**

**Sudāya**
- Cave 104, vault, left side; ill.: XU (et al.) 1983-85, Vol. 2, Fig. 100 (*supra*, Fig. 3)

**Bṛhaddutyuti**
- Cave 32, vault; ill.: XU (et al.) 1983-85, Vol. 1, Fig. 76 (*supra*, Fig. 7)
- Cave 38 (Musikerhöhle), vault, right side; ill.: XU (et al.) 1983-85, Vol. 1, Fig. 115 (*supra*, Fig. 6)
- Cave 80 (Höllentopfhöhle), vault, right side; ill.: XU (et al.) 1983-85, Vol. 2, Fig. 62 (*supra*, Fig. 5)
- Cave 171, vault, right side; ill.: XU (et al.) 1983-85, Vol. 3, Fig. 5; TAN (et al.) 1981, Vol. 2, Fig. 79 (*supra*, Fig. 8)
- Cave 206 (Fußwaschungshöhle), front wall, left side; ill: GRÜNWEDEL 1912: 160, Fig. 362 (*supra*, Fig. 9)

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**IMPRESSUM**

*Indo-Asiatische Zeitschrift. Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für indo-asiatische Kunst, ISSN 1434-8829*


Redaktion und Herausgabe: Raffael Dedo Gadebusch, Dr. Dietrich Mahlo, Gerd J.R. Mevissen

Bezugsadresse: Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Kunstsammlung Süd-, Südost- und Zentralasien,
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Die *Indo-Asiatische Zeitschrift* erscheint jährlich zum Jahresende. Mitglieder erhalten die Publikation kostenlos,
für Nichtmitglieder beträgt der Preis EUR 13,00, bei Doppelnummern EUR 22,00.

Beiträge sind willkommen und an die oben genannte Adresse zu richten.

Konzept, Satz und Layout: Gerd J.R. Mevissen; Gesamtherstellung und Druck: Reiter-Druck, Berlin
Umschlagabbildung:

*Jina Ṛṣabhanātha*, Messing mit Einlage, Gujarat, 8. Jh. n.Chr., H: 18,8 cm, MIK I 10146. Foto: Iris Papadopoulos